

Data Brief



August 2016

Danville Area Community College

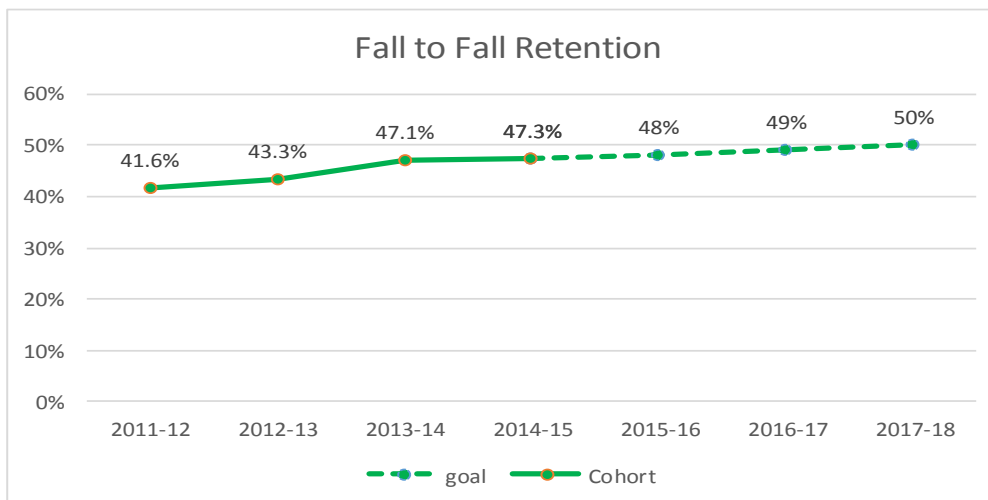
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Student Success Goals Set

It is said that a person without goals has no direction. Although the college has had a goal of increased student success over the past few years, the time has come to quantify how much that increase should be.

To that end, the college has set retention, persistence, and completion goals for the next three years. These goals have been set to improve by 1% each year in each category for the next three years. To many schools this would appear lofty, but considering the current track DACC is on, this is definitely attainable.

Fall to Fall Retention 1% Increase



Over the past four years, student retention has steadily increased, from 41.6% for students entering DACC in 2011 Fall and returning in 2012 Fall semesters, to 47.3% three years later. This increase is due to cumulative efforts of everyone at the college. While one might expect this number of decrease with the improving economy, the increase is welcome news to students seeking education at DACC.

Although the college has been making great strides in the retention measure, there is still room to grow. Currently, DACC finds itself near the middle of its peer college group.

As a result the Achieving the Dream (AtD) Data Team, with approval of the AtD Leadership Team, has set a goal

of 1% increases in the rate each year, reaching 50% within three years.

With a 1% increase in the retention rate of new degree or certificate seeking students, the college would at a minimum take in an additional \$23,000 in tuition and fees. This is only a base figure, as the college retention rate also includes second year students who could return for a third year.

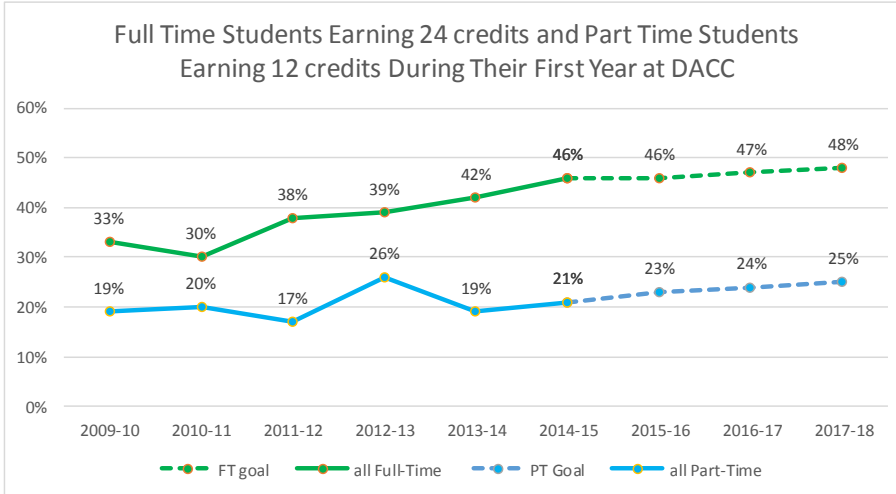
Separate from retention, but usually included in the discussion, is the rate at which high school students choose DACC. This too is a facet of retention as many high school students take DACC courses through dual enrollment or College Express. The college is fortunate to be steadily attracting over one-third of all recent area high school graduates to the college, but efforts must continue by the recruitment staff and all college employees to ensure this facet of retention continues to remain high.

It should be noted that all students taking a transfer, career, or remedial courses in the initial fall semester are included in the calculations with the exception of those who were in high school, were incarcerated, or who graduated during the year. Students are considered retained if they return to DACC the following year.

Persistence 1% Increase

Persistence can be defined in multiple ways. AtD considers fall to fall retention the same as persistence, while others consider persistence the sum of retention and transfer rates. The graph on the next page uses a similar metric to that used by the State of Illinois in their persistence performance metric. This metric considers all first time fall students and tracks them through the summer to see what percentage of full time students earn 24 credits and part time students earn 12 credits at their initial institution.

DACC is in the fortunate position to have experienced extremely rapid growth in this measure for its full time



students. Part time students have seen modest growth which pales in comparison.

Just as with the retention rate increase, no one initiative is responsible for the growth of student success. But seeing that the part time students are not improving at the rate of full time students, the college is starting to add additional focus on these students through its Mandatory Advising project. As part of Mandatory Advising, new part time students will be required to meet with an advisor which is a new policy at the college.

Success goals for this measure were again 1% increases per year, reaching three year goals of 48% for full time students and 25% for part time students. In looking closer the full time goal for 2015-16 is actually the same as the 2014-15 value. This was to accommodate for the large jump from 42% to 46% for students starting in falls of 2013 and 2014 respectively.

years. These results are the cumulative effect of all recent efforts across the college campus.

As the latest increase from 28.3% to 33.7% does not look sustainable, the AtD Data Team decided to start with 33% as the goal for students who entered DACC in 2012-13 and whose four year window is now closing. But, as with the other measures, future years' goals have been set with a 1% increase ending at 35% credential attainment as the goal for the 2014 Fall student cohort.

It should be noted that all degree or certificate seeking students in the initial fall semester are included in the calculations with the exception of those who were in high school, or incarcerated. Only credentials earned at DACC are included in the calculations.

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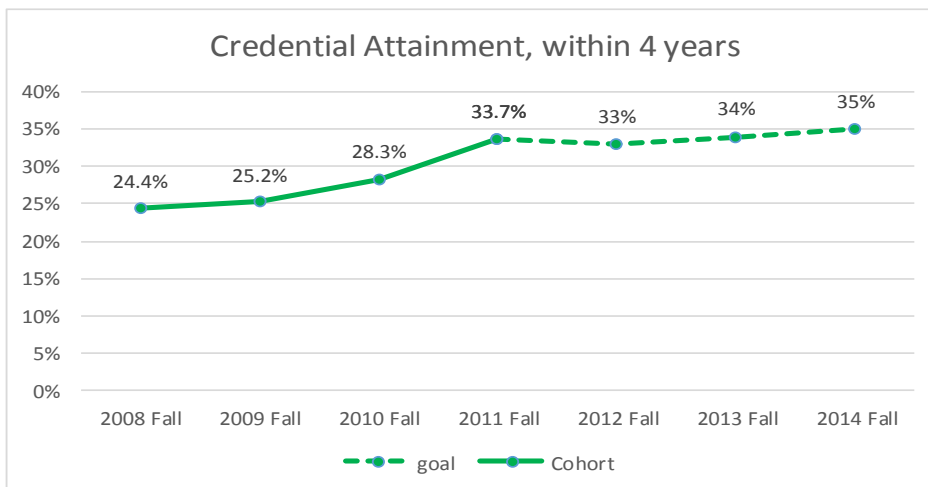
Student Performance Gaps

At the core of the Achieving the Dream initiative are (1) increasing student success and (2) decreasing success gaps between subpopulations. In addition to looking at overall student performance in areas like retention, persistence and completion, DACC continues to work towards lessening the gaps between: black and white, part-time and full-time, financially disadvantaged and able, and male and female students. Where these gaps persist, efforts continue to be needed to reduce and hopefully close these gaps.

Thoughts as the semester begins

Does each student feel welcome in your classroom, office, etc.?

Completion 1% Increase



Is each student aware of college and classroom policies that affect them?

Is each student making a personal connection at the college?

If a student is behind, is (s)he made aware early enough to get caught up?

As with the other two major student performance measures, the percentage of students earning their degree or certificate at DACC has grown during the college's Achieving the Dream

Are you reaching the students you are responsible for reaching?