

Data Brief



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Danville Area Community College

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Operation Graduation in Effect

Recently, the college established goals for 1% increases each year in student retention, persistence and graduation. Of these three performance measures, graduation is the most publicly available and frequently compared to determine the performance of a college.

To keep a focus on the college's graduation rate, President Nacco has recommended that new first time fall students be tracked each semester to see if their progress is at least that of previous student cohorts. This effort has been titled Operation Graduation.

To get new fall students off on the right foot, Counseling and Advising engage new students through a series of three phone calls during the fall semester. First, students are greeted early in the semester, told of the Welcome-Back-to-Campus event, asked how their classes are starting out, and reminded of college policies, such as the drop/refund policy.

A second call is made later in the semester checking in and letting students know of tutoring resources, Financial Aid options, and scholarship application deadlines. A third call is made near the end of the semester to students

who have not registered for spring to check in again and encourage their future enrollment. During these calls, student files are checked to be sure they have an academic plan, a student's mapped pathway to graduation.

The groundwork for these Counseling and Advisement activities was laid in previous years. This year, the number of student contacts has increased to three with contact being made by only advising staff and those in closely related positions.

Starting in the spring semester, student progress is tracked by placing them into one of four categories: graduated, still enrolled, transferred or dropped out. A chart is shared, like the one below, which can be compared to previous years to see if gains are occurring. The chart follows students for three years, as the three year graduation rate is the most commonly used and shared.

After the cohort has completed the Fall of their second year, personnel in Admissions and Records begin to contact students. For students who have completed significant credits towards their stated degree or certificate but are no longer attending, either due to dropping out or transferring before achieving an award, a letter is sent. For current

| | 2013 Fall cohort "Class of 2016" | | | | | | 2014 Fall cohort "Class of 2017" | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cohort Size* | 444 | 444 | 444 | 444 | 444 | 444 | 392 | 392 | 392 | 392 | 392 | 392 |
| start of term | 14SP | 14FA | 15SP | 15FA | 16SP | 16FA | 15SP | 15FA | 16SP | 16FA | 17SP | 17FA |
| 1. Graduates | 7 | 32 | 41 | 116 | 128 | 162 | 6 | 29 | 41 | 110 | | |
| % Grad | 2% | 7% | 9% | 26% | 29% | 36% | 2% | 7% | 10% | 28% | | |
| 2. Still Enrolled | 351 | 241 | 198 | 80 | 63 | - | 309 | 188 | 161 | 57 | | - |
| % Still Enrolled | 79% | 54% | 45% | 18% | 14% | | 79% | 48% | 41% | 15% | | |
| 3. Transferred | 2 | 40 | 48 | 75 | 77 | - | 1 | 34 | 40 | 56 | | - |
| % Transferred | 0% | 9% | 11% | 17% | 17% | | 0% | 9% | 10% | 14% | | |
| 4. Dropped out | 84 | 131 | 157 | 173 | 176 | - | 76 | 141 | 150 | 169 | | - |
| % Dropped out | 19% | 30% | 35% | 39% | 40% | | 19% | 36% | 38% | 43% | | |
| Still enrolled: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0-15 credits earned | 174 | 33 | 11 | 7 | 3 | - | 140 | 19 | 7 | 2 | | - |
| 16-30 credits earned | 121 | 112 | 41 | 16 | 8 | - | 115 | 83 | 32 | 10 | | - |
| 31-45 credits earned | 47 | 69 | 69 | 26 | 15 | - | 47 | 67 | 60 | 17 | | - |
| 46+ credits earned | 8 | 27 | 77 | 31 | 37 | - | 7 | 19 | 62 | 28 | | - |



students who are close to their award, courses needed for graduation as well as instructions on how to apply for graduation are included.

In a similar letter to students no longer enrolled, students are encouraged to continue towards their degree and points out the few classes which are needed to obtain their desired degree or certificate. Instructions on how credits earned after leaving DACC could be reverse transferred back to the college are also included for those who may have transferred to another college. The letter to students no longer enrolled is similar to one first developed for the “How Close Are You” campaign a short time ago. As a follow up to those letters Cindy Peck checks to see how many students contacted who were not enrolled do enroll, and how many students who are close to graduation fill out Intent to Graduate forms.

Mandatory Advising Progress

In 2014, DACC elected to develop and implement a Mandatory Advisement Process (MAP) as it’s HLC Quality Project. The goal was to develop and implement Advisement and Counseling services that meet the needs of today’s community college students with respect to the student learning process including individualized education/career plans, retention, timely completions, fiscal management, and student satisfaction. To develop the capacity to change the College’s culture, training was required for current advisors/counselors as well as faculty and staff.

This training and the project work towards:

- integrating systems to eliminate silos between departments, student services, and classrooms
- creating a culture of shared advisement throughout the campus
- using case-management techniques which incorporate check-in points, and
- incorporating strategies to reduce gaps held by part-time and Pell-eligible students.

Specifically the purpose of MAP is to assist students, campus-wide, in actively engaging in their advisement experience through appreciative and intrusive advising, and by helping students develop, define, evaluate, and achieve their academic and career goals.

Strategies being implemented in conjunction with MAP:

- 1) All new degree/certificate seeking students are required to go through Counseling and develop an academic plan. An additional advisor was brought on board to assist with this function.

- 2) Student Planner and other technology are being implemented to assist students with their planning.
- 3) Advisors have multiple contacts with students each semester, rather than only during registration. Various trainings have occurred to give advisors and staff a better understanding of student needs including trainings on student’s mental health, leadership, career/technical education, first generation needs, LGBTQ students, and veterans.
- 4) Embedded advisement is occurring in specific classrooms containing students with a high risk of non-retention.
- 5) Appointment Plus software is being adopted in front line offices to facilitate appointments and student contacts.
- 6) The Maxient reporting system has been implemented for faculty and staff to easily report concerns about students. The system is accessible from the DACC forms web page.

Alerts/Electronic Reports

- [Complaint/Grievance Process & Form](#)
- [Illness, Injury & Accident Report](#)
- [Incident/Conduct Report](#)
- [Retention Alert/Student Care Report](#)

Upcoming strategies to be implemented:

- 1) Provide training to grow the faculty mentoring portion of the project.
- 2) Scale up embedded advisement.
- 3) Continue training of advisors, staff and faculty.
- 4) Have students schedule appointments through Appointment Plus.

To determine the success of MAP retention, completion and student satisfaction data will be used to compare former and new students. Additionally, specific course withdrawal data as well as targeted student surveys relating to imbedded advisement will be used as supporting evidence.