

# Data Brief



January 2019

*Danville Area Community College*

Volume 8, Issue 2

## We Match Our Community ... Definitely a Good Thing

Nationwide a major focus of recent years in higher education has been to better serve the underserved. As a reaction to that and to improve overall student success, most of DACC's Achieving the Dream initiatives have focused on students who traditionally have had less success in college.

At least three committees are focusing on diversity: The CQI Diversity Team shepherds a number of events to show all students the richness of diversity and that DACC believes in inclusion; the AtD Equity and Inclusion Team focuses on initiatives to improve student success of subpopulations who are experiencing less success; and the Access, Equity, and Diversity Advisory Committee, which includes a number of community members along with some DACC employees, focuses on different aspects of minority inclusion.

Thanks to everyone at the College, especially those who have worked with these committees, the College can tout that both inclusion and success are increasing for traditionally underserved minority groups in multiple areas. A quick look at how the Colleges enrollment and recent graduates compare with county census numbers show that minority students are attending and graduating at rates comparable to the county population.

	DACC Credit Enrollment* FY2018	DACC Graduates* FY2017	Vermillion 2017 Census Estimate
White	77.7%	77.8%	78.2%
Black	14.1%	13.3%	13.2%
Hispanic	5.3%	5.2%	4.9%
other	3.0%	3.7%	3.6%

\*excluding unknown race/ethnicity

## Update on the Mandatory Advising Project

Although the report to the Higher Learning Commission is in, the Mandatory Advising Project is not complete. At this point, all new students are being seen by an advisor and the number of students being seen by faculty advisors has increased. Progress continues in three areas:

First, the advisors have been working on making up to three contacts with each new student. This initiative has been folded over into work with the first-time full-time students in Operation Graduation.

Second, kinks with Student Planner continue to be worked out, and although many have been worked through, there are currently two outstanding issues, one involving students being able to see all section offerings, and the other with actual online registration through Student Planner. As a result, third, student use of Student Planner is somewhat limited .

Once the programming of Student Planner is complete, the intention is to teach all students how to use the scheduling function of Student Planner and to do a marketing campaign of its' capabilities.

## The Mentoring Program

Recently, the College has ramped up its' mentoring efforts. This past fall 65 employees of the College were matched with 255 incoming students to assist on their education journey at DACC.

The goals are for each mentor to make a minimum of three contacts with their mentee each semester. These contacts come in a variety of ways including phone calls, emails, or personal visits. To assist the mentors, a guidebook was prepared and presented to each mentor. This guidebook includes discussion topics and resources that students have available.



With the ramping up of the program, Student Success Advocate Erika Harris has taken on the point person role, dedicated to coordinate the mentoring. The program has goals of making students feel like DACC is their school, that the students are aware of resources which they could use, and that some barriers to retention are overcome.

Along with the mentoring program, DACC has started an M-SWIFT mentoring program which brings in community/business members to mentor new Black male students. Along with the mentoring principles M-SWIFT facilitates conversations and other learning activities with the overall goal of increasing retention and student success. This program is in its initial stage with plans on ramping up in future semesters.

Both the mentoring and M-SWIFT programs would not be possible without faculty and staff volunteering to assist and guide the new students at DACC. Those at the center of each program thank you very much for your efforts.

## In the Long Run, It's All About Graduation, Transfer and Jobs

Some big picture goals for our students are: graduation, transfer, and/or the ability to get a good job. Although those are the long term goals, we spend much of our time helping newer students become successful college students and measuring our success through short term metrics such as:

- First Time Fall-to-Spring Retention
- First Time Fall-to-Fall Retention
- Developmental Placement
- Developmental Course Success
- Developmental to College Level
- Gatekeeper Course Success

By increasing student success of these short term goals the long term goals should also increase ... or so the literature suggests. Fortunately students at DACC follow the literature.

**GRADUATION**—Since joining Achieving the Dream DACC has increased IPEDS graduation rates by more than 10%, putting the College at above 35%. During that same time DACC's ten ICCB peer colleges had an average increase of 3%. In other words, DACC has increased its graduation rate from being well below the average of its peer group to being right in the middle or slightly above average.

**TRANSFER**—A greater percentage of DACC students are enrolled in career/technical programs than at DACC peer colleges causing the transfer rates to be lower. But of the students who earn a transfer degree, over 75% transfer to another university within a couple of years of graduation. When surveyed, a majority did so without incurring any student debt at DACC, 90% reported everything transferred as expected, and all reported that knowledge and skills provided at DACC were helpful (very or somewhat) in being successful with their current coursework at their transfer institution. When asked to rate specific aspects of DACC the students rated high: use of technology, availability and variety of classes, major program content, equipment and facilities, and the fact that at DACC they were able to improve skills in communications, critical inquiry/problem solving, technological competence and cultural awareness/social skills.

**JOBS**— Can you guess which career graduates from DACC earn the most income? Most graduates report employment within six months of graduation. Many stay in the area but every year a few report finding employment more than two hours away. Graduates who earn the most, according to Illinois Department of Employment Security records, are graduates in the career programs of Nursing and Tractor Trailer, with other health professionals following closely behind. In other programs, such as Accounting, Business Administrative Technology and Computer Programming/Networking, graduates have been earning over \$10,000 more than those who started the program but left with no award.

“I am so thankful I started this journey at DACC.”

- transfer graduate

“By far the best decision I’ve made was coming to DACC.”

- transfer graduate

“Couldn’t have started my education off in a better college.”

- career graduate

“Thanks for the opportunity to learn and graduate from your establishment!”

- career graduate