

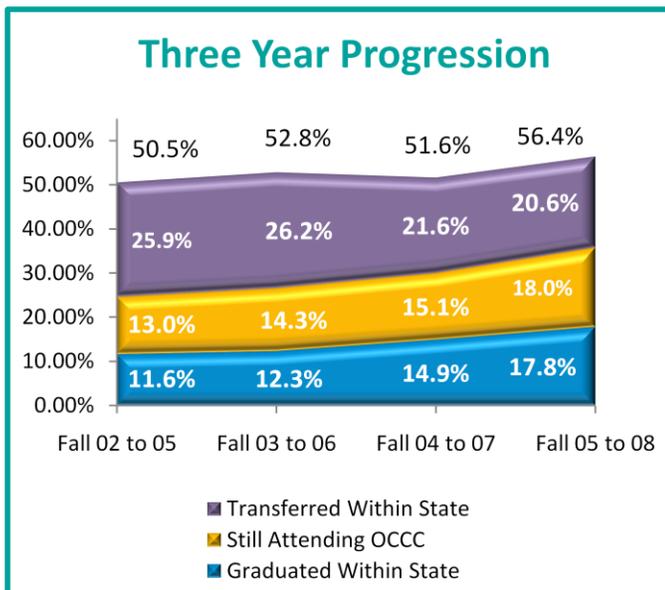
ACHIEVING THE DREAM OVERVIEW

Achieving the Dream is a multiyear, national initiative sponsored by the Lumina Foundation designed to help more community college students succeed. Since joining the initiative in fall 2007, OCCC has seen positive results in several key areas. Additional interventions are underway and their results will be analyzed to determine best practices.

PROGRESS

OCCC's Achieving the Dream initiatives have centered around the following priority areas:

- **Developmental Math Education**
- **Gateway Courses**
- **Online Learning**
- **Advisement Policy**
- **Financial Aid**



As initiatives from these areas have been implemented, the college has seen improvements in student persistence and retention three years in a row. OCCC's three-year progression

rate shows progress being made in helping students move successfully toward graduation. The progression rate measures those students who are still attending OCCC or another state institution or who have graduated from OCCC or another state institution over a three-year period. The graph above illustrates this progress showing an overall increase of almost 6% from 50.5% during the period of fall 2002 to 2005 and 56.4% during the period of fall 2005 to 2008.

DEVELOPMENTAL MATH EDUCATION TEAM

GOAL

To address the challenges students encounter with developmental math, to determine ways to help students succeed in completing these courses and to improve developmental math pass rates.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The developmental math education team, along with mathematics department faculty, completely redesigned the developmental math curriculum, including the development of four new developmental mathematics courses. Approved in October 2009, the curriculum is scheduled to be fully implemented in fall 2010.

FUTURE PLANS

The new curriculum is based on identified areas of strength and designed to improve student success by incorporating a variety of learning techniques as well as study skills activities into each course. The college prep math curriculum includes four three-credit hour courses, many offered as eight-week classes to allow students the opportunity to complete the developmental mathematics sequence in one year. Each course will integrate mini-lectures, study skills activities, group activities, and computer learning activities.

Team co-chairs are Tamara Carter, Director of Mathematics, and Pat Stowe, Director of Student Support Services.

GATEWAY COURSE TEAM

GOAL

To increase the number of students who successfully complete targeted gateway courses.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Twenty instructors received extensive training in collaborative learning methodologies designed to increase successful gateway course completion. Student success rates in sections of gateway courses taught using collaborative learning methodologies will be compared to regular gateway courses to determine effectiveness.

FUTURE PLANS

After collecting and analyzing responses from student and faculty surveys, the gateway course team will begin developing a list of recommendations for implementation.

Team co-chairs are Steve Shore, Professor of Chemistry and Mary McCoy, Director of Child Development Center and Lab School.

ONLINE LEARNING TEAM

GOAL

To enhance the overall online learning experience and increase student success.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The team has formed an online committee, composed of faculty and staff representatives, to design an orientation that will be required for students who will enroll in online courses. The orientation will include topics such as computer literacy fundamentals, technology requirements, time management skills, online learning skills, course expectations and others. The committee has also developed a best practices list to be used as a guideline in the development of online courses.

FUTURE PLANS

Online learning team initiatives include improving tutoring and lab assistance services for online students and broadening access to services provided to online students. The team also plans to monitor and analyze reasons for online student withdrawals using the results to determine additional improvements for the future.

Team chair is Susan VanSchuyver, Dean of Arts and Humanities.

ADVISEMENT POLICY TEAM

GOAL

To increase student persistence and retention through improved advising services.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New retention alert software has been fully implemented resulting in significantly more cases being submitted in comparison to previous years. Fourteen faculty members participated in the summer advising pilot program with results from faculty and student surveys indicating success. Plans are to continue the program for summer 2010.

FUTURE PLANS

Future initiatives include testing products for distance advising and exploring appropriate tools to follow up on students who withdraw from courses. An on-line academic plan has been piloted and plans are to implement it fully in fall 2010 following additional training and evaluation.

Team co-chairs are Liz Largent, Dean of Student Development, and Sonya Williams, Director of Science.

FINANCIAL AID TEAM

GOAL

To increase the rates of retention and student success by ensuring that financial barriers are minimized.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Financial aid team initiatives created improved workflows in the financial aid office, increased outreach to potential financial aid recipients, increased awareness of financial aid opportunities and increased front-line staff members helping students. Through these initiatives the percentage of new students who filed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) increased from 45% in FY08 to 55.9% in FY10 resulting in more students receiving financial assistance than in previous years.

FUTURE PLANS

The team is currently planning outreach activities focused on community-based organizations serving adults and families as well as a financial aid event for current students to encourage early filing of the FAFSA. An enhanced financial aid and veteran's services website is being constructed and interactive, online forms are being developed to aid in continuing improvements in financial aid processes.

Team co-chairs are Harold Case, Director of Student Financial Support Services and Alicia Harris, Assistant Director of Student Financial Support Services
