



Achieving the Dream™

# 2017 Annual Reflection & Leader College Application

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**Due June 23, 2017**

## **Instructions**

The annual reflection process provides a structured way for Achieving the Dream institutions to consider their student success work over the past year and to plan for the coming year. It guides reflections that emphasize success with system changes, progress with integration of multiple reform efforts that may be operating on the campus, and student centric solutions aimed at improving student outcomes. ATD coaches and staff provide feedback on the reports to help colleges refine next steps and they distill common themes and lessons to build knowledge of the institutional change process and to improve ATD's support of the networks' transformational work. The 2017 Reflection Process includes four components: the annual reflection narrative and data template, an optional application for recognition as a new Leader College, a coach satisfaction survey, and an interventions showcase submission.

## **Annual Reflection Report**

The annual reflection is designed to facilitate the engagement of a representative group of stakeholders to review and discuss the institution's student success and equity work including progress made, challenges faced, current priorities, and goals for the coming academic year. Important topics include efforts to achieve the scale and full adoption necessary for sustained success of the changes your college seeks to implement.

## **Leader College Application (if applicable)**

Institutions submitting an annual reflection have the option of applying for initial Leader College status by completing the Leader College application at the end of the annual reflection. Please note that the Leader College application includes a Achieving the dream Data Template which when completed will capture your college's student outcomes over three or more years.

## **Coach Satisfaction Feedback**

Institutions are requested to complete a short survey on their satisfaction with their assigned coaches. This feedback will help ATD provide better, more personalized coaching services. We encourage your institution to fill this survey out as a group so as to facilitate discussion about coach satisfaction and to submit one entry. Survey responses are confidential and will only be seen by Achieving the Dream non-



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coaching staff. The survey can be completed by visiting:  
[https://achievingthedream.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9Akht4Z824CRoLr](https://achievingthedream.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9Akht4Z824CRoLr)

## Interventions Showcase

Each college should document their student success work by updating existing interventions or adding new interventions to the Interventions Showcase. This is an important aspect of participation in the Achieving the Dream Network and an important resource for other institutions. Interventions Showcase users can log into the Interventions Showcase at [www.achievingthedream.org/user](http://www.achievingthedream.org/user).

## Submission

The annual reflection and Leader College application is submitted via an online form, and each institution's individualized link will be sent to Core Team Leaders by June. The worksheet on page 3 of this document may be used to help colleges collaborate and draft responses before completing the online form. The annual reflection and Leader College Application is due **June 23**.

## Questions

For more information about the annual reflection, visit [ATD Connect](#) or email [programanadpolicy@achievingthedream.org](mailto:programanadpolicy@achievingthedream.org).



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# 2017 Annual Reflection Worksheet

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## Contributors

Please identify the stakeholders who contributed to the 2017 annual reflection with their name and title.

- Dr. Stephen Nacco, President
- Dave Kietzmann, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services
- Dr. Penny McConnell, Dean of Liberal Arts and Library Sciences
- Stacy Ehmen, Dean of Student Services
- Carla Boyd, Director of Career Services
- Dr. Wendy Brown, Professor of Microbiology
- Phillip Langley, Lead Instructor of Developmental Education
- Cindy Peck, Director of Admissions and Records/Registrar
- Bob Mattson, Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Jessica Miles, Data Analyst
- Ashley Hargrove, Administrative Assistant for Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services
- Kerri Thurman, Administrative Assistant for President
- Stephane Potts, Director of Counseling and Transfer Articulation Coordinator

## Student Success Vision

- a) Briefly outline your institution's current student success vision. Note that this vision should be your ideal for how students will experience your college. It should include overarching, achievable goals that will act as key milestones as your college moves towards your student success vision.

*Suggested word count: 300-500 words*

Our student success vision at Danville Area Community College (DACC) centers on three main principles: 1) Students will be given information upfront concerning all services and processes needed to reach their individual educational goals, 2) Students will feel engaged in classes, welcome on campus and have at least one person on campus with whom they connect, and 3) Students will have an educational goal to strive for, an academic plan to keep them on track toward this goal, and an easy, accessible way to view their progress each semester until they reach their goal.



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### Student Success Vision (cont.)

To this end, the college has set retention, persistence, and completion goals to improve by 1% each year in each category over the next three years. To many schools, this would appear lofty, but considering the current track DACC is on, this is definitely attainable. Over the past four years, student retention of the overall student population has steadily increased, from 41.6% for students entering DACC in the Fall 2011 semester and returning in the Fall 2012 semester to 47.3% three years later. We hope to reach a fall-to-fall retention rate of 50% by the 2017-2018 semesters.

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. DACC 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 following 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 with persistence rates starting at 38% during the 2011-12 academic year and rising to 52% in the 2015-16 academic year. Part-time students have also seen growth, with persistence rates moving from 17% to 27% in the same time frame. Due to the marked gap between our full- and part-time students, the College initially created two goals last year in the area of persistence and strived to reach 48% persistence rates with full-time students and 25% persistence rates for part-time students within the next three years. Given our rapid growth this past year in this area, we will need to review our goals and adjust them as we see fit.

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 time with Achieving the Dream. When looking at all students, not just those new to the institution as requested through the ATD data template, while the Fall 2008 cohort saw 24.4% of students in this group attaining a credential within 4 years, the Fall 2011 cohort saw 33.7% of students meeting the same criteria. 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; however, 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 Fall 2014 student cohort.

- b) Briefly describe your systemic change priorities that help your institution achieve its student success vision. We recommend identifying 2-3 priorities. Each priority is likely comprised of multiple student success efforts that work together to achieve systemic change.

*Note: A student success effort is defined as a policy, practice, or procedure designed to reduce or eliminate barriers to students' progress and ultimate success in education and the labor market.*



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*Suggested word count: 300-500 words*

To meet our retention, persistence, and completion goals, the College is working on several student success efforts that will work together to achieve systemic change.

While our fall-to-fall retention rates have been steadily improving over the last several years, we know that to reach our retention goal of 50% by the 2017-18 academic year, we must work hard to engage every student we can at DACC. One way we are doing this is through a restructured initiative called "Operation Graduation."

In an effort to focus on moving the needle the greatest distance, President Nacco recommended that first-time, full-time fall students be tracked each semester to see if their progress is at least that of previous student cohorts. To get new fall students off on the right foot, the Counseling and Advisement office engages 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, but 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.

Seeing that the part-time students are not improving in terms of persistence at the rate of full-time students, the College is starting to add additional focus on these students through its Mandatory Advisement project. As part of Mandatory Advising, new, part-time students are now required to meet with an advisor to create an academic plan before their first semester at DACC.

Retention and persistence are just two parts of our overall student success agenda with completion being the ultimate goal. Through our "How Close Are You?" initiative, we found that several of our students leave DACC every year with the coursework completed for a degree or certificate but no credential officially attained. Operation Graduation also addresses this issue. Starting in the spring semester, student progress for this group is tracked by placing them into one of four categories: graduated, still enrolled, transferred or dropped out. A chart is shared, which compares the current cohort 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.





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Our Institutional Effectiveness office uses several data sources to measure progress on achieving our student success vision and has found that some data sources are better for our needs than others. We use National Student Clearinghouse to track what percentage of our students transfer in both our transfer majors as well as our CTE programs. Our state community college system data through the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is our main data source for our KPI student success data. Our Institutional Effectiveness office also uses it for Data and Characteristics to compare DACC with our peer colleges. When Illinois introduced performance-based funding, this information was also integral in the creation of our KPI measures. Performance-based funding is currently on hold, but we feel it is important to continue to track this information so we know where the College stands once this funding method is reinstated.

*As part of our research agreement with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), Achieving the Dream has access to your institution's NSC data and calculated outcomes. If you would like to share data from other sources, we encourage you to do so. There will be an opportunity to upload data at the end of the form.*

### Progress Update

Reflect with your group on your institution's progress with building capacity in each of seven critical areas that contribute to improving student success over the past academic year. Consider both the positive factors and the challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution. Note which areas will be priorities for further development in 2017-2018

### Leadership & Vision

*The commitment and collaboration of the institution's leadership with respect to student success and the clarity of the vision for desired change.*

Is this area part of your strategic plan?  Yes  No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?  Yes  No

### Progress

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

This past August, Dr. Alice Marie Jacobs retired from DACC after 17 years as our president. The College's involvement with Achieving the Dream started because of Dr. Jacobs's vision for a stronger focus on student success.



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With her retirement, one potential challenge the Leadership team faced was moving forward with our student success initiatives with a new president who may or may not be on board with ATD and its framework. Fortunately, Dr. Stephen Nacco came to the college with student success at the forefront of his mind and has done nothing but bolster the main principles of Achieving the Dream through his promotion of Operation Graduation, bonus courses, and our new partnership with the Danville Housing Authority.

Dr. Nacco has also put students and student activities at the forefront of the Board members' minds through his *DACC Flash* newsletters. These monthly additions to the Board meetings share articles about what is going on across campus from large-scale events such as the Faculty and Staff In-Service and the Welcome Back Bash to individual contributions such as the Middle College students decorating a tree in front of Vermilion Hall during the holiday season. Each edition of the *DACC Flash* is also posted on the DACC website and shared with all faculty and staff via e-mail. Through this medium, everyone on campus has a chance to see the great work DACC is doing to improve student engagement and success in a myriad of ways.

### Challenges

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

As with any transition, change is sometimes hard, and one idea that Dr. Nacco suggested, and our ATD coaches readily agreed upon, that has met some resistance is the need to break down silos and push a single student-success vision campus wide. The College currently has two employee-led entities on campus, Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and Achieving the Dream (ATD), which are comprised of several teams each centering on a specific aspect of the College. Under the CQI umbrella falls committees such as Employee Development, Campus Community, Diversity, and Student Support and Development. Several of these areas seemingly overlap with ATD sub-teams such as Diversity and Equity and Inclusion, but initial meetings about collapsing some CQI and ATD teams met with resistance. We did have two ATD sub-teams, First Year Experience and Progression and Completion, collapse into one to share a common purpose, but that is the only area where this occurred. When our ATD coaches visited in February, they agreed that our student success agenda should span across ATD, CQI, and any other committees or task forces on campus that involve students and meeting their educational goals. This will continue to be a work in progress for our campus but one that we will continue to strive for given how important it is for DACC to have one goal – student success.



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## Goals for 2017-2018 Academic Year [Optional]

Based on the analysis of your institution’s progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for leadership and vision. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

*Suggested word count: 150-300 words*

In an effort to connect all aspects of campus to our student success vision, the Leadership team would like to have a campus-wide World Café to share our current data and initiatives pertaining to student success. We are in contact with our ATD coaches to determine the best time of year to facilitate this event to achieve the highest impact. The ATD sub-teams are also working to meet and collaborate with similar CQI teams to see how each can help the other while still maintaining their own identities.

What resources, services, or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

Our ATD coaches have already offered to facilitate this event, and we are eager to have them do this so we can make sure we’re getting the most out of our time.

## Promising Practice

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes       No

**[IF YES]** Please describe the promising practice:

*Please include data that illustrates the success of this promising practice (data submission is voluntary, but encouraged). There will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the form. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status if appropriate to the intervention.*

## Data & Technology

*The institution’s capabilities to collect, access, analyze and use data to inform decisions, and to utilize and leverage technology to support student success.*

Is this area part of your strategic plan?  Yes    No



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Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?  Yes  No

### Progress

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

Our major initiative over the past year concerning data, technology and student success was the implementation of Ellucian Student Planner. This software is designed to help advisors and students build academic plans toward each student's specific program of study as well as show how changes to a student's schedule (such as withdrawing or failing a class) can drastically change future semesters. As a part of the Ellucian Self Service system, Student Planner provides a much more interactive experience for students as well as being mobile friendly and accessible 24/7. Advisors can also use the Student Planner system to record advising session notes and communicate with students about any changes the student may need throughout the registration process. Academic deans can also pull reports showing future courses needed based on student plans to better build upcoming semester schedules. This creates a more effective set of course offerings during uncertain economic times.

This past fall, those involved in Student Planner updated aspects of the Colleague system to better tie-in with the new technology while the advisors attended a multi-day training on how to best use the Student Planner software. A small pilot group started using Student Planner during the Spring 2017 registration period with a full roll-out starting with the Summer/Fall 2017 registration period. As part of our Mandatory Advisement Project for Higher Learning Commission, this system uses technology to create a stronger culture of advisement and helps students stay on track to reach their educational goals.



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## Challenges

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

Due to the state budget impasse, one challenge the College has faced over the last year is a decrease in office staff in our Institutional Effectiveness department. Already a small office, the IE department decreased from three employees to two employees when department positions were changed to fill other vacancies. Increasing data requests from various departments and teams on campus has stretched the IE office in terms of what they are able to accomplish as a two-person team. During the Coaches visit, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, also the ATD Data Team facilitator, spoke with our coaches about ways the Data Team could assist the IE office in reviewing and analyzing not only ATD data, but also data requested from other areas on campus. This has worked very well to ease some of the burden on that office as well as provide a diverse cross-section of the campus as a think tank for the College's data needs.

## Goals for 2017-2018 Academic Year [Optional]

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for data and technology. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

*Suggested word count: 150-300 words*

With all the Ellucian Student Planner has to offer, we would like to also purchase the Ellucian Student Self Service Financial Aid module to assist our students when applying and verifying their financial aid information. With roughly 80% of our students receiving some form of financial aid, this tool is the next logical step in our technology planning.

What resources, services or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

## Promising Practice

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes       No

**[IF YES]** Please describe the promising practice:



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*Please include data that illustrates the success of this promising practice (data submission is voluntary, but encouraged). There will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the form. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status if appropriate to the intervention.*

## Equity

*The commitment, capabilities, and experiences of an institution to equitably serve low-income students, students of color, and other at-risk student populations with respect to access, success, and campus climate.*

Is this area part of your strategic plan?  Yes  No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?  Yes  No

## Progress

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

One major focus of the ATD Equity and Inclusion sub-team has been introducing the *Framework for Understanding Poverty* curricula to the DACC campus and the Danville community as a whole. This past year, the sub-team determined that the on-campus *Investigations into Economic Class* course was not reaching the intended population, but the community *Getting Ahead* program was meeting a definite need within our Danville Housing system and needed more support.



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Since late December, DACC officials have met with Housing Authority leadership to address a long list of unmet educational needs for residents of the Fair Oaks complex and other facilities throughout Danville. The goal is to bring DACC services directly to the Housing Authority or else to bring residents to the College more conveniently. This past semester, our Vice President enlisted our Computer Network Director to install a 10-computer classroom in the Housing Authority headquarters that is dedicated to DACC's on-site classes such as GED and computer literacy. Another challenge was to accommodate residents who need classes on the DACC campus but face daunting transportation challenges. The Housing Authority stepped forward to provide a 15-seat minibus for DACC to use to shuttle Housing Authority residents. Our Vermilion County Works Executive Director enlisted federally funded job trainees as drivers. Beginning in the Spring 2017 semester, the first group of twelve GED students began shuttling between the Housing Authority and our campus. The shuttle also runs every hour to the Vermilion County Works Center where, through the GOALS program, they work with clients to establish success plans for personal and professional achievement. The DACC-Housing Authority union is a work in progress, but one that President Nacco thinks will continue to grow over the coming months and years.

One of the College's goals for equity last year centered on the need for student voices to be heard by faculty and staff through a student panel during one of our In-Service days. This past January, the Equity and Inclusion sub-team hosted a student panel with three students sharing their stories. Each one came from a slightly different background, but they all had to overcome obstacles to reach their educational goals, and hearing these stories really helped faculty and staff see why equity is a major focus at DACC. The panel was also very well received with 76% of survey responses saying they "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" that the "ATD Equity & Inclusion Student Panel" provided understanding of barriers to success that DACC students encounter.

### Challenges

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

Since DACC joined the ATD network in 2009, the Equity and Inclusion sub-team has worked to create interventions to close achievement gaps first between African-American students and white students then between PELL-eligible and non-PELL-eligible students. While these interventions positively impacted the students they reached, the numbers involved were always so low that overall progress could never be adequately connected to these initiatives. This year, the Equity and Inclusion sub-team decided to end the on-campus *Investigations into Economic Class* course due to low impact, but the team was at a loss as to their purpose as part of the student success agenda. When our ATD coaches came to visit us this past spring, the Equity and Inclusion team shared with them their frustration surrounding their uncertainty over their next steps, and Luzelma and Martha recommended the team see themselves less as a team that focuses on specific interventions and more on providing insight and expertise to the other ATD sub-teams and to the campus as a whole.



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Using this advice, the Equity and Inclusion sub-team has adopted a team mission statement to help keep their purpose at the forefront of their discussions and activities. The mission statement is as follows:

“The DACC Achieving the Dream Equity and Inclusion Team shall create a systematic approach to providing an equitable and inclusive environment for all students. The Team shall be a leveraging team for other groups to help interventions in terms of how to close achievement gaps and shall provide expertise to create professional development and training to move forward to a more equitable and inclusive environment at the College.”

The team also added to their meetings to include updates from other teams on campus, such as the Diversity team, the Student Experience team, the Teaching and Learning team, the Data team, and the Access, Equity, and Diversity team. This allows for collaboration between various teams and ensures that the concept of equity is always at the forefront of our student success agenda.

### Goals for 2017-2018 Academic Year [Optional]

Based on the analysis of your institution’s progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for equity. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

*Suggested word count: 150-300 words*

Our equity goals for the upcoming year center on expanding our work with the Danville Housing Authority to create more opportunities for those in our community who need access to college and community resources as well as promote equity through all aspects of our student success agenda. The Equity and Inclusion sub-team is also planning a poverty simulation to share at one of our Faculty and Staff In-Service meetings in an effort to continue promoting the idea of awareness and understanding of what some of our students deal with on a daily basis.

What resources, services or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?



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## Promising Practice

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes       No

**[IF YES]** Please describe the promising practice:

We believe our partnership with the Danville Housing Authority will generate very positive results for the students involved. Many of the students who have participated in the *Getting Ahead* program have continued their educational pursuits at DACC either through GED or college classes and gained a better understanding of the tools needed to move out of poverty into a better life for themselves and their families.

*Please include data that illustrates the success of this promising practice (data submission is voluntary, but encouraged). There will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the form. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status if appropriate to the intervention.*

## Teaching & Learning

*The variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic and non-academic supports strategies designed to facilitate student learning and success*

Is this area part of your strategic plan?  Yes     No

Did your college pursue any new or scaled strategies in this area during the past academic year?  Yes

No



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## Progress

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

While the College has not pursued any new or scaled strategies in this area during the past academic year, we have continued several initiatives that have proven to be successful in the past. Over the 2016-2017 academic year, the Teaching and Learning sub-team offered Teaching Excellence Academies during the Faculty and Staff In-Service days and Part-Time Faculty Academies covering several topics. These topics included:

August 18, 2016	Teaching Excellence Academy (61 of 65 = 94%) Creating a Classroom Culture that Encourages Student Engagement, Phillip Langley & Ryan Minier
August 18, 2016	Teaching Excellence Academy (61 of 65 = 94%) Scaling Up: Academic Integrity and Standards, Dr. Stefanie Davis & Stephanie Loveless
August 18, 2016	Part-time Faculty Academy (24 of 52 = 46%) Creating a Classroom Culture that Encourages Student Engagement, Phillip Langley & Ryan Minier
October 6, 2016	Part-time Faculty Academy (15 of 52 = 29%) DACC Strategic Planning & HLC Reaccreditation Updates, Dr. Stephen Nacco & Dr. Penny McConnell
October 7, 2016	Teaching Excellence Academy (62 of 65 = 95%) Blackboard Course Structure, Content, & Techniques to Encourage Student Engagement Dr. Chuck Hantz, Marcie Wright, & Nancy Allen
January 12, 2017	Teaching Excellence Academy (62 of 65 = 95%) Building Community in the Classroom, Jen Slavik & Dr. Phyllis Wille
January 12, 2017	Part-time Faculty Academy (18 of 52 = 35%) HLC Update - Mission Documents & Volunteers & Title IX Updates, Dr. Penny McConnell & Stacy Ehmen
April 1, 2017	Part-time Faculty Academy (11 of 66 = 17%) Updates at Danville Area Community College—Initiatives and Challenges, Dr. Stephen Nacco

As seen above, the Teaching Excellence Academy presentations for full-time faculty have a higher attendance rate than the Part-Time Faculty Academy presentations. Part-time faculty make up a large percentage of our teaching faculty, but, as is almost always the case, these faculty members also have other jobs that inhibit them from being able to attend the Part-Time Faculty Academy events throughout the year. The Teaching and Learning sub-team has discussed ways to increase part-time faculty engagement and will continue to work on this for the upcoming year.

## Challenges

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

In the area of teaching and learning, the faculty at DACC are working on really great things that are showing to have a positive impact on the students involved in those initiatives. The challenge we are facing with these initiatives is the fact that a lot of these initiatives are either having a hard time getting started or are not being scaled up to impact more students.



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Last year, the Math and Science and Developmental Education divisions started working on a math co-requisite option that would allow students to complete DEVM-100 and MATH 107 in the same semester. This pilot hit several road blocks, including students being reluctant to take 7 credit hours of math in one semester, and the classes were split into their regular courses prior to the start of the semester due to lack of enrollment in the co-requisite model. The divisions are going to look at the courses again and determine if there is a better way to set up the co-requisite system to eliminate some of the issues the original pilot revealed.

As reported last year, in the Fall 2015 semester, Dr. Wendy Brown from the Math/Science Division and Ryan Wycoff from the Liberal Arts Division collaborated on a learning community where students signed up for both BIOL 100 Life Science and SPCH 101 Oral Communication in a cohort. Wendy and Ryan created lesson plans that crossed subjects (for example, the students used information they learned in Life Science for their informative speeches in Speech) and utilized the same classroom in Lincoln Hall that had been updated to facilitate this contextualized learning style. Seventeen students enrolled in the Fall 2015 cohort and only two withdrew (an 88% completion rate).

This past Fall 2016 semester, Ryan and Wendy once again offered this learning community and had a 100% completion rate! Once they have a few cohorts of data, Wendy and Ryan plan on sharing their findings and experiences teaching in a learning community with other faculty on campus. Because of the high success rate of these students, it is the hope of the ATD Leadership Team that other faculty members will collaborate to offer additional learning community courses to our students in the near future.

### Goals for 2017-2018 Academic Year [Optional]

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for teaching and learning. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

*Suggested word count: 150-300 words*

One goal the Teaching and Learning sub-team has for the upcoming year is to better educate faculty on the services available to students across campus. With changes in faculty members over the last few years, some faculty are not aware of all of the resources the College has to offer or where exactly to send students if they have an issue. One way the Teaching and Learning sub-team is going to address this is by having a Student Services Expo at the Fall Faculty and Staff In-Service where various offices and services on campus will provide information about what they do and how students can best utilize their areas to be more successful on campus.



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A best practice the College is going to investigate over the next year is the switch to offering more 8-week courses. Studies have found that students have higher retention and course success rates when taking 8-week courses versus the traditional 16-week, semester-long, classes. While not all of our courses may fit best in this model, the Enrollment Management Team believes a large portion of our Career and Technical Education programs could move to this system with our Business Office Systems program already looking at making this change over the next year.

What resources, services or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

### Promising Practice

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes       No

**[IF YES]** Please describe the promising practice:

We feel our BIOL-100 and SPCH-101 learning community is a promising practice, but we would like to scale the intervention before sharing any results with other ATD schools.

*Please include data that illustrates the success of this promising practice (data submission is voluntary, but encouraged). There will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the form. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status if appropriate to the intervention.*

### Engagement & Communication

*The process of enabling key external stakeholders, such as K-12, universities, employers and community-based organizations, and internal stakeholders across the institution to participate in the student success agenda and improvement of student outcomes.*

Is this a high priority area for your institution?  Yes       No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?  Yes    No



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## Progress

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

One way DACC enables key external stakeholders to participate in the student success agenda and improvement of student outcomes is through our Middle College program. Middle College turns around the lives of high-school students who have the brains to succeed, but lack the will and persistence. The program rescues at-risk juniors and seniors who are on the verge of dropping out of high school. Led by the Director of Adult Education, the Middle College staff have served more than 180 students since the program began in 2013. With an average number of 45 in the program each year, these students complete nearly 750 credit hours annually. Almost 150 of the 180 that have been served students passed Middle College courses and achieved their personal goals, which ranged from earning a high-school equivalency to returning to their high school and graduating.

Another way we are working with external stakeholders to improve student outcomes is through the expansion of our 3+1 programs with partnering universities. This past fall, our Director of Counseling and Transfer Articulation worked with Franklin University to provide local and affordable bachelor's programs here in Danville through their online learning programs. What makes the 3+1 programs even better than our 2+2 programs is the ability for students to complete the first three years of their bachelor's degree requirements through DACC and only their final year through Franklin. This partnership means students can earn both an associate's degree and a bachelor's degree for under \$30,000. Currently, we have thirty-six 3+1 agreements with Franklin and hope to expand this in the future. Our nursing students are also able to earn credit toward their bachelor's degree while completing our associate's degree through a dual-enrollment program with Eastern Illinois University. This shortens the amount of time it takes for our nursing students to move from an ADN to a BSN and increases their opportunities after graduation.

## Challenges

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

Communication across campus continues to be a challenge when discussing the initiatives and progress of our student success agenda. This past spring, the ATD Leadership Team asked 100 faculty and staff members to complete the ICAT survey, and while we received a strong, positive response rate, the number of "I Don't Know" responses gave us pause.



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The main areas of uncertainty seemed to stem from a disconnect in understanding between what faculty and staff are doing in their respective areas.; questions concerning teaching and learning had higher "I Don't Know" response rates from staff, whereas questions concerning policies and procedures had higher "I Don't Know" response rates from faculty. To alleviate this issue, our August Data Brief will include a section responding to several of the areas where faculty and staff had questions. The Teaching and Learning team is also going to host an event during In-Service that will require faculty to learn more about each area of student services and the resources available to students on campus. These communication measures will hopefully help bridge the gap between different areas on campus and create a more cohesive understanding of the College's student success agenda as a whole.

### Goals for 2017-2018 Academic Year [Optional]

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for engagement and communication. What are some action steps your institution plans to take to achieve these goals?

*Suggested word count: 150-300 words*

Several ATD sub-teams are planning professional development events over the next year to increase communication and understanding about equity and our student success agenda overall. The Equity and Inclusion sub-team is looking at several poverty simulations to determine the most beneficial option for a presentation at one of our Faculty and Staff In-Service meetings, and, as stated above, the Teaching and Learning sub-team is conducting a Student Services Expo during the Fall Faculty and Staff In-Service to increase faculty understanding of the services and resources available to students. Both of these events will continue to keep our student success agenda in the forefront of everyone's minds.

What resources, services or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?



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## Promising Practice

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes       No

**[IF YES]** Please describe the promising practice:

Our Middle College program has shown a lot of success since its inception in both helping at-risk high school students complete their high school requirements as well as get them started on the right track toward a college education.

*Please include data that illustrates the success of this promising practice (data submission is voluntary, but encouraged). There will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the form. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status if appropriate to the intervention.*

## Strategy & Planning

*The alignment of the institution with the umbrella goal of student success and the institution's process for translating the desired future into defined goals and objectives and executing the actions to achieve them.*

Is this area part of your strategic plan?  Yes    No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?  Yes    No

## Progress

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

This past year, Dr. Nacco suggested a change in our current strategic plan and a move to a Strategic-Planning Matrix model. This document better shows how all upcoming campus goals and initiatives connect to four overarching areas 1) Student Learning, 2) Student Success, 3) Institutional Excellence, and 4) Organizational Advancement. During our October Faculty and Staff In-Service, departments were asked to go through the matrix and record how their offices and programs are contributing to the initiatives. From these contributions, departments created plans with goals and assessments to determine if what they were planning had met the intended goals. These "Closing the Loop" presentations are also being presented at monthly Expanded Administrative Council meetings to make each department accountable for their plans. With the College preparing for our Higher Learning Commission re-accreditation in 2019, this work is important to show how the College is committed to our student success work.



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## Challenges

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

The state budget impasse continues to be a challenge in terms of planning, because financial uncertainty can often lead to innovation paralysis. To combat this, our Vice President enlisted a group of 40 faculty and staff to meet this past fall to build an initial Revenue Enhancement Action Plan or REAP. After much discussion, the REAP group fashioned a draft with more than 30 strategies for boosting the College's revenue. President Nacco also invited the entire DACC community to share their ideas with the REAP group, which then winnowed out the best ideas and presented them to the larger community, including the Board of Trustees. Some strategies were implemented immediately while others will likely require long-term planning and will appear in the College's 2018 Strategic-Planning Matrix.

## Goals for 2017-2018 Academic Year [Optional]

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for strategy and planning. What are some action steps your institution plans to achieve these goals?

*Suggested word count: 150-300 words*

What resources, services or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

## Promising Practice

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes       No

**[IF YES]** Please describe the promising practice:



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*Please include data that illustrates the success of this promising practice (data submission is voluntary, but encouraged). There will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the form. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status if appropriate to the intervention.*

## **Policies & Practices**

*The institutional policies and practices that impact student success and the processes for examining and aligning policies and practices to remove barriers and foster student completion.*

Is this area part of your strategic plan?  Yes  No

Did your college pursue any strategies in this area during the past academic year?  Yes  No

## **Progress**

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

A prime example of how the College has changed policies and practices to remove barriers and foster student completion is through the addition of bonus classes. This past spring semester, DACC launched a pilot program to offer a free-of-charge “bonus class” for students who register for at least 12 credits for the spring semester. The program was our experiment to improve student progress by providing students with an incentive to add an extra class to their schedule, and thereby get to graduation more expeditiously. The project came as a result of collaboration among a number of College leaders, and for the pilot, the group identified eighteen courses to list as bonus course options. To notify students, the College launched email blasts, posted web site notifications, and posted signs throughout the campus. Students in the 2017 graduation cohort received personal telephone invitations to consider a bonus class. The list itself contained an eclectic range of choices from general education requirements, to transfer electives, to career courses for our CTE programs. The spring pilot ended with 29 students taking 67 credit hours and saving a total of \$6,540. This fall, we are offering 36 courses as bonus classes and hope to see a much larger number of students take advantage of this great program.



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Another way DACC is working to eliminate barriers to increase student success is through our Second Chance program. Last year, the College's Chief Financial Officer and Controller put together a team to create a way for students who owe past due balances to DACC to come back to school and have their debt to the college forgiven after successful completion of their intended degree or certificate within four years.. The need for a program like this came because DACC has more than 2,000 students who are unable to continue as DACC students because they have a balance owed on their accounts. Through an application process, students are able to share reasons for their past-due balance as well as their plans to pay for classes this time around and their goals for the future.

Last summer, the Business office sent letters to all students who had a balance that was over two years old letting them know about the Second Chance program and providing them with the application should they want to apply. Of these students, 16 applied and 9 were approved by the Second Chance Team. These students were assigned a mentor and given required steps to complete prior to being allowed to register for the fall semester such as completing the financial aid process to determine potential eligibility, meeting with Career Services to confirm their career choice, and meeting with their mentor to establish a plan for success for the upcoming semester. The program selection process was repeated in the fall, and 11 more students were approved to start classes in the spring semester. While this is the first year for the program and the number of students impacted is small, the Second Chance Team feels that this is a wonderful opportunity for students and will continue to offer this to those who need it in the upcoming year.

### Challenges

*Suggested maximum word count: 300 words*

With so many great ideas and initiatives currently running at DACC, one challenge that staff members are facing is a sense of initiative fatigue. Being a small campus, people have to take on multiple roles and responsibilities, and this can wear on people day in and day out. During the Coaches visit, one of the sub-teams discussed this, and Martha and Luzelma gave the good advice to have all teams review their initiatives and not be afraid to stop initiatives that are not working. The Equity and Inclusion sub-team has already decided to eliminate the on-campus *Investigations into Economic Class* course to better focus their energy, and other teams will complete this exercise over the next year.

### Goals for 2017-2018 Academic Year [Optional]

Based on the analysis of your institution's progress and challenges over the past year in this area, identify one or two goals for the coming academic year for policies and practices. What are some action steps your institution plans to achieve these goals?



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*Suggested word count: 150-300 words*

As part of our student success agenda, the College continues to review policies and procedures to determine if any current practices are creating unnecessary road block for our students. The Student Experience Team is especially focused on this effort as it pertains to student retention and persistence, because this seems to be where we lose students the most. If we can keep our students after their first year through the completion of their program, we will see retention, persistence, and completion rates all increase.

What resources, services or assistance can Achieving the Dream provide to assist you in reaching these goals?

## Promising Practice

Does your institution have a promising practice in this area that other Achieving the Dream institutions would benefit from?

Yes       No

**[IF YES]** Please describe the promising practice:

We do not have data yet on the Second Chance program, but we will continue to monitor these students to determine if this initiative is having its desired effect.

*Please include data that illustrates the success of this promising practice (data submission is voluntary, but encouraged). There will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the form. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status if appropriate to the intervention.*



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# 2017 Leader College Application Worksheet

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*For more information or questions about the Leader College application, please contact [programandpolicy@achievingthedream.org](mailto:programandpolicy@achievingthedream.org)*

## **Selection & Review:**

Each application for Leader College status will go through a blind-selection process and will be reviewed by a panel of experts both internal and external to Achieving the Dream.

Applications will be assessed on their ability to provide the following:

1. Evidence of growth or an upward trend for the metric your institution selected over the course of the last four years
2. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence to support the institution's success
3. A clear link between the impact of the specific actions the college has taken and the success the institution has experienced.

*Note: Colleges do not earn Leader College status solely because they have exhibited growth over a period of time. Successful applications will incorporate each of the items above – all of which are considered as a whole to determine if a college has earned leader college status.*

Institutions applying for initial Leader College certification must show an upward multi-year trend on one or more measures.

## **Section I**

### **Student Success Measure**

Of the measures below, please select one or more measures for which you would like your institution to be considered for Leader College status. Definitions for the measures are provided in Appendix A of this document.

- Completed college-level English and/or math in year one
- Persisted from term one to term two; or year one to year two
- Completed a certificate or degree within three years or four years
- National metric

## Data Analysis

Describe the outcomes of the measure your institution has selected to be considered for Leader College status. This could be for the overall student population or for a specific target population (e.g., African American men, Latina women, Pell recipient, etc.) during any four year window within recent academic years. For instance, if you are reporting term one to term two persistence you may include data from 2013-14 to 2016-17. If you are reporting three year credential attainment, you may include data from 2010-11 to 2013-14.

Evidence should include both quantitative and qualitative measures, and also include, at a minimum, metrics for the target population that shows improvement that can be reasonably explained by reform efforts including intervention(s), implementation of best practices and process redesign.

To demonstrate the impact of the interventions and the improvements achieved, data for periods before, during and after the implementation of the initiative(s)/ program(s) should be provided.

Colleges are encouraged to submit data from peer institutions or national data as points of comparisons. If the initiative(s) or program(s) targets a subset of students at the institution, also provide parallel metrics for all students at your institution.

In addition to the required data template, we encourage all institutions to include in an appendix any additional charts and figures that can support the explanation of their success in this section.

## Section II

In this section, describe the initiative(s), reform(s) or programs(s), which contributed to your institution's improvement in the measure selected during any four year window within recent academic years. Please include the following information:

- Outline the future goals and objectives of the initiative(s)/program(s).
- What was the biggest challenge in implementing the initiative(s)/reforms/program(s), and how was the challenge overcome or mitigated?
- Do you believe the program(s)/reforms/initiative(s) can be successfully replicated or transferred to other institutions? Why or why not?
- What are the most important considerations for an institution wanting to replicate the initiative(s)/reforms/program(s)?



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### Section III

Please provide a letter of endorsement from your institution's President/Chancellor that further explains why your institution should receive Leader College status.

# APPENDIX A

## Student Success Measures & Definitions

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### General Student Success Data Specifications

Achieving the Dream requires:

- That each institution analyze **at least four years of disaggregated data** for its student success measure.
- That **data be disaggregated on at least three levels:**
  - Ethnicity/race
  - Gender
  - Income status (Pell recipient status)

### Analyzing Your Data

Achieving the Dream has developed the **Achieving the Dream Data Template** to assist institutions with tracking student success data and presenting results.

The **Achieving the Dream Data Template** is a part of the Leader College application and annual reflection and can be found in Appendix B of this document.

### Defining the Cohort

The Achieving the Dream Cohort may be defined in one of two ways: (1) certificate- or degree-seeking students **new** to your institution in the fall term, including full-time and part-time students; or (2) certificate- or degree-seeking **first-time-ever-in-college students** attending your college in the fall, including full-time and part-time students.

### Measure 1: Completed college-level English and/or math in year one

Number and percentage of students successfully completing (grade C- or better) gateway courses within one year,

Institution may report gateway course completion in one of three ways:

- (1) Math
- (2) English
- (3) Math and English



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### **Measure 2: Persistence of cohort from term one to term two or year one to year two**

Number and percentage of students persisting from year one to year two (fall-to-fall) or term one to term two (fall-spring).

### **Measure 3: Credential attainment**

Number and percentage of students attaining a degree or certificate within three years or four years

### **Measure 4: National measure**

Metric from national data system that provides evidence of institutional success such as credit accumulation, transfer with baccalaureate degree or transition to labor market.

This measure is subject to the same guidelines as the other four measures (disaggregated on three levels, four years of data, etc.). National data sources include:

- Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence
- IPEDS
- National Community College Benchmarking Project
- National Student Clearinghouse
- Pathways Project (AACC)
- Predictive Analytics Reporting Framework
- Student Achievement Measure
- Voluntary Framework of Accountability



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## **APPENDIX B**

# Data Template Example

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### **Downloading Data Template**

Click [here](#) to download Achieving the Dream Data Template. Please see a preview of the template on the next page.



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## Preview of Data Template



### 2017 Annual Reflection & Leader College Application - Sample Community College

#### Data Selections

Enter in the appropriate values in the boxes below. Each yellow box needs to be filled in or you will be unable to enter numbers into any of the tables. These values will then auto-fill throughout the rest of this workbook.

Institution Name	Sample Community College
Cohort Type	- Select One -
<b>Metrics</b>	
Gateway course completion choice	- Select One -
Credential attainment choice	- Select One -
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
Largest race/ethnicity group	- Select One -
Second-largest race/ethnicity group	- Select One -
Third-largest race/ethnicity group	- Select One -

#### Metric Definitions

##### Cohort Type

**New to Institution:** All students who entered your institution for the first time in the given fall term. This includes both full-time and part-time statuses; students can be certificate-seeking or degree-seeking.

**First-Time-Ever-in-College:** All students who are both new to your institution (see above definition) AND have no prior postsecondary enrollment.

##### Metrics

**Gateway course completion:** Number and percentage of students in the given cohort successfully completing gateway courses within one year with a grade of **C- or better**.

- Courses should be non-remedial in nature.

**Persistence:** Number and percentage of students in the given cohort persisting from term one to term two (fall-to-spring) or from year one to year two (fall-to-fall).

- Students need to be enrolled in at least one credit-bearing course.

**Credential Attainment:** Number and percentage of students in the given cohort attaining a degree (associate/baccalaureate) or certificate from your institution within either three years or four years.

- Please note that these cohorts will be "earlier" than the ones used for other metrics, since you are examining a metric that occurs three or four years forward.

##### Demographics

**General Instruction:** All students will be accounted for in the "Overall" category. Some students are not expected to be represented in the subgroups (e.g., student does not have a known value for gender).

**Race/ethnicity group:** When selecting the largest, second-largest, and third-largest race/ethnicity groups, please refer to the size of your most recent Fall cohort to assist with your choice.