

OHIO FOCUS GROUP REPORT

2022



Soaring to New Heights





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CCCSE gratefully acknowledges the Ohio Association of Community Colleges and its Success Center for Ohio Community Colleges as well as Jobs for the Future for funding this focus group project exploring themes related to the community college student experience.

We would also like to thank the six Ohio community colleges that allowed us to conduct multiple focus groups with their students/alumni and faculty/staff in April and September 2022. Without these voices, we would not be able to demonstrate how community college students in Ohio are experiencing career advising, transfer advising, equity, and classroom engagement.

Finally, we thank the students who shared their stories of purpose and perseverance with us. This report is dedicated to them.

CCCSE is a service and research initiative in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy in the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin. By delivering “aha” moments about the student experience based on insights that matter, CCCSE assists institutions and policymakers in using information to promote improvements in student learning, persistence, and attainment.

The findings and conclusions contained within are those of CCCSE and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges or Jobs for the Future.

CONTENTS

The Focus Groups.....	1
Starting With the End in Mind.....	2
Topic #1: Career Advising	2
Topic #2: Transfer Advising	6
Topic #3: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.....	9
Topic #4: Classroom Engagement.....	16
Topic #5: Sense of Belonging.....	21
Topic #6: Favorite Teaching Moments.....	22
CCCSE Resources.....	23

© 2022 Permission granted for unlimited copying with appropriate citation.

Please cite this report as follows: CCCSE. (2022). *Ohio focus group report: Soaring to new heights*. https://cccse.org/sites/default/files/OH_focus_groups.pdf.



THE FOCUS GROUPS

For 20 years, the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) has delivered “aha” moments about the student experience and assisted institutions and policymakers in using information to promote improvements in student learning, persistence, and attainment. One of the ways CCCSE shares these aha moments is through the student voice as captured during focus group interviews.

As an enhancement to the Transformation Enablers Pilot – Pathways Providers Project, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ohio Association of Community Colleges and its Success Center for Ohio Community Colleges invited CCCSE in early 2022 to conduct focus groups with students, faculty, and staff at six Ohio community colleges to explore equity, classroom engagement, and career and transfer guidance. Each of the six participating colleges received a report based upon the themes that emerged from the focus group conversations and a set of focus group video clips.

Through the six focus group visits, CCCSE spoke with 107 students* and 42 faculty/staff.

To feature the voices of the focus group participants and to showcase the breadth of the discussions, select quotes have been included in this report. Text in italics represents these quotes. Some of the quotes were edited for clarity and conciseness or to remove extraneous information that did not contribute to the meaning of what was said.

Spring 2022

April 25 — Cuyahoga Community College
April 26 — Northwest State Community College
April 27 — Owens Community College

Fall 2022

September 6 — Central Ohio Technical College
September 7 — Lorain County Community College
September 8 — Zane State College

* Two of the students in the focus groups were alumni. Because these students participated in the student focus group sessions and reflected upon their experiences as students, their comments are included with the student feedback in this report.

STARTING WITH THE END IN MIND

CCCSE was one of the original seven partners of the AACCC Guided Pathways Project that launched in 2015. The basic tenet of the [Guided Pathways Framework](#)—an integrated framework that supports institutional transformation with student success at the center, based upon a structured experience with the overarching goal of closing equity gaps—is for the community college student experience to begin with the end in mind (career or transfer).

As community colleges across Ohio continue to scale pathways with the support of the Success Center, the need to hear, learn, and build from the voices of students is critically important. Research suggests that hearing how students perceive their experiences (positive and negative) can allow institutions to reevaluate their approaches and assumptions about what is working (or not) on their campuses and develop strategic plans that respond to this information. **Ohio is proudly called the Birthplace of Aviation, and information contained within this report can be used to assist community colleges in helping their students start with the end in mind—and in doing so, soar to new heights.**

TOPIC #1: CAREER ADVISING

To help students get on a path, the [Guided Pathways Framework](#) advises colleges to require supports to help students get the best start to their journey, including academic planning based on career/transfer exploration and integrated academic support for passing program gateway courses.

Many of the Ohio community college students shared that the career advising opportunities at their college focused on resume building, interview training, job postings, career fairs, job shadowing, internships, and so on. Some students shared that career services personnel visited their class sessions to provide more information about the types of career services they provide. Several students also described the colleges' career services as a lifelong benefit, in that they are able to use the colleges' career services as alumni.

This college, by far, has offered the most services I've ever seen for career guidance and help, ranging from resume helping; courses on public speaking; pitch meetings; the Pizza with Professionals, where you meet the professionals and you just get to have one on one, informal communications. All of that is just vital, along with employers will actually come to this college seeking individuals in order to find the people that they want because this college actually does produce people who know what they're doing, and it's shown numerous times. A lot of professionals that I've met would rather hire a student from here than a person who may have four years' experience because they know that they're good and they can be molded to what's needed.

WEBSITE

Some of the students shared how they selected their majors based on the information they found on the colleges' websites.

I found mine online. It was actually at 12:00 a.m. It was very late at night. I was going through the different options that they have here. I found marketing. I thought that I would like to do it. ... I'm satisfied with the major I've selected. I really like it a lot.

Several students praised their colleges for the career information provided on their websites, especially as it relates to careers.

What the college did do was amazing because when I go to this college's website, it tells me everything I need to know. It tells me the course outcomes, the course objectives. It tells me if this program also places you in a clinical to get real-world job experience. It tells you what it could be transferred into. The college's website is the best designed website I've ever seen.

When I was just looking around on our website, I saw that ... you could pick the job that you were interested in, and then there were videos of people in the field, and they answered some frequently asked questions. ... I watched that video, and I got to see what [the] job entails and the daily routine. Even though it was just online, it was a good way for me to see what my future will probably hold and what my day to day will look like.

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

College employees shared how their colleges integrate careers and start with the end in mind for first-time-in-college students during the onboarding process.

We start talking with students about careers early on while they're here. Within the first 15 hours, most students will take a career readiness course that we call a first-year experience course that exposes them to careers within [their major/program].

In the first-year experience course ... they have to do this assignment where they have to go meet with a counselor, and they have to complete their academic plan. The college wants every student who comes to the college to have an academic plan. ... We have an assignment where it's part of career planning, and it's called the My Plan. It's a series of assessments, and they have to do four assessments. ... We teach them to advocate for themselves, teach them to research out what it is that they want to do, and everyone steps in to work. We hand off the student to the transfer center, or the transfer center hands them off to the counseling center. We all work together to make sure that they graduate, and they graduate with something that they want to do.



Helping students pursue a career with a living wage is key in guided pathways. A student shared how an advisor guided them to identify which degree to pursue based on comparing salary differences.

The course advisor showed me the salary difference between somebody who graduates with an ASN and somebody who graduates with a BSN, and the margin was not too much. I'm like, "But the margin wasn't too much, so why can't I just have the ASN in three years and then go off to work?" He was like, "Okay. Yes, the salary is not too much because that was at an entry level. The more you get experience in the field ... you can now see the difference." Then we looked at it, and by the time you are in such a field for about three years, there is a wide gap. ... I really appreciated that because at least that gave me a broader view.

INSTRUCTORS

Many students shared how instructors discussed career planning with them.

My professors have been more helpful with careers. My social work teacher has actually got me in touch with a social work agency that I have job shadowed a few times just to make sure it's something that I actually want to get involved in.



One of the professors, actually . . . we used this specific website, and we had to at least have our top five careers that we were interested in, so we had to go actually in depth with getting information from your very first choice to your very last choice. When we actually did that as a project . . . it was interesting to get to know more information regarding those jobs.

Actually, we did mock interviews, which were required by our instructor. It was really good because, otherwise, I probably wouldn't have done it if it wasn't required, but once we went through it, it was an amazing experience. It really let us know what the employers were looking for and what type of questions were being asked, so it was a really good experience. . . . There was a bunch of faculty members, and they did the interviews for each student. Each student got to interview two times, and then our grade was combined with that. They gave a lot of feedback with the mock interviews.

Most professors are willing to help students figure out where they want to go and what they want to do with their lives after college. I specifically have spoken to a professor in the psychology department that specializes with helping students figure out what they want to do once they're done with college. . . . They were a huge help for me to try and figure out exactly which path I wanted to take because, with psychology, there's so many different paths.

Staff shared how instrumental faculty are in guiding students to a career path.

It was a faculty member that helped me go in the direction that I went as far as my degree when I came to this institution.

Our faculty play a big part, even if they don't always notice it, in helping students pick a trajectory or direction.

INTERNSHIPS

Many community college students shared that they were looking forward to their upcoming internships.

Taking advantage of those summer intern programs [is] pretty helpful. . . . Hopefully I'll be able to get an internship with them this summer and also maybe have a permanent job with them after my internship.

My advisor actually got me in contact with one of the people that reach out for internships. . . . Next semester, I actually plan on having a paid internship.

For one of my classes, it's based on career development and being a manager . . . so we do an internship with whatever restaurant we want to do. The manager actually grades you for your teamwork, how you help out, being a leader, and just your overall performance of being at that job. I think it really does help you see overall how you are as a team member and as a worker for other people around you, but also as an evaluation for yourself so you can see in the future, if this is something that you actually want to do, you can see what you need to work on in the future.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

There were several students who explained that while they were aware of career services at the college, they hadn't yet used the resources or they used alternate resources.

I haven't used too many career services here, but I did talk to my advisor, and he has told me about internships that are available for my program, or where I can find them online in our index. Then I have seen flyers around for resume-building or job fairs.

I haven't used any career services yet, but I am very satisfied with how the nursing program really emails us a lot with different opportunities that are available.

I haven't really used many resources. I have seen the flyers around if I do need to reach out.

I haven't used any yet. I know, at least for the education side of things, we have an entire Blackboard classroom that's set up, and they constantly post new job listings; they post summer jobs for when we're not in class . . . , so that is also super helpful. On top of that, I also know that they provide career services for the rest of your life if you graduate from here because my partner uses them, and he graduated from here.

The college has a career service specialist. She sends out new job postings. I know that she also helps students with resumes and cover letters. I haven't utilized her services.

On the other hand, a student majoring in a computer field shared that they have not received much information about career services.

Have they talked to us about career services? Unlike the nursing program, we don't get that. . . . We don't get anyone to come and talk to us about career choices. We don't talk about it. We just go to class, do the chapter for that week, and then that's about it. . . . Hearing other classes like the nursing programs and all that they have basically on a weekly basis, I envy that. I wish we had that.

“ Next semester, I actually plan on having a paid internship while I'm working, which is nice because most people don't get paid internships at anywhere. ”

— Student



TOPIC #2: TRANSFER ADVISING

It is essential for community college students to be able to know how they are moving along their pathway, especially if that pathway includes transferring to a four-year university. It is equally important that students know which credits will transfer toward their intended program or major at the four-year institution. Students talked about transfer opportunities in the context of both College Credit Plus (CCP) dual credit courses and university partnerships. When discussing transfer, students mentioned their colleges hosting transfer fairs and using a website called Transferology to check on which courses would transfer from their community college to different universities. Faculty and staff spoke about Ohio having a robust transfer system and how their colleges are constantly expanding their reach with articulation agreements.

The majority of the focus group students who plan to transfer to earn a bachelor's degree explained that they felt confident that their community college credits would transfer to a four-year university.

The first time that you enroll into classes, you have to meet with an academic counselor that is going to guide you in choosing your major and choosing your classes. They help you build an academic plan, the courses that you're going to take throughout time here at the community college. That was the first time that I told them what my intentions were, that I wanted to transfer into a four year college into business, and they helped me figure out the classes that I needed to take to transfer these credits.

I've talked to my advisor several times about transferring. We have worked out a plan that I have knowledge of all the classes I need for my major that will be accepted at the secondary college. ... Yes, I'm very satisfied. It's a partnership, so this college works with the next college to make sure that students have what they need and what credits they need.

Part of the reason why I picked the community college was on the basis that, when it came time to go to a future degree, most of the work that I'd already put in would be transferrable. That was part of the package of enrolling in a community college.

My advisor, when I talked to him about transferring, he was very helpful with that. I actually didn't know the contact information for the other advisor at the university that I was going to, so he actually set me up an appointment. When I talked to the other advisor, he said that all the credits I take here will transfer, which was really nice, so I won't have to restart anything or double take any classes. The whole time, he walked me through what I needed to do, how long it would take for the process to happen, and what it would be like once I transferred, which was nice because, in situations like that, it's very stressful, especially if you don't have the right resources.

I'm very confident that the credits that I take here will transfer. There is actually a website where you can put in all the different classes that you've taken here. It'll tell you, based on the colleges in the state or out of state ... what percentage of those classes will transfer to that college.

It is a very comforting feeling that my classes will transfer. That way, I know I'm not wasting any time, I'm not wasting money, and I know that, once I transfer, I won't have to retake classes.





Staff members also commented about the efficiency of the transfer advising process at their colleges.

About five years ago our college adopted a Pathways curriculum model. ... For the most part, I think almost all courses that we offer here are courses that will meet a transfer guideline for the state of Ohio, as least as far as general education. We've made efforts to limit students' choices to increase the chances of having a successful transfer to another institution that's financially as efficient as possible.

With the [university] partnership, I don't have the exact figures off the top of my head, but students can save an incredible amount of money.

While most students described a positive experience, several focus group participants who plan to transfer to a four-year university to earn a bachelor's degree described having multiple advisors and experiencing some hiccups with transfer advising.

I've had many conversations regarding transferring only because I also have had many advisors. ... Then just between the many advisors I've had, I remember certain things and just did it on my own, honestly, with the school that I want to go to. It's been rough, but overall, now I'm in a spot where I know exactly what I need to take so it can transfer. ... There are about six courses that I've taken that will not transfer to the university that I want to go to. ... I felt mad. I was annoyed, and I felt like they were just treating me like a number. I feel like [at] a community college, since it is smaller, at least this one is smaller, that I would have more—a better relationship with my advisor, but if they're constantly switching and changing, it's like, I've learned to be independent and go to the college website and look and see exactly what I need and then use—I think it's called Transferology—to see what will transfer between the two universities or the college and university.

Other students shared that they have not had frequent communication with someone at the college regarding transfer.

Yeah, I do plan on transferring eventually, but I haven't really had any conversations with anybody about transferring yet. I figure I'll do that further down the line, once it gets closer to it.

Before I came to this community college, my advisor and I spoke about transferring to a different college later on—once I got into my program, but we have not talked about that yet.

Another student spoke about an issue with their dual enrollment courses, which might not transfer to the university they are going to attend.

With transferring, I've had a little bit of a bumpy road because I did take college classes in high school, so making sure that they transfer here and then to the next university has been a little tricky. Right now, I'm actually working a thing with the board, trying to get credit for a class I took in high school. My advisor told me yesterday that she wasn't sure that all of my courses would fully transfer to my university, which is a little nerve wracking because I do pay for college all on my own. ... It felt like a gut drop kind of moment. I called my old boss five minutes after and was like, "Hey, can I get my job back?" Right now, I work three jobs in the summer to pay for college alone, so putting another one might be a little tricky, but I'll figure it out.

Another student talked about the challenges they experienced with reverse transfer.

I transferred obviously from somewhere else to here. The process was a little bit difficult because I was new to college. I didn't know the steps to take. College is a new thing in my family; they didn't know how to help me. My advisor at the time was just a fill-in advisor—that's not what her profession was—while they were looking for a permanent advisor, so she was even a little bit lost. I guess that's something that I would have changed. Actually, when you're transferring from a university to a community college, nothing transferred besides one class, so I had to start over.

“ I really love diving into transfer and doing things like that because it's almost like a puzzle that you get to put together. ... Transfer is very different depending on the student, so it takes a very holistic approach, and a very individualized approach for each student. ”

— Staff member



TOPIC #3: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

A challenge that community colleges nationwide continue to face is how to strengthen the education they provide in ways that lead to increased college completion and equity in student outcomes.

CAMPUS DIVERSITY

Many students agreed that they experienced adequate diversity at their colleges.

I think I was surprised, actually, as far as the wide range of the diversity and the students that I was in class with just for the fact that we are a small community, a small college to begin with, but I've met people from all parts of the world, almost every religion, almost every race. ... The professors were always really supportive about asking us all to participate and sharing from our hometown, our cultures, our lives to see how we all fit in and how we all interact.

When it comes to race and diversity, I do believe that there is a lot of diversity and different races in the community as well as in the college and the faculty. ... It's very equal when it comes to this college.

As a student worker is when I've noticed the college's stress and importance about diversity. I notice that we always want to make sure that everyone does feel included. This year we've been talking about ways, for example, to make restrooms more inclusive, and is that something that we need to change because we're getting more diversity now in the college.

We accept everyone. As our president would say, everybody's dream matters, and she's right. We do believe that 100 percent, and we are just so proud of this college because we are very diverse. Very diverse.



A Black student observed that racial diversity is not very common where they attend college.

Diversity in rural Ohio—I think that it's a very ironic question because it's not something you can necessarily control, as far as the school goes. The school can't go and tell the community, "Hey, you need to have more diverse people living in your community so they can come to the school." The school can only get what is already in the community. ... I think I've only had one class in the five years I've been here that had another person of the same skin color. ... That's just the way it is, and I don't take it personally.

An international student shared that they see diversity in the students but would like to see more diversity in college employees.

The day after orientation meeting, I was actually surprised to see that the room was like a rainbow class. You could see people Asian and African. It was a diverse class, that meeting that day. That really make me feel great because it always feels good when you see somebody looking like you. You think, "Oh, no, when I get there, I will probably be the only one looking like this," but when you get there, you're just shocked, and you see, "Oh, I'm not just the only one. I can talk to that person. I can probably relate to that person." As to the staff, I haven't seen diversity in the staff so far. I haven't seen that. I'd love to see a little bit more of that because you want to talk to somebody, but you want to go to somebody who probably looks like you because you think, you understand better. ... So far, my instructors, they haven't made me feel different so far, but I would love to see more diversity in the staff.



STUDENTS' LIVED EXPERIENCES

Some students opened up about their lived experiences around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Most importantly, with being Black minority, you got to work 10 times harder than anybody in your classroom because you got to make sure your paperwork is on time. You got to make sure that you say every word with pronunciation. You got to make sure that you get your work in the order, in the decent time that the professor asks you to. Most importantly, your grades is a struggle because, sometimes, you got stuff going on at your house. Not only that, I'm glad that they have people who can interact with Black people, understand that most Black minorities are ... pretty much first generation going to college.

I thought I was too old to come for it. I was 31. That I wasn't really going to fit in. When I first came here on campus and I seen the vast different people, diversities and everything and different backgrounds, it really was an eye opener for me because I was like, "Everybody's got a chance."

I definitely feel like I belong at the community college I'm in. With context, I live in a 96 percent African American community, traditionally. That's by design. I bought a house there. That's my comfort zone. ... Up until recently, rooms full of White people make me feel nervous. I don't know if that gives you any context or understanding, but if I have the opportunity to avoid a room full of White people, I probably will because I don't see where any decision in that room is going to be made to my benefit.

As far as I've seen, everyone's very tolerant. No one has singled out anybody because of their beliefs or what they are, emotionally, or any mental illness or anything. It's as diverse as Ohio gets. We are subject to the fact of location. For what I've seen, lots of people from all over Ohio come to the college regardless of where they're located at just because of how kind and loving the faculty is here. When I actually started college, I was actually in a polyamorous relationship with two other people. One of the projects that I did was I had to do an interview about myself. I included that in my interview. When I did my interview, no one said anything. No one pointed at me and laughed and said, "Oh, you're a weirdo. You're in a three-way relationship." In fact, I was actually applauded by my instructor saying, "Hey, you were very courageous for discussing this in front of all of your classmates because not everyone is so openly minded." Definitely, the faculty are encouraging people for their own identity.



Faculty and staff spoke about the colleges' focus on DEI and how equity is one of the cornerstones of the colleges' strategic plans. Several faculty members discussed how they seek out diversity in the content they provide to their students—specifically including people of diverse backgrounds in the video clips that are shown, textbooks that are adopted, and speakers who are invited, as well as changing names in case studies and/or role playing activities to be more diverse and inclusive.

A faculty member shared an aha moment in a cultural diversity class.

I think some of the most important moments that people have is in the topic about weight and appearance because they feel really comfortable saying that they don't discriminate and they don't have biases against people in other areas, but in that one, a lot of people are shocked to realize that they do have those sorts of biases in weight and appearance. Sometimes it's tattoos. Sometimes it's earrings. Sometimes it's older people who wear high-waisted pants. I think that one really gets to students and they're like, "Okay. We're not just talking about nationality. We're talking about all sorts of diversity."

Students talked about organizations on campus that have helped them feel more comfortable.

When I attend this college, I feel most comfortable in the BSE, the Black Student Engagement, because it's more of my culture, basically. . . . We learn more of our history. We engage with each other. . . . For example, when I came in pregnant, they were very comfortable, open to me, everything, offered a lot of things, like offered a lot of programs to help with childcare, help with food, coming back home, extra money in the hands, everything. . . . I do have a tighter connection just because most of them are women, and they can relate to most of my problems that's been happening.

We have something called Black Student Union. Sometimes, we will have lunches, or they'll have meetings, or a new book by a Black author came out. It's just basically getting together as young adults and as Black people or African Americans and just appreciating each other and getting to know one another in this race and just basically coming together as a whole and as a community college of that one race. I think it's very appreciated. I'm saddened that I learned about it this semester since it's my last semester, but it's a wonderful thing to have at this community college.

PARTICIPATION IN TRIO

Students discussed some of the academic student supports that the colleges offer. Many students shared how their colleges' TRIO programs have had a tremendous impact on their college education.

I found out about TRIO through the First Gen initiative they had. There were hashtags all over that said, "First Gen" or "I am First Gen." Basically, what that means is teachers filled out if they had had anyone before them attend college, they put, "I am First Gen," and they all wore pins. . . . I was immediately welcomed and embraced. I said, "Hey, I'm really struggling. My parents didn't go to college. I don't know anyone who went to college." Just for them to walk alongside me and say, "Hey, we're First Gen, too. Hold on. We've been through college. We get where you're struggling. We're going to help you." They introduced me to a lot of other classmates and peers who are first generation and also involved in TRIO, and that just opened up the doors for me to feel like I did belong at college, and this is how I'm going to get through it. . . . TRIO has impacted me tremendously. They have driven me to tour other college campuses two hours away as I was talking about transferring. They've helped me find financial assistance. They've helped me academically. I think it was a game changer for my college experience.

My academic advisor actually told me about it. I'm a mom and a student, so she thought it would be a really, really good choice for me to enroll in TRIO. They offer free tutoring and stuff, which is really nice because I don't always have the extra cash to pay for tutoring.

The best organization I can say that I have taken advantage of was TRIO. They have helped in a lot of different ways. I recently went through, basically, almost homelessness. I struggled with finding resources in my local community. They literally printed me a paper off with every local community and every charity that could help me in those situations. They also helped me with tutoring in different classes that I really just struggled with. Even if I just need to talk about something that I'm just having a hard time with, I can walk in there any time and say, "Hey, is someone available?"

TRIO really cares about the students, and they really care about me, I feel like, whenever I walk in. I also used resources like the market and the clothing closet that we have at our college. Basically, those are a free food stock for students that are really struggling to help them get groceries. Our closet is for people that need interview clothes or new shoes. Both of those resources have just really been incredibly helpful on my journey.

I'm the first one in my family to go to college. I didn't know how to process with financial aid, how to schedule classes, where to go, what to do. When I got registered in TRIO, they made it a lot more streamlined. It's much easier. You can go in there and talk to them about questions you have. They always answer it.

I found [TRIO] beneficial to myself especially in the last week. I have been going through a difficult time the last week with some issues at home. . . . I was about to drop out, and the TRIO program helped me sort things out this morning to the point where I can stay in college. They taught me a way to handle the stress of the schoolwork. They helped me contact the instructors and explain to them what's going on so that they understood what's going on instead of just dropping everything. They help in more than just academic ways.



DEI ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Students provided examples of how their favorite courses were intentionally designed to be inclusive.



My favorite course so far is the Individual in the Cosmos. ... It is so interesting because it's about myths and religions from all over the world. I particularly enjoyed it with the instructor I had because he made sure—even though he had a syllabus already, he made sure to include things that embraced cultures for other people whose cultures were not already contained in the syllabus. For instance, I'm from Nigeria, and he went out of his way to look for myths from Nigeria. We discussed it. He gave me an opportunity to educate the class on some of the hidden facts they might not know about, or to explain some parts of the myths that might be kind of foreign to them. That was very good, just to be seen and to be included, even when it was not originally the plan. ... It has broadened my horizon because I have learned from so many cultures. I've had the opportunity to take classes that ordinarily I wouldn't have thought about taking. It just broadens your knowledge base and your ability to empathize and accept people from other cultures. You're just more open to people. That is very important in nursing, because you have to be a culturally competent nurse because you meet people from all places and all walks of life.

I have taken and I am taking a diversity class. I took Introduction to World Religions. I loved that class. It was fabulous to see how each religion is, and what you might think is not at all what it is. I'm in Urban Development right now, and we are reading a book on poverty. It's very eye-opening. It's not just who you think it is, and it's not just a certain set of people. It affects a lot of people. It makes you question the world around you a little more.

We had to do a role play with other kids in the class for parent nights, how to interact with parents who are a different religion, different race, different ethnicity, and whatnot and how to create a good relationship between parents and teachers.

Faculty also provided examples of how DEI can be central to engagement.

During nursing simulations we have patients of different genders, ages, ethnicities, different religions, so we try to incorporate those different DEI components into it, and also the economic standpoint of our patients. ... The mother is in an emergent need and she needs to have a C-section. ... Based upon what's happening she will need a blood transfusion. The Jehovah's Witness patient, we're saying for this scenario, is refusing the blood transfusion. ... It's a really hard scenario for the students to encounter, but it's also something that is realistic and has happened in the past.

DEI INTERVENTIONS AND DATA

Employees spoke about equity having a renewed focus or being central to the colleges' missions and shared some of the strategies their colleges implement to meet students where they are and remove systemic barriers.

As far as equity, we're in the climate of COVID. One of the equity issues was making sure that the students had computers, had internet service. That was very, very trying for all of us as a nation, as well as a college. Our community college, we work very, very hard with business partners to make sure that we have hotspots for the students, as well as the faculty. ... We've received dollars from the government to give to students for them to get laptops as well.

When we talk about closing the equity gaps, one of the things that we do here is that we are all reminded, constantly, that equity is an issue for all of us to address and that we each have a responsibility to it. One of the things I really appreciate about this college is a program we have called Cares Cash, where every employee has not just the opportunity, but really the responsibility to listen and to seek out the needs of students. If I have a student who comes to me and I find out that they've lost their job—they can't pay their heating bill, they have to pick up extra hours at work to do that, and that's going to negatively impact their course—I have the opportunity to apply for Cares Cash for that student.

One of the student support services that we have at this college is we have a food bank on all of the campuses because food insecurity is really a thing. We take care of the whole student, including their nutritional needs.



One employee discussed how their college's changes to hiring policies have led to more diversity.

One change that we made recently in our office is an addition to our staff. We hired a young woman of color and she has lots of beautiful tattoos and there's a noticeable difference in the reaction of the students towards her. ... They're much more willing to speak to her. Especially students of color feel very, very comfortable approaching her, and it's been a very beneficial experience.

College faculty and staff discussed data and equity, and how they can use this information to try to meet each and every student where they are.

Our campus, we have a retention team that looks at the data of our students. We look at just about everything about a student—what year they're in, what math they're in, how old they are, where they live. We look at just about every aspect of a student to decide how to follow and track them to make sure that they're successful. We have a team that meets on a weekly basis, and that team will give information to a higher team. It just feeds up to the executive level.

Some of the ways that the college closes the equity gaps is that we have councils that speak specifically to specific areas. We have the Black American Council. We have the Hispanic Council. They work directly with students. We also have TRIO on campus, which reaches out to first-generation students. We also try to work with our data, as far as our student data, to see who our students are. We try to track them to make sure that they're going through the classes at a pace that will get them towards graduation. We try to focus on them every semester. We might look at our first-year experience classes and then reach out to those students that meet the criteria and just give them that added push of security to let them know that we're here for them because, sometimes, they do need a little bit more help because they don't know what services we have for them. We try to be mindful of our students' needs at every place, be it the food pantry, be it that they're the first generation. We try to make sure that they know that there's a service for them on campus.

I think, as faculty, we have a really unique opportunity at this college because our administration shares data with us all the time. Our administration gives us data broken down by age groups, racial/ethnic backgrounds, majors, and then we can focus on those different types of students to see what kinds of supports we can put in place ... different services that we can then refer them to, but also different ways that we can use those support systems in our classroom so that we can affect them directly. If a student needs extra tutoring, then we know exactly where to guide them. If a student needs support outside their home or inside their home, we can connect them to those services. I think one of the things our college does really well is they do make that data available, and they meet with us on a regular basis. They are not just telling us what to do, but they're asking us what we need in order to do our jobs to help our students.

We have a lot of data. We just have to clean it up in a way that really serves us to be able to pick out a lot of equity gaps that are being missed. In tying into that from a non-data standpoint, we do have a taskforce in place designed to think about diversity, equity, and inclusion here at the college. I am on that task force. A lot of our work is just to look not only at data but also to look at policies and look at ways that students are being underserved. A lot of times, too, in using data in policy review, if, let's say, for example . . . if students were dropped for nonpayment, we would want to parse that a little bit more and say, "Okay, what students are being captured in that? Is there an equity gap in that? If so, how is our policy resulting in a shortcoming for these students? How can we fix it?"

There were some college faculty and staff whose colleges are in the early stages of using data to close equity gaps. Additionally, faculty and staff from a small, rural college spoke about the need for more data and a centralized location for housing it.

We are just, as a college, really starting to dig into data to be able to tell us about equity gaps and then how to make changes based on that. I would say it's very in the infancy stages of doing that. I'm excited about us moving forward and really digging in and looking at that.

There is no central location where [data are] housed. We also don't have an institutional researcher.

In a perfect world, as an academic advisor, just having data available to us that included how many learners do I have that are registered for the semester—how many returning learners are not registered? Let me dive specifically into them and find out why. Is there something that happened? Is there something going on, or something we can do additionally? Having right at my fingertips an early alert. If an instructor says, "Well, this individual hasn't shown up in two days." Currently our process goes through two different divisions sometimes before making it to an academic advisor.

“ *In a dream world, for us in the advising center, we would like a central location that we could access all student information.* ”

— Staff member



TOPIC #4: CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

The courses where students learned the most and that they enjoyed the most incorporated three aspects of guided pathways implementation:

- » Integrate **experiential/applied learning and other active/collaborative learning approaches** to enhance instruction and student success in courses across programs of study.
- » Ensure that every student participates in a **program-related “light-my-fire” course** in their first academic term.
- » Incorporate **effective teaching practice—student engagement**—throughout the pathways.

ENGAGING COURSES

Students gave many examples of their most engaging courses and their favorite instructors.

My favorite course was Psychology, Lifespan, and Development. It was mainly because I believe that a professor can make or break your experience, and that professor was just amazing, always so energetic coming in, always wanting to try to do group activities, the professor incorporated her own stories into everything, and it felt great for keeping your attention and listening. There was just always something new. . . . I really praise that professor. A professor can make or break your experience, 100 percent.

It was hands on ethics, core values, morality, etc. [The professor] was talking about Plato, Socrates . . . but he made it fun. He made it accessible. He said, “Have you ever watched Legally Blonde, the movie?” Everyone loves that movie, right? He gave examples about Top Gun. He talked about Superman, Batman. Then he said, “You see how Batman handled these type of situations, and this is ethics.”

My favorite course is actually one I’m currently taking. It’s a physical geography lab. I find the topic incredibly boring, to be honest, but I like it because of the professor. . . . Also, I like how she promotes social activity with my other classmates. She switches us up to pair with different lab partners each time, just so we have more social interaction. I really enjoy it.

Here at this college, we have a great English professor. I would say the best in the state, probably the country. She’s amazing. I’ve taken a lot of English courses with her. . . . I want to say the best thing that we got to do was interact with each other. She made the students always interact with each other. I think that would be the best thing that we ever did.

Sometimes we would walk in the class, and she would already have her experiment half done. . . . Something might be bubbling over or she’s bashing rocks together. It was just crazy when you walked in. It made you feel involved. It made you feel excited.

My favorite class I took was Engineering Materials. It described a little bit about materials and stuff like that. My favorite part of the class was taking tours to different factories. . . . The impression it left on me was this—these places are really cool, and I might be able to work at one of these places one day.





Here at the college we have a lab, and we have an entire area that's set up like a hospital. You are given scenarios, so you walk into situations and then you're expected to respond like you would in the nursing field. You never know what's going to happen. You could be in the process of doing a baby delivery, and the dad will pass out. The mannequin will pass out in the corner. You could be working with a patient, and you think you're going in one direction, and then the patient stands up and walks out of the room. You never know what you're going to get. They put us in major real-life situations.

Something else we've done in that class is what we call case studies. He gives us these studies about a said patient, and we are to go find that information and diagnose this patient. Then we work with our classmates to all come up with a diagnosis, treatment plan. I think activities like that and assignments like that are huge because it not only teaches us the information, but it challenges us to go and learn it and to be able to apply it, which is huge in nursing. We have to be able to apply what we're learning.

My favorite class, actually, was one of the very first classes I had for my first semester. It was, believe it or not, a remedial math class. It has been 18 years since I've been in school. . . . The teacher made it fun. He made it understandable. He broke it down and actually made it to where every student was able to understand what they needed to do, and we passed. . . . I came to school absolutely hating math. Because of that remedial math class, I actually love math now. It made a huge difference. One person can make the difference in a student's life.

I enjoyed the project with my field science class. The class required us to select a project. I picked the stream and water project. I had to put on the mud boots. In fact, the park I was trying to get to, I couldn't drive, so I had to get on my bike. I rode my bike over and got into the river. It was the Black River. I was able to then go through and find the—it was macro invertebrates that we were looking for. I was able to find those, document those, and then submit that report. That was a great project. Got me out into nature and enjoying the wildlife that we have here right in the community. . . . Definitely learned more being out in the field. It required a lot of reading. There was documentation from several different universities that we had to read before we went out so that we could identify what we were looking for. It really was a combination of classroom and practical application all in one. It was a great experience.

I would say the most impressionable activity I have done so far at the college was in my Principles of Advertising class. We did an icebreaker, where the professor mentioned a story about how we're in the middle of the ocean. We have only a certain amount of items that we can bring on board for survival. We had a whole list to choose from. We rated the importance of each item for survival individually. Then we collaborated as a class and rated each other. The point that he was getting across was more heads are better than one, and teamwork is better than working on your own. That was so powerful and impressionable on me, because I'm a visual person. . . . I really enjoyed that activity. It helped me understand basically how collaboration and teamwork really makes a difference in an organization or a company.



HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

Faculty members shared some of their favorite activities to engage students.

One of the things that I have found to be impactful for students, especially as so many of our students were forced into remote learning when they would not have made that choice, is I meet with my students, virtually, in all of my online classes. . . . During that time, I try to just listen. Instead of giving them a lot of information about the course, I try to just listen. “What are your concerns coming into this? Why did you choose to take an online course? What aspect of it do you feel like is going to go really well, and which are you concerned about?” I teach mathematics, so most of my students come in—I’ll be honest—not loving math, and that has a lot of anxiety. We can talk about their previous courses, what kinds of things they have found to be successful for them, or what practices made it difficult for them to be successful. We can talk about which aspects of the course I’m willing to alter and change and which ones I’m not and why and some of the reasoning. I find, when we have this two-way conversation, my students reach out more throughout the semester for help. So many times, before I did this, an online student might finally reach out to me in week 12. They would say, “Wow, I know you kept telling me you wanted to help me, but I really didn’t believe you. If I would’ve just reached out sooner, then perhaps I could’ve gotten the help.” Now, by meeting with them in the first two weeks of classes, I find that they come back more frequently, and they say it was one of the best parts of the course even though they didn’t like it at the beginning. . . . A student may share with me how they’re single parenting and juggling a full-time job and how they have just enough time blocked out for the class. I can just ask them, “What’s your backup plan? When the school calls and says your child has to be home sick, what’s your backup plan?” Sometimes students haven’t thought about a backup plan. See, I know that that chaos is coming. Even if it’s their first semester in college, they don’t know to expect it. When I can help them to proactively think about what those hurdles will be, then they’re able to better prepare for them and navigate them when they come because the reality is the hurdles come. They just do. The more we could do to help our students prepare to overcome the hurdle just makes it easier for them to get across that line to graduation.

I like to keep the class loose, fluid. We laugh a lot in that class, and then we have different projects. One project is a pop-bottle rocket that used compressed air and water to shoot. They work in teams. The reason I have them work in teams is because in industry you’re going to have to work in teams. Then we have an individual project towards the end of the semester where they design and make lighters. One of the biggest things is—and I think one of the most fun things about it is—I give them no directions. I say, “These are your constraints and figure it out.” They seem to dive really hard into those.



Some of the civic engagement that students participate in at our institution are working at soup kitchens, helping at homeless shelters, also working with our metro parks through our libraries. They will go out, do some service, and then they bring it back and tie it back into the classroom and say, “What do I do now? After I’ve learned this, what do I do? What does that mean?” They learn how to apply that civic mindedness into their daily lives. . . . They see how those real-world skills apply. Students seem to enjoy them. They like doing them. They find that they make connections in the community that help build them—build experiences for them. Often, I’ve had some students that actually have had job opportunities after that.



NON-ENGAGING COURSES

Students also described courses in which they struggled. Many of the non-engaging descriptors students used were consistent—courses in which there was little interaction with their peers and instructor, courses in which the instructor read PowerPoint slides, courses in which student questions and discussion were not encouraged, courses in which the instructor was slow to respond or unresponsive to students, courses in which there were unclear expectations, etc. Some students also shared how they did not make the friendships they anticipated making in college because their instructors talked the entire time and did not design the course to be interactive.

I did have one class that I would say I very, very much struggled in. It was a biology class. It was right when COVID hit and our school shut down. Everything flipped to online. I kept all of the times that I would send an email to the professor going, “Hey, I don’t understand this. Can you explain this more, or can you talk to me?” In the entire semester, he only ever emailed any of the students twice. We actually ended up finding a tutor that did more work than the professor did. The entire class agreed that if it wasn’t for the tutor, we would have failed the class. You never saw or actually heard from the professor.

The course I struggled with the most would probably be statistics, probably because math is not always my strongest suit personally, so it’s a little bit harder for me to absorb. Unfortunately, the same for the professor teaching that particular class was very monotone and felt more like he was just walking us through the problems versus teaching us how to read the problems or understand the formulas or whatever, so it was really hard for me. There was no interaction. There wasn’t a lot of question and answer.

The only issue I’ve had the three semesters I was here is in internet-based classes. I’ve had some teachers that were great. They do video lectures, so you’re getting some kind of input from the teacher. I’ve had at least three online classes that it was just read the book, take a test. Read a book, take the test. I don’t feel like I’m paying hundreds of dollars to take a test to teach myself. If teachers who are doing online classes can do video lectures, can do more interactive discussions, that would be wonderful because people are paying a lot of money to be here. It shouldn’t just be read a book, take a test.

One of the classes that I struggled with was a core class for my degree, so I had to take it. . . . The professor was not very helpful. He just would go through the PowerPoints almost word for word, and he didn't even seem to be into the class. It's hard if the professor isn't engaged in a class to engage the students. If the professor's bored, why are we interested?

The worst class by far, I had an instructor who would put on a slide, read word for word the slide, pause, wait until everybody wrote down what was on the slide, and then would go to the next slide. That would be a two hour long, oh-my-God, stab-me-in-my-eye-type mentality.

It was Python programming and prior to that class, I didn't have any basics or foundation in programming, so it was fresh. It was new to me. It was a three-hour class that our instructor just comes to read the book that we all have that we could have read at home. She would just literally read it, and she had an objective. "Today, we're covering this chapter and that's my priority. If you ask questions, that question has to wait till I've covered my chapter." That was how she treated her class. Eventually—I think we started with eight people—there were two of us at the end of the semester. It was bad. . . . It left a sour taste in my mouth because of the way the whole class went. After that class, I'm like, "I don't want to have anything to do with programming anymore."

For my Anatomy and Physiology I class, I had an instructor who—it was an in person class, but the instructor didn't engage with us as students, just lectured to us, didn't really have a time to ask questions. I reached out to him like, "Hey, I'm struggling. Can we go over this?" His response was just cold, and he acted as if he didn't really care for us as students and didn't really care if we succeeded or not. He was just there to grade stuff and basically to have a job. . . . We come here as students to learn, not necessarily to just get a grade, and when you don't have an instructor that cares about you learning, it's kind of pointless. . . . It definitely didn't make me feel good about the college or the class. It gave me a bad taste in my mouth.

“ A professor can make or break your experience, 100 percent. ”

— Student



TOPIC #5: SENSE OF BELONGING

The majority of students who participated in the focus groups shared that they felt a strong sense of belonging at their college. They described their college as a family, and they discussed how faculty and staff care about student success.



I definitely feel like I belong. . . . It just feels like a kind of like home.

I definitely feel like I belong at this community college simply because the instructors, most of them, are really engaging. The faculty is super friendly. My guidance counselors all talk to me as if I am their one and only student, even though I know I'm not. They act like they care about my success, and my success is their success, and I think that's huge.

I believe I belong here because I have support here. I believe there's a lot of people supporting me and giving me hope here, giving me the encouragement I need to go on with my dreams.

I was scared to death that I was going to be the oldest person that ever stepped foot on this campus and I've been nothing but delighted. The answer is that I'm very happy to be here.

I feel like I belong at this community college simply for the fact that, if you pass a faculty member in the hallway, they will acknowledge that you're passing them. You know those hallways where you just pass and everyone's awkwardly silent? That doesn't happen here.

That was a big fear of mine, was feeling like I wouldn't belong because I'm an older student and I'm a mom. . . . It's amazing the conversations that we can have and the variations in the different generations that are in the classroom. I'm 100 percent comfortable here.

I do feel a sense of belonging at this college. I have had great experiences with different professors here on campus. They have taught me a lot, and they have encouraged me greatly like, if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be here right now. I would have quit.

When I walked in, I felt loved, I felt wanted. I went to another college before that was the bigger college that all they would ask is what your number is, "Oh, what's your I number or ID number?" Here it's not, "What's your ID number?" It's, "What's your name?"

However, there were several nontraditional-age students who shared that they don't feel like they belong at their college because they are older students.

As a nontraditional student, it is harder, simply because younger students are more out there. . . . We're the outliers. You have to fight for your place in those programs. It's hard being the only older person when you're in a group with young people. It feels lonely, even though you're in a group. You feel lonely because you wish you had people who had the same experiences or who are in the same place in life as you are.

TOPIC #6: FAVORITE TEACHING MOMENTS

During the focus groups, faculty and staff shared some of their favorite memories from working at their colleges. Many employees shared stories about watching students grow from being shy and introverted in the beginning of their journeys to self-confident, proud graduates.

Probably my favorite moment or moments with students is when I get the email or the call, or just the random visit to the college, and they just say, "Thank you." "Thank you for what you helped me accomplish." "Thank you. It was a difficult time in my life. I appreciate you listening to me during that and helping me succeed through that." I just find it amazing. Yeah. It gives me goosebumps. The reason I love teaching is I love to serve. When you see that you've made a difference in somebody's life, and even changed their socioeconomic status, and helped that, it's just amazing.

One of my alumni came back and she said, "I wanted to bring my mother over to introduce you because she gave me life, but you gave me a second chance."

You do your job every day and you forget sometimes how much it does impact people, especially financial aid. That's a big deal to so many people. I had a student come in over the summer and it was her first semester. With a one-term loan there were two disbursements. She didn't understand when her money was coming, if she was getting all of the money that she thought that she was. All I did was simply explain to her how it was going to work and when she would receive her funding. She almost was in tears and said, "You just saved my life." It sounds dramatic to think that a student could say that saved their life, but it may have made the difference for her and her family as to when they were getting that money and all I did was my job. I think that knowing that your job can make such a difference to somebody is the reason we all come back every day.

*My most memorable experience since I've started working here was at a dentist's office, believe it or not. I was in there getting some work done. I wasn't happy about it ... but I could overhear in the booth next door to me the older gentleman that was in there was being told that he was going to have to have a couple root canals and he was like, "Really? Wow." They said, "And you're going to have to have these couple teeth pulled and they're going to be replaced with implants." He's like, "That's fantastic," and I thought, "This is crazy. How could anybody be that excited about this much dental work?" Then as the dentist was talking to him, and I continued to eavesdrop, I learned that he'd never been to a dentist before. He had worked to raise his family and keep food on the table for his family his entire life and **his son just graduated from our college**, landed a job and the first thing he did was take his father to a dentist to get all this life-changing work done for his dad. That sticks with me, and that's one of the reasons I keep doing what I do.*



CCCSE RESOURCES

CAREER/TRANSFER ADVISING

One resource for enhancing career and transfer advising is the publication *Show Me the Way: The Power of Advising in Community Colleges*. The report's *Colleges in Action: Profiles from the Report*, specifically "Asheville-Buncombe Technical College: Advising for Transfer Students Mandates Entering a Pathway," might offer considerations for colleges wanting to expand their transfer programs.

CCCSE more recently published a national report focused on guided pathways, *Building Momentum: Using Guided Pathways to Redesign the Student Experience*, which discusses career and transfer advising. Additionally, a CCCSE-sponsored podcast hosted by *Diverse* magazine with Dr. Phillip W. Neal, president of Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College, discusses how the community college experience impacts students' long-term career success and has the potential to change their lives.



Dr. Phillip W. Neal
President and CEO
Southcentral Kentucky
Community & Technical
College

It's important for colleges to constantly make students aware of the career advising services that they provide.

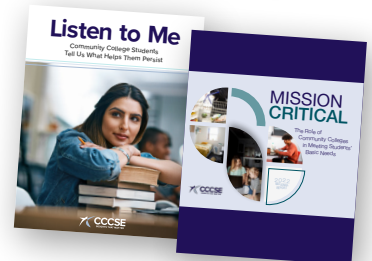
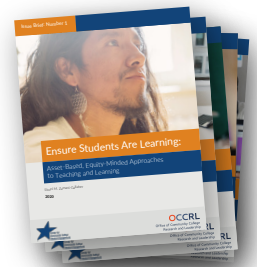
- » If students are not using career advising services, how can the college encourage them to utilize these services early in their college careers?
- » Are career services personnel being invited into classrooms to discuss how these services will benefit students?
- » As one student described, are faculty requiring a career services-type activity in their course to encourage use?
- » For transfer advising, how can the college ensure that dual credit courses will transfer to a student's preferred four-year college or university?
- » How can the college enhance reverse transfer?
- » How can the college make certain that conversations about transfer are being held early in a student's college experience?
- » What metrics are in place to confirm that students are given accurate transfer information?

EQUITY

CCCSE offers several tools that explore equity-centered practices. These briefs cover topics such as creating an equity-minded syllabus and fostering classroom engagement in equity-minded ways. A specific area that colleges may want to focus on based upon student feedback is identifying strategies for helping non-traditional (older) students feel a stronger sense of belonging at the college.

CCCSE recently published a report entitled *Listen to Me: Community College Students Tell Us What Helps Them Persist* and tools that specifically focus on first-time in college students and what helps them persist.

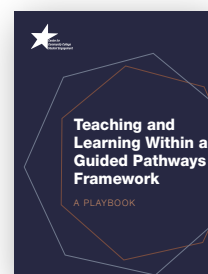
CCCSE also recently published a report entitled *Mission Critical: The Role of Community Colleges in Meeting Students' Basic Needs* and tools to help colleges work with students who are facing food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness. By providing holistic assistance to students, students will be more supported in their educational journeys.



CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

Students described their most engaging instructors as being responsive (responding to emails in a timely manner), caring (reaching out to students to check in on how they are doing), and engaged in the course (making the course content relatable and interactive). In the focus groups, when providing advice to instructors about how to improve their courses, students repeatedly mentioned that they would like more interaction with faculty and peers. The majority of the students used these characteristics to describe the courses they did not find engaging: courses where there is little interaction, group work, class discussion, practical assignments, etc.

A review of the components of “Ensure Students are Learning” (also known as Pillar 4 of the [Guided Pathways Framework](#))— scaled high-quality, program-relevant, applied learning experiences; intentional and sustained student engagement; evidence-based, high-impact teaching practices; and equity-minded, asset-based teaching improvements—can support this conversation. More details can be found in [Teaching and Learning Within a Guided Pathways Framework: A Playbook](#). Examples of innovative teaching practices for these components can be found in CCCSE’s searchable database, as part of its [Ensure Students Are Learning Toolkit](#).



The toolkit also features [professional development tools](#) for faculty—a two-hour professional development activity and a multi-step activity designed to take place over three weeks.

CCCSE SURVEYS

It is recommended that colleges participate in [CCCSE surveys](#) at least once every three years to monitor their progress and implement interventions to continue to make strides in improving their students’ experiences. If your college wants to know how students are experiencing college, it’s best to ask students.

The [Community College Research Center’s](#) "Scale of Adoption Self-Assessment," a tool that is designed to help a college assess how far along it is toward adopting essential guided pathways practices at scale, includes this:

- » The college assesses effectiveness of educational practice (e.g. using *CCSSE* or *SENSE*, etc.) and uses the results to create targeted professional development.

If your college is interested in learning more about administering CCCSE surveys, please [contact us](#).

Special Thanks

CCCSE would like to express gratitude for the following individuals for their support in planning and conducting the focus groups.

Cuyahoga Community College

Dr. Angela Johnson, Vice President, Access & Completion
Dr. Heidi Nicholas, Executive Director, Enrollment Management & Enrollment Operations
Shari Rako, Administrative Assistant, Access & Completion
Elizabeth Zeszotek, Completion Project Manager

Northwest State Community College

Heather Mendez, Executive Administrative Assistant

Owens Community College

Dr. Denise Smith, Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost

Central Ohio Technical College

Joe Argiro, Institutional Research Analyst
Chris Doll, Director, Institutional Research & Effectiveness

Lorain County Community College

Erika Fenik, Director of Institutional Planning and Engagement

Zane State College

Heather Rognon, Executive Assistant to the Chief Academic Officer

“ I decided to go to community college because it’s a lot more student focused. You’re not just a number. ”



info@cccse.org



www.cccse.org



[@CommCollSurveys](https://twitter.com/CommCollSurveys)



[@CCCSEVideo](https://www.youtube.com/@CCCSEVideo)

