

# LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

## Pathways Project Implementation Memorandum

**TO:** Laura Rittner, Executive Director, Success Center – OACC  
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**RE:** Developing an approach for ongoing, intrusive advising to proactively monitor and engage students as they progress through their program of study (Pillar 3)

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION

Developing an approach for ongoing and intrusive advising that monitors and engages students throughout their educational journey is a common objective in higher education. Even though the approach is common the delivery and interpretation vary. For the purpose of this research, refer to the following definition of intrusive advising: involving proactive interactions with students, with the intention of connecting with them before a situation occurs that cannot be fixed.

#### Statement of the problem:

Holistic and intrusive advising should begin with the end goal in mind, which is the students' career and academic goal. Colleges must recognize that career and academic pathways are not one and the same. Colleges have traditionally treated career advising as separate and distinct from academic advising, and as a result, students sometimes receive conflicting messages about how best to achieve their goals. Clear and impactful advising is essential for student success in college and postgraduate. The pathways team will identify key intervention points along the loss momentum framework when colleges should proactively monitor students and use career and transfer data to improve student success rates and build relationships. We will develop training plans that colleges can use to ensure widespread understanding of, use of and access to career and transfer data. Advising with the end in mind requires everyone to be engaged in these efforts from application to the transition outcomes defined in the loss and momentum framework.

### RELEVANT LITERATURE REVIEWED

Pertinent literature is essential in making a case for change. Our team decided to approach intrusive coaching by including the alignment of academic and career advising and to gain a better understanding, we reviewed several sources. To begin we reviewed, "The Importance of High Touch Intrusive Academic Success Coaching: Making it Work." (2016,

May 10). This article laid the foundation for the project by offering a definition and emphasizing the importance of intrusive coaching/advising. This article, Ledwith, K. (2014). "Academic Advising and Career Services: A Collaborative Approach. Special Issue: Strategic Directions for Career Services Within the University Setting," was also reviewed and described best practices on aligning academic advising and career services. Learning through experience and the leadership academy that the student experience is the key to student success, we then reviewed, Rassen, E., Chaplot, P., Jenkins, P. D., & Johnstone, R. (2014). "Understanding The Student Experience Through The Loss/Momentum Framework: Clearing the Path to Completion." Community College Research Center. As educators, we need to keep the student and what they experience at the forefront as we keep them motivated with their end goal(s). To assist institutions in the process of implementing this methodology, we reviewed the Loss-Momentum Framework: Revised Achieving the Dream. (2016). Achieving the Dream. This tool guided the team to focus on student touchpoints while considering common student challenges.

In addition, self-efficacy in career decision-making and college-related tasks have shown to be important predictors of interest in pursuing education and recognition in a student's chosen career field. These findings are consistent with the tenants of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000) and previous research which has highlighted the importance of self-efficacy in vocational outcomes (Edman & Brazil, 2009; Raque-Bogdan & Lucas, 2016)

## **DATA EXAMINED**

Relevant data was also reviewed to assist with guiding the recommendations. Here is an overview:

### **CCRC**

Currently, the Community College pipeline is very leaky. Community College Research Center (CCRC, 7/11/2020) cites that 10-40% of students that apply don't show up on day one. Additionally, at least 40% of first-time students are gone from higher ed by the start of their second year. There are also too many students who meander without earning a college degree. Nearly 20% of students still enrolled or transferred after 6 years without a credential. Nearly half of all students don't complete any credential and there are wide gaps by race, income and age. In addition, there are stark differences between full-time and part-time students. The one-year persistence rate of students who started full-time was 69.7%; for part-time starters, it was 50.8% (CCRC, 2020).

### **Loss-Momentum Framework**

The loss-momentum framework was used as a reference to assist in developing touchpoints, tools, and a timeline for career and academic advising. The information provided within the loss-momentum framework is intended to assist institutions by creating awareness of the key stages of the student's educational journey. This data emphasizes the common obstacles that have been identified that could negatively impact a student's success. Considering this

data, a guide has been developed to incorporate how an institution could begin with the career conversation from promotion of programming. This guide will progress throughout the student experience through the transition to the workforce or transfer to another institution.

# Understanding the Student Experience

External factors include federal, state, and local policy, accreditation, and the vendor market



Common Loss Points

Do not apply to postsecondary education	Poor academic preparation	75% of low-income students need to combine work and school; work over 20 hours/week; schedule changes	Limited advising leads to credit (and debt) accumulation not matched to degree attainment	Credits obtained at community college don't transfer to four-year institution
Delayed entry to postsecondary education	60% referred to developmental education, only 30% ever take subsequent college-level courses	Part-time enrollment means slow progress, loss of momentum	Leave with credits needed for degree but for college-level math	Leave college with excess credits
Poor college counseling leads to under-enrollment, poor matching and failure to obtain financial aid for which they qualify	Fail to enroll/pass Gatekeeper courses (i.e., entry-level math and English)	Life happens/complex lives means many disruptions; stop out or drop out	Transfer without credential	Leave college without support for job search or with no career plans
			Credential doesn't garner family-supporting wage job or isn't "stackable" to career that does	Leave college without knowledge of additional qualifications that can help advance career

Your Momentum Strategies

What initiatives support your students along their educational journey? Also, consider planned changes to technologies, policies, processes, and behavior.				

Adapted from Completion by Design's Loss-Momentum Framework

## PROPOSED CHANGES/REFORMS TO BE ADOPTED

In order to accommodate the range in institution structures, resources, and student populations a guide and toolbox is suggested. Considering that the problem is aligning career and academic advising to ensure that students are constantly reminded of their end goal, associating this effort with an existing tool that identifies obstacles that students face seems logical, specifically, by using the Loss Momentum Framework. The Loss Momentum Framework allows institutions to assess their efforts throughout the student experience. This tool has been updated by the Achieving the Dream (ATD) initiative. This version includes the transition stage, which includes the career/workforce component or continuation of the student's educational journey beyond the community college. Below is more detail, including the timeline:

### **Connection:**

The connection between career and academics should begin with emphasizing why potential students should come to the institution. The institution websites should be career-focused, which demonstrates “WHY” a student should apply for admission. This information should be aligned with the curriculum to prepare for the career. This is the “WHAT” needs to be completed at the institution. Which leads to the “HOW” they get started. California Community colleges have a great example of an Explore Careers page. This page includes an application that matches users to careers that match their interests. This application then links the user to an appropriate college based on location and program. According to the Workforce Playbook, the three most important questions for adult students while selecting a career field are 1.) How long will it take? 2.) How much will I make? 3.) How much will it cost? (Davidson et.al, 2019).

Suggested tools:

- Career cluster navigators on website before selecting a major, that discuss careers that ultimately connect potential students to related programming at the institution.
- An App linked to the website. Similar to the Here to Career used by the California Community Colleges <https://careered.cccco.edu/explore-careers/>

### **Entry:**

It's vital that career counseling begins prior to enrollment. Numerous career readiness assessments can be used but even a simple model can provide an equitable approach to supporting students that need the most resources. One great resource is the Career Resources Questionnaire (CRQ) (<http://www.cresogo.com/startcrqengl>), which is a brief career screening tool to help career professionals and college administrators to better assess the most appropriate and efficient resources for students prior to college entrance. Although there are many factors that cannot be measured, the survey uses meta-analytic research to propose an integrative framework that predicts career success for students including: human capital, environmental, motivational, and career management behavior. The CRQ provides

career counselors and academic advisors with a reliable, concise, and comprehensive measure to assess key indicators of career success. This free resource also includes student self-reflection workbooks that could also be used within a first-year experience course or in an individual counseling session with a professional counselor guide as well ([www.cresogo.com/CRQ](http://www.cresogo.com/CRQ)). The 13 areas that are targeted in this survey includes: 1.) the knowledge and skills that are essential for a successful career including occupational expertise, job market knowledge, and soft skills; 2.) Personal motivation including involvement, confidence, and clarity; 3.) Organizational and personal environment including career opportunities, organizational (college) support, job challenge, and social support; 4.) Activities/Behaviors such as networking, career information gathering, and continuing learning. The Career Resources Questionnaire is based on international research on career development, employability, and career success. The CRQ tool could also be used with college specific indicators to create an approach to address the specific student success equity gaps at individual institutions by getting the time and resources to students that need it most.

Suggested tools:

Career Resource Questionnaire: (<http://www.cresogo.com/startcrqengl>)

Career Resource Student Workbook:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/556b5fc5e4b08a6590cd288c/t/5bbdff444785d31544de423c/1539178309849/CRQ+Interview+Guide+Students.pdf>

### **Progress:**

The students' progression should be structured with clear academic and career goals each semester. This should include regularly scheduled meetings (with faculty or advisors) with clear expectations to get feedback on their progression in their program of study. The students' educational advising meeting can take place in different modalities from face to face, email, phone, or zoom session with academic advisors or faculty advisors. The institutions should have different ways to accommodate all students including those with limited childcare, work, or remote learners. Developing the relationship is key to understanding their educational goals.

There are numerous ways to gamify career progress to build credit and professional momentum for students. One great example, Clarion University uses a [badge system](#) to encourage students to stay career focused throughout their education journey. The bronze badge can be earned through participating in activities related to one program topic, of their choice, within each of the five categories (choose your path, job search documents, enhance your interview skills, professionalism for the workplace, and college to career). Earning a bronze level badge allows students to participate in the CUmentor program and upon successful completion, those students earn a gold badge. Additionally, students that want to commit to enhancing their oral and written communication skills can pursue a [platinum badge](#) that helps students reach their full potential and become career ready.

Suggested tools:

Progression Tools for community college

- Clarion University CU Professional program -gamification for career development throughout the college career journey (badge program). <https://www.clarion.edu/academics/career-services/plan-and-manage-your-career/searching-for-a-job/cu-professional.html#badge>
- Clarion University Act101 Educational Opportunities Program: <https://www.clarion.edu/academics/student-success-center/act-101-educational-opportunities-program.html>
- Financial funds – consider: Federal TRIO Program TRIO SSS <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/triostudsupp/index.html>
- Youngstown State University Center for Student Progress: <https://ysu.edu/center-for-student-progress>

### **Completion:**

Successful completion is determined by the perceived readiness of the student and preparedness to enter the workforce. Therefore, this should be a touchpoint that assesses the student's current status. Similar to an exit interview, a college professional should meet with the student to review a checklist to prepare for the transition. The checklist should include a reflection on the major selected, review of total credit accumulation, a personalized view of education finances, exploring career and academic options, career advisement, and an overall assessment of the student's educational experience and career preparedness.

Suggested tools:

- Exit interview with professional(s) at the institution to discuss:
  - Reflect on major selected.
  - Review of credit accumulation.
  - Personalized review of finances (including Federal Financial Aid) used at the college and how it impacts the student's future.
  - Review transfer options.
- Career advisement
  - Explore current options versus those that were available when the course work began.
  - Connect the student to a mentor in the industry.
  - Preparedness (i.e. resume, references, etc.).
- Transfer Centers
  - Official or unofficial areas that are designated for student information on articulation agreements and transfer. This should include support professionals to offer guidance.
- Assessment of student educational experience
  - Survey for additional acknowledgment at completion as an incentive.

## **Transition:**

Attainment of a credential and/or completion of coursework can provide an opportunity for transition. That transition could be employment or to the next phase of a student's educational journey or transfer to a four-year institution. This step is crucial to creating an expectation of lifelong learning, career planning, and advancement. Institutions should ensure that transition information is available to all students. This includes access to articulation agreements, career pathways to local employers, and opportunities for career advancement per program/career. Ohio has established a tool that could be used to demonstrate the career pathways. It can be found on the Making Ohio website <https://makingohio.com/>

Suggested tools:

- Clear Career pathway
  - Pathways for students entering into a new industry.
  - Pathway for career advancement.
  
- Continuing education options
  - Articulation agreements
  - Career advancement options

## **IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES**

Community colleges offer a crucial pathway to providing students of diverse backgrounds the opportunity for higher education. Research must address not only the risk factors but also strength-based factors that impact the career aspirations for this population, which may help to inform how to help support their success and promote equality and diversity in higher education. Numerous career readiness assessments can be used, but even a simplistic model can provide an equitable approach to supporting students that need the most resources.

Students that know why they are enrolled are more likely to graduate. Ultimately students will feel more confident in making career decisions and understand what they want and when they will achieve their goals. Santa Monica College has a new Guided Pathways reform with multiple approaches to connect with students during the college entry point. Counselors are present in key classes that many first-year students take so that they may offer career planning classes and encourage undecided students to enroll. One of the most common courses for a first-semester student is English Composition. The English courses at Santa Monica now have an assignment that asks students to explore a potential career, conduct research, and write an essay that develops self-awareness. The career counselors also facilitate 75-minute College-to-career workshops on campus and in classrooms, clarifying the academic/career pathway. The students also learn the power of networking through a 7-step success guide to explore careers, programs, transfer institutions, and career development activities.

Here is an example of a college that uses a similar methodology. Skyline College (Bruno, CA) has counseling and student support staff that help students with the career conversation upon entry, meta-major selection, and connecting the resources to serve their



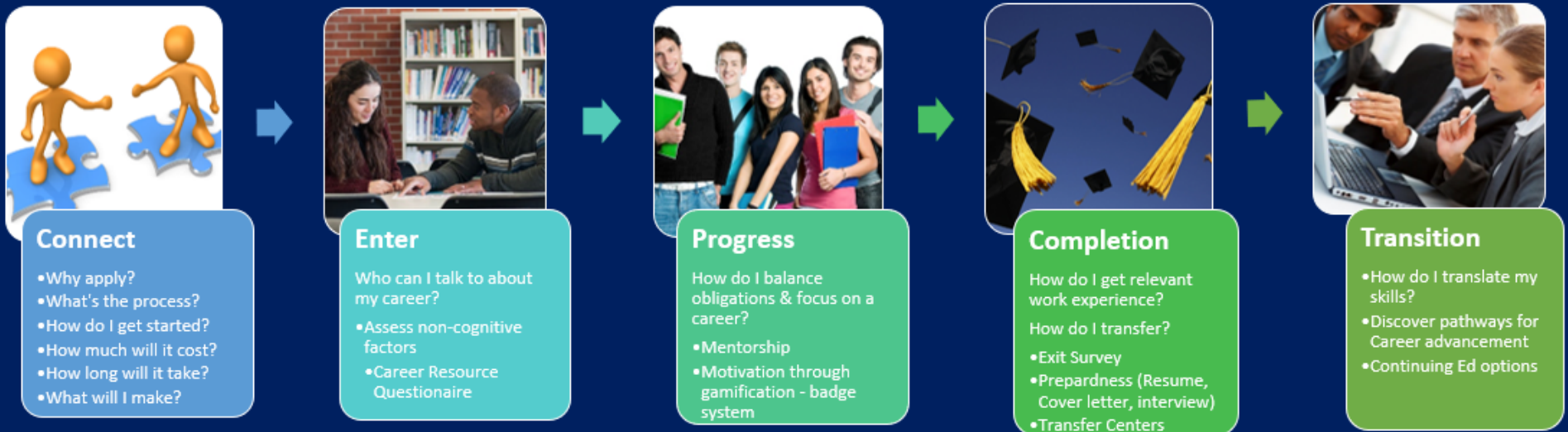
specific needs (overview: “Tools for the field”). Students review an intake survey with their counselor and most select a meta-major that aligns with their interests. The counselor discusses their first-semester course schedules and encourages them to enroll in career exploration courses. Undecided students are given the opportunity to attend a structured half-day meta-major preview to explore the programs within specific meta-majors. The career survey is a portion of the application process that separates students into three distinct resource needs groups. While this approach would take time to refine with the institutional population, the opportunity exists to create a rich tool to help close equity gaps.

The proposed changes/reforms to be adopted are generalized so it can be applied across various institutional structures, which is the biggest challenge. In Ohio, we have 23 community colleges that are various sizes, have access to unequalled resources, and serve different student populations.

## **CONCLUSION**

Even though a college education is a prerequisite for most careers based on the workforce playbook, keeping the end goal in mind from the start is what drives the student toward completion. Therefore, students that are consistently reminded of their end goal or that have their academic journey aligned with the career goals are more likely to complete. As defined above, intrusive and holistic advising can be a tool that truly supports students to completion. As educators we have to be intentional and be proactive versus reactive.

# Holistic and Intrusive Advising through Career Momentum Strategies



## CAREER AND ACADEMIC PATHWAY TOUCH POINTS

Holistic and intrusive advising should begin with the end goal in mind, which is the students' career and academic goal. This figure, which was adapted from the Loss-Momentum Framework allows counselors and academic advisors to align key intervention points to proactively monitor students. Advising with the end in mind requires everyone to be engaged in these efforts from application to the transition outcomes defined in the loss and momentum framework.

Adapted from: Completion by Design, Loss-Momentum Framework:  
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