![Achieving the Dream logo]

# 2016 Leader College Application Worksheet

*For more information or questions about the Leader College application, please contact Samaad Wes Keys at skeys@achievingthedream.org.*

## Selection & Review:

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

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

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

*Note: Colleges will not be granted Leader College status solely because they have exhibited growth over a period of time. Successful applications will incorporate each of the items above and applications will be reviewed holistically to determine if a college received leader college status.*

Institutions applying for initial Leader College certification will apply on one measure; institutions applying for Leader College recertification will apply using two measures.

## Section I

### Student Success Measure

Of the measures below, please select the measure(s) for which you would like your institution to be considered for Leader College status (one for initial certification applicants, two for recertification applicants). Definitions for the measures are provided in Appendix A of this document.

☐ Successfully complete developmental courses and advance to credit-bearing courses
☐ Enroll in and successfully complete the initial college-level or gateway courses in subjects such as math and English

☒ Persistence from year-to-year or term-to-term

☒ Credential attainment within four years (degree or certificate)

☐ Institution-defined metric

## Data Analysis

Describe the outcomes of the measure your institution has selected to be considered for Leader College status. This could be for the overall student population or for a specific target population (e.g., African American men, Latina women, first-generation, etc.) at any time within the past three academic years (2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015).

Evidence can include both quantitative and qualitative measures, but should include, at a minimum, metrics for the target population that shows improvement that can be reasonably explained by an intervention.

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

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

In addition to the required data template, we encourage all institutions to include in an appendix any additional charts and figures that can support the explanation of their success in this section.
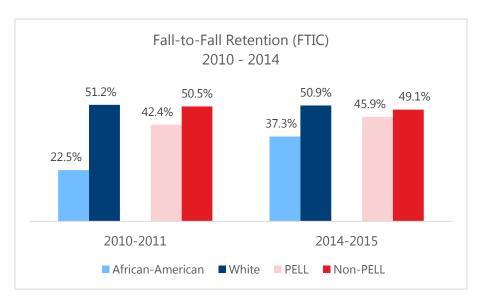
Since its participation in Achieving the Dream (ATD), Danville Area Community College (DACC) has embarked on numerous interventions that have been motivated by data, information and review of best practices. The results of the College's campus-wide efforts have shown significant changes in the culture of the college as faculty and staff have increasingly embraced a student success agenda. Because of this shift in campus culture, over the last four years, DACC has experienced steady and uninterrupted upward trends in persistence from year-to-year and credential attainment within four years.
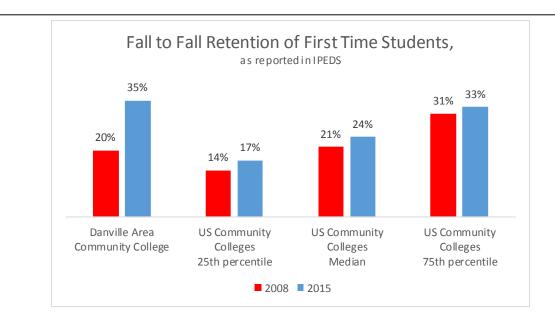
**Persistence from Year-to-Year**
Measuring all credit bearing students enrolled in the fall semester who returned the following fall semester, overall success has climbed year by year for these students.  Male students have remained relatively steady throughout the past three years, Pell students have remained steady, and non-Pell students have grown in success from year to year.  The same can be said for full-time students who have seen a 4.5% overall growth in success.  Part-Time student success has also grown every year, from 37.6% in 2011 to 45.5% in 2014.

Another important aspect of our student success agenda is closing the achievement gaps between student groups. From 2010-2014, our Fall-to-Fall retention rates for first-time-in-college students increased slightly, but the better news is the retention gap between African-American students and white students and between Pell and non-Pell students have both decreased with a 15.1% and 4.9% gap closure respectively. Closing these gaps is just one step toward creating a more equitable college experience for all students.
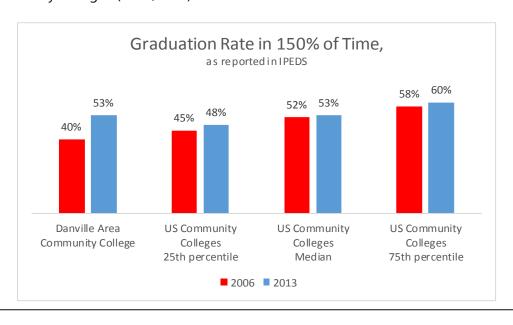


When looking at student data, the College also reviews several data sources to compare how we are doing to other community colleges both regionally and nationally. Using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) statistics, before we became an ATD College, DACC was in the bottom quartile of colleges for its fall to fall retention rate per IPEDS data which only looks at first-time students rather than all currently enrolled students as the ATD measure does (in 2008, 20%). Today, we are on the upper quartile for U.S. community colleges (in 2015, 35%).

## Fall to Fall Retention of First Time Students,
as reported in IPEDS

| | Danville Area Community College | US Community Colleges 25th percentile | US Community Colleges Median | US Community Colleges 75th percentile |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2008 | 20% | 14% | 21% | 31% |
| 2015 | 35% | 17% | 24% | 33% |

■ 2008  ■ 2015

**Credential Attainment within Four Years**

DACC has also made significant gains in students attaining a credential within four years. Measuring students who attained a degree or certificate within 4 years, overall success rates have continued to rise year by year for the 4 years measured with a 33.7% success rate for students starting at DACC during the 2011-2012 school year up from a 24.4% success rate for students starting at DACC during the 2008-2009 school year. While graduation rates have fluctuated from year to year in several sub-groups, every sub-group by ethnicity, gender, Pell status, and enrollment status has seen gains over the four-year span. IPEDS data, which is somewhat similar to the ATD recertification application measure of credential attainment, also reflects increases in students earning a credential. When looking at graduation rates within 150% of time as reported in IPEDS for first-time, full-time students, before we became an ATD College, DACC was below the median for U.S. community colleges (in 2006, 40%), and for the last two years, DACC has been in the upper quartile nationally for U.S. community colleges (2013, 53%).

## Graduation Rate in 150% of Time,
as reported in IPEDS

| | Danville Area Community College | US Community Colleges 25th percentile | US Community Colleges Median | US Community Colleges 75th percentile |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2006 | 40% | 45% | 52% | 58% |
| 2013 | 53% | 48% | 53% | 60% |

■ 2006  ■ 2013

## Section II

In this section, describe the initiative(s) or programs(s), which contributed to your institution's improvement in the measure selected any time in the last four academic years (2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015). Please include the following information:

Outline the future goals and objectives of the initiative(s)/program(s).

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

Participation in Achieving the Dream has moved DACC to implement various interventions within individual departments as well as review and change campus-wide policies and procedures. DACC ascribes its successes in student persistence and completion to the comprehensive implementation of all of its ATD-inspired efforts. What follows are a few examples of both departmental and campus-wide policy and procedural changes that have positively impacted student persistence and completion.

**Mandatory Orientation**

One of the main mottos of Achieving the Dream states that "students don't do optional," and one way to ensure that students are receiving information concerning college policies, procedures, and services is to have them complete a student orientation. When the First Year Experience sub-team initially reviewed orientation data, they found that students who attended orientation are much more likely to return the following semester than students who did not attend an orientation; this information validated our decision to make orientation a requirement for all incoming students.
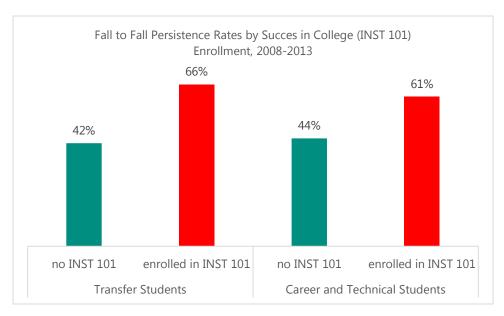
This was a major policy and procedural change that required a lot of communication and reiteration, but the students have been better equipped to navigate the college system with the information gained in the orientation. Students have responded positively to the orientation when surveyed, and in our Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), we saw an increase in students who felt that were not getting the "run around" when seeking information. Students also answered positively to feeling a sense of belonging at DACC, which can increase the likelihood that they return the following semester and year.

**Student Success Course**

The college's one credit INST 101 Success in College course, required of all degree-seeking students at Danville Area Community College, has proven to be of great benefit to students taking the course. While advisors encourage INST 101 be taken during the student's first semester, the choice is left up to the student. Although many take the course in their first semester, a number wait for a later semester. In this analysis, two groups of students that started in a summer or fall semester were compared - those taking the course their first fall semester or summer prior and those who did not have the course by the end of that first fall semester. Students starting in fall semesters from 2008 through 2013 were considered.

Fall-to-fall persistence rates have shown gains of 17% to 24% for both applied associate degree and transfer degree students (Figure 1.4). Persistence, in this case, is defined as retention at DACC or transfer to another higher education institution. Gains of this magnitude are rarely seen in larger scale initiatives. Across the nation, the fall-to-fall persistence rate for multiple years has fluctuated between 55% and 60% for first-time two-year public institution students with full-time students having rates approximately 10% higher and part-time students approximately 6% lower, according to the National Student Clearinghouse. As can be seen in the chart, students who enrolled in Success in College in their initial semester have had persistence rates well above that national average, while students not taking advantage of first semester enrollment in the course did not.
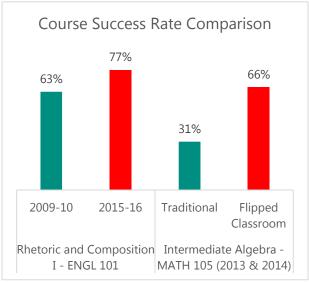


Fall to Fall Persistence Rates by Succes in College (INST 101) Enrollment, 2008-2013

| | Transfer Students | | Career and Technical Students | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | no INST 101 | enrolled in INST 101 | no INST 101 | enrolled in INST 101 |
| | 42% | 66% | 44% | 61% |

**Departmental Initiatives in Math and English**

As all national studies have suggested, students who complete gateway math and English courses are more likely to persist from term-to-term and year-to-year as well as earn a credential. At DACC, ENGL 101 Rhetoric and Composition I and MATH 105 Intermediate Algebra are two courses that were targeted as gatekeeper/gateway courses in that they were initially high enrollment, low success rate courses. Both of these courses have seen considerable gains in student course completion based on policy and procedural changes that have occurred over the last several years as part of our student success effort.

When establishing gatekeeper courses, ENGL 101 was of particular interest because it is required for so many of our programs, and one aspect of the course specifically, the Exit Exam, was causing several students to fail the course even though they had earned a passing grade in the class before the exam was taken. After researching other colleges and their policies and procedures surrounding their college composition courses, the Writing Committee determined that the Exit Exam should not be the only deciding factor for course competency and decided to eliminate the exam as a requirement for passing the class. Students in ENGL 101 now complete a writing sample similar to the Exit Exam in their classes as part of course requirements. As the chart below indicates, this changes has had a considerable impact on our ENGL 101 course success rates.

Early on in the College's ATD journey, one of our math instructors started a pilot course for MATH 105 Intermediate Algebra in which she used flipped learning as an alternative to the traditional lecture-based model. In terms of the flipped learning model, the instructional techniques have been reversed so that homework is completed in class while lecture is reviewed outside of class through online videos. As you can see from the chart below, upon reviewing the data, the Math and Sciences division determined that the flipped learning model was showing higher success rates than the traditional method and made the decision to move all MATH 105 on-campus courses to this method of instruction starting in the Fall 2015 semester.

### Course Success Rate Comparison

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 63% | 77% | 31% | 66% |
| 2009-10 | 2015-16 | Traditional | Flipped Classroom |
| Rhetoric and Composition I - ENGL 101 | | Intermediate Algebra - MATH 105 (2013 & 2014) | |

The Math and Sciences and Liberal Arts divisions also utilized data from our continuing ATD analysis and information that highlighted the importance of gatekeeper courses and student preparation for furthering their education.  This data guided efforts to fundamentally alter tutoring services offered to students with a goal of improving accessibility and efficacy. DACC leadership supported department specific plans to enhance access to tutoring, resulting in significant changes in how tutoring would be offered in math, sciences and writing.  The DACC Math and Sciences division developed the Math and Science Solutions (MASS) tutoring lab in 2014 to help students achieve higher levels of success in math and science courses, and the Liberal Arts division moved the Writing Center to the first floor in 2013 to create a more student-friendly and accessibly environment. By moving tutoring services to their respective academic buildings, both have seen an increase in student traffic which positively impacts student course completion rates and, in turn, positively impacts student persistence and completion.

**Faculty and Staff Engagement**

Since becoming a part of Achieving the Dream, DACC has invested resources into the effort by leveraging financial resources specifically for professional development, both through grants and budget reallocations, allowing opportunities to bring speakers to campus to provide new information to faculty regarding cooperative learning and working with underrepresented groups. DACC was able to fully fund training of an internal cooperative learning trainer to offer instruction on cooperative learning to any current and future faculty member interested in this teaching tool. Funds have been committed toward professional development in not only cooperative learning, but also equity, inclusion, and cultural sensitivity.  Professional development on the topics of equity, inclusion, and/or cultural awareness have been provided to DACC full-time and part time faculty and staff on an annual basis with a dedication to offer this training every year.  The goal of this intervention is for all faculty and staff to be more cognizant of the cultural differences and needs of students and to be able to provide the best possible learning environment for each student.  The strategy has led to yearly improvements in persistence.

The implementation of DACC 's professional development initiative coincides with both the improvement in student attitudes and the improvements in persistence providing DACC with compelling evidence that its professional development endeavors have changed administrator and faculty mindsets creating a culture at DACC that is more accommodating to students and consequently more supportive and conducive to student success and persistence. Qualitative evidence concerning this intervention includes a perceptible change in attitudes during the period covered by DACC's focused professional development efforts. The Noel Levitz SSI noted positive changes in how students view faculty and staff when asked to respond statements such as, "Faculty care about me as an individual" and "Administrators are approachable to students."

**What was the biggest challenge in implementing the initiative(s)/program(s), and how was the challenge overcome or mitigated?**

The biggest challenge in implementing any initiative at DACC is communicating the change to all involved in the new policy or process. To foster stronger communication concerning our student success efforts, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness creates a data brief every semester based on the recommendation of the ATD Leadership Team concerning new interventions and student success data that we have found in our efforts. These are shared at the Faculty/Staff In-Services and Part-Time Faculty Academy sessions each semester. Procedural changes are also communicated within the necessary offices and departments on a monthly or quarterly basis.

**Do you believe the program(s)/initiative(s) can be successfully replicated or transferred to other institutions? Why or why not?**

The initiatives can be successfully replicated.  The interventions that DACC utilized were themselves derived from best practices and evidence based on studies that demonstrated promise in helping DACC achieve its goals.  For DACC, the process of targeting mandatory orientation, a student success course, departmental changes in math and English courses, upgrading its tutoring offerings, and providing additional professional development required a commitment to investing resources despite declines in available funding opportunities.

**What are the most important considerations for an institution wanting to replicate the initiative(s)/program(s)?**

For institutions that may seek to replicate the progress that DACC has had, it will require prioritizing the student success strategy over other college operations and/or identifying resources that can facilitate the increase in training as needed for faculty and staff. Schools must consider their campus culture and determine where they are individually as an institution on their personal journey toward positively impacting student success.

# Section III

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

May 31, 2016

Achieving the Dream
8403 Colesville Road
Suite 450
Silver Spring, MD 20910-6331

Dear ATD Colleagues:

Danville Area Community College submits this application for Leader College recertification with anticipation. As an Achieving the Dream college since 2009 and a Leader College since 2013, the Danville Area Community College community has embraced its ATD work with enthusiasm and commitment. As the president of DACC during our ATD journey, I am proud of what we have accomplished, but realize that there is much more work yet to be done. That is one reason DACC is maintaining its affiliation with ATD despite the current budget impasse in Illinois.

We are thankful for the opportunity to be part of the network and realize that we would not have accomplished what we have to date without the support and knowledge of our coaches as well as the ATD resources available to us. Additionally, the College has benefited from our Strategic Plan process focused on becoming more student centered, support from the Board of Trustees, and community support for the College and its Achieving the Dream focus on equity and student success. Community support was evident last week as the Board of Trustees was able to approve an expensive technology solution because of funds provided through the Foundation by generous community members.

As you will see from the recertification application, for the last four years progress has been made in two major areas of student success: persistence from year-to-year for all currently enrolled students and credential attainment within four years for all currently enrolled students. The College has been concerned for quite some time with its graduation and persistence rates. In fact, DACC has made somewhat dramatic progress since it first became concerned about these issues. Using IPEDS data as a national comparison, you can see in the Leader College recertification report that we have made great gains in both persistence and credential attainment since becoming involved with Achieving the Dream.

Another important aspect of our student success agenda is closing the achievement gaps between student groups. From 2010 – 2015, our fall-to-fall retention rates for first-time-in-college students increased slightly, but the better news is the retention gaps between African-American students and white students and between Pell and Non-Pell students have both decreased with a 15.1% and 4.9%

gap closure respectively. Closing these gaps is just one step toward creating a more equitable college experience for all students.

We have been focused on planning to hopefully close achievement gaps between full-time and part-time students. Whenever we disaggregate data in any measure, part-time students do not fare as well as full-time students. To address this issue, this year, Mandatory Advising was implemented for all students pursuing a certificate or degree (previously advising was only required of full-time certificate and degree-seeking students). In fact, Mandatory Advising is our quality initiative for regional re-accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission. An important aspect of the Mandatory Advising plan is a technology solution described in the Reflections report, the Ellucian Colleague Student Planning Module, which we hope will cause us to see continued improvement in fall-to-fall retention as well as credential attainment.

Because I serve on the Leadership Team as well as participate frequently in the meetings of several other teams, I know first-hand how hard DACC personnel are working to improve student success and hope that the Leadership College designation will again be granted which will inspire and motivate their continued efforts.

Sincerely,

Alice Marie Jacobs
President

C: Board of Trustees