

Academic Senate's Institution-Set Standard Task Force Notes

(1st Meeting 3-30-23; 2nd Meeting 4-25-23)

1. **Should GCC persist in reporting on retention to its accreditor (i.e., the ACCJC) if it is optional?**

The group agreed that the college should set aside the metric on Retention until enrollment stabilizes.

- With enrollment on a decline across California, it would be more meaningful to resume setting standards and goals on retention once enrollment numbers have normalized. There are still many external factors that we have no control over that affect retention.
- Last year's findings from the 2022 Academic Senate Task Force on retention are still relevant, and yet retention dropped again since last year (to 46%). Note: on April 7, 2022, the Academic Senate changed the standard from 50% back to 47%.
- The plans and action items set into motion as a result of the 2022 Academic Senate Task Force will take some time to produce results. The college needs to follow through with those plans. E.g., It may help the college to see evidence of the impact of the future work of the Learning & Professional Pathway Success Teams, the Quality Focus Project on equitable classroom practices, Vaquero Success Center, and other plans throughout the college.
- Tzoler's most recent student surveys regarding why students dropped produced similar information as the student surveys from the year before.
- Although GCC may set aside reporting on retention to the ACCJC for now, the college should still closely monitor retention efforts for our own information. Also, it still indirectly receives information regarding retention from the transfer and degree metrics.
- There are many reasons why students are not reenrolling from Fall to Fall and therefore affecting retention rate:
 - GCC's creation of many new certificates has resulted in an all-time high for certificates awarded in an academic year. GCC had also lowered the number of units for certificate completion (some certificates reduced from 18-16 units) to help students complete more quickly. Students may be completing their certificate programs and therefore have no need to return in the Fall.
- How does GCC compare to other community colleges? While retention (Fall to Fall) isn't measured by all colleges, persistence (Fall to Spring) is. Among a sample of peer institutions, GCC ranked 2nd in persistence at 70.6% (just after Santa Monica College at 71.1%). GCC is doing much better than most other colleges in persistence.

2. **Task force recommendations for Institution-Set Standards and Stretch Goals**

To ensure the program completion metrics are proportional to enrollment, the task force decided it would be more meaningful to change to percentages what is currently measured as the number of degree completions, number of certificate completions, and number of transfers. The task force recommends reporting these to the ACCJC using percentages but can internally continue to evaluate these standards utilizing numbers.

- Ed converted the numbers to percentages to examine the "percentage after 6 years" data for the task force to recommend percentages for standards and stretch goals.

Standard 1: Course Completion Rate

2022-2023 Report: Institution-Set Standard 68%; Stretch Goal 75%

Task Force Recommendation: Institution-Set Standard 69%; Stretch Goal 76%

This number probably reflects how well GCC is serving many different student populations: reverse transfers, dual enrollment, lifelong learners, skill awards, etc. Since GCC is now a Teaching College, we can expect to have more and more students coming to GCC to plug in random courses for finish academic goals at another CC. Since GCC has been closer to the stretch goal in recent years, it seems logical to increase the Set Standard and the Stretch Goal each by 1%.

Standard 2: Retention Rate

2022-2023 Report: Institution-Set Standard 47%; Stretch Goal 57%

Set aside this for now. See notes above and last year's Academic Senate Task Force notes on why we fell below our standard for retention at 46%, even after lowering it in the previous year.

Task Force Recommendation: Do not report to the ACCJC on this optional metric.

Standard 3: Degree Completion

2022-2023 Report: Institution-Set Standard 1000; Stretch Goal 1200

Task Force Recommendation: Institution-Set Standard 9.5%; Stretch Goal 15%

- Success Teams are in beginning their work
- Students can petition for more than one degree which should increase degree completion rates
- Degree completion fell last year from 1290 to 1247

Standard 4: Transfers

2022-2023 Report: Institution-Set Standard 1100; Stretch Goal 1300

Task Force Recommendation: Institution-Set Standard 40%; Stretch Goal 45%

- Some wondered if we should **lower** our standard given the plunge from the year before, which almost reached our standard.
- Kevin Meza forecasts that transfer numbers should go up since now CSUs are accepting for Spring.

Standard 5: Certificate Completion

2022-2023 Report: Institution-Set Standard 300; Stretch Goal 500

Task Force Recommendation: Institution-Set Standard 2.5%; Stretch Goal 5%

- An uptick in certificate completions may be lowering the retention.

- Also, the higher number of certificates may be directly related to the pandemic. People displaced or working from home during the pandemic had an opportunity to complete certificates (time from work and unemployment benefits to complete education).
(Disaggregate certificates by discipline.)

Possible action items for GCC regarding retention:

- Check which certificates were achieved last year to see if there is a connection to the employment benefits.
- Investigate patterns and reasons for why students drop and implement proactive help for students and inform them of resources at GCC before they drop.