CCA-GPS & Core Elements Glossary—FINAL 3.7.16

CCA-GPS Elements

Guided Pathways – An approach to community college education that emphasizes whole programs of study; informed choice; no wasted credits; default pathways; intrusive, on-time advising; 15 to finish; clear progress to guaranteed courses; milestone courses; block schedules; and workforce connection.

Informed Choice - Colleges use a range of information such as career history and high school performance to provide recommendations to help students make more informed choices about programs of study that match their skills and interests.

Default Pathways - Students choose coherent academic majors or programs, not random, individual courses. In this way, a clear path to on-time completion is prepared for students, semester by semester, all the way to graduation day.

Intrusive, On-Time Advising - Innovations in technology now allow student support to be targeted and customized to meet the needs of individual students, and colleges can more effectively monitor student progress. Early warning systems make it easy for institutions to track student performance in required courses and target interventions when they are most needed.

Intrusive advising does not require technology, however – it can be done without early alert software. Faculty teaching milestone courses can reach out to students who are having trouble, and help them get the support they need.

Guaranteed Course Availability – Guided pathways ensure that courses will be available when the student needs to take them; unavailability of a course will not be an obstacle to degree completion.

Milestone Courses - Degree pathways contain critical milestone courses that must be completed each semester to certify students are on track. These courses provide realistic assessments of student progress and give students early signals about their prospects for success in a given field of study.

Block Schedules – Highly structured schedules that add an element of predictability for students who are often attempting to work or fulfill family obligations while attending college.

Career Pathways

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Accelerated Developmental Courses allow students to complete developmental sections of courses in less time that it would take in a traditional format, which frees the student to move on to more advanced, degree-specific courses.

Contextualized Developmental Courses bring students up to speed in lagging areas, such as writing or math, in the context of the subject that the student wishes to study, such as Advanced Manufacturing.

Prior Learning Assessment describes the process by which one's experiential learning is evaluated for the granting of college-level credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education. This learning may have occurred through workplace-based training programs; work, volunteer and community service; military service and training; and non-college courses.

Competency-Based Assessment is an outcomes-oriented approach that is not dependent on seat time measures of learning. Instead, student achievement of learning outcomes is assessed and certified through observational methods, such as task performance, exams, demonstrations, portfolios, or other direct measures of proficiency, and credentials are awarded based on successful demonstration of competence. The emphasis of this approach is on the mastery of specific competencies as demonstrated through performance-based assessments.

Modularized Curriculum - Curriculum that is divided into more manageable "chunks" or modules with the purpose of improving degree completion rates among non-traditional learners. Generally, each module leads to employment and connects to the next module, eventually leading to completion of an industry-recognized professional-technical degree. Modularizing is one element in a comprehensive career pathways system.

Stacked and Latticed Credentials - A credential is considered stackable when it is part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual's qualifications and help them to move along a career pathway or up a career ladder to different and potentially higher-paying jobs. For example, one can stack a high school diploma, an Associate's degree, and then typically obtain two more years of appropriate postsecondary education to obtain a Bachelor's degree. An individual can also stack an interim career/work readiness or pre-apprenticeship certificate, then complete an apprenticeship, and later earn a degree or advanced certification.

Another example is a non-credit course that stacks into a credit certificate program, which then stacks into an Associate's degree. Completion of non-credit courses and certificate programs allows students to enter the workforce and continue their education.

Advanced Online & Technology-Enabled Learning

Modularized Content Delivery – Modularized content delivery refers to building an online course using a collection of modules or units, with each module having a set of discrete, self-contained learning experiences developed around a specific learning objective. The modules within a course usually follow a standard framework or matrix of activities and assignments. Modularized content delivery helps to support self-paced learning and competency-based instruction.

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Accelerated Course Delivery – Accelerated delivery refers to designing programs in a format that supports accelerated learning, for example, allowing students to master concepts or course content more successfully and in a shorter period of time than usual. The program is delivered in an accelerated format that significantly reduces the time to completion of the credential, and may include innovative learning strategies, such as simulations, competency-based assessments and continuous feedback improvement components.

Simulation Training & Assessment – The use of simulation training gives students the opportunity to learn remotely and outside of typical classroom settings and hours in highly interactive applications to gain "hands-on" practice to hone their technical skills. Simulations allow the learner to model or role-play in a scenario and practice skills and behaviors in a risk-free environment. Interactive assessment in simulations provides a way for teachers to gauge student progress and mastery of complex skills.

Personalized & Virtual Instruction – Delivery of personalized and adaptive instruction that builds on student interests and prior knowledge. A well designed system can explore each student's strengths and weaknesses, experience and background, and shape the instructional experience to fill gaps and build on existing strengths. Personalized learning may also be called student-centered learning, since the goal is to make individual learning needs the primary consideration in educational and instructional decisions.

Digital Tutors – Digital tutor systems refer to the development of educational software with a goal to be as effective as a personal tutor. The system allows each individual to move through material at a rate tailored to one's experience and assists students to master the material much more quickly than one could in traditional classroom-based instruction. The tutorial approach includes step-by-step instructions presented through computer or web-based technology, designed to teach a student how to master a set of occupational skills. It is an attempt to make the advantages of one-on-one tutorial instruction scalable and readily accessible. Its strategy has been to observe the practice of individuals who are expert in both a subject matter and tutoring and then capture their instructional techniques in computer technology.

Asynchronous & Real Time Collaboration - Online courses should support strategies for collaboration among learners and instructors, whether they are based on asynchronous and/or real time (synchronous) learning environments. Asynchronous forms of instruction are not delivered in real time, i.e., online learning in which students learn from prerecorded video lessons or game-based learning tasks that students complete on their own. Students go through a course at their own pace and on their own schedule, and interaction between instructors and students occurs intermittently with a time delay. Asynchronous collaboration may encompass a wide variety of interactions, including email exchanges between teachers, online discussion boards, and course-management systems that organize instructional materials and correspondence.

Real time, or synchronous, learning describes forms of instruction in which students learn from instructors or peers in real time, but not in person. Educational video conferences, interactive webinars, chat-based online discussions, and lectures that are broadcast at the same time they are delivered would all be considered examples of real time, synchronous learning events. Real time learning allows

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learners to interact with the instructor and/or other participants, through software or technology that creates a virtual classroom or meeting.

Interactive Performance Predictors - Interactive tools (predictive data analytics, feedback loops, etc.) that improve the ability of educators to better assess and predict student performance. The tools provide continuous feedback to the learner and instructor to measure progress and, as needed, to automatically identify and remediate individual student learning deficits or enable an instructor to determine whether a student needs additional assistance. These mechanisms can provide feedback to course designers to allow colleges to develop courses that are improved as more students use them and to increase performance outcomes.

Reasonable Cost Course Sharing Available at Nontraditional Hours - Developing and sharing online courses at a reasonable cost and that are available at non-traditional hours, i.e., offered during the day, at night, on weekends, etc.

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