

Spring 2011

Adjunct Faculty In-Service

Triton College

A Focus on Student Success

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the Dream

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Success is what counts.

Success is What Counts

Achieving the Dream was created to help more community college students succeed – complete courses, earn certificates and earn degrees. The initiative is built on the belief that broad institutional change – informed by student achievement data – is critical to achieve this result.



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Success is what counts.

Why the Concern About Student Success?

- Our performance as a Nation is lagging in the global economy
- Access has improved but still disparities... those with low income, 36% (but better than earlier years); those with high income, 78%
- Completion rates are lagging...BA rates: 4 in 10 after 4 years; 6 in 10 after 6 years; BA rates by age 24...high SES, 75%; low SES, 9%
- CC traditional success indicators worse...less than 1/5th succeed through Dev Ed; 1 in 10 earn certificate/degree within 3 years

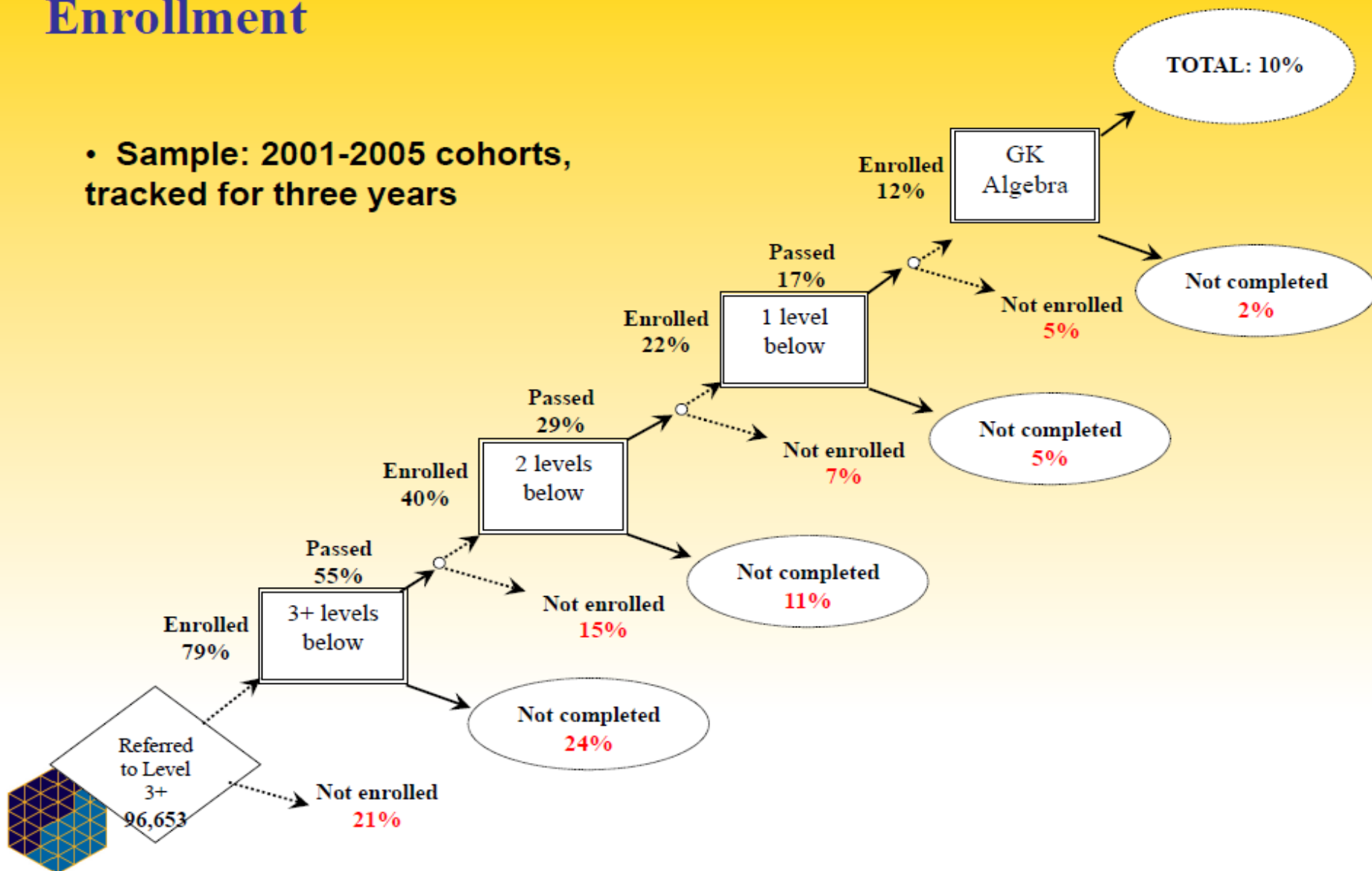


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Math In-Order Course Completion and Enrollment

- Sample: 2001-2005 cohorts, tracked for three years



Success is what counts.

Some Places to Focus Efforts to Improve Student Success

- Improving high schools and high school preparation...U.S. now 24th out of 29 Nations in math proficiency
- Teachers need to be engaged in high school redesign (How colleges might help...dialogue about data showing how students are doing at your college; early placement testing results)
- What institutions do matter...research indicates that schools and colleges with similar size and make-up (to include many students of color and low-income) have different results



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About Achieving the Dream (ATD)

- Began in 2004 with 27 community colleges in five states
- As of 2011, the Initiative has grown to more than 130 institutions (about 1200 CCs exist) in 24 states and DC serving more than one million students
- Co-designed by the Lumina Foundation for Education and seven national partner organizations (ATD is the largest non-government Initiative in community college history)



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About Achieving the Dream

- The 27 colleges and 5 states in Round One (plus Ohio) of the Initiative are now officially done but 21 of these colleges and 8 others have been designated ATD Leader Colleges
- Additionally, 15 of these colleges and 5 states have received Gates funding for a new three-year Developmental Education Initiative
- Plans continue in 2011 for a National Expansion with an estimated 30 colleges planning to join the Initiative later this year



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Achieving the Dream...Working on Five Levels

ATD is a long-term effort to increase the success rates of traditionally underserved students at community colleges at 5 levels...

- Promote and Support Institutional Change
- Develop supportive state and national policies
- Engage the public to support access and success
- Build knowledge about what works in strengthening student outcomes
- Enhance the capacity of national organizations to work long-term for improved student success

Bottom Line: A transformative process...not just another project

Success is what counts.



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First Level - Colleges Participating in ATD

To strengthen the college capacity to increase student success through careful review of institutional practices/processes/policies by:

1. Functioning more as a learning organization
2. Developing a culture of evidence/inquiry and accountability
3. Making systematic and lasting changes



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1. Functioning as a Learning Organization

- Examine teaching and learning practices
- Track student progress through well-defined student learning outcomes
- Assess curriculum effectiveness/relevance and improve as needed
- Review practices/processes/policies for barriers to student success
- Make professional development (especially related to student success) a priority



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2. Creating a Culture of Evidence /Inquiry

Having open and honest conversations about data and examining outcomes of all students to include rates at which they:

- Complete developmental courses and progress to credit-bearing courses
- Enroll in and complete gatekeeper courses
- Complete courses with a grade of C or better
- Re-enroll from one semester to the next
- Earn certificates and degrees



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3. Systemic and Lasting Changes

Includes the ability/willingness to:

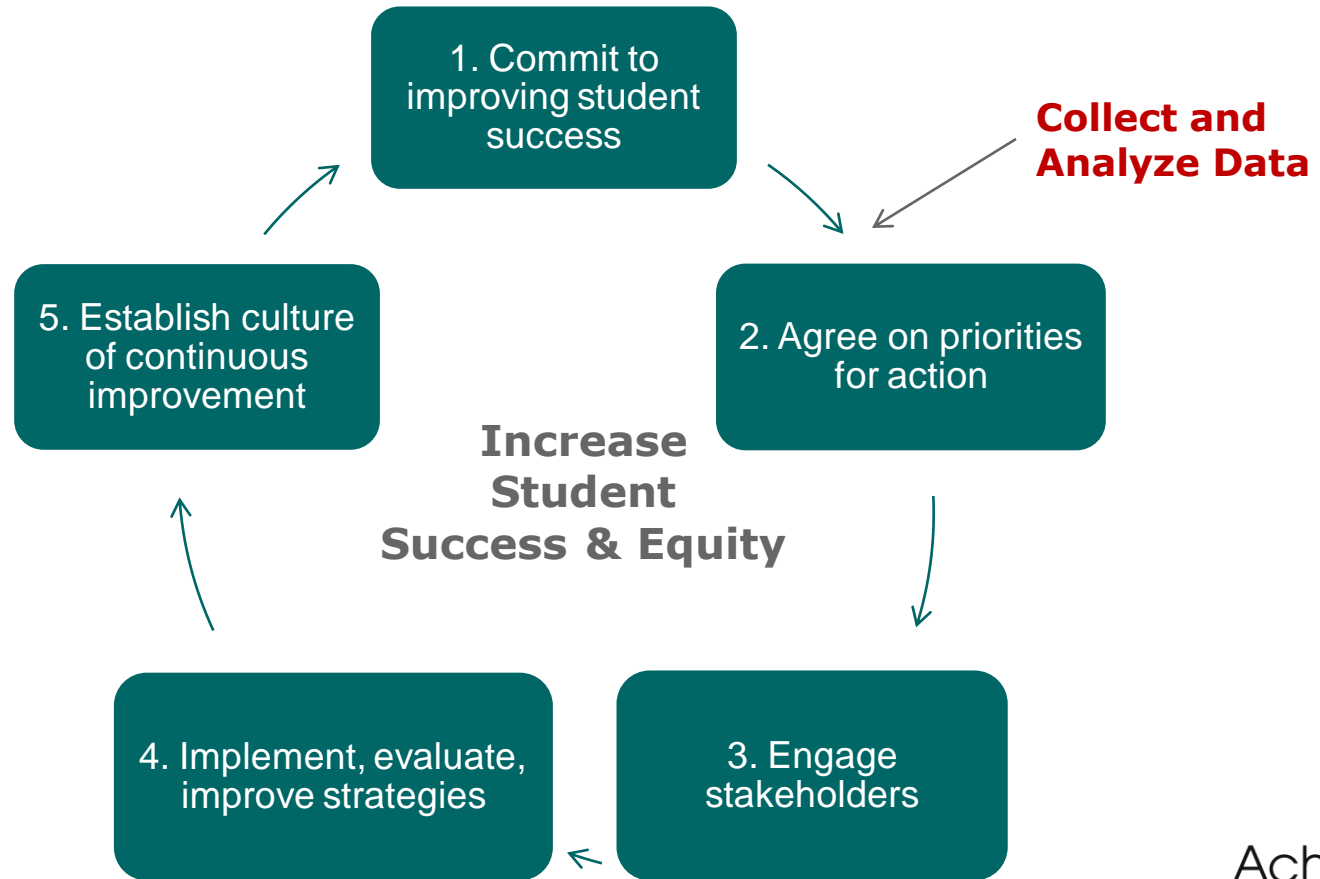
- Improve institutional practices
- Allocate/Re-allocate resources to support interventions that work and go to scale with them
- Review and analyze practices and policies
- Engage constituents (internal and external)
- Listen to student needs
- Use data to make decisions



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Initiating Five-Step Process for Institutional Improvement



Field Guide,
pp. 10-11



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What Seems to Work in Garnering Commitment

- Getting the Board on board
- Engaging campus leadership, especially faculty (to include part-time faculty)
- Communicating the vision broadly
- Putting your money where your mouth is (make resource investments needed to improve student success)
- Building a Core and Data team (or similar existing committee structures) to oversee the process



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What Seems to Work Regarding the Use of Data

- Regularly tracking the progress and outcomes of student cohorts (to identify student “leakage” points)
- Regularly disaggregating data to identify achievement gaps among student groups
- Using data from a variety of sources to better understand barriers to success
- Communicating the results broadly
- Ultimately...prioritizing problems for action



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What Seems to Work in Engaging Stakeholders

- Involving faculty and student services staff (encourages shared ownership in the student success agenda)
- Asking students what they think (through surveys, focus groups, campus conversations)
- Engaging outside stakeholders (beyond the “usual suspects”) – builds external support
- Diagnosing root causes of student underachievement before formulating strategies



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Engaging Stakeholders - Continued

- Review the literature for best practices
- Examine a College's current/previous efforts to address achievement gaps
- Review the effects of policies and procedures...one finding is that developmental education students in particular “don't do optional”
- Formulate strategies (only after data review and engagement)...could be new or expand on existing



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

- **# 1...Review of Existing Placement Policies and Procedures**
- **Why:**
 1. **Out of Triton's 2006 incoming cohort of 1900 students about 500 or 24% did not take the placement tests**
 2. **Out of 1,405 students who took the math placement exam, 1,153 or 82% were referred to developmental math. Further only 666 or 58% referred to developmental math attempted it within 3 years and only 16% referred ever completed their DE math sequence**



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

■ # 1...Review of Existing Placement Policies and Procedures (Continued)

■ Why:

3. Out of 1,405 students who took the English placement exam, 554 or 39% were referred to developmental writing. Further only 425 or 77% referred to developmental English attempted it within 3 years and only 44% referred ever completed their DE English sequence
4. Though less students were referred to reading based on placement tests, results were similar to math and African-American and Hispanic students had higher referrals



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

- **# 1...Review of Existing Placement Policies and Procedures (Continued)**
- **With what actions and results:**
 - 1. Implement mandatory placement testing... Board policy changed in October 2010 requiring all new students to test**
 - 2. Expected Results: 100% degree/certificate seeking students taking placement exam; % additional enrolling in DE (Math, 35%; English, 22%, Reading, 8%); increase in % of successful completions**
 - 3. Future consideration: change in policy for mandatory placement**



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

- **# 2...Developmental Education Program Course Evaluation**
- **Why: Developmental courses at Triton have been evaluated as gatekeeper courses, that is, high enrollment and relatively low success rates (withdrawals as well as grades less than “C”)**
- **Goal: develop a more efficient and effective DE curriculum and structure resulting in increased completion rates and reduce time spent in DE courses**



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

- # 2...Developmental Education Program Course Evaluation (continued)
- With what actions and results:
 1. Formed a committee of English, math, reading and ABE faculty and administrators
 2. Studied “best practices” among which were: fast track; pre-course prep; modular; CAI/tutors; bridge programs; learning communities; impact of late registration; impact of financial aid; organizational structure



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

- # 2...Developmental Education Program Course Evaluation (continued)
- With what actions and results:
 3. Committee finished review process and narrowed focus to a few strategies to be piloted
 4. Pilots being considered are fast-track options and on-line alternatives



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

- **# 3...Creating Shared Ownership for Student Success on Campus**
- **Why: administration felt that the campus community up to this stage of its development was not engaged as a whole in a culture of student success**
- **Goal: create an enhanced campus culture of student success by: updating mission, vision and budgeting processes to reflect student success goals; improving student satisfaction (use of survey tools), retention rates by 4% and graduation rates by 6% over 5 years; increase staff/faculty buy-in**



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Triton College's ATD Strategies

- **# 3...Creating Shared Ownership for Student Success on Campus (continued)**
- **With what actions and results:**
 - 1. Strategy oversight by the ATD Core Team**
 - 2. Identified specific tasks and timelines to include: enhancing communication/marketing tools; review and provide input related to student success on college website and other documents; PDC and CTE provide opportunities and engage faculty/ staff in promising student success strategies; get student success data to faculty/staff and foster data usage**



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Adjunct Faculty Role

- Teach many of the students the college wants to impact by it's student success strategies
- Important players to have on board with the college's goal of having shared ownership in the student success agenda
- What should you as adjuncts know and consider in your faculty member role based on what the research says and best practices?



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What Some Emerging Research is Telling Us

- Find out about what the experience is like for new students when they walk in the door and into the first few weeks of class...the earlier the intervention the better the result
- Momentum and initial success appear to be critical for student persistence and success
- Those who successfully make it through a developmental sequence are more likely to attain higher educational goals (the more accelerated the better too)



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What Some Emerging Research is Telling Us

- Students who take recommended courses immediately after assessment and enroll immediately into credit after developmental (or co-enroll), tend to be much more successful
- Those who are able to attend more full-time are more likely to succeed (implies more interventions like increased aid to do so)
- Late registration and early/frequent absences create challenges for most students (importance of early alert systems)
- Most students (especially those considered at-risk) don't do "optional"



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ATD College Emerging Encouraging/Promising Practices

- Learning Communities (Linked Courses)
- Basic Skills Imbedded in Career Programs
- Supplemental Instruction
- Active and Collaborative Learning (Cooperative Learning)
- Fast-Track Math/ Modular Math



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ATD College Emerging Encouraging/Promising Practices

- Summer Bridge Programs (Boot Camps)
- Case Management (more intrusive/ required advising and early alerts)
- Required Learning Lab Participation (Homework/Study Group)
- Course Redesign/Curricular Alignment
- Creating or revamping orientation and college success courses for new students



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Some Promising Results ATD Colleges

- **Valencia CC:** narrowed achievement gap between African-American and Caucasian students from 13% to 5% and eliminated the gap between Hispanics and Caucasians
- **Danville CC:** increased the % of students of color (by 22%) and low-income students (20%) that advanced from DE to college math
- **Patrick Henry CC:** reduced its attrition rate from 26% to 5% for students in classes with active cooperative learning



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Some Promising Results ATD Colleges

- **Jefferson CC:** increased retention of new full-time students by 8%
- **El Paso CC:** decreased the number of students requiring DE (24% decrease in DE reading/37% decrease in DE writing) and increases by 70% # of credentials awarded
- **Guilford Tech CC:** eliminated its 11% persistence gap between African-American and Caucasian males in DE
- **Coastal Bend CC:** increased its intermediate algebra completion rate by 28% (between 2001 and 2008)



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What Adjunct Faculty Can Do

- Get more connected with the goals of your institution and see how you can play a role
- Get to know your students better...today's non-traditional students need the new 3 "R's" beyond course mastery, relationship, relevance and rigor
- Know about and communicate to students the academic and student support systems available at the college
- Participate in early alerts (for excess absences and lack of academic progress) with good interventions seem to help
- Become active members of campus committees



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What Adjunct Faculty Can Do

- Know about and if not available, ask for student success trend data for the classes that you teach
- Find out about and ask for effective classroom strategies and practices (instruction and assessment) from other faculty that seem to be making a difference
- Take advantage of professional development activities (PDC and CTE)/department meetings focused on student success
- Find venues where your concerns can be effectively heard and vetted
- Use office hours proactively



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Questions for Thought

In a recent MDRC report evaluating the impact of Achieving the Dream, *Turning the Tide: 5 years of Achieving the Dream in Community Colleges*, one of the recommendations is to “Do more to involve adjunct faculty” ...

Questions for Discussion (aside from conditions of work, pay or moving to full-time status)...

How do you suggest adjunct faculty get more involved in Triton’s attempt to change the culture to embrace student success?



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Questions for Thought (Continued)

Is it currently a practice to integrate data use into your teaching and if not, how would you like to see that done....what data about your students would you be interested in seeing?

What other suggestions do you have to achieve your full potential as a faculty member contributing to the student success improvement agenda of Triton College?



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Resources for More Information

- www.aacc.nche.edu (Information about the new College Completion Challenge)
- www.achievingthedream.org (ATD info and click on interventions to find what other ATD colleges are doing and strategies)
- www.deionline.org (info and blog about what Gates funded colleges are doing to enhance developmental education)
- <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu> (current articles on community college emerging research)



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More Information

- Working on securing bibliography about part-time/adjunct faculty issues and practices

- For more information contact:

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Thank You for Your Attention and Input!!



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