PHCC’s Retention To Completion Project: Raising The Bar on Retention, Transfer, and Graduation Rates

PHCC secured Title III funding to improve student success through advising and to increase retention through development of campus-wide intervention programs and career development activities.
PHCC at a Glance

- Founded in 1962 as a two-year branch of UVA
- One of 23 VCCS institutions since 1971
- Serves Martinsville, Henry County, Patrick County, & southern Franklin County
- 26 associates degrees, 13 certificates and 52 career studies certificate programs
- Student Demographics
  - Average Age 27
  - 61.5% Female, 38.5% Male
  - 74% White, 23.3% Black, 2.7% Mixed, Hispanic, Asian, Native American
Off - Campus Locations

Virginia Motorsports Technology Center
Martinsville, Virginia

Franklin County Site
Rocky Mount, Virginia

PHCC School of Craft and Design
Martinsville, Virginia

Patrick County Site
Stuart, Virginia
PHCC Noteworthy Facts

- Enrollment increased 19.05% in 2008-09
- Strong distance education program (SP 08: DL Headcount 1423)
- 41 of 48 full-time faculty possess a masters degree or higher
- Foundation is nationally ranked in fundraising success
- Ranked first nationally in technology among small, rural community colleges by the Center for Digital Education and the American Association for Community Colleges in 2006
- Received the 2008 John Champaign Memorial Award for Outstanding Developmental Education
- Lumina/Achieving the Dream Grant 2004-2008
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Grant 2009
2001-02 Data-Driven Rationale for the Project

Inadequate advising processes and procedures
• No Assistance at off-campus sites
• History of problems with advising processes

Under-prepared students
• 85% program-placed students assessed for developmental courses

Low Retention Rates:
• Below the VCCS average (All Students) 37.9%
• Below the VCCS average (First-Time Program Placed Students) 49.6%
Additional Data-Driven Rationale

Lowest Transfer Rate in VCCS: (Transferred within 4 years and completed a 4 year degree within 8 years from the cohort entering in Fall 1993)
- 01-02 All 7%
- 01-02 Degree Completers 9.42%

Low Placement Rates:
- Next to lowest in VCCS 02-03 in the “rate of employment of OT graduates 6-12 months after graduation”
- Next to lowest in the “retention employment” indicator (% of graduates working/continuing work for a period of at least one quarter)

Very Low Graduation Rate:
- Fall 1996 cohort graduation rate was 11.3%.
Retention to Completion Project Design

The Integrated Advising, Testing and Career Center aims to improve student success and retention through development, adoption, and initiation of:

- An improved faculty-based advising system
- Initiation of campus-wide intervention programs
- Career services
- Improved placement testing and non-academic assessments

**YIELDS**

- Exemplary Career and Advising Services
- Increased Retention, Transfer, and Graduation Rates
Institutional Commitment

• Institutional Physical Resources:
  – 1500 sq. feet in the Walker Fine Arts Student Center
  • Dedicated wireless lab with 38 stations
  • Five staff offices
  • PHCC provides phone, data lines, equipment maintenance, HVAC, etc.

• Institutional Human Resources:
  – Approximately 650K in salaries during grant years 2004-2009

• Other Institutional Financial Commitment:
  – Approximately 15K in testing and office supplies

• Retention To Completion Taskforce
Implementation of Advising Enhancements Based on Best Practices

• Advising resources for students, faculty, and the community
• Articulation agreements initiated with senior institutions
• Transfer Counselor in IATCC
• Computerized COMPASS in a wireless lab
• Undecided students referred to the IATCC for follow-up
• Advising Labs at off-campus sites
• Development of SDV courses aimed at increased retention/transfer
• Provide classroom instructor support with career related topics
• Participate in campus-wide ATD projects to improve retention
Implementation of Career Resources

Accessible career resources (contact and virtual format through the internet)

- On-Line Job Site
- Job Search Workshops & Assessments
- On-line Career Resources
  - Resources to support programs, cooperative education opportunities, apprenticeships, and internships are made available online
  - Links to national and state employment opportunities in a coordinated, comprehensive online job site provide a “one-stop” employment search
Services Available for In-class Activities

- Career Exploration Activities
  - Assessments
  - Inventories
  - Informational Websites

- Job Search Topics
  - Job Search Techniques
  - Completing Applications
  - Resume Writing
  - Interviewing Skills
  - Professional Ethics
Implementation of Retention/Transfer Strategies

• Comprehensive approach to retention
  – Faculty-based early warning program (Attendance Tracker)
  – 100% faculty and a growing number of adjunct faculty partake in professional development offerings related to recruitment and retention
  – Peer/faculty mentoring program
  – Case Management Advising

• Development of Tracking Database Management System
  – Title III Reporting
  – Evaluating Services
  – Placements
  – Traffic
  – Identifies Where Marketing is Needed

• Required entry course requirement in business related programs
  – SDV 101 (Orientation to Business Related Programs)

• Required capstone course in transfer programs to graduation and transfer rates
  – SDV 199 (Transferring to the Senior Institution)
OUTCOMES
Advising-Related Outcomes After Four Years

Advising

- **100%** of full-time faculty have participated in professional development activities aimed at increasing transfer/retention.

- The IATCC is **fully integrated** into the campus.

- **Off-Campus** advising labs **staffed and fully functioning** to provide same services at off-campus sites.
Graduation and Transfer-Related Outcomes After Four Years of Operation

Graduation Rates
• Doubled in 5 years
• Ranks 4th highest in VCCS

Transfer: Since Title III funding in 2002
• % for ALL graduates increased from 7% to 20.8%
• % of transfer degree graduates increased from 9.42% to 59.40% (+ 16% in 07-08)
• Articulation Agreements increased exponentionally
  – VCCS articulation 24 senior institutions
  – PHCC specific articulation with many senior institutions
Patrick Henry Community College Transfer Rates
Special Retention Initiative Outcomes

• Attendance Tracker
  • Retention Rate of 82.2% (Pilot)
  • Fully institutionalized Fall 2006 with a 64% retention rate and similar rates since

• Dreamkeepers
  • Retention Rate of 77% (Pilot)
  • Fully institutionalized Fall 2006 with up to a 90% retention rate and similar rates since

• Peer Mentoring
  • Retention Rate of 51% (Pilot-equivalent to institutional rate)
  • Institutionalized Fall 2006 with a 90.6% retention rate and similar rates since
PHCC Retention Rates

- Fall to Fall
- Fall to Spring

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall to Fall</th>
<th>Fall to Spring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>66.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>39.6</td>
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<td>2007</td>
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<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>49</td>
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Career-Related Outcomes

• Student participation in work-based learning (internships, apprenticeships, cooperative education) increased 9%.
• Comprehensive on-line job site created
• Two-hundred fifty-four (254) Infused Classroom Activities
  – 832 Career Development/Assessment
  – 288 Resume Writing/Interviewing Skills
• Two hundred eighty-eight (288) In-house Workshops
  – Skills Identification
  – Completing Job Applications
  – Resumes
  – Interviewing
  – Job Fair
• One of only two VCCS institutions to meet/exceed all Perkins Measures
• Outreach, an unintended consequence
  – At risk youth
  – Developing the workforce
  – WIB activities
  – Provide Career Assessments to various community-based groups
PHCC Students Feel Supported!

The 2008 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (585 institutions) provides an excellent benchmark for PHCC with respect to “Support for Learners”:

- **2nd highest “in the VCCS”**
- **3rd highest of ALL U.S. “small, rural, single campus” institutions**
- **8th highest of all U.S. community and technical colleges**
- **12th highest of ALL U.S. colleges**
If you want to know more…

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Any Questions?