Advancing Reengagement and Student Success through Data-Informed Strategies for the Some College, No Degree Population

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June 28, 2023

Welcome

Amanda Janice Roberson
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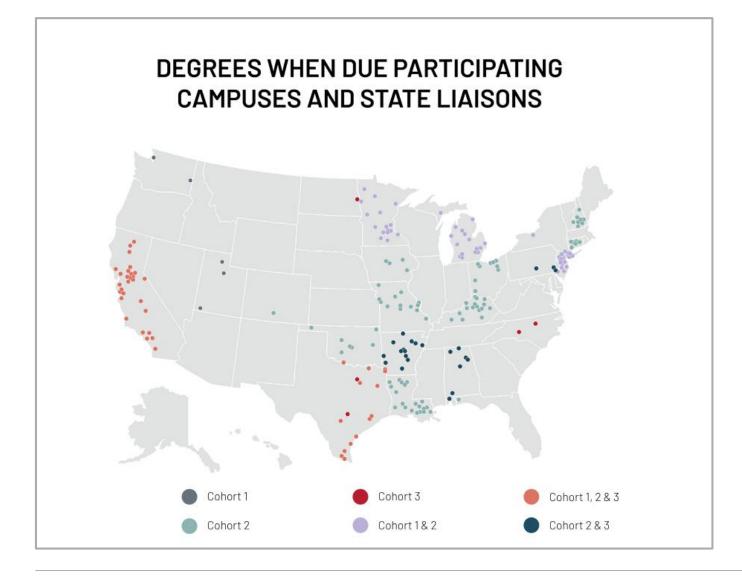
Institute for Higher Education Policy

Our Vision

Building a more equitable and just society through higher education.

Our Mission

We drive systemic change in higher education to advance equitable outcomes and generational impact for communities historically marginalized on the basis of race, ethnicity, or income. We achieve this change through research, advocacy, policy development, and field engagement.

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40 million Americans have some college but no degree

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DEGREES WHEN DUE PARTICIPATING CAMPUSES AND STATE LIAISONS

Cohort 1
Cohort 2
Cohort 3
Cohort 1 & 2
Cohort 1, 2 & 3
Cohort 2 & 3

200 Institutions

23 States

3 Cohorts

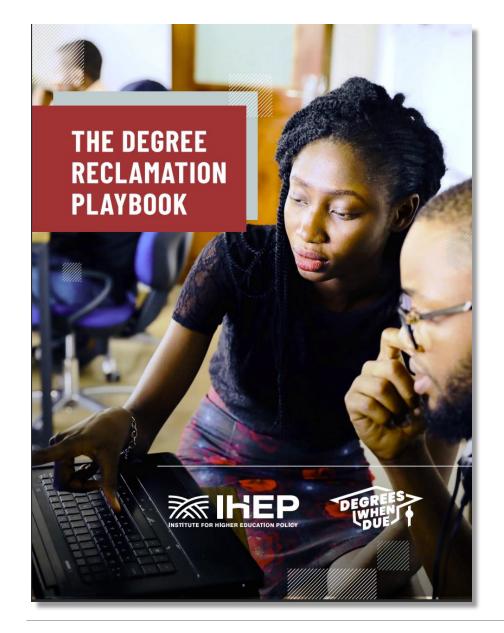**3** Years

Students cited three main reasons for leaving:

1. Needing to find employment to meet their basic needs
2. Raising and supporting children and a family
3. Reprioritizing work, family, and school

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Students had two primary motivations for returning:

1. Wanting to serve as a role model for their family, particularly since some of them had initially left college due to their children
2. Needing a degree for a job promotion or a job they desired

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"A Decade of Equity-Focused Completion Best Practices at your Fingertips"

This user-friendly guide includes:

- 10-steps to implementing degree reclamation strategies on campuses

- Color-coded tracks for RT and AR

- Strategic Assessment

- Appendix full of worksheets and guides

10 Steps to Degree Reclamation Implementation

1. Build Your Team

2. Build an Equity Framework

3. Inventory Institutional Policies and Practices

4. Dig into the Data

5. Share Transcripts and Student Consent *(Reverse Transfer)*

6. Audit Degrees

7. Communicate with Near-Completers

8. Re-enroll Near Completers *(Adult Reengagement)*

9. Confer Degrees

10. Sustain Degree reclamation strategies

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Identifying Students and Barriers

➢ Two words: **Degree audits**

➢ **170,000** students identified as potentially eligible for a degree

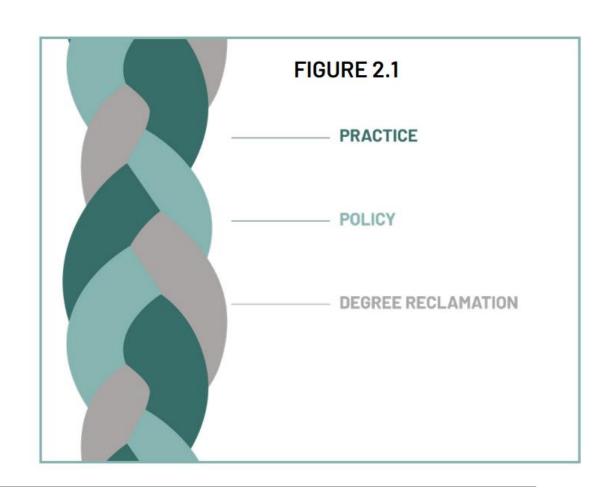➢ Three words: **1 in 10**

➢ **Degree Mining Tool**

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BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
Academic	
Developmental coursework (e.g., math, reading, and English) or gateway courses (e.g., college-level math)	Peer tutoring; summer bridge programs; supplemental academic supports; co-requisites
General education requirements (e.g., oral communications)	Changes in curriculum or pedagogy
Unique institutional requirements (e.g., wellness or computer literacy requirement)	Removing or altering unique institutional requirements
General academic challenges	Regularly train faculty and advisors on requirements; use an intrusive advising model; leverage technology to track student progress
Non-Academic	
Financial challenges	Institutional debt forgiveness; fundraising/scaling student financial aid; embedding basic needs support
Class accessibility	Different modality options; classes outside of traditional times (evening, early morning, weekend)
Bureaucracy	Advisors acting as navigators; reform policy and practice
Isolation	Adult student-friendly campus culture; programs focused on adults; adult cohorts/learning communities/groups; advisors trained on adult learners

Integrating Reengagement Strategies

- Part of routine processes

- Work Plans

- Recurring Meetings

- Shared repository

- Champions

- Alignment with Strategic Plan

FIGURE 2.1

PRACTICE

POLICY

DEGREE RECLAMATION

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Driving Policy Change

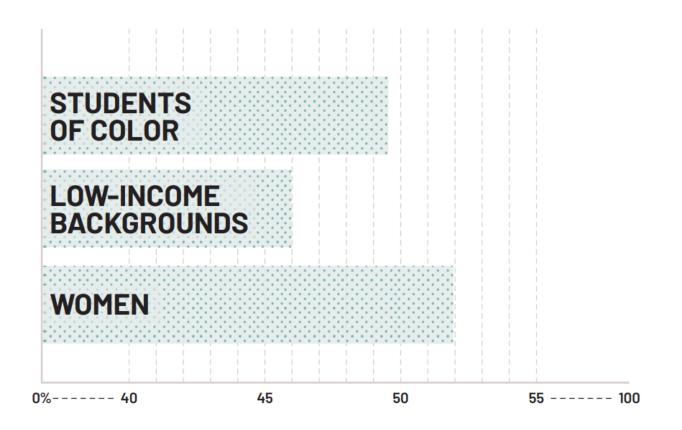| POLICY	ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN	STEPS TO IMPROVE ALIGNMENT	EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS
The college charges a $75 graduation fee to cover the expenses related to verifying degree eligibility and helping to defray the cost of commencement.	**1 (not aligned)** This policy is not aligned with the institution's goal in the strategic plan to eliminate student barriers to degree completion because it creates a financial obstacle that may discourage students from applying for graduation.	1. Analyze the resources generated by the graduation fee. 2. Based on this analysis, consider the potential of eliminating the fee. 3. If total elimination of the fee is not feasible, consider an alternative source of funding. One option might be to embed this fee (or a smaller amount) as part of the general student fee that is not a barrier at the end of students' journeys.	This fee is not equitable and could be seen as a regressive tax, in that students from low-income backgrounds are charged a higher percentage of their income than wealthier students. This results in a fee that is a disproportionately large hurdle to degree completion for our most economically disadvantaged students.

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Using Data and Student Voice

- Connect with students and understand their stories

- Consider data points for storytelling
  - Change over time
  - Comparison Groups
  - Disaggregated data

- Institutional Leadership Support

- Regional and State Leadership Support

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Disaggregated Data are a Tool to Advance Equity

STUDENTS OF COLOR

LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS

WOMEN

0% – – – – – 40   45   50   55 – – – – – 100
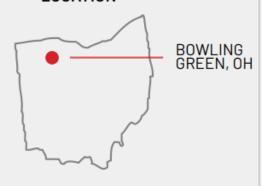
Among the students who were awarded associate's and bachelor's degrees through degree reclamation, **almost half were students of color, 46 percent were students from low-income backgrounds, and 52 percent were women.**

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Bowling Green State University (OH)

ABOUT BOWLING GREEN UNIVERSITY

LOCATION

BOWLING GREEN, OH

Note: Undergraduate enrollment and degrees conferred are averaged over a three-year period, 2017-2019.

Source: Authors' calculations using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2017-2019, Completions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR
INSTITUTION TYPE

14,880
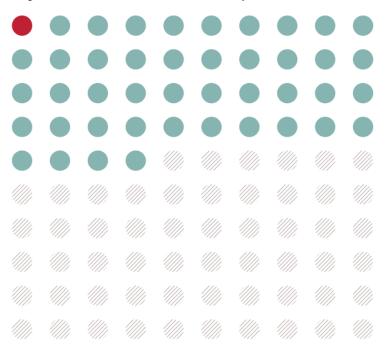UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT

2,910
DEGREES CONFERRED ANNUALLY

Credits: BGSU Marketing and Brand Strategy

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Shasta College (CA)

Figure 1.
Targeted Former Students and Subsequent Outcomes

0.34%
Students Completed all the Academic Requirements, But Not Awarded Degree

43.5%
Students Completed all the Academic Requirements, And Awarded Degree

56.2%
Students' Academic Requirements Incomplete

Note: Targeted students had stopped out but had accumulated 60 or more credits.

ABOUT SHASTA COLLEGE

LOCATION

REDDING, CA

Note: Undergraduate enrollment and degrees conferred are averaged over a 3-year period of 2017-2019.

Source: Authors' calculations using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2017-2019, Completions. Accessed on 9/13/2021.

GENERAL INFORMATION

PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE
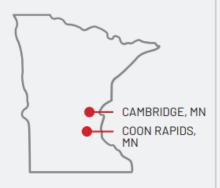INSTITUTION TYPE

9,191
UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT

769
DEGREES CONFERRED ANNUALLY

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Anoka-Ramsey Community College (MN)

ABOUT ANOKA-RAMSEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LOCATIONS

● CAMBRIDGE, MN
● COON RAPIDS, MN

Note: Undergraduate enrollment and degrees conferred are averaged over a 3-year period of 2017-2019.

Source: Authors' calculations using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), 2017-2019, Completions. Accessed on 9/13/2021.

GENERAL INFORMATION

PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

INSTITUTION TYPE

8,868

UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT

1,059

DEGREES CONFERRED ANNUALLY

INSTITUTION-SPECIFIC GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS WERE A BARRIER FOR MANY NEAR-COMPLETERS

The data showed that about 280 near-completer students—or about 54%— had not completed ARCC's wellness course requirement.

Figure 2.

Institution-Specific Graduation Requirements Were a Common Barrier

243 | 280

Total Near-Completers: 523

KEY

░ Completed wellness course

⣿ Did not complete wellness course

Quick Poll

Join at menti.com and use code 2143 5291

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LIGHTING THE PATH

to Remove Systemic Barriers in Higher Education and Award Earned Postsecondary Credentials Through IHEP's Degrees When Due Initiative

"Students with some college but no degree need to be reenrolled – and reengaged. A clear path to degree completion will make a tremendous difference for them, their families, our communities, and our country as a whole.

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DEGREES WHEN DUE

Lighting the Path: Policy Recommendations

Institutional Policy

➢ **Invest in data.**

➢ Review graduation requirements.

➢ Switch to an opt-out policy.

➢ Eliminate unnecessary paperwork.

➢ Address financial holds.

➢ **Implement routine degree audits.**

➢ Build in clear communication.

➢ Be student-centered.

State Policy

➢ **Facilitate implementation.**

➢ Increase awareness.

➢ Fund degree reclamation.

➢ Inform pathway development.

➢ Change policy.

Federal Policy

➢ Remove barriers.

➢ Promote degree auditing.

➢ Invest in college completion.

Long-Lasting Impacts of DWD

➢ Identifying policies and practices that posed barriers

➢ Systemic institutional change

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Questions?

It's Your Turn: Strategic Assessment

- Designed to kick-off the work of the Degree Reclamation Playbook

- Evaluates the implementation level of related policies, practices, and strategies at your institution.

- Helps flag areas of the playbook that may be most useful.

- As a group, rate the policies/practices, capacity, and strategies on this scale:
  - **Not Present**: not in consideration or previously implemented.
  - **Exploring/Planning**: actively being considered or preparing to pilot/implement.
  - **Implementing**: currently in full scale implementation.
  - **Sustaining**: full-scale implementation complete, with work on long-term survival and effectiveness.

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Thank you!

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