



Tompkins Cortland Community College  
2015-2020 Strategic Priorities Action Plan Update/Progress Report  
April 2017

## Introduction

This is the fourth of our regular periodic reports updating progress on our goals and action plan and the second update for 2016-17, the second year of our action plan. This report provides the results obtained on the goals to date and discusses the current working directions of the committees. In July, we will update results from this semester. You can find all memos and updates at [http://tc3.edu/about\\_tc3/institutional\\_planning.asp](http://tc3.edu/about_tc3/institutional_planning.asp).

The good news is that there is some “good news” related to our FTFT first semester success rates. Unfortunately, all of the news on our metrics is not as positive. It is important, however, that we continue to acknowledge our current state and keep our goals in mind as we engage in current and future initiatives.

## GOALS

### I. CHALLENGE GOAL - Increase completion rates by 50% by 2025

- **Completion rates for first time full time students after 4 years (a national IPEDS measure). Our goal is to increase this rate from 25.5% (average of 2008-10) to 38% by 2025.**

The baseline of 25.5% is an average of the completion rates for Fall 2008, 2009, and 2010 FTFT students four years later. Our challenge is to have 38% of the Fall 2021 FTFT students graduate by 2025.

**Status unchanged since last report:** Our IPEDS rate for the 2011 cohort is 27%. The SUNY community college average rate for the 2011 cohort was 30%. Internal data indicates that 28.3% of the Fall 2012 FTFT students graduated by this past summer.

- **Completion rates for all students new to TC3 (full-time or part-time) after 6 years and who earned at least 12 credits (VFA/SAM\*).**  
**Our goal is to increase this rate from 41% for the Fall 2008 cohort (as of 2014) to 60% for the 2019 cohort (as of 2025).**

\*The Voluntary framework for Accountability (VFA) and Student Assessment Measure (SAM) are national metrics, and provide comparison data from other two-year institutions.

**Status unchanged since last report:** Six-year data for the Fall 2009 students declined to 38.9% (VFA). While it has been many years since most of these students have been enrolled in the college and thus have not had the benefit of our many initiatives developed in recent years, we are disappointed in these results, but remain optimistic that our goal is within reach. I note that Fall 2009 saw our largest increases (13%+ increase in core enrollment and 46% increase in residential students) and was the year we began to see significant changes in the demographics of our traditional age students.

## II. Intermediate Goals

In order to track our progress toward the above challenge goals, we established a set of intermediate goals, indicators that measure the progress necessary to achieve our ultimate goals of completion. As outlined in this and previous memos, we have numerous initiatives that we believe will have a positive impact on these metrics.

### GOAL – Increase Core Enrollment

In Fall 2015 we established aspirational core enrollment goals. We all are well aware that enrollment has moved in the opposite direction from those goals. This semester we will revisit our aspirational assumptions, amend them if necessary, and establish new goals for the next three years based on our current numbers.

### GOAL - Increase success rates for basic skills courses to the 75th percentile in the National Community College Benchmarking Project

#### Updated Status:

	Baseline		Current status	Goal
	Fall 14 $\geq$ C	Fall 15 $\geq$ C	Fall 16 $\geq$ C	Fall 17 target
<b>ENGL 99</b>	61.7%	62.5%	<b>63.2%</b>	72%
<b>ENGL 98</b>		82.7%	<b>79.8%</b>	
<b>ENGL 100</b>	65.7%	62.7%	<b>62.7%</b>	77%
<b>INTD 49</b>			<b>50.0%</b>	
<b>RDNG 99</b>	57.6%	52.3%	<b>58.6%</b>	74%
<b>RDNG 116</b>	55.4%	49.4%	<b>47.8%</b>	74%
<b>MATH 90</b>	43.7%	38.2%	<b>45.0%</b>	65%
<b>MATH 95</b>	43.1%	40.7%	<b>48.6%</b>	65%
<b>MATH 100</b>	48.1%	50.0%	<b>43.7%</b>	72%

While the above results were not what we hoped to see, we are engaged in numerous curricular and pedagogical initiatives that provide reason to hope for different results moving forward. Updates on the developmental curricular pilots are included in the Action Plan working group updates below.

**GOAL - Increase, over the next three years, the Fall-to-Fall retention of FTFT students from our current 51% (Fall 2014 to Fall 2015) to 61% (Fall 2018 to Fall 2019), the SUNY community college average for Fall 2013 to Fall 2014.**

**Status unchanged since last report:**

	Fall to Fall retention			
	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15
ALL FTFT	52.2%	52.5%	51.4%	46.2%
Male	48.9%	48.0%	48.0%	42.9%
Female	55.3%	57.0%	54.4%	49.4%
Resident 1st semester**	50.2%	48.8%	44.6%	39.9%
Commuter 1st semester	53.7%	55.7%	57.3%	51.6%
Under-represented Minorities (URM)*	44.0%	50.6%	42.6%	35.6%
nonURM	56.2%	53.5%	56.1%	52.1%
PELL recipients	53.0%	53.0%	46.3%	42.6%
Non-PELL recipients	51.1%	51.6%	61.2%	53.0%

\* African American, Hispanic, Alaskan/Native American and Multiracial

\*\* residential student at end of semester

**GOAL – Increase First semester academic success (defined by GOOD academic status) to 72% by Fall 2017.**

**Updated Status:**

	Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15	Fall 16
ALL FTFT	67.2%	69.5%	71.6%	64.9%	62.6%	64.5%
Male	58.3%	64.4%	67.3%	59.0%	55.6%	61.0%
Female	75.5%	74.2%	76.4%	70.5%	69.7%	68.2%
Resident 1st semester**	69.2%	70.8%	67.8%	59.1%	56.2%	59.4%
Commuter 1st semester	65.6%	68.5%	75.6%	70.0%	68.0%	70.0%
Under-represented Minorities (URM)*	53.0%	59.2%	65.3%	57.5%	49.1%	55.2%
Non URM	73.2%	74.5%	76.0%	68.8%	70.0%	71.9%
PELL recipients	66.0%	68.9%	69.5%	60.2%	58.2%	61.2%
Non-PELL recipients	68.7%	70.3%	75.8%	74.5%	70.9%	71.3%

\* African American, Hispanic, Alaskan/Native American and Multiracial

\*\* residential student at end of semester

The good news here is an increase in first semester academic success for our FTFT students, with larger increases in the subgroups that historically show performance gaps. Unfortunately, these increases did not translate to similar increases in Fall to Spring retention.

**GOAL - Increase new student FTE enrollment by at least 1% every year.**

**Updated Status (from Salient):**

FTE enrollment of first-time (NEW) students, full or part –time, with percentage change from previous year:

	2014-15	2015-16		2016-17	
Fall	400.8	399.6	-0.3%	372.9	-6.7%
Spring	66.3	79.9	+20.5%	55.4	-30.7%
Total*	467.5	479.9	+2.7%	429	-10.6%

\* Includes small number from Summer enrollment

*Italics identify estimated numbers for the rest of this year.*

The relative stability in Fall enrollment from 2014-15 to 2015-16, couples with the significant Spring increase, gave us confidence that we could meet or even exceed this goal this year. Historically we have seen up to 20% of enrollment occur in the last few weeks before a new semester; the declines this year included this period and were unexpected. On the other hand, this shift in enrollment pattern may indicate that our housing incentive and marketing of the Vector Scholars and Network Peer Mentoring Program may be influencing earlier enrollment behavior.

Admissions and the marketing team are actively engaged in implementation of new strategies that we are optimistic will have a positive impact on future new student enrollment and contain any further decline.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTION/OPPORTUNITY GROUP PROGRESS REPORTS:**

**I. THE FIRST SEMESTER MATTERS**

**Transition/Entry-level processes** (Update from Khaki Wunderlich and Blixxy Taetzsch)

*How can we best design our entry-level processes (from recruitment to first semester enrollment) to provide guidance thorough the many necessary complex processes, leading students onto a path most likely to lead to success and completion, while not restricting choice?*

See the Marketing updates below for continued enhancements to our entry-level processes (START).

The housing discount for students who declare their intent to live on campus by July 1 is being continued, decreasing the funding gaps for low income students.

Pathways, Network Peer Mentor, and Vector Scholars programs are actively working with participating students. The first semester results for the 37 students in our second group of Vector Scholars was very promising:

- 75% first academic semester success rate vs. 52% for comparison group
- 92% Fall to Spring retention vs. 72.5% for comparison group

The program has been expanded to add food support this semester and to continue programming and support for the students throughout their enrollment at TC3. Forty new scholars will be recruited for Fall 2017.

We are in active development of our new Full Measure Education (FME) initiative, creating a mobile and web-based planning and communication platform for students that bring together career, academic, and financial planning. The student app and web platforms have been named *Tompkins Cortland Connect* and are going live this month. Degree Works integration is expected to be completed by June. Full implementation remains on target for late Summer.

The staff platform, providing an integrated view of student information to track correspondence and communications with students, will become available by summer and we will begin pilot use with specific staff groups.

#### **Basic Skills/first semester courses** (Update from John Conners)

*What processes will most efficiently and effectively identify our students' basic academic skills and need for pre-college intervention?*

Recent national and regional research raises significant questions about the validity of basing course placement on single test scores. We have begun data analysis and conversations with basic skills faculty groups and Student Success staff to identify factors (e.g. high school grade point averages and Regents test scores) that might be utilized, alone or in conjunction with placement test scores, to best place students in their first semester classes.

We are also looking at our current testing processes to identify possible ways to alleviate barriers students might encounter in our placement systems. We have just identified a set of criteria for high-performing recent high school students that will allow English and Reading placement without the need for additional testing.

*What curricular models can best meet the needs of our current students and increase success rates in basic skills first semester courses, while decreasing the time spent in non-program applicable courses?*

Updates from Fall 16 curriculum initiatives:

#### ENGL 98/100 -

- 104 students
- 80% success rate in ENGL 98 (vs. 63% success for students enrolled in ENGL 99)
- 68% success rate in ENGL 100 (vs. 62% for students enrolled only in ENGL 100)
- we will continue increasing the number of sections in Fall 2017

#### Quantway –

- New MATH 98 course, leading directly to MATH 200 for nonSTEM students

- 42 students this semester
- 1 section (16 students) scheduled for summer session and 6 sections (96 students) planned for Fall
- Success rates at other similar institutions has been 65-70%

#### INTD 49

This five-credit interdisciplinary course combines the curricula of our current ENGL 99 and RDNG 99 courses, thereby decreasing the time needed for remediation while better helping students understand the relationship and interdependence of reading and writing skills. Two sections are offered each semester this year, five sections (80 students) are planned for Fall 2017. Assessment is pending; however, the faculty believe students are exiting the course with significantly higher skill levels and preparedness for the college-level courses than students in the standalone RDNG 99 and ENGL 99 courses.

Network Learning Living Community – Fall 2016 pilot residential learning community of RDNG 99/PSYC 101/Network Peer Mentoring Program. Student had a 75% success rate in RDNG 99 compared to 55% rate for all other sections. The plan is to redesign and continue the pilot in Fall 2017.

#### **Residential students** (Update from John Bradac)

*How can we better leverage the opportunity for support provided by students living on campus?*

During the spring semester, the campus community continues to engage in conversations with campus constituents to better understand our residence life program and to foster a strong sense of educational community within the residence halls. Our goal is to increase the academic support in the residence halls and better engage our residents in the academic learning community of the college. As a campus community, we have been working with the Residential Life staff to explore creative ways to promote positive interaction and build a vibrant living-learning environment for residents. Current initiatives include:

- A new staff/faculty/Residence Life initiative – “Faculty and Staff Floor Partners.” All 21 floors have been “adopted” by one or more staff or faculty. Partners and students met at the beginning of the semester to connect and discuss possibilities for further engagement. Each floor partner is asked develop and implement three programs with members of the floor to increase engagement for our student community.
- An external review of our judicial processes conducted by three external consultants:
  - Jody Kunk-Czaplicki, Office of the Judicial Administrator, Cornell University
  - Timothy R. Burkhalter, Associate Director of Student life for Student Conduct, Loyola University
  - Cyndi Vasquez-Barrios, Dean of Students/Deputy Coordinator-Title IX, Joliet Junior College

On February 14-15, the consultants met with faculty, staff, and students across the community to gather information and to benchmark the strengths and challenges facing the judicial operations on campus. We anticipate a completion of the review by April 15<sup>th</sup> and will then

disseminate the report and consider what adjustments, if any, should be made in our current policies and practices.

## **II. HIGH NEED STUDENTS/IDENTIFICATION OF PERFORMANCE GAPS INDICATIVE OF STRUCTURAL BARRIERS** (Update from Khaki Wunderlich, Kris Altucher, Tim Densmore, and Blixty Taetzsch)

*What, in fact, are the needs and gaps experienced by our students and what should be the indicators and short term goals to assess the success and equitable access for identified “high risk” groups?*

The initial analysis of available data for subgroups of our student population is completed and was used to inform our *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan 2016-2020*, completed and submitted to SUNY in December 2016. We recently received commendation from SUNY for the comprehensiveness of the plan. The full plan can be accessed at [http://tc3.edu/about\\_tc3/institutional\\_planning.asp](http://tc3.edu/about_tc3/institutional_planning.asp). Highlights of the plan, related to this strategic priority, are included below:

### **Campus Demographics**

Diversity in our student body has increased significantly in recent years. Our student population is significantly more diverse than the surrounding communities and our housing population is even more diverse than the total student population. Increases since 2008 are shown below:

Core enrollment from 2008-09 to 2015-16

- Underrepresented Minorities (URM) +124% (currently 26%)
- PELL recipients +35% (currently 46%)
- Students with Disabilities +29% (currently 15%)
- Adult students (≥ 25 years of age) have remained steady at about 33%
- Veterans constitute less than 2%
- International students have ranged from 2% - 6%

First-time full-time Fall enrollment Fall 2008-2016

- Underrepresented Minorities +239% (currently 41%)
- PELL recipients +40% (currently 66%)
- Students with Disabilities +51% (currently 21%)
- Adult students (≥ 25 years of age) have remained 5-6%
- The percentage of most academically-challenged students has remained between 12-16% since Fall 2009.

No data is available on LGBTQ identification. Data on first generation college student and parent status are not comprehensive and will be included in our short-term goals.

While we have been very successful in diversifying enrollment, particularly for first-time students, we have not been as successful in understanding and providing the support needed by many of our students in order to succeed academically.

Despite efforts to increase diversity in non-Civil Service hiring pools, we continue to struggle to increase diversity in our faculty and staff. Non-white only staff and faculty are less than 10% across all employee groups, while the student body is approximately 30%.

## Performance Gaps

Analysis of available data identifies the most significant performance gaps to be experienced by Underrepresented Minority (URM) and low income students. Because academic standards were significantly increased in Fall 2011, success indicator data is presented only since that time. Data for several groups are available in the Strategic Evidence Library.

- Average 4-year completion rate gap for Fall 2011 and 2012 FTFT students is 16.5% for URM students and 8.7% for PELL recipients.
- The five-year trend for FTFT first semester academic success shows a gap of 15% for URM students and 14% for PELL students. The gap for URM students has remained consistent over that time. Of concern, the gap for PELL students has widened significantly. Fall 2016 data showed 17% and 10% gaps, respectively.
- The five-year trend for FTFT Fall-to-Fall retention shows a gap of 14% for URM students and 11% for PELL students. The gaps show the same pattern as first semester success above.

We will continue to monitor gaps for other identified groups (particularly gender, students identified with a disability) but will primarily focus our resources on improving indicators for the URM and PELL students. We have also recently identified a group of academically successful students who have “stopped out” and will be following through with them to better understand their issues and needs.

The Plan includes six goals with strategies and metrics; two of them relate directly to our strategic priorities:

### Goal 2 Decrease gaps in student academic success, retention, and completion.

Comparison is to complementary cohort. Historic data is included in Section III of the Strategic Evidence Library.

#### FTFT Four Year Completion Rate

	Baseline Gap*	2020 Gap Target Metric
Gender	5.7%	≤4%
URM	16.5%	≤7%
PELL	8.7%	≤5%
SWD	5.1%	≤4%

\* mean of 2011 and 2012 Fall FTFT students

#### FTFT First Semester Success

	Baseline Gap*	2020 Gap Target Metric
Gender	11%	≤5%
URM	15%	≤7%
PELL	14%	≤7%
SWD	6%	≤3%

\* trend gap Fall 2011-2015

### FTFT Retention

	Baseline Gap*	2020 Gap Target Metric
Gender	5%	≤3%
URM	14%	≤10%
PELL	11%	≤7%
SWD	4%	≤3%

\* trend gap Fall-to-Fall retention of Fall 2011-2015 FTFT student

### Goal 6 Strengthen collection and access to data related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Availability of dashboards.
- Use of data in department plan documents, including assessment.

Strategies related to achievement of the above goals and objectives are outlined in the full Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan. As part of department planning, each department will also be developing strategies, activities, and assessment plans to directly support these collegewide goals.

*What structural barriers are created by our practices, procedures, and policies that all students must interact with throughout their experience with TC3?*

The barriers encountered by many groups are embedded in the conversations of the all of the working and planning groups and are evident in many of the initiatives described herein. This question will remain in the forefront for each group and, in fact, the entire college, as planning continues.

### III. MARKETING (Update from Bruce Ryan and Blix Taetzsch)

*What is the comprehensive visual brand that expresses our authentic core strengths?*

The strategic marketing group and related college departments continue to make progress on initiatives connected to this strategic priority:

#### Marketing by Persona

Last year, research identified five personas within our student body: Local Traditional, Local Adult, Urban Diverse, Adult Convenience, and Donut. Both admissions and the marketing communications group have worked this year to develop collateral and tactics targeted to personas. Some of this work includes:

- Developed a calendar that covers an entire one-year cycle and outlines, by persona, when social media communications occur, what publications are produced and when, and the key core messages at each point in time.
- Developed an admitted student viewbook for the urban diverse persona

- Produced three separate viewbooks for local traditional/donut, local adult/adult convenience, and urban diverse personas
- Creating social media advertising targeted to the local traditional/donut and local adult/adult convenience personas
- Initiated instant admit days and placement testing in high schools, targeting local traditional and donut personas
- Developed a separate admissions communications plan for all-online students and assigned an admissions staff member to work with these students
- Started placement testing at extension centers, targeting primarily local adult and adult convenience personas.
- Planned adult student information events at extension centers in March '17, targeted to local adult and adult convenience personas
- Developing plans for a general college admissions video and a video targeted to the local adult and adult convenience personas
- Developed a promotional plan for Summer '17 targeting incidental and the adult convenience cohort

### **Promoting Academic Programs**

During March and April, members of the external relations team (marketing communications and development) met with faculty program chairs focusing on:

- How faculty and external relations can collaborate to promote academic programs in print, on the web, and in social media
- Identifying “hip pocket” fundraising ideas and priorities that strengthen academic programs and thus strengthen the college’s brand around academic strength.

### **Strengthening and Simplifying START (new student processes –Student Testing, Advisement, Registration, and Transition)**

The strategic marketing group focused on the START process during a half-day retreat in February '17. The overall goal is developing strategies and tactics to both simplify the process and create more robust, brand-driven communications during the process. Specific ideas include:

- Develop a dedicated web page for students who have completed their application
- Include more videos explaining steps in the START process, rather than just delivering text
- Develop messaging and strategies for promoting START through social media and other targeted communication methods
- Expand communications beyond process steps to reinforce the brand around academic quality and community and to keep students engaged through orientation and the start of classes
- Bundle process steps that are now separate in the START process. This may include setting up a myInfo account, downloading the new mobile application, and completing a pre-advising questionnaire at the time of application.

These initiatives will be put in place over the next two enrollment cycles.

### **Living the Brand**

The college’s strategic priority around marketing notes the importance of a holistic approach. Thus, marketing includes the relevance and quality of our curriculum and instruction, co-curricular programs and campus life, and everything else related to the student experience at Tompkins Cortland. In December, leadership council held small group conversations around our four strategic priorities. The

marketing conversations focused on how we can better live our brand. Specific concerns and ideas revolved around:

- The quality of adjunct instruction and evaluation
- Adjunct faculty's knowledge of college processes and how some handle student issues and concerns
- Helping students advocate for themselves
- Hours of operation, particularly services for students
- Lack of school spirit and traditions

Provost's Council debriefed council members input on all four strategic priorities and has started working on some of these issues.

#### **IV. ENHANCED INFORMATION AVAILABILITY AND USE** (Update from Tim Densmore, Kris Altucher, and Khaki Wunderlich)

*What is the meaningful evidence of success that will tell us that what we are doing is working, at the initiative, program, and institutional level?*

This question is embedded in the work of each committee considering our critical questions. Formative and summative reports from the committees and major initiatives across campus will be posted in the Strategic Evidence Library available at [http://www.tc3.edu/campus\\_info/institutional\\_planning.asp](http://www.tc3.edu/campus_info/institutional_planning.asp).

*How can we make information more accessible to the college community?*

Aggregated diverse student enrollment demographic data is publically available on interactive dashboards on the college's website at <http://tc3.edu/dept/ir/demographics/>. Aggregated performance data is shared with the entire college community twice a year at staff/faculty retreats; public-facing dashboards are in development.

*Section I: Enrollment/Demographic Dashboard.* These interactive graphs and spreadsheets provide the opportunity to see a range of aggregated historical information about our students and academic programs.

*Section II: Challenge and Intermediate Goal Data.* We worked for the last year with our partner Salient to develop dashboards for current and historical data related to completion, retention, first semester success, basic skill course success, and new student enrollment. The intent was to provide a user-friendly, interactive interface that would allow access to data by total population and by various subgroups. Unfortunately, we have reached the conclusion that this product will not support our desired end result. We will post charts of the data to provide static access while we explore options for developing the interactive dashboards we hope to provide.

*Section III: Strategic Priorities Action Plan Data and Reports.*

Formative and summative reports from the working committees will be posted as they become available. Current documents include:

- Major Themes from January 2016 Faculty Meetings
- Forum strategic priorities survey Spring 2016
- Success gaps for student subgroups can be seen in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan above.

*Section IV: Assessment Data and Reports.* This section provides direct links to documents related to our broad range of student success initiatives and data, including department plans or reports and formative and summative assessments of our major initiatives. Current documents include:

- Vector Scholars program assessment report
- Pathways Program 2015-2016 assessment report
- 2015-2016 pilot mandatory ACAD 175 for probation students assessment report
- All 2016-2017 Department Plans can be accessed on the college network's "S" drive.

I continue to be inspired by the creativity and passion reflected in the work of faculty and staff across the college. We are early in our journey to make significant impacts on our student success metrics; we cannot let these results dampen our creativity and passion. I know we all remain committed to doing all we can to help our students succeed academically, socially, and personally. I thank you for your hard work and, as always, remain optimistic that we will achieve both our intermediate and challenge goals.