EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2011, Arizona’s community colleges embarked upon a long-term Strategic Vision to significantly increase the number of Arizonans who achieve their postsecondary education and training goals, complete a degree or certificate, and/or transfer to a university. In order to measure progress toward the three major goals outlined in the Strategic Vision, the colleges have implemented a rigorous self-assessment and accountability process centered around the annual collection and distribution of data related to 30 key indicators.

Data presented in this report, some of which are highlighted below, identify areas of strength, as well as places where Yavapai College will need to focus its efforts in order to improve student access, retention, and completion. For some of the retention and completion measures, a specific group of students called the “Credential-Seeking Cohort” was tracked; this group is defined as full- and part-time learners who earned at least 12 credit hours by the end of their second year. Tracking this sub-cohort aligns Yavapai College’s data collection and accountability strategies with those of national community college initiatives such as the Voluntary Framework of Accountability. Furthermore, analysis of retention and completion outcomes within this sub-cohort provides a more accurate gauge of community college student success, as it takes into account learners’ diverse educational and training goals.

As 2012 was the first full year of Strategic Vision data collection, the outcomes presented in this document should be considered a baseline for comparison in future years. The Strategic Vision, as well as a Technical Guide that provides detailed definitions of each key indicator of progress, can be found at www.arizonacommunitycolleges.org.

HIGHLIGHTS OF YAVAPAI COLLEGE’S 2012 STRATEGIC VISION STUDENT PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES REPORT

Access

- Yavapai College (YC) is a great value. At $4,500 per year, the net price of attendance is 11 percent of the county’s median household income, making YC an affordable and quality option for college.
- Yavapai College offers multiple methods of course delivery to meet the diverse needs of students. Forty-four percent of course offerings are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on-campus; 56 percent of courses are offered in alternative methods (on-line, evening, weekends).

Retention

- 95 percent of Yavapai College’s fall 2009 credential-seeking cohort was retained to spring 2010; 79 percent of the cohort returned the following fall. Both measures exceed the statewide average.

Completion

- Yavapai conferred 817 degrees and certificates in 2010-11, an increase of 10 percent over the prior year.
- 74 percent of Yavapai College’s 2005 credential-seeking cohort achieved a successful outcome within six years.
BACKGROUND

ARIZONA COMMUNITY COLLEGES: LONG-TERM STRATEGIC VISION

In 2011 Arizona’s community colleges published a long-term strategic plan, which has since been incorporated into strategic planning processes at Yavapai College. This plan outlined a clear vision for Arizona’s ten community college districts and identified 30 key indicators of progress toward 3 major goal areas: access, retention, and completion. Many of these indicators are aligned with those included in the American Association for Community Colleges’ Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) initiative, which will allow for comparisons with national norms in years to come.

A major function of the Strategic Vision is the collection, analysis, and publication of data pertaining to the 30 key indicators of progress, as well as the sharing of best practices and successful program models across the state. This document is the first in a series of annual reports providing data related to student progress and outcomes at Yavapai College.

While data for some of the indicators were gathered on a pilot basis last year, 2012 was the first full year of Strategic Vision data collection. As such, the outcomes presented in this document reflect a baseline for comparison in future years (pilot data are shown for indicators where the definitions were identical).

However, these data also provide a snapshot of areas where Yavapai College is successfully serving students, as well as those areas where further improvement is needed. The baseline data included in this report will also enable Yavapai College to set reasonable benchmarks for attainment related to core metrics in the coming years. For these core metrics, statewide and national comparisons are shown.

OUR VISION: Arizona’s community colleges, through a collaborative effort with education, business, and community partners, will significantly increase the number of Arizonans who achieve their postsecondary education and training goals, complete a degree or certificate, and/or transfer to a university.
Indicator 1. Full-time student equivalent (FTSE) enrollment

Annual full-time student equivalent (FTSE) enrollment at Yavapai College increased 7 percent between 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Indicator 2. Enrollment of underserved populations

The 6 percent of Yavapai College students who are members of an underrepresented racial or ethnic group is much lower than the national or statewide averages in community colleges,¹ but is similar to the percent of Yavapai County’s population that belongs to an underrepresented minority group.²

Yavapai College enrolls a larger percentage of older students than the national average, but a smaller proportion of Pell recipients, although the latter number may not reflect the percentage of students at the college who are Pell-eligible.

Indicator 3. Percent of student credit hours earned via alternative delivery methods and/or at alternative times and places

At Yavapai College, less than half of all instruction in 2010-11 occurred in traditional semester-length classes held on campus between the hours of 8am and 5pm.

Extending access to many diverse populations, 56 percent of all student credit hours were earned online, at night or on the weekends, in short-term or open-entry/open-exit courses, and at skills centers or other alternative locations.

Indicators 4-5. Community college-going rate and overall college-going rate

In 2010-11, Yavapai College enrolled over one-quarter of all recent high school graduates from the college’s service area, a slight decrease from 2009-10.

Although not shown on the graph, Arizona’s community colleges and public universities together enroll 51% percent of all recent high school graduates.³

Service Area Community College-Going Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>32%</td>
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</tbody>
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Indicators 6-7. Success after remediation

After six years, 37 percent of developmental math learners in Yavapai’s 2005 new student cohort successfully completed a college-level course in math, and 44 percent of all developmental English or reading learners in the same cohort completed a college-level English course.

The six-year time period is essential, as a significant percentage of developmental learners who completed a college-level course did so in years three through six.

Indicators 8. Cost of attendance as a percentage of Yavapai County median household income

At roughly $4,500 per year, the net price of attendance at Yavapai College is 11 percent of the county’s median household income, making the institution an excellent and affordable option for postsecondary education and training.

Cost of Attendance as a Percentage of Median Household Income in Yavapai County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicators 9-10. Course success rates

Over two years, 71 percent of student credit hours attempted in developmental courses by Yavapai’s 2009 new student cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass).

In that same time period, 78 percent of student credit hours attempted in college-level courses by Yavapai’s 2009 new student cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass).

Indicator 11. Percent of gateway (first college-level) math and English credit hours successfully completed

In 2010-11, seventy-one percent of student credit hours attempted in English Composition I and II, Speech, and College Algebra combined were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass).

These rates are comparable with national trends. According to the National Community College Benchmark Project, national rates of gateway course completion range from 68 percent (in Algebra) to 79 percent (in Speech).⁴

Indicator 12. Percent of full-time learners completing 42 credits and percent of part-time learners completing 24 credits within 2 years

By the end of their second year, 43 percent of full-time learners in the 2009 credential-seeking cohort had completed 42 credits, and 53 percent of part-time learners in the same cohort had completed 24 credits.

Although there is room for improvement, these rates are notable, as research has linked attainment of credit thresholds (roughly equivalent to 20 credits per year for full-time students) to higher retention and completion rates.\(^5\)

Indicators 13-14. Retention rates

All but five percent of learners in Yavapai College’s fall 2009 credential-seeking cohort (excluding those who successfully transferred and/or earned a degree or certificate) persisted at their college to spring 2010, and 79 percent of them returned for classes the following fall. These data indicate that efforts by Yavapai College to retain credential-seeking students have been successful.

Yavapai’s retention figures are somewhat higher than the 52 percent fall-to-fall retention rate reported as a national comparison,\(^6\) as the national number is not limited to credential-seekers. However, national community college accountability initiatives such as the Voluntary Framework of Accountability are beginning to track and analyze retention among credential-seeking sub-cohorts, and thus more accurate national comparisons should be available in future years.


Indicator 15. Percent of learners achieving their stated education or training goals

This indicator is in development. It will be incorporated into the Strategic Vision once enough time has passed to link intent to completion data.

Indicator 16. Number of degrees and certificates awarded

Degree and certificate production at Yavapai College increased 10 percent between 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Of the 2010-11 total, 57 percent were degrees, and 43 percent were certificates.

Indicator 17. Degree/certificate completion rate (graduation rate)

After six years, 29 percent of Yavapai’s 2005 credential-seeking cohort had completed a community college degree or certificate. Yavapai’s graduation rate is somewhat higher than the 25 percent reported as a national comparison, as the national number is not limited to credential-seekers. However, the VFA is beginning to track and analyze completion among credential-seeking sub-cohorts, and thus more accurate national comparisons should be available in future years.

Indicator 18. AGEC completion rate

At Yavapai College, 23 percent of the 2005 credential-seeking cohort completed the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) within six years.

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Indicators 19-20. Number of in-state university transfers, and percent with an AGEC and/or degree at time of transfer

Between 2008-09 and 2010-11, the number of students transferring from Yavapai College to an in-state, public university increased by 14 percent. An indicator of increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness, in 2010-11, over half of all Yavapai transfers to in-state universities earned an AGEC and/or degree prior to transfer (the statewide average was 52 percent).

Indicators 21-22. In-state and overall transfer rates

Yavapai College’s transfer rates among Arizona State System for Information on Student Transfer (ASSIST) “transfer behavior cohorts” have remained stable at 25 percent. The college’s overall transfer rate (the percent of learners in the 2005 credential-seeking cohort who transferred to any four-year college or university within 6 years) is significantly higher, however, indicating that many Yavapai students transfer to private or out-of-state institutions. The in-state transfer rate is comparable to—and the overall transfer rate higher than—the most recent national transfer rate (25 percent) calculated by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges.⁸

Indicator 23. Percent of learners achieving a successful community college outcome

Seventy-four percent of Yavapai College’s 2005 credential-seeking cohort achieved a successful outcome within 6 years. Because community college learners enter college with diverse education and training goals, and because they often attend part-time and/or earn credits from more than one community college, the VFA and other national accountability initiatives have broadened the definition of successful community college outcomes to include: earning a degree or certificate; transferring to another two- or four-year college or university; continued enrollment; and/or leaving the institution after earning 30 or more credits.

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⁸Center for the Study of Community College. (2002). National transfer rates are up! Results of the 2001 Transfer Assembly Project. Los Angeles: Author.
Indicator 24. Percent of full-time transfers to Arizona public universities who earn a bachelor’s degree within 4 years

Sixty-five percent of all 2007-08 full-time transfers from Yavapai College to in-state universities earned a bachelor’s degree within four years. This rate is higher than a comparable national average,\(^9\) and indicates that full-time transfers from Yavapai are succeeding at the state’s public universities.

Yavapai College continues to work with in-state four-year colleges and universities to improve transfer success.

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Indicator 25. Percent of all transfers who earn a bachelor’s degree within 4 years

Almost half of 2007-08 transfers from Yavapai College to all four-year institutions—public and private, in-state and out—earned a bachelor’s degree within four years. This number likely reflects a high incidence of part-time attendance after transfer.

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Indicator 26. Percent of occupational program completers passing a licensure exam within one year

This indicator will be incorporated into the Strategic Vision once the VFA has finalized its corresponding metric, and as soon as all community college districts are able to obtain accurate licensure data.

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Indicator 27. Percent of occupational program completers either employed with a livable wage or enrolled in further education

This indicator will be incorporated into the Strategic Vision once the VFA has finalized its corresponding metric, and when the “livable wage” has been adjusted to account for a lower median household income in Arizona.

Indicators 28-29. Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Educational Development (GED) Learner Outcomes

At Yavapai College, 58 percent of ABE/GED learners achieved their goal of entering employment.

Also, 66 percent of ABE/GED completers achieved their goal of enrolling in postsecondary education or training.

Note: the definitions used to calculate indicators 28 and 29 will be modified in 2013 to follow changes to the corresponding National Reporting System for Adult Education metrics.

Indicator 30. Percent of adults with postsecondary experience and/or degrees

Thirty-nine percent of Yavapai County adults age 25 and older have attended some college and/or have earned an associate degree; this rate is much higher than the national average.¹⁰

However, less than one-quarter of Yavapai County adults hold bachelor’s or higher degrees. By continuing to provide education leading to transfer and bachelor’s degrees, and by partnering with the state’s universities, Yavapai and other community colleges across the state will endeavor to help the Arizona Board of Regents reach their goal of raising the statewide bachelor’s degree rate to 28 percent by 2017.

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