

Continuous Learner

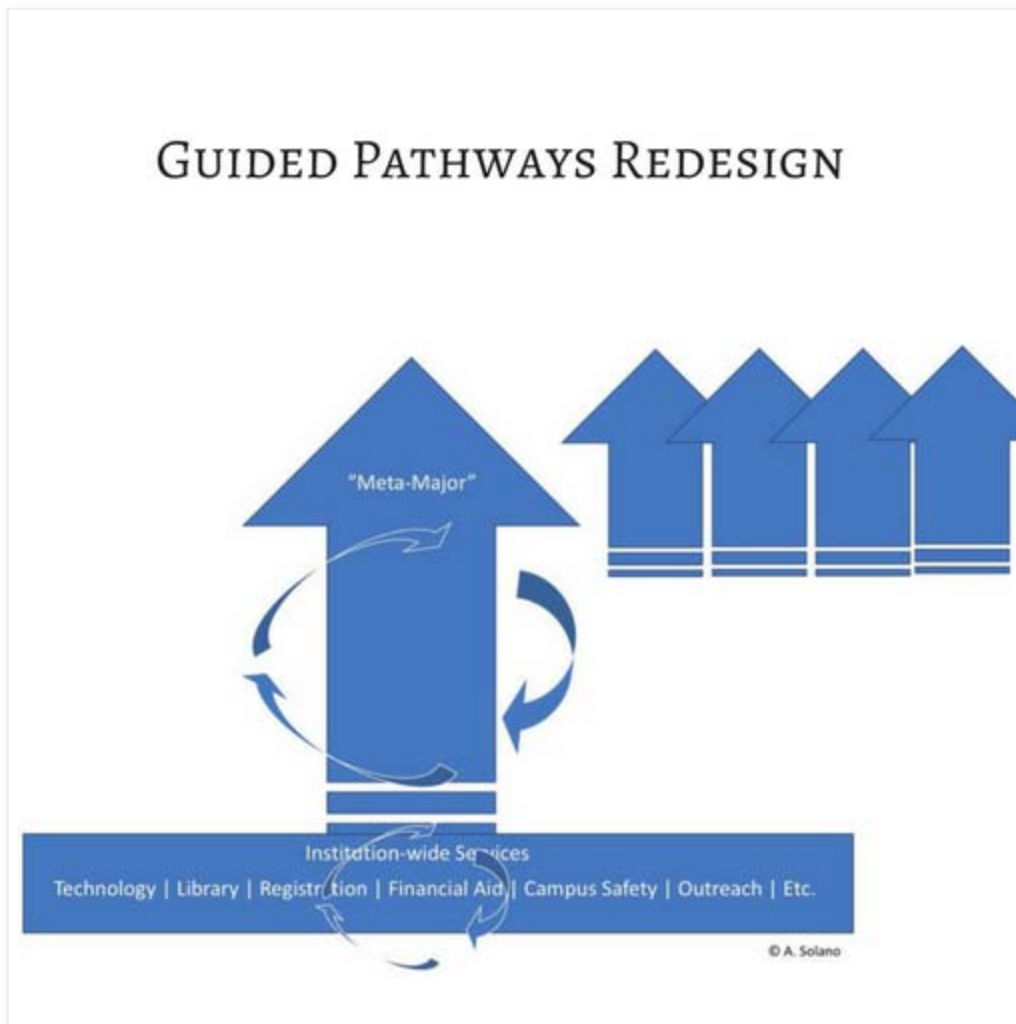
Education, Management, and Other Things Considered by A/S Education Consulting

Home



Thursday, April 12, 2018

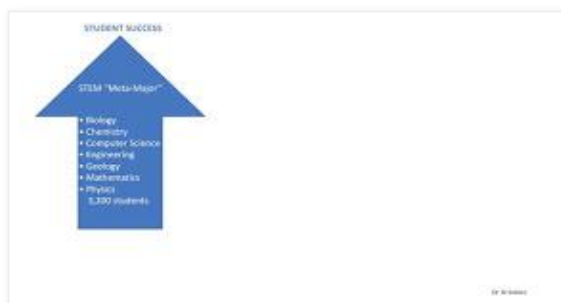
Guided Pathways: What it Means to Redesign the Institution



As institutions of higher education embark on guided pathways planning and implementation, it never ceases to amaze me how many people still don't know what guided pathways is exactly. To be fair, it's not an easy framework to explain. Often, definitions used such as the four pillars of guided pathways (abbreviated version: clarify the path, enter the path, stay on the path, ensure learning) leaves much room for interpretation. I'm a highly visual person so I'll explain guided pathways through a few graphics and end with guided pathways data.

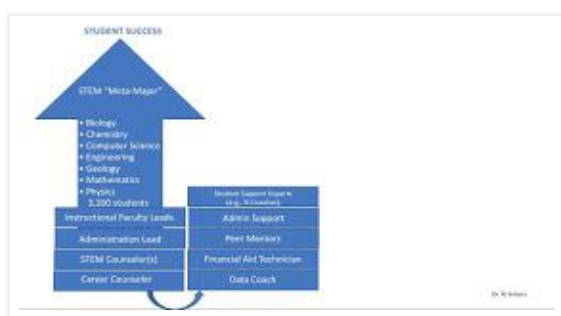
First, what guided pathways isn't. It isn't just reconfiguring disciplines/majors into meta-majors (or whatever a campus wants to call it, "areas of interest," "academic clusters," "career clusters," "schools," etc.) and potentially adding a counselor and some curriculum maps for students for each

meta-major.

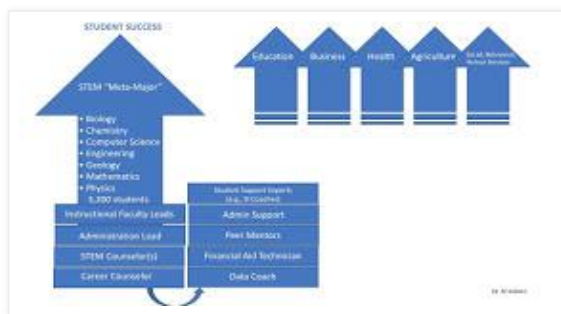


The first step to understand guided pathways is that it is a major **redesign** of an institution. Many campuses already have disciplines/majors in “meta-majors.” Some institutions call them divisions. *It’s the support system within each meta-major that begins to unpack the meaning of guided pathways.*

As you see below, I highlighted a STEM meta-major and the kind of comprehensive support necessary to move the needle on student success. I’m not suggesting that campuses copy exactly the support system here (I used, in part, Bakersfield College). Rather, given existing resources and personnel skill set, expertise, and personalities, consider how the support system will look for your context. For example, if an institution’s STEM meta-major has 200 students then it probably won’t need the same level of support services compared with a meta-major of 3,200 students.



A similar support system is designed for other meta-majors (see top-right in the image below). If, for example, a student started as a math major in the STEM meta-major and by taking general education courses such as economics found that majoring in economics was a better fit for her goals, she can move into a separate meta-major and receive comprehensive support services there. She would still feel part of a community.



The other aspect of guided pathways that seems to escape some people is that institution-wide services will continue. For example, technology, library, registration, financial aid, campus safety, outreach, etc. These services don't necessarily need to be folded into a meta-major. Again, how it looks like depends on your context.

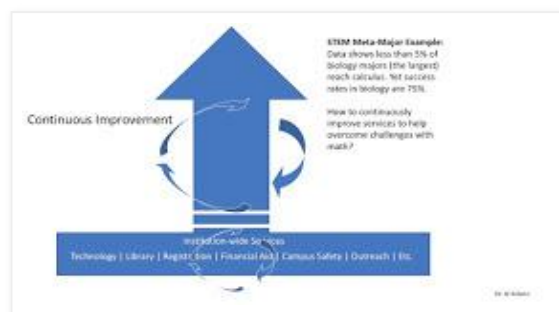


Last but not least, once meta-major comprehensive support and institution-wide services are in place, guided pathways is about *continuous improvement*. Key people within the support system need to become a **team**.



The team is tasked with analyzing data (Bakersfield College has a data coach for each meta-major) and tackling challenges such as the mathematics one noted below. It's a real-life example of how at one campus the vast majority of STEM students major in biology but less than 5% reach calculus! At the same time, the first-year biology sequence has a 75% success rate (success rates are also above 70% for low-socioeconomic students). Students are doing well in biology—their field of interest—but struggle in math. What can the team do to increase biological science student success in math?

In addition, what can the institution-wide services do to continually improve services for students?



Speaking of students, I recently helped to plan and facilitate a district-wide event that included a student focus group activity. One question I asked the students was to describe positive experiences at their campus. The overwhelming response was about how much they appreciated

their faculty. Given the student theme of how faculty make a positive impact on their lives, I emphasized to the audience how important it is for guided pathways to be **faculty-driven (including counselors)** with support of administration and staff. I can't emphasize this enough! Then, using the images above in two PowerPoint slides (let me know if you want me to send them to you), I asked the students to share what they think about the guided pathways framework.

To use her exact words, one student said bluntly, "It's about goddamn time!"

All of the students agreed that the framework was needed. One student shared how she felt the STEM program at the campus already mimicked the guided pathways framework. She felt she received a significant amount of support through the investments made in STEM at the campus. However, she noted that her friends in other areas such as business and the social sciences lack a comprehensive support system.

Students expressed what community college professionals and researchers have known for years—effectively implemented special programs get results. Guided pathways is about scaling these pockets of success campus-wide, and the data speaks.

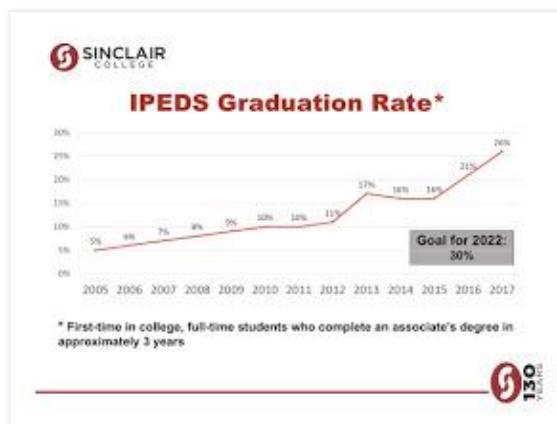
The following early evidence is courtesy of [Dr. Davis Jenkins](#) from the [Center for Community College Research \(CCRC\)](#) at Teachers College, Columbia University.



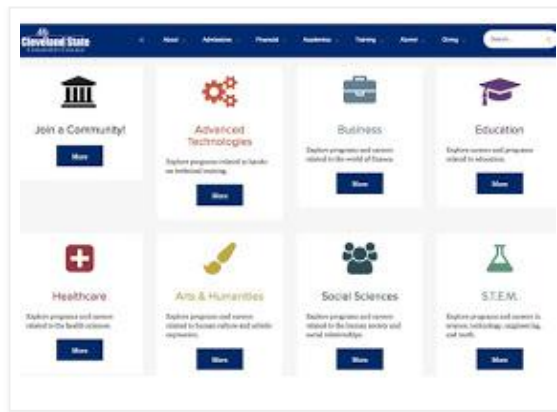
Located in Ohio, below is how [Sinclair College](#) articulates what they call "Career Communities" (e.g., meta-majors) to students via their website.



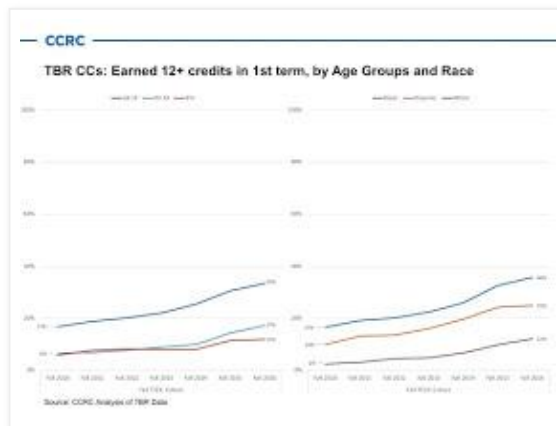
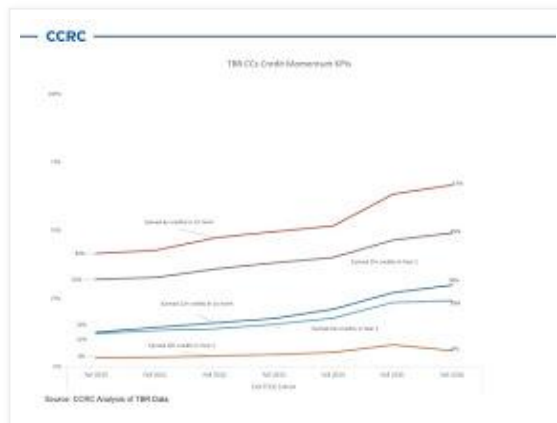
By the numbers...



The [Tennessee Board of Regents \(TBR\)](#) includes 13 community colleges. Below is the meta-major configuration for one of the thirteen colleges, [Cleveland State Community College](#) (yes, there's a city of Cleveland in Tennessee).



By the numbers for all TBR campuses...



In Texas, the [Alamo College District](#) includes 5 community colleges. In addition to their meta-major configuration with support systems, Alamo shows students their journey through the system. (Click [here](#) for the PDF).

UNIVERSITY OF THE PASCIFIC LIBRARY

AlamoADVISE THE ADVISING LIFE OF AN ALAMO COLLEGES STUDENT
ACADEMIC & CAREER ADVISING EMERGED VISION - BUILDING MOMENTUM TO COMPLETION

AlamoADVISE is a comprehensive advising system that provides students with personalized academic and career advising. It is designed to help students navigate the complex process of college completion, from enrollment to graduation. The system is built on a foundation of data and research, and is continuously updated to reflect the latest trends in higher education.

Key Features:

- Personalized Advising:** Students receive tailored recommendations based on their individual needs and goals.
- Academic & Career Support:** The system provides resources for both academic success and career exploration.
- Real-time Updates:** Students can track their progress and receive immediate feedback.
- Integration with Institutional Data:** The system is linked to the college's database, ensuring accurate and up-to-date information.

Benefits:

- Increased student retention and completion rates.
- Improved student satisfaction and engagement.
- Enhanced institutional effectiveness and accountability.
- Streamlined advising processes for faculty and staff.

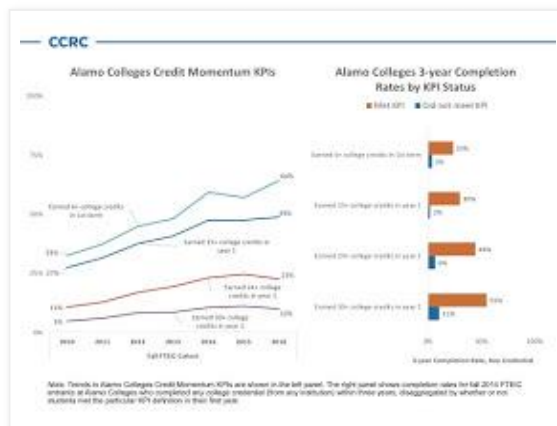
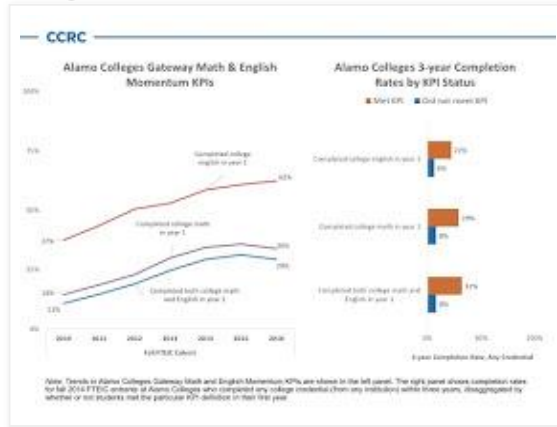
Implementation:

AlamoADVISE is implemented across all Alamo Colleges, providing a unified advising experience for students. The system is supported by a dedicated team of advisors and technical staff, ensuring a smooth and effective user experience.

Contact:

For more information about AlamoADVISE, please contact your campus advisor or the AlamoADVISE support team.

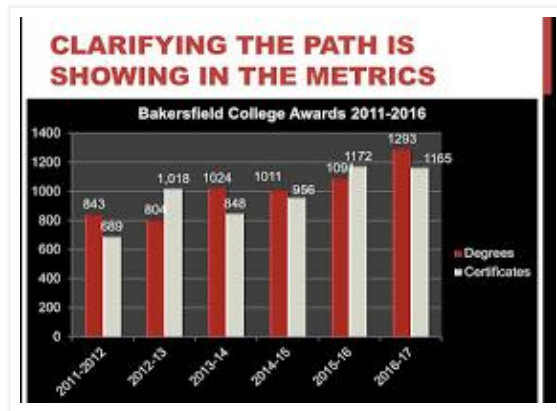
By the numbers for all Alamo Colleges...



The following early evidence data is courtesy of the [Bakersfield College Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#). Among many activities, Bakersfield College (BC) has done meaningful work with the high schools to educate them about the BC road map via the meta-majors. The college saw an increase of 34.4% in student enrollment from five years ago.



Early numbers at BC also show an increase in student certificate and degree awards.



To implement guided pathways means to redesign the institution. The redesign includes three major areas: discipline/major configuration into areas of interest (e.g., meta-majors), comprehensive support services for each meta-major while maintaining high-quality institution-wide services, and a continuous improvement process led by meta-major and institution-wide services teams.

I hope that the images that describe the redesign are helpful. If you'd like the PowerPoint slides, please feel free to [contact me](#).

Finally, I'd like to mention that I'm grateful to Dr. Davis Jenkins for the meaningful research he and the CCRC team have accomplished to help institutions increase student success. I'm also grateful for his support of my work to help colleges. If you're looking for a keynote speaker, please feel free to reach out to Dr. Jenkins at davisjenkins@gmail.com / 312-953-5286.

Onward...

Follow me on [LinkedIn](#).

For related articles see:

[Unpacking the Meta-Major Concept](#)

[Guided Pathways: Starting on the Right Foot](#)

[Guided Pathways: Good to Great?](#)

[Why I Spit Shine My Shoes \(And How it Relates to Leadership\)](#)

It's a metaphorical take on educational leadership. I tie in guided pathways at the end. Log on to your LinkedIn account to access the article.

Copyright of Continuous Learner ([A. Solano](#))

[Continuous Learner](#)

Share



No comments:

[Post a Comment](#)

Links to this post

[Create a Link](#)

[Home](#)



[View web version](#)

Powered by [Blogger](#).
