

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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November 17, 2014

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**Report to the
Joint Standing Committee on Education**

November 17, 2014

**ADVANCED CAREERS:
A Launching Point for Pathway Partnerships in West Virginia**

ADVANCED CAREERS:

A Launching Point for Pathway Partnerships in West Virginia

*James L. Skidmore, Chancellor
West Virginia Council for Community and
Technical College Education*



Background

- Articulated credit from CTE to CTCs (EDGE)
- Dual Credit
- Collaborative Programs

Background

- Low numbers of CTE students matriculating to the CTCs
- 67% developmental education rate from high schools to CTCs.
- Need for skilled technical workforce.
- Lack of clear Career Pathways to high-wage, high-demand jobs.
- Cited for lack of Career Pathway Programs of Study by Federal Perkins monitoring visit.
- Governor's Education Reform Legislation – AC Program in every career center.

Career Pathway Program Criteria

- Address documented need for skilled employment in high-demand, high-skill, high-wage career fields;
- Validate and align secondary and postsecondary education content and standards;
- Include academic and technical content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses;

Career Pathway Program Criteria

- Include a focus on authentic, robust, project-based instruction that grounds students in the real-world use of academic and technical knowledge;
- Offer the opportunity, where appropriate, for secondary students to acquire postsecondary credits; and,
- Lead to a valued industry credential, certificate, associate or baccalaureate degree.

Benefits to Students

- Create smoother transitions and multiple options for students as they move from secondary to postsecondary education and into the workforce;
- Encourage students to set realistic career goals and complete a full sequence of courses, leading to a postsecondary credential;

Benefits to Students

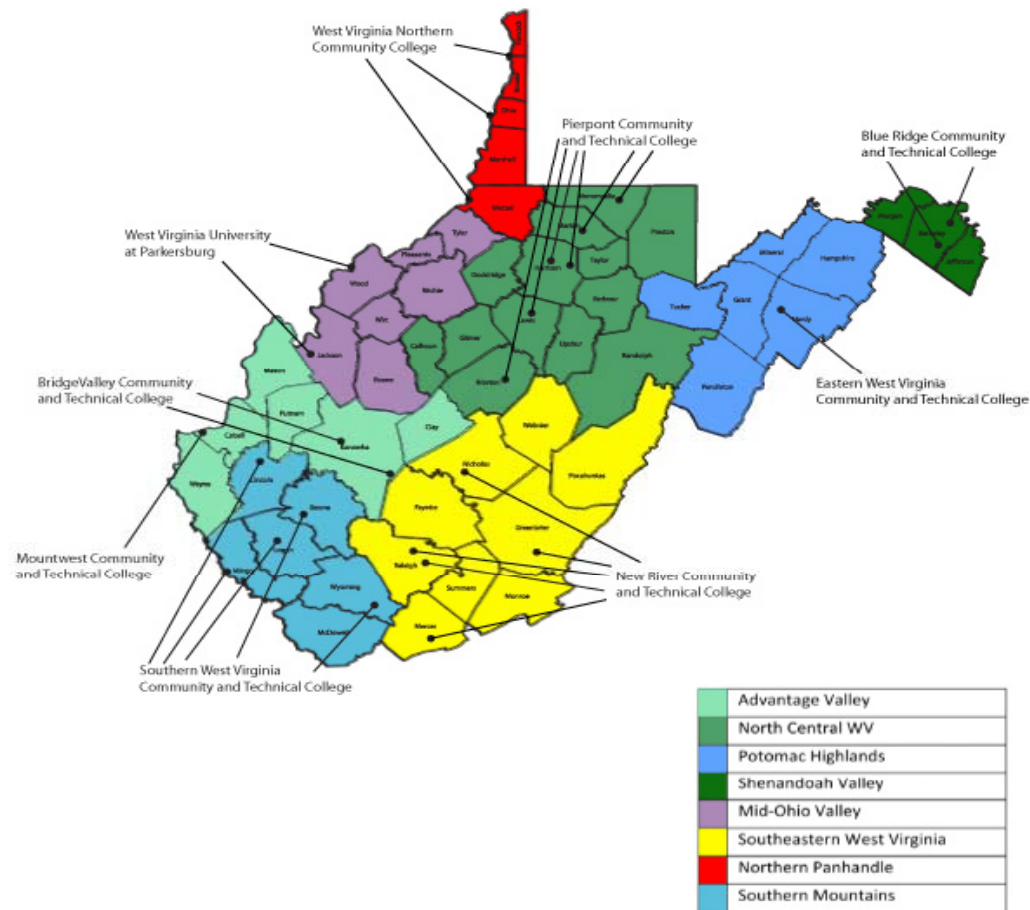
- Fully engage students in their studies, resulting in a more personal investment and increased motivation;
- Eliminate duplication of what students learn by granting credit for documented skills; and,
- Assist students to master high level academic concepts by embedding them within the context of their technical studies.

Implementation Strategy

- **Consortium Planning Districts**
 - **Co-Chairs**
 - CTC President
 - CTE Director
 - **Membership**
 - CTC Personnel
 - Public school career-technical education personnel
 - Baccalaureate colleges with associate degrees

Implementation Strategy

- Use Consortium Planning Districts



Implementation Strategy

- **Legislative Intent:
Consortium Planning Districts**
 - Identify high-demand, high-wage occupations.
 - Plan and develop unified effort to meet the region's workforce needs.
 - Increase the number of students attending CTCs.
 - Align secondary programs with certificate and associate degrees at CTCs.
 - Establish Programs of Study Pathways.

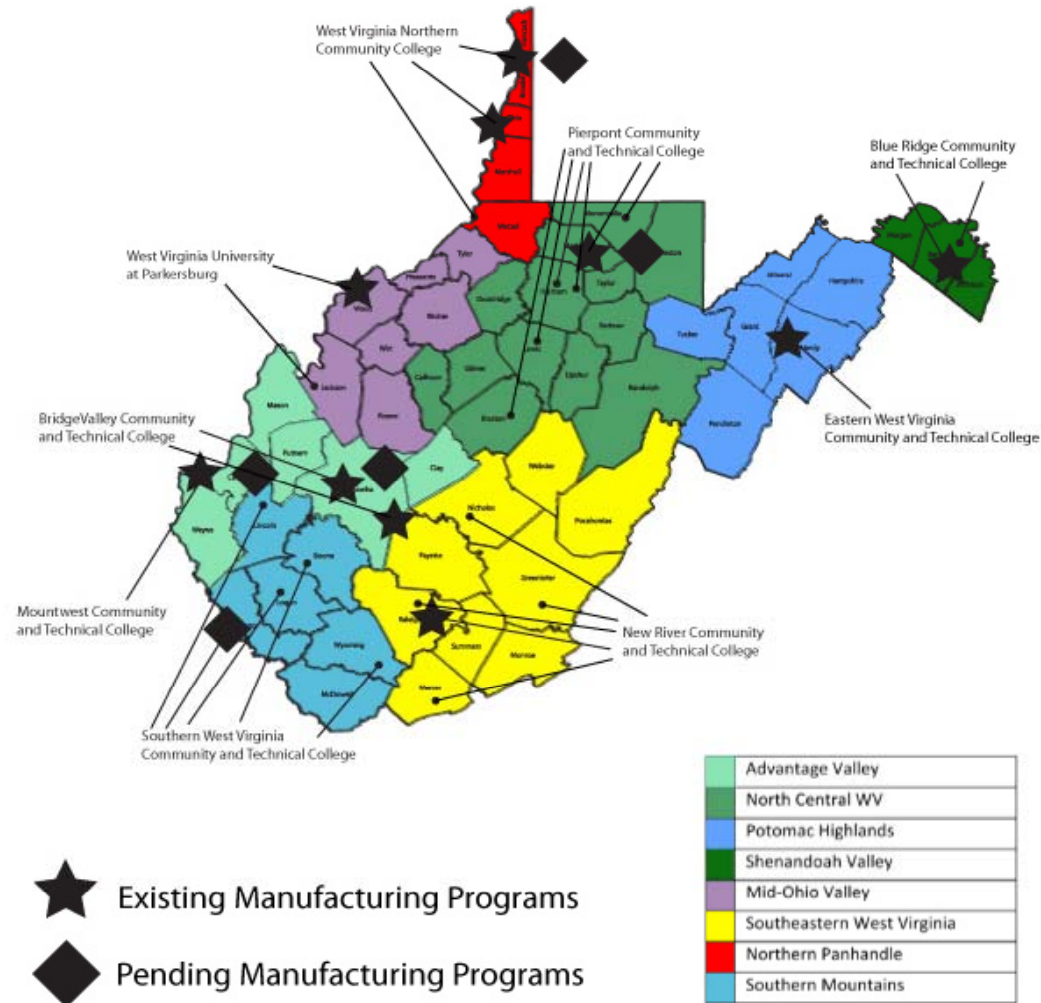
Implementation Strategy

- **Legislative Intent**
 - Accountability
 - Requires consortia compacts
 - Goals/Strategies
 - Measures AC Implementation
 - Approved by Community College Council

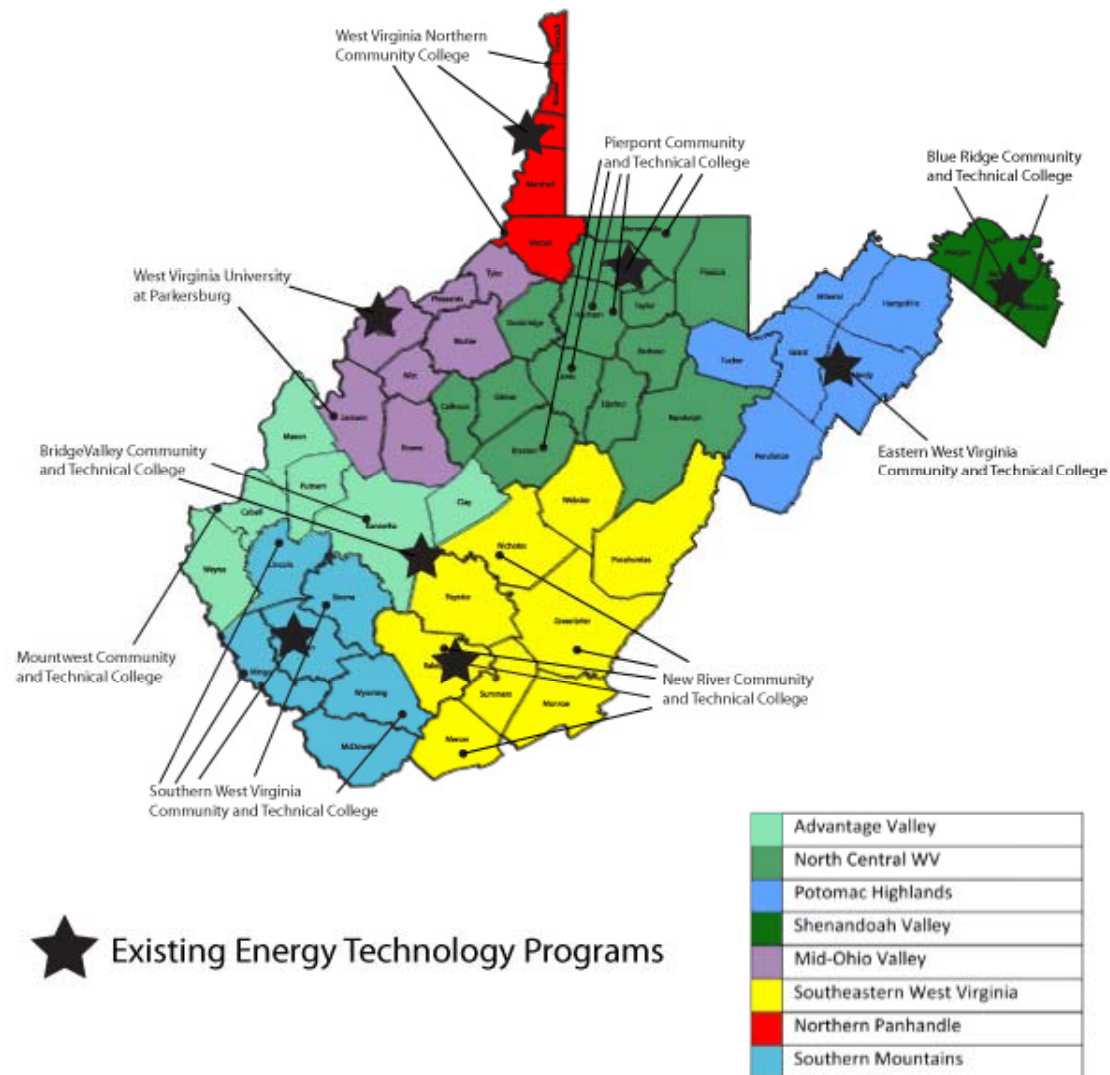
Implementation Strategy

- **Initial Targeted Programs**
 - **Community and Technical Colleges**
 - Manufacturing Related
 - Energy
 - **Advanced Career Programs**
 - Integrated Production Technologies
 - Energy/Power
- **Strategically align programs to job demands by region of the State**

Implementation Strategy



Implementation Strategy



Implementation Strategy – Student Options

- **Manufacturing Related Programs**
 - Advanced Manufacturing Technology
 - Mechatronics Technology
 - Chemical Process Technology
 - Electrical Engineering Technology
 - Mechanical Engineering Technology
 - Instrumentation Technology
 - Machining Technology

Implementation Strategy – Student Options

- **Energy Related Programs**
 - Wind Turbine Technology
 - Electrical Distribution Technology
 - Sustainable Building Technology
 - Power Plant Technology
 - Petroleum Technology
 - Mine Management
 - Solar Energy Technology

Implementation Strategy - Initial Pilot Effort

The secondary AC programs that were reviewed included:

- Energy, Power and Engineered Systems
- Integrated Production Technologies
- Informatics
- Health Informatics

Implementation Strategy - Initial Pilot Effort

The related CTC programs included:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Electrical Engineering Technology
- Mechanical Engineering Technology
- Civil Engineering Technology
- Instrumentation Technology
- Chemical Process Technology
- Computer/Information Technology
- Medical Insurance Coding and Billing

Implementation Strategy

The joint faculty teams worked through a number of project exercises taken from the four AC programs to gain an understanding of the level of content and project delivery of the secondary curriculum.

Findings – Initial Pilot Effort

Integrated Production Technologies

- There was a strong consensus that any student successfully completing the secondary program would be a strong candidate for the CTC Advanced Manufacturing program, as well as the various engineering technology fields.
- The CTC would offer scholarships to the AC graduates, as well as preferred entry into the Advanced Manufacturing Internship Program.

Findings – Initial Pilot Effort

- There is a need for a joint marketing effort to begin in the middle grades.
- The CTC will investigate the possible development of robotics and instrumentation programs.

Power, Energy & Engineered Systems

- Possible 6 hours of advanced credit into the Electrical Engineering Technology program at the CTC

Findings – Initial Pilot Effort

- Secondary graduates would be well prepared for a number of CTC technical programs.
- The CTC is investigating the development of an Energy Overview program that aligns with the AC program.

Findings – Initial Pilot Effort

Informatics/Health Informatics

- The CTC is looking at developing an aligned Health Informatics program as well as a data mining option.
- The secondary graduates would be well prepared candidates for both of these programs.



Findings – Initial Pilot Effort

- The retreat received excellent ratings by both the secondary and postsecondary participants and will lead to continued development of seamless pathways for students.

Questions

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West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education

November 17, 2014

**15 to Finish
Promoting On-Time Degree Completion in West Virginia**



Promoting on-time degree completion in West Virginia

- Get ahead.
- Graduate on time.
- Take 15 to Finish.

Presentation to the Joint Standing Committee on Education | November 17, 2014

Why 15?

The math is obvious: there's no chance of graduating on time without earning at least 15 credits each semester, or 30 each academic year.

- Complete College America

Why 15?

12 = 5 vs. 15 = 4
CREDITS YEARS CREDITS YEARS

Why 15?

The payoffs are far-reaching. In addition to graduating on time, students can see...

- Improved academic performance
- Reduced student loan debt
- Savings on tuition
- Improved employment prospects

Why has 12 become the norm?

- Clouding students' perceptions is the way the U.S. Department of Education calculates what is considered to be a full-time student for federal financial aid purposes.
- To receive federal grant and loan aid, a student only has to enroll in 12 hours per semester. By doing so, a student is on track to complete a degree in a minimum of five years.

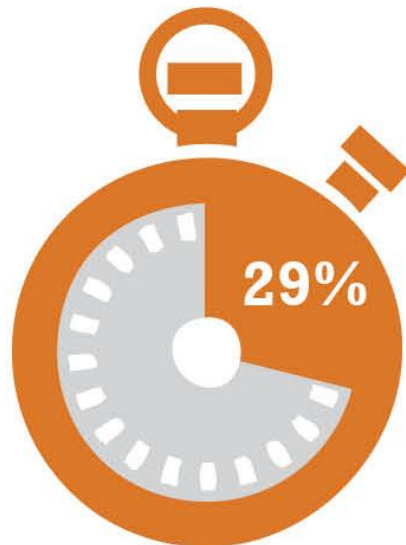
National perspective

Complete College America (CCA) has adopted “Full-Time is Fifteen” as one of its “Game Changers.”

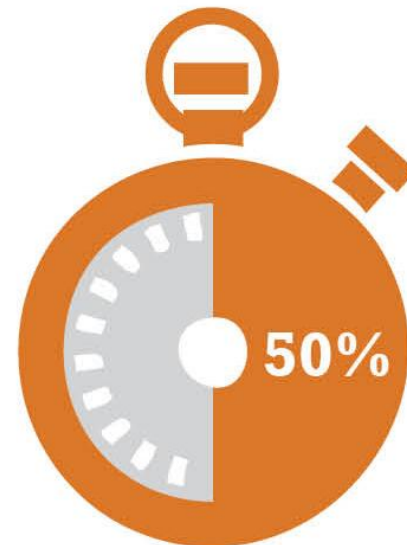
The following 4 slides contain related national data from CCA.

Most students DON'T take the credit hours necessary to graduate on time.

Full-Time Students Taking 15+ Credits Per Semester



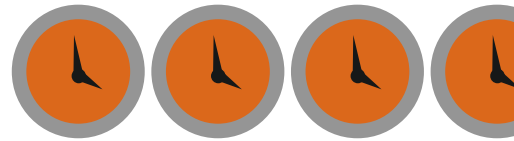
At 2-year
institutions



At 4-year
institutions

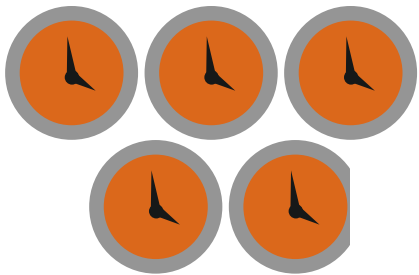
Graduating on time is a myth in American higher education.

2-Year Institutions



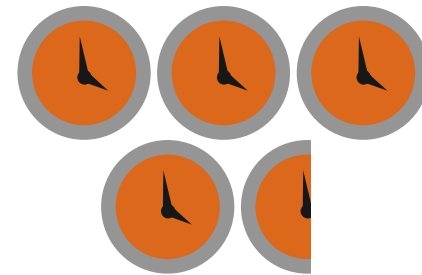
3.6 years

4-Year Institutions (Non-Flagship)



4.9 years

4-Year Institutions (Flagship)



4.4 years

Cost of Each Additional Year

2-Year Institutions

\$38,264

4-Year Institutions (Non-Flagship)

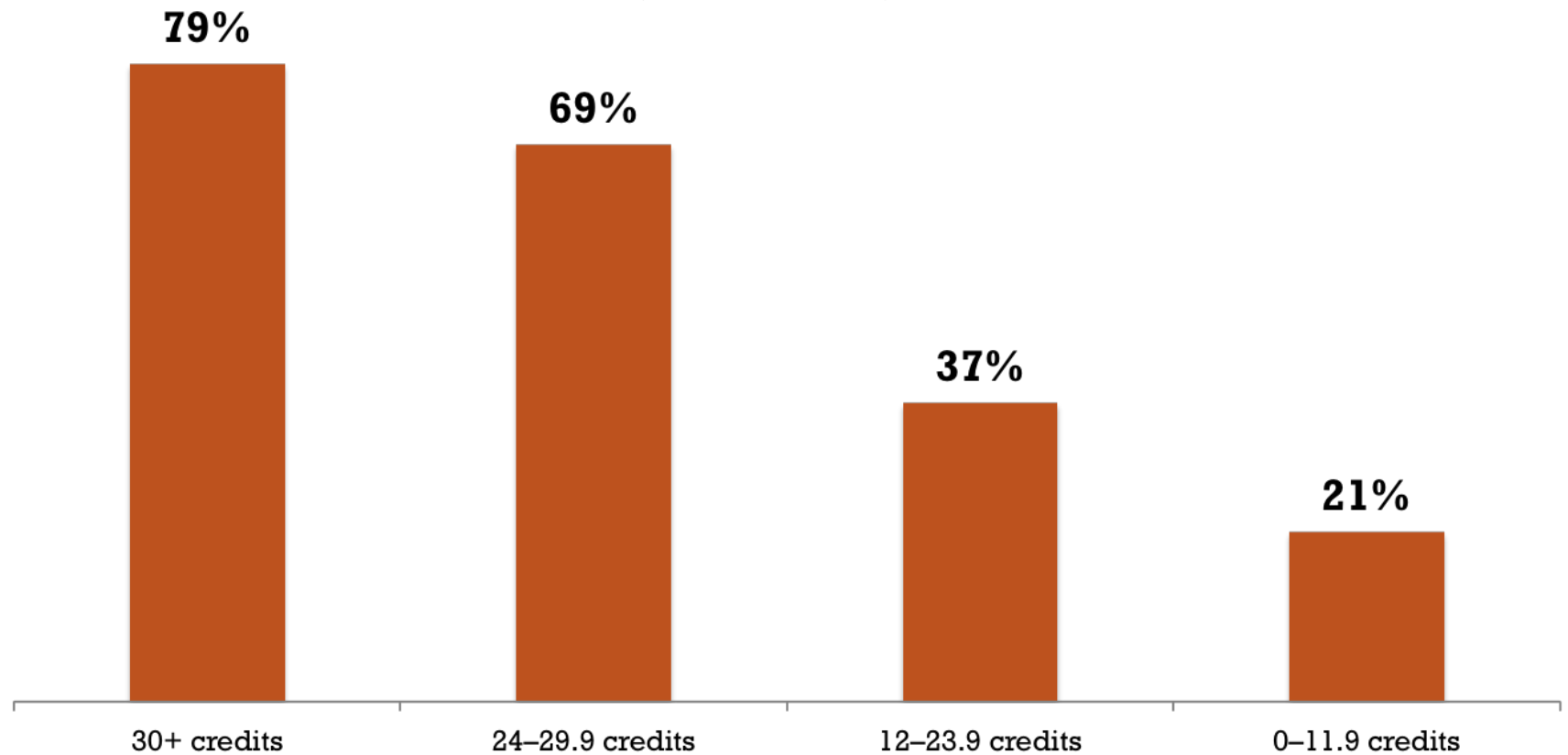
\$63,718

Data for public college and university students who began college going full-time. The cost of one additional year of tuition and fees is state specific and comes from the College Board's *Trends in Student Pricing* 2013 report. Lost wages are national average salaries for new graduates and do not account for earnings while in college. The median starting salary of 2011 associate degree graduates of community colleges comes from the American Institutes for Research's *What's the Value of an Associate's Degree?* The average starting salary of 2013 bachelor's degree graduates comes from the National Association of Colleges and Employers' 2013 *Salary Survey*.

More students graduate when they complete 30+ credits in their first year.

Bachelor's degree

(ALL STUDENTS)



THE POWER OF 15 CREDITS

Where it began: 15 to Finish in Hawaii

**Classified undergraduates
taking 15 or more credits
increased by 14.7%**

UH System, Fall 2011 to Fall 2012

States with similar efforts



West Virginia Higher Education Polic

Our new campaign

15 to FINISH
WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia context

For the 2007 cohort...

- Freshman year: 78% of students enrolled in 15 credit hours or more
- Sophomore year: only 50% of students enrolled in 15 credit hours or more

West Virginia context

For the 2007 cohort...

- Students who completed 15 credit hours or more outperformed those who took 14 or fewer hours in every academic measure examined...
- ... even after controlling for factors such as academic readiness, family income, and first-generation status

15 to Finish Institute

September 30, 2014

- More than 80 participants from public four-year campuses representing academic affairs, student affairs, admissions, public information and student advising.
- Discussion led by Dr. Linda Johnsrud, who led Hawaii's pioneering campaign.
- Campus representatives introduced to policy background and outreach resources available to them.

Feedback from students

- Commission staff met with student leaders from across the state's campuses.
- Feedback was very positive. Students encouraged a strong focus on advising and recognition of each student's individual needs.
- Some students – such as those pursuing engineering degrees – will need to take more than 15 credits each semester to graduate on time.
- Some students are part-time for necessary reasons. As such, the focus of our campaign is on students taking 12-14 hours.

Campus resources

www.cfwvconnect.com/15-to-finish

- Toolkit for spring 2015 semester campus-level rollout will include:
 - Research
 - Policy brief (attached)
 - Challenges, goals and objectives
 - Implementation guide
 - Timeline
 - Checklists
 - Strategies & best practices

Campus resources

www.cfwvconnect.com/15-to-finish

- Toolkit for spring 2015 semester campus-level rollout will include:
 - Promotional materials
 - Advertising resources
 - Earned media and public relations materials
 - Social media materials

Commission-sponsored advertising

- Funded through federal College Access Challenge Grant dollars.
- Will include:
 - Radio/audio spots
 - Videos
 - On-campus promotion
 - Statewide earned media outreach

15 to FINISH

WEST VIRGINIA

► **POLICY BRIEF**

15 to Finish: Implications and Utility for West Virginia
West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
September 2014

Introduction:

The math is obvious: there's no chance of graduating on time without earning at least 15 credits each semester, or 30 each academic year.

- Complete College America

Yet federal financial aid policies only require that students be enrolled in 12 credits each semester to be considered eligible for assistance. Most damaging, this standard has become known as “full-time” attendance. As a result, enrolling in fewer than 15 hours is becoming a norm, with 50 percent of students at public universities doing so (CCA, 2013). This practice can have a profound impact on both institutional and student costs. For low-income and underrepresented minority students, it can mean the difference in completing college altogether. The longer students take to complete their degree, the more likely that their lives will fill up with jobs, relationships, marriages, children, mortgages — the list goes on and on.

In West Virginia, many students take too much time to complete a degree or drop-out of college entirely. According to Complete College America (2011), less than half (48.2 percent) of West Virginia bachelor's degree seeking students who began college full-time in 2002 finished a degree in six years. The rate for low-income students (Pell grant recipients) was 38.7 percent. These are discouraging statistics, particularly at a time when West Virginia's economy needs more college degree holders than ever before.

The challenge that lies ahead for West Virginia's public system of four-year colleges and universities is to continue to offer state residents affordable access to four-year institutions, while helping more students complete their degrees in a timely manner. To address these needs, the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's new 2013-2018 master plan, *Leading the Way: Access, Success, Impact*, has set a system-wide goal of increasing the number of students completing 30 or more credit hours the first academic year of college to 65 percent. In pursuit of this goal, the plan sets forth strategies including providing clear pathways to degree completion and establishing 15 credit hours per semester as the standard for success.

Nationally, a promising practice has emerged that focuses on changing students' mindsets and behaviors and affirming the “full time is 15” message advocated by Complete College America. Dubbed 15 to Finish, the effort emphasizes campus-wide collaboration through a focused but comprehensive awareness and advising campaign. The campaign seeks to reset students' perceptions of full-time as 15 credit hours and to inform them of the payoffs of enrolling in 15 hours or more — including better academic performance, reduced student loan debt, savings on tuition, housing and fees, and earlier entry into their intended careers.

This paper discusses the 15 to Finish initiative, offering a context and recommendations for implementing the program in West Virginia.

What is 15 to Finish?

The "15" in 15 to Finish refers to credit hours a semester, which at most institutions would represent five courses. At four-year colleges and universities, this is considered a "full load" of academic coursework. By legislative mandate, the majority of academic programs in West Virginia are 120 credit hours, meaning that a student would need to complete eight semesters of 15 hours of coursework to graduate, on time, in four years. Complicating matters and clouding students' perceptions is the way the U.S. Department of Education calculates what is considered to be a full-time student for federal financial aid purposes. To receive federal grant and loan aid, a student only has to enroll in 12 hours per semester, three hours shy of what is typically considered a full academic load. In only taking the minimum 12 hours, a student is on path to complete a degree in a minimum of five years instead of four.

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} 12 & = & 5 & \text{vs.} & 15 & = & 4 \\ \text{CREDITS} & & \text{YEARS} & & \text{CREDITS} & & \text{YEARS} \end{array}$$

According to Complete College America, as of December of 2013, 15 states had developed formal programs to promote and study the impact of encouraging students to enroll in 15 hours each semester in order to complete their degrees in a timely manner. The most prominent example of these efforts is The University of Hawaii System's "15 to Finish" program. The System's campaign began in 2011 and featured statewide advertising, on-campus messaging to current undergraduates, high school and community outreach, and training for campus staff and faculty. As a result, the percentage of students taking 15 hours or more per semester across the four-year system increased from 38.3 percent in 2011 to 55.5 percent in 2012, a 17.2 percentage point increase (Johnsrud, 2013).

Figure 1: States that have launched a 15 to Finish effort (as of Dec. 2013)



Is a 15 to Finish Campaign Right for West Virginia?

In order to examine the impact a 15 to Finish effort might have in West Virginia, the Commission analyzed data from a cohort of first-time, full-time freshmen that began studying at a public four-year institution in the fall of 2007 (the most recent cohort for which six-year graduation data is available). A total of 10,620 students enrolled during the 2007 academic year, with 77.8 percent of those students enrolling in 15 hours a semester. However, due to dropouts and reductions in the number of hours attempted, that rate fell dramatically by fall 2008. In their second year, the number of students from the 2007 cohort who enrolled in 15 hours per semester dropped from 8,264 to 5,409 — just over half of the first-time students who began the previous fall. Although the decrease in students taking 15 hours is a major concern, there is positive news. Among every measure the researchers examined, students who enrolled in 15 credit hours per semester their first academic year outperformed those who enrolled in 14 or fewer credit hours.

Among every measure the researchers examined, students who enrolled in 15 credit hours per semester their first academic year outperformed those who enrolled in 14 or fewer credit hours.

This is notable since the researchers controlled for pre-enrollment academic ability (high school GPA and ACT composite score) and income level. For example, students who enrolled with a high school GPA between 2.0 to 2.9 are described in Table 1.

| Table 1: Credit enrollment by first-time freshmen with a high school GPA of 2.0 to 2.9 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|---|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| All students, fall 2007 | | | | Students who were enrolled the entire 2007-08 academic year | | | | | | | |
| Avg. Fall 2007 GPA | | Retained Spring 2007 | | Average cumulative GPA Spring 2007 | | Retained to Fall 2008 | | Graduated in 4 years | | Graduated in 6 years | |
| Did not take 15 hours | Took 15 hours | Did not take 15 hours | Took 15 hours | Did not take 15 hours | Took 15 hours | Did not take 15 hours | Took 15 hours | Did not take 15 hours | Took 15 hours | Did not take 15 hours | Took 15 hours |
| # mean | # mean | # % | # % | # mean | # mean | # % | # % | # % | # % | # % | # % |
| 1052 1.70 | 2328 1.99 | 796 75.7 | 1966 84.4 | 1300 1.93 | 1462 2.31 | 872 45.4 | 1148 78.5 | 48 2.5 | 186 12.7 | 288 15.0 | 549 37.6 |

Of this sub-group, there were 3,380 freshmen with 66.2 percent of those students enrolled in 15 hours of coursework. Among students enrolled in 15 credit hours, the average fall semester GPA was almost .30 points higher — and those students were more likely to be retained to the following semester. As one can see across the table, the outcomes of taking fewer than 15 hours per semester during the first year of college have long-term repercussions on retention and completion. Ultimately, 37.6 percent of students who enrolled in 15 hours of course work each semester during their first year in college completed a degree in six years, compared to 15 percent of their peers who enrolled in fewer credit hours.

Another area of interest in West Virginia is learning how low-income students perform in college. Low-income students often arrive to college less prepared for not only the level of academic rigor required of college level work, but also navigating institutional processes such as course registration. Table 2 explains outcomes related to low-income (Pell Grant eligible) students and credit hour enrollment.

Table 2: Credit enrollment by Pell eligibility and college performance indicators

| Pell Eligibility | All students, fall 2007 | | | | | | | | Students who were enrolled the entire 2007-08 academic year | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|------|---------------|------|-----------------------|------|---------------|------|---|------|---------------|------|-----------------------|------|---------------|------|-----------------------|------|---------------|------|-----------------------|------|---------------|------|
| | Avg. Fall 2007 GPA | | | | Retained Spring 2007 | | | | Average cumulative GPA Spring 2007 | | | | Retained to Fall 2008 | | | | Graduated in 4 years | | | | Graduated in 6 years | | | |
| | Did not take 15 hours | | Took 15 hours | | Did not take 15 hours | | Took 15 hours | | Did not take 15 hours | | Took 15 hours | | Did not take 15 hours | | Took 15 hours | | Did not take 15 hours | | Took 15 hours | | Did not take 15 hours | | Took 15 hours | |
| | # | mean | # | mean | # | % | # | % | # | mean | # | mean | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| | ✓ | 870 | 1.91 | 2362 | 2.43 | 693 | 79.7 | 2088 | 88.4 | 1147 | 2.07 | 1634 | 2.73 | 780 | 48.8 | 1371 | 83.9 | 75 | 4.7 | 355 | 21.7 | 288 | 18.0 | 799 |
| ✗ | 1486 | 2.23 | 5903 | 2.69 | 1194 | 80.3 | 5376 | 91.1 | 2011 | 2.40 | 4559 | 2.91 | 1583 | 55.9 | 4038 | 88.6 | 294 | 10.4 | 1536 | 33.7 | 805 | 28.4 | 2850 | 62.5 |

This table follows an almost identical pattern to those students who enrolled with a high school GPA of 2.0 to 2.9. Of the 10,620 first-time students who enrolled in 2007, 41.4 percent (4,400) were Pell Grant eligible. The low-income students who enrolled in 15 credit hours of coursework exhibited better academic outcomes throughout their college career when compared to their peers who enrolled in fewer credit hours. Twenty-four percent of low-income students who enrolled in 15 credit hours each semester during their first year in college completed their degrees in four years, compare to only six percent of their peers who enrolled in fewer credit hours.

Conclusion

Is increasing then number of students taking 15 credits per semester likely to have a positive impact in West Virginia? Yes, particularly when examining outcomes based on course-taking behaviors during students' first year in college. It is important to note that this initial project only measured outcomes based on the number of hours students attempted during their first academic year. In examining the tables, it is clear that during the six-year period, students are withdrawing from college for any number of reasons. Encouraging more students to enroll in 15 credit hours per semester might not be the "magic" answer to increasing persistence and completion for all students attending four-year public colleges and universities in West Virginia. However, the cohort data presented above demonstrates that students who enrolled in 15 credit hours during the fall and spring of their freshmen year had far better academic outcomes than their peers who did not.

Key Points

- ✓ Students who enrolled in 15 credit hours the fall and spring of their freshman year had far better academic outcomes than those who did not.
- ✓ It is clear that during a six-year period, students are withdrawing from college for any number of reasons.
- ✓ An awareness initiative such as 15 to Finish is likely to be beneficial to West Virginia students, but should be coupled with strategic advising and personalized support efforts to address the many factors affecting students' ability to stay on track for graduation.

West Virginia's 15 to Finish Campaign

To promote on-time degree completion and academic achievement, the Commission will launch a system-wide 15 to Finish information, awareness and advising campaign in January 2015. West Virginia's effort will be integrated within the Commission's statewide College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV) initiative, an outreach program focusing on helping students prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education.

Goals: The West Virginia 15 to Finish campaign will seek to:

- ✓ Increase the percentage of college students taking at least 15 credit hours per semester
- ✓ Change students' perceptions of "full-time enrollment" to 15 hours
- ✓ Prompt college advisors to encourage more students to take 15 credit hours or more
- ✓ Build awareness regarding the academic benefits of taking 15 credit hours per semester
- ✓ Build awareness of the long-term benefits of finishing college on time

Target audiences:

- ✓ Soon-to-be college students (12th grade students, potential adult learners)
- ✓ Current college students
- ✓ Parents of students ages 17-25
- ✓ Admissions and enrollment officers
- ✓ Faculty and academic advisors
- ✓ Policy leaders and administrators

Campaign activities and messaging tools and strategies:

Activities for the effort will center on conducting a highly targeted multi-media communications campaign and providing professional development to ensure successful implementation and stakeholder support at the local level. Communications strategies will include earned media outreach, digital and social media advertising, highly targeted radio advertisements, and the creation of campus toolkits including materials such as brochures, email and newsletter templates, and video PSAs for use at orientations and other campus events. Materials from these toolkits also will be provided to high school counselors to aid them in advising 12th grade students.



15 to Finish is a registered trademark of the University of Hawaii System and is being used by West Virginia with permission through the Complete College America initiative.

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
Leading the Way: Access. Success. Impact.

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