

All Students Dimension Report
Pulaski Technical College

Foundations Institutions serve all new students according to their varied needs. These institutions anticipate, identify, and address the needs of traditional and non-traditional students in response to their individual abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences. These efforts are subject to assessment and adjustment as needed. Institutions also ensure campus environments that are inclusive and safe for all students.

Committee Leaders:

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Current Situation:

To what degree has your campus identified groupings of students who predictably have unique academic, social, and safety needs?

Pulaski Technical College uses application for admission, Free Application for Federal Student Aid, the POISE student information system, the Advisement Record, student transcripts, and the COMPASS assessment test to identify the groups of students on campus who have unique needs. Based on these methods the following groups of students have been identified as having academic and social needs:

- Academically under prepared students.
- Students with disabilities.
- Minority populations.
- Night students.
- Online students.
- International students.
- SOAP students (Start Over Again Program).
- Concurrently enrolled - high school students.
- Non-degree seeking students.
- University transfer students.
- Little Rock site students.
- Transfer students (incoming transfer and outgoing transfer).
- Single parent students.
- Dislocated workers.
- Displaced homemakers.
- First-generation students.
- Students receiving financial aid.
- Non-traditional students.
- First-time entering students.
- High Ability students.

All of the previously identified groups are considered to have safety needs. The COMPASS assessment test is primarily used to identify unique academic needs. The Student Advisement Record is used to identify two groups of students with unique social and safety needs, dislocated workers and displaced homemakers. The College does not have additional methods in place to identify these students. Counseling services are in place to serve students with unique social and safety needs. However, the counseling staff utilizes most of their time academically advising continuing students because there is no advising structure in place. Counseling is understaffed, leaving little or no time for counselors to serve the social and safety needs of students. In addition, students with these unique needs are responsible for seeking out services on their own.

To what degree to the campus address the following unique needs of groupings of new students known to benefit from predictably targeted assistance?

According to the FoE student survey, over 75% of students feel physical safe on campus. 66% of students felt Pulaski Technical College meets their academic needs. However, over 45% of students felt that Pulaski Technical College was only moderately meeting their social needs. The FoE faculty/staff survey provided additional evidence to support the committee's findings:

Q036. Student Sub-populations - During the first year, to what degree does this institution address the unique needs of the following student sub-populations: Honors students

37.1% responding 1 or 2 25.3% responding 3 37.6% responding 4 or 5

Q037. Student Sub-populations - During the first year, to what degree does this institution address the unique needs of the following student sub-populations: Students with academic deficiencies

9.5% responding 1 or 2 25.7% responding 3 64.8% responding 4 or 5

Q038. Student Sub-populations - During the first year, to what degree does this institution address the unique needs of the following student sub-populations: Students with learning disabilities

5.1% responding 1 or 2 18.2% responding 3 76.6% responding 4 or 5

Q039. Student Sub-populations - During the first year, to what degree does this institution address the unique needs of the following student sub-populations: Students with physical disabilities

7.5% responding 1 or 2 15% responding 3 77.6% responding 4 or 5

Q041. Student Sub-populations - During the first year, to what degree does this institution address the unique needs of the following student sub-populations: Racial/ethnic minority students

16.6% responding 1 or 2 24.6% responding 3 58.8% responding 4 or 5

As the survey indicates, 41% of faculty/staff do not believe that the institution addresses the unique needs of ethnic/minority students. As the CPI indicates, over half of the Pulaski Technical College students are minority students. In addition, over 62% of faculty/staff realize Pulaski Technical College does not address the needs of honors students. 37.6% believe we are doing a good job of meeting the needs of honors students. This percentage is interesting seeing as the College does not have an honors program and does not identify honors students. In contrast, they do believe the College does a good job of meeting the needs of students with disabilities. The All Students Dimension Committee found a limited number of programs, policies and services in place that were designed specifically to address the unique academic, social, and safety needs of new students known to benefit from predictably targeted assistance. The majority of these programs, policies, and services are inadequate, non-active, or not regulated. For example, the Student Orientation Advising and Registration (SOAR) program is designed to ensure all new students receive adequate academic advising during their first registration process. However, not all new students are required to attend SOAR for registration. The remaining students register during late registration. Because of lack of full-time advisors and an insufficient staff, new students are not receiving the targeted assistance they have been identified to benefit from. Another example is the academic alert form in place to notify students early in the semester of inadequate classroom performance. The use of this form is almost non-existent. In some instances, instructors are not even aware of the early alert system, there is no incentive to use it, and there is no program in place to assist the student once they receive the form. One final example is the lack of a viable new student orientation program. In the past, students were invited to come to campus prior to the beginning of the semester for an orientation of Pulaski Technical College's student policies and procedures. This model of orientation was changed to an online orientation model because of low student attendance and lack of staff. The online orientation is not mandatory and the College does not make certain that new students receive this important information.

To what degree does your institution assure that all new students experience individualized attention from faculty/staff, academic support outside the classroom, opportunities for campus involvement, and an inclusive campus environment?

Pulaski Technical College does not ensure that all new students experience individualized attention from faculty/staff, academic support outside the classroom, or experience an inclusive campus environment. The College does ensure that opportunities for campus involvement exist including, Student Life and Leadership campus activities and events, community service opportunities, cultural diversity programs, student organizations, *Milestones* and *The View From Here*. However, no system is in place to guarantee the students take advantage of the opportunities available to them. As a result of the FoE student survey, over 60% of students feel they belong on campus, however, approximately 39% of students responded that Pulaski Technical College only moderately gave them the feeling that they belonged at this College.

Q040. Campus Environment - At this college, to what degree do you feel: You belong

11.9% responding 1 or 2 27.5% responding 3 60.7% responding 4 or 5

Sources of Evidence:

The All Students Dimension committee used many sources of evidence to support our findings including, but not limited to the following: the College catalog, the Student Handbook, the website, the CPI, the minority retention report, the POISE student information system, the Student Advisement Record, student focus group, poll of College Seminar students, personal interviews, FoE faculty/staff and student surveys, professional experience and knowledge.

Opportunities and Challenges:

Pulaski Technical College faces many opportunities and challenges in addressing new student needs including, but not limited to the following:

- o Budget shortfalls.
 - More full-time faculty/staff.
 - Staff training.
 - Expand services at all sites.
 - Additional professional development opportunities.
- o Lack of communication.
 - Between departments.
 - Between the College and students.
 - Between faculty and staff.
 - Between administration and faculty/staff.
- o Lack of equipment/technology at all sites.
 - Computer labs.
 - Compatibility issues with technology infrastructure.
 - Inadequate student information system.
- o Lack of services for online students.
 - Advisement.
 - Tutoring.
 - Test preparation and testing services.
- o Lack of physical space to meet student needs.
 - Student Services.
 - Career Services.
 - Single parent counseling.
 - Advising/Registration.
 - Business Office/Financial Aid.
 - Classrooms.
 - Faculty/Staff offices.

o Lack of staff/resources at all sites.

-Allowing more students to enroll than we can provide excellent service for.

- Student Services staff.

-Full-time faculty.

-Lack of minority faculty/staff.

-Counselors.

-Advisors.

-Tutors.

-Test proctor.

-Retention coordinator.

-Security officers.

Lack of services at the Little Rock site.

-Staff.

-Site Director.

-Student support services.

-Programs/events.

-Career services.

Recommended Grade: D-

Recommended Action Items:

- Academic Advising: Mandatory (*High priority*)

This action item addresses issues stemming from all three performance indicators included in the All Students Dimension. Assigning an academic advisor to all students would provide academic support by ensuring students, throughout their career at Pulaski Technical College, receive correct academic information, accurately follow their degree plan, assist with the proposed early alert system, and will directly effect retention. In addition, supplying students with a personal contact on campus will support their social and safety needs. The All Students Dimension committee realizes that staffing and financial boundaries exist; however, the College could begin this endeavor in the fall 2007 semester with a pilot group of incoming first time students. Resources needed for this action item include, utilizing existing full-time faculty and advisors (approximately 150 people to date) to serve as the assigned academic advisor for an incoming pilot group of 500 first time entering students. This formula would require each full-time faculty and/or advisor to serve 3 students for four semesters. During the All Students student focus group, the question, "Do you wish you had an academic advisor assigned to you?" was asked. The response was an overwhelming yes.

- College Seminar-style Class: Required (*High priority*)

This action item addresses issues stemming from all three performance indicators included in the All Students Dimension. This course will ensure that all students receive necessary Pulaski Technical College information that is directly related to their educational success, will positively affect the retention of our students, and will aid in the existing communication problem. Out of fifteen College Seminar students polled, zero had taken the online orientation and many of them did not know it existed. The course will discuss the information currently offered through the online orientation with additional information, campus guest speakers, and assistance. Options for this course could include a one-hour course in addition to the current College Seminar course, replace the current College Seminar course, or be in the form of a co-curricular course. We recommend beginning this course during the fall 2007 semester. The pilot group of 500 students receiving mandatory academic advising would also be required to take this course. The College could utilize full-time professional staff to serve as instructors for a one hour course. The other two options would utilize current College Seminar instructors and require additional faculty.

- Early Alert System (*High priority*)

This action item addresses the academic needs of all students. Informing students of their progress at midterm will allow students time to take the necessary steps to improve their grade if needed or to drop a course before the final drop date. During the student focus group, students indicated they were not always aware of their progress and would want to know if they were falling behind in the course. The College would need to set and make known a specific midterm date. Instructors would be required to deliver midterm grades to the students and the registrar's office by this date. As an aid to instructors, the College could explore an electronic grade book system and/or using Blackboard and/or Campus Connect. If a student is notified of a poor grade and wishes to take the steps to improve that grade, the Learning Assistance Center and their designated academic advisor, with additional training, would provide the services needed to assist the student and provide additional academic and social support.

- Computer Skills Assessment (*High priority*)

This action item addresses the academic needs of all students. Student suggestions to the All Student Dimension committee imply that the currently existing Computer Concepts course does not meet the needs of students with no computer skills. A computer skills assessment administered during the COMPASS test could pinpoint students in need of a basic introductory computer course. All students taking the COMPASS would take this computer assessment. However, incoming transfer students and students who have taken the ACT would have the option to be assessed. This course could be developed through the Division of Education and Academic Success and/or Business Division. Instructors currently teaching the Computer Concepts course and business courses would be utilized to teach this course. Therefore, the implementation of this action item would require minimal funding/staffing.

- Telephone 24/7 Help Center (*High priority*)

This action item addresses issues stemming from all three performance indicators included in the All Students Dimension. In addition, a 24/7 telephone help center would aid in the recruitment and retention of students, provide exceptional customer service, and would increase the communication across campus. This action item originates from a presentation conducted during the December 2006 Information Technology committee. A 24/7 telephone help center provides first level help across campus, divisions and departments. Incoming calls are answered no later than the second ring. If the help center is unable to answer the question, a trouble ticket is produced and emailed to the appropriate department to alert the department with contact information for follow up. This action item requires a financial commitment from the College. However, Darrow Neves, Chief Information Officer at Middlesex Community College which has had such a service since 2004 reports that faculty, staff and student calls to support staff, the IT department and academic resources have declined substantially allowing faculty and staff to focus on supporting the teaching and learning goals of their institution.

- Student Involvement: Participation on Standing Committees (*High priority*)

As previously stated, according to the FoE student survey, 61% of students moderately feel they belong at Pulaski Technical College. As an institution of excellence, Pulaski Technical College should take steps to ensure the remaining 39% have a feeling of belonging. This action item addresses issues stemming from all three performance indicators included in the All Students Dimension. Currently, students are not serving on all standing committees. Instituting this action item will open the lines of communication between administration, faculty, staff, and students. This action item will directly affect the feeling of belonging for students and create an inclusive campus environment. Students will have an opinion in the decisions made on their behalf and will have a stronger voice on campus. A student representative will be appointed to each standing committee from the Student Government Association and the Student Ambassadors. This action item will be very easy to implement by the fall 2007 semester.