

Using Data to Enhance Campus Culture and Advance Student Outcomes



Among 58 community colleges in North Carolina, Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) is the system's third largest, serving more than 40,000 students annually. GTCC's five campuses, all located in Greensboro, Jamestown, and High Point, have held student needs and service as a campus mission since its inception in 1958.

As higher education leaders nationwide increase their focus on student success and program completions, GTCC embraced the challenge. Their college leaders chose Achieving the Dream (ATD), Complete College America (CCA), and Completion by Design (CBD) to advise them on innovative practices to benefit student retention, success, and completion. GTCC also partnered with Ad Astra to gather and analyze student data to

inform the implementation of new practices and track institutional progress.

Dr. Susan English*, former Director of Instructional Support and Special Projects at GTCC, said "Through a process of continual improvement, the college has a collaborative focus to optimize scheduling practices that are aligned with national completion

"We're optimizing our scheduling practices through a process of continual improvement; we are analyzing new data each term to determine how to adjust the schedule and are getting better over time. All these efforts are happening concurrently. But by sharing and reviewing reports with college-wide stakeholders, we are becoming increasingly better at finding actions for change."

DR. SUSAN ENGLISH

*Director of Instructional Support
and Special Projects, GTCC*

initiatives. The guidance of these industry leaders has fueled a powerful movement on campus."

GTCC used strategic scheduling and elements of design and optimization to create pathways and roadmaps. Ad Astra's Platinum Analytics™ and Higher Education Scheduling Index (HESI™) dashboard metrics were foundational in tracking enrollment ratios, class fill rates, and schedule effectiveness.

"We have more students who are taking more classes because we are offering a more comprehensive selection of courses across all campuses," said Dr. English. In Fall 2015, 45% of students were full time. This number rose to 47% in Fall 2016. Additionally, course fill rates had a 5.2% increase from 78.5% to 83.7%. Thoughtful design, utilizing the analysis, and changing the culture... all point to improved completions," Dr. English said. "Implementing many of the researched best practices that advance student completions has increased success at GTCC."



KEY PLAYERS IN GTCC'S SUCCESS



Achieving the Dream™

Achieving the Dream (ATD) is a national reform network dedicated to community college student success and completion. ATD strongly recommends using data to inform decision-making to improve student outcomes. For more information, visit: achievingthedream.org

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

Established in 2009, Complete College America is a national nonprofit focused on working with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations. For more information, visit: completecollege.org



Completion by Design has a simple, pioneering vision: community college faculty, staff, administrators and students, working collaboratively, can create integrated institutional policies, practices, processes, and culture that together improve student performance and completion outcomes. For more information, visit: completionbydesign.org

Ad Astra

Ad Astra is more than just a software and consulting company. We are a dedicated team on a mission to help transform the higher education industry. Our passion is helping colleges and universities effectively manage finite space and faculty resources. We create student-friendly schedules and accelerate student completions, resulting in improved retention and increased graduation rates. For more information, visit: www.aais.com

**This case study was originally published in 2016. Since then, Dr. Susan English has left GTCC, and is currently the Vice President for Academic Affairs at Thomas Nelson community College in Hampton, Virginia. ■*