

According to Complete College America, a privately funded college completion strategy organization,

“The best strategy for reducing the cost of college is to ensure that *more students graduate on time*”

- Nationally, %70 of community college students referred to remedial math had not attempted a college level math course within 2 years
- Most full time students (29% cc, 50% university) do not take credits necessary to graduate (15 per semester or 30 per year)
- On average, too many students wander the course catalog collecting 81 credits for an Associate degree and 134 credits for a Bachelor’s degree. (60 and 120 are generally sufficient)
- On average 1 advisor is available for every 400 students leading to uninformed choices. Many students do not take important critical pathway courses that are prerequisites for taking more advanced courses in their major.

In Ohio, the average time to degree for an Associate degree is 4.1 years. The cost of each additional year is \$52,031. (Including \$17,031 cost of attendance and \$35,000 lost wages)

In Ohio, the average time to degree for a Bachelor’s degree is 4.5 years. The cost of each additional year is \$69,166. (Including \$23,839 cost of attendance and \$45,327 in lost wages)

In Ohio, we can and should do better: The Goal – Increase on time graduation by 2019 by at least 10%. (?)

Key strategies for reducing costs for students focusing primarily on time to degree and retention strategies:

What the University or College Can do;

1. Tuition Guarantee – Predictability for students and their families, plus an incentive for students to stay on course.
2. 15 to Finish – a national movement to convince students that taking 15 hours every semester keeps them on pace to finish on time.
3. Reducing the number of hours required for graduation. The new standard should be 120 for Bachelor’s and 60 for Associates unless the program accreditation would be threatened.
4. Reform remediation – since most students who take remedial classes do not graduate, implement co-requisite remediation where advisable.

5. Intrusive Advising – provides students with aggressive guidance, insures that students declare majors and intervenes when students get behind. The best programs utilize multi-semester plans and predictive analytics to inform student choices.
6. Default Scheduling- which would make sure that students take key courses, take full loads and provide maps or guided pathways.
7. Meta-majors – help students who are undecided narrow their choices and helps reduce the number of general education credits earned while wandering.
8. Reform mathematics – already underway in Ohio, complete the Chancellor’s plan to provide the necessary flexibility for faculty to design math courses that are appropriate to the major.
9. Utilize recent reforms in College Credit plus to provide college credit to more high school students at virtually no cost to the family.
10. Aggressive text book policies help students save money by shopping on line or renting their text books.

What the State of Ohio can do:

1. Require each university and college to supplement their college completion plan with a plan to reduce their time to degree. To be completed by December 2015. Each plan could utilize the strategies identified above, or create their own.
2. Target financial aid to the students with the most financial need, since this is the most productive use financial aid resources. Provide financial incentives to stay on time.
3. Support an Excellence/Success fund to provide grants to each college and university to offset start-up costs associated with their completion plans.
4. Provide adequate resources to the K12 sector for College Credit Plus so that they enthusiastically encourage their students to seek college credit while completing High School.
5. Provide quality career advising in High Schools to encourage students to contemplate their choices before enrolling in college.
6. Don’t penalize universities that serve non-traditional students who tend to be part-time and mid-career.
7. Don’t reduce student options to double major or study abroad, since these are excellent learning opportunities.
8. Invest in co-op and internships even though they often take more time. They also tend to help retain students and make more likely their immediate employment.

Guiding Principles

Incentivize colleges and universities to improve graduation rates, the number of graduates and the time it takes to graduate in order to produce more students ready to enter the workforce.

Increase Ohio's competitive advantage by capitalizing on our existing strengths.

Strengthen our ability to respond to new or increased workforce development opportunities.

Raise participation rates in higher education among Ohio high school graduates.

Attract the best and brightest students from Ohio and elsewhere to learn and work in Ohio.

Encourage colleges and universities to attract, prepare and graduate non-traditional and at-risk students.

Ensure that college is affordable for students and families.

Unstated Guidance

Consensus is in the best interests of all universities, and should be encouraged

The new formula is mission neutral, meaning it encourages the USO to meet the needs of all students with an array of programs and opportunities without creating undue pressure on the university mission.

Simplicity, predictability and a sense of fairness should guide decisions