CCCSE Launches Three Grant-Funded Projects

Activities ramp up this spring on new projects focused on dually enrolled students, learning events featuring the importance of the student voice, and focus group work for a statewide success center.

Improving Large-Scale Student Engagement Survey for Younger Learners

CCCSE will begin a new project to study dually enrolled students at 15 community colleges across the country over the course of two years. The project will allow CCCSE to amplify the momentum of guided pathways by helping institutional practitioners better understand the experiences of dually enrolled students pursuing pathways to postsecondary credentials. The project will include two administrations of a survey instrument refined for dually enrolled students, data reflection opportunities for participating colleges, and guided action planning for improvement. In the coming months, an advisory committee will be organized to guide the development of the survey, and 15 colleges will be selected to pilot the survey. This project is made possible by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Transformation Enablers Pilot – Pathways Providers

CCCSE will be the organizer of four learning events this spring for higher education member institutions of Jobs for the Future (JFF) and the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU). The theme of the webinar series is the student voice. This work is part of the the Pathways Providers grant initiated in summer 2021, which will allow CCCSE to participate, along with other Pathways Service Providers, in a pilot to enhance and build capacity in the guided pathways journey for organizations participating in the Service Design & Delivery (SD&D) ecosystem. This project is made possible by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

WEBINAR SERIES SCHEDULE

Date	Presenting Organization	Title
March 29	CCCSE	"AHA Moments About the Student Experience"
April 26	Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL)	"Advancing Equity and Incorporating Student Voice in Program Review"
May 26	The Ada Center	"How to Use the Student Voice in Resource Allocation Decisions: Tools and Insights From Students About Critical Technology and Communication Practices"
June 29	UNCF	"Understanding Barriers to the Institutional Adoption of Learner Voice and Using Institutional Incentives and Capabilities to Accelerate Adoption"

CCCSE is currently wrapping up two other grant-funded projects.

For highlighted findings, see page 2.

Ohio Focus Groups and Workshop

In partnership with the Ohio Student Success Center, CCCSE will conduct and video record focus group interviews with students, faculty, and staff at three Ohio community colleges this spring semester. The purpose of the focus groups is to better understand experiences—especially of Black, Latinx, and indigenous students—on issues of equity, classroom engagement, and career and transfer guidance. Additionally, CCCSE will host a fall 2022 workshop to train institutional research staff on how to use the student engagement data and focus group videos for institutional planning. This project is made possible by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Students Speak About Barriers to Success

CCCSE has completed the qualitative data collection portion for two ongoing grant projects. Below are selected excerpts from what the students had to say. National reports for both projects will be released in fall 2022.

Students in Need in Community Colleges

The Students in Need project, co-funded by The Kresge Foundation and ECMC Foundation, explores on a national level the characteristics of students who are food insecure, housing insecure, and homeless, as well as the impact of student need on student engagement. CCCSE conducted interviews in fall 2021 with students at three diverse community college campuses.

I try to eat, definitely, on the days that I come to school, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but all the time, I don't [eat].

It was a little scary trying to sleep in your car. Not being comfortable, and then making sure you don't hear no noises around you. You don't really get sleep. You half awake. There's nowhere you can really find anywhere to park, especially when you don't know the city or anything like that. It's not like I could park in anybody's driveway or anything like that.
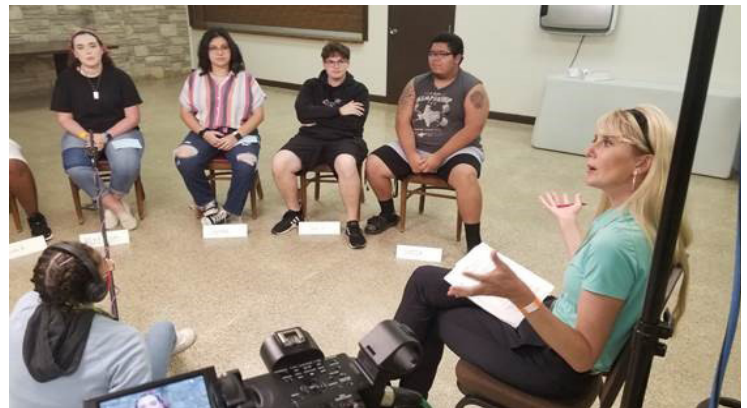
Listen to Me: I Have Something Important to Say

The Listen to Me project, funded by Greater Texas Foundation, solicits insights from students about challenges in their early community college experience that may lead to attrition. CCCSE conducted four rounds of focus groups at three Texas community colleges, hearing from the same students throughout fall 2021 and early spring 2022.

I'm really stressed. Whenever I graduated high school, I thought all of the insecurities and everything I was dealin' with would go away, but that didn't happen, obviously. When I'm in class, I tend to compare myself a lot to other people. Whenever I would sit down to study, I would tell myself very negative things. I would be like "You can't even do it. What are you doing?"

Right now at this time, what's causing me the most worry and stress is my financial situation. Not having the money it takes to get here (gas). Not having the money it takes to buy hygiene, clothing, things like that.

I know exactly what classes I should take at what times and so I can graduate on time. … Makes me feel good. Makes me feel like it's doable and I can see exactly what I need to do in order to achieve my goals.

Texas community college students participate in a Listen to Me focus group.

Spring Surveys Underway

Currently 197 colleges are participating in CCSSE 2022. Of those, about half have opted to add the free Race/Ethnicity Pilot Survey to their administration. In addition, over a quarter of colleges administering CCSSE in the classroom are participating in CCSSE paper-and-pencil+, an option that allows colleges to also survey their online-only students. The paper-and-pencil+ option will be available to SENSE colleges starting with the 2022 administration.

Presentations & Meetings

Below is a list of all virtual attendances and presentations by CCCSE staff during the past few months or that are upcoming.

January 2022

» NSSE advisory board meeting
» Texas Success Center Knowledge Steering Committee meeting
» *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* advisory board meeting
» The Pathways Collaborative meeting

February 2022

» DREAM Conference – *The Working Learner: What We Need to Know to Help Them Succeed!*
  Including co-presenters from Austin Community College (TX) and Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley Campus (MO)
» Metropolitan Community College-Maple Woods Inaugural Student Engagement Showcase – *Why Student Engagement Matters!*
» National Alliance of Community & Technical Colleges board meeting
  CCCSE recently invited to serve

March 2022

» Excelencia in Education Seal of Excelencia advisory council meeting
  CCCSE recently invited to serve
» The University of New Mexico - Valencia Campus Guided Pathways Virtual Summit – *What Do We Know About The Intersection of Guided Pathways And The Student Experience?*
» New England Board of Higher Education Legislative Advisory Committee – *Doing The Most With The Least: How State Policymakers Can Support Wellbeing, Belonging and Success at Community Colleges For An Equitable Pandemic Recovery*
  Including co-panelists from The Hope Center for Community, College, and Justice; Bunker Hill Community College (MA); River Valley Community College (NH); and Northern Essex Community College (MA)
» Trellis Foundation Summit
» Jobs for the Future (JFF) and the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) Webinar Series – *AHA Moments About the Student Experience*
» The Council for the Study of Community Colleges Conference
  » *A French and U.S. Comparative Overview of the Critical Concerns of Community College Students and Leaders During the Global Pandemic*
    Including co-presenters from University of Southern California, Office for Community College Research and Leadership, American Council on Education, and University of Bourgogne-France
  » *Academic Mindset and Its Role in Student Learning at Community Colleges*
    Including co-presenter from University of Wisconsin
  » *COVID-Related Effects on Student Engagement*
  » *Measuring Student Engagement in Community College: Construct Validity of CCSSE*
    Including co-presenter from University of North Carolina at Charlotte
  » Transfer Seeking Behaviors of Community College Students
    Including co-presenter from University of North Carolina at Charlotte

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CCCSE Continues 20th Anniversary Celebration

SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOARD

▶ The Founding Members

▶ The Impact

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FOCUS GROUP REEL

LISTENING & LEARNING BEST OF FOCUS GROUPS

Active and Engaged Learning Matters

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SPECIAL PODCAST SERIES

Because community colleges have long been at the margins of the

Race-Centric Equity Initiatives with Dr. Eboni Zamani-Gallaher, Director of the Office for Community College Research and Leadership

Diverse In The Margins

Diverse: Issues In Higher Education is celebrating CCCSE's 20th anniversary by interviewing researchers and community college leaders in a four-part series of its *In the Margins* podcast. Each episode will focus on a theme from CCCSE's Listening & Learning collection. The first episode features Eboni-Zamani Gallaher, Executive Director of the Office for Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL), who speaks about "Issues of Equity Matter." OCCRL previously collaborated with CCCSE to create equity briefs as part of a comprehensive toolkit developed for the Ensure Students Are Learning project.