

Applicant: Portland State University (PSU) (OPEID 00321600)

Partners: Clackamas Community College (CCC), Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC)

Project Title: Access, Connect, Complete, Engage (ACCE)

Populations to be Served: ACCE will focus on students living on lower incomes, who are the first in their family to attend college, who identify as persons of color, who are older when they (re)enroll in college, or who are parents (“underserved students”) who attend CCC or MHCC and intend to transfer to PSU to earn a bachelor’s degree. PSU and partners anticipate reaching 750 CCC and MHCC students over the grant period for a total of 1,500 students over the course of four years.

Project Goals: The proposed multifaceted, integrated approach to supporting postsecondary (PS) student success will 1) increase the % of underserved CC students who successfully transfer to PSU; 2) increase the % of underserved transfer students who successfully persist and earn a bachelor’s degree from PSU; and 3) refine sustainable systems for using data to continually assess and improve program effectiveness.

Primary Project Activities: ACCE will address system barriers to academic success for underserved transfer students and help reduce disparities among postsecondary outcomes across CCC, MHCC, and PSU by bridging evidence-based practices that include 1) *extended coaching and advising* to clear the transfer pathway and support students long-term; 2) *transition programs* to foster sense of belonging; 3) *comprehensive and integrated advising* to support course planning, credit transfer for major degree requirements, and bachelor’s degree attainment; 4) *financial coaching and direct student aid* to make college more affordable, accessible, attainable, and transparent; and 5) *data-driven evaluation and decision-making* to improve postsecondary success outcomes for underserved students.

Anticipated outcomes: Among the core objectives guiding ACCE activities are: 1) Clear the transfer pathway between CCC, MHCC & PSU by providing early/proactive, wrap-around, collaborative, and extended guidance to 3,000 prospective underserved transfer students over four years; 2) Make the transition between CCC, MHCC & PSU more affordable, accessible, attainable & transparent by removing financial barriers to 1,500 prospective underserved transfer students over four years; and 3) Provide comprehensive & integrated advising to support course planning, credit transfer for major degree requirements, & bachelor’s degree attainment for 1,500 underserved transfer students over four years. Anticipated outcomes include increased credit completion, increased enrollment, reduction of excess credits, increased successful transfer, and increased persistence and degree completion.

Priorities Met: Absolute Priority 2 and Competitive Preference Priority

Expected Contribution to Field: This study will use a Randomized Control Trial to add to existing evidence that meets What Works Clearinghouse standards; it will explore whether more underserved transfer students earn their bachelor’s degree with extended, continuous support throughout the transfer trajectory (i.e., across two- and four-year institutions).