Annual Reflection Narrative
Amarillo College

Due: May 15, 2013

Annual Reflection Narrative Instructions

1. **Contributors to the Annual Reflection**:

   Institution Name: **Amarillo College**

Contributors	Titles of Contributors to this Annual Reflection
Dr. Paul Matney	President
Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart	Vice-President, Academic Affairs
Mr. Bob Austin	Vice-President, Student Affairs
Dr. Tamara Clunis	Dean, Academic Success
Dr. Kathy Wetzel	Department Chair, Mathematics, Sciences & Engineering
Danita McAnally	Chief, Planning and Advancement
Cara Crowley	Director, HSI Programs

2. **Progress Statement**:
   Please describe in no more than one page your institution's progress in improving student success and completion. In what ways is your reform work transforming the way students experience college?

Amarillo College faculty and staff also know that life is too short to listen to excuses. Therefore, we analyzed and evaluated reasons for students' successes and struggles, and have not allowed them to become our excuse for lack of success. Amarillo College faculty and staff worked diligently and effectively to improve student success. Our initial results show great promise and yet, point to a tremendous need for improvement.

Amarillo College continues to hold Student Success as its institutional priority. President Matney established a $100,000 Student Success Contingency allowing faculty and staff to submit requests for funding central to student success. As a result, Amarillo College leveraged these funds in year one to improve student access to technology, expand tutoring hours, and accelerate developmental education options. The results demonstrate that we have been able to:

- **Improve student success in our English and Math Course Redesigned gateway courses**. These improvements demonstrate that our Course Redesign Intervention laid a powerful foundation on which to build. For 2012, English 1301 redesign sections showed a 4% increase in student success compared to 2011 courses. Course redesign was particularly helpful for our growing Hispanic student population, with a significant increase in Hispanic student success in redesigned section of English. For Math redesign of Intermediate Algebra, an additional 191 students were saved compared to non-redesigned sections with an 8% increase in success. An additional 258 students were saved in College Algebra redesign compared to students in non-redesigned sections with a 4% increase in success. The redesign of these two gateway courses placed greater emphasis on technology, active learning, application of course content, and increased standards and expectations. The redesigns were faculty driven. This initial success will challenge and encourage the faculty in History, which began its redesign plan spring 2013.

- **Increased support for our under-resourced students**. We implemented Benefit Bank to connect students to resources for which they qualify in a single source application web interface. In spring 2013, we leveraged benefit bank to bring over $28,000 back to students through tax returns and connected students to over $100,000 worth of resources. We hired a social worker to develop a case management system for our most at risk students. In fall 2012, the social worker served over 200 students alone. We implemented an early alert system allowing faculty to identify students who were struggling with attendance or course work or were in need of resources and additional support. In fall 2012, 799 students were early alerted. Each student was assigned to an advisor who followed up by connecting students to resources. Additionally, faculty and staff created food and clothing pantries on the Washington Street and West campuses. These served over 100 students in Fall 2012 and are completely staffed and stocked voluntarily by college employees. If students have need, Amarillo College has developed a system to initially connect students to resources within the college or the community. Our systemic approach to poverty was competitively selected for presentation at the First Year Experience conference in Orlando, February 2013.

- **Expand tutoring support into all gateway courses**. The Amarillo College Board of Regents passed a $1 general fee assessed for each student to fund the expansion of tutoring throughout the college. Following the successful model of the Amarillo College Math Outreach Center, tutoring expanded with the Science Enrichment Center and Writers Corner. The Math Outreach Center saw a 16% increase in success for students using the service as opposed to those not using the service and had 14,041 units of service through February 2013. The Writer's Corner saw 10-19% increase in student success for those using the service with 2230 units of service through February 2013. The Science Enrichment Center was established as a new service this academic year, a director was hired, and faculty integrated their course assignments and test analysis into the tutoring processes. The impact on student success for those using this new tutoring service is still under analysis. students who failed any test in A&P and CHEM were required to receive a 30 minute mandatory tutoring session before they were allowed to take their next major class exam. At the end of the tutoring session, a 10 question post quiz was administered and 97% of those who had failed the major exam passed the post quiz. The Science Enrichment Center had 3,847 units of service through February 2013. Additionally, traditional methods of tutoring also saw a 5% increase in student learning for 873 individual tutoring sessions through February 2013. We are developing a culture for students AND faculty to seek tutoring as a viable option to improve student learning.

As a result of Year 1 implementation of our interventions, Amarillo College students experienced a college intentionally creating pathways for their success. We worked hard to integrate and align our efforts – placing students' needs above our own. While we have significant work ahead, the success of our efforts this year has buoyed us. Amarillo College is a great place for faculty and staff – we have a family. Our work this year will ensure Amarillo College is an even greater place for students.

3. **Institution Context**:
    Please consider both the positive and negative factors affecting the student success efforts at your institution and provide a brief (no more than one page) summary of the impact each has had on your progress this year. This summary may include aspects related to the institution's culture and environment such as leadership changes, engagement of full- and part-time faculty, staff additions or lay-offs, state or federal influences, budget reductions, and reaffirmation of accreditation efforts.

Challenges
- Amarillo College, like every higher education institution, is faced with financial concerns because of state budget cuts. This has resulted in increases to tuition and decreases in positions, both faculty and staff
- The culture of Amarillo College has been employee centric in policy and practice, while caring for students is also a cultural value. As the completed policy audit indicated, we have potential to shift to a student centered culture, but changing policy and practice has proven difficult.
- A pressing challenge is defining the student success agenda in an accessible manner for every employee in every division to embrace as a part of executing everyday job duties.
- Drilling data down to an actionable level at the faculty/staff and departmental level is difficult and requires data analysis skills and a professional development plan to develop those skills.
- With shifts in Institutional Research personnel, a new reporting structure and additional duties have been placed on current IR staff. This shift could be a challenge that becomes an opportunity for greater IR capacity.

Opportunities
- Ended late registration as practice and policy.
- With further integration and alignment of academic and student affairs efforts, AC is piloting an At-Risk score for each incoming student on a scale of 1-5. For each increase in the at-risk score, the students will receive the corresponding intervention targeting the elements that have placed the student at the at-risk level. This will be piloted in Fall 2013 and includes both academic, advising, counseling, and financial interventions for students upfront to ensure they start their academic journey on the right path.
- Successfully completed SACS reaffirmation with our QEP, First Year Seminar, recommended for approval. The FYS is one of our interventions with a goal of expanding it to include all incoming students.

- Creation of Data Specialists in each academic department and student services advising division focusing on providing success data for each faculty and advisor with comparisons to the department and college. This process has produced important action items for professional development, course sequencing, advising, and pedagogy.
- Since almost 50% of the Board of Regents attending an AtD Trustee's Institute, our community leadership has embraced student success, placed it as an agenda item, and will host a student success retreat for all AC Board of Regents.
- Campus culture that is embracing student success as a part of job searches, reorganizations, and budgeting priorities.
- The part-time faculty certification process at Amarillo College is robust and is an effective way to reach and include our part-time faculty into the student success agenda.
- The integration of student and academic affairs efforts within the poverty and tutoring expansion interventions and Data Specialists process laid an important foundation of teamwork across these two critical divisions.
- The $2.5M Department of Labor TAACCCT grant provides a great opportunity to develop, implement, and institutionalize accelerated and integrated developmental courses and entire technical programs by expanding the Adult Basic Education Innovation Grant for Developmental Education, ESL, and Workforce training integration.
- The Amarillo community Gates Partnership for Postsecondary Success $1.3M grant forged new relationships with community leaders and created a greater understanding of and support for the Amarillo College mission. As a result of this partnership, AC started a career center partially staffed by the Workforce Solutions; hired a social worker to coordinate community service connections to students; and, forged greater interest in supporting AC with 9 candidates running for the Board of Regents, for four seats.
- The renovation of spaces for the Center for Teaching and Learning will allow for more effective training and targeted incubation of new instructional technologies.
- The renovation and expansion of Math Outreach Center will allow for more effective tutoring for more students.
- One of our own, Dr. Tamara Clunis, was selected as The Outstanding First Year Student Advocate for community colleges nationally by the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition, indicating our efforts for students are starting to be acknowledged by the higher education community.
- Establishing a Student Money Management Center to open September 1, 2013.

4. **Principles Assessment**:
   For each principle listed below, provide a brief summary of your institution's aggregate observations regarding the Principles Assessment Survey *(see below)*. Please be sure to include recognition of achievements and challenges your college has experienced as well as a description of future plans. This summary should be no longer than 3 paragraphs for each principle and may also include a synopsis of your institution's group discussions.

a. **Principle 1) Committed Leadership**

The Principles Assessment Survey indicate senior leadership deep commitment to student success, with 93% rating of 4 or 5 for leadership team support for improvements to student learning. The perception of a commitment to student success is by the Board of Regents is not as strong, with only a 70% rating of 4 or 5. With four current board members completion of the Trustee's Institute, board placement of student success as a standing item on meeting agendas, along with a commitment to attend a board planning retreat for student success in August 2013, the board is certainly increasing their commitment to and understanding of student success. The area needing the most attention is development of commitment for the student success agenda for faculty leaders. With only 65% rating faculty leadership commitment at a 4 or 5, the senior leadership must make a stronger effort to include and develop faculty leader involvement in planning and implementation.

b. **Principle 2) Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services**

We see growing capacity in data collection, management, analysis and application. The survey results indicate some concerns over data integrity, with 57% rating data integrity as a 3 or below. Changes in IR staff duties and reporting structure could address this concern structurally. Additionally, the most important notation is that about 50% of responders, while seeing an increase, are not receiving enough longitudinal data on our cohorts and don't feel such data is used enough in decision-making. For example, 51% indicated IR staff need to do more to assist college personnel in using data and research to improve programs. While this is identified as an IR staff issue, it also points to the need to further train our campus leaders to be conversant in data and data analysis to alleviate the growing burden on IR staff. Over 80% see an increase in faculty use of data to improve teaching strategies. However, 48% indicate the college needs to more fully engage personnel from across campus to review student achievement data. The Instructional Data Specialists have worked closely with IR to improve this within the academic ranks and these results indicate we need to involve every division in these data conversations. Shifting to self-service data, through tools such as dashboards, will improve our ability to embrace data-driven decision-making.

c. **Principle 3) Broad Engagement**

Broad engagement is an area with increasing support and the greatest need. Each survey question targeting broad engagement indicated that involvement of faculty, staff and students was increasing, but needs to be stronger. While best practices are identified and professional development offered further effort must be made to reflect and implement appropriate strategies. Amarillo College must more effectively evaluate and integrate best practices into action, as only 40% felt such action was taken in student services staff and 44% in academics. Most encouraging, 78% see increasing (3 rating) to a lot (4-5 rating) of alignment with student and academic affairs. The Core Team is building a comprehensive communication plan to include method depth and branding.

d. **Principle 4) Systemic Institutional Improvement**

The most encouraging portion of the survey results were for systemic institutional improvement with the highest collective ratings for questions in the category. Over 96% of respondents said AC had established a planning process that relies on data to set goals, and 78% gave the highest ratings. Training for full and part-time faculty is seen to promote student success with 81% ranking such activity with a 3 or above. The most improvement is needed in the area of training faculty and staff on using data to improve programs and services. While 42% said it was increasing, only 16% gave it the highest rating. Still, these results are encouraging and indicate that AC is improving his discussions of, uses for, and planning with data to make systemic improvement.

e. **Principle 5) Equity**

Where systemic institutional improvement demonstrated a growing strength at Amarillo College, equity concerns identify an important area for significant improvement. While 78% indicate AC has a commitment to equity for all students, only 27% correctly stated that our staffing does not reflect the demographic of our area. These survey results highlight the opportunities for the implementation of the AC Equity agenda through training to integrate multicultural perspectives in curriculum, proactively promoting a learning environment for all students, and developing a skill set to work with diverse student backgrounds for front line and student support services.
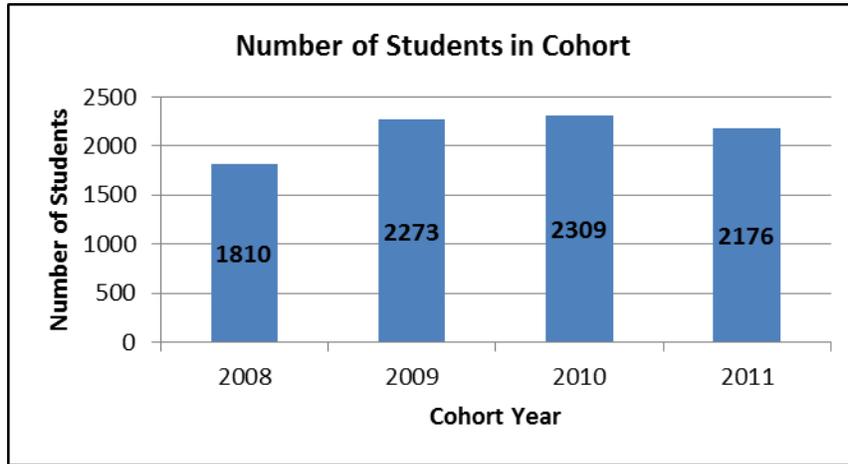
5. **Student Success Data**:

Please review your institution's disaggregated data for the five Achieving the Dream student success measures listed below. This data must be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status.

Next, prepare a one- to two-paragraph summary for each measure that a) describes your progress in comparison with previous year outcomes, (b) addresses rising or declining results over time, (c) explains your progress in closing achievement gaps among the disaggregated student groups, and (d) describes your plans for addressing decreases or sustaining and building increases. For *at least* one measure, please include a table or graph to illustrate your points.

Finally, describe any achievement gaps evident in the data for all five Achieving the Dream student success measures and explain how the institution is addressing or plans to address these gaps.
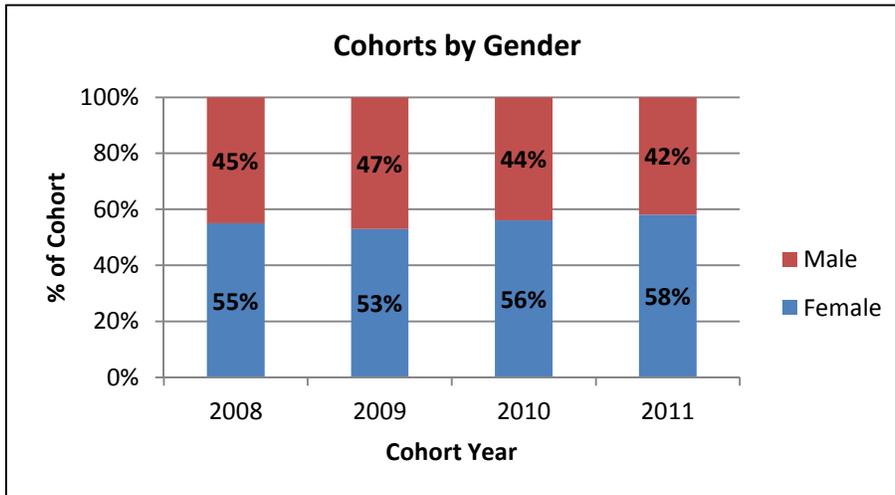
Overall Summaries

- Amarillo College has admitted **over 2,000 new students each fall** semester since 2009.

Number of Students in Cohort

A bar chart titled "Number of Students in Cohort" with Y-axis "Number of Students" (0 to 2500) and X-axis "Cohort Year":
- 2008: 1810
- 2009: 2273
- 2010: 2309
- 2011: 2176

Cohort Demographics

- **Gender:**

More than 50% of new students each fall are female.

A stacked bar chart titled "Cohorts by Gender" with Y-axis "% of Cohort" (0% to 100%) and X-axis "Cohort Year":
- 2008: Female 55%, Male 45%
- 2009: Female 53%, Male 47%
- 2010: Female 56%, Male 44%
- 2011: Female 58%, Male 42%

Gender	Cohort Year			
	2008	2009	2010	2011
Male	815	1069	1016	912
Female	995	1204	1293	1264

- **Ethnicity:**

More than half of entering students each fall are White, and more than **30%** are Hispanic. Black students make up **5% - 7%** of entering cohorts each year. These three demographic groups comprise over 90% of entering cohorts.
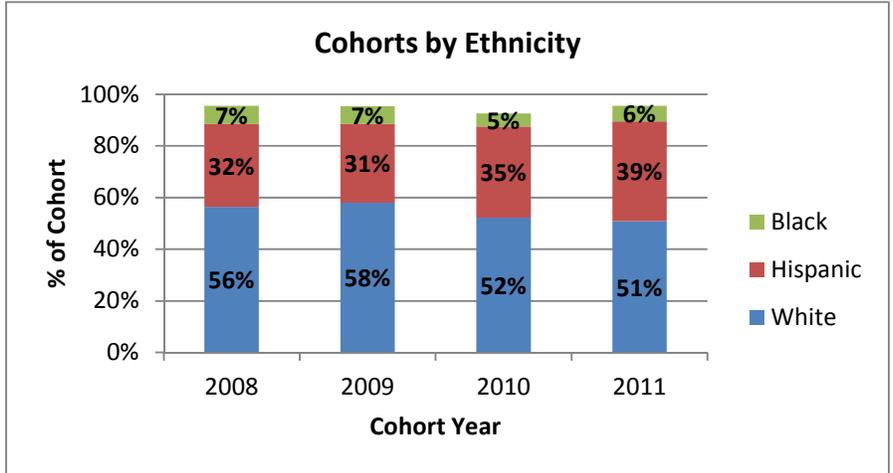
Cohorts by Ethnicity

|	Cohort Year			
Ethnicity	2008	2009	2010	2011
Missing	28	43	102	38
Am. Indian	18	15	33	28
Asian	36	47	36	31
Black	126	156	117	131
Hispanic	581	695	815	841
White	1021	1317	1206	1107

- Pell Status:

The percentage of students entering AC that received Pell awards **consistently increased** over the past four years, amounting to **more than half** of entering students for the past two years.

Cohorts by Pell Status

	Cohort			
Pell Status	2008	2009	2010	2011
No	1147	1264	1163	978
Yes	663	1009	1146	1198
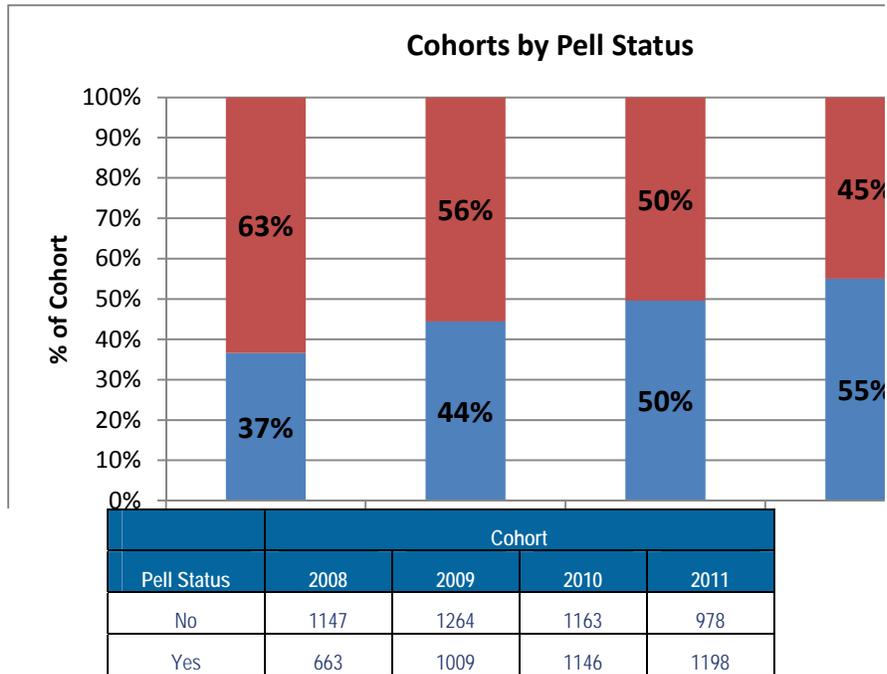
Measure One: Successful completion of developmental instruction and advancement to credit-bearing courses

- **Developmental English**

Three years of data for two cohorts demonstrates that among students who placed into Developmental English, **less than 30%** had completed developmental requirements after three years. In both cohorts, the increases in Developmental English completion rates beyond the first year are about **5%**.
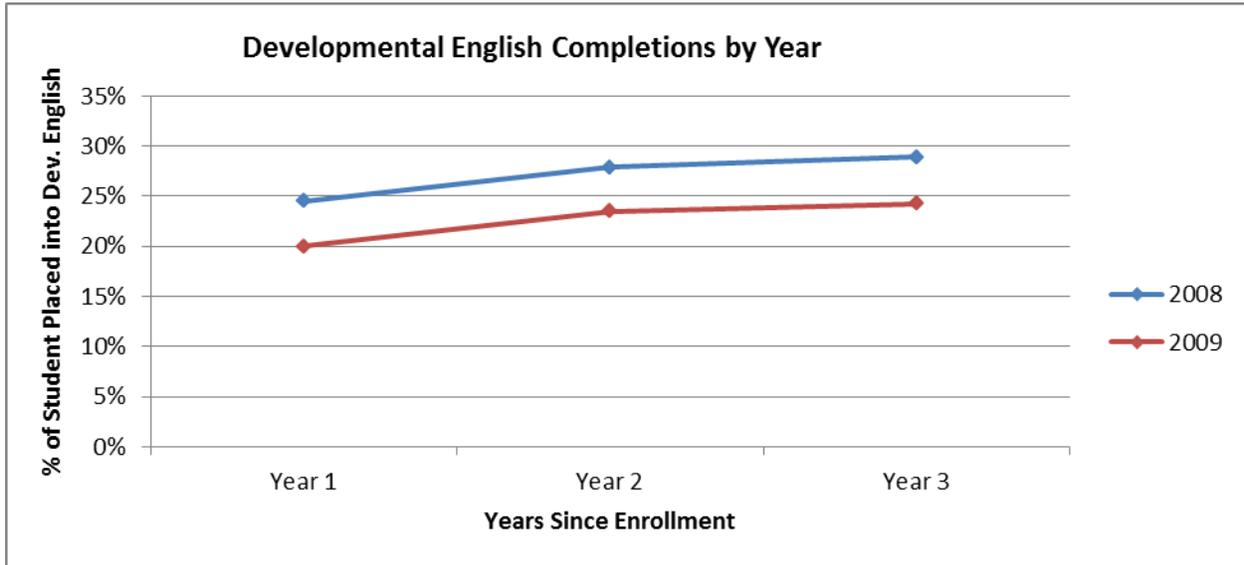
- **Developmental Math**

Three years of data indicate that only around **25%** of students that placed into Developmental Math completed developmental requirements within three years. In both cohorts, the developmental completion rate increased by **10%** subsequent to the first year of enrollment.
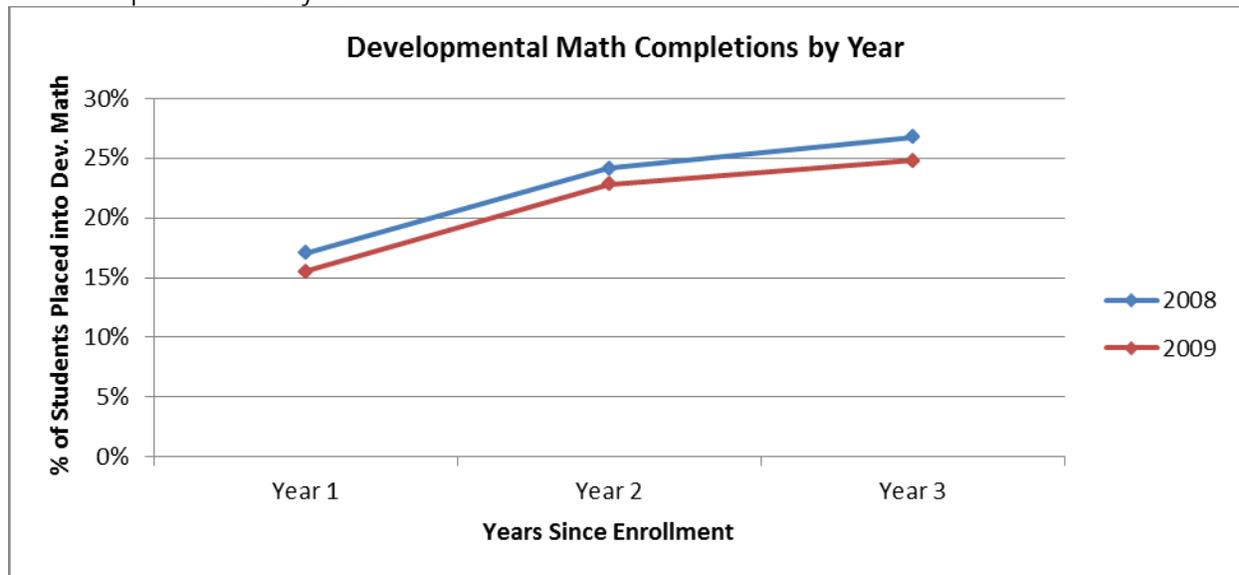
- Important Disaggregated Data Findings

Pell: Since 2009, the percentage of Pell awarded students placing into Developmental English has **increased from 26% to over 40%,** while the percentage of students that were not Pell awarded remained more stable, indicating that the **gap** between these two groups is growing with a **difference of 16%** in the most recent group.

Pell Status: Placement into Developmental English
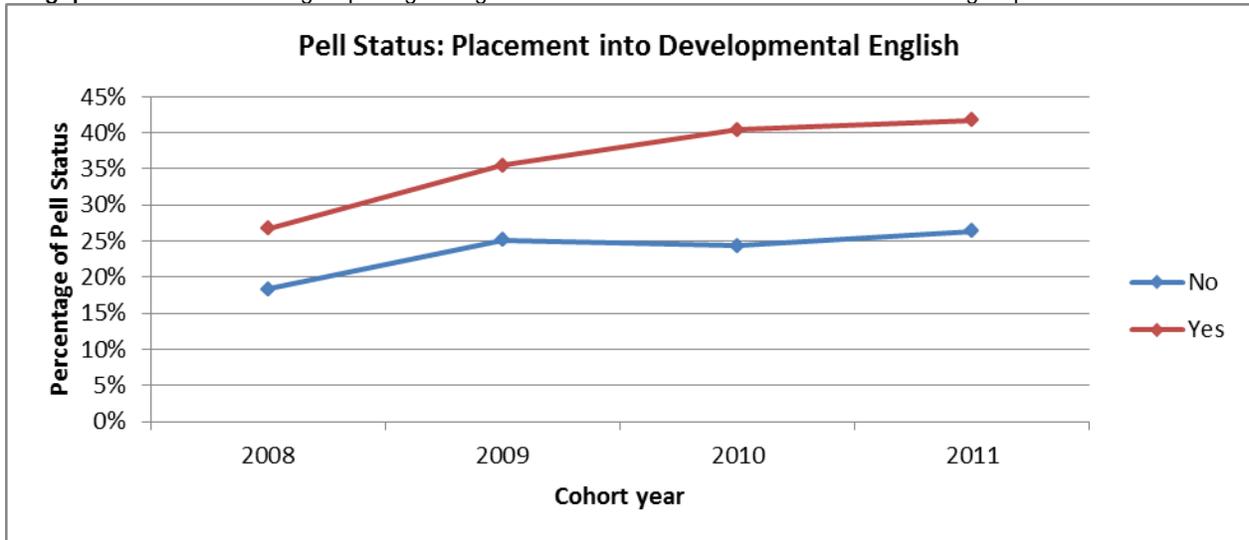
Ethnicity: Black students that placed into Developmental Math completed requirements in the first year at **lower rates** than the cohorts overall.

Black Students: Completion of Developmental Math in the First Year
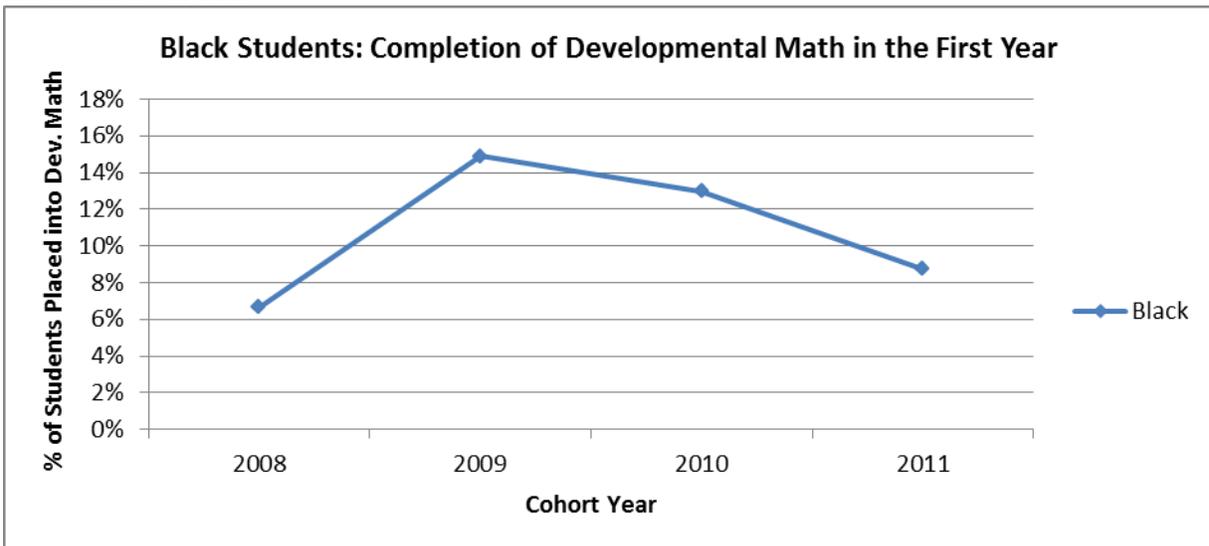
Gap Analysis for Goal I

- We must focus on African-American students with more intentionality. We plan to do this with creating an NAACP student chapter to focus on support, mentoring, and leadership development in additional to the 5 institution-wide interventions.
- The At-Risk score with the corresponding interventions will be critical for our Pell student success – connecting students to interventions BEFORE academic, financial, and/or social stresses start impacting students.

Measure Two: Enrollment in and successful completion of the initial college-level "gateway" math and English courses
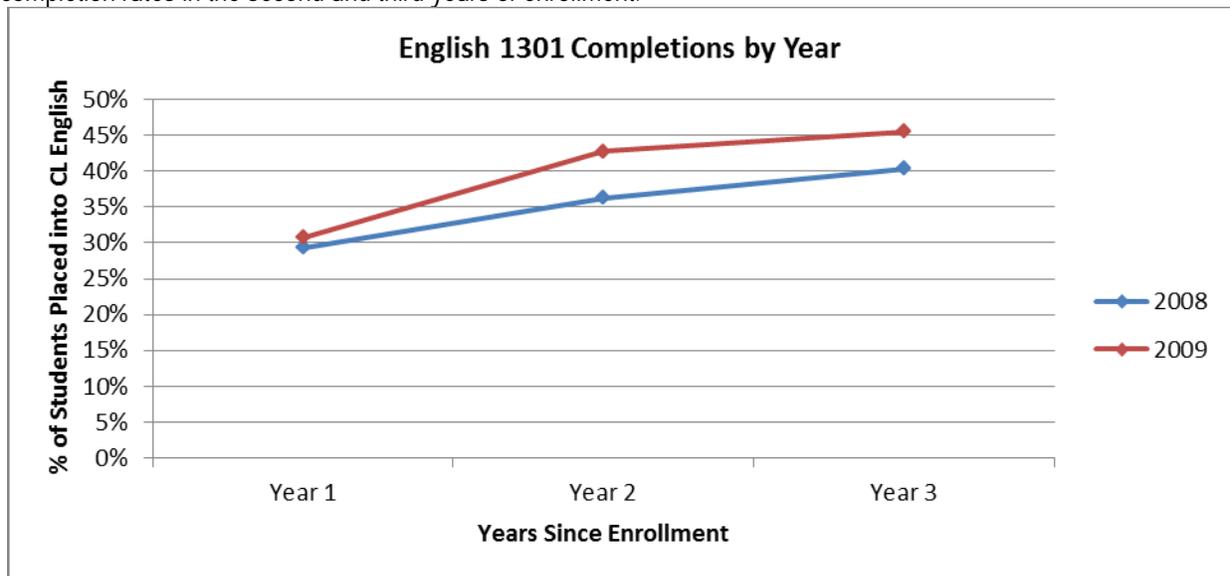
English 1301

- **Students that Placed into Developmental English**

Over three years, the percentage of students that placed into Developmental English and completed English 1301 approximately **doubled** subsequent to the first year of enrollment, with completion rates in the third year having been **slightly curtailed** compared to the second year.
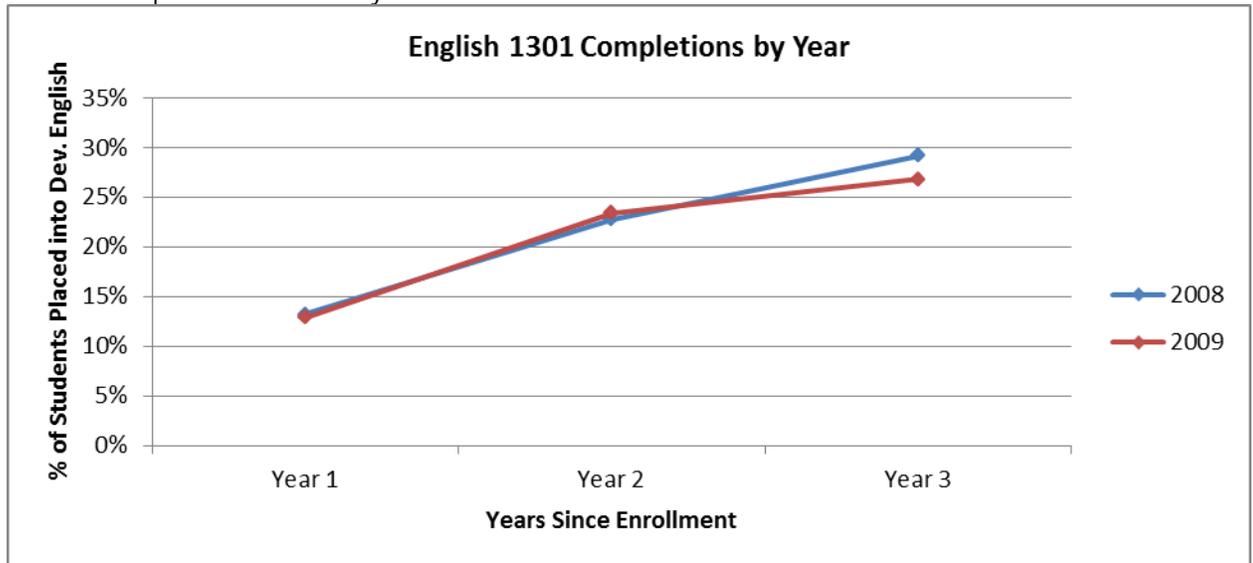
- *Students that Placed into College-level English*

Among students that demonstrated college-readiness in English, English 1301 completion rates after three years were **40% and 45%,** respectively, for the 2008 and 2009 cohorts. These data show increases of **10% - 15%** in the completion rates in the second and third years of enrollment.
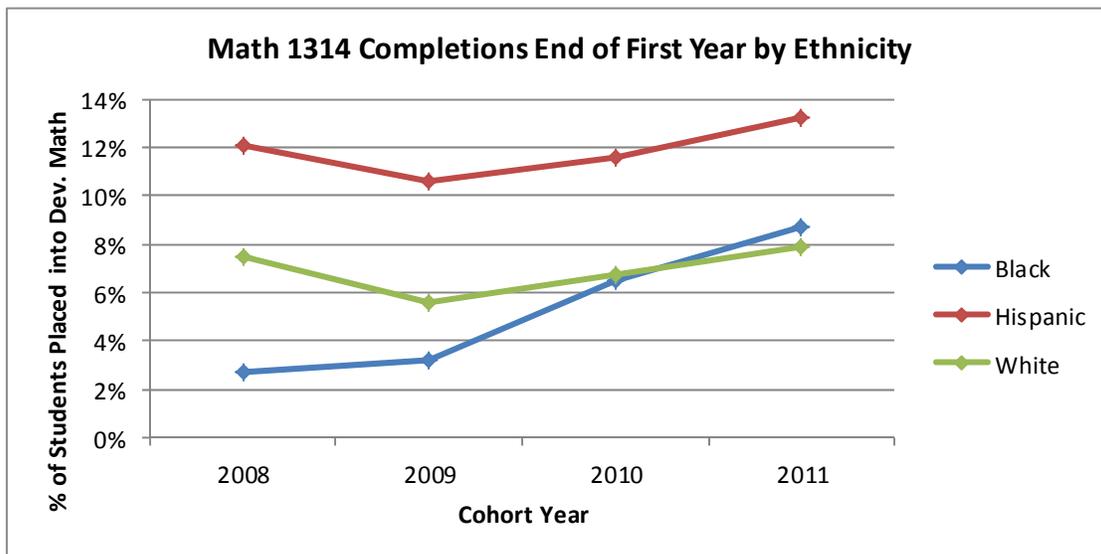
Math 1314

- *Students that Placed into Developmental Math*

Of students that placed into Developmental Math, **20%** completed Math 1314 in three years of enrollment. **Less than 10%** of student referred for math remediation completed gateway Math in the first year.

Math 1314 Completions by Year
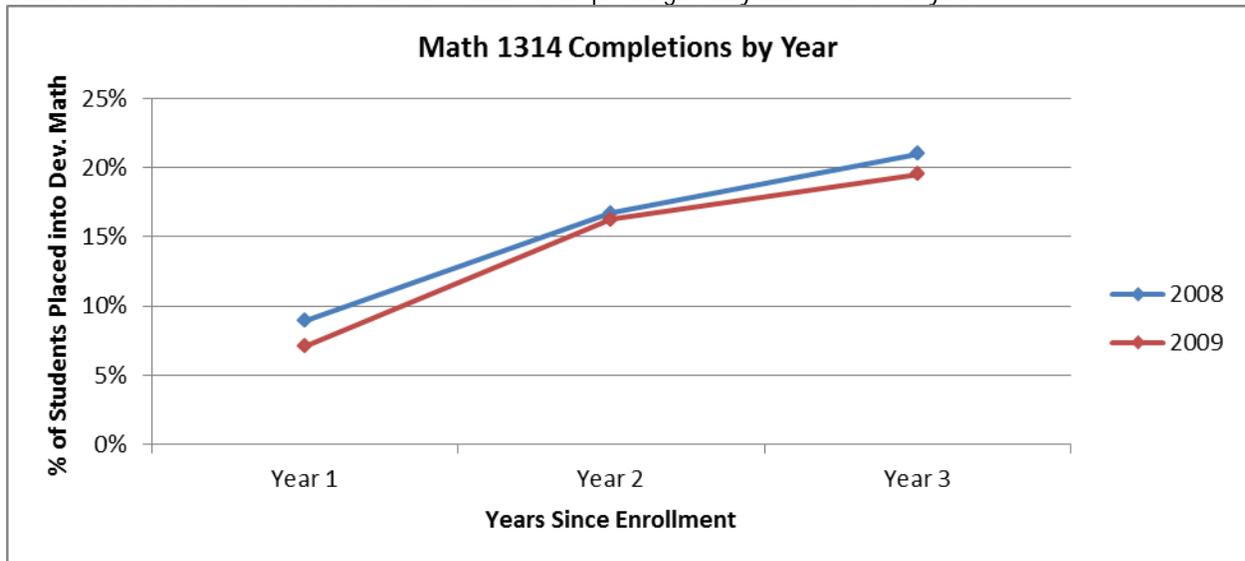
The rates at which Black, Hispanic, and White students that placed into Developmental Math completed Math 1314 has **increased across the cohorts**, with Black and White students completing at **lower rates** than the cohorts overall.

**Math 1314 Completions End of First Year by Ethnicity**

- *Students that Placed into College-level Math*

The percentage of students that placed into college-level Math and completed Math 1314 **rose by 7% - 9%** subsequent to the first year of enrollment, with the higher three year completion rate in the 2008 cohort at **42%**.
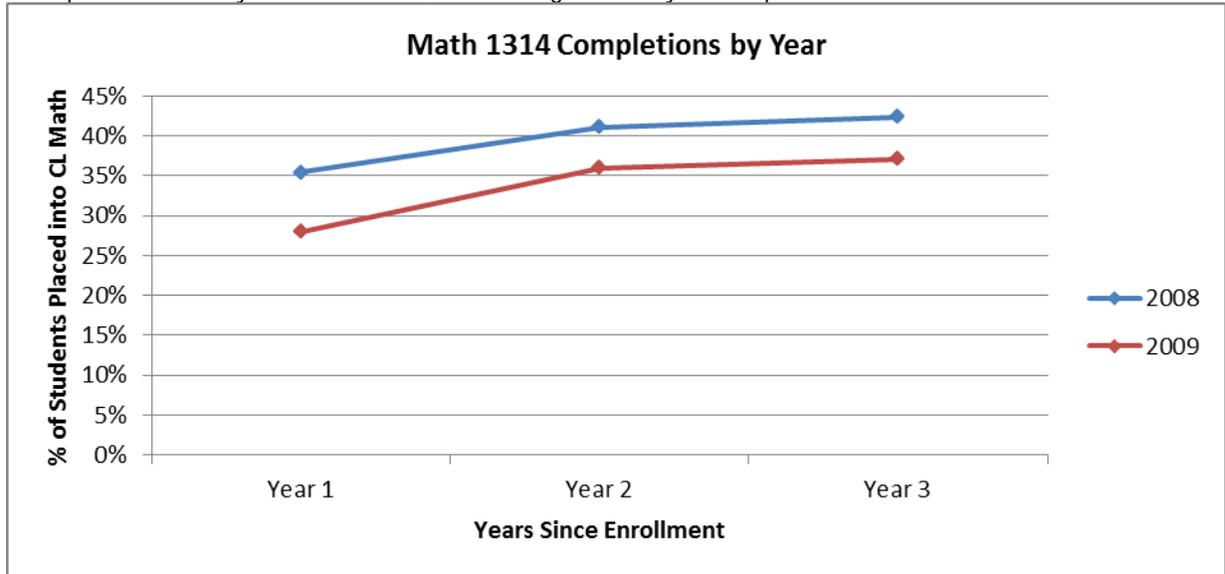
Black students that placed into college-level Math complete Math 1314 within the first year at rates **much lower** than the overall cohort rates.
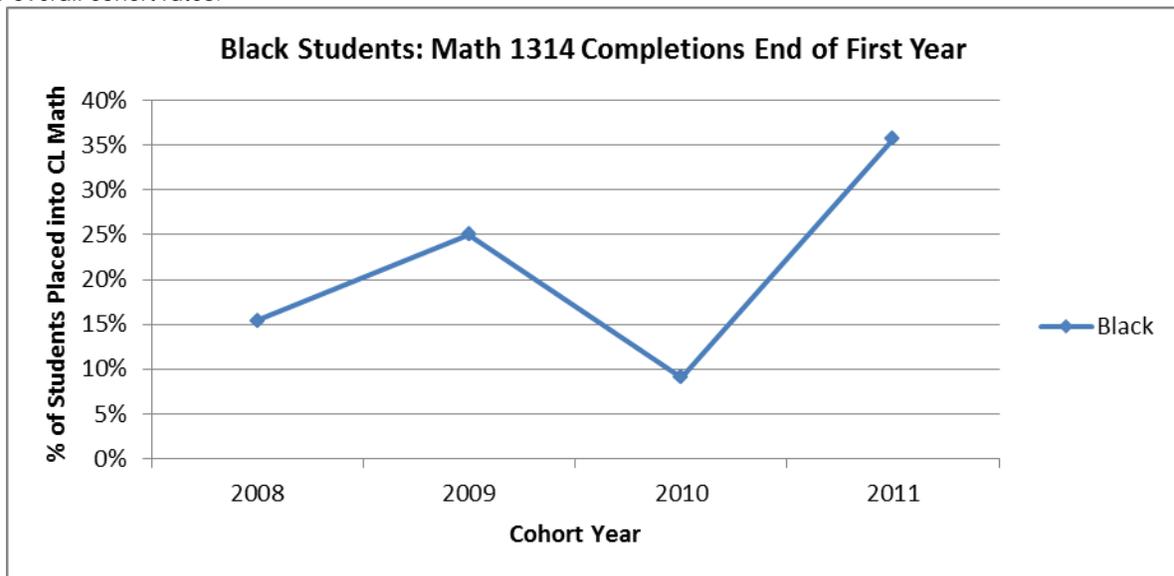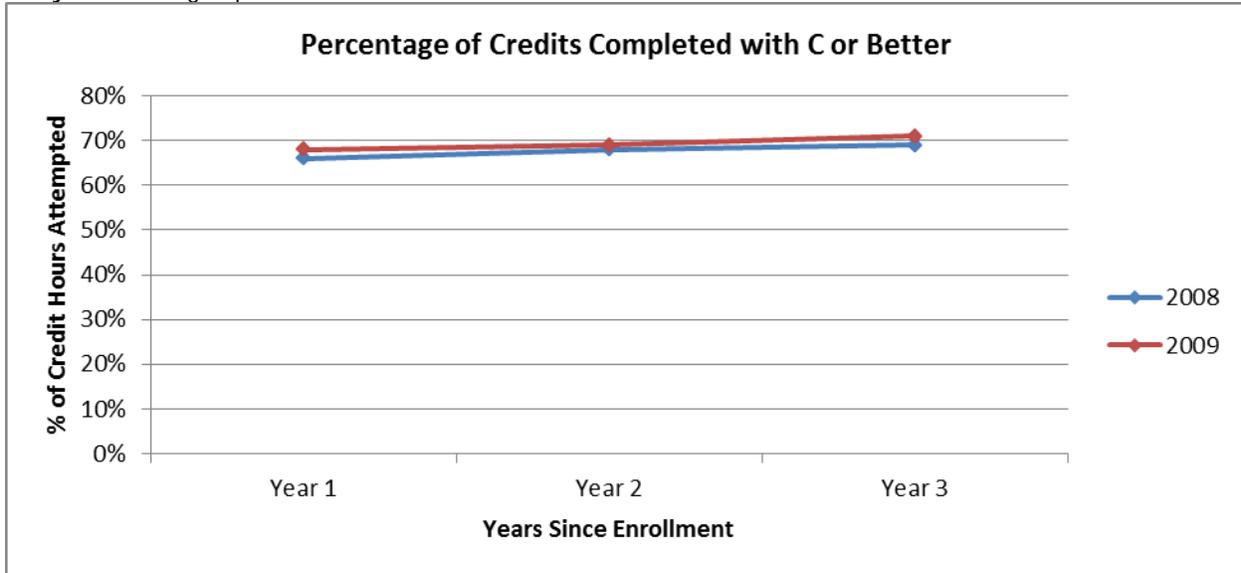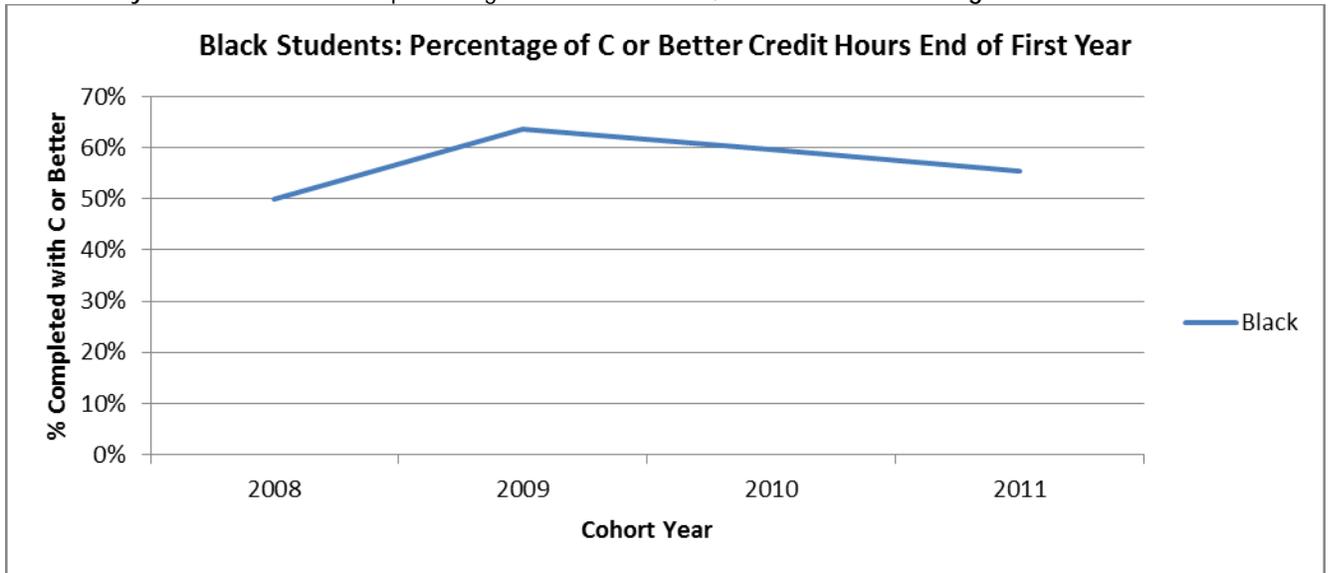

Gap Analysis for Goal II

- English and Math increased success rates demonstrate the need to continue to expand our redesigned courses to more courses and more sections.
- The Developmental Education pathway data indicates a need for more intention and acceleration to ensure students, especially African-American students, have greater opportunity for success.

Measure Three: Course completion with a grade of "C" or better

- Three years of cohort data indicate the percentage of credits attempted that were completed with a grade of C or better were **between 68% and 70%** in the two cohorts for which data is available, **increasing by about 1% per year** in both groups.

The percentage of credit hours completed by Black students with a C or better grade at the end of the first year is **consistently lower** than the overall percentage across the cohorts, and has been **declining** since 2009.
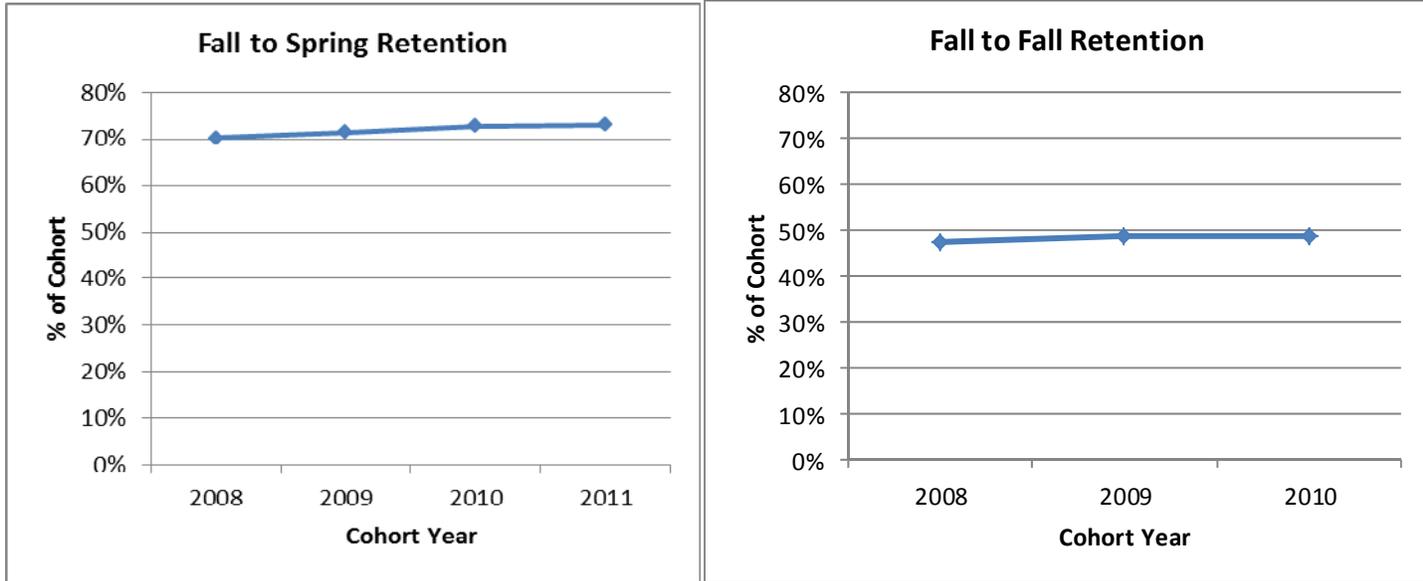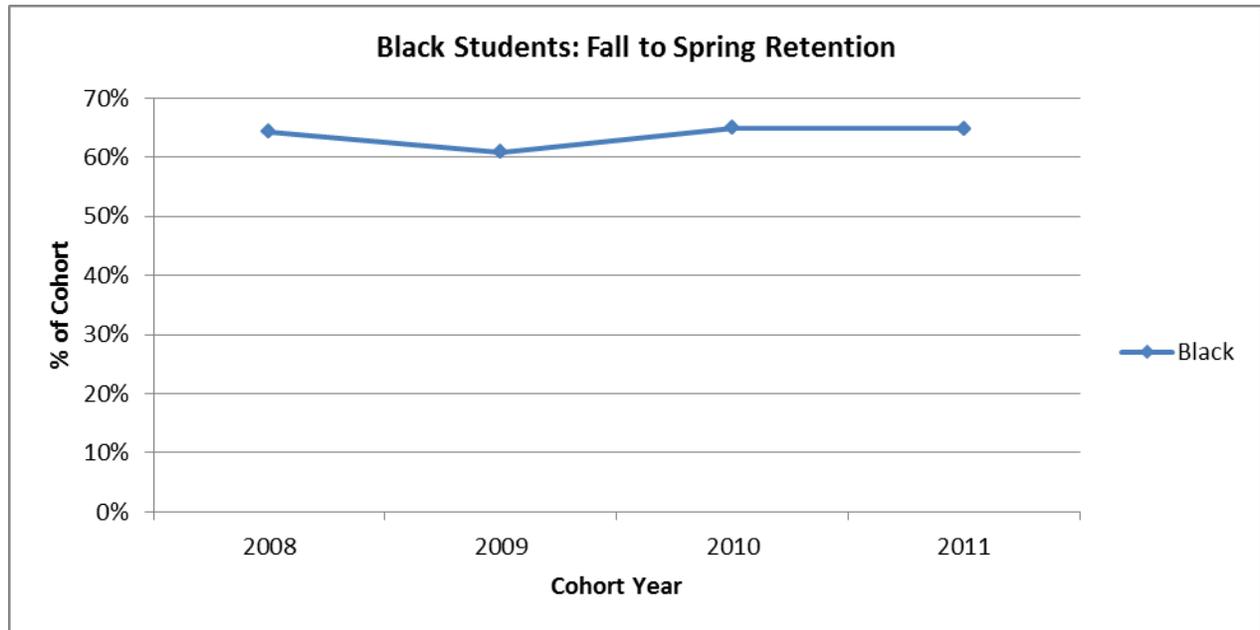

Gap Analysis for Goal III

- African-American student overall success is not seeing the same increases through tutoring, course redesign, and FYS interventions. We will investigate more specifically in the coming year, the rates of African-American and Hispanic students who utilize tutoring, FYS, and poverty initiatives and their success in gateway course redesigned sections.

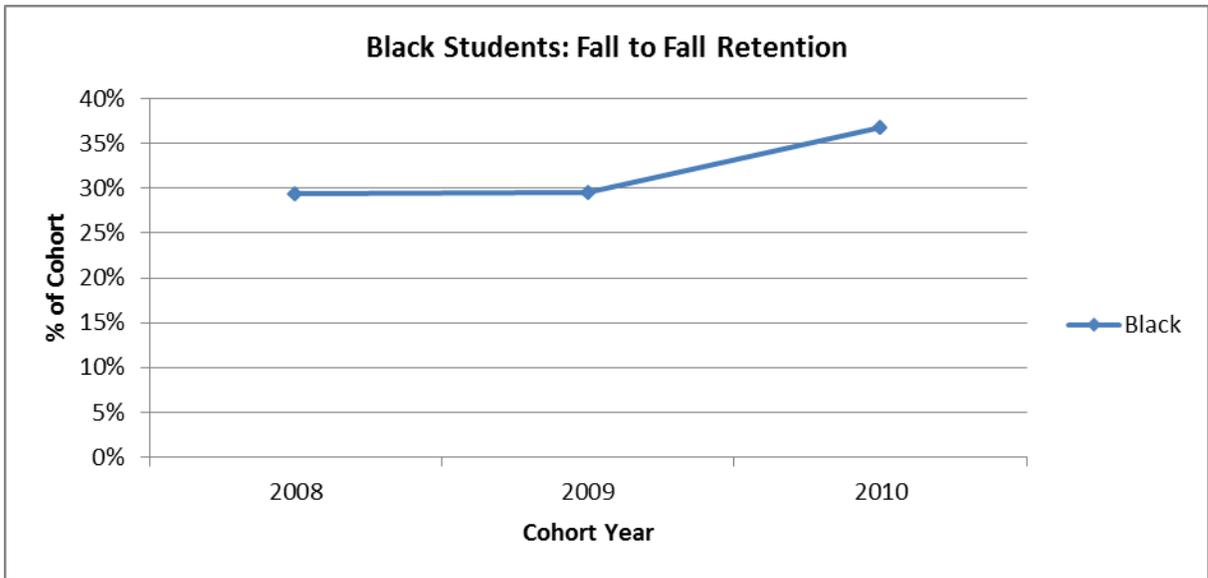# Measure Four: Term-to-term and year-to-year retention

- Across the cohorts, **70%** of entering fall students returned in the following spring, while **less than 50%** of cohort students returned in the fall of the second year.

Fall to Spring Retention

Fall to Fall Retention

- Across cohorts, Black students retained from fall to spring at **lower rates** than observed in the cohorts overall.

Black Students: Fall to Spring Retention

- Across cohorts, Black students retain to the second year at rates **much lower** than in the cohorts overall.

Black Students: Fall to Fall Retention

A line chart titled "Black Students: Fall to Fall Retention" with the y-axis labeled "% of Cohort" ranging from 0% to 40%, and x-axis labeled "Cohort Year" with values 2008, 2009, 2010. The "Black" line is approximately 29% in 2008, 29.5% in 2009, and rises to about 37% in 2010.
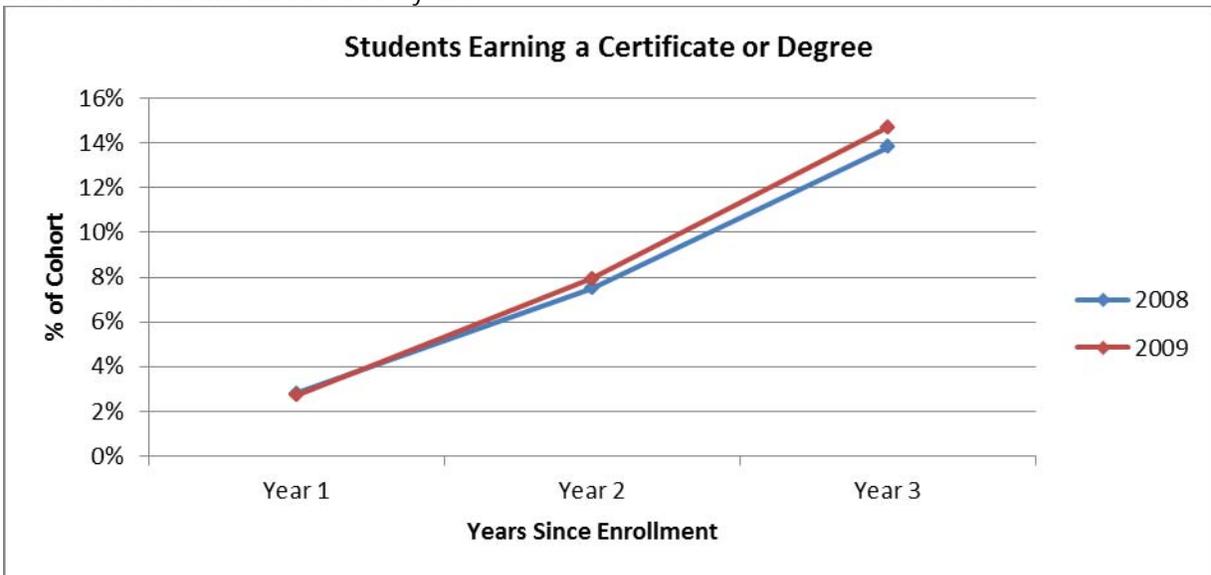
Gap Analysis for Goal IV

- Again, our gap analysis indicates a need for greater understanding of our American-American student experience with Amarillo College. We must more intentionally investigate, understand, and respond to these student needs, even as we understand this population is only 5% of our community and college.

# Measure Five: Completion of certificates or degrees

- **Graduates**

A **very small percentage** of cohort students earned a certificate or degree during the first year of enrollment among the 2008 and 2009 cohorts. In the second and third years of enrollment, the percentage of cohort students that earned a credential **increased 5%** both years.

A line chart titled "Students Earning a Certificate or Degree" with y-axis labeled "% of Cohort" ranging from 0% to 16%, and x-axis labeled "Years Since Enrollment" with values Year 1, Year 2, Year 3. The 2008 line rises from about 2.8% to 7.5% to 13.8%. The 2009 line rises from about 2.8% to 8% to 14.7%.

- The percentage of females that earned a degree or certificate within three years is **lower** than the percentage of males that earned a degree or certificate within three years, and the female percentage is also **lower** than the three-year completion rate observed in the cohorts overall.

Completions End of Third Year by Gender
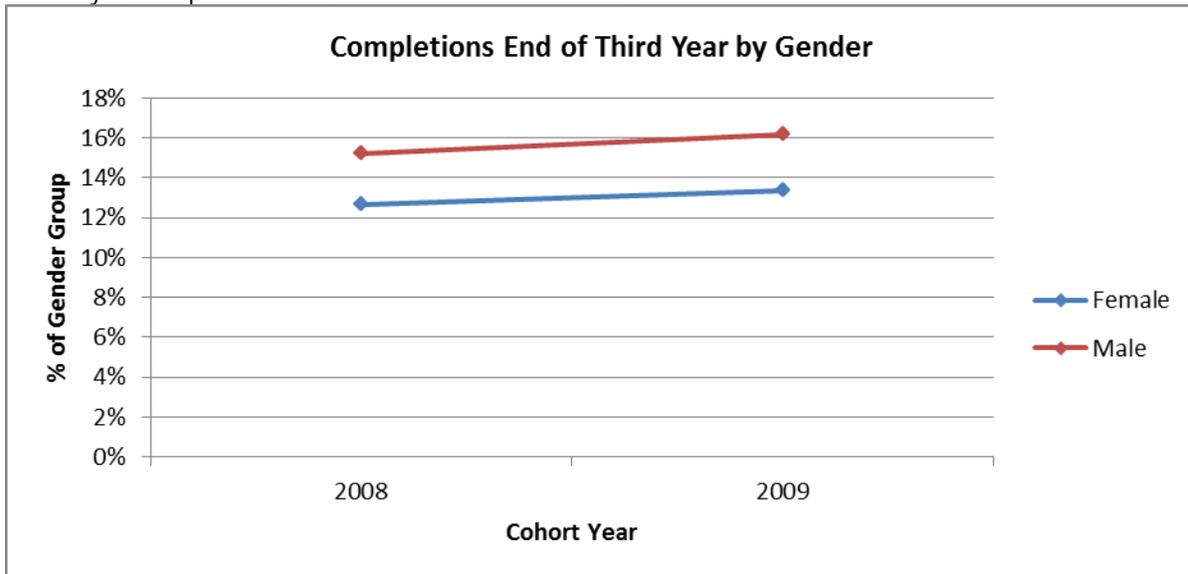
The percentage of Black students that earned a credential in three years was **lower** than the overall completion rate observed in the 2008 and 2009 cohorts, and the 2009 cohort saw a **decrease** of almost **3%** over the 2008 cohort.

**Black Students: Completions End of Third Year**
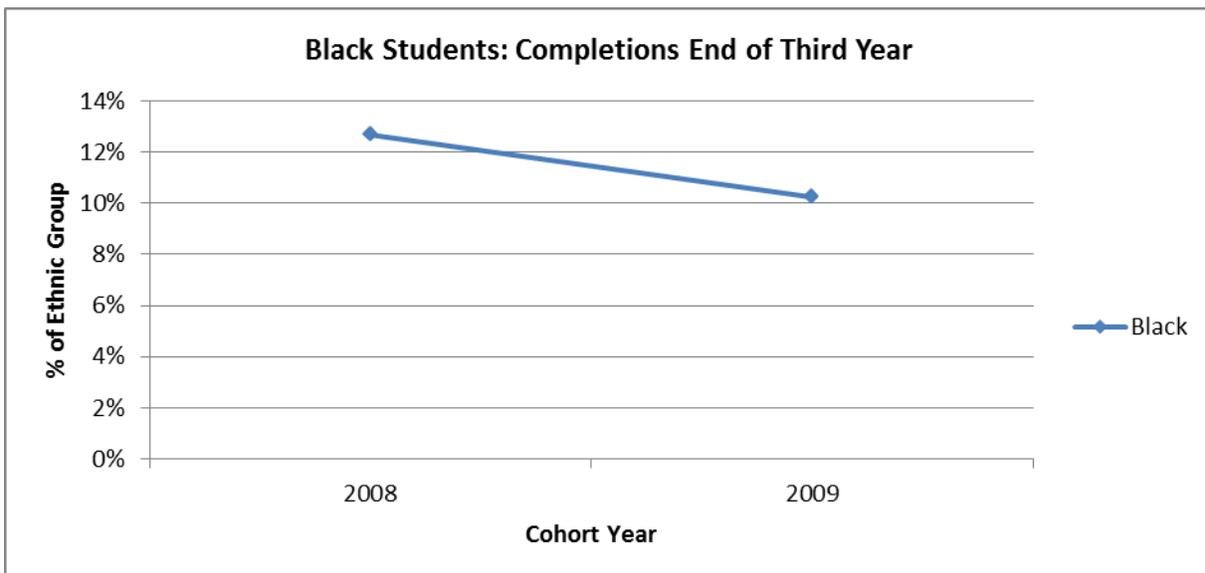
- **Transfer-Outs**

In the 2008 and 2009 cohorts, approximately **7%** of students transferred to another institution without earning a credential in the first year, and that number increased over the two subsequent years by **4% and 3%,** respectively.

Transfer-Outs with No Credential
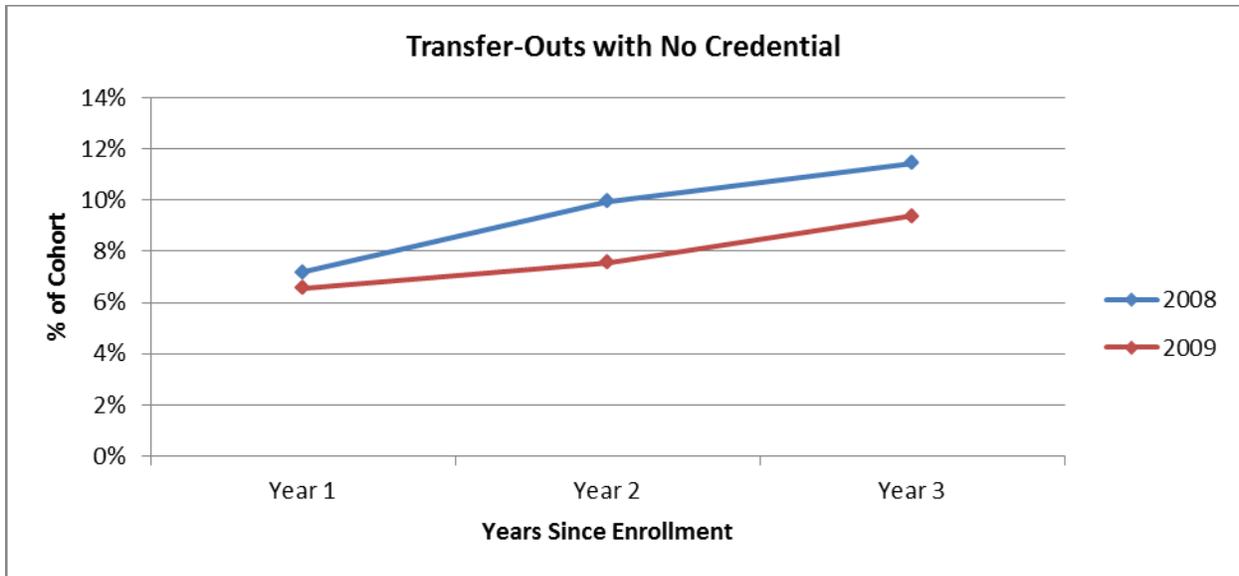
Pell awarded students transfer without having earned a credential a rates **lower** than observed in the cohorts overall.

Pell Awarded: Transfers with No Degree End of Third Year
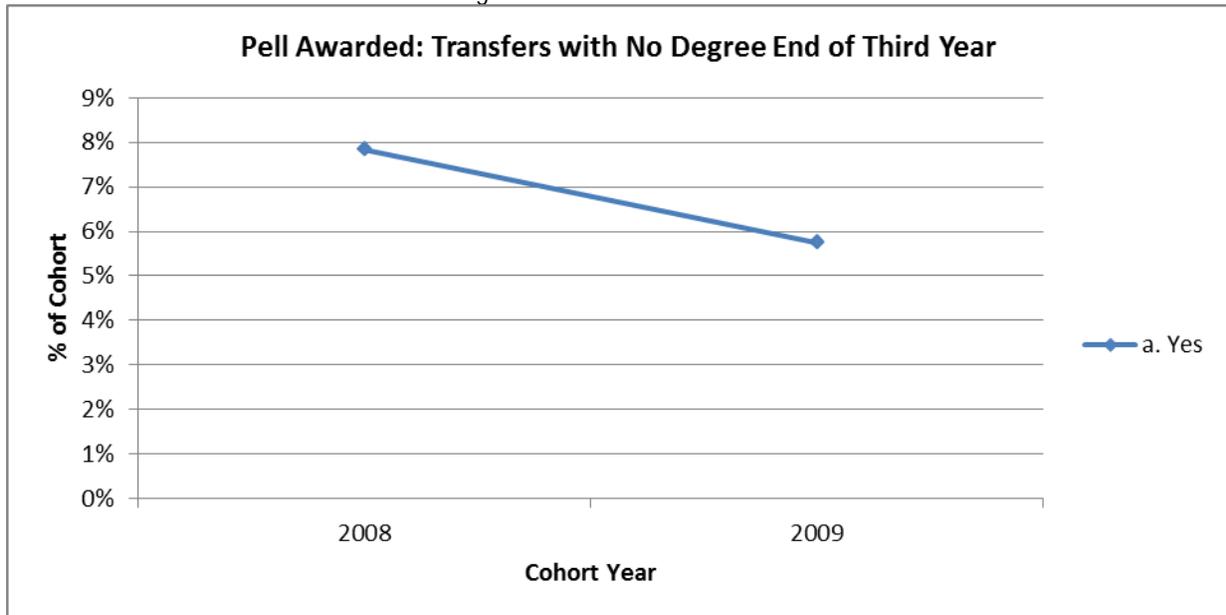
Gap Analysis for Goal IV

- Female, African-American, and Pell Awarded students are not completing degrees or transferring at the same rates of the overall cohort. Focusing on acceleration and implementation of intervention requirements related to the At-Risk score will be the Amarillo College focus to close the gaps for these populations.

6. **Student Success or Completion Efforts**:
    In addition to Achieving the Dream, with which other student success efforts is your institution affiliated? Please put a check next to each that applies.

    ☐ ACE
    ☐ Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning Quantway
    ☐ Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning Statway
    ☐ Complete College America
    ☐ Completion by Design
    ☐ FIPSE
    ☐ Foundations of Excellence
    ☒ New Mathways (Dana Center)
    ☒ Reaffirmation of Accreditation
    ☒ Title III (Title V)
    ☒ Others (please list: No Excuses University - turnaroundschools.com; DOL TAACT; S3 Developmental Education Grant; AVID Higher Education; SSS Trio; Gates Partners for Postsecondary Success)