



As the postsecondary institutions known for their open admissions policy, community colleges enroll a diverse group of students of all abilities and academic goals. Increasing numbers of students enter college directly from high school or after being in the workforce, finding themselves under-prepared for the rigor of college-level courses and lacking the support they need to persist and succeed. Community colleges respond to students' needs with innovative strategies designed to assist in transitioning them to programs offering certificates and degrees at the associate and baccalaureate levels. Many of these strategies involve partnerships, outreach, support services, and other means necessary to help students realize their dream of a college degree can be reached. This edition of UPDATE features five articles that illuminate current research and practice related to enabling student access and transition to college.

~ Catherine Kirby, Assistant Director, OCCRL and UPDATE Editor

## Credit-Based Transition Programs: An Interview with Katherine Hughes

by Catherine Kirby

Katherine L. Hughes is the Assistant Director for Work and Education Reform Research at the Community College Research Center (CCRC), [Teachers College, at Columbia University](#). Her recent work focuses on the potential of credit-based transition programs (such as dual enrollment) for preparing youth for college. Previous research projects have centered on the national school-to-work initiative, employer involvement in high schools, work-based learning, the restructuring of New York City's vocational high schools, and career academies. Dr. Hughes' research has increasingly focused on state policies, in particular examining how such policies influence the high school to college transition and access to college generally. In early November, Catherine Kirby, UPDATE Editor, conducted this interview with Dr. Hughes.

**UPDATE:** In a 2006 CCRC publication, "[Pathways to College Access and Success](#)," you and your co-authors discussed Credit-Based Transition Programs (CBTBs) such as the International Baccalaureate (IB), dual enrollment, Tech Prep, and middle college high schools – strategies that aid the transition from high school to college. The IB has long been associated with academically well-prepared students whose transition to college is typically smooth relative to students whose high school achievement is not as high. What has your research shown that administrators and policy-makers should keep in mind as they develop or implement these transition programs for middle- and low-achieving students?

**Dr. Hughes:** In that study we particularly looked at programs that were trying to broaden their student population to include students who were middle or low achieving or under represented in college in different ways. The IB program we looked at was one of those. Yes, IB is typically known as a program for very high achieving students who take almost exclusively college courses their junior and senior years. It was interesting to see how this program was trying to open up access, but they weren't as successful as they hoped because they were having trouble recruiting students into the program, especially minority students. [The target students] didn't see this program as something for them because they hadn't previously been included. To encourage the students to see themselves as IB students, the program was working on the ninth and tenth grade curriculum to get them started earlier for preparation for college level courses. So, one thing we learned is that just because you open a program to a broader range of students doesn't mean the students will come. You need an active recruitment strategy that includes a lot of encouragement and preparation so that students feel they will be able to succeed.

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**UPDATE:** In that same study you discovered some promising program features that enable student success. Could you say a bit about them?

**Dr. Hughes:** We found some very interesting and promising support services for students in another form of CBTB - dual enrollment programs. In those, high school students are also considered to be college students and thus, often have a college ID which they can use to access college services in addition to the services their high school offers. That is seen as a big advantage in terms of having access to services like tutoring, computing, writing workshops, counseling, financial aid counseling, transfer counseling – all of the things that colleges typically provide. If high school students can familiarize themselves with those services and use them, then they'll have a big step ahead when they come to the campus later on. We found that to be very promising.

We contrasted the dual enrollment model [with the advantage of having a college ID as a result of enrollment in a dual credit course] with the credit-in-escrow model associated with tech prep programs. With credit-in-escrow, students take courses at the high school that will eventually yield college credit for them, if they go on to the participating college and request the credit be counted toward their college transcript. Students taking credit-in-escrow courses are not officially considered to be college students and so do not have that kind of access to the campus and its services that you would see in dual enrollment programs. There is some general acknowledgement that that has been a failed model because most students don't ever see their credits; they change their minds in terms of what they want to study or where they want to go to college. But with the dual enrollment model, the high school student is completing college level work and upon completion of the course has generated credit immediately on a college transcript.

In addition to outreach, active recruitment, and availability of student support services, the other thing we cited was curriculum aligned between the high school and the community college in the form of curricular pathways. Within these pathways, there are many options for course taking. We've seen partnerships between community colleges and high schools that don't just offer college credit courses, but offer developmental courses and college preparatory courses – a range of activities that, again, support students starting in the tenth grade so that they can be prepared to take college courses when they reach their senior year. So, depending on the students' level, there are many options that they can take advantage of that will hopefully eventually lead to a college credit course in their senior year. Again, the programs can include students of a wide range of abilities. This is not about just offering college credit courses to the top students the spring semester of their senior year. But rather, having a deeper program and a broader range of opportunities and options for all students.

Finally, we also talk a lot about data collection and the benefits associated with having data about these programs. Unfortunately,

we found that there wasn't a lot of data being collected. It is really important to be looking at data from these programs in order to see if they're having their intended affects and also determine how they can be improved. No, or even poor, data makes program evaluation difficult.

**UPDATE:** To track some student transition data requires sharing data across systems that often are not connected. Have you found any examples where states are doing a good job of overcoming the barriers of sharing information between secondary and postsecondary levels within the many states that lack a shared data system?

**Dr. Hughes:** In California, there's the [Cal-PASS](#) system, funded by multiple foundations, where school districts and colleges can voluntarily send their data. The Cal-PASS administrators store and manage data from multiple regions across the state. But usually we're disappointed when we ask people about data they are collecting. It's certainly in everybody's minds right now. You can't go to a conference or meeting without people talking about data, and, of course, it ties into all the national discussion on accountability. We work in several states through the Ford Foundation's [Bridges to Opportunity](#) project which has not only been encouraging states to create better secondary and postsecondary data systems and connect them but also for people to understand research and how data from research can be used to inform policy decisions at the state level. I know several states now that are in the process of trying to put this all together, which is often very expensive and difficult, but possible.

**UPDATE:** Data systems are not the only important systems that must be better aligned if educational organizations are to improve the transition from high school to college. In a 2002 report entitled "[What Role can Dual Enrollment Programs Play in Easing the Transition between High School and Postsecondary Education?](#)" prepared for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, you and your co-authors mention the "significant break between high school and college" that we have in the U.S. education system. Part of that break is embodied in the lack of coordination between high school exit and college entrance standards. What is being done to address this?

**Dr. Hughes:** The problem is a lack of standardization within states. For example, there are states in which community colleges are using several different college placement exams, and even those using the same test sometimes set different cutoff scores. If the colleges themselves have different standards for what college readiness means, then how can high schools and districts and the state's secondary education system determine what their exit criteria should be? Our history of locally controlled education really works against [standardization], although some states are doing it. In Florida now, all of the colleges must use the same placement exam, so you could say in Florida that there is a statewide standard for what college readiness means. With that in place, the K-12 system can work to make sure that students

are ready and can pass that standard when students get out of high school. I know this is something that the America Diploma Project, sponsored by [Achieve](#), has been working on, and I can't tell you how many reports are on my desk that basically recommend the alignment of high school exit standards and college entrance standards – but it's just coming about very slowly. New York City took a step towards alignment after the state imposed the Regents Exams for all high school students. The Regents Exams have existed for a long while, but they hadn't before been required of all high school students. When they did, the City University of New York system [CUNY] said that if the students got a certain score on their Regents that would be an indicator that they were ready to enter CUNY. Now, the exit score is not the same as the CUNY entrance score. You can just pass the Regents (with a low score) and still not be considered college ready; the entrance score is a little bit higher than the exit score. And, there are some states that are starting to use the ACT as students' high school exit examination and with it, the public postsecondary institutions are using that score as a measure of college readiness criteria.

**UPDATE:** That gap between high school exit measures and college entrance requirements is exposed in the high rate of remediation seen at the community college. What has your research uncovered that shows some promise to lower the remediation rate?

**Dr. Hughes:** It's a huge problem and we don't have a lot of good evidence on what works. We see a lot of students being discouraged because they come to college and think they're ready to take college credit courses and then are told they are not. They're spending their money or using their financial aid to take a lot of developmental courses, so this is a huge problem. I know there's a lot of good research underway that will hopefully start giving us some more clues on the best way to tackle this. It's hard to say if it's really due to anything going on in the class or if it's due to the fact that a lot of students are part time and they have jobs and financial problems.

**UPDATE:** Of all the credit based transition programs, dual enrollment (often referred to as dual credit) has experienced widespread growth in Illinois as elsewhere in recent years. Not only designed for academic courses, many career and technical dual enrollment courses have been developed for students wishing to explore courses that are being squeezed out of high school curricula for various reasons. What has your research shown about the impact of dual credit courses on the broader range of students who enroll in them?

**Dr. Hughes:** We just released a new study entitled, "[The Post-secondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States](#)". It's the best evidence to date that dual enrollment is having its intended outcomes. We're excited about it, not just because all of the findings were so positive, but also because of the size of the sample. The largest was from the state of Florida where we looked at all students across the state participating in dual enrollment and a

sub sample of students we identified as CTE students. The sample in Florida was large enough that we could look at some sub groups, so we created sub samples of the lower SES students and found that the positive affects for them were larger than the positive affects for the sample as a whole. In addition, we also had a sample of students in the CUNY system in New York City. In NYC, we looked exclusively at students who graduated from the CTE high schools and then went on to CUNY, comparing students who had participated in dual enrollment and students who had not. We were able to control for some student background characteristics and some indicators of socioeconomic status and students' GPAs as well as other variables.

What we found was similar positive outcomes for the general population and the CTE students. We found that students who were in dual enrollment had a better transition and were more likely to go on to college full time, at 4-year schools instead of 2-year schools. They had higher GPAs after certain time periods. They were more likely to persist in postsecondary education and they certainly accumulated more credits over the course of several semesters than the students who did not participate in dual enrollment. That is a positive outcome and a support for dual enrollment. It's also support for this expanded eligibility for dual enrollment that we have been writing about in these other reports that you've mentioned. Transition programs are designed to help students succeed, and we should work to see that no eligible students are excluded.

**UPDATE:** Since the inception of dual enrollment programs, your work and that of others have cited skepticism and outright rejection of dual enrollment courses and policy among state- and district-level officials because of financing and equitable funding. It's nearly 2008; have we addressed this backlash against what has proved to be a popular mechanism that supports student transition to college?

**Dr. Hughes:** Yes. We're starting to do some work in California where they strongly prohibit double funding of dual enrollment. As a result, we find that a lot of people in California are just scared to touch it. It does exist in the state, but it's a big, big issue. There were some scandals a few years ago with the State Department of Finance, which caught colleges doing things fiscally they weren't supposed to do. It has inspired some fear around the state. Every year a state legislator proposes legislation to institute double funding and it never happens. That does create disincentives around dual enrollment. But we have found some wonderful places where they are offering dual enrollment. Also, when we were doing some work in Michigan, we found that high school districts have to contribute funds to pay the students' tuition. The high school districts must hand over some money to the colleges where the students are taking their college courses. As you can imagine, would a district leader or principal want students to take college courses or not? They would not; it's a loss of funds to them. It really creates some disincentives. They understand that, but so far they haven't been able to change. It's still a very big issue. On the other hand, Iowa has its own legislation supporting what they

call Career Academy programs. Most of us know Career Academy programs as high school based or small learning community programs with a CTE theme. In Iowa they are CTE pathways from the high school to the college that include college credit and often courses that are taken at work sites. Iowa encourages these programs by providing funds so that when high school students choose to enroll in these programs and leave the high school for part of the junior or senior years, the high schools in the district are not losing funds. That certainly contributes to the success of the program. I'm hoping our new report, that shows some positive benefits to students who participate in dual enrollment, will have some influence on the state policy scene. Evidence will help. We've already talked about how dual enrollment has been growing like crazy around the country and the number of students participating has really shot up. All of that has been happening in an environment where we really haven't had very good evidence. People have believed that it is a good thing. We are increasingly getting some evidence, and maybe we'll see some policy shifts based on that evidence.

**UPDATE:** In order to implement effective transition programs, we instinctively know that greater and more sophisticated collaborative relationships between high schools and community colleges are needed. Where can we focus our efforts to achieve better collaboration between secondary and postsecondary systems?

**Dr. Hughes:** A lot of effort needs to be made on the secondary side. We see the effort from the postsecondary side. They're reaching down into the high schools to try to get the students on their campuses, to try to make sure that the students are ready, to try to recruit the students to come. Just in our own work, we don't see the equivalent effort on the other side – something about raising the capacity of high schools and districts and raising their awareness of the importance of strong partnerships with postsecondary. In terms of CTE specifically, when secondary CTE programs have had outreach efforts, it has been focused on employers in the business community so that the CTE skills they are teaching are relevant and up-to-date and so they can provide for work based learning opportunities. That's really been the focus of outreach to the loss of outreach to the postsecondary community. Here in New York City, looking ahead to the new Perkins and all of the school reorganization going on here, there have been some discussions of quality criteria for [secondary] CTE programs and making sure that all CTE programs have strong postsecondary partners and have pathways leading right into local postsecondary schools. State CTE leaders recognize that [secondary CTE programs] have done a good job with outreach to employers, creating partnerships and such, but improvement needs to be made with partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions.

**UPDATE:** Policy regarding dual enrollment varies among districts and among states. Given that dual enrollment is often a contributing structure of the pathway system that is so much a part of Perkins IV implementation and is known to contribute to student transition from high school to college, which policy issues are particularly important for community college administrators and state policymakers to address?

**Dr. Hughes:** The policy issues that are particularly important go back to student eligibility and access. We've shown that students in CTE programs and CTE pathways who take dual enrollment do very well – just as well as non CTE students do. We should make sure that they can be included no matter what their GPA because there still are a few states that set the state-wide GPA as eligibility criteria for dual enrollment participation. Florida is one. Statewide, students are supposed to have a 3.0 to participate but if they are taking non-credit CTE courses, they can have a 2.0. We argue that neither of those GPA eligibility requirements should be there. Most states do allow the institutions to set their own criteria. Some colleges do want students to pass their placement tests to make sure that they're not going to fail. Other institutions have no entry criteria. So, in addition to the access and funding issues are other features. For example, where does the course take place: on the college campus or the high school campus? Those are things that we don't have a lot of good evidence on. One would think that the students would get more out of it at the college campus, right? You want them to have that taste of college and become oriented to the environment and be among other college students, but we don't have any real hard and fast evidence yet on whether that is the case. We actually just saw an interesting program in California where the high school had space but the college was running out of space. So the college actually built the whole auto shop at the high school, and the college courses are being taken there. Not only the high school students are using that auto shop to take college courses, but the college has its own night time college students taking classes there because that's where the space was. That was an interesting model – making use of whatever each institution can contribute to the partnership, implementing collaboration as it was intended.

**UPDATE:** Using the word collaboration is much easier than implementing it. Building relationships between systems that haven't worked closely together is difficult. What have you found to help increase both the quantity and the quality of collaboration needed for career pathway programs and credit based transition programs?

**Dr. Hughes:** A lot of collaboration has happened around creating and sustaining articulation agreements. In California it's actually in the state educational code that articulation agreements must be made between high school and college faculty – a high school teacher sitting down with a college teacher, working together and going through their curricula and finding the similarities and deciding if there are high school courses that could yield advance standing or college credit. It's very time consuming, but it has brought about stronger relationships. Instead, you can just do dual enrollment and have the high school students take a college credit earning course. We know with our recent research that it is helping students transition to college. ♦

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# Improving Access, Transition, and Success: Meeting the Challenges Facing College Students with Disabilities

by Christine D. Bremer, Joe Timmons, and Donna Johnson, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota

Postsecondary education has been shown to lead to better employment and improved life outcomes, but for many individuals with disabilities, college remains an unrealized dream. Compared to those without disabilities, only two-thirds as many working-age adults with disabilities have attended college, and fewer than half as many have attained a bachelor's degree or higher.

A disability is defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as:

(1) a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (sometimes called an actual, or present, disability); or (2) a record of a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (sometimes referred to as a history of a disability); or (3) being "regarded as" having a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (also called a perceived disability).

Postsecondary education leads to better employment and improved life outcomes, but for many people with disabilities, college remains an unrealized dream. In 2005, of working-age adults with disabilities, 24.8% had less than a high school education, while 34.5% had no more than a high school diploma or equivalent. Among those without disabilities, 11.5% had less than a high school education and 27.9% had no more than a high school diploma or equivalent. Thus, compared to those without disabilities, only two-thirds of those with disabilities have attended college. This disparity continues at the postsecondary level, with 28.0% of those with disabilities having some college and 12.8% having a bachelor's degree or more, compared to 30.5% and 30.1% respectively for those without disabilities.

The disparity in educational access experienced by individuals with disabilities translates to similar disparities in employment. In a 2005 analysis, the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics reported that the employment rate of working-age adults (21-64) with disabilities was less than half of that for working-age adults without disabilities (38.1% compared to 78.3%). Median wages for working-age adults with disabilities and without disabilities employed full-time, full-year differed by approximately \$6,000. The poverty rate for working-age individuals with disabilities is nearly three times that of those without disabilities. The table to the right clearly displays the disparity.

Just 22.6% of working-age people with disabilities have full-time, full-year employment, vs. 56.2% for those without disabilities. Median wage for those employed full-time, full year are approximately \$30,000 vs. \$36,000, respectively. Of working-age people with disabilities, 24.6% live in poverty, compared to 9.3% of those without disabilities.

Fortunately, college-going trends for students with disabilities are moving in the right direction. Newman (2005) compared college participation data for youth with disabilities age 15 to 19 who had been out-of-school (as graduates or dropouts) for up to two years. Data collection took place in 1987 for Cohort 1 and in 2003 for Cohort 2 as part of the National Longitudinal Transition Study and the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, & Levine, 2005). Information was obtained from parent interviews in 1987 and from both parent and youth interviews in 2003. Over this time period, the percentage of youth with disabilities attending postsecondary schools after leaving high school more than doubled, from 15% (Cohort 1) to 32% (Cohort 2). At the time of the 2003 interviews, 19% of those in the study were attending postsecondary school, compared to 42% of the general population (Newman, 2005).

The 1995-96 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) reported that approximately 6% of undergraduates reported having a disability, with the largest groups among these having learning disabilities and/or orthopedic impairments. Students with disabilities tended to be older and were more likely to attend two-year rather than four-year institutions, compared to students without disabilities (Hurst & Smerdon, 2000). The NPSAS study did not include psychiatric disabilities as a category, but students with diagnosed psychiatric disabilities (such as depression, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, or schizophrenia) are generally entitled to the same types of general support and specific accommodations as other students with disabilities. Among college students, psychiatric disabilities are increasing and may be even more common than learning disabilities (Sharpe, Bruininks, Blacklock, Benson & Johnson, 2004). From Spring 2000 to Spring 2005, the number of college students who said they had been diagnosed with depression increased 56%, from 10.3% to 16.1% (American College Health Association 2000, 2006). Over a third of college students surveyed who report that they have been diagnosed with depression stated that their first

**TABLE 1**

Working-Age Adults (21-64)	With Disabilities	Without Disabilities
Educational Achievement		
Less than high school	24.8%	11.5%
No more than high school	34.5%	27.9%
Some college	28.0%	30.5%
Bachelor's or higher	12.8%	30.1%
Employment rate	38.1%	78.3%
Median wage	\$30,000	\$36,000
Poverty rate	24.6%	9.3%

diagnosis occurred within the past year. During the same period from 2000 to 2005, reported anxiety disorders increased from 6.7% to 8.5%. In Spring 2005, depression, anxiety disorders, and/or seasonal affective disorder were together cited by 16.3% of students as health-related impediments to their academic performance. For comparison, the top health-related impediment was stress, at 31.6%, followed by cold/flu/sore throat at 26.5%. Many universities now have extensive online resources for faculty and staff who may encounter students experiencing psychological distress. (See the Resources section at the end of the article for examples.)

## Federal Law

Since the 1960s, Congress has passed a number of civil rights laws intended to protect the rights of Americans who may face discrimination in publicly financed education because of their race, gender, disability, or age. These laws reflect the core value – that each individual should have the opportunity to develop his or her talents to the fullest (U. S. Department of Education, 1999). For preschoolers and young people in elementary and secondary schools, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), most recently reauthorized in 2004, has helped those with disabilities gain access to the “free, appropriate public education” mandated by Congress.

When students with disabilities leave the relatively protected environment of public secondary school and enroll at a college or university they continue to have rights that prohibit discrimination in programs because of their disability (U. S. Department of Education, 1998). College students are protected under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, and/or by Title II of the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*. The U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights is responsible for enforcing these laws in postsecondary settings and has the responsibility of both supporting individuals’ rights and helping to disseminate the rules and regulations of these acts. Nearly every American college and university that receives any type of federal funding is subject to one or both of these laws, which have similar requirements. (Private postsecondary institutions that do not receive federal financial assistance are governed by Title III of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, which is enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice and which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by private entities.) For students with disabilities who attend college, it is critical they have an accurate understanding of their civil rights, an ability to advocate for themselves, and knowledge of the accommodations and assistance that can be obtained on their campus to alleviate the effects of their disability (Stodden & Conway, 2003; U. S. Department of Education, 2007a).

## Disability Disclosure

Disclosure of certain disabilities to others can be a significant issue for college-age individuals – especially hidden or non-apparent disabilities, such as mental illness, learning disabilities, chronic health conditions, or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity

Disorder (ADHD). Many students with hidden disabilities seek to avoid the labels that dogged them in high school and choose not to disclose, thereby foregoing accommodations for which they may qualify. This situation is unfortunate because many students end up deciding to disclose their disability only after they have begun coursework and gotten behind in their studies or performed poorly on exams.

If students decide to disclose for the purpose of accessing accommodations, they must make their needs known by contacting the campus disability services’ office. Once students make the decision to disclose, they need to consider how to go about discussing their needs with faculty. In *The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities* (National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, 2005), the authors recommend that students focus on how the disability impacts their ability to learn and how the accommodations or modifications needed will help them access the learning environment. Chapter 6 of this workbook deals specifically with disclosure as it relates to postsecondary education.

## Admissions and Accommodations

The Office of Civil Rights in the U. S. Department of Education (U. S. Department of Education, 2007b) provides guidance on college admissions, explaining that colleges may not ask applicants about their disability status but may ask the individual whether he or she is able to meet the program’s essential requirements. Following admission, a college may ask the student for documentation of disability status, but only in response to that student’s request for academic adjustments, accessible housing, other reasonable accommodations, or auxiliary aids and services. Absent such a student-initiated request, students with disabilities have no obligation to inform a college of their disability status, either before or after admission. Postsecondary institutions are under no obligation to identify students with disabilities, and individual disclosure of a disability is always voluntary. It is good practice, however, for faculty members to inform their classes that students may talk with them privately about disability concerns, and to share information about the institution’s disability services office and other resources available to help students. Academic adjustments or accommodations may take many forms. (See sidebar on following page for information concerning what the law requires concerning academic adjustments.)

Common academic accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Accessible classroom location
- Advance notice of assignments
- Assistive computer technology
- Notetakers
- Readers
- Interpreters
- Lab or library assistants
- Open/closed captioned videos/films
- Course or program modifications

- Document conversion (Braille, large print, tape)
- Early syllabus
- Exam modifications (e.g., extended time, alternative test format, quiet space for testing)
- Priority registration

The [HEATH Resource Center—Online Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education](#) provides a wealth of resources for postsecondary students with disabilities and their families. Also, the [Association on Higher Education and Disability \(AHEAD\)](#), the professional association of disability services providers, has many publications on disability accommodations.

### Academic Adjustments

The Office of Civil Rights, in their publication, [Transition of Students With Disabilities To Postsecondary Education: A Guide for High School Educators](#), provides this guidance on academic adjustments: Academic adjustments are defined in the Section 504 regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 104.44(a) (2006) as:

[S]uch modifications to the academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of [disability] against a qualified ... applicant or student [with a disability]. Academic requirements that the recipient can demonstrate are essential to the instruction being pursued by such student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory within the meaning of this section. Modifications may include changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted.

Academic adjustments also may include a reduced course load, extended time on tests and the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

Auxiliary aids and services are defined in the Section 504 regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 104.44(d), and in the Title II regulations at 28 C.F.R. § 35.104. They include note-takers, readers, recording devices, sign language interpreters, screen-readers, voice recognition and other adaptive software or hardware for computers, and other devices designed to ensure the participation of students with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills in an institution's programs and activities. Institutions are not required to provide personal devices and services such as attendants, individually prescribed devices, such as eyeglasses, readers for personal use or study, or other services of a personal nature, such as tutoring. If institutions offer tutoring to the general student population, however, they must ensure that tutoring services also are available to students with disabilities. In some instances, a state VR agency may provide auxiliary aids and services to support an individual's postsecondary education and training once that individual has been determined eligible to receive services under the VR program.

### Universal Design: An Inclusive Instructional Approach

Some students lack adequate documentation to receive accommodations or other supports available at their college. As result, there are many students attending college who could be more successful if their postsecondary institutions worked on becoming more accessible to *all* students. Many resources are available to assist faculty in providing what is called “universally designed instruction.” (See again the Resources section.) Some colleges and universities recognize that students have a variety of learning needs and have adopted the concept of universal instructional design. Common examples of instructional strategies that incorporate universal design include, but are not limited to:

- Using two or more ways to explain information.
- Providing demonstrations, handouts and visual aids.
- Using captioning options on videos.
- Providing review materials and study guides for exams.
- Making lecture notes available (Johnson & Fox, 2003).

Students with disabilities want what every other student wants – the opportunity to learn, to work, and to achieve. Improved access to college and more universally designed instruction can tip the balance for many individuals, making it possible for them to make a successful transition to college where they can nurture skills, pursue interests, and eventually participate fully in the workforce. ♦

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## Resources

### ***Instructional Design Resources for Faculty***

CAST Transforming Education through Universal Design for Learning  
<http://www.cast.org>

Curriculum Transformation and Disability (CTAD)  
(University of Minnesota)  
[www.gen.umn.edu/research/CTAD/](http://www.gen.umn.edu/research/CTAD/)

Disabled Students Program: Teaching Students with Disabilities (University of California, Berkeley)  
<http://dsp.berkeley.edu/TeachStudentsWithDisab.html>

Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT): The Faculty Room. (University of Washington)  
<http://www.washington.edu/doi/Faculty/>

FacultyWare (University of Connecticut)  
<http://www.facultyware.uconn.edu/home.cfm>

Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, special issue on faculty development regarding students with disabilities in postsecondary settings.  
<http://www.ahead.org/members/jped/journals/JPEDVol17No1.doc>

### ***Mental Health Resources for Faculty and Staff***

Student Mental Health Issues - General Guidelines for Faculty and Staff (University of Minnesota)  
<http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/facstaff/general.html>

Student Mental Health Issues – Distress-Specific Guidelines for Faculty and Staff (University of Minnesota)  
<http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/facstaff/specific.html>



## Illinois' Shifting Gears Initiative: Helping Adult Students Transition to College and Careers

by Jason Taylor

In December, 2006 the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) was awarded a \$1 million Shifting Gears Grant from the Joyce Foundation, with a \$500,000 match from the state of [Illinois' Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity \(DCEO\)](#). The Joyce Foundation's goals for Shifting Gears are to improve the education and skills training of the Midwest workforce and promote regional economic growth. Illinois is among five Midwestern states including Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ohio to receive the Shifting Gears grant. In addressing the goals of the Shifting Gears initiative, the ICCB partnered with DCEO, [Women Employed](#), Illinois Council of Public Community College Presidents, [Chicago Workforce Board](#), Center on Tax and Budget Accountability, Illinois Coalition on Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Chicago Jobs Council, and the [Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty and Law](#). [Workforce Enterprise Systems \(WES\)](#) and the [Office of Community College Research and Leadership \(OCCRL\)](#) were contracted to evaluate Illinois' Shifting Gears initiative.

To support economic growth, the Shifting Gears initiative intends to enhance educational and work opportunities for low-skilled and low-wage workers by creating bridge programs that connect Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), General Educational Development (GED), and developmental education courses with certificate training and associate degree programs in three industry sectors identified as having critical skills shortages: manufacturing, healthcare, and transportation/distribution/logistics. Bridge programs prepare individuals, particularly with literacy levels below the ninth grade, for entrance into postsecondary education and training by using contextualized learning within a career framework. Success in bridge programs ultimately leads to career-path employment.

The ICCB solicited proposals from Illinois community colleges interested in developing these programs and in July, 2007, eight colleges were selected. They are Black Hawk College, City Colleges of Chicago (Malcolm X and Wilbur Wright), College of DuPage, College of Lake County, John A Logan College, Lewis and Clark Community College, McHenry College, and Oakton Community College. Lavon Nelson is the Director for Workforce Systems at the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) in the Workforce Development division and the Project Manager for Illinois' Shifting Gears initiative. In October, OCCRL graduate research assistant, Jason Taylor interviewed Ms. Nelson for UPDATE.

**UPDATE:** First, would you share why the ICCB (and other partners) pursued the Joyce Foundation's Shifting Gears grant? What special opportunities did Shifting Gears offer the state?

**Ms. Nelson:** I think that we chose to pursue it for two reasons. One, to be quite honest, funding is always an issue with trying new initiatives. Shifting Gears was an opportunity to explore some funding and offer incentives to the [community] colleges and other partners to focus on bridge programs. Two, Shifting Gears was an opportunity to do something that was collaborative, to bring all of the partners together focused around a couple of major issues that impact low-income and low-skilled people's abilities to move into postsecondary education and careers. So, the Shifting Gears initiative offered that opportunity to explore other models for working with low-income, low-skilled individuals and to incent colleges and other partners to focus on bridge programs.

**UPDATE:** Your proposal to the Joyce Foundation focuses specifically on three industries: healthcare, manufacturing, and transportation/distribution/logistics. How were these industry sectors determined?

**Ms. Nelson:** Three or four years ago the state established the ten economic development regions, and out of that came the [Critical Skills Shortage Initiative \(CSSI\)](#). Through the CSSI regional work, those three industry sectors emerged across the state. During that same time, the three state partners – Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I, WIA Title II, and postsecondary Perkins – began to receive WIA incentive funds in the amount about 3 million dollars. The money was split among the agencies, DCEO, ICCB, and ISBE with most of it coming to [ICCB] since we house adult education and postsecondary Perkins. Prior to receiving the Shifting Gears grant from the Joyce Foundation, we were already taking an industry sector approach by focusing over the recent years on healthcare, then transportation, and recently manufacturing with the WIA incentive funds. It made sense to continue to follow that industry sector approach with the Shifting Gears award so that we align initiatives around the sectors for which we know the state has the most need.

**UPDATE:** Are there specific adult student populations targeted for inclusion in the Shifting Gears initiative?

**Ms. Nelson:** Basically, we focused on low-skilled, low-income adults with a lowest placement level of 6<sup>th</sup> grade or an equivalent ESL. We have two pilot concepts. The first is creating pre-vocational, blended remediation and occupational courses. Eligible students must be persons 18 years of age or older who are interested in enrolling in one of the targeted occupational fields. Their performance on standard placement tests must correspond to the 6<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grade level or the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. The second concept involves aligning adult education program content with occupational program entry criteria. Eligible students for that concept must be persons 18 years of age and older who want to obtain their GED or those who have limited English speaking skills and who have the goal of entering post-secondary occupational training in one of the targeted sectors. Adult basic skill levels must correspond to the 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade and/or ESL at the low intermediate level, or their adult basic skill level must correspond to 9<sup>th</sup> grade and above and/or ESL at the high intermediate or advanced levels.

In 2004, there were 103,542 students in Illinois community colleges who did not have the basic skills needed for college work and were enrolled in remediation; these students are not able to move up the educational ladder. Many of them exhaust their Pell Grants while they are in remediation, do not finish remediation, and drop out. In adult education, once students complete their exit criteria, they take the college entrance exam like [Compass](#) or [Accuplacer](#) and often end up in remediation at the community college. The remediation issue is huge in Illinois, as it is nationally, and it is a drain on resources. The point is that a GED received from an adult education program or even a high school diploma does not guarantee college readiness; the systems do not align.

**UPDATE:** Shifting Gears encourages career bridges and career pathways. What do these terms mean, and why are these types of educational options important?

**Ms. Nelson:** First of all, bridge programs are important because they are the entry point to any kind of pathway for many adults, and it is one way for adults to get into the system. [The Bridges to Careers: A Program Development Guide](#) created by Women Employed describes a bridge program as “training to prepare adults with reading levels below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade who lack the basic skills to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and training leading to career pathway employment.” Our Bridge Task Force of the Illinois [Community College] President’s Council took that and created an occupational bridge definition in spring of 2006. A few elements of the President’s Council definition include: blending workplace competencies, career exploration, and basic literacy and math skills in an occupational context; training held at times and places convenient to working adults, including the workplace; offering academic and personal support services to help balance work, family, and school responsibilities; and designing programs to serve those with the ability to benefit.

In 2004, the Illinois Workforce Investment Board (IWIB) created Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics task forces, and the task forces strongly support the efforts of bridge programs as a component to regional career pathway systems. So, the ICCB is focusing on issues such as bridge programs and their importance to student transitions to the community colleges.

**UPDATE:** What key strategies are the community college pilot sites considering to help adults transition to the certificate or degree programs in the targeted occupations?

**Ms. Nelson:** That is going to depend, of course, on whether they are pursuing pilot concept one or two. In concept two for example, we are asking adult education sites to align their exit criteria with the entry criteria of the community colleges for a particular sector or program. The goal is to get students out of adult education and straight into credit-bearing courses at community colleges as opposed to completing adult education and ending up in remediation. So, we are also asking sites to create, purchase, or modify to develop enriched, contextualized curricula for adult students. In pilot concept one, our strategy is to contextualize remediation courses within the community colleges.

**UPDATE:** Other recent initiatives like [Breaking Through](#) with Jobs for the Future (JFF) and the [National Council on Workforce Education](#) (NCWE) and a recent study conducted by OC-CRL researchers Debra Bragg, Catherine Kirby and colleagues associated with the [National Center for Career and Technical Education](#) (NCCTE) have provided insight into this adult student population, the curricular innovations, and support services that enable student transition and success. What do you hope Shifting Gears pilot sites will contribute to this growing body of knowledge?

**Ms. Nelson:** What I am hoping we do is identify some key areas where there can be policy changes. The Joyce Foundation is interested in policy change. There are several things within institutions that can be changed that would be considered policy. We have issues around getting curriculum moved [more quickly] through the committees within colleges. Another is how do we build in sustainability, and in order to do that, what policies need to be changed? Also, what needs to change in the institutional program approval process? These are examples of policy changes. One discovery we have made from previous bridge program pilots is the importance of a coordinator or transition person. That is an expense that is not budgeted for in many colleges. So, what we would hope to contribute is information about what works and what does not work.

**UPDATE:** As you mentioned, The Joyce Foundation is interested in affecting policy change and you spoke about changes at the institutional level. What policy areas might be needed to accommodate these programs at the state level?

**Ms. Nelson:** There are some unique regulations with adult education at the state level. For example, how much money can adult education providers spend on these types of courses? How much time can they invest in vocational education? So, a policy example at the state level would be building in some sort of encouragement or letting adult education providers know they can do this enriched course; we want to provide adult education with the tools they need. Another example at the state level would be our program approval process. Do we need to modify it? And then there's funding for innovative remedial courses. For example, if we contextualize remedial education or ESL courses, what kind of course do they become related to how the college is reimbursed? Do we need to develop and approve a new type of course, a blended course that would be funded at a different rate? Remedial courses have the lowest reimbursement rates of any type of course offered at community colleges. They get the lowest reimbursements yet they have high enrollment numbers. Eventually we want to take what we learn from the bridge pilots and combine that with other efforts and develop a long term policy agenda with a legislative component. We will not get this done by the time the pilots are over, but we want to put the foundation in place and make policy changes along the way.

We are also having a “tipping point” discussion to determine in Illinois what it might take for someone to get enough education and training to obtain a job that provides a family-living wage. Washington State<sup>1</sup> created something like this and used it to inform their legislature. So, we are beginning this conversation in Illinois about a tipping point.

**UPDATE:** For accountability purposes, program and student outcome measures will have to be tracked over time. What opportunities and challenges do you foresee the state facing in identifying and aligning the multiple data systems to track student and program outcomes?

**Ms. Nelson:** I do not think we are going to have much trouble with multiple data systems because ICCB is the fiscal agent for Illinois' Shifting Gears initiative. All the data come to us already or we have existing relationships with other entities. For example, all community college data, with the exception of some individual demographic data that the colleges are going to have to collect, we already get. We will then flag those people coming through the programs; this is true for adult education as well. And, we have existing relationships with the Illinois Department of Employment Security to obtain unemployment data. We have not yet determined how long these students will be tracked, but since we have flagged them, we can follow them for as long as we need to. Our senior director for policy and research is involved in all of the discussions. We have as our

evaluation team Debra Bragg and Cathy Kirby at OCCRL and Tim Harmon [from Workforce Enterprise Services] who has worked with us on projects in the past.

**UPDATE:** How will you share the knowledge gained from the eight sites selected for demonstration grants with other community colleges and partner organizations interested in developing career bridge and career pathway programs?

**Ms. Nelson:** Recently, we have been working in learning communities. Our first two learning communities have been primarily with the pilot sites, but as we move on we will be inviting other colleges and adult education providers to attend so that we can share information with others. I have been doing a lot of traveling to conferences and meetings talking about the project, so we will continue to bring people together, share the data, and disseminate policy information.

There is also some discussion with the Joyce Foundation about continuation of the Shifting Gears Initiative. The conversation is in its earliest stage, but if there is continuation of the project, we have a foundation in place for disseminating information, and we will expand those strategies.

**UPDATE:** By the end of the grant period, what do you hope the Shifting Gears pilot demonstration sites will have accomplished so that programs such as these can continue to be created and support Illinois' workforce needs?

**Ms. Nelson:** We hope we will have clarified what works and what does not work for bridge programs for this population and addressed corresponding policy issues. Like the Joyce Foundation has said, it is just as important to find out what does work as what does not work. Out of that, what we really want the sites to identify are some key policies that need to change. There are many solutions for people, but a bridge program is one way for people to get into career pathways. In Illinois, we do not have direct career pathways in place, but with the new federal Perkins IV requirements we are going to be developing programs of study in some of the [16 career clusters](#). What we learn from Shifting Gears sites will help us feed the adult community into those pathways, aiding their transition to the community college and on to more rewarding careers. ♦

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<sup>1</sup> For details, see Prince, D., & Jenkins, D. (2005) *Building pathways to success: Lessons for community college policy and practice from a longitudinal student tracking study* (CCRC Brief, No. 25). New York: Community College Research Center, Columbia University, Teachers College.

## The TEAM Project at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: Increasing Access and Improving Transition of Illinois Community College Students

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Illinois) has received a three-year grant from the [Lumina Foundation for Education](#) to develop and implement a project that supports access and success for community college students who wish to transfer to Illinois. Entitled the Transfer Experience and Advising Mentors (TEAM) Project, activities include providing information, individual counseling, and hands-on assistance with the transfer process to a target audience of underserved and traditionally underrepresented students. Beginning with the fall semester of 2008, the project's goal is to increase the transfer enrollment and promote the success of transfer students through graduation. This project supports the University's five-year strategic plan that includes as one of its goals, excellence and access to the "Illinois Experience" through increased diversity of the undergraduate population. The TEAM project will also address concerns about the number of students enrolled in baccalaureate transfer programs in Illinois community colleges who never attain a four-year degree.

The project targets approximately ten community college districts in and around Chicago, near St. Louis, and in rural areas of Illinois that were selected based on density of prospective students, high enrollment of students from traditionally underrepresented groups and/or economically disadvantaged backgrounds, often coming from areas where historically few students have matriculated to UIUC. The project is expected to result in doubling the number of transfer students from the target districts within five years and achieving graduation rates for transfer students as high of those students who enter Illinois as freshmen.

The project's four goals include:

- increasing the number of students who transfer to UIUC from the target districts
- increasing their academic success once they have transferred;
- reducing the institutional barriers they face at the University and
- disseminating outcomes of the TEAM project to partners, peer institutions, and at a national level to promote adoption of the TEAM model by other institutions.

Related to the first three goals, the project will implement three key strategies to promote access and success for the transfer students at Illinois.

**Strategy 1: Transfer Experience and Advising Mentors (TEAM).** A group of current UIUC students will be recruited and trained to serve as TEAM leaders who will deliver critical services for the students. TEAM leaders will be recruited from an honorary student association dedicated to fostering academic excellence and active involvement among transfer students and from students belonging to organizations such as the African American Cultural House, Asian American Cultural Center, La Casa Cultural Latina, and Native American House. By selecting TEAM leaders from these groups, the project will create a community linkage that research suggests plays a key role in the success of students from underrepresented groups. Also, because data on undergraduate retention rates suggest lower graduation rates among males than females, special efforts will be made to recruit male TEAM leaders. TEAM leaders will make visits to the target colleges to meet with prospective students and their families, communicate frequently with prospective students, assist students with completing financial aid and scholarship forms, participate in online discussion groups (e.g. transfer blogs) and provide mentoring, conduct campus visits and other activities related to guidance, and advise to students before and after their transfer to UIUC.

**Strategy 2: "AdviserLink" Transfer Advising and Virtual Transfer Bridge.** An examination of sources of difficulty and/or failure for community college transfer applicants revealed many students' course-taking patterns indicated the absence of courses deemed critical for success in majors at Illinois. This "course pattern failure" could stem from

Chartered in 1867 as a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is committed to excellence and access in research, teaching, and public engagement. The University's mission is to transform lives and serve society by educating, creating knowledge, and putting knowledge to work. The University enrolls 31,000 undergraduate students in nine divisions, which together offer some 4,000 courses in more than 150 fields of study. The University enrolls more than 11,000 graduate students from around the world and ranks among the top eight universities in the nation in doctoral degrees awarded. As the state's flagship institution of public higher education, the University of Illinois is committed to providing all qualified students – regardless of background and financial means – with an educational experience of the highest quality.



lack of clarity in transfer requirements, incomplete advising to help students meet pattern requirements at various institutions, lack of course availability at some two-year institutions, and/or avoidance of courses perceived as too difficult. To address course pattern failure, the TEAM project will include a Web portal, "AdviserLink," where prospective students identified by TEAM staff will be able to communicate with a dedicated transfer adviser who can help students prepare for success at Illinois. The project staff also hopes to develop a "virtual transfer bridge" targeting courses that are either frequent sources of course pattern failure, have been identified as critical to success in upper-level curricula at Illinois, and/or are identified as barriers to success by community college transfer coordinators and the Illinois Community College Board. Illinois faculty in consultation with community college instructors and transfer advisers will develop bridge courses, offered both online and on-site to the targeted community colleges. This blended model holds promise for the target audience because the community college system in the state has invested heavily in online learning, and four times as many community college students take online courses as students at four-year institutions.

**Strategy 3: Change in Institutional Financial Aid and Credit Minimums to Improve Access and Opportunity.** To accomplish the goals of this project, the University is addressing institutional policies and practices that have historically served as barriers to student transfer. First, the *Illinois Promise* program, which provides scholarships to students whose family incomes are at or below the poverty level, will be expanded to serve transfer students. *Illinois Promise* scholarships ensure coverage of the cost of tuition, room, and board. Expanding this program will increase access to the University for the most economically disadvantaged members of the targeted transfer population and will model change that can be replicated at other four-year institutions. Second, the traditional 60-hour minimum requirement will be lowered to 30 – 45 hours, to the extent possible across the entire campus. In many academic units, transfer requirements have already been reviewed and revised to enhance access at earlier points in various curricula. Also, the University will work with the participating community colleges to identify curricula where 2 + 2 articulation agreements and/or dual enrollment programs could be created to enhance curricular alignment and smooth student transition.

Finally, related to the last goal of dissemination of the project results, the University and the TEAM administrative group have dedicated resources to create a model for institutional change by removing barriers related to financial aid and transfer admission policies that can be adopted by other institutions. The University will engage in concerted efforts to share the lessons learned at the conclusion of the grant. Further, the project includes strategies to involve multiple local and state-level partners including foundations and corporate sponsorships to sustain the project after the grant ends so its ability to affect permanent change within the institution and among other institutions extends the longevity and ultimate impact of the project and its goals to positively affect student transition from community college to university.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is committed to ensuring access and promoting attainment for community college transfer students as a key, five-year goal for the institution. Daniel Cullen has been appointed starting December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, as the Assistant Director in the Office of Admissions and Records with the key role in the recruitment and retention of the transfer students this program will attract. In his previous assignment, Mr. Cullen directed the state's Course Applicability System (CAS). Through his close interaction with state agencies and the state's community college transfer coordinators, he brings a wealth of knowledge about the state's transfer process. Currently, Mr. Cullen is finishing his Ph.D. program in higher education at Illinois. His doctoral dissertation spotlights the educational experiences of students attending an urban community college who have expressed an intention to transfer.

With a dedicated group of faculty, staff, and administrators coordinated by the Office of the Provost, this project will mobilize multiple campus units to create innovative and coordinated curricular and supportive services that aid student transition from community colleges to the University in order to provide them with the myriad of personal and professional opportunities that accompany a credential from the University of Illinois. ◆

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## OCCRL Reports Released: New Research on Youth and Adult Transition

OCCRL is distributing three new reports associated with research funded by the United States Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education's National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NCCTE). These reports focus on national and state policies concerning youth and adult transition to community colleges and career and technical education (CTE) policy and program approval.

In May 2007, the NCCTE published a report, entitled "Career and Technical Education Pathway Programs, Academic Performance, and the Transition to College and Career." This report, written by Natasha Lekes, Debra D. Bragg, Jane W. Loeb, Catherine A. Oleksiw, Jacob Marszalek, Margaret Brooks-Laraviere, Rongchun Zhu, Chloe C. Kremidas, Grace Akukwe, Hyeong-Jong Lee, and Lisa K. Hood, examines student transition to two selected community colleges offering CTE transition programs in association with K-12 school districts with multiple high schools. The report presents results in two parts, one examining secondary students and the other examining postsecondary students, with the postsecondary portion of the analysis giving attention to the impact of dual credit enrollment. The full report is available at [http://nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/r&dreport/CTE\\_Pathway\\_Programs.pdf](http://nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/r&dreport/CTE_Pathway_Programs.pdf) and the accompanying research brief at [http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Publications/In\\_Brief/Brief-Ruud-fall-07.pdf](http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Publications/In_Brief/Brief-Ruud-fall-07.pdf).

In September 2007, NCCTE released "State Approval Policies and Procedures for Postsecondary CTE Programs." This report, authored by Rodney J. Merkle and George H. Johnston examines state standards regarding state-level policies for postsecondary CTE programs. Specifically, the report examined state policies that: ensure consistency between occupational standards and CTE programs, respond to labor market needs, and offer articulation between secondary and postsecondary programs. The report includes suggestions for practice and policy implications. The full report is available at [http://www.nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/r&dreport/StateApprovalPolicies\\_Johnston.pdf](http://www.nccte.org/publications/infosynthesis/r&dreport/StateApprovalPolicies_Johnston.pdf) and the accompanying research brief is currently available at [http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Publications/In\\_Brief/Brief-Rod-George-07.pdf](http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Publications/In_Brief/Brief-Rod-George-07.pdf).

In October 2007, the NCCTE published a report, entitled "A Cross-Case Analysis of Career Pathway Programs that Link Low-Skilled Adults to Family-Sustaining Wage Careers." This report, written by Debra D. Bragg, Christine D. Bremer, Marisa Castellano, Catherine Kirby, Ann Mavis, Donna Schaad, and Judith Sunderman, focuses on programs, policies, and practices implemented to support the transition of low-skilled adults through career pathways aligned with community colleges. The study presented demographic and educational characteristics of adult students in the career pathway programs, curriculum and instruction, and support services. The report is available at [http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Projects/GED/Career\\_Pathways.pdf](http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Projects/GED/Career_Pathways.pdf) and the accompanying research brief at [http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Publications/In\\_Brief/BriefACP.pdf](http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu/Publications/In_Brief/BriefACP.pdf).

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The Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL) was established in 1989 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Our primary mission is to provide research, leadership, and service to community college leaders and assist in improving the quality of education in the Illinois community college system. Projects of this office are supported by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and are coordinated with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), along with other state, federal, and private and not-for-profit organizations. The contents of our Briefs and bi-annual UPDATE newsletters do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the ICCB, OCCRL, or the University of Illinois. Comments or inquiries about our publications are welcome and should be directed to [OCCRL@uiuc.edu](mailto:OCCRL@uiuc.edu). This issue and back issues of UPDATE can be found on the web at: <http://ocrl.ed.uiuc.edu>.

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