

TCI Research Symposium: Evidence of
What Works for TAACCCT

**SEEDS OF
TRANSFORMATIVE
CHANGE**

Evidence of What Works
from TAACCCT



transformative
change

OCCRL

Office of Community College
Research and Leadership

November 10, 2015

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TCI Research Symposium: Evidence of What Works for TAACCCT

Transformative Change

Initiative (TCI) is dedicated to assisting community colleges to scale-up innovations that improve student outcomes and program, organization, and system performance. TCI defines transformative change as raising the individual, organizational, and system performance of community colleges to unprecedented levels without sacrificing their historic commitment to access and equity.

TCI built the Evaluation Collaborative to create avenues for evaluators to share and learn from one another about meaningful ways to gather, analyze, and report results, including measuring and disseminating implementation and impact findings.

Goals

- Examine evaluation results pertaining to TAACCCT-funded grants on organizations, programs, and students.
- Share lessons learned on methodologies pertaining to TAACCCT evaluation.
- Consider implications of results on scaling innovation for greater impact.

Our Discussants



Dr. Marisa Castellano joined the OCCRL evaluation team in 2014 and assisted in the evaluation of a multisite TAACCCT consortium grant. Dr. Castellano received her PhD from the University of California, Berkeley. She has 17 years' experience leading research and policy studies of secondary and postsecondary career pathway efforts, first for the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University and then for the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education at the University of Louisville. This work has included longitudinal studies of student achievement in secondary career pathway programs, a systematic literature review on educational transitions, and examinations of retention interventions for nontraditional community college students and promising practices in career pathway programs for low-skilled adults.



Dr. Derek V. Price is principle owner of DVP-PRAXIS LTD, an action oriented consulting focused on higher education and the workforce. His firm specializes in mixed-method formative and summative evaluation services to inform implementation and measure impact. They also provide strategic advising services for project development and implementation, and conduct research and policy analysis on critical issues facing higher education and the economy. Dr. Price is a national leader in strategic thinking for institutional transformation and systems change. He has a strong policy, research, and evaluation background and works on a broad range of policy and practice issues around postsecondary education and workforce development. Before starting DVP-PRAXIS, Dr. Price was the director of higher education research at Lumina Foundation for Education. In that role, he helped launch the Foundation's premier national initiative, Achieving the Dream.



Dr. Randall Wilson leads several Jobs for the Future projects designed to help low-skilled adults advance to family-sustaining careers, while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. He has more than 20 years' experience in research and program evaluation in the areas of workforce development and urban community development. He conducts research and provides technical assistance for CareerSTAT, a national initiative that encourages and enables hospitals to advance the skills and careers of frontline health care workers through work-based learning. He currently provides technical assistance and peer learning for New Paths to Professional Nursing, an initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that assists frontline hospital workers succeed in attaining Bachelor's level nursing credentials. Dr. Wilson manages evaluations in several national initiatives that offer pathways integrating basic skills instruction with attainment of postsecondary credentials, including Accelerating Opportunity.

Agenda

Illini Center, Orange and Blue Room, 200 South Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois
8:30am to 3:30pm

8:00 AM Breakfast & Registration

8:30 AM Opening Remarks and Introductions

8:45 AM Session One: Transformative Change and Impact Evaluation

- Finding the Evidence that Works for Reality: Navigating the Expectations from DOL
- Tribal College Workforce Development: A Contextual Analysis of the Impact of a TAACCCT Grant
- Moving From Aggregate to Subgroup Analysis to Assess Equity and Outcomes: Unpacking The Meaning of Transformative Change
- Using Mixed Methods Evaluation Evidence to Scale TAACCCT-tested Innovations in Missouri Community Colleges
- Discussion

10:30 AM Break

10:45 AM Session Two: Workforce and Employer Partnerships

- Keeping Up with Demand: Measuring Labor Market Alignment in TAACCCT Programs
- Chicken or the Egg: Integrating Industry Recognized Certifications in Education Pathways from the National Aviation Consortium
- Leveraging Community College and Business Partnerships to Expand Training and Employment Opportunities in the Biosciences
- Lessons Learned: Use of an Intermediary to Assist a Multi-State Consortium of Community Colleges with Employer Engagement
- Discussion

12:30 PM Lunch & Overview of the TAACCCT Grants Program Evaluation

1:15 PM Session Three: Student Learning

- Elements of a Successful Community College Educational Model
- Remote Science Labs and Student Learning Outcomes: A Mixed-Methods Analysis
- Apprenticeships as a Strategy for Higher Education Completion and Workforce Development in Montana
- Intrusive Advising; Lessons Learned from TAACCCT
- Discussion

3:00 PM Closing Statement on Transformative Change and Evaluation

3:30 PM Adjourn

8:45 AM - 10:30 AM

Session One: Transformative Change and Impact Evaluation

8:45 AM

Session One: Transformative Change and Impact Evaluation Introduction

Heather Fox, OCCRL, University of Illinois

8:50 AM

Finding the Evidence that Works for Reality: Navigating the Expectations from DOL

This paper will present a critical discourse around the notion of “scale-up” or “scaling”, which has been the focal point of federally funded programs in educational settings. It is often conceived as generalizable practices, and such scale-up practices (innovation and transformative change) are evidence-based as the result of experimental studies. TAACCCT programs are uniquely designed and situated, which often create contradictions between the expectations from the funding agencies and reality as relates to program outcome evaluation methodology. The author will provide a comprehensive overview of outcome evaluation methodological approaches that have been presented and discussed among TAACCCT evaluators, DOL evaluators, and program stakeholders.

Soko Starobin, Iowa State University

9:10 AM

Tribal College Workforce Development: A Contextual Analysis of the Impact of a TAACCCT Grant

The project was designed to help the colleges build capacity in terms of equipment, space, relationships, and processes to better and more effectively support workforce development and training. Shorter term impacts included helping students complete training programs and earn industry-recognized credentials so that they can obtain gainful employment. Medium term outcomes included expanding partnerships, increasing retention and completion rates, and preparing students so they retain employment. Long term impacts were hoped to be higher rates of labor force participation for community members and integrating policies and processes designed to support ongoing workforce development. This paper describes how the TAACCCT funding facilitated significant changes in the consortium colleges that promise long lasting effects. What is learned through the TAACCCT project will help to inform future workforce development and education efforts at these and other Tribal Colleges in the nation. This paper attempts to capture not only project progress and lessons learned, but to also describe the transformations that have occurred at each institution in the project.

Leah Woodke, Woodke360

9:30 AM

Moving From Aggregate to Subgroup Analysis to Assess Equity and Outcomes: Unpacking The Meaning of Transformative Change

The Department of Labor requires that TAACCCT evaluations produce rigorous and usable evidence of the impact of the reforms on student outcomes. However, what is not explicitly required in TAACCCT evaluations is for colleges to assess the extent to which their reforms improved equity, particularly in regards to closing gaps in retention and attainment based on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. In contrast, at the heart of the Transformative Change Initiative (TCI) is an attention to the impact of reforms on equity. The purpose of this study is to provide an example of an evaluation approach designed to assess whether a TAACCCT-funded initiative impacted the magnitude of disparities in student outcomes. We draw from the Office of Community College Research and Leadership's (OCCRL) evaluation of the Health Professions Pathways (H2P) Consortium, a group of nine community colleges that implemented a suite of innovative reforms aimed at improving the postsecondary and labor market outcomes of students pursuing careers in the healthcare. The research questions addressed in this study are: 1) What were the postsecondary and labor market outcomes of H2P students? 2) What impact did H2P make on the outcomes of healthcare students? and 3) To what extent did H2P reduce gaps in outcomes stemming from student demographic and socioeconomic characteristics?

Matt Giani, OCCRL, University of Illinois

Debra Bragg, OCCRL, University of Illinois

9:50 AM

Using Mixed Methods Evaluation Evidence to Scale TAACCCT-tested Innovations in Missouri Community Colleges

This paper presents results of the mixed methods third-party evaluation of the round one Department of Labor TAACCCT consortium MoHealthWINs (MHW), the first of three TAACCCT consortia funded by DOL for Missouri. This paper describes tri-fold goals of the third-party evaluation to evaluate program implementation, measure impact, and utilize evidence to sustain and scale innovations. Of particular importance to Missouri's community colleges are nine innovations identified at the beginning of the grant by campus leaders to transform healthcare education to make it more accessible and equitable for underserved student populations. Of these nine strategies, three innovations – Career Pathways, Developmental Education Reform, and Intrusive Advising – assumed a high priority in future planning and implementation efforts led by the Missouri Community College Association (MCCA). Using quantitative and qualitative data gathered by the internal research team of Cosgrove & Associates in partnership with the third-party evaluator, Bragg and Associates, this paper will report promising evidence on the implementation and impact of these three innovations, and describe how these results are being used to design a statewide asset mapping initiative led by community college leaders, practitioners, policy makers, and partners, in association with the MHW evaluation team.

John Cosgrove, Cosgrove & Associates, Inc.

Maggie Cosgrove, Cosgrove & Associates, Inc.

Debra Bragg, Bragg & Associates, Inc.

10:10 AM

Discussion

Facilitated by Dr. Derek Price, DVP-Praxis

10:30 AM

Break

10:45 AM - 12:20 PM

Session Two: Workforce and Employer Partnerships

10:45 AM

Session Two: Workforce and Employer Partnerships Introduction

Deborah Richie, OCCRL, University of Illinois

10:50 AM

Keeping Up with Demand: Measuring Labor Market Alignment in TAACCCT Programs

Increasingly, policy makers and the public are focusing on ways that higher education can align with the labor market to better meet student needs and promote workforce success. In fact, key goals of the TAACCCT grants include addressing the income needs of students by creating programs at community colleges to address employer workforce and skill needs. Consensus does not yet exist, however, about what this goal means for community college systems, institutions, departments and programs. Current efforts to evaluate labor market alignment include documenting short-term employment outcomes, but there is little agreement on how best to understand and document processes, which vary considerably across programs. Through work on TAACCCT and other projects, as well as a wide ranging review of the scholarly literature, the authors have developed a framework that provides an operational definition for labor market alignment (LMA) in higher education and describes key activities and outcomes. This paper will present this framework and provide guidance on how to use it to improve methods in evaluations of workforce development programming. We document the evaluation approach, its initial results, and its utility for on-going evaluation efforts, both in on-going TAACCCT evaluations and other higher education workforce evaluations.

Michelle Van Noy, Education and Employment Research Center, Rutgers

Jennifer Cleary, John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers

11:10 AM

Chicken or the Egg: Integrating Industry Recognized Certifications in Education Pathways from the National Aviation Consortium

A key component of the National Aviation Consortium (NAC) has been a focus on employer engagement and building relationships between consortium schools and industry partners in aviation manufacturing. Through this work, the project has had a particular emphasis on incorporating industry recognized certifications in the career and education pathways developed through their round two TAACCCT grant. As the third party evaluation team, the Office of Educational Innovation and Evaluation has collected feedback through interviews and surveys from project staff, college administrators and employers across the consortium about the results these stakeholders are seeing related to the integration of industry credentials in the project's education pathways. The paper will include both observations and lessons learned regarding this aspect of the TAACCCT grant.

Cindy Shuman, Kansas State University

11:30 AM

Leveraging Community College and Business Partnerships to Expand Training and Employment Opportunities in the Biosciences

The Community College Consortium for Bioscience Credentials (c3bc) has focused on employer and business engagement as a key strategy for building the colleges' capacity to meet emerging needs for biosciences training and in harmonizing bioscience standards. Through purposeful partnership building, c3bc community colleges have engaged business partners in a wide range of activities to support the development of new curricula and credentials, facilitate job placement of bioscience students, and increase the value of community college bioscience credentials in the workplace. This paper discusses findings from eight c3bc colleges' activities in creating partnerships with business and industry and in leveraging these partnerships to facilitate grant activities. The results from a cross-case analysis of the c3bc partnership activities illustrate the types of approaches colleges have used to build productive partnerships and to broaden business involvement in the colleges' bioscience activities. Examples of the colleges' strategies in expanding and sustaining partnerships are provided, as well as the common elements in these strategies.

Judith A. Alamprese, Abt Associates

11:50 AM

Lessons Learned: Use of an Intermediary to Assist a Multi-State Consortium of Community Colleges with Employer Engagement

This paper provides a description of how a partnership between an employer-led workforce intermediary and community colleges can help to leverage employer engagement at a regional level, strengthening the ability of colleges to take TAACCCT-funded reforms to scale. The paper draws on data from the Evaluation of the ShaleNET Consortium (the consortium received a Round Two TAACCCT grant). It provides a brief description of the consortium, a summary of evaluation findings on its employer engagement efforts with a particular focus on the role of its employer-led workforce intermediary, and concludes with a discussion of the significance of results. The paper makes an important contribution to the literature on workforce intermediaries: It supports extensive research on the role of workforce intermediaries (Lowe 2010, Conway and Giloth, 2014), while deepening the understanding of the specific role of employer-led workforce intermediaries and how an intermediary's work is influenced by the characteristics of a specific industry and region. Furthermore, the paper highlights the vital role that an employer-led workforce intermediary can play in serving as a liaison between large corporations and community colleges and suggests that intermediaries are pivotal partners as colleges seek to sustain their work after the sunset of the grant.

Kate Dunham, Social Policy Research Associates

Marian Negoita, Social Policy Research Associates

Heather Lewis-Charp, Social Policy Research Associates

12:10 PM

Discussion

Facilitated by Dr. Randall Wilson, Jobs for the Future

12:30 PM - 1:15 PM

Lunch & Overview of the TAACCCT Grants Program Evaluation

12:30 PM

Lunch

12:45 PM

Overview of the TAACCCT Grants Program and the National Evaluation

The paper is based on a series of briefs that provide an initial picture of the TAACCCT grants based on analysis of the grant applications for Rounds 1-3. The briefs examine the TAACCCT grant initiative, the institutions awarded grants, industries of focus, the variety of approaches planned by grantees, and the evaluations being implemented.

Lauren Eyster, The Urban Institute

1:15 PM - 3:00 PM

Session Three: Student Learning

1:15 PM

Session Three: Student Learning

Mark Combs, OCCRL, University of Illinois

1:20 PM

Elements of a Successful Community College Educational Model

The National STEM Consortium (NSC) is a ten-college Round 1 TAACCCT partnership focused on developing and delivering one-year certificates in composites, cyber technology, electric vehicle technology, environmental technology, and mechatronics. Within these programs, a specific educational model was implemented. The model consists of block scheduling, cohort enrollment, compressed classroom time, employer linkages, hybrid delivery, specialized student support (in the form of a “navigator”), and “STEM Bridge,” an accelerated, contextualized learning program designed as a refresher in math, reading and writing, and soft skills. As the third party evaluator, Hezel Associates provided an implementation and impact evaluation that satisfies US DOL requirements and generated formative feedback to improve these programs. However, findings related to impact are limited as TAACCCT programs were under development during data collection. The precepts of developmental evaluation (Patton, 2011) suggest that as a better course of action, complexity of models in development should be examined before any real impact can be measured. The NSC has embraced a desire to contribute its learned knowledge to community college education, as a whole; therefore, the evaluation went a step further to develop an understanding of how these model elements foster student success, in terms of retention and program completion.

Sarah Stewart, Hezel Associates, LLC

Tashera Boldts, Syracuse University STEM Fellow

1:40 PM

Remote Science Labs and Student Learning Outcomes: A Mixed-Methods Analysis

The North American Network of Science Labs Online (NANSLO) is a network of science laboratories at colleges in the United States and Canada that offer remote science activities to students through the use of robotics and a web interface. The network consists of three nodes; each node is a laboratory equipped with science equipment operated via the Internet. NANSLO joined the Consortium for Healthcare Education Online (CHEO) TAACCCT-grant funded consortium in order to offer science lab activities remotely to students as part of the grants' goal of expanding online course offerings to students in allied health, chemistry, biology, and physics programs. This study examines the use of NANSLO under the CHEO grant, including the experiences of the project team members and participating staff, faculty, and students, and evaluates course outcomes from Colorado Community College Online (CCOnline) students (N=2089 enrollments). This research reveals lessons learned for scalability and sustainability of remote science labs and contributes to the study of remote learning and STEM. The overarching research question was: Can remote, web-based science lab activities produce the same or better learning outcomes necessary for the acquisition of essential science knowledge as kit-based lab activities?

Renee Edwards, Education and Employment Research Center, Rutgers

Heather McKay, Education and Employment Research Center, Rutgers

2:00 PM

Apprenticeships as a Strategy for Higher Education Completion and Workforce Development in Montana

This paper is from phase I of a qualitative study of Montana's TAACCCT-supported efforts to transform and expand the role of apprenticeships in the state. All of Montana's 2-year and many 4-year colleges are participating in the state's TAACCCT consortium grants, and TAACCCT apprenticeship activities constitute a statewide effort to transform and expand the role of apprenticeships in workforce development. The aim of this work is twofold: first, it seeks to develop a robust model for apprenticeships that combine paid job experience with college coursework and enable participants to earn both an apprenticeship certificate and a postsecondary degree. Second, TAACCCT apprenticeship

activities are working to expand apprenticeships to new fields, such as advanced manufacturing and nursing. Despite a growing appreciation of the benefits of apprenticeship in the U.S. and Montana, a state agency head noted that a primary hurdle to their growth is awareness and understanding. The study will examine if and how the perceptions and roles of apprenticeship stakeholders are changing in the state as a result of TAACCCT and other activities, and the implications of the changes for the development and management of higher education and workforce training programs at the local and state levels.

Sandra Staklis, RTI International

Kevin Jordan, RTI International

Christina Restad, RTI International

2:20 PM

Intrusive Advising; Lessons Learned from TAACCCT

Many TAACCCT grants throughout the country employed advising/coaching strategies to help improve retention, completion and employment outcomes. In many cases colleges created a new positions called career coaches or navigators. This paper looks at that development and implementation of the career coach role at fifteen colleges in Colorado through TAACCCT. Coaches were to provide the following assistance to students: Guide students through career exploration and present energy training opportunities, Advise and support students as they complete the developmental education needed to succeed in the energy programs, Help students navigate the college's processes, Provide referrals and support for nonacademic issues. This paper explores the integration of coaches within institutions, and function and impact of career coaches across the colleges. It also identifies some promising advising strategies and the challenges faced by career coaches which are important to the scale and sustainability both the strategies and the position. Finally, it looks at student interactions with coaches and some student outcomes.

Heather McKay, Education and Employment Research Center, Rutgers

Suzanne Michael, Education and Employment Research Center, Rutgers

2:40 PM

Discussion

Facilitated by Dr. Marisa Castellano, OCCRL, University of Illinois



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