

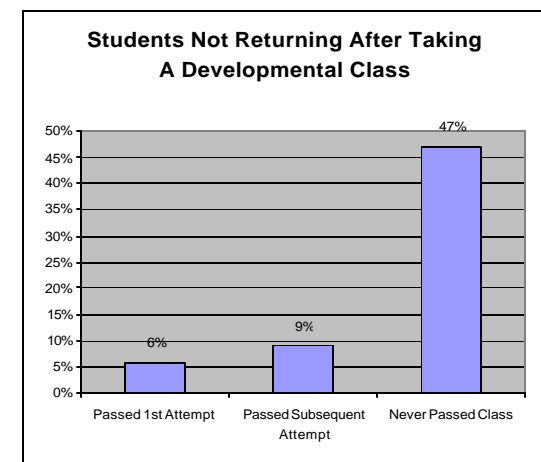
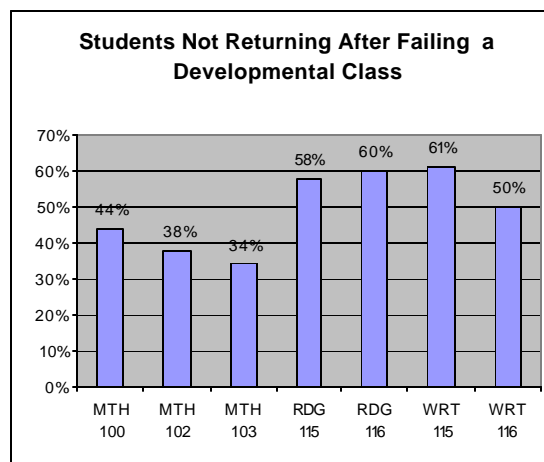
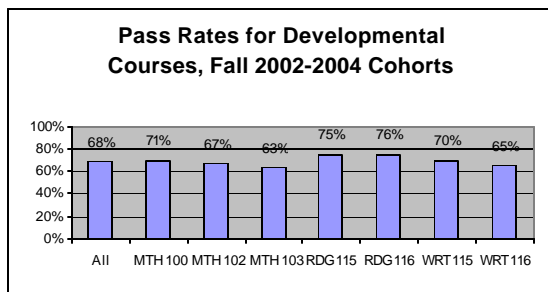
### Section III. Achieving the Dream Proposal Timeline and Action Plan North Central State College

#### Priority 1: Improve student success in developmental education.

#### Evidence/Rationale:

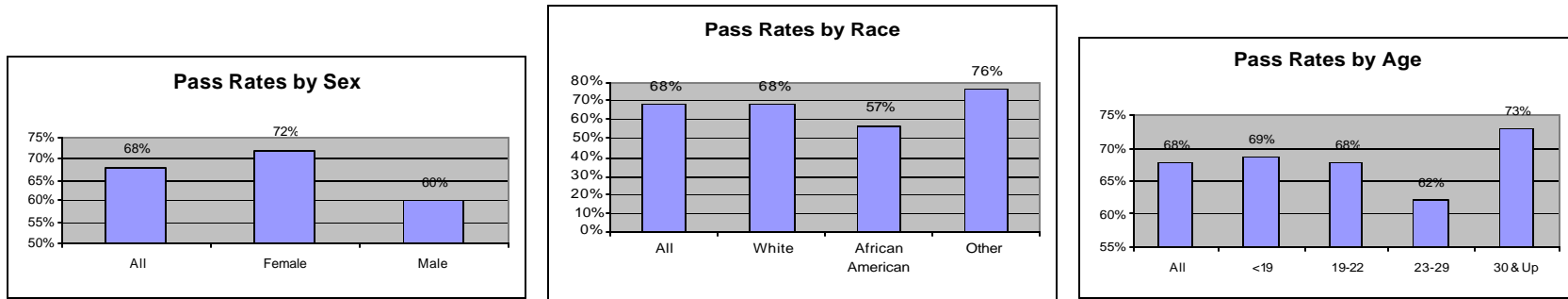
##### Overview

The analysis reveals that 66% (1,512) of 2002-04 cohort students were assessed at one or more developmental levels in math, reading or writing. Students attempting these courses achieved a 67.9% success rate. 92% of cohort students who successfully complete developmental work enroll in additional courses. Of those students who are unsuccessful in developmental work, 47% immediately leave the institution and do not re-enroll. This has a significant impact on student persistence and completion rates at NCSC.



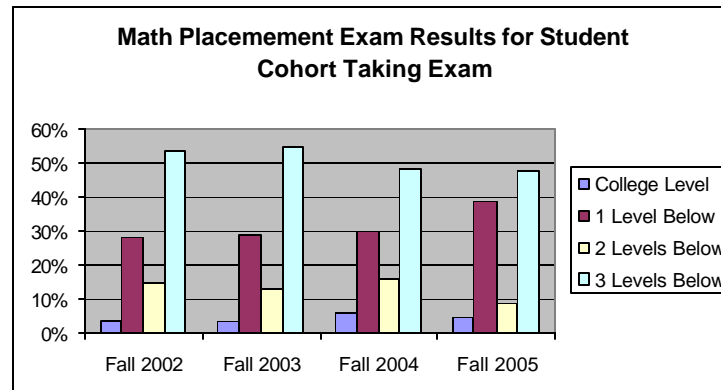
*Data disaggregation*

Male students and students age 23-29 comprise 38% and 39.4%, respectively, of the multi-year cohort. While the African American composition is small at 5.4%, it is rapidly increasing and achieved 8% in fall 2005. Pass rates for males, African Americans and students age 23-29 were 60.1%, 56.5% and 62.3%, respectively, compared to an overall 67.9% cohort average. Male students and students age 23-29 comprise 38% and 39.4%, respectively, of the multi-year cohort.



*Math Placement Analysis*

NCSC also analyzed the potential impact of not maintaining a mandatory placement policy for math. The following charts show that on average, over 95% of cohort students are assessed at a developmental math level



While the results are alarming, students also have little direct incentive to perform in math entrance assessments. Only 6.5% of students repeated the math placement test, as compared to 23% and 27%, respectively, in reading and writing. Nonetheless, students who follow the recommended assessment achieve greater success than students who self-place into a higher level. Of cohort students assessed into developmental math (three levels) and attempting a math course, 33.2% self-placed into the college level. An aversion to taking developmental classes is especially true for males, whose focus groups estimated that 50-75% of men have too much pride to think that they need a developmental course. Moreover, 23.1% of cohort students assessed into developmental math who attempted a math course self-placed into a higher-than-assessed developmental level. The success rates of these students in the first math attempt were 68.6% and 67.6%, respectively. This compared to a success rate of 79.7% for students who attempted their first course at the assessed developmental level. Of the 160 students testing into the lowest developmental math level, yet attempting the highest developmental or college level, the pass rate was only 61%.

### *Reading/Writing Progression Analysis*

NCSC does have mandatory placement for students assessed into developmental reading and writing. Consequently, it analyzed students progressing into college-level gatekeeper English (ENG 101) against students directly placed into the college level. Students starting in lower-level writing (WRT 115) had a 67.3% success rate in ENG 101; students in upper-level (WRT 116) had a 73.1% success rate; students in lower-level reading (RDG 115) had a 40.9% success rate; and students in high-level reading (RDG 116) had a 68.3% success rate. Native ENG 101 students had an 81.3% success rate, confirming the need to improve developmental preparation.

### *Conclusions*

NCSC developed strategies grouped into the two general areas of strengthening the college advising system and improving curriculum/instruction to combat the root causes of these issues as derived from quantitative analysis, especially among focus groups consisting of the target student subpopulations and developmental faculty.

**Measurable Changes after Three Years:**

Success rates in developmental math courses will increase by 4% each year for FY07, FY08, and FY09. Success rates in RDG and WRT courses will increase by 3% each year for FY07, FY08, and FY09. Developmental students reporting positive advising experiences on CCSSE surveys and in final focus groups will increase by 10%, including a 15% subgroup increase. Early alert referrals for students in developmental courses will increase by at least 8%, and among referred students, 10% fewer cohort students will annually receive D/F, or “no-pass” as compared to the 02-04 cohort. Developmental students attending Noel Levitz College Student Inventory advising appointments will persist at a rate of at least 10% greater than developmental students who do not follow up on their CSI appointments. Success rates for developmental students progressing into college-level gatekeeper English or math will increase by 4%, including 8% for the subgroups, by FY09.

Work Plan	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Staff
<b>Strengthen the college advising system</b>				
The College will implement a policy requiring mandatory assessment <u>and</u> placement for mathematics courses in January 2007. In preparation, The Math Department has reviewed and compared mathematics placement cutoff scores from twenty-three Ohio community colleges. Institutional funds paid for Terry Coleman of the Core Team to attend the ACT conference in Chicago in spring 06. Conference topics included the steps to properly set cutoff scores, retention of students through better placement, studying the effectiveness of developmental courses, and building student success through the Compass system.	X	X	X	Terry Coleman, Interim Dean of Arts and Science Division
The Math Department will prepare study guides (basic skills sheets) and other tutorial materials for each of the developmental math course for practice in both the COMPASS test and first-day Readiness test.	X			Dr. Patrick Kent, Lecturer, Mathematics
As part of the COMPASS exam, students testing into developmental math will also take a math diagnostics exam. Advising staff will then review the results with the students, and, if the student is only deficient in one or two areas, they will provide additional skills sheets and tutorial videos covering the areas of deficiencies (see above step).	X	X	X	Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services
On the first day of MTH 100, MTH 102, or MTH 103 (the developmental math	X	X	X	Dr. Patrick Kent,

series), the student will take a pre-test that will provide a base line of that student's mathematical abilities. If the assessment results indicate that the student should enroll in a different level of mathematics, the student will be advised to do so.				Lecturer, Mathematics
Based on the experience of using multiple math placement evaluation instruments, College developmental writing and English faculty will study the potential for implementing an alternative local writing instrument.		X		Dr. Mike Allen English Program Director Richard Birk, Developmental Education Program Director
FYE 101 is a one hour course that is required for most of our students. FYE 161 is a more intense, 3-hour study skills and career planning course that was required for students testing into both developmental reading and writing. As of fall 2006 all students placing into any one developmental course, including math, will take the more comprehensive FYE 161.	X	X	X	Margaret Puckett, Program Director, First Year Experience
Advising will also expand the DIRECTIONS program to include every student testing into any developmental mathematics, reading or writing course(s). The program identifies and provides support to academically unprepared students, currently those who place into developmental reading and/or writing. Students remain in the program until they pass gatekeeper English (ENG 101), FYE and are in good academic standing. The Directions support program includes mandatory quarterly advising for each student in the program. Involvement in Directions will help to familiarize the student with the Student Success Center (our tutoring and advising center) and also provide connections to other support services as appropriate.	X	X	X	Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services
As part of FYE 161, all students take the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory to efficiently reveal key student indicators that may lead to attrition, and are	X	X	X	Bev Walker, Director of Retention

referred to a session with a staff advisor to recommend specific action steps. All developmental students will now be assessed with this tool.				Services
Advisors will share information with students about the number and frequency of NCSC students starting in developmental work in an effort to reduce the stigma and increase acceptance by students. This effort will combat the stigma concerns cited by male focus groups, as well as inform students on various supports available to developmental students. African American focus groups cited a lack of awareness about the Student Success Center.	X	X	X	Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services  Nicole Workman, Marketing Representative
Developmental faculty will create protocols in each developmental course for triggering the Early Alert process. The alert might be triggered by absenteeism, insufficient homework, poor test grades, poor quality class work, or non-academic reasons such as financial issues, personal counseling referral, or referral for disability services.	X			Terry Coleman, Interim Dean of Arts and Science Division  Dr. Patrick Kent, Lecturer, Mathematics  Richard Birk, Developmental Education Program Director
NCSC will provide appropriate professional development opportunities to academic advisors. This will include sending a core team of faculty and advising staff to the annual 3-day conference of the Ohio Association for Developmental Education/College Reading and Learning Association. OADE maintains special interest groups in the following categories: Adjunct/Part time; Administration; Counseling/Advising; Math; Reading; Study Skills; Technology; Tutoring; Writing; Learning Disabilities; ESL. These staff will in turn relate relevant information from these conferences, as well as ongoing	X	X	X	Terry Coleman, Interim Dean of Arts and Science Division  Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services

literature reviews, to peers during in-service trainings and departmental meetings. Note that Ohio colleges have online free access to numerous technical journals, such as <i>New Directions for Student Services</i> and <i>New Directions for Community Colleges</i> . Given the large prevalence of adjunct developmental faculty and part-time advising staff, stipends will also be provided for these individuals to attend training.				
<b>Improve curriculum and instruction</b>				
Add a computer enhanced tutorial to each of the developmental math classes. Students who struggle with difficult concepts would be able to access immediate assistance to clarify problem areas.	X	X	X	Dr. Patrick Kent, Lecturer, Mathematics
Convert developmental mathematics courses from a strictly lecture format to a lecture/lab combination. The lab portion of the course would combine use of computer aided instruction with 1:1 assistance from the faculty member and a supplemental instructor or peer tutor.	X	X	X	Dr. Patrick Kent, Lecturer, Mathematics
The math faculty will research means to better adjust developmental pedagogy to learning styles through the use of manipulatives and computer modules. At the same time, it will heed warnings from <a href="#">The State of State Math Standards 2005</a> , David Klein (2005) discussed nine problem areas in which state standards come up short. Among those was concern for an overuse of calculators and manipulatives in that students might come to depend on them and focus on the manipulatives more than on the math. Findings will ensure the math educator explicitly states and reinforces the link between the use of the manipulative, and development of concepts for understanding and properties of mathematics to be learned.	X			Dr. Patrick Kent, Lecturer, Mathematics

<p>Developmental students will also have access to acclaimed PLATO developmental software through a joint laboratory that is being established between NCSC and an area career center. The program is primarily designed for high school drop-outs to recover credits at their own pace through a new lab to be housed at NCSC. However, NCSC has negotiated with the career center to allow developmental students access to this software when not in use by the career center students.</p>	X			Don Plotts, Assistant to the President
<p>Research and develop standard protocol to trigger mandatory, one-on-one tutoring in developmental writing classes. Based on protocol, implement mandatory tutoring for writing. Assume up to four hours per at-risk student to coincide with number of assignments.</p>	X	X	X	Richard Birk, Developmental Education Program Director
<p>Currently, the flex-time final exam process for WRT 116 and its attendant group grading take up most of the last two weeks of the quarter. The College will drop the flex-time final, and replace it with in-class essay exams for both the mid-term and final. This will free up a week of instructional time.</p>	X			Richard Birk, Program Director, Developmental Education
<p>Study the pairing of high-demand social science courses concurrently taken with our higher level RDG 116. This will include creation of a customized reading textbook (available at no additional cost from publisher) containing content from the social science courses. This will ensure consistency from section to section. RDG 116 would focus on the reading and study strategies necessary, but also provide more relevant reading materials and improve transfer of learning from developmental to content courses.</p>	X			Richard Birk, Program Director Developmental Education  Bob Lewis, Associate Professor Social Studies

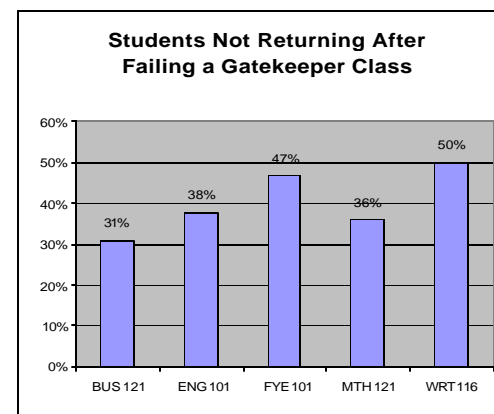
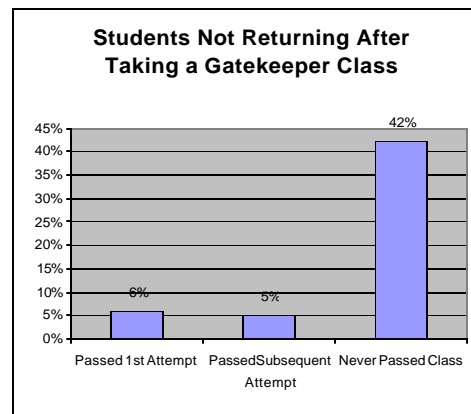
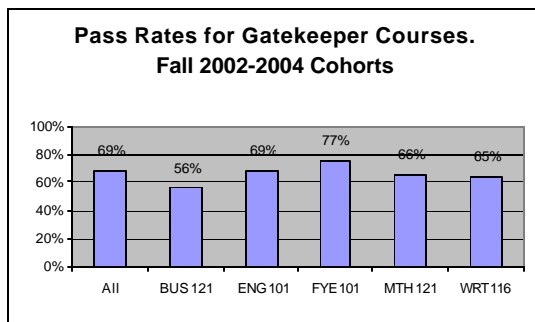
<p>Implement the paired reading/social science course. In future years, continue study to link RDG 116 with other general education and potentially even discipline-specific courses.</p>		X	X	Richard Birk, Program Director Developmental Education
<p>Lower-level reading (RDG 115) will change from a 3-credit, 3 contact hours course to a 1-credit, 2-contact hour lab course that will be offered and taken in the same quarter as upper-level reading (RDG 116). There are so few RDG 115 students (average 25 a year), that often the course is cancelled although students are mandated to take the course based on COMPASS scores. These students would be better served to immediately address their reading skills by making RDG 115 a lab component for qualifying students, so they receive 5 hours of reading instruction in their first quarter.</p>	X	X	X	Richard Birk, Program Director Developmental Education
<p>In addition to the training delivery system proposed in the previous section, two other training programs are proposed to improve instruction and tutoring. First, The NADE cites that "tutor training is the best programmatic predictor of successful college developmental education [basic skill development] programs" (Maxwell, 1993). Given the increased level of tutoring in this proposal by both peers and faculty, a tutor training program of at least four hours will be implemented. Potential topics include: learning preferences, study and success strategies, communication skills, diversity, student needs, and special needs, history and theoretical foundations for tutoring and learning, Student Success Center resources available to tutors and students, and services available on campus and in the community. Also, options will be studied to expand this program within current budgets. One includes integrating this training as an elective within current in-service training. Since institutions such as Paradise Valley Community College in Arizona offer tutor training as a for-credit course, this will be explored as well.</p>	X	X	X	Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services

**Priority Area: Improve student success in gatekeeper courses.**

**Rationale/Evidence:**

*Overview*

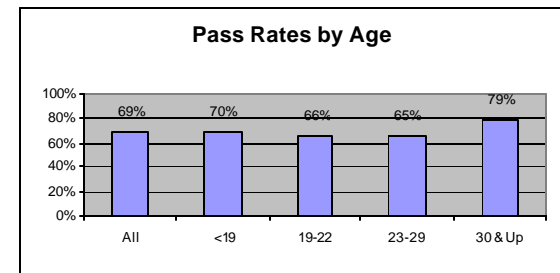
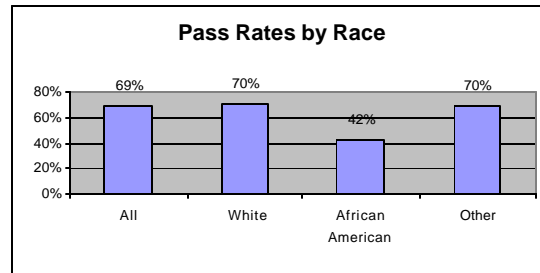
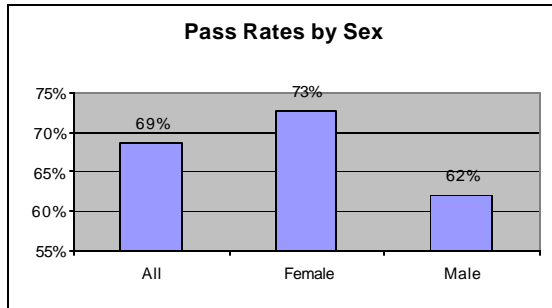
A total of five high-enrollment, high failure courses were defined as “gatekeeper” courses at NCSC. Cohort enrollment for these five courses (3,875) was 1.7 times the actual 2002-04 cohort size of 2,275, and pass rates were 68.7%. The gatekeeper business class (BUS 121) posted a success rate of only 56.1%. Even a one-credit college success course (FYE 101) had a pass rate of only 76.6%. FYE 101 is required for all students with the exception of those who place into both developmental reading and writing, who must take a three-credit success course that utilizes the College Student Inventory (CSI) from Noel-Levitz. The analysis reveals that cohort students who successfully complete gatekeeper courses persist at a rate of 94%. Of those who fail one or more gatekeeper courses, 42% leave the college, including 47% who fail the success course. This has a significant impact on student persistence and completion rates.



*Data disaggregation*

Male students and students age 23-29 comprise 38% and 39.4%, respectively, of the multi-year cohort. While the African American composition is small at 5.4%, it is rapidly increasing and achieved 8% in fall 2005. Male students and African American students posted average gatekeeper

success rates of 62.1% and 42.4%, respectively. Pass rates vary dramatically by course. For example, only 49.3% of males and 21.7% of African Americans passed BUS 121, while 68.5% of males and 55.5% of African Americans passed FYE 101.



### *FYE 101 Analysis*

Qualitative data raised several pedagogical-related factors potentially impacting student success. All focus groups consistently cited time management/study-skill related barriers. While FYE 101 courses are intended to address such issues, male focus group students cited inconsistency in instruction among FYE sections. All males reported that it was too demanding for the one credit hour earned. Faculty qualitatively reported similar concerns, as there are up to 20 different persons instructing per year, including staff and faculty often trying to make required course load hours. There is no customized training.

### *BUS 121 Analysis*

When presented with the pass rates, business faculty believed that due to recent revisions, course success requires proficient reading and writing skills. However, there is no current prerequisite for BUS 121. Based on these comments, NCSC analyzed the correlation between students who had taken developmental reading or writing and attempted BUS 121. Students who started in lower-level reading (N=3) and writing (N=10) failed at rates of 100% and 70%, respectively. Students who had taken upper-level developmental reading (N=38) and writing (N=90) failed at rates of 60.0% and 67.7%, respectively. This has created discussion as to whether more emphasis should be placed on prerequisites for basic reading, writing or math skills in content courses that aren't specifically college level reading, writing or math.

*Conclusions*

NCSC developed strategies grouped into the two general areas of strengthening the college advising system and improving curriculum/instruction to combat the root causes of these issues as derived from quantitative analysis, especially among focus groups consisting of the target student subpopulations and course-specific faculty feedback groups.

**Measurable Changes after Three Years:**

Success rates in gatekeeper courses will increase by 4%, including 8% for the student subgroups, each year for FY08 and FY09.

Work Plan	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Staff
<b>Strengthen the College Advising System</b>				
Academic departments will study academic outcomes in non English or math gatekeeper (high enrollment, high failure) courses. This will include a correlation of gatekeeper success with COMPASS scores and developmental placements. NCSC will review creation of a policy governing prerequisites in core skill areas and a a system to periodically review prerequisites for gatekeeper courses.	X	X		Dr. Therese Bushner, Chief Academic Officer
NCSC will continue "progression analyses" of developmental students moving into college level English and math courses to ensure the curricula are appropriately aligned. It will adapt a progression analysis template currently employed by Miami Dade College's Office of Institutional Research (courtesy of Dr. Bashford). MDC's methodology includes, by course, term-to-term course progression, pass rate after completing a prerequisite, and pass rates for students placed directly vs. students progressing from the prior course. Such analyses will become more relevant in math with the implementation of mandatory placement.	X	X	X	Tom Prendergast, Director of Institutional Research/Grants

NCSC faculty supplement the work of staff advisors by counseling students on issues related to their majors. NCSC will integrate advisor training into in-service trainings, especially to respond to concerns by men of ineffective faculty advising. It will also utilize training strategies proposed by Kramer (Enhancing the Potential of College Faculty as Advisors, 2003). Also, advisor training will respond to concerns by African Americans students on lack of cultural awareness, and by faculty on difficulties in advising students with learning disabilities.	X	X	X	Dr. Therese Bushner, Chief Academic Officer
<b>Improve curriculum and instruction</b>				
Given the high failure rate, and concern voiced by both students and faculty over inconsistent pedagogy in FYE courses, NCSC will undertake an instructional review of the FYE 101 course – Orientation to College. This review will result in a consistent organization, delivery and content based on best practice research such as Stovall (2000) and the National Resource Center for the First Year Experience at the University of South Carolina. This will also include a customization of this course currently offered to Tech Prep students in area high schools for articulation credit.	X	X	X	Margaret Puckett, Program Director, First Year Experience
NCSC has initiated discussions with area school districts on expanding the use of a customized FYE 101 course (see above) as an elective course to high school students to help them better prepare for college. This would be funded as a dual-enrollment program, as is the current case with Tech Prep students.		X	X	Don Plotts, Assistant to the President
NCSC will continue seeking means to maximize gatekeeper offerings to students, including delivery through alternative formats (see next section). At the suggestion of a student focus group, it could also include a tightly controlled policy allowing students who miss a class session due to extraordinary circumstances to sit in on another class section of the same professor with advance permission.		X	X	Dr. Therese Bushner, Chief Academic Officer
NCSC will continue efforts to recruit more qualified minority faculty, responding to a concern raised by African American focus groups. For example, it will maximize connections with the city of Mansfield and Mansfield City Schools to find qualified faculty, such as a retired secondary educator willing to instruct on	X	X	X	Doug Hanuscin, Director of Human Resources

an adjunct basis.				
NCSC has arranged for an author of a success course text (Amy Baldwin) to train FYE instructors on August 11, 2006. This individual's costs are being covered by the publisher of the text. Ms. Baldwin will train instructors on best practice techniques for success courses. In future years similar training will be offered for new instructors and refresher training will be offered for returning instructors. The Director of the FYE program has recently attended train-the-trainer programming through Skip Downing, consultant in the field of faculty development and student success strategies.	X	X	X	Margaret Puckett, Program Director, First Year Experience

**Priority Area: Improve Student Persistence Rates**

**Rationale/Evidence:**

Overview

The fall-to-winter persistence rate for 2002 cohort students is 70.4%. Fall-to-fall persistence rate for cohort students is 44.0%. Using data from the Ohio Board of Regents, the fall-to-fall persistence rate of freshman degree-seekers (full-time) averaged 51% for 2002 and 2003, compared to 54.5% at all Ohio technical colleges. Persistence has a direct impact on completion, transfer, and graduation rates. The campus interactions believed to be the most critical in determining student persistence are those that occur within the first six months or first year of college (Tinto, 1994, 1996).

*Data disaggregation*

Male students and students age 23-29 comprise 38% and 39.4%, respectively, of the multi-year cohort. While the African American composition is small at 5.4%, it is rapidly increasing and achieved 8% in Fall 2005. However, these three subgroups maintain substantially lower persistence rates, both term-to-term and fall-to-fall, than cohort averages.

### 2002 Cohort Persistence

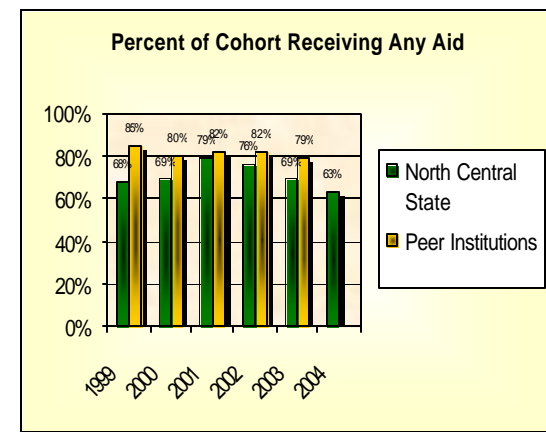
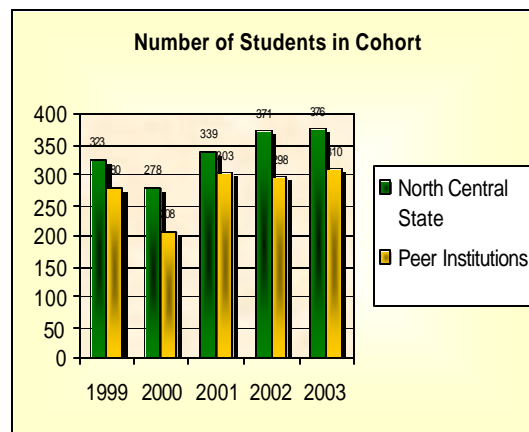
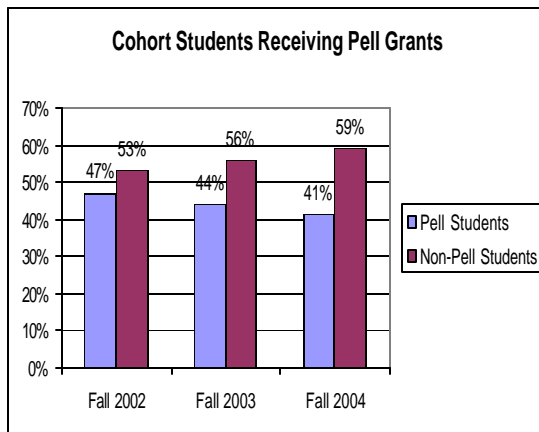
	Fall '02	Winter '03	Fall '03	Winter '04	Fall '04	Graduates
Female	100.0%	73.3%	46.8%	42.0%	28.8%	3.7%
<b>Male</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>63.9%</b>	<b>37.6%</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>21.2%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
Grand Total	100.0%	70.4%	44.0%	40.1%	26.4%	5.2%

	Fall '02	Winter '03	Fall '03	Winter '04	Fall '04	Graduates
Other	100.0%	62.9%	40.0%	34.3%	17.1%	0.0%
<b>Afro-Am.</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60.0%</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>22.2%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
White	100.0%	71.5%	45.0%	41.6%	27.2%	5.5%
Grand Total	100.0%	70.4%	44.0%	40.1%	26.4%	5.2%

	Fall '02	Winter '03	Fall '03	Winter '04	Fall '04	Graduates
<19	100.0%	74.8%	51.3%	43.7%	36.1%	3.4%
19-22	100.0%	72.1%	44.5%	40.4%	27.9%	4.4%
<b>23-29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>
30 and over	100.0%	71.5%	44.4%	41.6%	22.0%	6.1%
Grand Total	100.0%	70.4%	44.0%	40.1%	26.4%	5.2%

### Impact of Financial Aid

Noel-Levitz reports that financial barriers are the primary reason students list for not persisting at college. Initial quantitative data gathering showed the number of cohort students on Pell grants rapidly dropping from 2002-2004. During the initial stakeholder engagement phase of gathering qualitative data, every group cited concerns with confusion/complication regarding the financial aid process. It was cited 16 times by community groups with confusing processes as a barrier to both students and parents. Many students also expressed the need for more information about financial resources beyond federal and state aid. Further, NCSC's Financial Aid Office voiced concerns that other departments and even faculty were inappropriately advising students on financial aid matters. The African American student focus group estimated that 80-90% of their peers struggle with lack of money and financial aid as a barrier. In a related issue, African Americans cited difficulty in accessing technology to facilitate coursework. Currently, NCSC does not offer scholarships specifically for minority groups. Based on these concerns, NCSC undertook additional quantitative review, comparing NCSC financial aid statistics in IPEDS against other Ohio technical colleges. Note that IPEDS cohort are first-time, full-time freshmen.



IPEDs data revealed that although NCSC had larger student cohorts than the peer institutions, it consistently lagged these institutions in the percentage of students receiving any aid. However, NCSC students have generally received slightly more aid per student.

*Conclusion*

NCSC developed strategies grouped into the three general areas of increasing access to and use of financial aid, strengthening the college advising system and improving curriculum/instruction to combat the root causes of these issues as derived from quantitative analysis.

**Measurable Changes After Three Years:**

Fall-to-winter persistence will increase by 2% each year with an increase of at least 5% in each subgroup. Fall-to-fall persistence rates will increase by 2% each year. The percentage of students receiving any type of financial aid will increase by 1.5% each year.

Work Plan	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Staff
<b>Increase access to and use of financial aid</b>				
The financial aid office underwent an exercise in spring 2006 to flowchart out its various processes. According to the <i>Problem Solving Memory Jogger – 7 Steps to Improved Processes</i> , creating a flowchart of current processes is an integral step toward identifying potential problem areas and root causes.	X			Doris Smith, Director of Financial Aid
The Institutional Research Office will conduct a comprehensive business process review of the financial aid area. Linsey (1997) recommends a study of delivery of funds, including the response time to student applications and requests, the timeliness of awards and subsequent reevaluations, the speed with which offices interact to process students, and the results of computerization on the efficiency of student aid delivery. Further, assessment of student satisfaction with delivery of aid might include questions about the effects of the uncertainty of funding, problems encountered in annual needs assessment, perceptions of clarity of institutional and federal rules, and satisfaction with the student aid package. Finally, it will ensure that current processes maximize the use of professional judgment in reviewing applications.		X		Tom Prendergast, Director of Institutional Research/Grants
In addition to accountability issues, training for financial aid officers will also focus on process issues such as professional judgment, improving student perceptions of the financial aid office, suggestions for dealing with unhappy	X	X	X	Doris Smith, Director of Financial Aid

<p>students and parents, and balancing technology and the human touch in financial aid.</p> <p>In addition, financial aid officers will present at faculty and staff in-service training, emphasizing and clarifying the roles all employees are expected to assume regarding communication of student financial aid matters.</p>				
<p>NCSC will enlist the assistance of community partners in communicating and simplifying the financial aid process. It will continue sponsoring and publicizing financial aid workshops for students and parents, including off-site venues such as community centers. Further, NCSC has begun communications among local minority ministers and the college's foundation to establish scholarships for qualified minority applicants.</p>	X	X	X	<p>Doris Smith, Director of Financial Aid</p> <p>Betty Wells, Vice President of Institutional Advancement</p>
<p>NCSC will partner financial aid and other staff with students to research and secure funding for access to technology. NCSC has an educational technology advisory group currently studying digital divide matters to which concerns by African American students over access to technology and technology literacy have been forwarded. Among potential strategies for investigation is the creation of a need-based computer loan program to assist students with the study, research and preparation of class assignments, reduce study time, access source material from home and increase familiarity with computer technology. At Merritt Community College in California, students must sign a contract, be recommended by a counselor, maintain a GPA of 2.0, and keep all counseling appointments.</p>		X	X	<p>Michael Rencock Welker, Instructional Technologist</p> <p>Doris Smith, Director of Financial Aid</p>
<b>Strengthen the college advising system</b>				
<p>NCSC's Enrollment Planning Committee will analyze the enrollment patterns of students historically underserved by advising, such as pre-health and undeclared majors. For example, focus groups for students age 23-29 noted strategies to overcome lack of offerings/schedule conflicts included knowing prerequisites and sequences; knowing when classes are offered, and making the class schedule early – essentially self-advising.</p>	X			<p>Peg Moir, Chief Student Services Officer/Chair of Enrollment Planning Committee</p>

Based on this study, the Enrollment Planning Committee will recommend new advising strategies for these students. For example, the CCSSE 2005 survey report recommends that instructors build advising and counseling activities into course requirements to reach students who otherwise would not receive this counsel.		X	X	Peg Moir, Chief Student Services Officer/Chair of Enrollment Planning Committee
Based on the pilot project among developmental students, NCSC will formalize/clarify the protocols for triggered an academic alert message to the SCC for any student. This program can be initiated by any faculty member when they sense that a student is struggling. Some of the more common reasons that the alert might be triggered include absenteeism, insufficient homework, poor test grades, poor quality class work, or nonacademic reasons as cited in a previous section.		X	X	Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services
The advising staff will also investigate establishing a mandatory orientation that will introduce the college and the college experience to new students. Some elements of our First Year Experience courses may be incorporated into the orientation. If it is determined that such an orientation would enhance the learning experience, be enforceable and cost effective, it may be implemented in year two. K McClenney (2005) recommends mandatory orientations to increase student engagement.	X	X		Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services  Margaret Puckett Program Director First Year Experience
<b>Improve curriculum and instruction</b>				
NCSC will continue to collect and evaluate data on course scheduling and availability given qualitative data collected from stakeholders.	X	X	X	Peg Moir, Chief Student Services Officer/Chair of Enrollment Planning Committee
Where possible, NCSC will implement alternative delivery formats to help address concerns noted above. Perin (2005) suggests such alternative formats to increase achievement and persistence. NCSC has hired a part-time staff member to create an Alternative Delivery Department to serve as a campus-wide clearing house and centralized point of contact for all issues relating to the delivery of credit classes delivered in the following formats. Offsite mini	X	X	X	Gina Kamwithi, Director of Alternative Delivery

<p>campuses, DVD/Video/CD audio, Video Conferencing, cohort programs, web enhanced or online delivery). This individual has submitted a budget and business plan for 2006-07 with the goal for the department to become self-sufficient within a year. NCSC has also announced a cohort program to deliver core coursework to a group of students in a rural region on the edge of its service area.</p>				
<p>NCSC will require in-service training for all faculty and staff on topics related to increasing student persistence. Staff advisors will educate all employees on leading academic and affective indicators that may lead to attrition. Given the smaller size of NCSC, all staff interface with students regardless of job description. Kramer (2003) recommends that employees be supported so that they know how to connect students with relevant campus services and resources.</p>	X	X	X	Bev Walker, Director of Retention Services