

CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO
WRIGHT
5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



CITY COLLEGES of CHICAGO
Wilbur Wright
Education that Works

From the President

In 2010, Chancellor Cheryl Hyman launched City Colleges' Reinvention, a joint effort that brought together faculty, administrators, students and external stakeholders to drive greater degree attainment, job placement and career advancement. We have to ensure that our students are prepared to move into higher education and that they have the skills for jobs in the 21st century.

Such ambitious educational goals can only be achieved when a laser focus on student success is paired with collaboration, coordination and a shared sense of purpose. Big educational goals also depend upon multiple successes. Increased completion rates only happen if retention improves, and retention, in turn, depends upon more students receiving the support services they need to develop the confidence to succeed, as well as more students successfully transitioning out of developmental and adult education courses.

At Wright, we are making significant progress in key areas that support these strategic goals, including retention, completion, degrees awarded, enrollment, and remediation transitions, among others. This growth will continue to be fueled by Wright's collaborative spirit and tradition of building quality and continuous improvement into the policies and programs that support student success. Our participation in the Higher Learning Commission's Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP), the outcomes of which support Reinvention goals, is a key component of our institutional success.

As City Colleges' College to Careers Information Technology hub, we are developing courses and pathways that will serve as the foundation for a curriculum at Wright and City Colleges that is relevant in today's IT industry, and that effectively prepares students for the industry's exciting opportunities and high-wage, high-growth jobs.

This Five-Year Plan is an outgrowth of City Colleges' District-wide strategic plan and reform efforts. It documents Wright College's commitment to empower students with the access, tools and credentials needed to effectively guide them through completion at Wright—toward their goals to transfer to four-year colleges or universities, or to join the workforce immediately in in-demand careers.

David Potash

David Potash
President, Wilbur Wright College

Reinvention

AT WRIGHT COLLEGE, success means that all students receive the guidance, support and instruction to efficiently earn a credential of economic value that prepares them for a career, whether their goal is to enter the workforce immediately or seek further education first. Since the Reinvention initiative launched in 2010, this renewed focus on student outcomes has represented a paradigm shift at Wright College from a focus on access to a focus on both access and success. A robust set of outcomes is now paramount, including: completion, retention, and the value we deliver to students, their communities, employers and four-year colleges alike.

Reinvention launched with collaborative teams of faculty, staff and students from every college. Their task: to comprehensively review and revamp all aspects of City Colleges to ensure students' success. They were given time away from their regular responsibilities to dedicate themselves to the reform effort. More than three years later, the model remains in place, creating a permanent mechanism for deep and lasting change at City Colleges.

In 2013, City Colleges went a step further by launching Reinvention⁷, or Reinvention to the seventh power, implying the multiplication of impact by embedding the taskforce reform model at each of the seven City Colleges. Reinvention⁷ puts in place the processes and procedures that allow students to make good choices, to complete on time, and to transfer or move directly into the workforce. It ensures that cultural change permeates Wright College—from the advisors to the deans to the faculty to the support staff and of course to our students. Every person at Wright College has a hand in bringing about our reinvention.

Since the launch of Reinvention, Wright College has made real progress toward creating a true student-centered culture of success.

COMPLETION

When Reinvention launched, Wright College's graduation rate was 8 percent, and by 2013, it had jumped to 14 percent.



Roger Burt
Class of 2013 Valedictorian

The total number of Wright College completers crossed 1,600 in FY2013, marking a 74 percent increase under Reinvention.

CREDIT ENROLLMENT

Credit enrollment is up by nearly 1,636 students, or nearly 15 percent, since the launch of Reinvention.

COLLEGE TO CAREERS

Under Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chancellor Cheryl Hyman's leadership, City Colleges launched College to Careers (C2C), a program that partners City Colleges faculty and staff with industry experts to better prepare students for careers in growing fields.

In 2012, Wright College became City Colleges' hub for information technology programs through College to Careers. Since then, staff and faculty have worked with industry partners to design new and enhanced programs that prepare students for this growing field.

ADULT EDUCATION

Wright College has realigned its adult education off-site locations with the surrounding communities of greatest need in terms of adults lacking a high school diploma or English fluency, addressing what were true adult education deserts in Chicago.

In FY2013, 156 Wright adult education students transitioned to college-level courses, up 34 percent since Reinvention launched.

NEW CAPITAL PLAN

City Colleges has launched a five-year \$524 million capital plan to address years of neglected maintenance and reflect the latest changes in pedagogy and technology to ensure our students are job-ready and four-year-ready when they walk out of the classroom.

Millions of dollars will be invested at Wright College in the coming years, funding new and renovated teaching and learning facilities including smart classrooms, science classrooms, libraries, labs, and student support centers. Major capital improvements include: the roof replacement for the Learning Resource Center, classroom expansion at Wright College's Humboldt Park campus and an energy efficiency overhaul of the Science, Events and Liberal Arts & Administrative building exteriors.

More than three years in, Reinvention boasts many proud accomplishments. But while outcomes have improved, we are still working to reinvent Wright College into the best-in-class institution that Chicagoans have a right to demand. To build on our early successes, we must leverage the now-proven winning approaches in new ways by taking to the next level our drive to make our student-centered culture pervasive across the organization.

Through Reinvention⁷, we will achieve deep and lasting change at Wright College. We will ensure every student has access to programs that lead to further college or a career, and that every student is equipped with a plan for how to reach their goals.



Executive Summary

In five years, we aim to have transformed Wright College into a best-in-class urban community college where:

- The number of degrees awarded annually has increased by **152 percent** since the launch of Reinvention to **1,122**.
- The number of degrees and credentials of economic value awarded annually has more than doubled to **2,004** since the launch of Reinvention.
- More than half (**56 percent**) of students transfer to four-year institutions following graduation from Wright College and nearly triple the percentage of students graduate (**23 percent**), compared to the start of Reinvention.
- More than two-thirds (**71 percent**) of occupational completers are employed in their area of training.
- More than a third (**39.5 percent**) of new remedial students advance to college-level work within one year.
- More than four times (**485**) the number of adult education students are transitioning into a credit-level course after one semester in GED or ESL programs since the launch of Reinvention.

We have set ambitious goals in order to make good on the promise of providing a high-quality, affordable post-secondary education that delivers credentials of economic value and puts Chicagoans on a clear path to further college and careers.



Core Strategies

To reach these ambitious but necessary targets, Wright College is pursuing the following key strategies: increasing relevance, reducing time and increasing student supports in order to boost retention and completion. Taken together, these strategies will establish a culture of student success at Wright College that will improve the lives of our students and their communities. These strategies are being advanced through Reinvention⁷ and the Student GPS (Guided Pathway to Success) initiative to ensure every student has a clear path to further college and careers.

INCREASING RELEVANCE

We must ensure that the courses of study that students embark on will advance their goal of moving to four-year universities or to a meaningful career. To deliver on this promise, we have examined what the marketplace will demand today and tomorrow. Through this work, Wright College programs will have real value for employers, four-year colleges, and most importantly, our students' futures.

REDUCING TIME

We seek to maximize our students' resources—both the time and money spent at Wright College as well as on the longer road to a bachelor's degree and beyond. Numerous studies show that the longer it takes to complete a degree, the less likely the chance of degree completion. We are, therefore, employing a number of strategies to reduce the length of students' programs without sacrificing educational quality, including structured pathways, predictive scheduling, whole program enrollment and more.

INCREASING STUDENT SUPPORTS

We are dedicated to supporting our students on the path to their goals. City Colleges has strategically invested in student supports, including wellness centers, career centers, transfer centers, veterans centers, tutors, advisors and a new early alert system, to ensure students complete and move on to further college and careers. Going forward, we aim to use data more effectively to help students, and provide more information to students so they can better help themselves. This will not only require improvements in data management, but also in the way we work to help students reach their end goals.



GOALS & TARGETS

Measuring student access and success

Through a combination of discussions with faculty, staff, and students, and analysis of the challenges confronting current and prospective students, Wright College has developed specific measures that, collectively, forge a culture of student success. Our performance goals deal with how we will know whether we are improving student success.

Increase the number of students earning college credentials of economic value

Wright College has made significant strides through Reinvention in terms of the number of students earning credentials of economic value. We must build upon this early progress by boosting retention and giving students clear, relevant, and direct pathways to high-growth, high-wage jobs and to successful college transfer through Reinvention⁷, the College to Careers initiative and enhanced student supports. Our goal is to increase our graduation rate to achieve an IPEDS rate of 23 percent by 2018.

We also are forecasting robust growth in student placement in relevant jobs as a result of our College to Careers initiative to align our occupational curriculum with the expectations of industry. Our goal is to have in five years 71 percent of occupational program completers employed in their area of training. College to Careers is about more than jobs; it is about good-paying jobs. We expect the median earnings of graduates in these jobs to increase and be sufficient to at least sustain a family. Our goal is to ensure students earn a median income of \$38,129 in 2018.

		FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
COMPLETION WITHIN 3 YEARS	WR	13%	14%	16%	18%	23%
	CCC	13%	14%	16%	18%	20%
TOTAL NUMBER OF DEGREES & CERTIFICATES AWARDED	WR	1,629	1,675	1,764	1,847	2,004
	CCC	9,815	10,070	10,562	11,024	11,895
DEGREES	WR	854	887	950	1,010	1,122
	CCC	4,122	4,280	4,586	4,873	5,414
CERTIFICATES	WR	775	788	813	837	882
	CCC	5,693	5,790	5,976	6,151	6,481

Retention

		Fall 2013 to Spring 2014	Fall 2014 to Spring 2015	Fall 2015 to Spring 2016	Fall 2016 to Spring 2017	Fall 2017 to Spring 2018
CREDIT STUDENTS FALL-TO-SPRING RETENTION RATE	WR	70.7%	71.5%	72.1%	73.6%	75.8%
	CCC	66.9%	67.7%	68.2%	69.2%	71.6%

College to Careers

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT RATE IN AREA OF TRAINING

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
WR	60%	61%	64%	69%	71%
CCC	60%	61%	64%	69%	71%

MEDIAN EARNINGS OF STUDENTS EMPLOYED IN TRAINING AREA

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
WR	\$31,824	\$31,461	\$34,262	\$36,149	\$38,129
CCC	\$31,824	\$31,461	\$34,262	\$36,149	\$38,129

Enrollment with a Purpose

While many of the measures above focus on student success, we also need to ensure adequate student access. Urban community colleges across the country that excel in graduating their students concurrently enroll more of them, help current students complete, and have more new students follow in their footsteps.

Wright College has made a strategic decision to focus on credit and adult education enrollment. Enrollment in credit courses has increased, showing the benefits of initiatives like College to Careers, refocusing our marketing and recruitment efforts, and better articulating the value of a certificate or degree from Wright College.

We work to increase adult education enrollment through strategies to boost program quality and term-to-term and in-term retention, as well as the geographic realignment of Wright College's adult education offerings with demand as documented by the 2010 census.

TOTAL ENROLLMENT (unduplicated)

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
WR	22,643	22,829	23,032	23,289	23,603
CCC	108,252	109,139	110,110	111,340	112,837

CREDIT

WR	12,874	12,977	13,081	13,186	13,291
CCC	62,744	63,246	63,752	64,262	64,776

ADULT EDUCATION

WR	6,537	6,602	6,668	6,768	6,903
CCC	35,371	35,725	36,082	36,623	37,356

CONTINUING EDUCATION

WR	4,394	4,416	4,460	4,527	4,617
CCC	16,348	16,430	16,594	16,843	17,180

COLLEGE TO CAREERS

WR	3,613	5,368	7,123	8,878	10,633
CCC	17,611	26,163	34,716	43,268	51,821



Increase the rate of transfer to bachelor's degree programs following City Colleges graduation

The difference in earning potential between workers with a Baccalaureate degree versus a high school diploma—what economists call the “college-graduate wage premium”—has risen sharply since 1980 and now stands at 84 percent. Further, students with bachelor's degrees have lower unemployment rates, and jobs requiring a bachelor's degree continue to grow steadily while jobs requiring less than a college education continue to shrink. Many Wright College students—including students in many of our occupational programs—are on track to transfer to a four-year institution either right after college or by going back after some time in the workplace. Just as with job placement, we must focus on ensuring that they not only transfer, but do so in a meaningful way that holds economic value.

Studies show that students who transfer following completion of an associate degree are more likely to go on and complete their bachelor's and that is why we have consciously chosen to emphasize completion prior to transfer. Nevertheless, recognizing that currently the vast majority of our transfer students transfer prior to completion, we will also continue to monitor the transfer rate of students with 12 credits or more. We have set a goal that by 2018, 221 students completing 12 credit hours will transfer to a four-year institution annually.

		FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Rate of transfer to bachelor's degree programs within 2 years of CCC graduation	WR	43%	44%	48%	52%	56%
	CCC	42%	43%	47%	51%	55%
Number of fall new students who transfer to four-year institutions after earning 12 credits	WR	143	145	169	188	221
	CCC	726	736	853	950	1,121

Drastically improve outcomes for students requiring remediation

With the majority of incoming students requiring some amount of remedial education to achieve college-level readiness, we must alter our approaches to remedial education to reduce the time that any student is required to remain there before reaching college-level coursework. Co-requisites (classes taken concurrently rather than in succession), contextualized remediation (embedding math and/or literacy skills in occupational or other coursework), summer refresher programs, as well as more accurate placement measures are among the strategies we are using to reduce time in remediation. Ultimately, we believe that addressing these issues early in students' college careers will be the best way to position them toward degree attainment and transfer.

Our goal is to have at least 39.5 percent of students in remedial coursework progress to college-level work within one year of their first semester by 2018.

		FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Percentage of students in the cohort (new students enrolled in remedial course) advancing to college-level work within 1 year of their first semester	WR	36.7%	37.0%	37.6%	38.3%	39.5%
	CCC	30.2%	30.5%	31.2%	31.8%	33.1%

Increase the number and share of Adult Basic Education/GED/English as a Second Language students who advance to and succeed in college-level courses

Since the launch of Reinvention, we have already seen an increase in the numbers of adult education students advancing toward college-level work. We aim to further accelerate the improvements and increase successful transitions.

Total adult education students identified in the fiscal year who transition to at least one credit course after one semester

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
WR	155	213	337	426	485
CCC	909	1,181	1,773	2,128	2,424

Increase the quality and effectiveness of student services and support

All of our performance goals rely heavily on our ability to serve our students' needs beyond the classroom. From admissions and advising through transfer and career placement, we must provide effective supports to our students that remove barriers to success and encourage persistence and achievement. As with moving students from developmental education to college credit, we believe that an early indicator of success is our students' credit accumulation.

In the coming years, our goal is to have increased significantly the share of students who successfully complete in their first year 30 and 15 credits for full-time and part-time students, respectively.

Percentage of students in the cohort (fall first-time, full-time degree/cert. seeking students taking >12 credit hours) who earn 30 credits within their first year

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
WR	7.5%	7.7%	8.0%	8.4%	9.2%
CCC	8.1%	8.2%	8.6%	8.9%	9.6%

Percentage of students in the cohort (fall first-time, part-time degree/cert. seeking students taking <12 credit hours) who earn 15 credits within their first year

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
WR	22.6%	23.1%	24.2%	25.3%	27.5%
CCC	20.0%	20.4%	21.3%	22.2%	23.9%





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