



## The Fact Sheet

Welcome to the first newsletter for the NPCC Achieving the Dream initiative. In thinking about focusing on student success at our college, the Core Team thought that it may be helpful to send you some basic information about the initiative.

### Background of the Initiative

This is the fourth round of a series of grants made to community colleges in fifteen states. There are currently some 80 colleges engaged in this effort. All the funding for this initiative is private. Our state funding comes from the Rockefeller Foundation.

We submitted our grant proposal in the spring. Seventeen Arkansas schools sent proposals. We received word in June that ours was the top-rated proposal. Here is an excerpt from our proposal relating to our goals for the grant period:

- 1. A time for reflection during the planning year when members of the NPCC family will be free to engage with each other unabashedly across classrooms, divisions, departments, silos, and faculty office floors to dream in much the way we encourage our students to dream. Each individual will be allowed to speak to the plan, so that each will have a sense of ownership in its impact. Every person's input will be of worth--for people who know their worth and are free to act out of that worth can give of themselves almost inexhaustibly. All members of the community will be asked to commit to the Dream and dream for NPCC.*
- 2. A thorough and unflinching examination of retention, grades, course completion and graduation rates. This examination will be mandated in our Strategic Plan and will include analysis of graduation rates by gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic group, placement scores, and high school of origin.*
  - a. NPCC hopes to uncover and eliminate obstacles to success that it may have inadvertently created or perpetuated. No students on the NPCC campus should find*

*the road to success complicated by their gender, ethnicity, income level, or origin.*

*b. NPCC hopes to establish stronger partnerships with the seven county high schools with the intention of strengthening those institutions' preparation of graduates.*

*We look to a time when we can facilitate a reciprocal flow of expertise between our college and area schools.*

*c. NPCC hopes to enhance its assessment process and be more responsive to outcomes.*

*3. An investigation of Supplemental Instruction as a potential intervention across several disciplines with a view to a full scale program by grant's end.*

*4. An evaluation of our need for ESL assessment for placement and a full-blown ESL component within the developmental studies area.*

*5. A complete shakedown of developmental education at NPCC with continuing attention to its math sequence and additional input for its reading and writing classes. NPCC will shamelessly borrow proven strategies from other colleges with the Achieving the Dream initiative.*

Four schools in Arkansas received funding. The other schools are OTC, PTC, and PCCUA.

### The present

The grant will be for five years. The first year we will receive \$50K for research and planning; the final four years of the grant will be for implementing strategies arising from our data findings. We will receive \$100K for each of those four years.

There are two on-campus teams working to guide the first year's work. The Core Team is composed of Sally Carder, Gordon Watts, Maggie Picking, Brad Moody, Dana Murphy, Roger Fox, and John Tucker. Gordon is the chair of the Core Team. Brad heads up the Data Team; its other members are Jim Castaldi, Janet Braley, and Lisa Hopper. The Student Success Committee, created by Gordon last spring, will also have a role to play in the work of the first year.

## The year ahead

The Core Team has submitted a Work Plan for the first year to the Achieving the Dream offices. Here are the highlights for the year ahead:

### September

- Select participant for the Great College Workshop in November
- Meet with the Student Success Committee to clarify its role and develop guidelines for assignments
- Train personnel in conducting focus groups

### October

- Data Team begins training with NPCC personnel in analyzing the data
- Student Success Committee members will explore best practices across national institutions in student success, persistence, and graduation rates
- Frank discussions of the data will begin at the divisional level as NPCC is challenged to reflect on obstacles to student success

### November

- Jim Hammons back on campus to talk with Developmental faculty and instructors of Gatekeeper courses
- Great College Workshop at Mountain Harbor (8th, 9th, and 10th)
- Study Skills students take Locus of Control instrument
- Focus groups with students, faculty, and staff begin

### December

- More sharing, more sharing

### January

- Workshop Day focus on our Successes and Challenges
- Campus begins thorough review of all the data in order to write measurable goals for the coming four years
- Divisions, Departments, and Committees meet to discuss how the data will impact planning for the coming years
- Focus groups for internal and external stakeholders
- Identify participants for the second Great College Workshop

### February

- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is administered to 600 students

- Second Great College Workshop
- Strategy Institute for NPCC Teams and others
- Faculty and staff give more input into the types of strategies needed for student success

### March

- Draft strategic proposal for the next four years is ready for presentation to the campus community

- Draft Implementation Plan to our coaches

### April

- NPCC Achieving the Dream data informs the State Policy Plan for differential funding formula
- Feedback arrives from coaches for our Implementation Plan

### May

- Final Implementation Plan is sent to the American Association of Community Colleges and the Achieving the Dream offices

## Your questions

Okay, this is just the first shot. There will be continuing communication about all that's going on and all the opportunities for your input with this effort. If you have ANY question, contact a member of the Core or Data Teams.

Finally, some folks have not realized that we REALLY want to hear from you about how you'd like to hear from us. SO, if you haven't already done so, answer the questions below—then send your answers to Dana Murphy, or call her with your thoughts (4139), or email her. THANKS.

1. How would you prefer to be informed about our successes and realities (aka non-successes)?
2. How would you prefer to be informed of opportunities to assist in our efforts to develop and realize our vision for NPCC?