Annual Reflection Narrative Questions

Please enter your responses directly into the spaces provided below.

Note that the period covered by this Annual Reflection is May 2013 - April 2014. Please reflect on activities during this time period throughout the narrative.

Institution Name: Elgin Community College

1) Contributors to the Annual Reflection

Achieving the Dream suggests that your institution engages a representative group of stakeholders to review and discuss your student success and equity progress, the results of the Principles Assessment, and data for the five Achieving the Dream student success measures (as described in Question 5 below).

Names of Contributors to this Annual Reflection	Titles of Contributors to this Annual Reflection
Philip Garber	Executive Director of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Marcy Thompson	Assistant Vice President of Teaching, Learning and Student Development
David Rudden	Director of Institutional Research
Tanya Ternes	Manager of Institutional Research
Shanna McKee	Institutional Research Analyst

(You may add more rows to this table as necessary)

2) Student Experience
In what ways is your reform work transforming the way students experience college?

Question 2: Student Experience (2-3 Paragraphs)

As outlined in the *ECC Strategic Plan for FY13 through FY17*, primary student targets for our reform work include: students placing into and enrolling in developmental education; African-American students; and Hispanic students. The interventions we have either launched, maintained, or scaled through the Student Success Infrastructure (SSI) or through departments or committees focus on these key populations, and in reports to AtD, accreditors and state regulatory bodies, we routinely disaggregate results by these groups. We infer from the data we've collected thus far that our efforts are paying off – and results from recent administrations of the CCSSE, Student Satisfaction Inventory (Noel-Levitz), and our own homegrown student engagement/satisfaction surveys each indicate that students remain engaged throughout their courses of study. Additionally, results on student performance from our student information system indicate that students perform well, persist, and complete. As reported in previous AtD reports, the interventions we have piloted, refined and/or implemented since joining AtD include: early alert and notification; peer mentoring; tutoring and supplemental instruction; student success courses; an expanded First Year Experience program; learning communities; course scheduling adjustments; placement testing pilots; modifications to student advising; and pilots in diversity, equity, and social justice. Each of these shape the student experience at ECC. In general, what these efforts have in common are: (1) making pathways more intentional and purposeful than they have been in the past; and (2) addressing affective, non-cognitive dimensions of the learning process.

With respect to intentional pathways, we are currently piloting several projects. A Course Pathways model is being planned for fall 2015 to sequence courses and student schedules in ways that make sense for learning and completion. We are also piloting a College of Baltimore County-inspired Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), in which students take developmental and college-level writing courses back-to-back in a single term. Results from this program are promising, showing that ALP-developmental students earn higher grades than non-ALP developmental students. Also, success extends, for most students, into their college-level courses. As reported previously, we were one of the first community colleges in Illinois to partner with Job for the Future Accelerating Opportunities (AO) program to bridge adult basic education to careers in a purposeful manner. Our results show that AO students exhibit higher GPAs and higher graduation rates than non-AO students. Other attempts to make student pathways more intentional focus on placement testing modifications in math (and accompanying procedural changes to prerequisite courses). Finally, we are very excited that students in fall 2014 will be greeted by a cadre of newly hired academic advisors – hires which resulted from labor negotiations and an organizational shift we implemented this past year to separate the counseling from advising functions at ECC. Beginning in fall 2014, academic advisors will work with students on course scheduling and credit attainment, while wellness professionals will be available to address personal issues and make referrals to community partners.

Under the area of affective learning, we use the Learning and Student Skills Inventory (LASSI) as a pretest-posttest assessment in various pilot programs. We are using this approach in our Transition Academy, a program for at-risk high school students in grades 9 through 12, which is entering its third year of implementation. The TA is a one-a-month Saturday program for high schoolers and their parents that includes team-taught college and high school content, service learning, and community mentorship. We also use this method in student success courses (College 101), an intervention we first reported to AtD in 2009, which will be expanded in fall 2014. Two cohorts of ECC faculty and administrators have now completed training in affective learning through the Academy for College Excellence, and in fall 2014, instructors will introduce this material in our student success course, College 101, to special sections of African-American and Hispanic students. Finally, affective dimensions of the student experience continue to undergird our Alliance for College Readiness, which is grounded in David Conley's model of college readiness.

3) Progress Statement

Please describe your institution's progress in improving student success and completion over the past academic year. Consider both the positive factors and challenges affecting the student success efforts at your institution. This summary may include aspects related to the institution's culture and environment such as leadership changes, engagement of full and part-time faculty, staff additions or transitions, state or federal influences, budget reductions, and reaffirmation of accreditation efforts.

Question 3: Progress Statement (No more than 2 pages; 1 page preferred)

In last year's annual reflection, we reported on the creation and deployment of the Student Success Infrastructure (SSI), the organizational umbrella uniting all of our reform work for student success. We are happy to report that the Infrastructure is still going, providing a "home base" for our efforts. The structure is a place to organize and centralize, allowing greater involvement campus-wide, especially from faculty. Four (4) strategy teams, a steering committee (the Equity Coordinating Council), 12 taskforces (and a myriad of sub-taskforces) comprise the Infrastructure, and co-leaders on each team represent faculty, support staff, and administration who are diverse by rank and role. Although we value the framework, we seemed to spend much of our time last year discussing the Infrastructure itself rather than actually using it. Much of our work focused on resolving confusion over functional and organizational roles which we, as a college, had never fully resolved prior to joining AtD (e.g., At what point do new initiatives become institutionalized? How should results inform scaling, etc.? Which criteria do we use to prioritize among initiatives?). Through a series of meetings, process documents, models, definitions, templates and forms, Infrastructure teams achieved moderate success in rectifying many misgivings. However, this administrative work, it seems, took precedence over the main purpose of the Infrastructure, which is our students. At the end of this academic year, we anticipate a large turnover in Infrastructure leadership (some of this due to burnout or retirement, and others due to lack of time or competing priorities), and we hope next year to revive a new structure (we're calling it "SSI 2.0") with new opportunities to leverage new talent to maximize success. Fortunately, we believe these newly created process documents will serve us well.

Within the Infrastructure itself, institutional research and the "data rangers" continue to receive praise across campus – and indeed, our IR and Assessment/Curriculum offices are some of the busiest on campus. Through the Principles Assessment and related surveys, we see significant gains in the capacities of faculty, administrators, and staff to use and interpret data (instead of assuming that the data alone provide answers). In the future, we expect to expand the data ranger concept and tools like logic models to support all kinds of campus programs, whether Infrastructure-based or not. In fact, some of our biggest gains in action planning and decision-making are now occurring outside the realm of the Infrastructure and student success. The Review Team, for example, which we first reported in 2011, continues to meet and has even strengthened its role this past year in reviewing program review reports as well as listening to/reflecting on/advising programs undergoing reviews. The pivot reporting tools developed by our IR professionals, which we reported in 2011, are user-friendly and searchable platforms used this past year as a part of the program review process. We are hopeful to scale their use to include the Infrastructure taskforces in the future. We also note that the quality of conversations occurring between information technology and the Infrastructure teams have improved. One of our newly funded technology initiatives, for example, is a student planning module we are launching via Ellucian Colleague. We expect to use the system for the first time in fall 2014 once our academic advisors are firmly in place. Finally, ECC's reauthorization of accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission will occur next year, in 2015, and we are excited that AtD has provided a framework for contextualizing our new budgeting practice, *Purposeful Budgeting*, which is our quality improvement project with the Commission. The project encourages us to focus efforts on goal setting and linking budgets to goals for student success. We are piloting a budgetary evaluation system with the help of the Government Finance Officers Association Partners in Practice program, and, for the most part, budget officers support the new system.

Within the Infrastructure itself, despite our emphasis on procedural concerns this past year, we did experience success in student reforms. Interventions showing the biggest improvements came from our Embracing Learning-Centered Environment (ELCE) Team, which is the team perhaps most directly related to the work of academic departments. Concerns about possible improper placements in English led taskforces to analyze testing data through regression analyses. Similar analyses in math had occurred in the previous year, leading to updates of our administrative procedure on course prerequisites. Importantly, faculty in math and in English are exploring recommendations that multiple methods, including high school GPAs, may be important for placement. The ELCE team also plans to expand the ALP program mentioned in Q2 to include additional pairings of developmental and

college-level English and pairings of developmental reading and college-level English by spring 2015. Faculty in math are planning "communities of practice" (CoPs) professional development conversations related to affective learning, which build off of the ACE training mentioned in Q2, and through the ACE model, we continue to identify developmental sequences where affective-inspired pedagogy make sense. The math lab, which we reported on in our 2012 report, increased traffic this year compared to last, with a large increase in the demand for study rooms among students in developmental sections. We take this as a positive sign. We also reanalyzed our gateway course data, comparing 2014 results to those gathered in 2009, and conversions are now occurring among faculty related to supplemental instruction and curriculum in gateway courses.

Within the Workforce and Communities Team, analyses of workforce needs led to funding and hiring a student internship coordinator in our Career Development Services office. We continue to explore ways to leverage existing advisory committees for career and transfer programs. In this team and in our Student Resources Team, we realize an ever-present need for better communication and knowledge-building among students and employees alike. We have plans to create a digital "mega-doc" or repository that can be easily searchable, updated, and accessible which will encompassing all that ECC has out there to help students, most of which seems isolated in pockets and ever-changing. As mentioned in Q2, a taskforce within the Student Resources Team is working with the ELCE team to implement special sections of College 101 this fall, which will be dedicated to student-faculty discussions of African-American and Hispanic achievement. Additional conversations are occurring about leveraging resources to create a multicultural student center at ECC.

We have always maintained that the Infrastructure is a place for new ideas to germinate and "grow wings" before they are permanently institutionalized in departments. For the most part, this idea is working. However, many of our most promising new ideas (e.g., course pathways, advising modifications, and the Transition Academy) are happening without a great deal of Infrastructure involvement. Realizing that not all new ideas necessary require formalization, we try to honor pockets of isolated innovation while at the same time encouraging those with sufficient strength and scope to get involved in the Infrastructure so that they may profit from data rangers, analysis, discussion and review, and funding resources that the Infrastructure provides. We remain optimistic.

4) Principles Assessment

For each principle listed below, please provide a brief analysis of your institution's aggregate responses regarding the principles inherent to the Achieving the Dream Student-Centered Model of Institutional Improvement.

> *You may access complete definitions of each of the Five Principles [here](.).*

> **Principles Assessment Survey:** Your answers to this question should be informed by the Principles Assessment Survey, which assists institutions in gathering stakeholder feedback.
>
> > ➤ Achieving the Dream recommends that your institution solicit feedback via this survey to a representative group of stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, etc.) who have been involved in your reform work.
> >
> > ➤ All surveys should be submitted by **April 10, 2014.** Achieving the Dream will provide a summary of the results by April 23, 2014 for institutions to use when completing their Annual Reflection Narrative.
> >
> > ➤ For more information about how to administer the survey, see the **Instructions** section of this document.

Each principle summary should be no longer than 3 paragraphs and may also include a synopsis of your institution's group discussions regarding each principle.

How many people from your institution submitted an online Principles Assessment?

N=272

Question 4: Principles Assessment Analysis

Principle 1: Committed Leadership (2-3 Paragraphs)

Senior leaders at ECC remain committed to student success and completion. Of the 272 respondents to the Principles Assessment Survey in 2014, 73 (27%) are administrators with primary oversight for departments and for leading efforts in their divisions and communicating results. Although the overall number of administrators who took the 2014 survey is down from the 86 (43%) who took it in 2013, the overall number of survey respondents across all employee categories increased in 2014 compared to 2013 (272 vs. 201). We take this as a good sign.

In comparing 2014 to 2013 results, each of the 6 survey items in the Committed Leadership category showed slight improvements. Items pertaining to vision and values (e.g., policy commitments, communication methods, etc.) showed more modest increases on the order of 0.1 points. Those pertaining to the commitment of particular stakeholders (e.g. board, faculty, etc.) showed higher gains on the order of 0.3 points. We're especially excited to see that perceptions of faculty leadership are strengthening campus-wide. In fact, significantly more faculty took the survey in 2014 (N=125, 46%) than in 2013 (N=50, 25%). From this, we infer that the Infrastructure is working to increase awareness of student success among those who work most directly with students, our faculty.

Under the area of Committed Leadership, we are pleased that college communications – including our website and media releases – emphasize the student success agenda. Further, on a quarterly basis, our Board of Trustees calls for updates from the Student Success Infrastructure and, on an annual basis, updates on key performance metrics assessing the impact of our reform work. Students' progression into college-level work, transfer and completion are among the metrics included in the annual Performance Report, as well as satisfaction and engagement measures. Lastly, upon the recommendation of our AtD coaches, we held two day-long retreats this past year with team and taskforce leaders of our SSI. These helped to minimize confusion and inconsistencies, share reports, and boost morale. Our plans, as indicated in Q6, are to design the SSI next year and provide leadership development opportunities for individuals involved in it.

Principle 2: Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services (2-3 Paragraphs)

The Use of Evidence category of the Principles Assessment Survey also showed gains for the most part when comparing the 2014 to the 2013 survey administrations. Items pertaining to IT and IR capacity showed the largest gains in this category -- ranging from 0.1 to 0.5 points over where we stood on these items last year. The items with the biggest gain are IT capacity and data integrity. As a college, we have made the biggest gains in the Use of Evidence category since joining AtD in 2009. Projects where data teams and data rangers have been added include our summer bridge program, the Alliance for College Readiness and the Transition Academy. Data rangers presented at the DREAM conference, at Illinois state conferences, the ECC assessment conference, and the ECC professional growth conference. We also continue our bi-monthly data brown bag lunches and our monthly *Piece of the Pie* data newsletter. Additionally, the SSI is beginning to use data to validate requests for new initiatives funding, but at present we have some work to do in evaluating initiatives, as indicated in our future goals in Q6. We hope to be able to tie the prioritization of existing student success initiatives and selection of new ones back to performance results, as we are now starting for departments per the Purposeful Budgeting project described in Q3.

In the survey results, we also note gains for those items pertaining to the identification of achievement gaps, disaggregated data, and surveys and focus groups. Each item in this subsection experience gains on the order of 0.1 points. Finally, we see relatively strong gains on the order of 0.3 points for items pertaining to the evaluation and assessment of progress. While these gains are, on average, higher than the gains made on the other two subsections, we note that the items in this subsection were lower last year, so the gains made in 2014 place them on par, or even slightly lower, than the items measuring IT and IR capacity and data.

A procedural change made this past year in response to our recognition visit with the Illinois Community College Board. At that time, the ICCB suggested that we establish a committee to discuss technical definitions of data elements to ensure accurate reporting. To this end, the ICCB Report Team was created and currently has seven members, who represent IR, Student Systems, Registrar, and Admissions. To date, the team has worked through three reports and is currently working through a fourth. Additionally, the team has worked to create a midterm grade sheet to assist ICCB during their next recognition visit.

Principle 3: Broad Engagement (2-3 Paragraphs)

Survey items pertaining to Broad Engagement show consistent gains from 2013 to 2014. On average, across all items in the category, gains are on the order of 0.2 points. The highest-rated items in this category pertain to faculty engagement in setting and examining course and program outcomes, which showed gains of 0.2 points. We are excited to see this trend. The lowest-rated items pertain to involvement of adjunct faculty, which showed a gain of 0.2 points also, but is still lower than the other items in this category. We know that engagement of part-time faculty is an issue nationwide, and ECC is no exception. Finally, we showed minimal to no change in items pertaining to engagement of student services, but with a new dean of student development hired in this area last year, we have some exciting new ventures forthcoming in this area.

Gains on the order of 0.2 points are found in items pertaining to involvement by students and external stakeholders. As a college we are working hard to incorporate these constituent groups in our Infrastructure activities, and several teams and taskforces are working actively through advisory groups and student organizations to plan a student lock-in for 2015.

Principle 4: Systemic Institutional Improvement (2-3 Paragraphs)

In comparison to last year, there are mixed findings with respect to the college's assessment of Systemic Institutional Improvement. The highest-rated items under this category continue to be those measuring the pervasiveness of the "student success agenda" in regular college work and meetings, as well as the perceived link between planning and use of data in setting in establishing and meeting student success goals. Other items have shown positive gains (0.2 points or greater between 2013 and 2014) in items that measure the perception of professional development opportunities the college offers to employees that are related to student success and/or use of data.

However, the lowest-rated items in this category continue to be those that relate to linking of budgetary decisions to student success, and those that relate to scaling up and sustaining pilot projects. To better address such issues, the college implemented in FY2013 the Purposeful Budgeting approach mentioned in Q3 for all organizational units. This approach requires justification and prioritization of each line item in a unit's annual budget, and is intended to make the institutional budgeting process more transparent and to reinforce the connection between budgetary decisions and strategic planning.

Gains in the Use of Evidence category also closely dovetail with the Systemic Institutional Improvement category. Based on data, we have updated administrative procedures/policies on minimum competencies, adding/dropping courses during the first week, and course grading to distinguish among various types of course withdrawals. The Course Pathways project described in Q2 grew from recognition that the number of course choices available to new students can be overwhelming yet most often students enroll in a common set of core courses their first year. In 3 transfer/liberal arts areas, sections will be packaged together to promote the development of a smaller community of learners as students will enroll in these courses together.

Principle 5: Equity (2-3 Paragraphs)

Survey items related to Equity continue to be highly rated across all items within this principle. In fact, the single item with the highest overall average rating in the entire survey is in this category (item5.1b, "The institution consistently demonstrates a commitment to equity for all students"). While equity and inclusiveness can be considered a relative strength of the college, nearly all items within this measure showed overall rating gains of 0.2 or more when comparing 2013 to 2014. The exception to this was item 5.1b, mentioned above, which was already one of the highest-rated items both last year and again this year.

The ratings on this particular measure are not surprising, as ECC has an established history of making equity a priority, both in the classroom and with respect to institutional policies and practices (e.g., hiring). Additionally, there are a few committees and taskforces whose primary focus are related to issues of equity and inclusiveness. These include: the Global/International Studies Team (GIST) that provides leadership to increase the global competence of faculty, staff and students in support of strategic plan goals; the Multicultural and Global Initiatives Committee (MAGIC) that provides and supports multicultural learning experiences at the college in order to prepare individuals to succeed in a diverse society; and the Embracing Cultures on Campus Team that is part of college's broader SSI framework.

5) Student Success Data Trends

Please review and discuss your institution's **disaggregated data trends** for the five Achieving the Dream student success measures (see Appendix A)

> ❖ In an effort to better guide institutions in student cohort tracking, Achieving the Dream has clarified the five Achieving the Dream student success outcome measures. Please be sure to review **Appendix A: Student Success Outcome Measures and Definitions** before running your data analysis to acquaint yourself with these new specifications.
>
> ❖ Achieving the Dream recommends that each institution analyze **at least four years of disaggregated data** for each measure.
>
> > ➢ We realize that some of the newer Achieving the Dream institutions may not have four years of disaggregated data available for each measure. If your institution is not able to analyze at least four years of data for a measure, we ask that you simply indicate this in the summary you give below.

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I. For *at least* one measure, your institution will provide a chart or graph, which should be uploaded along with this narrative as a *separate document*. Achieving the Dream has several tools to assist institutions with creating charts and graphs that track student cohorts.

Please indicate by typing "x" next to the tool your institution will use in generating its chart/graph:

__ **Achieving the Dream Data Template:** An excel template that institutions can use to enter data and track student cohorts. You can access the ATD Data template on the Annual Progress Site and see an example of a completed template in Appendix B.

> *Note: Institutions that are applying for Leader College Status or Leader College Recertification **must** use the ATD Data Template* and complete the accompanying Leader College application.*
> - Institutions applying for Initial Leader College Status must complete the ATD Data Template for at least ONE ATD measure (one tab)
> - Institutions applying for Leader College Recertification must complete the ATD Data Template for at least TWO ATD measures (two different tabs).

__ **Achieving the Dream Data Products:** Your institution has access to Achieving the Dream data products. These data products are based on all student data submitted to Achieving the Dream database by your institution. One of these data products is an Excel workbook provides summarized data for ATD student outcome measures by student cohort and by subgroups (gender, ethnicity, Pell recipients). To access these data products, please log on to the data submission site: www.dreamwebsubmission.org.

X **Institution-generated chart or graph:** Institutions may submit a self-generated chart or graph.

II. Please provide one response *per outcome measure* that includes the following:

(a) Description of your institution's progress in comparison with previous year outcomes

(b) Explanation of your institution's progress in closing achievement gaps among the disaggregated student groups

Question 5.ii: Data Analysis Summary
Measure 1: Completion of remedial or developmental instruction (2-4 Paragraphs)

In the data tables and charts attached for Measure 1, developmental course completion is disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity and Pell status. These data represent the proportion of students from each respective fall cohort who placed into <u>any</u> level of developmental math, English and/or reading and then successfully completed (with a grade of A, B or C) the <u>highest</u> level of developmental coursework in each of these areas during their first two years at ECC. The data reveal modest 5-year increases of 4% in successful completion of the highest level of developmental math and English, and 2% for developmental reading, between the 2007 and 2011 cohorts. Overall, the successful completion of the highest level of developmental math continues to lag behind completion of English or reading. Across all disaggregated subgroups, 5-year changes were positive for the most part, but insignificant. Hispanic students in developmental classes continue to successfully complete developmental sequences at the same rate as White and Asian students, a trend that has been observed over a number of cohorts. However, the comparatively low rates of successful completion of developmental coursework for African-American and low-income (Pell recipient) developmental students continues to be an area of concern.

The increases that have been observed can be attributed, in part, to a variety of strategies that are currently being implemented in the College Transitions and Developmental Education department. These strategies involve the creation and adoption of accelerated courses, supplemental instruction through new labs in math and reading, and new testing and placement practices. The initial focus of these strategies had been in math, with reading included as a priority beginning in spring 2013. The work of ECC's Alliance for College Readiness, a formal partnership with each of the four public school districts in our service area, has also contributed to increases, as one of the main objectives of this partnership has been to improve the level of readiness of new, incoming students in each of the three areas of developmental coursework. However, the consistent achievement gap observed for African-American and low-income students has also reinforced the need to continue the development of such strategies with specific student subgroups in mind. To that end, ECC instituted a task force under the college's broader SSI umbrella to investigate and make recommendations towards eliminating achievement gaps for African-American and Hispanic students.

Measure 2: Completion of college-level gateway courses (2-4 Paragraphs)

In the data tables and charts attached for Measure 2, gateway math and English course completion are disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity and Pell status. The data represents the proportion of *all students* from each respective fall cohort who had successfully completed (with a grade of A, B or C) their first college-level math or English course *within their first 3 years* at ECC. The tables show that the trend data for successful completion of college-level math/English follows a similar pattern as the data in Measure 1. There are significant increases in successful completion rates between the 2007 and 2010 cohorts for both math (10%) and English (8%) gateway courses. Similar increases are observed across most disaggregated subgroups over this 5-year period. There continues to be a significant achievement gap between African-American students and other ethnicities when comparing the completion rates for college-level math and English, as illustrated in the attached data tables.

Although interventions have not been specific to college-level math or English, the observed increases in the proportion of students who successfully complete these courses within the first 3 years can be attributed to the work being done to improve the completion rates for, and accelerate the progress through, developmental coursework, as described in Measure 1. The observed improvements in the proportion of students who successfully complete developmental coursework during their first three years are a necessary precursor to any increases in successful completion of college-level coursework. This past year, the ALP described in Q3 allow students to enroll in the final developmental English course in a sequence with its respective college-level English course in the same term, so as to accelerate the progression through these sequences. Initial course success rates are promising and are expected to contribute to increases in college-level math and English completion for future cohorts. There are plans to continue such a model with math and reading coursework in future terms.

Measure 3: Course completion with a grade of "C" or better (2-4 Paragraphs)

In the data tables and charts attached for Measure 3, successful course completion rates are disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity and Pell status. The data represents the ratio of all courses completed with a "C" grade or better out of all courses attempted by each cohort. The data shows that the successful course completion rates have remained remarkably consistent across 5 years (2008 through 2012 cohorts) at more than 75%. When comparing successful course completion rates across disaggregated subgroups, however, a number of achievement gaps become noticeable. African-American students showed the largest gain in course completion rates (+8%) when comparing the 2012 to 2008 cohorts, but there continue to be significant achievement gaps when comparing Hispanic and African-American students to White and Asian students, when comparing females to males, and when comparing low-income students to other students.

Although courses success rates have improved significantly for African-American students over the last 5 years, the college recognizes the continued need to improve the course success rates for its African-American and Hispanic students. The African-American and Hispanic Achievement taskforce, mentioned above, has been asked to evaluate the needs of these students in an effort to propose initiatives to improve upon these success rates.

Measure 4: Term-to-term and year-to-year retention (2-4 Paragraphs)

In the data tables and charts attached for Measure 4, initial fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall retention rates are disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity and Pell status. The data represents the proportion of new, first-time-in-college students who returned to enroll at ECC in the spring following their initial fall term, as well as in the following fall term. The data illustrates increases in both retention rates overall and across all disaggregated subgroups when comparing the 2007 to 2011 cohorts. The overall fall-to-spring retention increased significantly from 74% for the 2007 cohort to 81% for the 2011 cohort, while the fall-to-fall retention rate increased modestly from 59% to 63%. Similar increases are observed across all disaggregated subgroups, with Hispanic students showing the largest increase (+15%) over that 5-year period. As observed with other measures mentioned above, Hispanic students show fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall retention rates comparable, or slightly better, to White and Asian students, but there continues to be an achievement gap for African-American students when compared to other ethnicities. In contrast to what was observed with other measures, low-income (Pell recipient) students continue to have significantly *higher* fall-to-spring retention rates than other students.

Much of the increase in retention rates can be attributed to the college's comprehensive First Year Experience (FYE) program, which includes new student orientation, learning communities and a College 101 success course. ECC also began the *20-in-1 Campaign* last year to convey the significance to students of successfully completing 20 credit hours during their first year. Many of the important components of this campaign will have an impact on retention, as well as successful completion of first-year coursework. Although there have been widespread increases in retention rates across all cohorts, retention rates for African-American students still lag behind all other subgroups by more than 10%. This will continue to be an area that the college needs to improve upon. The African-American and Hispanic Achievement taskforce described earlier will be instrumental in making progress in this area.

Measure 5: Completion of certificates or degrees (2-4 Paragraphs)

In the data tables and charts attached for Measure 5, graduation rates are disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity and Pell status. The data represents the proportion of new, first time in college students who earned a degree and/or certificate at ECC within 4 years of first enrollment. The data illustrates substantial increases in overall graduation rates, as well as across all disaggregated subgroups. In most instances, the graduation rate nearly doubled for the 2009 cohort when compared to the 2006 cohort. The overall graduation rate increased by 13% between the 2006 and 2009 cohorts. The largest increases over this short timeframe were observed for African-American students (+16%), males (+16) and Pell recipients (+15%).

Unfortunately, as with our retention and course completion measures, graduation rates for African-American students still lag behind those of all other subgroups. Although there have been improvements in the graduation rates for African-American students, these rates still lag behind students of other ethnicities. This will continue to be an area that the college needs to improve upon. Again, the African-American and Hispanic Achievement taskforce will be instrumental in making progress on this measure.

III. After reviewing your analysis of each of the five measures, outline your institution's plans for sustaining and building increases and addressing decreases and achievement gaps.

Question 5.iii: Continuous improvement plans for building increases and addressing decreases (No more than 1 Page)

We are pleased overall with the performance results reported above and believe, as an institution, we are making steady and consistent progress in developing cultures of improvement to address Goal 1 (Developing a learning-centered environment) and Goal 2 (Student goal completion) of the *ECC Strategic Plan for FY13 through FY17*. While we are pleased with the gains made by our African-American students across these 5 measures, as a group, African-American students still underperform relative to other race/ethnicity categories, so we will continue to monitor their performance as we attempt to narrow this gap through our reform work. Importantly, we are pleased with the progress our Hispanic students have made over the last five years – particularly in the completion of developmental and college-level coursework. Hispanic students remain our largest minority demographic, with almost 40% of our students of Hispanic origin. On the whole, we see little in these data to warrant a need for any wholesale changes in the interventions we are implementing, so our plan for now is to continue with current or soon-to-be implemented interventions aimed at purposeful packaging of courses and exploration of affective learning on student success (as described in Q2).

Last year, we joined the American Association of Community College's Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA), which involves reporting on many of the same metrics, but includes more student subgroups, as well as a few additional outcome measures. For example, VFA reporting includes a six (6) year horizon for reporting success outcomes and including student majors (transfer vs. career). The VFA metrics may provide another avenue for ECC to identify achievement gaps when examining success outcomes by disaggregated groups of students, particularly African-American students. With the VFA and AtD datasets together, we will continue to look for improvements in performance over time. We believe that, for African-American students in particular, local or community supports may provide an important avenue for helping students achieve their goals. Programs like the Transition Academy, which work within the community, may have an impact over time but are still too new to tell, and because they target high school juniors and seniors, any impact on ECC success data may be imperceptibly small. Closer to our campus, the African-American and Hispanic Achievement taskforce has outlined plans for assisting African-American and Hispanic students at ECC. Working with ECC's Black Student Association and the Organization of Latin American Students, the current plans for this taskforce include: (1) a reception area to celebrate new students' arrival college and a place to network and socialize; (2) specialized sections of College 101 to focus on issues of cultural importance to African-American and Hispanic students, as described in Q2; and (3) creating a larger multicultural student center with professional ombudspersons hired to advocate and create supports specific to students of color. We are honing these ideas now and will look into funding opportunities in the near future.

6) Goals and plans for 2014-2015:

Based on analysis of your progress over the past year, including your student success data and stakeholder input, please identify at least three goals for your institution's student success work, 2 to 3 planned action steps to advance these goals in the 2014-15 academic year.

Goal 1: Reinforce the SSI process framework

- Revise the SSI (i.e., "SSI 2.0") based on the feedback gathered at the fall 2013 and spring 2014 SSI retreats

- Emphasize and reinforce the importance of evaluating interventions (and not just proposing them); refocus discussions around logic models, the 5-Step Model of Institutional Improvement, and the Phases of Inquiry, Data Collection and Measurement in deciding whether to scale up or scale back interventions

Goal 2: Champion the use of professional development for SSI leaders

- Provide new SSI team and taskforce leaders with foundational training in the process documentation we have compiled to date

- Provide SSI leaders greater opportunities to learn about effective leadership, managing workflow, organizing meetings, mentoring employees, etc.

- Provide more opportunities for honest dialog and teambuilding activities that support cultures of change

Goal 3: Improve communications about student success

- Create a new SSI team or taskforce focused on communications management

- Report orally and in writing SSI progress at regular intervals (which may require more frequent meetings of the Equity Coordinating Council)

- Develop a common vocabulary for describing the SSI, the SSI processes, and progress with interventions to a wider campus audience

7) Sharing

If you would like to share additional information about your institution's progress and reflection process, please use the space below.

Question 7

The SSI asks teams to summarize progress twice annually: at mid-year, when budgets for the next fiscal year are developed; and at end-of-year, just prior to the start of the next funding cycle. One of our SSI teams, in its annual report, offered the following quote, which is an appropriate way to end this year's annual reflection:

"Our institution tends to segment itself into contained units rather than working to find synergies and collaborations. There is a need to continue to work on building a climate of trust at ECC between divisions and between faculty and administrative boundaries. It is extremely important to concentrate on the VALUE of activities and ideas in finding a shared focus."

Appendix A:
Achieving the Dream Student Success Measures & Definitions

GENERAL STUDENT SUCCESS DATA SPECIFICATIONS

Achieving the Dream recommends:

- ❖ That each institution analyze **at least four years of disaggregated data** for each measure.
    - ➢ We realize that some of the newer Achieving the Dream institutions may not have four years of disaggregated data available for each measure. If your institution is not able to analyze at least four years of data for a measure, we ask that you simply indicate this in the summary you give below.
- ❖ That **data be disaggregated on at least three levels**:
    - ➢ Ethnicity/race, gender, and income status (Pell or non-Pell recipients).

For an example of how to disaggregate data within a cohort please see **Appendix B: ATD Data Template Example.**

ANALYZING YOUR DATA

Achieving the Dream has developed the following tools to assist institutions with tracking student success data and presenting results:

- ❖ Achieving the Dream Data Template
- ❖ Achieving the Dream Data Products

Institutions applying for initial Leader College status or Leader College Recertification must submit a **completed ATD Data Template** along with the appropriate Leader College Application and Annual Reflection narratives. You can learn more about the Leader College application and recertification processes [here](#).

DEFINING COHORTS

Achieving the Dream has identified three ways for institutions to define their cohorts when analyzing data for the Annual Reflection. It is expected that you would also disaggregate data on at least three levels: ethnicity/race, gender, and income status.

- ❖ The **ATD Cohort** includes all students who are first-time degree or certificate-seeking students new to your institution during the fall term, including students who were previously enrolled as dual-enrollment high school students.
- ❖ **First Time in College (FTIC)** refers to any students who are in college for the first time (any college)
- ❖ **First-Time to Institution** refers to any students who are new to attending your institution

STUDENT SUCCESS MEASURES

In an effort to better guide institutions in student cohort tracking, Achieving the Dream has clarified the five Achieving the Dream student outcome measures. Below you will find the specifications for each.

Measure 1:
Successfully complete remedial or developmental instruction

Definition: Number and Percentage of Students Successfully Completing Developmental Course Requirements within 2 years
  - ❖ Successful completion is defined as earning a "C" or better.

Cohort Definition Options: Institutions should define the cohort of students that they track in this measure by choosing one of the following cohorts:
  - ❖ All students in the ATD Cohort referred to Developmental Math, English, and/or Reading
  - ❖ All FTIC students referred to Developmental Math, English, and/or Reading
  - ❖ All First Time to Institution students referred to Developmental Math, English, and/or Reading

Measure 2:
Enroll in and successfully complete the initial college-level or gateway courses

Definition: Number and Percentage of Students Successfully Completing Gateway Courses within 3 Years

  - ❖ Successful completion is defined as earning a "C" or better in gateway English and/or Math.

Cohort Definition Options: Institutions should define the cohort of students that they track in this measure by choosing one of the following cohorts and report gateway completion in either English and/or Math:
  - ❖ All students in the ATD Cohort
  - ❖ All FTIC students
  - ❖ All First Time to Institution students

Measure 3:
Complete the courses they take with a grade of "C" or better

Definition: Number and Percentage of Students Successfully Completing Courses with a "C" or Better

The measure is calculated as a ratio of all credit hours successfully completed to all credit hours attempted.

Cohort Definition Options: Institutions should define the cohort of students that they track in this measure by choosing one of the following cohorts:
  - ❖ All students in the ATD Cohort
  - ❖ All FTIC students

❖ All First Time to Institution students
❖ All students in your institution

| Measure 4: |
| Persistence |

Definition: Number and Percentage of Students Persisting from Term-to-Term or Year-to-Year

Institution may define persistence in one of two ways:
  (1) Term-to-term: first enrollment term to next major term (e.g. Fall to Spring)
  (2) Year-to-Year (e.g. Fall to Fall)

Cohort Definition Options: Institutions should define the cohort of students that they track in this measure by choosing one of the following cohorts:
  ❖ All students in the ATD Cohort
  ❖ All FTIC students
  ❖ All First Time to Institution students
  ❖ All students except those graduating or transferring

| Measure 5: |
| Attain a certificate or degree |

Definition: Number and Percentage of Students Attaining a Degree or Credential within 4 Years

Cohort Definition Options: Institutions should define the cohort of students that they track in this measure by choosing one of the following cohorts:
  ❖ All students in the ATD Cohort
  ❖ All FTIC students
  ❖ All First Time to Institution students

Appendix B:
Achieving the Dream Data Template Example

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	**Institution Name:**					Springfield Community College								
2						**Persist from Term-toTerm or Year-Year**								
3														
4	**Define the Persistence (Fall to Fall/Fall to Spring, etc.)**					**Fall to Spring**								
5	Note: Enter the most recent year that your college will submit data for in cell A7-9 and the header rows will pre-populate with the BEGINNING year of the cohort													
6	**All students in the ATD cohort**													
7-8	**2013-2014**	**2010-2011**			**2011-2012**			**2012-2013**			**2013-2014**			
9		N	# Successful	% Successful	N	# Successful	% Successful	N	# Successful	% Successful	N	# Successful	% Successful	
10	All	3,691	2,758	74.72%	3,754	3,002	79.97%	3,592	2,869	79.87%	3,417	2,621	76.70%	
11														
12	Hispanic	489	371	75.87%	508	405	79.72%	573	465	81.15%	645	493	76.43%	
13	African American	366	257	70.22%	393	291	74.05%	412	314	76.21%	392	300	76.53%	
14	White	2,524	1,901	75.32%	2,585	2,090	80.85%	2,366	1,898	80.22%	2,144	1,633	76.17%	
15	Male	1,646	1,222	74.24%	1,667	1,298	77.86%	1,616	1,258	77.85%	1,492	1,136	76.14%	
16	Female	2,045	1,536	75.11%	2,087	1,704	81.65%	1,976	1,611	81.53%	1,925	1,485	77.14%	
17	Pell	938	777	82.84%	1,320	1,120	84.85%	1,445	1,229	85.05%	1,586	1,287	81.15%	
18	Non-Pell	2,753	1,981	71.96%	2,434	1,882	77.32%	2,147	1,640	76.39%	1,831	1,334	72.86%	
19	Subgroup 1: ENTER NAME (Optional)			NA			NA			NA			NA	
20	Subgroup 2: ENTER NAME (Optional)			NA			NA			NA			NA	
21	Subgroup 3: ENTER NAME (Optional)			NA			NA			NA			NA	
22	Subgroup 4: ENTER NAME (Optional)			NA			NA			NA			NA	
23	** A cohort should be a general/large population of students, such as: ALL new or FTIC students or ALL new or FTIC students referred to developmental education. **A cohort cannot be defined as a group of students that has received the benefit of a specific intervention.**													
24														
25	Cell B10 Represents 36% of total enrollment.													
26	Cell E10 Represents 34.3% of total enrollment.													
27	Cell H10 Represents 32.5% of total enrollment.													
28	Cell K10 Represents 30.2% of total enrollment.													
29														