Kentucky's Gateway Course Success Statewide Strategy

Nationally, 84% of community college students do not complete both required math and English gateway courses their first year. However, research has demonstrated that completing gateway courses in these two key disciplines is positively correlated with completing a degree or credential.

With such strong ties to completion, the need for higher education reform around gateway courses is critical. Strong evidence from many states shows the need for wholesale reform of how gateway courses are accessed and taught to improve outcomes. Also, with the downstream effects of pandemic lockdown-related learning loss apparent across the nation and educational spectrum (from elementary school to college), the focus on gateway course success has never been more important.

To build on our strengths and move forward with urgency and intentionality, the Kentucky Student Success Collaborative (KYSSC) formulated objectives and recommended strategies to provide a new statewide vision for gateway course success. Campus partners and KYSSC will focus its work over the next three years on prioritizing state and institutional resources toward strategies that will build a community and culture of stakeholder engagement and continuous improvement to improve equitable outcomes through research, engagement, and action.

The statewide gateway course success strategy, launched in January 2024, outlines priorities and recommendations to serve as long-term guideposts for statewide improvement efforts.

* ✳ Center students' needs in the pursuit of scalable improvements in gateway courses.

* ✳ Strengthen communication and collaboration within and across institutions.

* ✳ Remove barriers to equitable access and success in gateway courses across modalities.

The Kentucky
Student Success
Collaborative

Priority Recommendations

Objective 1:

We will center students' needs in the pursuit of scalable improvements in gateway courses.

1. Prioritize student voices in qualitative research about the impact of gateway courses on student success.

2. Research the impact of various policies and practices on student enrollment and success in gateway courses and identify strategies that result in better and more equitable outcomes.

3. Develop a dashboard to track disaggregated data on student enrollment and success in gateway courses across all institutions.

Objective 2:

We will strengthen communication and collaboration within and across institutions to promote better and more equitable outcomes in gateway courses.

1. Provide professional development to support faculty to deliver high-quality, inclusive, and culturally relevant instruction in gateway and corequisite support courses.

2. Convene communities of practice to identify best practices and develop successful strategies for the design and delivery of gateway and corequisite support courses.

3. Explore partnership development with KY Adult Education to leverage resources and increase support for all learners who do not meet college-ready benchmarks.

Objective 3:

We will remove barriers to equitable access and success in gateway courses across modalities.

1. Engage institutions and faculty in redesigning instruction in gateway courses, emphasizing the role of faculty in improving student success.

2. Develop comprehensive training for advisors and messaging for students emphasizing the importance and relevance of gateway courses in overall student success.

3. Promote wraparound basic needs support for students in gateway and corequisite support courses.

Learn About Our Efforts

In partnership with Kentucky stakeholders, the KYSSC has begun the work to move from strategic planning to strategy implementation. Opportunities to learn about and engage in the statewide effort to support student success in gateway courses include:

▶ Read the Research

Learn about Kentucky's statewide strategy to improve gateway course success by reading the full report released in January 2024.
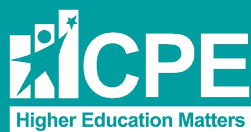
▶ Collaborate with Peers

Join the Gateway Course Success Community of Practice – a monthly virtual meeting with stakeholders and partners to share promising practices, discuss challenges, and improve the ecosystem of supports available to students.

▶ Find Resources

Check out specific gateway course success resources on the Impact exChange – Kentucky's knowledge and resource hub for student success.

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