

# INCREASING COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT RETENTION THROUGH AN IMPROVED NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

Dr. John Thomerson and Heather LaRue  
Retention and Resources Coordinators

SKY Rise Title III Programs

Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College

# OUTCOMES

As a result of attending this presentation, participants will be able to:

- identify **best practices** for New Student Orientation programs.
- identify ways to **engage incoming college students** during Orientation programming.
- contrast the efficacy of Orientation programs **centered on student feedback** with traditional faculty- or school-focused programs.
- apply **lessons learned** about successfully revising an Orientation program to revising a similar project at their college.
- revise a portion of an existing Orientation programs at their college along learner-centered principles.

# OVERVIEW

- Who are you?
- Who are we? Who are our students? What problems were we trying to solve with our new Orientation?
- What does research say about best practices?
- How did we align Orientation with best practices?
- How do we know these changes helped our students?
- What lessons did we learn?

# WHO ARE YOU?

- Show of hands if you're working:
  - at a two-year institution?
  - at a four-year institution?
  - In K–12?
  - Government/Policy?

# WHO ARE WE?

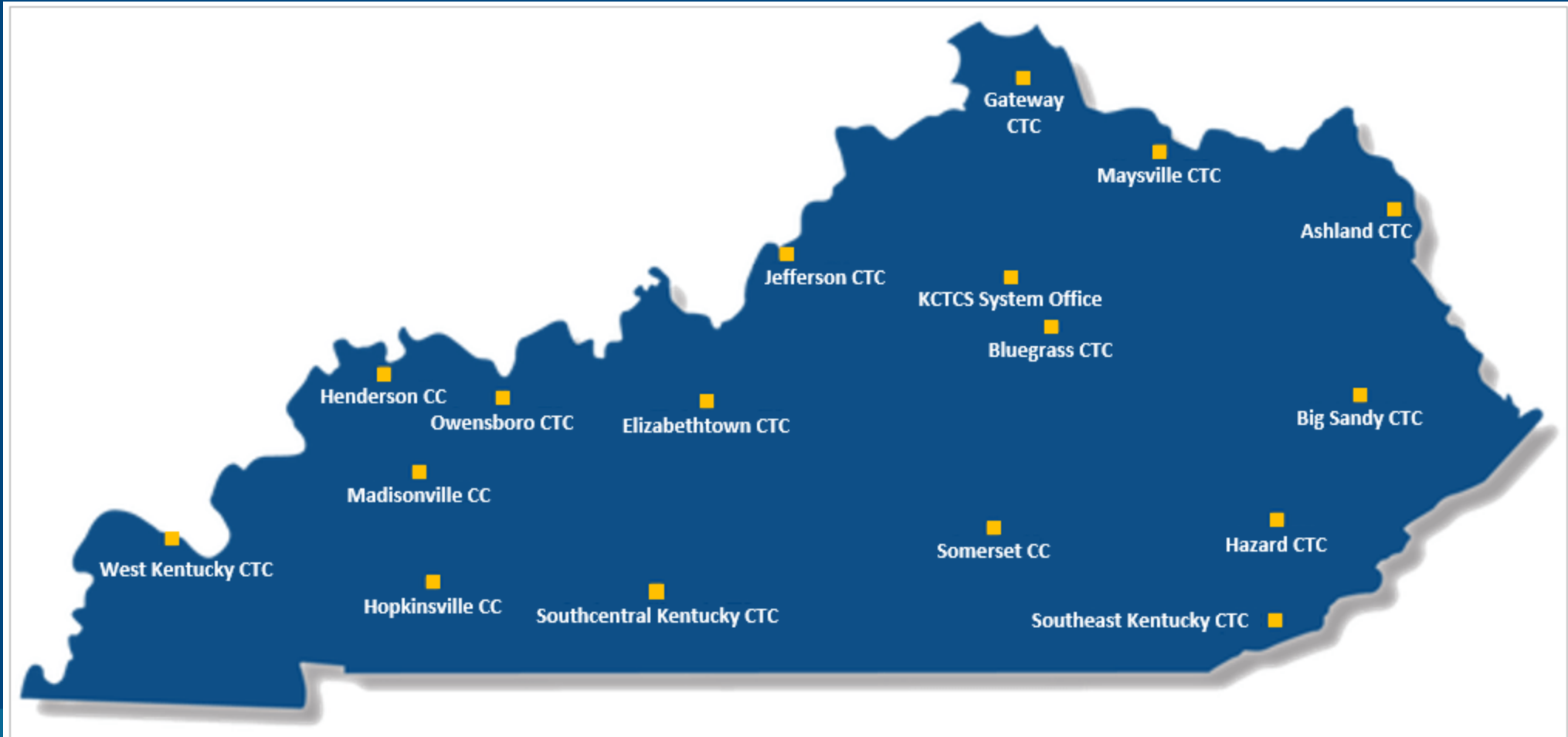


Figure 1. Map of college locations. This map shows the locations of the main campus for the sixteen community and technical colleges in Kentucky (KCTCS, 2018c).

# WHO ARE WE? Southcentral Kentucky

Community & Technical College

# CAMPUS LOCATIONS

*KATI Campus*  
1127 Morgantown Road  
Bowling Green, KY



*Franklin-Simpson Center*  
175 Davis Drive  
Franklin, KY



*Main Campus*  
1845 Loop Drive  
Bowling Green, KY



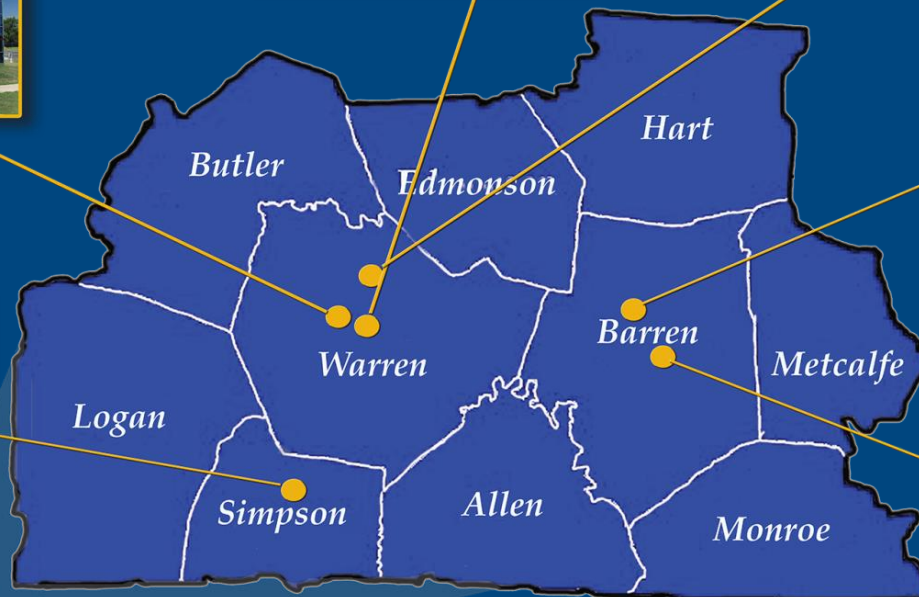
*Transpark Center*  
221 Commonwealth Blvd.  
Bowling Green, KY



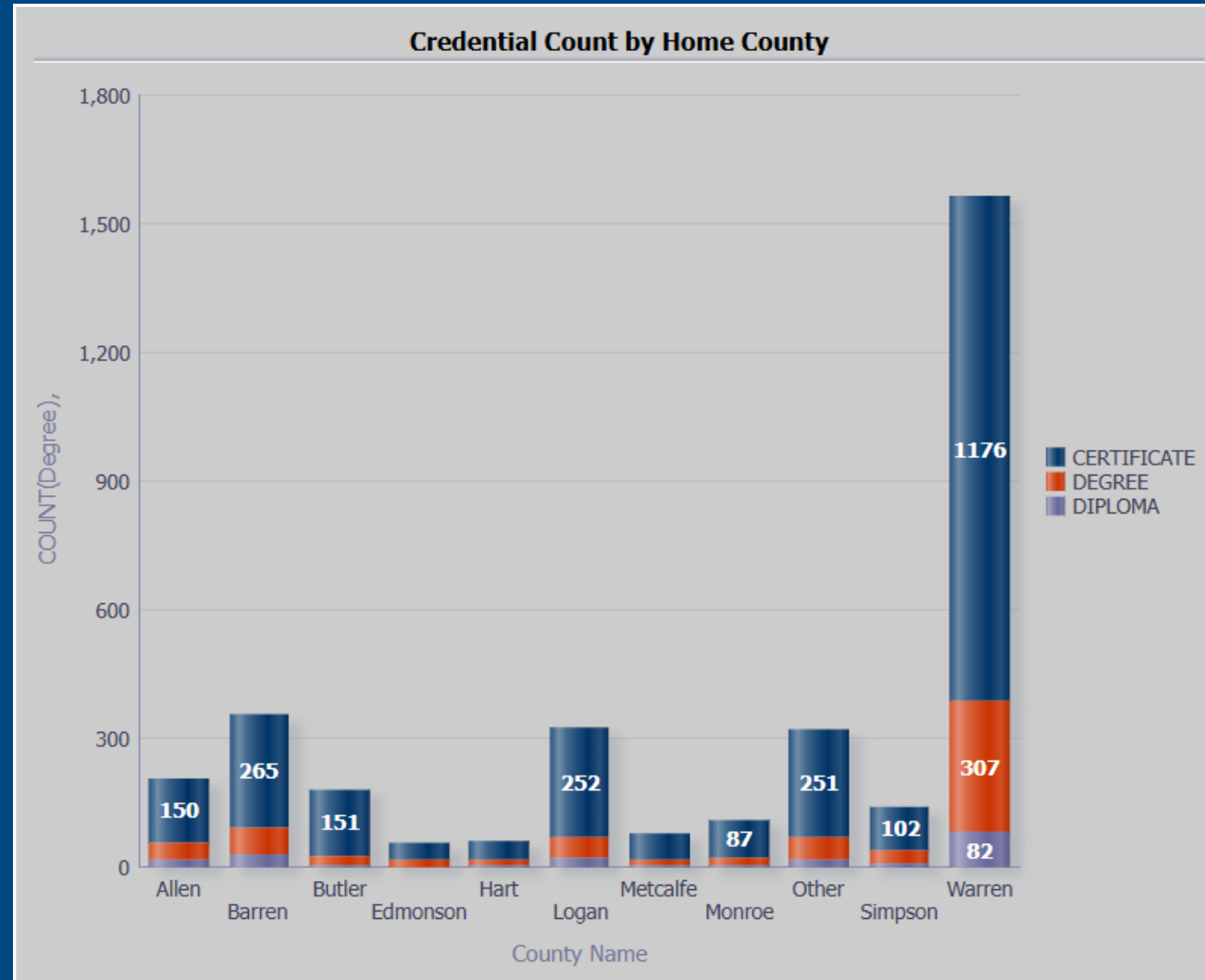
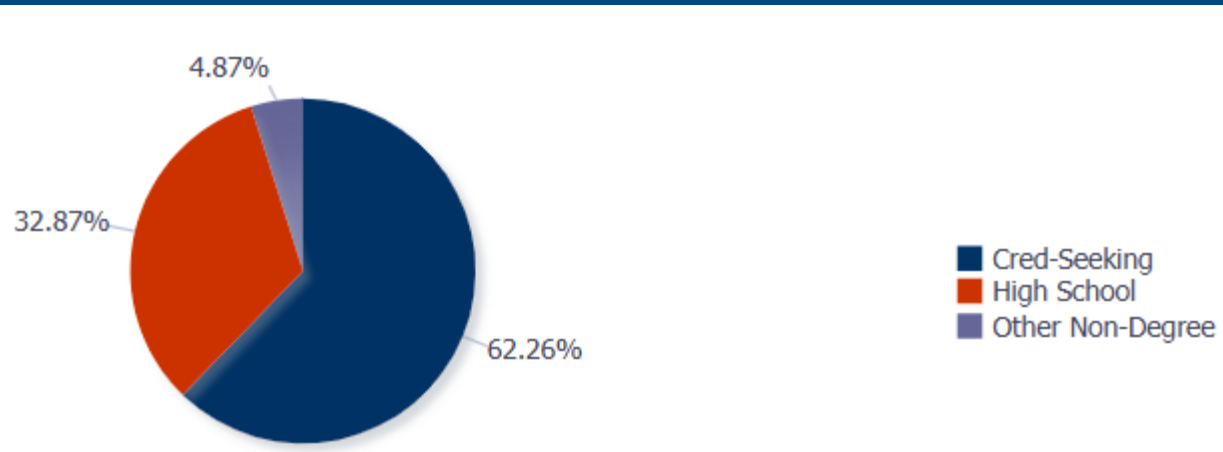
*Glasgow Campus*  
129 State Avenue  
Glasgow, KY



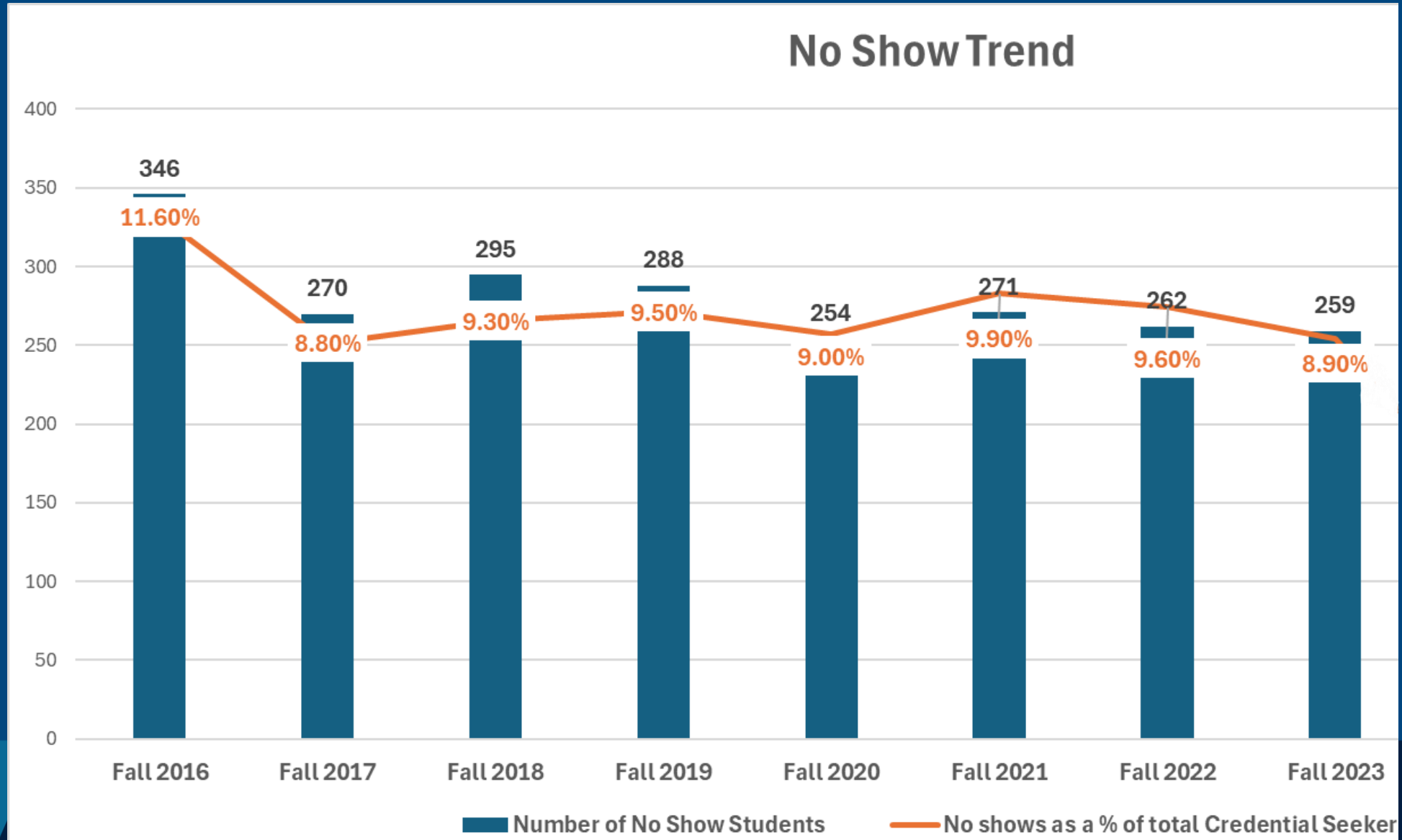
*Glasgow Tech Campus*  
500 Hilltopper Way  
Glasgow, Ky



# WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?



# WHAT PROBLEMS WERE WE TRYING TO SOLVE WITH OUR NEW ORIENTATION?



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Semester	No Shows	Estimated Credit Hours	Estimated Tuition Value
Fall 2016	346	3114	\$529,380
Fall 2017	270	2430	\$413,100
Fall 2018	295	2655	\$451,350
Fall 2019	288	2592	\$451,008
Fall 2020	254	2286	\$409,194
Fall 2021	271	2439	\$436,581
Fall 2022	262	2358	\$429,156
Fall 2023	259	2331	\$433,566
			<b>Total Tuition Value: \$3,553,335</b>



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**Working alone, consider your own school's Orientation (or a related program).**

**Take 60 seconds to rank each of these themes on a 1 to 5 scale (5 = we're doing great!, 1 = uh oh)**

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**We'll take a quick poll. Raise a finger to show how you rank your program on a 1 to 5 scale (5 = we're doing great!, 1 = uh oh)**

# HOW DID WE ALIGN ORIENTATION WITH BEST PRACTICES?

- Goals
  1. Prepare students
  2. Reduce no-show rates

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- Student centered by design
  - Answering their questions

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- Student centered by design
  - Answering their questions
  - Using their language
  - Incorporating student voices in ORI





# HOW DID WE ALIGN ORIENTATION WITH BEST PRACTICES?

- Active learning

# Graduation Visualization



**\*Graduation Visualization**

I am here at SKYCTC to \_\_\_\_\_.

After graduating from SKY, my goal is \_\_\_\_\_.

**Plan for  
success**

# HOW DID WE ALIGN ORIENTATION WITH BEST PRACTICES?

- Building connections

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- Student centered by design
- Active learning
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**Working alone, take 90 seconds to brainstorm how you could take incorporate one of these best practices into your own school's Orientation (or a related program).**

# HOW DID WE ALIGN ORIENTATION WITH BEST PRACTICES?

- Student centered by design
- Active learning
- Building connections

**Share with a partner. Each of you take 45–60 seconds to share how you could want to incorporate one of these best practices into your own school's Orientation (or a related program).**

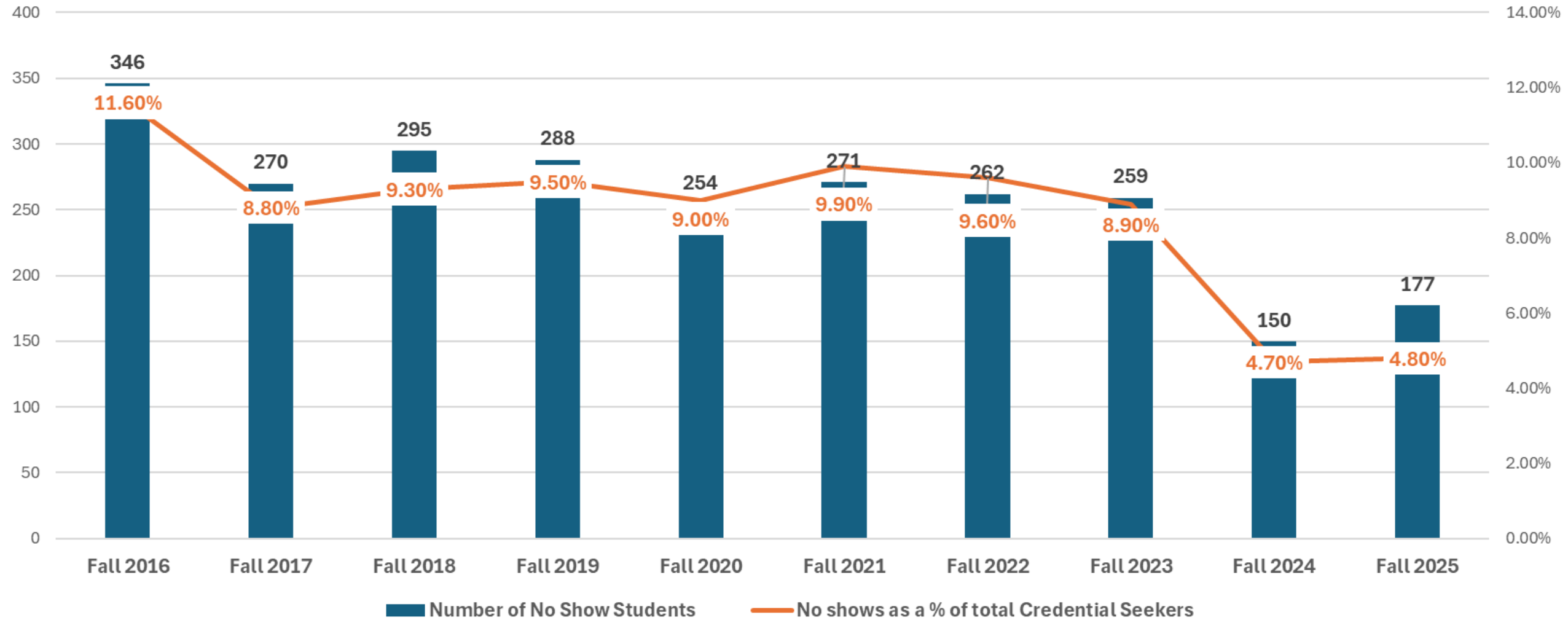
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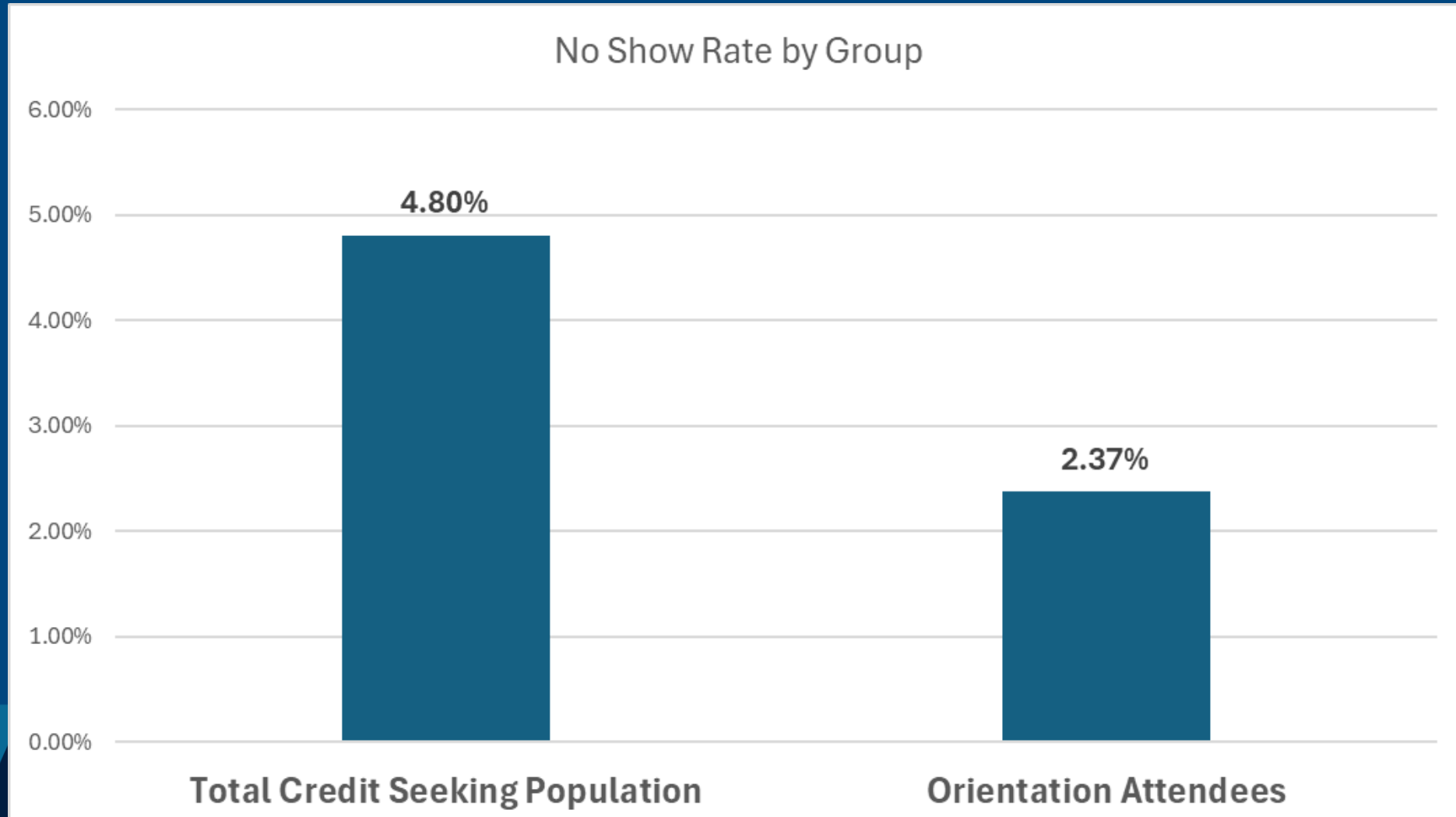
**We have a couple of minutes—  
who wants to share with our  
whole group?**

# HOW DO WE KNOW THESE CHANGES HELPED OUR STUDENTS?

## No Show Trend



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# HOW DO WE KNOW THESE CHANGES HELPED OUR STUDENTS?

- *I feel more confident about starting college because of Orientation.*
  - 90% of students “agree” or “strongly agree”
  
- *I feel like I belong at SKYCTC.*
  - 90% of students “agree” or “strongly agree”

# HOW DO WE KNOW THESE CHANGES HELPED OUR STUDENTS?

- Student feedback overwhelmingly shows they:
  - know exactly **how to get to their class** on the first day,
  - learned effective strategies for **building resilience** and **overcoming challenges** as a student during orientation,
  - know where and how to **ask for help** when they need it,
  - learned effective strategies for **time management** during orientation, and
  - know how to **use the technology platforms** they'll use daily during college.

# WHAT LESSONS DID WE LEARN?

- Gather student feedback and change Orientation accordingly

# WHAT LESSONS DID WE LEARN?

- On campus relationships matter

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- Keep the main thing the main thing

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- On campus relationships matter
- Keep the main thing the main thing
- Successful Orientations are an investment

**Share with a partner. Each of you take 45–60 seconds to share how you could apply one of these lessons while revising your own school's Orientation (or a related program).**

# WHAT LESSONS DID WE LEARN?

- Gather student feedback and change Orientation accordingly
- On campus relationships matter
- Keep the main thing the main thing
- Successful Orientations are an investment

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# QUESTIONS?

- Contact us!
  - Dr. John Thomerson and Heather LaRue
  - Retention and Resources Coordinators
  - SKY Rise Title III Programs
  - Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College
- [john.thomerson@kctcs.edu](mailto:john.thomerson@kctcs.edu)      [heather.larue@kctcs.edu](mailto:heather.larue@kctcs.edu)
- 270-901-1053