

21st Century Learners Spanning Multiple Institution Services

It is common to hear 60% of students attend two or more institutions before they graduate with an undergraduate degree. It represents a macro enrollment pattern that challenges data systems managed by local institutions. Students stop and start across many institutions as they seek to improve their academic credentials, to foster career aspirations and shift their emphasis through life. This does not count early college, PLA, CLEP or AP. Early college has the same issue as students attending multiple educational institutions, not being able to see how college credit would be granted until after enrollment. Systems are not developed, nor is the data able to transcend institutions following the events of student enrollment. Duplication is the norm and often, the effort to track student enrollment patterns is complicated by identity. Assessment data is also not shared, which then duplicates efforts much like in health care, where a patient visits multiple specialties and each has a perspective on the patient.

How does a student know how an AP course would count toward a degree plan of a chosen school? How does a student know how their course work from one or more institution would count toward a degree plan of another? They would have to visit and question each school independently. Student services have difficulty bridging disparate systems. Attempts have been made to help students. Most attempt to consolidate data and transform the data into useful advice and information. This adds another challenge of keeping separate data systems synchronized.

Time to degree has increased as enrollment patterns continue to shift and older students are now attending school part-time, enrolling in dual programs across more than one school. How can students track their progress when taking course work across two or more schools at the same time? Systems today, are not developed to serve this growing population of students and the new initiatives sought to improve 2+2 programs between community colleges and senior institutions.