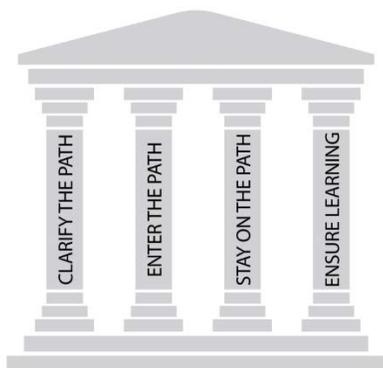


Hello again. Greg Kemble here.

In the previous video I talked about the first of the four pillars of the guided pathways framework: clarify the path.

FOUR PILLARS OF GUIDED PATHWAYS



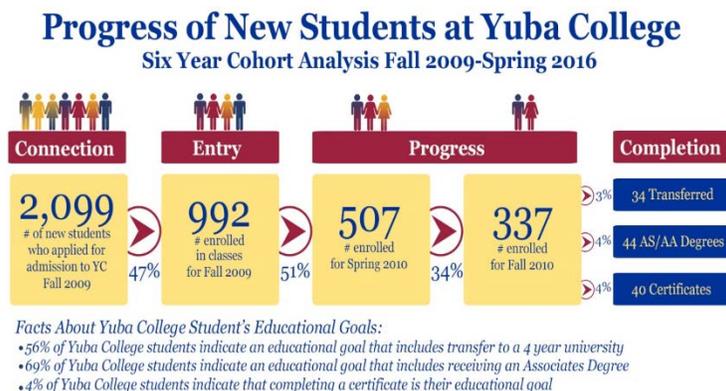
When thinking about our institution through that lens—and yes, I’m mixing metaphors here—we create clear curricular pathways that help students reach their educational goals in a timely manner, and we simplify our processes as much as we can, removing obstacles that confuse or discourage students.

these paths. This may involve shifting resources to outreach. It may involve making sure our website is informative and accurate and simple to navigate. It may involve finding ways to give our counselors more time to guide students as they explore their college or career options to choose the path that interests them.

The second pillar—enter the path—builds on that work. It encourages us to think about ways to attract students and get them on

And then, once they’re here, it might involve making sure these students feel supported—getting them into courses in line with their interests as soon as possible, getting them connected with tutors, or reaching out to those who struggle through programs like Early Alert.

Now why would we want to focus on this? Well, this graphic—I’ve shown this before—suggests that we might have a problem getting students to enter the path.



About 2100 potential new students filled out applications to attend Yuba college for fall 2009. But only about a thousand of them—less than half—ended up enrolling in classes that semester. And then, even when we got them here we lost another half or so by the second semester.

I'm going to admit that, before I started investigating Guided Pathways, when I was faced with statistics like this, I would just explain them away. Maybe these students went to a four-year college, or joined the Air Force, or went to jail, or got a job, or got married, or whatever.

Or I wanted to know how this compares to the rest of the state, and when I learned that most community colleges struggle in a similar way, I'd throw up my hands and say, "See?"

But now that I've started learning about Guided Pathways—and I'm speaking for myself here, though I know others who feel the same way—I can't be satisfied with that anymore. As Darren Otten says, I can't unsee what I've seen. The Guided Pathways framework has brought into focus how many ways our college is not as student-centered as it could be—as we claim it is, and as I want it to be.

And it's not just me. As I mentioned in the first video, the state has been unhappy with the limited progress that a number of initiatives have had—the Basic Skills Initiative is most often mentioned—and so they're now pushing us in the direction of Guided Pathways. In order to participate in the College Promise Program—AB 19—we're required to be a part of the California Community Colleges Guided Pathways program.

And so the latest initiative, more or less, is AB 705. I mentioned it before. It has several components, but I want to talk about two.

First, there is the multiple measures component, which requires that we use high school transcripts as the primary measure for placing students in English and math.

Now, why? Well, the research has shown that the cut scores on placement tests, such as the ones we've used at Yuba College, are poor predictors of success in college level math and English. So, if that's true, we've been placing too many students into developmental classes that they don't actually need. And we know the longer students are in school—especially in classes that don't contribute toward a degree—the more likely they are to quit before they reach their goal.

But AB 705 goes further. It also demands that we give pretty much all students the opportunity to complete their required English and math courses in their first two semesters. So, I'm an English teacher, so I'll talk about English. This means that we will only be allowed to offer one course below the college-level course.

There's a lot to complain about here, especially since the law technically went into effect at the beginning of this year. But if we want to make these changes work for our students—if we're not going to just let them sink or swim according to whether or not they are college ready (or one-level-below-college-ready), we're going to need to figure out ways to support them. We've got to find ways to be student-ready—to offer the kinds of support that will increase their chances to succeed.

In the last video I mentioned a distinction between an initiative and a framework. AB 705 is an initiative—it's a law and even if we're convinced it's the wrong play, there's little we can do to resist it.

But Guided Pathways is a framework—a way of organizing the institution around our students’ experiences. So when the state lays an initiative on us, like AB 705, we don’t have to find a way to just tack it on to what we’ve been doing. That’s what we’ve done in the past and it’s the main reason we’re “initiated out.”

Instead, the framework gives us a structure to analyze how the initiative will impact our students—how it will impact the aspects of pathways as represented in the four pillars—and to adapt to it in a coherent way.

Now, both of the things that AB 705 demands can be incorporated into the Guided Pathways framework. We need to clarify a path—in this case, we’re perhaps talking about accelerated developmental courses.

We need to help them enter the path—making sure students who pass their developmental classes don’t put off their college-level English or math, for example. Instead, we encourage them—we guide them—to take those classes right away.

And, as the third pillar demands, we need to help them stay on the path, providing the type of support our students need, whether it’s supporting our instructors as we adjust to teaching new accelerated curriculum with students with a wider range of abilities, or embedded tutoring, or more proactive connection with tutoring centers.

Guided Pathways gives us a way to break down what we’ll need to do to serve our students when we’re faced with new and even problematic initiatives from the state.

All right. In the next video, I’ll talk about pillar three—helping students to stay on the path. See you then.