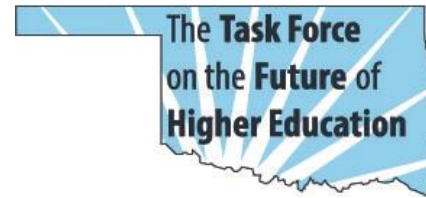


STATE REGENTS TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION



College Degree Completion and Workforce Development Initiatives Subcommittee

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Data Analytics

Data or predictive analytics is beginning to emerge as a very promising and powerful tool in higher education. The State Regents should provide opportunities for institutions to learn more about the appropriate use of data analytics and they should facilitate and encourage a statewide implementation plan that accelerates the adoption of best practices in data analytics to enhance student experience and success through the use of predictive tools.

1. The State Regents should include funding for the implementation of predictive analytics on a system-wide basis in its annual funding request to the Legislature. The funding request should include a timeframe for implementation, the expected return on investment, and a plan for reporting results on the benefits gained from implementing the use of data analytics system-wide.
2. The State Regents should direct institutions to develop comprehensive plans on the use of data analytics to streamline administrative processes, generate revenue through increased enrollment and improved retention rates, and improve student success through enhanced proactive advisement and individualized support services.
 - a. Information regarding the use of data analytics will be embedded in the annual academic plan that is submitted to the State Regents.
3. The State Regents should empower and provide a charge to the Councils on Information Technology, Instruction and Student Affairs to recommend specific implementation strategies that would maximize the effectiveness of data analytics on a statewide basis.
4. The State Regents should facilitate the development of a consortium of institutions with like missions to use data analytics to solve institutional problems

5. The State Regents should continue to work with the Oklahoma State Department of Education to develop a robust, comprehensive data pipeline. The ability to link student level K-12 and postsecondary data would greatly enhance the ability to determine factors that predict student success.

B. Workforce Development

In 2014, only 40.1 percent of Oklahoma's workforce had a degree, certificate or high quality credential. Projections show that 70 percent of Oklahoma's jobs will require some education or training beyond high school by 2025. To address this skills gap, Governor Fallin has developed the Launch Oklahoma initiative, setting an ambitious goal of having 70 percent of Oklahoma's adult workforce having attained a college degree, certificate or other high quality, recognized credential by 2025. The State Regents should develop strategies that quickly address workforce needs and promote degree and certificate completion in high-demand occupations.

1. The State Regents should work with the Council of Presidents and chambers of commerce to develop a statewide strategy to engage business and industry in actively working with Oklahoma colleges and universities better align academic programs to meet current and projected workforce needs.
2. The State Regents should require that any new degree program request 1) provides evidence that the program will produce graduates related to the 100 critical occupations identified by the Governor's Oklahoma Works and Launch Oklahoma initiatives; or 2) provides evidence that the program will produce graduates related to one of the five key wealth generating ecosystems (aerospace and defense, energy, agriculture and biosciences, information and financial services, transportation and logistics).
3. The State Regents should develop policies and procedures to accelerate time to approve new workforce-oriented programs needed by business, including microcredentials.
 - a. Microcredentials should be developed in partnership with business.
 - b. Microcredentials should be designed to be stackable.
4. Institutions should promote partnerships with business to offer internship and apprenticeship opportunities to students.
5. The State Regents should continue to fund and promote adult degree completion strategies through the Reach Higher program and the Adult Promise grant from the Lumina Foundation.
6. The State Regents should develop enhanced marketing strategies for OKCollegeStart.org as a resource for traditional and adult students' college preparation, college degree planning, college financial planning, career development, and other services.

C. Degree Completion

In 2009, Oklahoma joined the Complete College America (CCA) consortium of states, making increasing college degree completion a top state priority. The State Regents should

encourage and support a statewide approach that would accelerate and scale the implementation of data-proven completion strategies to achieve Oklahoma's college degree completion goal of increasing the number of degrees and certificates earned by 67 percent by 2023.

1. The State Regents should develop and present to the Governor and State Legislature a budget request that fully funds Oklahoma's college completion efforts.
2. The State Regents should endorse and support the full implementation of Oklahoma's statewide Guided Pathways plan as developed by the Oklahoma State Team for Complete College America. The following areas will be emphasized:
 - a. Implementation of meta-majors statewide
 - b. Development of student on-boarding that provides informed choice for degree programs prior to enrolling (career opportunities and outcomes)
 - c. Develop term-by-term on-time degree maps
 - d. Provide critical course path guarantee
 - e. Implement proactive advising protocols that track student progression and provide alerts
 - f. Communicate results and outcomes about the above strategies/policies
3. The State Regents should work with institutions to facilitate and implement reverse transfer agreements between community colleges and four-year institutions.
4. Institutions should continue to scale and strengthen co-requisite remedial education offerings.
5. The State Regents should work with institutions and appropriate councils to expand opportunities for students to earn college credit through competency based, prior learning assessments.
6. The State Regents should make the Course Equivalency Project more accessible and user friendly.
7. The State Regents should continue to work with colleges and universities through the work of the Math Success Group to develop multiple math pathways.

D. Concurrent Enrollment

Concurrent enrollment has proven to be a highly effective tool in developing a high school to college bridge that accelerates time to degree for students, improves student matriculation, and strengthens high school and college relations. The State Regents should support strategies that ensure the integrity and expansion of concurrent enrollment opportunities for Oklahoma students and families.

1. The State Regents should continue to request full funding of the concurrent enrollment tuition waiver program for high school seniors by the Legislature.

- a. The total estimated cost for FY18 is \$10.6 million, while the program is currently funded at only \$2.8 million (26.8% of program cost).
2. The State Regents and the Legislature should expand the concurrent enrollment tuition waiver program to high school juniors, contingent upon additional funding from the Legislature.
 - a. Develop metrics to document the success of concurrent enrollment and its return on investment for the State and provide this to the Governor and Legislature.
3. The State Regents should initiate a study of alternative funding models for the concurrent enrollment tuition waiver program.

E. Scholarships and Financial Aid

College is an increasingly important investment for students and their families, and Oklahoma is among the most affordable states for college. Oklahoma has the 10th-lowest student debt level in the nation, and nearly half of all Oklahoma graduates leave college with no loan debt. The State Regents currently provide a number of resources that help students and their families plan for and manage the cost of earning a college degree. Recognizing the important role that financial aid plays in promoting college access and completion, the State Regents should develop strategies that facilitate easier access to financial aid and scholarship information and opportunities for students.

1. The State Regents should coordinate the creation of a statewide financial aid/scholarship matching tool for students to identify potential financial aid/scholarship opportunities, with the goal of maximizing the disbursement of available scholarship funds to students each year.
2. The State Regents should strongly encourage colleges and universities to develop partnerships with local communities and businesses to provide scholarships for adult degree completion through the Reach Higher initiative and include state matching funds for these scholarships in the annual system-wide budget request.
3. The State Regents should encourage institutions to create and/or expand a seed fund to provide emergency aid for students in need to prevent dropout.
4. The State Regents should initiate a study to determine the capacity of institutions to increase fundraising efforts for need-based financial aid.
 - a. Institutions should place greater emphasis on need-based financial aid in fundraising.
5. The State Regents should initiate a study to examine the role of unmet financial need for students nearing the end of their college career.
6. The State Regents should initiate a study to determine the impact of microcredential and competency-based education programs on financial aid eligibility.

F. Adult Degree Completion

Oklahoma currently has over 70,000 adult citizens that have earned on average more than 72 college hours without earning a college degree. The State Regents should explore and support strategies that would maximize adult degree completion in Oklahoma.

1. The State Regents should continue to support adult degree completion through the Reacher Higher initiatives, which includes the Adult Promise grant from the Lumina Foundation.
2. The State Regents should work with institutions to develop a system-wide strategy for identification and outreach to students who have dropped-out but have a significant number of college credit hours.
3. Institutions should partner with local businesses to develop programs that provide scholarships or tuition reimbursement to encourage employee degree completion or skill acquisition that meets business needs.
4. The State Regents should expand online education opportunities for adult students as recommended by the Academic Program Innovations and Online Education Subcommittee.
5. The State Regents should explore the development of potential models for competency-based degrees in conjunction with recommendations from the Academic Program Innovations and Online Education Subcommittee.

G. Military-Connected Students

Each year, thousands of veterans take courses at Oklahoma colleges and universities. With the revamped GI Bill, veteran enrollment numbers have increased dramatically. One of the State Regents' top priorities is to provide support for our veterans and to address the unique issues they face in returning to our colleges and universities after military service.

1. The State Regents and institutions should develop a statewide outreach strategy for assisting military-connected students and their families earn a college degree.
2. To facilitate degree completion for veteran students, the State Regents should develop a matrix of course equivalencies for students with military service experience.