

# ENDs Monitoring Report

Completion

April 10, 2017

**Presented To:**

Dr. Daniel J. Phelan, President  
Jackson College Board of Trustees

**Presented by:**

Dr. Rebekah S. Woods, Provost

## **ENDs Monitoring Report: Completion Executive Summary**

This ENDs Monitoring Report focuses upon Jackson College's efforts to advance student success and completion as part of its Total Commitment to Student Success (TCS<sup>2</sup>) initiative. The College employs multiple efforts to increase the number of students who complete degrees, certificates, credentials of market value, and/or transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution. These efforts contribute not only to our local communities, but also to an educated United States citizenry and a globally competitive workforce. Key measures of ENDs completion performance include: 1) Fall to Winter Retention; 2) Fall to Fall Retention; 3) Completed Credentials of Market Value, (i.e., skill sets or concentrations, completed Certificate or Associates Degree); 4) Transfer to a Two or Four-Year Institution; and 5) The Number of Students Still Enrolled After Two and Six Years. These metrics are utilized because they are the initial steps which must take place prior to the eventual completion or transfer of a student. Additionally, they include the metrics used to measure our performance as an institution by the state and the federal government as well as allow us to benchmark against normative data sets.

This report was presented to the Board for the first time three years ago, and has since become the principal focus of attention for our faculty, staff, and administration. Numerous institutions and organizations nationally have begun rethinking the traditional paradigms and business models and are moving from specific strategies to systemic – some would say radical and disruptive – changes that completely change the way in which the work of higher education is done. Jackson College has embraced this notion and is often seen as a leader in innovative work affecting community colleges. The most systemic and transformative work underway currently is our development of structured instructional pathways and our Student Success Navigator model. These show the most promise of long-lasting and significant increases in the completion rates of our students. Our work is on track to achieve our goals of 80% completion by 2022.

All of our academic strategies implemented thus far have been designed to help students succeed in their courses and persist both from semester to semester, and year to year, with the eventual completion of a credential of market value or transfer to a four-year institution. Our fall-to-winter student retention rates have remained consistent for the last few years and increased one percentage point this year to 72%. Our two year completion or transfer rate for students decreased from 25.4% to 24.2% and continued to decrease over six years from 56.8% to 52.1%. There is no clear answer that would explain this decrease although there is some speculation about the effects of non-traditional students that were enrolling during the great recession and subsequently left as the economy began to improve while they were completing a degree or credential.

As this report will demonstrate, Jackson College has focused significant efforts on the success and completion of our students. Many strategies are underway and in various stages of implementation. We are making improvements and helping our students to persist through completion or transfer. Some strategies that have been in place and are helping our students succeed in the classroom are now also showing promise for helping them persist and complete.

## **Institutional Context**

Jackson College is committed to the success of our students and ensuring they complete a credential of market value, and/or transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution, prior to leaving Jackson College. The College is known as a leader within the State and on a national level as having the success of our students as our top priority. For example, we were in the first round of schools selected in Michigan to be part of the Achieving the Dream (ATD) initiative and have also been recognized as a “Leader College” within ATD. We received also a Title III grant to further develop and institutionalize the student success work begun under ATD. We were the first school in Michigan to adopt the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) from the Community College of Baltimore County and have scaled this work 100% within our academic community. We were invited to participate in two national institutes sponsored by the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) to share and further develop our student success initiatives. We were selected by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) to attend the National Summit on Development Education. We were one of only 40 initial community colleges selected nationwide to pilot the Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA). And, most recently, we were selected through a highly competitive process as one of 30 colleges nationwide that are participating in the Pathways Project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and led by AACC to implement guided academic and career pathways at scale, for all students. Our work with guided pathways and our student success navigators design model has been studied and benchmarked against both locally and across the country. The list could go on and on which further demonstrates, in part, our Total Commitment to Student Success (TCS2).

Over the years we have also implemented numerous strategies designed to increase our students overall success and eventual completion, such as Learning Communities, Supplemental Instruction, Blended Courses, mandatory orientation, multiple measures for mandatory course placement, tutoring, professional development for all instructors, distance learning strategies, initiating affinity groups such as Men of Merit and Sisters of Strength and Veterans, Mandatory Seminar in Life Pathways (SEM 140), Math pathways, The Federal TRiO program, Career Coaching, Guided Pathways, Student Success Navigators and more.

## **External Context**

In 2009, President Obama set the stage for the Completion Agenda when he called on all community colleges to increase the number of community college students completing a degree or other credential by 50% - to 5 million students by 2020. In response, the Completion Agenda became the overarching goal for numerous organizations and agencies – American Association of Community Colleges, League for Innovation, Center for Community College Student Engagement, National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, The Association of Community College Trustees, The College Board, Phi Theta Kappa, and philanthropic organizations such as The Lumina Foundation, The Gates Foundation and The Kresge Foundation. Each organization had its own particular deadline and achievement goal, but the theme was common – increase the total number of student completions within a finite period.

Completion is also in the national spotlight as funding for public colleges is being based, at least in part, on student outcomes such as degree completion rates, course completion, time to

degree, transfer rates, the number of degrees awarded, or the number of low-income and minority graduates. Currently, the National Conference of State Legislators indicates that 32 states have already implemented a portion of higher education funding on performance metrics, with 5 more states in the process of transitioning to some type of performance funding. Percentages vary greatly from less than 1% in Illinois to 100% in Tennessee and Ohio, and yes, Michigan is included in the 32 states. Indeed, in the last legislative cycle, elected officials initially sought to increase the percentage of state aid allocated on the basis of performance metrics. While this measure was defeated, we do believe that it is only a matter of time before these values are increased..

Regardless of the current and potential future financial impact attached to completion for the Jackson College, as a community college our mission is to change the lives of our students and our community. To accomplish this mission, our students must be prepared to transfer and/or successfully enter the workforce and fulfill the needs of our area employers. They can only do this if they are leaving us with an associate's degree or other credential of market value in the workplace. Georgetown's Workforce Center had previously reported that 65% all new jobs through 2025 would require an associate's degree or less. However, since the Great Recession (December 2007 through June 2009) more than 95% of the jobs created have required at least some college education. Additionally, the New America organization has now reported that by 2030, our nation will be 16 million credentials short in the workforce. Our work at Jackson College is to help fill that gap for our community. Within a community wherein only 30+% are in possession of a post-secondary credential, our work is not only extensive, but vital.

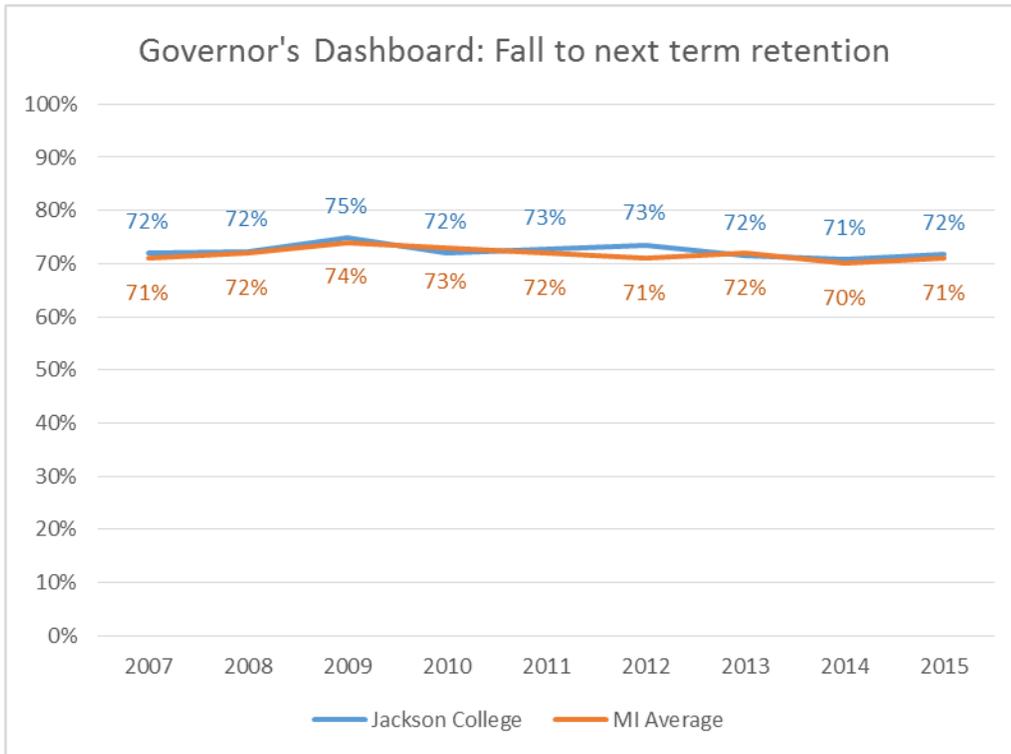
## **Institutional Performance Reporting and Assessment**

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

The ultimate KPI of student completion is the overall completion of a credential of market value and/or transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution. However, there are several initial steps which must take place before the eventual completion is achieved. The College specifically selected the following measures from the AACCC Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA) as metrics for the Completion Monitoring Report. Why? Because these measures allow us to assess a student's initial steps, as well as his/her eventual completion while ensuring we are adequately measuring our unique mission by including all students – not just first time full-time students. Additionally, the VFA metrics provide us with normative data sets for comparison. Those measures are:

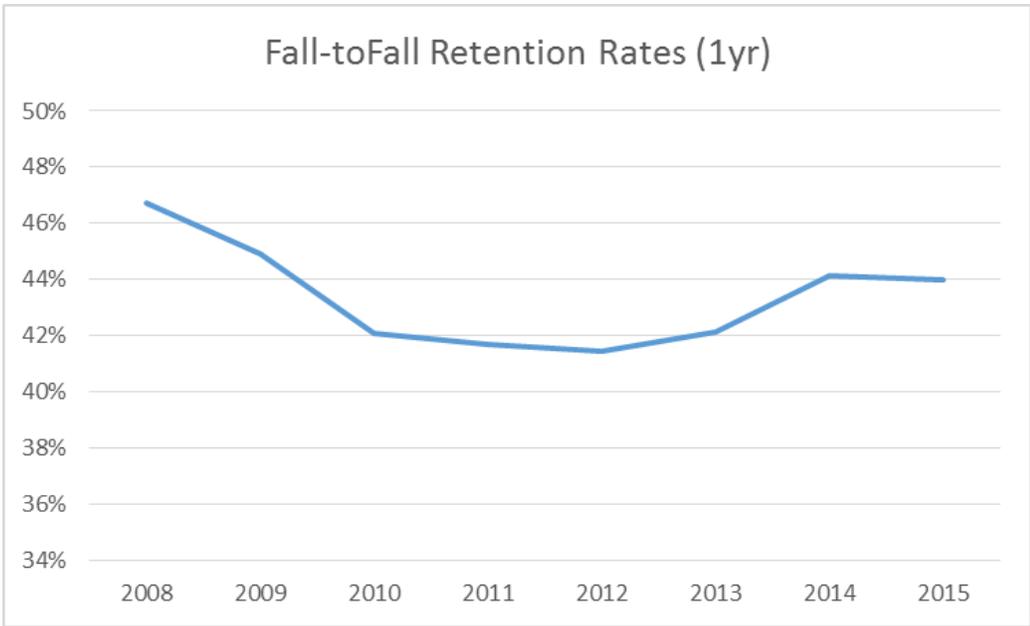
- Fall to winter retention
- Fall to fall persistence
- Completed certificate or degree within 2 and 6 years
- Transferred to a two or four year institution within 2 and 6 years
- Still enrolled after 2 and 6 years
- Graduate employment rates

**Fall to Winter Retention:** The College's fall-to-winter student retention rates for FY16 increased one percentage point but has remained fairly consistent for the last few years.



Percent of full and part-time students that were enrolled in the first, fall term and are still enrolled in the next full academic term.

**Fall to Fall Retention:** Although the VFA does not collect a fall-to-fall retention metric, it is an important milestone along the pathway to completion that must be monitored by the College in order to know how to support student completion. Jackson College has always had a fairly strong fall-to-winter retention (2015 – 72%). However, we continue to lose more than half the students by the next fall semester. The College's retention rate for all students persisting from fall 2015 until fall 2016, both full-time and part-time, remained at 44%, consistent with the prior year. The College was actually anticipating a drop in fall to fall retention rate due to the opening of CV3 in fall 2015. The increase in the number of housing students that arrived with significant academic deficiencies that year resulted in a retention rate for housing students of only 32.3%. Having our overall retention rate remain constant despite this, is very positive and a testament to the impact of the retention strategies in place.



Completion or Transfer: The completion or transfer rate of JC's students over two years decreased from 25.4% to 24.2% and continued to decrease over six years from 56.8% to 52.1%. There is no clear answer that would explain this decrease. Although, Jackson College is not necessarily alone in these disappointing results, some are speculating that these results are due to the number of students that enrolled in community colleges during the recession, many who were unprepared for college. The need for developmental education, would have extended the regular time frame required for completion. However, as the economy improved, they chose to leave for employment opportunities rather than remaining to complete a credential (See: [http://aacc.nche.edu/Publications/Reports/Documents/Trends\\_CC\\_Enrollment\\_Final2016.pdf](http://aacc.nche.edu/Publications/Reports/Documents/Trends_CC_Enrollment_Final2016.pdf))

VFA Two-Year Completion Metrics				
Metric	2013	2014	2015	2016 (students entering fall 2013)
Completed certificate or degree within 2 years	5.23%	3.99%	3.90%	2.80%
Transferred to a two or four year institution within 2 years	19.81%	20.19%	21.50%	21.40%
Still enrolled after 2 years	42.49%	40.72%	39.90%	40.40%
Number of students in 2Yr Cohort	1475	1693	1583	1795

VFA Six-Year Completion Metrics				
Metric	2013	2014	2015	2016 (students entering fall 2009)
Completed certificate or degree within 6 years	20.20%	19.14%	16.60%	15.90%
Transferred to a two or four year institution within 6 years	42.17%	47.43%	40.20%	36.20%
Still enrolled after 6 years	6.10%	2.78%	3.40%	3.20%
Number of students in 6Yr Cohort	1475	1693	1625	2406

*note: Figures represent the cohort that enrolled 6 years prior to the reported year*

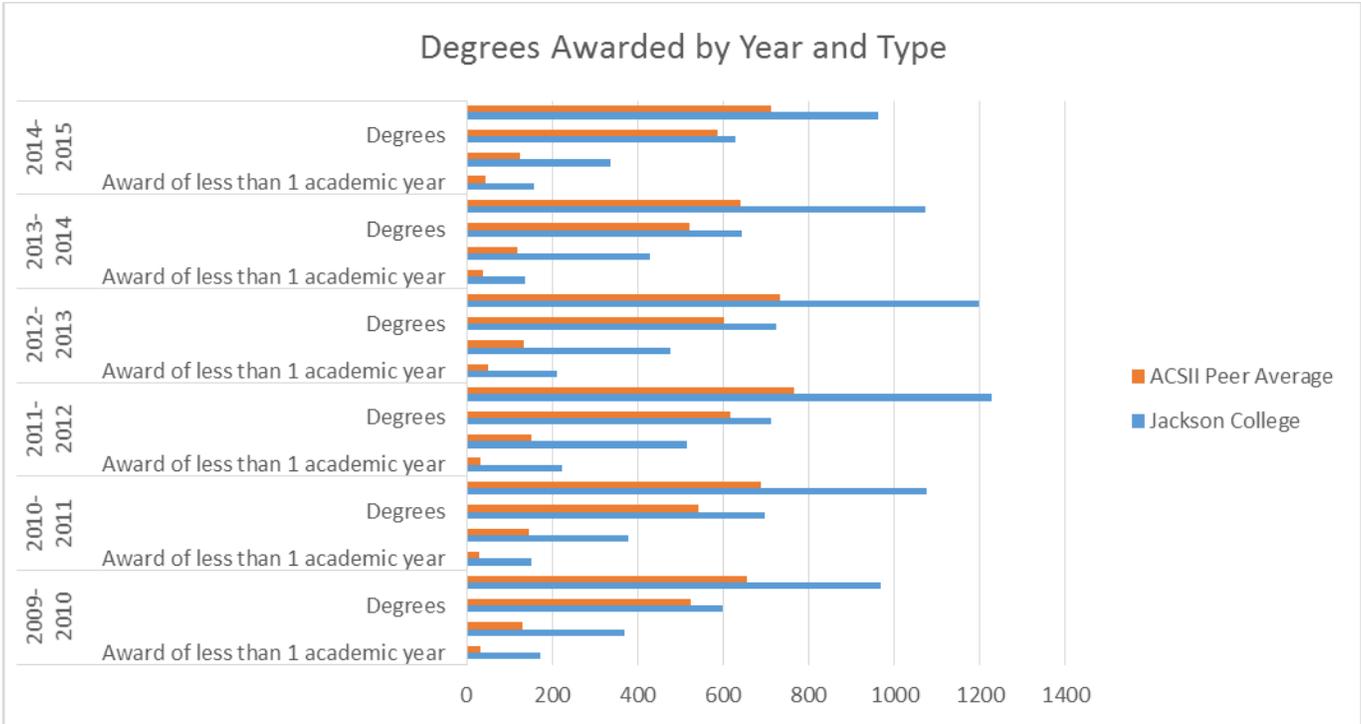
**Number of awards conferred:** An additional metric relative to the college's completion mission is the number of awards conferred each year. The table reflects the number of awards conferred over a five-year time period and is broken down by type of award.

Degree Type	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	1yr	5-YR%
AA, AS, AGS	197	197	232	208	118	43.27%	-40.10%
AAS	515	526	398	383	261	31.85%	-49.32%
Cert	292	263	250	222	199	10.36%	-31.85%
CON	85	97	52	48	25	47.92%	-70.59%
SSET	139	115	79	97	89	-8.25%	-35.97%
Total	1228	1198	1011	958	692	27.77%	-43.65%

Operational definition: Number of degrees, certificates, concentrations and skill sets awarded during an academic year (SP, FL, WN)

The drop in the number of degrees and non-degree credentials coincides with the drop in the enrollment – specifically the non-traditional students - as well as retention. During our enrollment peak, the College saw an influx of students over the age of 24 who were returning to college with new funding sources such as No Worker Left Behind that provided for funding to complete an occupational credential or degree that would allow them to return to the workforce. However, as enrollment has declined, the largest drops in populations have been the same students in the 25-29 and 30+ age groups.

Also included is a table comparing our number of awards as compared to the other ACS II Michigan community colleges – Kellogg Community College, Lake Michigan College, St. Clair Community College, Monroe County Community College, Muskegon Community College and Northwestern Michigan College. While the size of each institution certainly varies somewhat, the number of awards conferred by Jackson College is strong when compared to our counterparts. In FY15, Jackson College conferred 963 awards while our ACS II peers averaged only 711 awards.



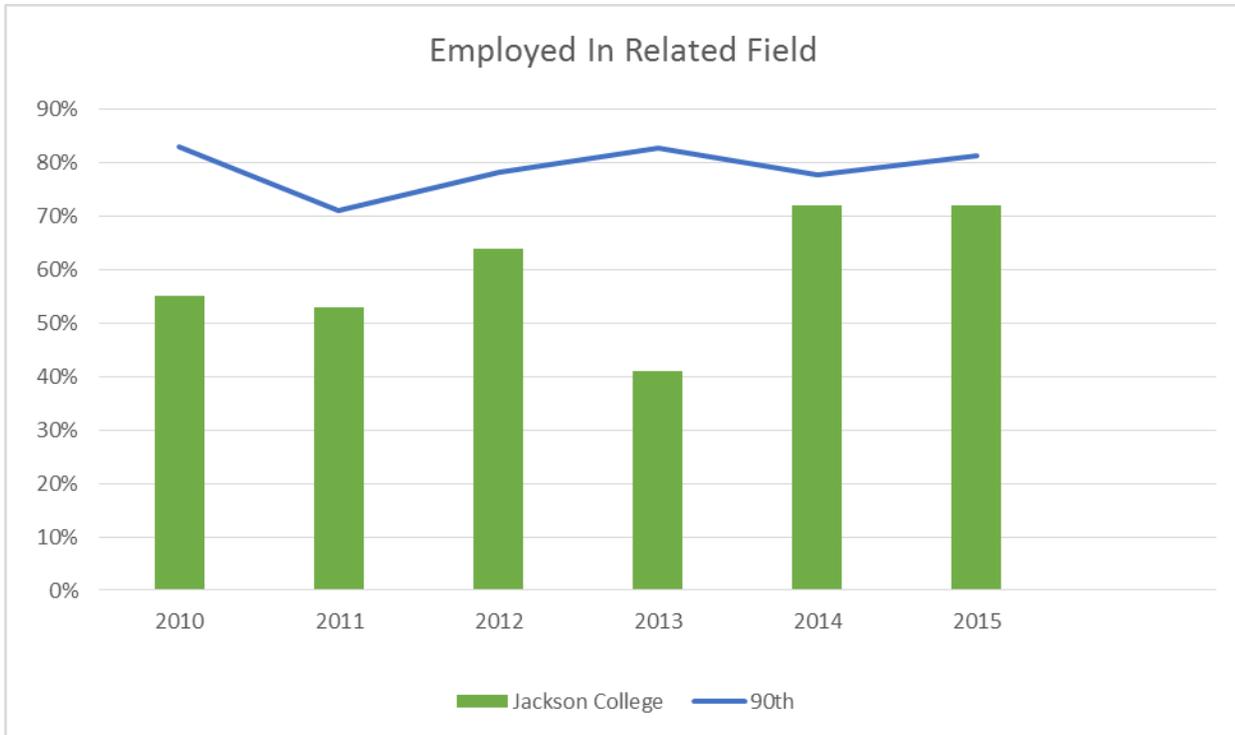
Benchmark Source: IPEDS – Completions

**Graduate Employment Rates:** Our graduate employment rates have remained at 72% from 2014 to 2015, but still fall short of the 90% percentile of 81% employed as indicated by the NCCBP. While the federal unemployment rate dropped from a high of federal 6.7% in 2014 to a low of 5.0% in 2015, the state unemployment rate was at a high of 7.8% in 2014 but mirrored the federal rate of 5.0% in 2015. The tri-county rates depicted below were consistent with the changes at the state and federal levels.

County	2014 (%)	2015 (%)
Jackson	6.7	5.1
Hillsdale	7.0	5.1
Lenawee	6.5	4.8

Unemployment rates for tri-county area.

With the new addition of the career exploration components of the SEM140 class combined with the work of our Career Coach and the new Work-Based Learning Coordinator (WBLC), our graduate employment rates are expected to improve. The Work-Based Learning Program (WBL) will be incorporated into a designated class for each occupational pathway, with the expected outcomes to include direct impact to technical skill attainment and work experience, including non-traditional fields. The WBL program will also increase proactive collaboration with employers and community organizations in order to identify and create more opportunities for students. Students will also be informed of and referred to available career and employability resources on campus.



Graduate Employment Trends.

**Related Areas of Performance Assessment:**

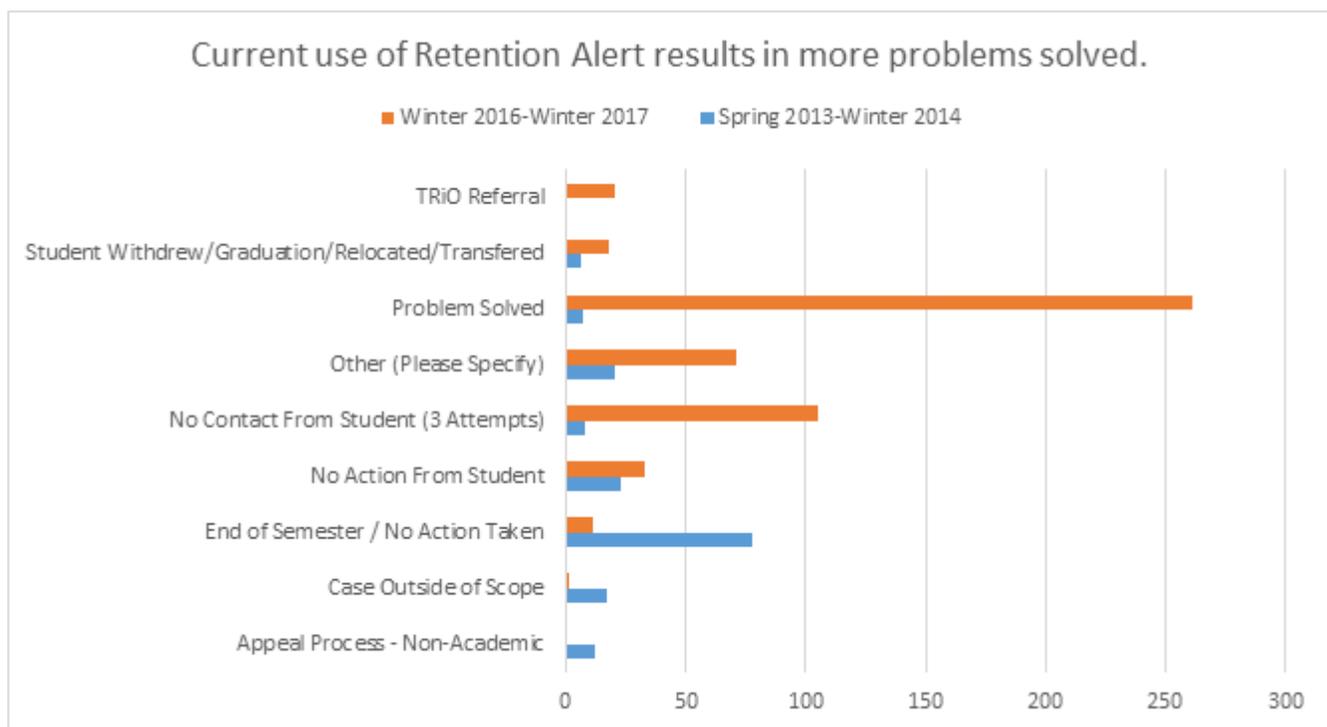
**TRiO:** The fall 2016 to winter 2017 persistence rate for students in the TRiO program was 91%, up from 86% last year and compared to the overall student population at 72%. Thirteen TRiO students from fall 2016 were on the dean’s list and 17 students are expected to graduate in May. The TRiO department attributes their strong persistence rates to increased communication with faculty and students. Director Melissa Merkel made three contacts each semester with each faculty member who had a TRiO student in their class to determine how the student was doing in class and any additional supports they may need. They also sought positive feedback for the student and shared this information during their one on one meetings with students. They also believe the additional space now available in Bert Walker Hall has allowed their students to utilize more support resources. 100% of their students from fall 2016 have received a minimum of 4 hard contacts from the combined TRiO staff which helps to contribute towards their persistence and retention. Additionally, plans are underway to increase the number of TRiO students transferring to a four-year institution by exposing the students to a minimum of four campus visits each year to four year institutions.

**Prison Education Initiative:** Our prison program first began enrolling students into Jackson College credit classes for the winter 2013 semester in a self-pay program. Since then, we have enrolled over 1200 students total in the self-pay program, the Pathways from Prison Program, the Second Chance Tech Grant program, and the Second Chance Pell Program combined. Every year we host a Student Excellence Awards Program in the correctional facilities to celebrate the successes of our students. The students have succeeded in their courses at 91% compared to 73% for the general student population in face to face classes. We have also had 67 students complete a degree or certificate in the program – 59 certificates and 8 associate

degrees. Completions are expected to grow at an accelerated rate due to the increase in the number of classes able to be completed with the support of Pell funding.

**Retention Alert:** Retention Alert, a product of our Title III grant, was piloted with developmental math. Essentially, when an instructor has a student facing difficulties and feels more staff help is needed for the student, Retention Alert software is accessed from the class roster to trigger communications to student or academic support services. The referral is directed to an individual on campus who knows the student, through student club affiliation, housing, athletics, or academic advising. Students with apparent major life challenges are referred to the ombudsman.

The current phase of Retention Alert system covers all developmental education courses in the area of English, Reading, and Math. Additionally, our Seminar 140 course, as well as all STEM courses, have been added. All new students have been assigned a Student Success Navigator, the Retention Alert user's manual has been updated and all staff who might receive referrals have been trained. Faculty members have been given a short video that demonstrates how to submit a referral. The system and process are working as anticipated. All cases are routed to their student success navigator. 150 total cases have been created so far for Winter 2017 – a significant increase from Winter 2016 which was at twenty-two. Twenty cases are currently open and 130 have been completed and closed by the student success navigators. During the last year, 261 students have had their problem solved and will continue to grow as the system is made available to all faculty. The next and final phase of expanding Retention Alert will occur this Spring 2017 semester in which all remaining disciplines (Allied Health, Behavioral Science, Business & Technology, Language, Literature, & Arts, Nursing, and Technical Trades) will be trained and actively using Retention Alert.



## **Institutional Performance Improvement Planning**

Jackson College is committed to investing the time and resources necessary to improve the success and completion rates of our students. We are continuing to expand multiple modes of education to match the learning styles and life circumstances of our students. These include traditional face-to-face delivery, hybrid delivery, degrees delivered entirely on-line, and direct assessment competency-based programs. These options ensure that students who are not able or interested in sitting in classes through 15-week semesters over a few years are still able to begin and complete a degree through an educational model that works for them.

We have also expanded our policies that allow for students to receive academic credit through a demonstration of existing competencies or credentials. This allows us to recognize the knowledge, skills and abilities that students bring with them to the institution, rather than assuming those are only able to be achieved through a traditional 15-week semester.

Pathways: Jackson College has continued to make excellent progress on its guided pathways work over the last year. Some of our significant accomplishments are described below.

JetStream: Last Spring, we successfully launched in Colleague the Student Planning Module, a/k/a “JetStream.” All our program maps are loaded into JetStream, so both Student Success Navigators and students have the ability to view student schedules and track student progress. When the Community College Research Center (CCRC) from Teachers College at Columbia University visited us last fall, they were impressed with our ability to implement IT solutions like JetStream to support our pathways work.

SEM 140: The new First Year Seminar course called “Seminar 140: Seminar in Life Pathways” is now fully scaled up and providing students valuable knowledge and skills that will prepare them to be successful in college and life. Each SEM 140 class is pathway specific, meaning students enrolled in a SEM 140 class are all in the same pathway. This structure helps to build a cohort effect and learning community feel for students in the same pathway. Towards the end of the Fall semester, we conducted student focus groups, and several students provided very positive feedback about their SEM 140 class and instructor. They talked about how they are applying what they’re learning in SEM 140 (such as accepting self-responsibility and building interdependence skills) across their other courses, which is a testament to its broad positive impact and continued potential. Also built into the SEM 140 curriculum are important pathway and career exploration opportunities to ensure students are making the best selection for their future.

Faculty Learning Days: Thanks to the leadership and insights of the Faculty Professional Development Committee, we devoted an entire day of the Fall 2016 Faculty Learning Days to guided pathways. Guided pathways expert, Rob Johnstone from the National Center for Inquiry and Improvement, joined us on that day. He provided a very well-received and engaging keynote talk about guided pathways and reminded us why it’s hard but important work.

Student Intake Assessment: In part inspired by Rob Johnstone’s visit, Assistant Dean of Student Services, Nathan Venske, and psychology professor, Anthony Cleveland, have recently started development of an intake assessment that students will complete before orientation and

registration. The goal is to gain a better understanding of each student earlier, so we're best prepared to meet them where they are and better able to support their academic goals.

National recognition: Our guided pathways work has not gone unnoticed. We have been lauded by several experts and organizations that are leading guided pathways work nationwide, including Gretchen Schmidt from the AACC Pathways Project, Davis Jenkins from the Community College Research Center (CCRC), Rob Johnstone from the National Center for Inquiry and Improvement, and Alison Kadlec from Public Agenda.

We regularly receive requests to visit and research our pathways accomplishments and approach. For example, CCRC at Columbia University visited last fall to learn more about and study the ways we have laid the groundwork for guided pathways redesign work. Public Agenda visited in January to learn more about our faculty engagement efforts and study our Foundational Studies Council model that brings together faculty and staff from across the college to focus intently on how to support student success in big and bold ways. The higher education research firm, Education Advisory Board (EAB), recently reached out to us to learn more about how we've been able to implement pathways to inform the development of their guided pathways best practices research and report. In short, while we still have a great deal more work to do, we are viewed nationally as a model college that has developed a best practice approach to pathways work and has accomplished a great deal already.

Student Success Navigators: The Student Success Navigator Model was fully implemented as of December of 2016. All Navigators have now been hired, trained and assigned a caseload. The total number of Navigators, spanning the four JC locations, is 18. The Navigator to student ratio averages 200:1, down from the initial 1,483:1 calculus. This ratio is significantly below the community college national average of 440:1. Student satisfaction with advising services continue to remain at a high level as reported by students in the Student Services Satisfaction Survey.

During the past year the Student Success Navigators have engaged in professional development focused on Appreciative Advising, which is a holistic approach to advising focused on relationship building. The professional development is designed to continue the transition from transaction to relational advising. The Navigators follow a detailed Outreach and Intervention Plan outlining three mandatory hard contacts designed to help keep students on track.

Additional work that is underway for the next 12 months includes:

Pathways 2.0: Work is underway to complete next steps in our Pathways work. Program maps are being created for transfer programs that will be available sometime during FY18. Student Success Navigators are creating drafts for faculty to review. Annual course schedules have been built starting with the fall 17 semester that mirror the program maps created by faculty. Blended Writing courses have been fully scaled and embedded along the pathways and Blended Reading courses will be fully scaled by winter 2018. Prerequisites are being reviewed to ensure students are not being unnecessarily delayed from beginning their program courses. And the Program Review process has been revised to include pathways assessment elements.

Accelerated Semesters: Jackson College is reviewing work done by other community colleges with accelerated semesters, allowing students to concentrate on fewer classes over 7-weeks. Schools such as Trident Technical College and Odessa College have experienced significant increases in course success rates when allowing students more of an immersion experience in fewer courses over a shorter period of time. We are reviewing our own data to see if it supports what other schools have experienced. We have three programs built as pilots to launch in Fall 2017 – Cybersecurity, Networking, and an Associate of Arts.

Competency Based Education (CBE): Currently, Jackson College has over 90 courses that have been deconstructed into competencies using a tool developed and designed in-house by Jackson College faculty. The majority of the courses are from the allied health programs, but all departments have deconstructed at least one course.

The two degrees that we will begin delivering in an alternative CBE format are Health Administration/Insurance Specialist-AAS and Allied Health General Studies-AAS. All courses for the different degrees have been deconstructed into CBE, and the faculty are currently developing assessments for the competencies. The goal is to have the assessments complete by spring 2017 and then begin seeking approval from HLC to offer the degrees in a CBE format. Our intention is that Jackson College will be entirely competency-based by fall, 2018.

## **Conclusion**

The first item on the College's Statement of Beliefs indicates that "the success of our students is always our first priority." We exist as an institution to help our students achieve their educational goals. However, we are painfully aware that many of our students are not successful in achieving their goals. On average 35% of our students are no longer enrolled after 2 years and 45% after 6 years and they have not completed a certificate, degree or transferred to another institution. These are unacceptable statistics.

Numerous strategies have been implemented and are in process to improve this level of success. Many of these new initiatives are showing significant promise and success. Our unwavering commitment to the success and completion of our students must remain the highest priority among the Board of Trustees, the Administration, Faculty, and Staff, regardless of the time and resources involved. It is the right thing to do.