

# Leading Change for Student Success



Summary of 2022 Research Findings

Prepared by Pacific Research and Evaluation, LLC

Funded by a Title III Strengthening Institutions grant (2019-2024)



## GOALS

Improve student retention, increase completion rates, and close opportunity gaps for historically underserved students.

## STRATEGIES

Simplify and clarify Guided Pathways model at the college, implement integrated student supports, and redesign pre-college math courses.

## Data Sources (Spring 2022)

### ▶ Student Online Survey & Focus Groups

**275**

BC students responded to the online survey. Additionally, 10 students participated in one of six focus groups.

### ▶ Faculty/Staff Online Survey

**50**

BC faculty and staff responded to the online survey. Guided Pathways faculty and staff also shared feedback on initial research findings.



**7**

### ▶ Peer Educator Focus Group

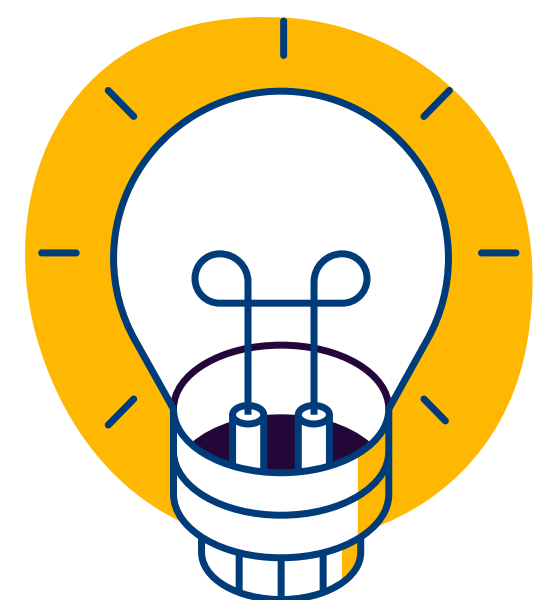
Seven peer educators participated in a focus group.

## General BC Student Feedback

- ▶ 80% of students were confident in their ability to achieve their goals, and 78% would recommend BC to others considering college-level courses.
- ▶ Student survey findings suggest a need for Guided Pathways. Students gave mixed feedback about whether they were informed of their possible degree choices and whether BC provided a clear connection between coursework and career pathways.
- ▶ 74% of surveyed students agreed that BC prioritizes diversity and inclusion, up from 69% who agreed in 2021; however, both the student survey and focus groups revealed some accounts of discrimination and/or lack of inclusion. An additional study focused on diversity and inclusion at BC may be valuable to shed light on this topic.

## Peer Engagement

- ▶ 50% of surveyed students indicated feeling engaged with their BC peers. This is a marked improvement from the 35% of students who indicated feeling engaged with peers in 2021. According to the 2022 survey, BC students used Canvas, email, and Discord most often to connect with peers.
- ▶ Student focus group participants suggested ways that BC can support students in making connections. These most often included Discord and Zoom meeting rooms set up by instructors as an optional way to interact with classmates. Other suggestions included more in-person classes, events, and club meetings.



## Online Learning

- ▶ 67% of surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed that online education is a good fit for their learning style (while 18% were neutral, and 15% disagreed).
- ▶ 52% of students indicated, to varying extents, that limited contact with instructors was a challenge to them when it came to online learning.
- ▶ Students also expressed that the lack of a standardized use of Canvas by instructors presented a challenge for them, as did the need to print physical course material.

Peer Educators added context to students' printing challenges, noting students often stop by the Welcome Center in search of printers.

Faculty and Staff noted that BC is currently rolling out trainings for online instructors, including Canvas standards. BC is also working to increase student awareness of campus resources, given the campus' relatively recent re-opening.

## Welcome Center and Student Orientation



Feedback from participating students about the Welcome Center workshops was generally positive, with mention of the usefulness of Canvas and Financial Aid / Benefits Hub content.

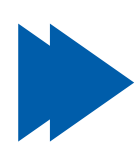


Peer educators suggested the Welcome Center could use more BC ambassadors (hiring was in process at the time of the survey), and more peer educator support.



BC faculty and staff highlighted a need for a better system for managing online (self-led) new student orientation sign-ups and for ensuring these students have what they need to fill out the intake form correctly.

## Academic Advising and Early Alerts



63% of surveyed students said they had met (mostly virtually) with an academic advisor in the past year. This is a notable increase from the 2021 survey findings, in which only 34% of students reported having met virtually with an academic advisor during the previous 12 months.



Students found advising meetings helpful when it came to selecting the right classes, creating a plan for the course of their education, finding resources, and transferring.



In terms of improving the advising experience, students noted a need for more advisors, more available time slots, longer appointments, in-person advising, quicker response times, and increased DEI training and representation among advisors of the diversity of BC's student body.



45% of surveyed students had completed an Education Plan at the time of the survey; however, the completion rate was far less (21%) for students who had NOT met with an advisor in the past year.



## First-Year Seminar (FYS)



Initial feedback generally appears to be positive, but more data is needed to understand trends. Students commented that FYS helped connect them with resources. BC staff felt that FYS provides helpful information, but noted that students need to be provided with this information at multiple timepoints throughout their studies as well.

## Redesigning Pre-College/College Level Math

- ▶ More than 70% of students were made aware of math tutoring at BC by their instructor, knew where to go for help if they had challenges with their math courses, and had the resources they needed to succeed.
- ▶ Some students shared that they benefitted from extra prep materials provided by their instructor and online resources, such as Aleks and MyLab.
- ▶ Some students felt math classes were too fast-paced, or said they would prefer in-person math courses. Students also suggested improving the math course accommodation system, offering more online tutoring, and lessening the lockdown browser requirements for exams.

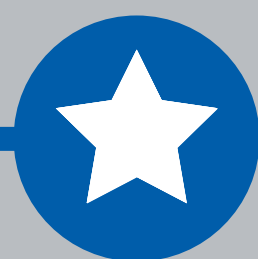
## Tutoring

- ▶ Students at BC reported a high level of awareness of the free tutoring services offered at the college. Tutoring labs that students have used most include Math (26% have used) and Writing (24% have used).
- ▶ Students indicated they would use tutoring more if there were more flexible hours, more knowledgeable tutors, available tutoring staff, longer sessions offered, tutoring for higher-level classes, tutors for more subjects/classes, and more diverse tutoring staff.

## BC Pathways Faculty Feedback



Faculty suggested making use of College Issues days to increase faculty participation in BC Pathways.



Faculty involved in BC Pathways are excited to provide a streamlined, supportive experience for students. Part of this work includes clarifying career pathways and making the college experience as affordable as possible by ensuring students have support to set goals and know which classes they need.



Factors getting in the way of implementing BC Pathways, according to faculty, include limited time for additional work, concerns that non-Pathways classes will get overlooked, and concerns that students will not be aware or incentivized to explore non-Pathway classes.

## Peer Educator Feedback

A key strength of the peer educator efforts is they are building bridges between programs and departments and facilitating student referrals to services and resources at BC.

Training areas that peer educators mentioned would be useful to them included DEI training, de-escalation strategies/student scenario training, and customer service training.





# Limitations and Considerations

- For the purposes of this evaluation, input from BC students is limited to those who chose to respond to the invitation to participate in a virtual or in-person focus group or to respond to the online survey. Student feedback is therefore not generalizable to all BC students. The evaluators strive to amplify historically underserved and marginalized student voices, but as the following bullets exemplify, there are challenges involved, which we acknowledge.
- The top three race/ethnicity groups represented in the student survey data include White (48%), Asian (28%), and Black/African American/African (12%). Initial feedback from BC staff indicates the race/ethnicity distribution of survey respondents is somewhat consistent with the race/ethnicity distribution of BC's student population, with slightly more White students and Black/African American/African students in the survey sample compared to the overall BC student population.
- Students who selected Asian as their race/ethnicity were asked additionally if they identified as East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian, Filipino, or another Asian background. Upon review of preliminary findings, a BC faculty member suggested the future inclusion of 'Asian American' as an important race/ethnicity identifier option for students.
- As researchers, the authors recognize the importance of revealing potential sources of bias, particularly bias from the authors' identities and experiences. At the time of this study, all authors were staff at an organization, which was also participating in ongoing reflection on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Authors all identify as white, cis gender women.
- Overall, while the Title III evaluation surfaced some accounts of students experiencing discrimination and/or lack of inclusion, the evaluation was not designed to capture the depth and breadth of BC experiences of students with non-dominant identities, and an additional study of this kind may be valuable to better understand diversity and inclusion practices and policies at the college.

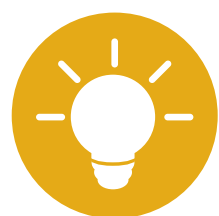
# Evaluation Insights



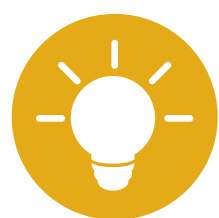
**The data suggest a need for increasing student awareness of the services available to them at the college.** A notable group of survey respondents were not aware of multiple grant components, such as New Student Orientation, the Intake Form, and Early Alerts. In focus groups, students talked about wanting more information on where to go for resources and services.



**BC students conveyed they want access to in-person classes as well as online and hybrid learning options, and would like to see a more standardized use of Canvas by instructors.** Students felt strongly that if instructors followed a set process for how to organize assignments, deadlines, and other class information in Canvas, that it would be easier for students to navigate online course content.



**Around half of surveyed students reported they had never taken a math course at the college.** Students who have taken math classes have benefitted from being notified by their instructor of free math tutoring resources at the college and from extra prep materials and online resources provided by their instructor, such as Aleks and MyLab.



**Students at BC reported a high level of awareness of the free tutoring services offered at the college at 82%, but half (48%) of these students have not utilized a tutoring lab.** Tutoring labs that students have used most include Math and Writing.



**A reoccurring theme in the data includes the need for strengthening connections across grant components and moving away from siloed efforts.** BC faculty and staff involved in Guided Pathways/ATD want to learn about other aspects of the work that they are not directly involved in, such as Educational Plans, Welcome Center workshops, Target X, and BC Pathways.



**Peer educators are responsive to the need for more streamlined, personalized support for students navigating college systems, building bridges across programs and departments, and elevating student voices.** Peer educators highlighted training areas that would help them in their role, including DEI training, de-escalation strategies/student scenario training, and customer service training. The peer educator team would also like more access to CRM tools that will help them better support students.



## Questions or Comments

If you have comments or questions about these efforts, or are curious about the more detailed survey and interview findings included in the 2022 Bellevue College Title III Evaluation Report, please contact:

**Title III Project Director, Esteban Maldonado**  
[Esteban.Maldonado@BellevueCollege.edu](mailto:Esteban.Maldonado@BellevueCollege.edu)