

Northwest Vista College
Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count
Improving the Success of Underserved Students

Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count is a multi-year initiative that addresses a national imperative: increasing the success of underserved students at community colleges. The colleges of the Alamo Community College District are in the first group of 27 colleges from five states who joined the initiative in 2004. The states are Florida, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. Seven colleges from two additional states have been added.

All colleges will document over time the percentage of low-income students and students of color who accomplish the following:

- Successfully complete developmental courses and progress to credit-bearing courses
- Enroll in and successfully complete gatekeeper courses
- Complete the courses they take, with a grade of C or higher
- Re-enroll from one semester to the next
- Earn certificates and degrees

The colleges of the Alamo Community College District are including one additional outcome: Improvement in CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement) results.

Achieving the Dream will help the faculty, staff and administrators of community colleges strengthen their institution's capacity to:

- Pursue student success with commitment and zeal
- Function as "learning organizations"
- Develop a culture of evidence and accountability
- Make systematic and lasting changes to improve student outcomes

Northwest Vista College, along with the other ACCD colleges, identified three areas of focus for this year: developmental mathematics, gatekeeper courses (ENGL 1301, MATH 1314, HIST 2301, and BIOL 1406), and success of first time in college students.

A key strategy, selected by NVC based on data analysis and research, is to intervene with students during their first 15 credit hours of coursework at the college. A focus will be to help students establish goals and to become proactive in the college and in building strategies for their success in higher education.

For more information about Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count, see the website: www.achievingthedream.org. For Northwest Vista College, see the website: www.accd.edu/nvc/areas/irpe/AtDBriefs.htm