



Executive Summary

The SLCC Pathways Collaborative Work Team met throughout this academic year to discuss and carry out the 2020-2021 pathways charge. We turned our focus to areas of study and forming bonds between academic and student affairs personnel on the area of study committees. The collaborative work team and area of study design team members engaged in high-level thinking and composed some college-wide and specific area-related pathways initiatives for next academic year.

Key outcomes for this year:

- **Community:** academic affairs and student affairs built stronger relationships on area of study design teams. This should set the stage for community building efforts going forward.
- **Equity analysis:** the Office of Learning Advancement completed an AAC&U Guided Pathways Grant that (among other goals) supported an [SLCC project to disaggregate assessment data](#) to explore equity gaps in general education. The project and the data should feed into further inquiry into equity concerns in general education, and it should support current and ongoing course redesign efforts focused on addressing equity outcomes.
- **Gateway course:** some areas made progress on refining and scaling their gateway course experience.
- **Planning:** The collaborative work team has a much clearer sense of the work ahead.
 - **General education:** reforming general education governance will be a key part of moving pathways forward. General education forms a significant portion of all transfer pathways, and the college needs to build a better structure to ensure the integrity, integration, and coherence of our general education program.
 - **Placement and developmental education:** improving placement and developmental education practices has been a neglected feature of pathways work. Revisions to the placement process and further reforms in developmental Math and English are forthcoming.
 - **Maps:** next year we will turn out attention to completing drafts of area and program maps. Each area will be provided with a map template that will be drafted and agreed upon by area leads before the start of next academic year.
 - **Area as community:** we will leverage the area of study as a platform for student engagement, including more effectively integrating MySuccess into area-level community building efforts.

Moving ahead, we will need to work on achieving the right balance between allowing for area of study individuality and attempting to norm specific initiatives across the college. This year a greater emphasis was placed on areas exploring initiatives without the immediate pressure to scale them.

Utah system: There are also system-level changes that will be consequential for SLCC Guided pathways reform. While the CWT can't take credit for these developments, SLCC will benefit from these improvements at the system level:

- **Policy on AA/AS degrees:** the [Board Transfer Council proposed policy](#) on the composition of Associates degrees should improve transfer prospects for SLCC students and assist SLCC efforts in building more complete transfer degrees.¹
- **Academic to technical credit:** the system mandate to move specific workforce credentials from academic to technical credit with the broader idea that these technical certificates will serve as an on ramp for underserved students to AAS and AS degrees with the potential to transfer to four-year degrees.

Charge and Background

This year, the SLCC Pathways collaborative work team was asked to turn its attention to “the ongoing creation of the areas of study” with attention to five engagement by design principles.

Charge: Oversee the ongoing creation of the areas of study consistent with the [SLCC Pathways Plan](#). Coordinate the efforts of each area of study design team to implement [SLCC's Engagement by Design principles](#)

- **Draft area of study frameworks.** Coordinate the efforts of each area of study design team to implement [SLCC's Engagement by Design principles](#). To ensure consistency across frameworks, we ask that the CWT have each design team respond to prompts for the following five engagement by design principles:
 - Faculty, curriculum, and community are essential in helping inform and connect students to an Area of Study as an early part of their educational experience.
 - Students need to understand the overall organization and goals of a program
 - Students need effectively designed map in order to make good choices
 - General education should be distributed across many disciplines
 - Students are more likely to persist in inclusive, diverse, and accessible learning environments

¹One recent promising example: the University of Utah English department just agreed to redesign their degree and move two key entry-level major's courses down to the 2000 level.

Program prioritization: The SLCC context is also important. Academic Affairs engaged in a process of program prioritization where we evaluated the entire bank of programs with an eye toward analyzing their “relative value.”² Some programs have been discontinued, and the Provost office will continue to improve and accelerate the process of program review and prioritization next academic year.

Approach

We revised the composition of last year’s pathways collaborative work team, adding additional members from student affairs to increase representation from some SA divisions and allow for continued community building between academic affairs and student affairs. The CWT adopted the strategy of meeting four to five times each semester in order to allow more time for the area of study design teams to meet. For the CWT meetings, our goal was to build relationships and learn about each other’s work. Each meeting, area of study leads or student affairs leads took turns presenting on their work and its relation to the broader pathways initiative. Area of study design teams met to craft framework drafts and propose specific actions for next academic year.

Finally, an effort was made to break pathways work down into its constituent parts. While guided pathways is a “whole-college reform,” that whole is made up of parts. When it comes to successfully implementing pathways, it is best to talk about it a set of specific actions student affairs and academic affairs personnel take to guide students and enhancing learning (the two pillars of SLCC Pathways). The SLCC Pathways CWT made every attempt to adopt a more grounded and modest approach to pathways work. Breaking pathways reform into its constituent parts has the benefit of helping particular actors better appreciate their role in moving the initiative forward.

Area of study team: In term of area-related initiatives that feed into the broader pathways framework, a few are worth singling out.

- **Arts, Communication, and Digital Media:** creating a scaffolded curriculum that guides choice.
- **Business:** will map ten discrete habits of mind across the curriculum that should be taken in a semi-fixed sequence.
- **Computer Science and Information Technology:** embedded college success modules scaled across a gateway course.
- **Health Sciences:** embedding diversity and equity into the gateway college success course.
- **Humanities:** will standardize how they introduce students to the Humanities in a way that underscores its importance to all students regardless of area of study.

² Robert C. Dickeson, *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services*. (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2010), 23.

- **Manufacturing, Construction, and Applied Technology:** will become an on-ramp for underserved students through technical-credit certificates (some being moved from academic credit areas).
- **Science, Engineering, and Mathematics:** making the area of study gateway college success course unavoidable.
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences:** embedding values assignment in gateway social science course so students can assess and reflect upon their own educational values in the context of their college goals.

Challenges and Limitations

Understanding the work: one challenge when it comes to pathways work in academic affairs has been achieving clarity about the work. We have been conceptually and culturally blocked when it comes to moving pathways forward. One sticking point is that we were inadvertently asking areas of study to do work that they weren't equipped to handle: namely, tackling the challenges of general education and developmental education—what we're calling horizontal rather than vertical pathways concerns. The CWT made significant progress this year in getting conceptually unstuck. But really moving this work ahead will require the right mix of vision, directiveness, collaboration, and accountability.

Area of study asymmetry: pathways reform encourages symmetrical and uniform ways of thinking. We have created an academic unit called an area of study largely for the purposes of guiding students in their decision making. Our administrative structure does not mirror this new way of organizing academic units. Perhaps more importantly, not all areas of study are the same when it comes to their role and size at the college. Some areas (Business, for instance) have a significant number of students coming to SLCC with the intention of completing a program in that area. Other areas largely exist to serve the general education needs of the rest of the college. Still other areas have little work to do when it comes to guiding student choice: their curriculum is already made up of a highly directed and sequenced set of courses (especially in the career and technical areas). Indeed, those areas with the most majors typically have the most structured curriculum (Health Sciences, Computer Science and Information Systems), and it is those areas with few majors that have curriculum that guided pathways experts would label cafeteria-like. That cafeteria structure is likely the direct consequence of those areas serving a general education rather than program mission. How do we build a consistent SLCC pathways framework while also recognizing and handling this asymmetry? Can pathways potentially help us achieve more balanced enrollments across areas of study?

Governance: how do we effectively engage existing governance structures (faculty senate, curriculum committees) in SLCC Pathways work? Reforming the structure of the general education committee is a start, but the college could do more to involve faculty senate in pathways work.

Recommendations

The CWT recommends SLCC translate pathways work next year into a set of discrete assignments where responsible leads for each assignment are identified and given specific tasks. This means we facilitate fewer centralized pathways discussions and instead assign the work to specific individuals with a timeline and concrete outcomes. We also need to better understand and connect seemingly unrelated work to pathways reform. There are a number of initiatives that can be plausibly integrated into our understanding of pathways work.

We recommend identifying specific pathways-related projects through the lens of the SLCC Guided pathways framework. “SLCC Pathways provides a guided program of study intentionally designed to enhance learning and clarify a student’s route to program completion.”:

Guiding Students

- **Academic to technical credit:** while the work has its own distinct priorities and boundaries, we should also understand the system push to move certain credentials from academic to technical credit as a pathways initiative. We are clarifying how we want students to enter the college for a certain set of programs.
- **Area and program mapping:** we are to the point now in pathways reform where each area of study will be directed to build area and program maps. Maps will be more than just a list of courses. They must holistically describe the learning journey students undertake as they progress through an area and program.
- **Campus/Site as pathways platform:** SLCC should leverage sites (not just areas of study) as mechanisms for curating and scheduling a narrower selection of courses and programs. Sites like Herriman, West Valley, South, etc. Site-based pathways could prove to be an effective tool for guiding student choice and creating site-based communities within SLCC. Site-based pathways can also model pathways work for the rest of the college.
- **English placement:** the current self-guided placement is over placing students into college-level English. We need to better direct certain students to ESL, developmental writing, or co-requisite support options.
- **General transfer:** with the impending policy on Associates degrees forthcoming, SLCC should explore general transfer degrees alongside building more effective program specific pathways (direct transfer). Two areas of study where general transfer may be a good fit are Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences.
- **Program review and prioritization:** program review and prioritization need to be the norm. We should always be evaluating our programs for their fit with mission, community needs, and sustainability. And we should always be working to reflect upon and improve the programs we have. Academic affairs will continue to refine and amplify its program review and prioritization processes.

- **Area of study marketing:** we will work with marketing to work on revising the area of study landing pages and think about how we communicate pathways to students through the web and other means.

Enhancing Learning

- **Area as community:** we should return to a proposal made by the first pathways group that the area become “a place where you are known and feel welcome—where you are challenged and supported to complete a degree or certificate.”
- **Developmental education:** we will continue to compress and co-locate developmental education options for SLCC students. We also need to think about developmental support following students throughout their pathway.
- **ESL:** some of our students would benefit from ESL courses that they’re not currently taking. How do we potentially embed ESL options within areas of study?
- **Gateway college success:** continue to scale college success modules in gateway courses.
- **General education governance:** the majority of our students pass through general education. Its current ungovernable state hinders the College’s ability to effectively program general education to serve both the interests of the program itself and the interests of pathways reform.
- **Professional development:** continue to offer year long, robust instructional development opportunities to faculty—and continue to work on formally integrating instructional and EDI development into the career trajectory of tenure track faculty.

2021 2022 Pathways Projects: Guiding Students

<u>Task</u>	<u>Lead</u>
Academic to Technical Credit: Move ten specified certificates from Academic to Technical Credit	Associate Provost Rachel Lewis, Dean Jennifer Saunders and Deans where certificates currently reside
Area and Program Mapping: Draft area and program maps in each area of study	Area of study design team leads (with special emphasis on Dean accountability)
Campus/site as pathways platform: Experiment with site-based pathways reform, beginning at West Valley: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a narrative for each site • Focus on curating options at campuses and sites. 	Shannon McWilliams, Jason Pickavance

English placement: English placement revised and assessed	Associate Professor of English, Joanne Giordano and Director of Testing Lakiesha Fehoko
General transfer: Draft two general transfer degrees: Social and Behavioral Sciences and Humanities	Dean Roderic Land, Associate Dean Marianne McKnight
Program review and prioritization: continue to refine and accelerate the process of reviewing and prioritization programs at SLCC	Associate Provost for Academic Operations Jason Pickavance, Assistant Provost for Curriculum and Academic Systems Rachel Lewis, Deans
Revise area of study landing pages: work with areas of study on the landing pages and area specific web strategies.	Sarah Reale, Jane Stringham, Jason Pickavance

2021-2022 Pathways Projects: Enhancing Learning

<u>Task</u>	<u>Lead</u>
<p>Area as Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the idea in the first pathways report: the area “is a place where you are known and feel welcome—where you are challenged and supported to complete a degree or certificate.” • Increase Faculty Participation in MySuccess and explore Area networks • Partner with Student Affairs on Area level programming (Ella, Richard) 	<p>Associate Provost for Academic Operations Jason Pickavance, Associate Vice President for Student Success Kathryn Coquemont, Deans</p>
<p>Developmental education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot co-requisite developmental English • Developmental Math reform 	<p>Interim Associate Dean Lisa Bickmore, Associate Professor Joanne Giordano</p> <p>Associate Dean of Mathematics Suzanne Mozdy</p>

<p>ESL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move ESL out of the Humanities area of study. • Grow ESL enrollment through better placement practices. • Build a pilot of co-requisite ESL in the Business area of study. 	<p>Associate Dean of ESL Maria Ammar, Dean of Business Dennis Bromley, Associate Provost for Academic Operations Jason Pickavance</p>
<p>Gateway college success: Scale gateway college success--Each area of study will select one or more gateway courses where an area-specific college success treatment is embedded. This course is designed for all students in an area of study and should be unavoidable.</p>	<p>Area of study Dean or administrative lead</p>
<p>General Education governance: reform general education governance following the recommendations from the General Education Design Team report.</p>	<p>Provost office</p>
<p>Professional development: Engage in specific pathways-related professional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send English group to conference on co-requisite developmental education. • Bring CCRC speaker to campus as part of Guided Pathways professional development that aligns with Strategy 1. • CCRC reading group for AOS leads. 	<p>Associate Provost for Academic Operations Jason Pickavance, Direct of Faculty Development and Transformational Educational Initiatives Liz Rogers</p>

Conclusion

The college should be clear-eyed about the work ahead, but it should also sufficiently credit itself for the work accomplished. Failing to clearly identify and hold ourselves accountable for next steps will impede progress. Failing to provide ourselves appropriate credit for what we have accomplished will lower morale. On the last point, this report offers a final recommendation. Given sufficient progress on drafting and submitting maps next year, SLCC should officially recognize itself as a guided pathways college and state, unambiguously, that we have crossed a certain finish line when it comes to guided pathways reform.