

PROJECT DEgree



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Nearly two-thirds of all jobs will require a college education by 2018, and more than half of those will require at least a bachelor's degree. Unfortunately, far too many community college students fail to complete their education. An estimated 40% to 70% of entering students need to take at least one remedial course—and many get stuck there, never moving on to transfer-level college courses.

Project DEgree provides a solution.

It is designed for 18-26 year olds who have earned a high school diploma or GED, but who still need further developmental education in order to be ready for college-level course work. Project DEgree provides students with individualized academic and social supports, offers an engaging project-based curriculum within a learning community, and helps students structure their lives so they can build and maintain the momentum necessary to complete a college credential.

Students enrolled in Project DEgree pay tuition for their classes, but receive many services and supports free of charge to help them progress toward a degree. Students are encouraged to take a 12 credit load each term and expected to take a class during summer term.

Year One

Once admitted, students are enrolled in a learning community with 20 to 25 other Project DEgree students. Together they take developmental-level coursework in reading and writing, plus a college survival and success course. They receive math instruction including supplemental tutoring based on individual placement scores.

Students progress as a learning community, taking the next sequence of reading and writing courses, plus a study skills course. Students are also individually enrolled in the next needed math class and continue to be offered supplemental supports.

Each learning community is assigned a resource specialist who provides intensive support to students during their first year in the program. By teaching both the college survival and study skills courses, resource specialists get to know their students as learners and are able to offer more holistic support.

Year Two

Students fully transition into college-level courses and work toward the certificate or degree of their choice. They are supported by a completion advisor who works in collaboration with other advising staff to provide guidance and connect students to college resources and supports, with the goal of increasing persistence.

Engage. Support. Accelerate. Graduate.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Research shows that students enrolled in learning community programs like Project DEgree are significantly more engaged in their education and much more likely to stick with college and finish their degree. Other benefits of Project DEgree include:

- Dedicated support from a resource specialist who serves as an advisor, coach, and mentor
- Opportunity to form a positive, motivating peer group
- Referrals to resources, such as financial aid, tutoring, counseling, student activities, health services, and more
- Personal counseling and guidance including assistance with problem solving, time management, and stress management
- Transcript reviews and academic advising
- Assistance with completing enrollment and registration
- Free individualized math tutoring
- Incentives like textbook vouchers may also be offered

REPLICATION OF PROJECT DEGREE

Because of Gateway to College National Network's track record serving high school dropouts who enter in developmental education and go on to achieve success in transfer-level courses, our funders are supporting a national pilot of Project DEgree to test our pedagogical and student support approaches with underprepared high school graduates.

We are providing start-up funds and technical assistance to help the following nine colleges implement Project DEgree:

Broward College – Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Durham Technical Community College – Durham, NC
Essex County College – Newark, NJ
Georgia Perimeter College – Atlanta metro area, GA
Owens Community College – Toledo, OH
Phoenix College – Phoenix, AZ
Portland Community College – Portland, OR
San Antonio College – San Antonio, TX
Spokane Falls Community College – Spokane, WA

Contact information for Project DEgree programs is available at www.projectdegree.org.

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the Foundation to Promote Open Society.**

ABOUT GATEWAY TO COLLEGE NATIONAL NETWORK

Gateway to College National Network is a national nonprofit organization that is tackling the dropout crisis and catalyzing change across developmental education in college. Our strategies include creating and replicating innovative programs, building partnerships, influencing systems, conducting research and sharing what we know, helping effect policy and regulatory changes, and providing customized consulting services. The National Network also offers training, technical assistance, and professional development opportunities to Gateway to College and Project DEgree programs across the country.

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