# College Spark Washington Guided Pathways Initiative

# 2019 Progress Report

# Cohort 2

Planning for and implementing Guided Pathways requires active and engaged leadership from the top, shared or distributed institutional change leadership across the college, and meaningful engagement of faculty and staff that is both broad and deep.

1. **How is your college approaching these leadership aspects of Guided Pathways implementation?**

We have intentionally created a shared governance style leadership structure for our Guided Pathways efforts. Each division at the College (Finance and Administration, Instruction, Strategic Development, and Student Success) is represented on the Core Team, co-led by Strategic Development and Student Services, and every level of employee from the President to maintenance staff are active in the work. We then added division co-led committees, established “School Leads” within Instruction, and continue to ensure, through either volunteer or intentional placement, broad representation within the Guided Pathways structure.

In addition to broad engagement, CPTC has also embedded Guided Pathways into college-wide events throughout the academic year. Every in-service for faculty this year has had a Guided Pathways component; our “Opening Day” (convocation) was under a Guided Pathways theme and featured a presentation from our Guided Pathways coach; and we’ve embedded the Guided Pathways pillars and practices in our strategic planning efforts. Regular updates on the work being done in each committee are provided to campus through the President’s weekly emails to the campus community.

1. **What aspects of this work has gone especially well and what has been challenging? How are you approaching these challenges?**

Going Well- We have been traveling down the path of becoming a Guided Pathways institution for more than three years – well before we applied for grant funding. To that end, we’ve found that kind of sense-making and ground work has led to a broad understanding of and commitment to the effort. Our Executive Team is focused on ensuring that Guided Pathways is a part of our governance and decision-making, and is focused on the adaptive changes necessary to make it successful. Our Institutional Research team has also provided consistent and crucial support to ensure our discussions and decisions are data-focused. The members of the committees are dedicated - showing up, doing the work, and moving the initiative forward. Training has been provided consistently and cohort retreat attendees have come from broad areas to ensure commitment amongst the entire institution.

Challenges- Commitment is great, but it’s time to truly deepen the work and allow for long conversations necessary to examine data, review potential solutions, and work collaboratively to implement them. This challenge is one we are in the midst of making adjustments to handle. We are challenged by the lack of available time, our four collective bargaining agreements and how we can apply previous language to new needs, as well as meeting the timelines established by the grant deliverables. Our college is exploring a potential “common hour(s)” that will create some space for these efforts. This could include a weekly time set aside for Guided Pathways participation.

1. **How are you actively engaging your campus in this work beyond Guided Pathways workgroups or committees? How are you making the case for *why* this work is needed and what remains to be done in this area?**

We have made use of existing space in our in-service (faculty) sessions, our “Opening Day” convocation (all staff and faculty), and our annual all faculty and staff professional development day to ensure the concepts permeate more deeply. Each of these days has featured both Guided Pathways-specific presentations and space and time to work on related tasks such as learning outcomes or data review. We’ve also held intentional meetings with areas of the college that are finding it more difficult to connect with the topics – such as maintenance/facilities/custodial staff. The College President and Guided Pathways co-leads met separately with this staff group to talk about the connections of Guided Pathways to their work.

Guided Pathways, and the promise of increased success it brings for our students, is also embedded in, and supported and reinforced by, other work the College has done and continues to do to increase access, retention, and completion. In February, CPTC administered the ICAT employee survey developed by Achieving the Dream to measure institutional preparedness for student success-centered change along seven dimensions. The responses from faculty and staff, and perhaps more importantly, the morning dedicated to discussing the results with colleagues from across the college at the all-college professional development day, provided meaningful information to the Guided Pathways leadership about employee perception of the College’s readiness for institutional change. These conversations led to concrete ideas to improve readiness and communication in preparation for the necessary changes to implement Guided Pathways. Asking employees to respond and also asking them to help derive the meaning and impact of responses is another method of engaging the campus in connecting broader activities and information to Guided Pathways-specific challenges and solutions.

We make the case for “why” with data. We’ve distributed a series of data stories that visualize our student success rates (completion, equity gaps) as a way to engage faculty/staff in understanding why this effort is important. We have also increased efforts to provide data to faculty consistently so they can see their own success results and those of their colleagues. In response to ICAT data suggesting employees would like more training in accessing and using CPTC’s data resources, Institutional Research has developed video walkthroughs for dashboards and begun a series of “Data Dive” meetings to provide hands-on training and a venue for cross-division discussion of institutional metrics.

**Reflecting on the Guided Pathways model and your progress to date:**

1. **What have been some biggest successes/accomplishments with regard to the Guided Pathways Essential Practices during the past year?**

CPTC has made tremendous progress with several essential practices in the past year, including those highlighted below.

Faculty and Staff Communication and Engagement- With CPTC’s Executive Team support, we have established a broad-based committee structure to develop, implement, and refine each Guided Pathways element. The Guided Pathways Core Team serves as the overarching steering body for Guided Pathways. The Core Team consists of 21 members including the College President, four faculty, eight instructional administrators, five student success administrators, two members from Strategic Development, and one member from Finance and Administration. This committee leads the Guided Pathways essential practices of faculty and staff engagement and communication. Four sub-committees lead pillar/work areas. The committees are: Retention/Completion, Outreach/Recruitment, Student Learning, and EDI (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion). The committees have joint leadership with Instruction and Student Success. Members of committees were sought through a college-wide volunteer process. Once volunteers were identified, additional members were added by the Executive Team and Core Team Co-Leads to ensure broad representation and input. Committees report to, seek guidance from, and participate in the Guided Pathways Core Team, which serves as the leadership body for Guided Pathways at CPTC.

Additionally, the college community has been engaged in the effort through several mediums such as:

* Guided Pathways Book Clubs were held in divisions to support sense-making of Guided Pathways. Participants read *Redesigning America’s Community Colleges* and discussed its applicability at CPTC.
* Videos were sent to all faculty and staff via email sharing updates about Guided Pathways efforts at CPTC.
* School (Meta Major) and Academic Leads were hired and provided with stipends (funded by Guided Pathways) to provide faculty leadership and voice to initiatives.
* Guided Pathways has been presented and/or discussed at the following: Opening Day (convocation) 2017, 2018; Faculty In-Service November 2018, February 2019, and April 2019.
* Each cohort retreat delegation has included attendees from all college divisions in order to build advocates for the work.
* Program videos have been made to highlight hands-on learning and career opportunities.
* All college celebrations occur twice per year to inform the campus about progress on GP initiatives, staff champions, and other awards/recognitions to highlight the good work being done.

Each Guided Pathways Committee developed an annual work plan (January 2019) presented to Guided Pathways Core Team Co-Leads. Action plans were then refined to ensure they focus on current practice and actions necessary to reach scale in the essential practices. Finally, a Guided Pathways budget process was established so that committees could request funding to assist with their work on essential practices.

Faculty to faculty communication is a critical piece of creating buy-in. To support this, a faculty lead in each of the 7 schools was chosen to champion the work of Guided Pathways within their Meta Major (“School” at CPTC). School Leads work with program faculty, further explain Guided Pathways, and assist with developing program maps. Three additional leads for Academic programs (General Education and Transitional Studies) were also chosen to facilitate conversation with program faculty on how to embed/contextualize/co-req courses along a degree path that will lead to better completion rates.

Meta Majors and Programs of Study- Meta Majors have been identified and implemented in marketing materials, on the website, and throughout the College in places as varied as data dashboards and the way graduates were arranged at graduation. CPTC developed 7 schools: Business and Personal Services, Health and Human Development, Automotive and Trades, Manufacturing, Nursing, STED (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Design), and Aviation & Aerospace.

As part of the overall alignment of programs and schools, the College’s new Institutional Outcomes and Assessment Manager has built a plethora of resources for faculty to review and update their program learning outcomes. Program learning outcomes have been identified and finalized for over 90% of programs to date, a huge undertaking for faculty and school leads and a significant milestone in CPTC’s progress towards scaling essential practices such as program mapping.

Intake and Entry Advising- CPTC has completely revamped its entrance process to place heavy focus on early guidance and support for prospective and new students. Currently, every prospective student that wants to attend CPTC, regardless of campus (Lakewood, Puyallup, or online) is required to meet with an entry specialist at the Lakewood campus’ new Welcome Center. When meeting in person is not possible, entry services staff can meet virtually with those students on a case-by-case basis. Students complete a brief intake that pre-qualifies them for workforce funding and connects them to any on campus resources for which they may be eligible (e.g., Veteran’s services, disability support, etc.). Entry specialists discuss CPTC programs, assist students in choosing a Meta Major and program, go through the steps to enrollment, and help students understand their degree plans and register for first quarter classes. Once a student is registered for classes, they are invited to a mandatory in-person orientation held the week before classes start.

Once students matriculate and begin taking classes, they are assigned a program advisor who has an area of specialty based on CPTC’s 7 Meta Majors. Advisors work proactively with their assigned students on retention/completion initiatives including: early alert follow-up, providing resources for students not meeting satisfactory academic progress, visits to classrooms 2-3 times per quarter, in-person group registration, and other initiatives designed to connect advisors with students in-person and in the classroom as well as the Advising Center. Advisors work with assigned program faculty to identify students who are at-risk, to develop updated degree plans, and to problem solve program challenges.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion- The EDI committee worked with various campus stakeholders on a Diversity Factbook that details achievement rates among subpopulations on campus including by race/ethnicity, disability status, veteran status, gender, income status, first generation status, and single parents. The Factbook will be used to identify gaps in achievement, develop interventions and goals to decrease the gaps, and measure progress with each annual publication. In addition, the EDI committee developed a common set of terms and definitions so that internal and external stakeholders can communicate with a common understanding. CPTC will finalize new hires in July 2019 that will help further EDI work, including a student diversity programs coordinator and a Chief Diversity Officer. These are both brand new hires to the College and will help with focusing our work on EDI initiatives. Finally, CPTC’s Board of Trustees approved a 4th Core Theme of Equity and will identify key performance indicators to measure progress on campus EDI goals.

1. **What have your biggest setbacks been and how are you approaching these? Where does your college most need to focus time, energy, and resources during the coming year in order to make progress in implementing the Guided Pathways?**

Setbacks

* Time- Although Guided Pathways committees are meeting regularly, some staff and faculty are finding it difficult to attend. Since most faculty teach in a block schedule they are committed from roughly 8 AM-3 PM depending upon the program. Therefore, most meetings happen after 3 PM, which can create a scheduling challenge if staff/faculty are on several committees. This also impacts the speed at which decisions can be made if it takes several meetings to bring staff up to speed. The college is considering several models to carve out additional time including a common hour and limiting the number of committees so that staff/faculty can focus their time and energy on the most impactful work toward Guided Pathways and overall college goals.
* Interconnectedness of Change- Work on Guided Pathways essential practices has been divvied out to the 5 Guided Pathways committees. Often, when considering essential practices, the work crosses several divisions/departments and committees. For example, when the Student Learning Committee discusses redesign of program maps, program faculty need to engage several stakeholders to ensure they are considering the impact of changes they are proposing. If they want to embed General Education throughout a program, that has impacts for Advising, Scheduling, Facilities, and the faculty contract. We can’t do these changes in silos or we’ll miss important perspectives that could assist us in developing a better product for students and the campus at large. The Guided Pathways Core Team is trying to play a larger role in ensuring good communication across committees so that impacts of work in one area is discussed at Core Team which has broad representation across campus and can better vet ideas/conversations.
* Constraints of Faculty Contract - Currently, the faculty contract requires that each full time faculty member teach a specific number of credits or hours. As the Student Learning Committee begins work on program maps, faculty are concerned about the impact of course pathways changes on their teaching load and compensation. To fully engage faculty in this work, we will develop and negotiate the contract to ensure their participation and ownership in the process.
* Curriculum Designer- It took much longer than anticipated to hire a curriculum designer to help faculty develop program maps, learning outcomes, and program outcomes. After two failed searches, a curriculum designer has been hired and has begun working with faculty.

**Areas of Focus for 2019-2020**

* Program Maps- The Student Learning Committee will embark on the challenging work of redesigning program maps in 2019-20. They will start with 7 programs as a pilot, then continue to scale up the work throughout the year until all programs have new maps. This will be a campus-wide effort with staff/faculty from all divisions having opportunities to provide feedback and consultation. Among the essential practices related to map redesign requiring consideration and agreement are rethinking math pathways, identifying gatekeeper courses, scheduling of courses, and ensuring students take college level Math/English within the first year of enrollment. All of this work will be occurring concurrently as maps are redesigned.
* EDI- With the hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) and a student diversity programs coordinator, work will ramp up to identify campus-wide EDI goals and interventions to decrease achievement gaps. These expert resources will provide guidance and research on best practices to the EDI committee and the campus as a whole, building up diversity competencies on campus concurrent with Guided Pathways work. The EDI committee will work with all committees on essential practices to ensure this work does not become siloed or seen as only the CDO’s responsibility.
* Technology- The Retention/Completion committee is currently vetting different technology solutions that will help students/staff/faculty monitor progress toward a credential. Technology being considered assists staff with knowing which students are on or off track on their program maps. It also identifies students who may need early intervention to help with academic difficulties.

1. **Reflecting on what you’ve learned so far, what parts of Guided Pathways seem especially practical, valuable and useful to students? Are there aspects of the Guided Pathways model that aren’t working very well yet? What needs to be changed or augmented to make them work better? What’s missing from the Guided Pathways model that you’d like to see added?**

Practical, valuable and useful to students-

* New Intake Process- Guided Pathways work has streamlined the intake process, creating a quicker, more efficient process. Entry specialists meet with all new students to help them through the steps to enrollment, better understand programs/maps, and create a first quarter plan. A prospective student can now get everything done in one trip and be ready to enroll. In the past this may have taken several trips to campus and visits to several offices. Now, students work essentially with one staff member to do everything needed for enrollment. This personalized approach has led to high satisfaction ratings and a high enrollment yield.
* New Advising Structure- Taking a proactive/intrusive approach has led to gains in persistence and retention. Advisors are assigned to programs. They work with students in specific programs from the time they enroll until the time they graduate. Advisors visit classrooms in their assigned programs at least twice per quarter and follow up on early alerts. Advisors are more connected to students and faculty which has led to greater collaboration on student issues/concerns, and education plans.
* CPTC Website- The college website has been redesigned with Guided Pathways in mind. Programs are listed by Meta Majors and each program site has the following:
  + Program video
  + Program learning outcomes
  + Career information and job trends

Students have access to a wealth of information about the program in one place, making it easier to find answers to their questions and make informed decisions about programs of study, including the commitments required for each one and the career outcomes associated with completion.

* Math/English Pathways- Work is ongoing to shorten the math/English pathway, particularly in developmental education. English is working on the accelerated model and now is at scale with an English 94/101 block for those students who need additional support. This included removing one developmental English class, thereby shortening the time it takes students to progress to college-level. Math faculty recently were awarded a 3 year grant from College Spark to work on math pathways redesign. This will include revising the placement process and moving to a co-requisite support model instead of developmental math classes, shortening time to degree and increasing college-level math enrollment and pass rates.

Aspects that aren’t working well yet, and what needs to be changed to make it work better-

* Scheduling- As a technical college, programs exist on a block schedule, roughly 8 AM-3 PM each day depending upon the program. Although this does have some benefits such as keeping cohorts of students together, it presents scheduling challenges for other courses. Scheduling general education courses on top of a full day of program courses can be daunting for students, particularly if they need to work or have family commitments. Many students have credits load in excess of 20 credits per term just to fit in general education or pre-requisite courses. Some students save their general education courses for the end and never complete them after finishing program courses. In some programs, students can earn licensing or industry credentials without completing a degree, so they complete program courses and enter employment without finishing at CPTC. To encourage timely degree completion and interwoven general education, the entire structure of credit loads and teaching loads needs to be re-imagined. High credit loads aren’t sustainable from a student perspective and the faculty contract may need some creative solutions to ensure faculty teaching loads and compensation are addressed fairly. Finally, CPTC primarily schedules courses one quarter in advance. The current scheduling process takes too long and is riddled with errors. To get to an annual or two-year schedule will be a challenge. A task force is working to map out the scheduling process and timelines and make recommendations for improvement. CPTC needs a clear, simple process that makes it easier to schedule courses and rooms. The College is migrating to a centralized room reservation system, which will support this work. This task force’s research and recommendations will go hand in hand with program mapping in the coming year.
* Exploratory Sequence- At admission, students are required to choose a program and Meta Major. As a technical college, students aren’t able to choose an exploratory sequence of courses that gives them time/space to choose an area of study. For financial aid purposes, students have to choose a program right away. Consequently, a defined exploratory sequence does not currently exist for all programs. Work will begin to identify an exploratory sequence as a part of our program mapping work, and a default sequence will be piloted in Spring 2020. Additionally, COLL 102 (College Success) may be contextualized as a part of the Meta Major’s exploratory sequence. Other ideas for an exploratory sequence include program information sessions, orientation, and an introductory course in each school.

What’s missing from the model?-

* Recognition of Differences Between Technical and Comprehensive Colleges- As Clover Park progresses in our implementation of Guided Pathways, we’ve encountered some substantial differences in operation and philosophy that make the challenges and opportunities quite different for us compared to a comprehensive community college. For example, course sequencing is less of a challenge at a technical college due to logical sequences of skills and competencies in a prof-tech program, often mandated by licensing or program accreditation requirements. On the other hand, as mentioned above, fitting general education courses into traditionally clock-hour based programs with 7 hours blocked each day is more difficult for technical colleges. Support, resources, examples, and training opportunities contextualized to the technical college environment would be beneficial for our faculty and staff.