

RIO SALADO COLLEGE

EXPANDING COMPLETION OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW STUDENT GROUPS THROUGH CUSTOMIZED PATHWAYS

“If we are to increase the number of college graduates and supply our communities with an educated workforce, we need new models of education. We must be innovative—we must accelerate completion through our public and private partnerships, we must be cost-efficient and effective in leveraging technology in order to expand access and increase our ability to serve students.”

CHRIS BUSTAMANTE, RIO SALADO COLLEGE

AT A GLANCE:

Targeted Degree Program:

Associate of Arts and Associate in General Studies

Opening Date: Fall 2013

First-Year Enrollment: 1,000

Anticipated Students Served in First Five Years: At least 5,000

Tuition Model: Current tuition cost, already comparatively low for an associate's degree, reduced by credit for prior learning

Geographies Served: Arizona

Targeted Students: Pell-eligible students seeking an Associates of Arts, Associates in Applied Science, and Associate in General Studies degree; with subpopulations of students seeking credit for prior learning and those entering the program holding a GED

HALLMARKS:

New services developed specifically for targeted student populations

Online student portal that provides a map to completion

Alternative credit options

Peer mentors

Real-time analytics reports for students, faculty, and staff

Customized, guided intervention response system that allows faculty, advisors, and staff to implement targeted online interventions based on students' online activity

Rio Salado College's commitment to student success has been recognized on many occasions. For example, the college was named one of three winners of the 2012 Council for Higher Education Accreditation Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes. The college has expanded on that demonstrated commitment, designing and implementing approaches to make the completion of its most transferable degrees, the associate of arts and the associate in general studies, dramatically more attainable by three distinct populations:

- Students in early college programs in area high schools
- Workers whose employers use Rio Salado's educational service partnerships for employee training
- Individuals possessing skills and knowledge obtained outside higher education who are seeking to receive credit for prior learning

As a student from one of these target groups enrolls in a degree program he or she will access a custom-

ized online portal called RioCompass. In the portal, she can submit previously earned credits for evaluation, apply credit for prior learning, and select her intended degree to obtain a customized map of the courses needed to complete it.

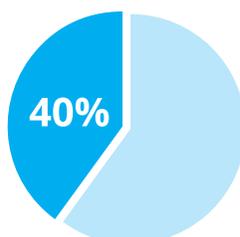
The portal also provides her with contact information for a personal advisor, a professional who will help her find her way and serve as a degree-completion companion. Once the student begins to take courses online, both she and her advisors are able to use real-time analytics reports and a customized intervention and assessment feedback system to ensure that any problems in learning or in completing course work can receive timely attention.

Further support is also available via a network of peer mentors drawn from the student body.

These peer mentors support the student's transition to college, college life, college resources, and college success.

The new services available for students from the target populations represent steps forward with a re-

PELL-ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:



PRICE TO STUDENTS:

\$5,400 currently for students not in the pathways identified for this program, falling to **\$1,482/FTE** for students with 21 credits for prior learning

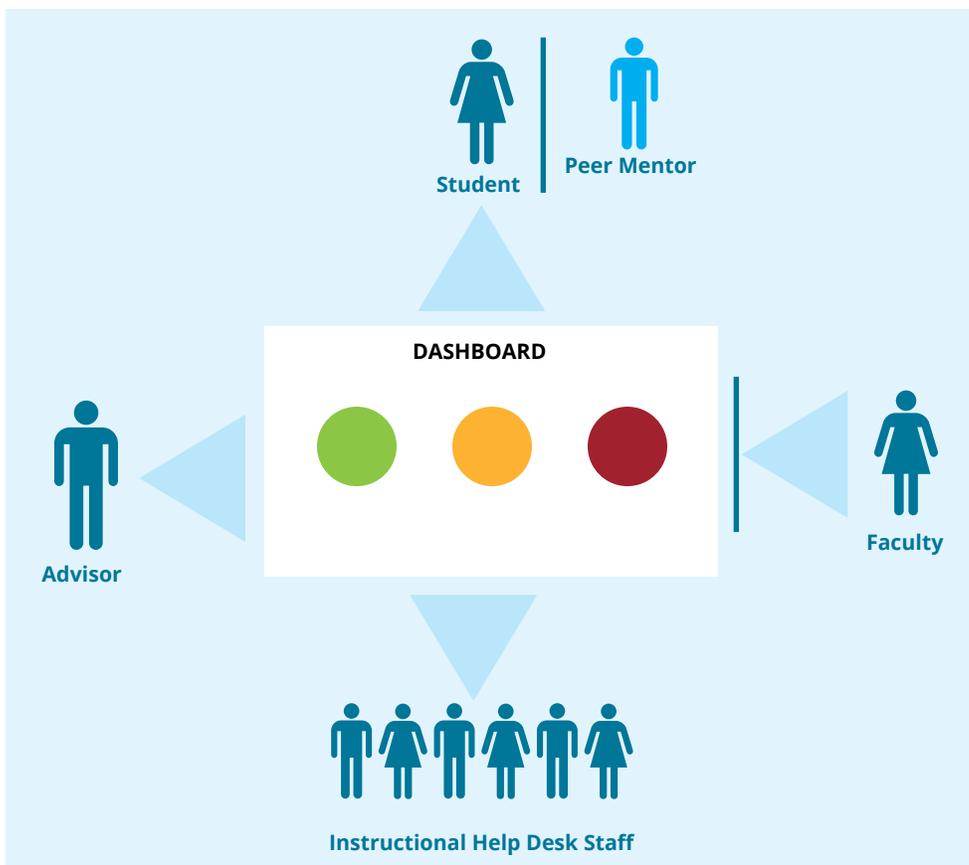
COST PER FTE:

\$4,074

DELIVERY:

online and in person

STUDENT SUPPORT MODEL



Rio Salado's RioPACE system is at the core of their approach to student support. The dashboard gives instructors real-time data about how often students log in to the online platform, how long they spend on the site, and how quickly they progress. In addition to faculty, that data is fed to advisors, instructional help desk staff, and the students themselves.

Instead of hard numbers, a student's progress is reflected in the colors of a stoplight. Red signals that a student has a serious issue while green appears if the student is on track.

For struggling students, a Guided Evaluation Assessment and Response (GEAR) system provides targeted feedback.

cently implemented early-alert system at Rio Salado, RioPACE (Progress and Course Engagement). RioPACE provides instructors with information about student performance in three critical areas that correlate with student success: login frequency, site engagement, and pace. The system displays alert levels for each student within the instructor's online course roster (green if all areas appear on track, yellow if there are some warning signs, red if there is a serious issue).

In the new program, Rio Salado is improving the reporting system to allow more key individuals to access the performance data in RioPACE: the student herself, the student's advisor, and key support staff who work in the instructional help desk. At the

same time, faculty and support staff are gaining new capacities to provide enhanced feedback, consistent grading, and an improved learning experience to the student through a Guided Evaluation Assessment and Response (GEAR) system.

The design of GEAR enables instructors to focus efforts on providing this kind of targeted and personalized feedback by integrating additional content and examples that make conceptual linkages and illustrate real-world applications. In this program, GEAR capability is available to the instructors of general education courses included in the degree pathways for students in the target groups.

In addition, students are tracked and monitored through a Guided In-

tervention and Response (GivR) system. This system operates similar to GEAR in that targeted and personalized interventions are provided for those students who are "triggered" in the system. These triggers include, for example, frequent calls to the helpdesk, low performance data from RioPACE, and recommendations from advisors and counselors.

Through these new and enhanced learning systems and student support services, students experience a significant shift in the way they engage with content, experts, and each other.

The systems and services, once tested in the degree programs for the targeted populations, may be applied college-wide.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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