California
Guided Pathways

What is the "California Guided Pathways Model?"

The California Guided Pathways Model is an *integrated*, *institution-wide* approach to student success based on intentionally designed, clear, coherent and structured educational experiences, informed by available evidence, that guide each student effectively and efficiently from her/his point of entry through to attainment of high-quality postsecondary credentials and careers with value in the labor market.

Central to the pathways model are clear, educationally coherent program maps—which include specific course sequences, progress milestones, and program learning outcomes—that are aligned to what will be expected of students upon program completion in the workforce and in education at the next level in a given field. Students are helped from the start to explore academic and career options, choose a program of study, and develop a plan based on the program maps. These plans simplify student decision-making, and they enable colleges to provide predictable schedules, frequent feedback, and targeted support as needed to help students stay on track and complete their programs more efficiently. They also facilitate efforts by faculty to ensure that students are building the skills across their programs that they will need to succeed in employment and further education.

Guided Pathways Essential Practices

The four dimensions of the Pathways Model, together with essential practices under each, are the following:

1. *Clarify paths to student end goals*

   a) Simplify students' choices with default **program maps** developed by faculty and advisors that show students a clear pathway to completion, further education and employment in fields of importance to the region.
   b) Establish **transfer pathways** through alignment of pathway courses and expected learning outcomes with transfer institutions, to optimize applicability of community college credits to university majors.

2. *Help students choose and enter a pathway*

   a) Bridge **K12 to higher education** by assuring early remediation in the final year of high school through the application of courseware technology in strong K12/higher ed partnerships, such as the TN SAILS model.
   b) Redesign traditional remediation as an **"on-ramp" to a program of study**, which helps students explore academic and career options from the beginning of their college experience, aligns math and other foundation skills coursework with a student's program of study, and integrates and contextualizes instruction to build academic and non-academic foundation skills throughout the college-level curriculum, particularly in program "gateway" courses.

This overview is excerpted from a longer unpublished document developed by the Community College Research Center (CCRC) and the AACC Pathways Project.

c) Provide **accelerated remediation** to help *very poorly prepared* students succeed in college-level courses as soon as possible.

3. Help students stay on path

a) Support students through a strong **advising** process, embedded and ongoing in the pathway experience and supported by appropriate technology, to help students make informed choices, strengthen clarity about transfer and career opportunities at the end of their chosen college path, ensure they develop an academic plan with predictable schedules, monitor their progress, and intervene when they go off track.
b) Embed **academic and non-academic supports** throughout students' programs to promote student learning and persistence.

4. Ensure that students are learning

a) Establish program-level **learning outcomes** aligned with the requirements for success in employment and further education in a given field and apply the results of learning outcomes assessment to improve the effectiveness of instruction across programs.
b) Integrate **group projects, internships, and other applied learning experiences** to enhance instruction and student success in courses across programs of study.
c) Ensure incorporation of **effective teaching practice** throughout the pathways.

Essential Capacities for Guided Pathways Reforms

Research and experience in the field indicate that the following capacities are essential for motivating and supporting higher education institutions and systems to undertake the broad-scale institutional reforms involved in implementing guided pathways effectively and at scale.

- **Leadership** demonstrating skills for managing and sustaining large-scale transformational change.
- Broad and authentic **engagement** of college faculty and staff—particularly advisors—in the design, implementation, evaluation, and ongoing improvement of pathways for students.
- **Institutional will and capacity to use data and evidence** to design academic and career pathways, monitor student progress, and implement needed improvements over time.
- **Technological tools and infrastructure** appropriate to support student progress through guided pathways.
- Commitment to the level of **strategically targeted professional development** that will be required to design and implement pathways at scale.
- **Policy conditions** established at the state, governing board, system, and institutional level that provide incentives, structures and supports for pathway design and implementation at scale while removing barriers.
- A **continuing action research agenda** that examines the efficacy of guided pathways and develops practical knowledge and tools to support effective implementation at scale.

Exploring the Context for Guided Pathways

- Recognition that the structure of community colleges is not designed to support completion outcomes
- Students continue to be trapped in long developmental sequences in math and English
- University transfer rates have remained relatively static
- The demand for a qualified workforce and college graduates is more intense than ever

We can do better to get students to a better future

GUIDED PATHWAYS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Self-Assessment Outline: Porterville College (Draft)

		Scale of Adoption			
Key Element		**Pre-Adoption**	**Early Adoption**	**In Progress**	**Full Scale**
Inquiry	1. Cross-Functional Inquiry				
	2. Shared Metrics				
	3. Integrated Planning				
Design	4. Inclusive Decision-Making Structures				
	5. Intersegmental Alignment				
	6. Guided Major and Career Exploration Opportunities				
	7. Improved Basic Skills				
	8. Clear Program Requirements				
Implementation	9. Proactive and Integrated Academic and Student Supports				
	10. Integrated Technology Infrastructure				
	11. Strategic Professional Development				
	12. Aligned Learning Outcomes				
	13. Assessing and Documenting Learning				
	14. Applied Learning Opportunities				
Overall Self-Assessment					