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ABSTRACT COMMUNITY COLLEGE LINKAGE PROGRAM

Overview

The ***Community College Linkage (CCL)*** program encourages, facilitates, and supports the enrollment of high-achieving community college students at independent four-year colleges and universities. *CCL* is designed to contribute to the national goal of increasing college completion numbers. Through *CCL* programs and services, community college students will gain access to member four-year institutions; receive academic, social, and personal support to prepare for this transition; and establish a social network with other community college scholars. At the same time, *CCL* will work closely with four-year institutions to influence policy, practices, and campus culture to establish and sustain the integration of these students into their campus communities. *CCL* seeks to assist students whose lives will be transformed by this opportunity while they themselves help transform the learning communities at these four-year schools.

CCL will be a national network comprising a number of regional consortia whose members are community colleges and four-year colleges and universities. Students participating in the program will have access to the four-year schools within the national network. A national office will coordinate the activities of the network.

The *CCL* concept is based on the successful program in place at Bucknell University since 2006; a program supported by a five-year grant from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation as part of its Community College Transfer Initiative.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is providing planning funds to develop the *CCL* concept into a working model. The proposal for this grant was supported by the American Association of Community Colleges, the College Board, the Council for Independent Colleges, and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

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Definition of Services Provided

CCL, through its regional offices, will provide various services and programs similar to transfer centers at institutions that enroll a large number of transfer students. Because of finite resources, many small-to-medium institutions cannot afford to fully support such an office. *CCL* leverages the power of collaboration and cooperation to meet the needs of these individual campuses, the needs of each student involved in the program, and to realize the collective potential of all involved.

Services available through each *CCL* regional consortium office:

- Partner institution identification and solicitation
- Student identification
- Articulation agreement standards
- Course equivalency standards
- Program-to-Program transfer standards
- Financial aid planning coordination
- Guidance and support to facilitate a smooth transition into the 4-year campus community
- Enrollment planning assistance
- Advising assistance
- Student network
- Faculty network
- Staff network
- Best practices library
- Regional fundraising

Services available through the *CCL* national office:

- Establish and manage the regional consortia offices
- Secure funding to support the establishment of each regional office
- Lead national fundraising efforts
- Manage ongoing improvements to the regional programs
- Coordinate the national network of regional consortia
 - Leverage all the applicable practices of the participating consortia
- Establish and support the national social network of students involved in the *CCL* program
- Program assessment
- Marketing and communications, including media relations