

Pathways Glossary of Terms

A

Advising (faculty)—two types: Formal & Informal Faculty advising.

Areas of Study (Meta-major) – As currently identified in YC Pathways, students making informed choices among a set of initial broad academic pathways, which lead to academic programs. For example, first-year students would choose an Area of Study in a broad area, such as STEM, health care, or social science, and then narrow into a more specific major, such as chemistry or nursing. (Bailey, et al.)

- Agriculture, Animals & Culinary
- Arts, Humanities & Communication
- Business
- Community Education
- Education, Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Exploratory
- Healthcare & Wellness
- Industry, Trades & Transportation
- Justice, Law & Public Safety
- Science, Engineering and Computers
- University Transfer & General Studies

B

Benchmark Courses (Milestone Courses) – Specific courses along the path to program completion that signal that one is or is not on track. Failure to meet a Benchmark could trigger a communication with a student, including discussing extra support or alternative program options. The intent is to give students useful feedback early and often. These courses provide realistic assessments of student progress and give students early signals about their prospects for success in a given field of study. This eliminates the problem of students putting off challenging courses until the consequences of changing majors becomes too damaging and costly. (Bailey, Jaggars, Jenkins; and Abele)

C

Completion – Graduation, attainment of degree or certificate

D

Declared Majors –Pathways students are expected to declare a major within the first two semesters in order to reduce wandering and unnecessary tuition expense. (Bailey, et al)

Default pathways—Students remain on their chosen path unless given approval to change by an adviser. Exploration outside one’s major is still allowed as intentional investigation, replacing aimless wandering. Students stay on track for graduation and fully understand the time and money consequences of making a change. (Bailey, et al)

E

Early Alert – A program activated and initiated by faculty for students not succeeding in any class. Under Pathways, Early Alert would particularly apply for Benchmark classes. Reports are submitted to Advising for intervention and notification of students. Also under Pathways, “heavy, hands-on intervention” would be applied for students not succeeding in specified courses for students’ declared major.

F

First Year Experience – A full year of heavy hands-on, intrusive intervention. It should include Gateway courses (Math and English as determined by major), a “College 101” type class, and a minimum of one Benchmark class per semester. (Klein)

Flow Chart (aka Program Map) – A recommended sequence of courses which serve as a default plan for students who intend to pursue the program. It may be flexible, providing options for fulfilling a particular General Education outcome, for example. In addition to flow charts, students and their advisors will have access to ordered lists of courses and requirements by program. These will serve as guides for building schedules when the prescribed default plan is not appropriate or advisable. (Bailey, et al.)

G

Gateway Courses – For Associate Degrees for transfer these are English and Math courses with typically high enrollment and high failure rates. Courses are aligned based on the declared major. (Fernandez). A course that identifies which Program of Study a student is pursuing.

M

Master Schedule (Block or Structured Schedules) – Master scheduling should be combined with whole program choices. Master scheduling is easiest to accomplish when it is used in whole programs of study. Students make one choice, their program of study, and then the college makes the decisions about the necessary sequence of courses. The college then blocks the required course sequences in coherent, connected schedules. This approach has the added benefit of eliminating common errors by students when choosing courses. Institutions benefit when they can predict with near certainty, often semesters or years in advance, the timing and capacity of required courses needed to complete those programs on schedule. (Fernandez)

Math Alignment to Majors – For many students, algebra is a serious obstacle to college success. Instead, we should use college mathematics, which better aligns with most non-STEM programs of study. College algebra has one purpose: calculus. (Leahy)

Milestone Courses – See **Benchmark Courses**

P

Pathway – A broad content area that students choose as they begin college. We can think of a Pathway as an Area of Study at YC. Each Pathway includes a set of courses that meet academic requirements that are common across several related programs of study. Students taking courses on a Pathway are able to explore degree options without losing credit or time toward completion. (Bailey, et al.)

Pipeline – The number of classes required for a degree/completion. In Pathways, the number of courses should be reduced. This is the case for the Developmental Education pipeline as well as for overall degrees. The data show that students are averaging 81 credit hours for a 60-hour associate's degree and 133 credits (120 is standard) for a bachelor's Degree. (Adams)

S

Student Success – Completion of certificate, degree, program, OR employment in their field

References

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