Creating a Culture of Care on a Campus and in a Community

Presentation at the NCII
Rural Guided Pathways Project
Minneapolis, MN
June 27-29, 2022

An Exercise

- Most educators have had a person who supported them during their education. Who was that person for you? How did they support you?

- Please share at your table for 3-5 minutes.

About the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC)

- How I got into higher education

- Over 14 years as a 501(c)3

- Two core initiatives: **Data Informed Education** and **Caring Campus**

- Authors of *Creating a Data-Informed Culture in Community Colleges* (Harvard Education Press, 2017)

- Work in 27 states

Creating a Data-Informed Culture in Community Colleges
A NEW MODEL FOR EDUCATORS
Brad C. Phillips and Jordan E. Horowitz
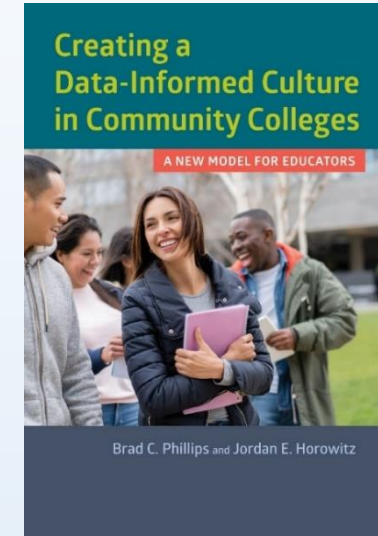
Caring Campus

Challenges of Rural Community Colleges

- Same work, regulations, and reporting
- Staff wear multiple hats
- Less funding
- Community may not have the same resources as suburban and urban areas
- Harder to attract talent
- College-going attitudes can suffer
- Gas prices

Recruitment vs. Keeping the Students You Have

- Recruitment is important
- But keeping the students you already have is important
- Grawe, 2018 Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education
- What it means to be a relationship builder
- Students want someone who "gets" them, even if they do not look like them – equity is about relationships
- Faculty and Professional Staff are interacting with students everyday and know their concerns and challenges

What is Caring Campus?

- An intentional effort to make students feel welcome and a sense of connectedness to your college

- Engages the underutilized professional staff who are typically missing from student success efforts

- Helps faculty and professional staff connect with one another and with other employee groups to create a positive college environment

- Creates behavior change that influences culture change across campus

- Causes the college to reexamine policy barriers to student success

- Currently in 88 colleges around the nation

Caring Campus

What is Caring Campus?

- Focuses on specific behaviors – not attitudes and opinions
- Based on research
- Behaviors are little to no cost
- Empower faculty and staff – work together as part of the student success and equity agenda
- Takes 6 months to 1 year to implement
- Outcomes are dramatic
- Little to no ongoing costs – behavior change is FREE
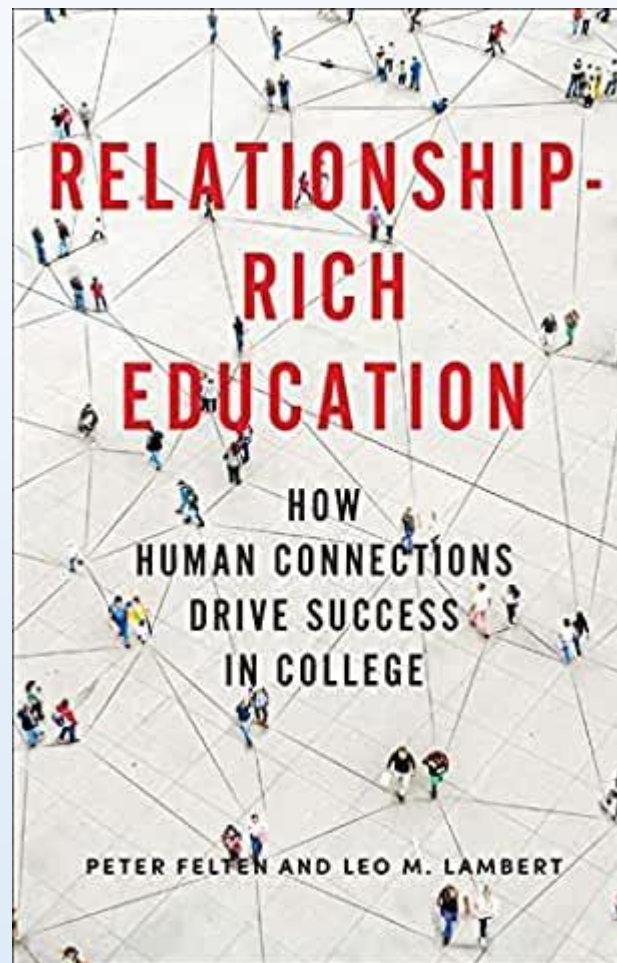- Works in both a face-to-face and virtual environment

Caring Campus

Research on Retention & Relationships
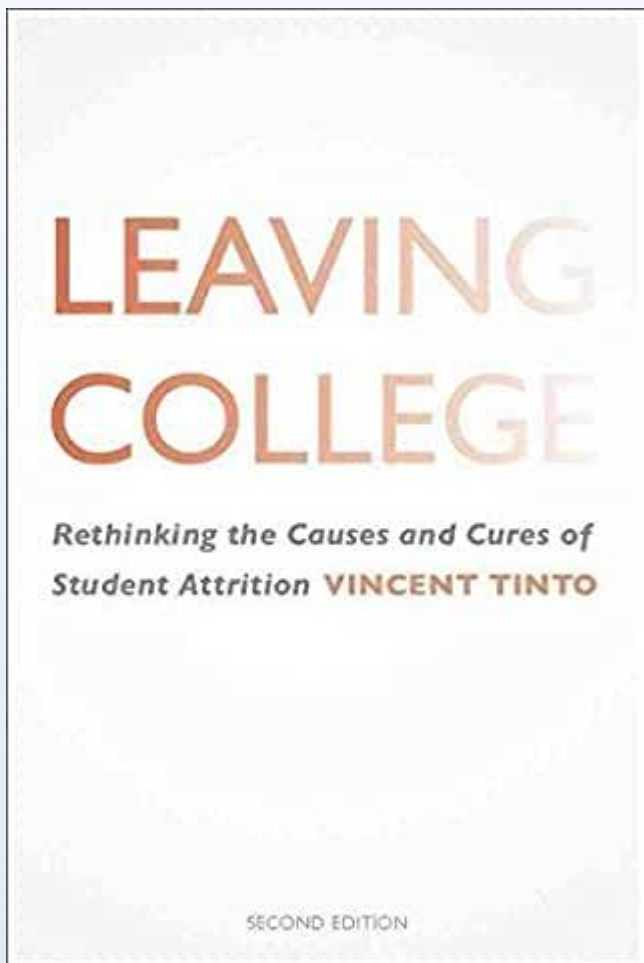
"...the secret of effective retention lies not in the types of programs institutions construct for their students, but in the underlying commitment to students that inspires these programs" (1993)

"Decades of research demonstrate that peer-to-peer, student-faculty, and student-staff relationships are the foundation of learning. Belonging and achieving in college...effects are particularly strong for students of color and first-generation students." (2020)

Transaction-Based Process vs. Relationship-Based Engagement

- We are a transaction based education system – improving success and equity is not considered

- Dollars exchanged for goods and services

- Antiseptic

- Must move to a relationship based education system – focusing on success and equity

- Making connections matter

- Human based and leverages programs and services
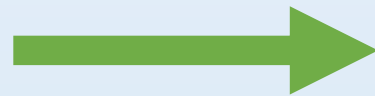
Top Five Behavioral Commitments

Unsung Heroes: Professional Staff

➢ Who is the first person a student engages with at a college campus?

➢ Who is there to help students when they have questions?

➢ Who is there to support students when they are lost and/or in crisis?

➢ Who is there to remove bureaucratic barriers to help that student be a student?

Professional Staff Behavioral Commitments

Face-to-Face	Virtual Environment
Ten Foot Rule: Whenever a student is within 10' and seems to need assistance take the initiative to approach them. Say hello, smile, and use a positive tone.	**Reaching Out**: If your college allows, reach out to students via phone, email, and text to let them know you're available to answer questions, respond to concerns, etc.
Nametags: Wear name badges or lanyards with the college name on them so that students will know who to approach with questions.	**Give Your Information Up Front**: Start each contact with your name & department. Ask for student's name and contact info in case you get disconnected.
Cross-Department Awareness: Learn about other departments so you know where to send students. Maintain accurate and up-to-date detailed directories.	**Cross-Department Awareness**: Learn about other departments so you know where to refer students. Maintain accurate and up-to-date detailed directories.
Warm Referrals: Call ahead or walk student to the office they need to get to. Follow up to ensure the student got there.	**Warm Referrals**: Use the student's callback info to call the receiving office, make the connection on the student's behalf, and ask them to contact the student. Follow-up.
First Week Greetings: During the first week of classes set up information tables and meet students in the parking lot, welcome students to the college.	**Reach out to students**: At key times such as the first week of classes, as course drop dates and filing for degrees approach; especially first time in college students, to ensure they have the information they need.

Community College Research Center Study of Caring Campus (2021)

✸ Caring Campus successfully positions professional staff as respected change makers.

✸ Caring Campus cultivates a sense of unity.

✸ Caring Campus enhances professional staff knowledge.

✸ Professional staff are also able to build their leadership skills and strengthen interpersonal relationships in ways that can lay the groundwork for future innovation and student-centered practices.

✸ Caring Campus has the potential to improve equity.

Top Six Behavioral Commitments

Seat Time: Faculty

➢Who has the opportunity to spend the most time with students?

➢Who is there to help students when they have questions?

➢Who is there to help students with their academic questions?

➢Who is there to support students reach their academic and career goals??

Faculty Behavioral Commitments

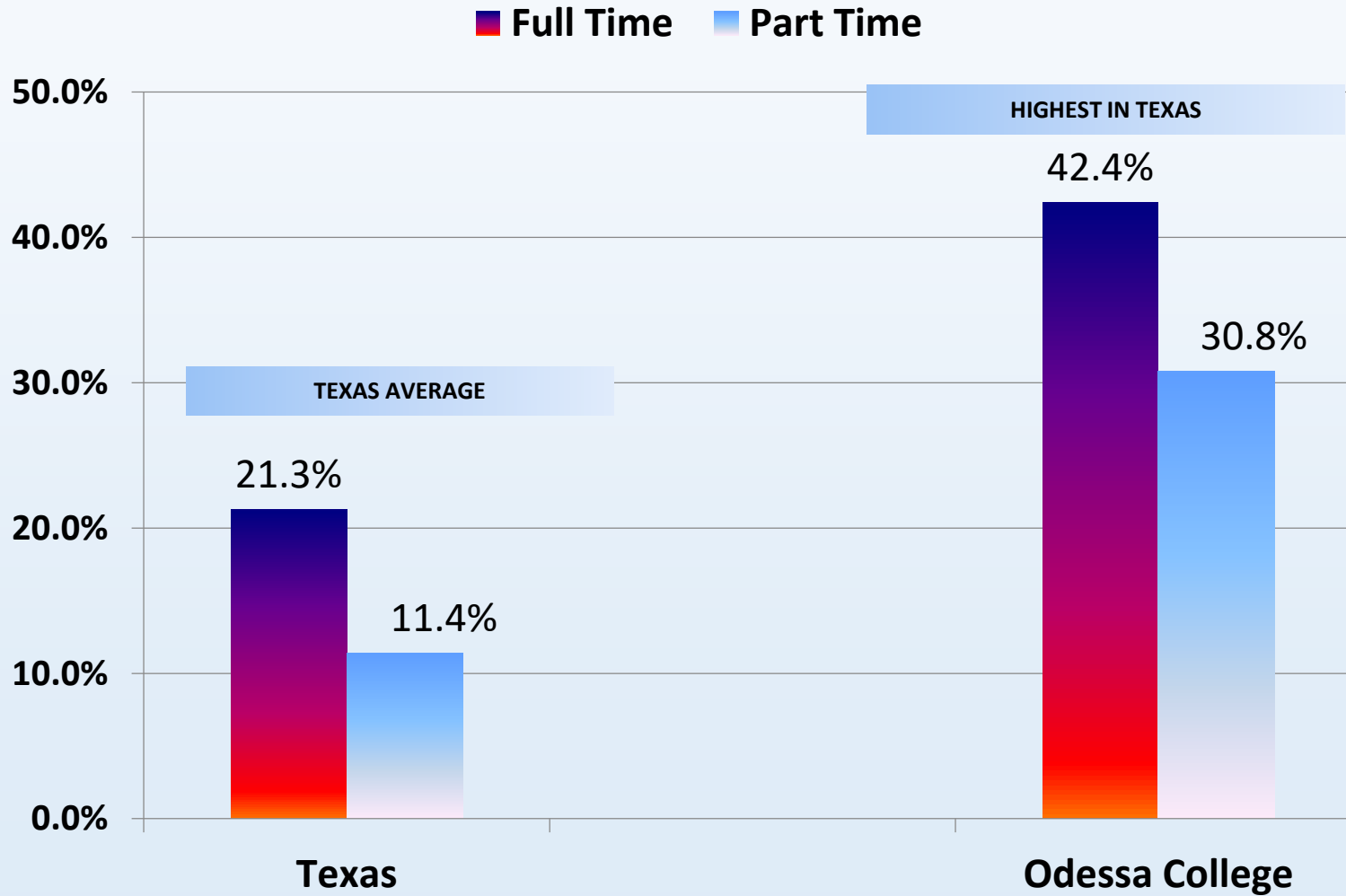| Face-to-Face (Classroom)	Virtual Environment
Welcome to the Course: Upon the first class meeting, faculty employ activities to engage and bond with all students.	**Welcome to the Course**: Before the first class meeting, a welcome letter is sent to all students who are asked to respond with a letter describing themselves.
Learn and Use Student Names: Faculty learn every student's preferred name and use their name whenever interacting with a student.	**Learn and Use Student Names**: Faculty learn every student's preferred name and use their name whenever interacting with a student in a synchronous and asynchronous environment.
Comprehensive Syllabus: "The Course Syllabus: A learning Centered Approach," Grunert O'Brien et al. is used to model the course syllabus.	**Comprehensive Syllabus**: "The Course Syllabus: A learning Centered Approach," Grunert O'Brien et al. is used to model the course syllabus.
Moments That Matter: Faculty meet with each and every student to get to know them. This one-on-one meeting can be done during "student hours" or during class.	**Moments That Matter**: Students are asked to write a paper about themselves. Comment on the paper and make sure that the paper is shared among all students.
Assignments Early and Often: A low stakes assignment is given at the first class meeting and higher stakes assignments are given early in the course. Quick feedback is provided to students about their performance and follow-up done with students if they are struggling.	**Assignments Early and Often**: A low stakes assignment is given at the first class meeting and higher stakes assignments are given early on in the course. Quick feedback is provided to students about their performance and follow-up done with students if they are struggling.
Situational Fairness: Understand that many students bring challenges that affect their learning and being successful in a course. It is key to provide them with understanding and compassion. Know that from time to time students will not turn in assignments and assessments on time due to factors outside of their control. Treat these incidents on a case by case basis.	**Situational Fairness**: Understand that many students bring challenges that affect their learning and being successful in a course. It is key to provide them with understanding and compassion. Know that from time to time students will not turn in assignments and assessments on time due to factors outside of their control. Treat these incidents on a case by case basis.

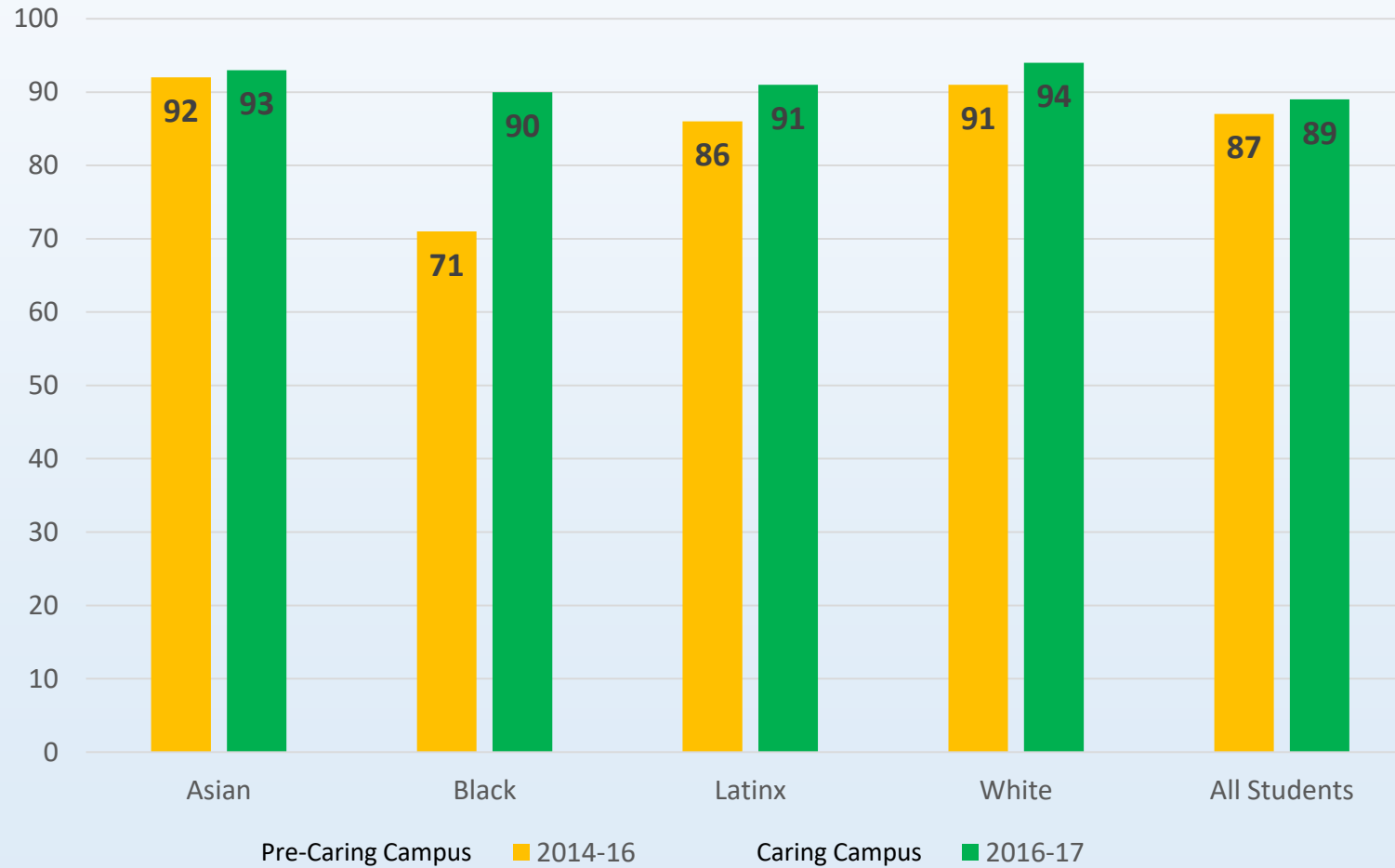Student Course Success Rates
Achievement Gap Closing: Odessa College
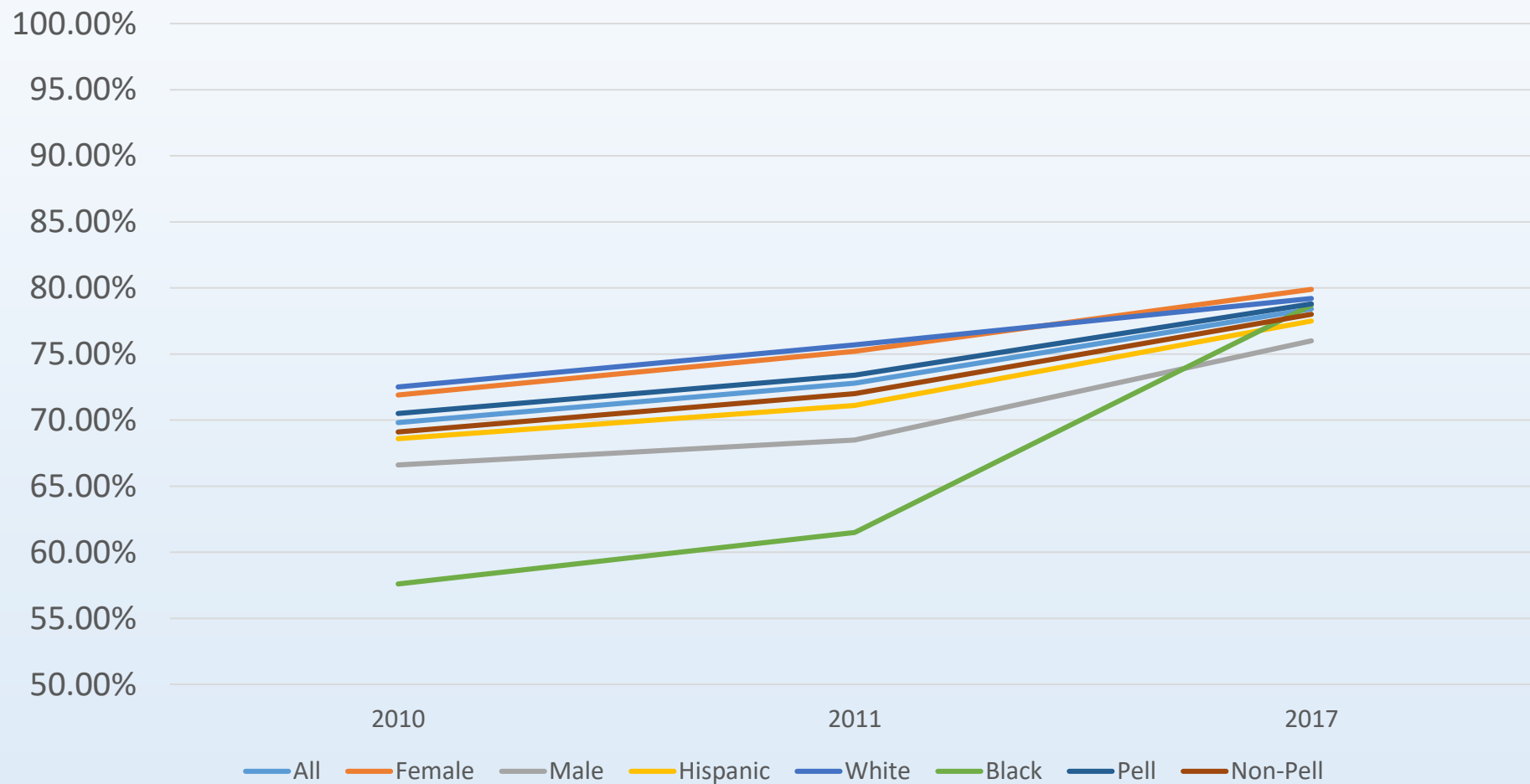
The Odessa College 2014 Cohort had the highest three-year graduation rate in Texas – more than 20% points above the Texas average
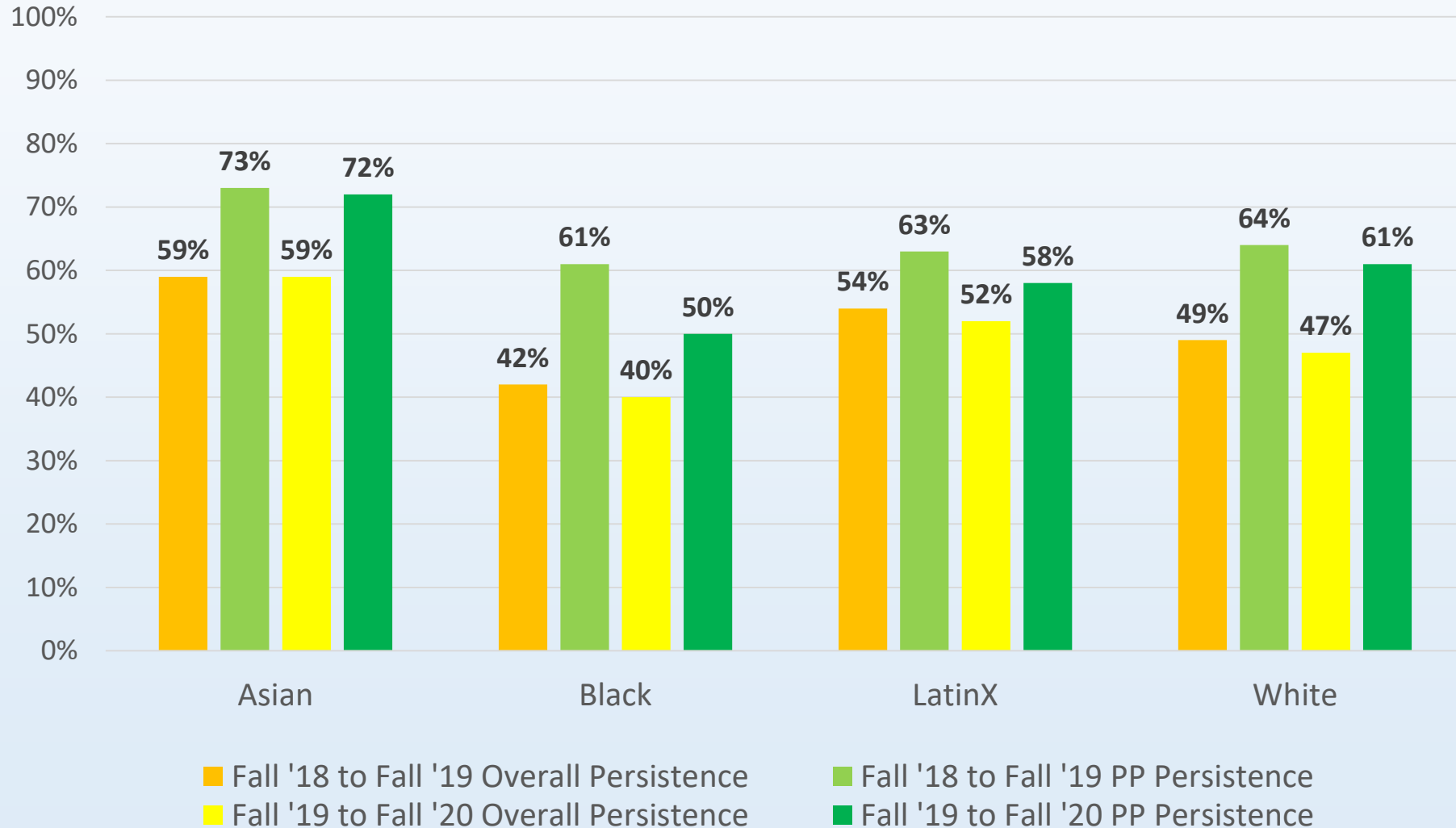
Full Time   Part Time

HIGHEST IN TEXAS

42.4%

30.8%

TEXAS AVERAGE

21.3%

11.4%

50.0%

40.0%

30.0%

20.0%

10.0%

0.0%

Texas

Odessa College

It's not just Odessa
Lake Washington Technical College
Course Success (in percent)

Oakton Community College
Three Year Transfer & Graduation Rates
Fall 2017 Entering Cohort

Caring Campus and Guided Pathways

Four Pillars of Guided Pathways

CLARIFY THE PATH

ENTER THE PATH

STAY ON THE PATH

ENSURE LEARNING
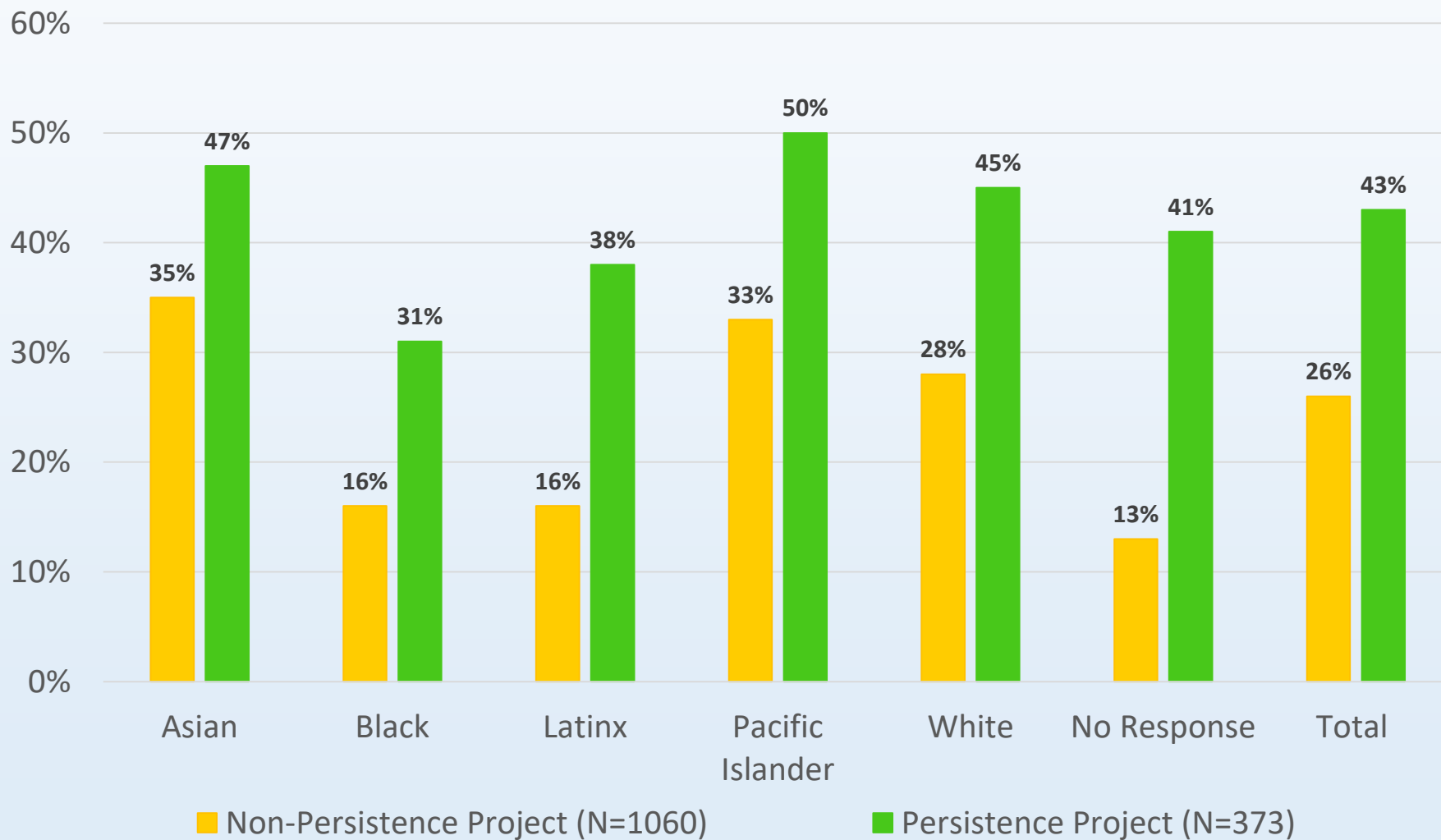
Clarifying the Path

- Professional staff focus on reducing barriers for application, choice of path, helping student pay for college.

- Faculty help make the path clear for students and help students make their choice.

Caring Campus and Guided Pathways

FOUR PILLARS OF GUIDED PATHWAYS

CLARIFY THE PATH

ENTER THE PATH

STAY ON THE PATH

ENSURE LEARNING

Enter the Path

- Professional staff connect with students in their first and subsequent contacts. Provide just in time problem solving.

- Faculty ensure that students feel that they can be successful from the 1st day of class. They connect with students on the 1st day.

Caring Campus and Guided Pathways

FOUR PILLARS OF GUIDED PATHWAYS

CLARIFY THE PATH

ENTER THE PATH

STAY ON THE PATH

ENSURE LEARNING

Stay on the Path

- Professional staff help students feel connected, stay connected and feel cared about throughout their educational experience.

- Faculty understand that students have complicated lives and make every effort to support students in their classes.

Caring Campus and Guided Pathways

FOUR PILLARS OF GUIDED PATHWAYS

CLARIFY THE PATH · ENTER THE PATH · STAY ON THE PATH · ENSURE LEARNING

Ensure Learning

- Professional staff create conditions so students can focus on their learning – removing barriers along the way to completion.

- Faculty connect with student who in-turn work hard to please that adult in authority who cares about them.

Moving Forward

- As you engage in your Guided Pathways work, please consider the human component.

- Creating a relationship-rich environment increases employee satisfaction.

- As leaders, you can model these behaviors and they will gain traction among your colleagues.

- Have fun with this – human beings want to connect and it feels good.

- You and your colleagues can be the person your students refer to when they talk about how educators supported them in their educational experience.

IEBC's YouTube Channel

https://www.youtube.com/iebcnow

Please subscribe

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