Engaging Community College Faculty in the National Conversation About Student Success and Completion

PUBLIC AGENDA

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IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Faculty think more students are completing – earning a certificate or degree or transferring – than actually are.

Average community college completion rate*: **39%**

But **most faculty (57%) overestimate** the completion rate to be 50% or higher at their school.
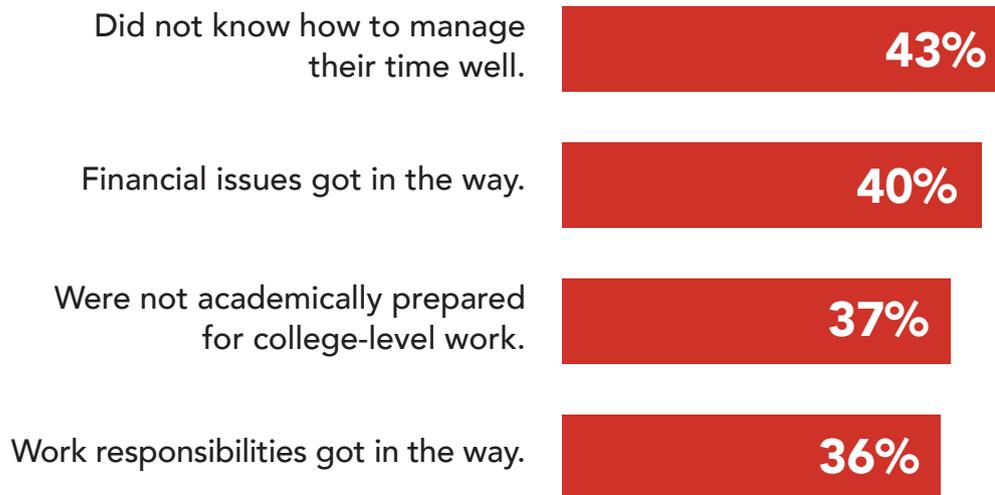
Faculty may have a gap in knowledge, but they still worry about completion:

43% of faculty agree that when it comes to their students, "**too few** earned a certificate or degree, or transferred."

*Juszkiewicz, Jolana. *Trends in Community College Enrollment and Completion Data, 2015*. Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges, 2015.

Faculty see the many challenges – on and off campus – that keep students from earning a certificate or degree or transferring.

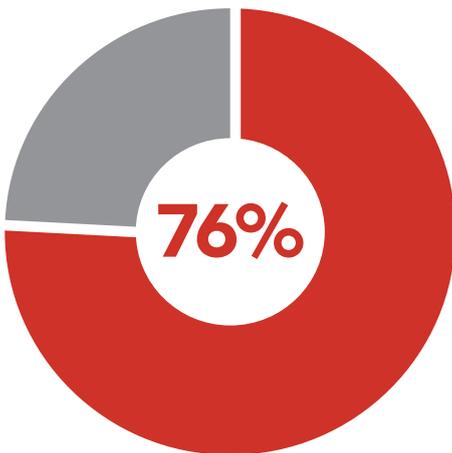Among their students who did not complete, faculty see the following as the top reasons:

Did not know how to manage their time well.	**43%**
Financial issues got in the way.	**40%**
Were not academically prepared for college-level work.	**37%**
Work responsibilities got in the way.	**36%**

> " Something has to be done to help students be able to focus on their studies and not on how they're making ends meet. "
>
> **—Frederick Community College faculty member (Maryland)**
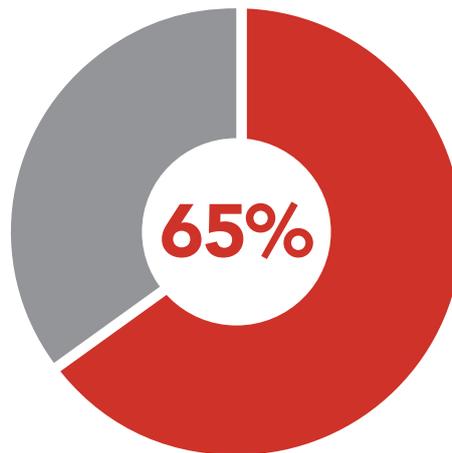
Faculty recognize which practices are helping students earn a certificate or degree or transfer.

Faculty think the following practices are helping the most students:

Clarifying for students which courses are required to complete each certificate and degree program or to transfer.	Offering experience-based learning in real-world settings, such as internships, service learning or job-shadowing.	Employing teaching methods that extend beyond traditional lecturing.
76%	**65%**	**63%**
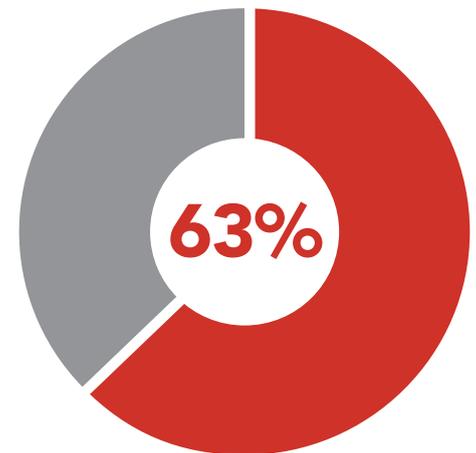
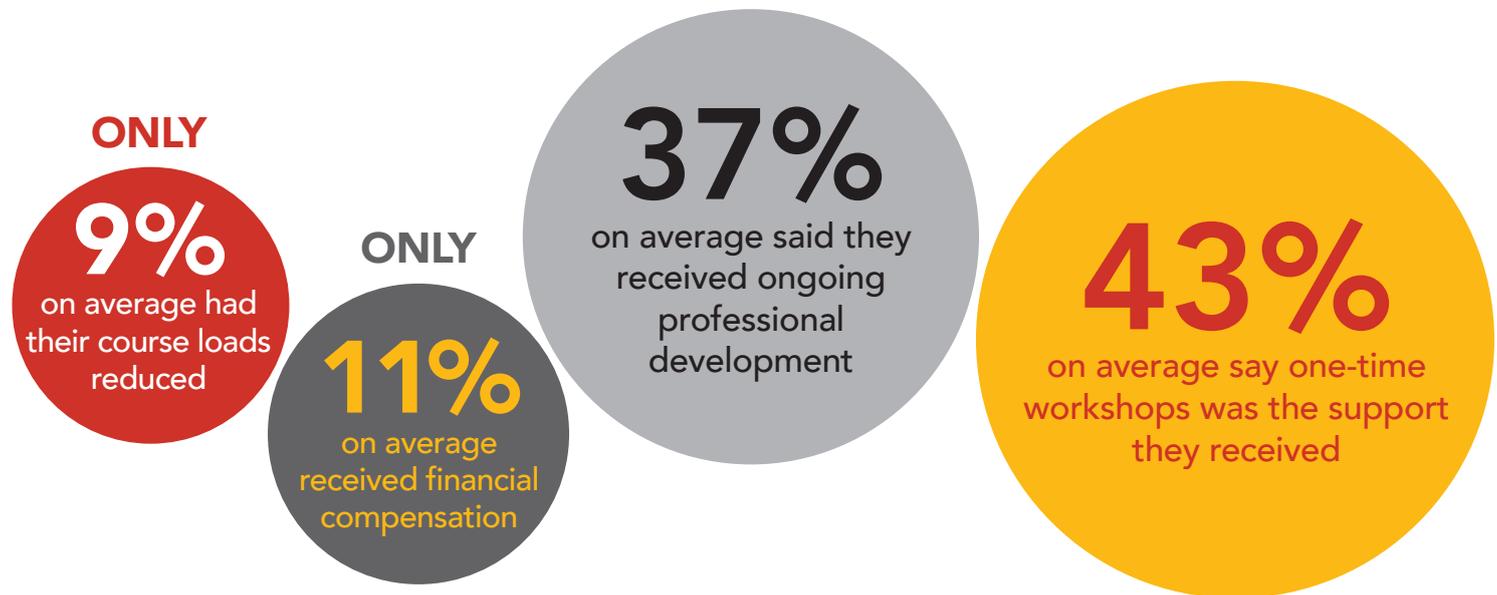**Most faculty think that their colleges are implementing these practices, too. But they might not be.**

82% of faculty think their college is "clarifying for students which courses are required."

However, research indicates **most** community colleges **are not** doing so: instead, most operate on a "cafeteria model" where students have to figure out on their own which courses to take.*

*Bailey, Thomas R., Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins. *Redesigning America's Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success.* Harvard University Press, 2015.

Faculty need more – or more sustained – support.

Faculty say that they receive some support from their colleges on certain practices. But they need more sustained types of support:

ONLY

9%
on average had their course loads reduced

ONLY

11%
on average received financial compensation

37%
on average said they received ongoing professional development

43%
on average say one-time workshops was the support they received

> " Faculty tell us that ongoing professional development too often focuses on administrative procedures. Many would instead prefer sustained professional development focused on creating, implementing and evaluating new instructional practices. "
>
> —**Cynthia Wilson, Vice President for Learning and Chief Impact Officer**
>   **League for Innovation in the Community College**

Part-time faculty numbers are steadily growing, but they are the least supported and least connected to students.

Percent of faculty who say they participated in a college-wide success committee:

Percent of faculty who agree that when it comes to their students, "too few earned a certificate or degree, or transferred":

21%

4%

49%

29%

■ Full-time faculty   ■ Part-time faculty
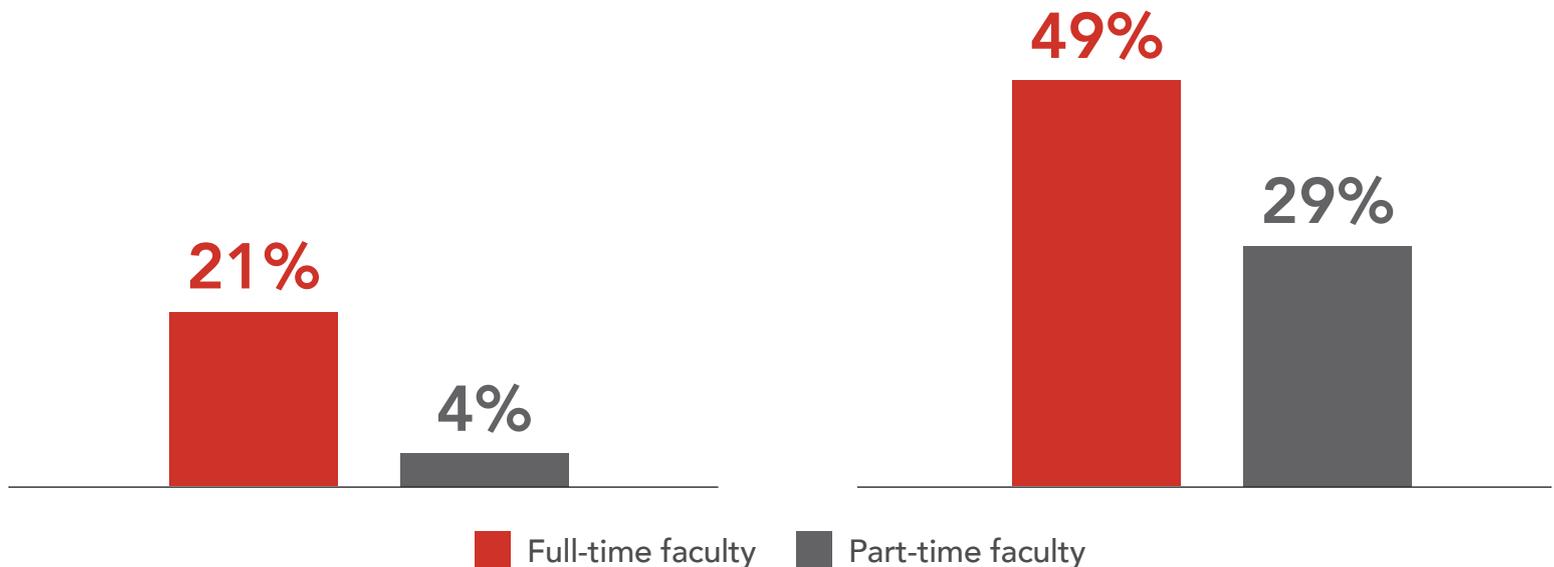
> " Administrators and full-time faculty need to better support part-time faculty, so that part-time faculty can better support their students. "
>
> **—Anonymous faculty member, from a discussion group**

What can you do?

Invite faculty to be partners and leaders in creating and implementing policies and practices to improve student success.

Become informed about the big issues that affect your institution.

Involve faculty in task forces, working groups, and future studies at local, state, and national levels.

Develop policies that promote and support the culture, values, commitment to equity, and goals of the college related to student success.

Collect, disaggregate, and share data about student outcomes, gaps between different groups, and effectiveness of practices.

Collaborate with colleagues across the college and partner with leadership to shape the institution's present and future.

Take initiative and take risks in learning about and adopting new teaching and learning techniques.
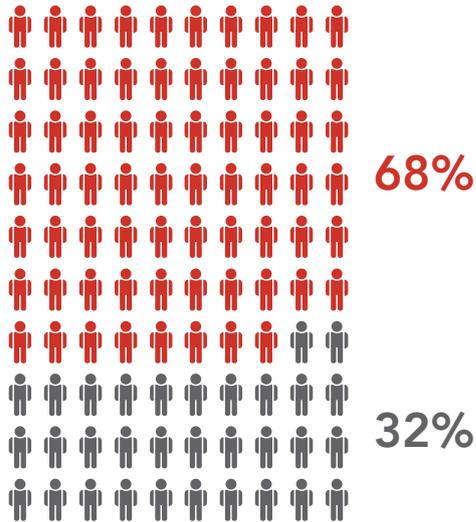
When considering unfunded mandates, include faculty in discussions about the intended and unintended consequences of those mandates.

Provide faculty with the support that research shows and faculty themselves say is needed to support improvements in teaching and learning.
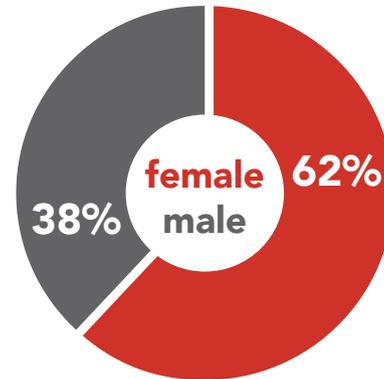
Who did we survey?

1,000 faculty (👤 = 10)
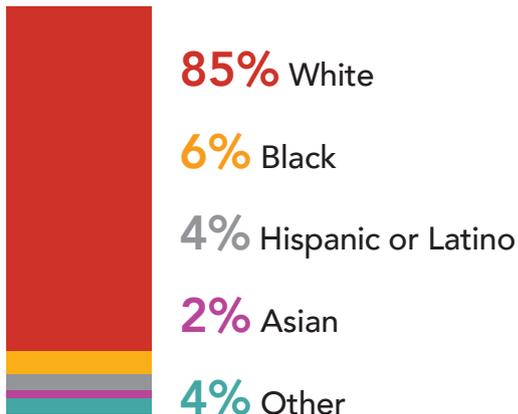
68%

32%

👤 Full-time 👤 Part-time

46 states and **1** territory

female male
62%
38%

40 disciplines taught

85% White

6% Black

4% Hispanic or Latino

2% Asian

4% Other
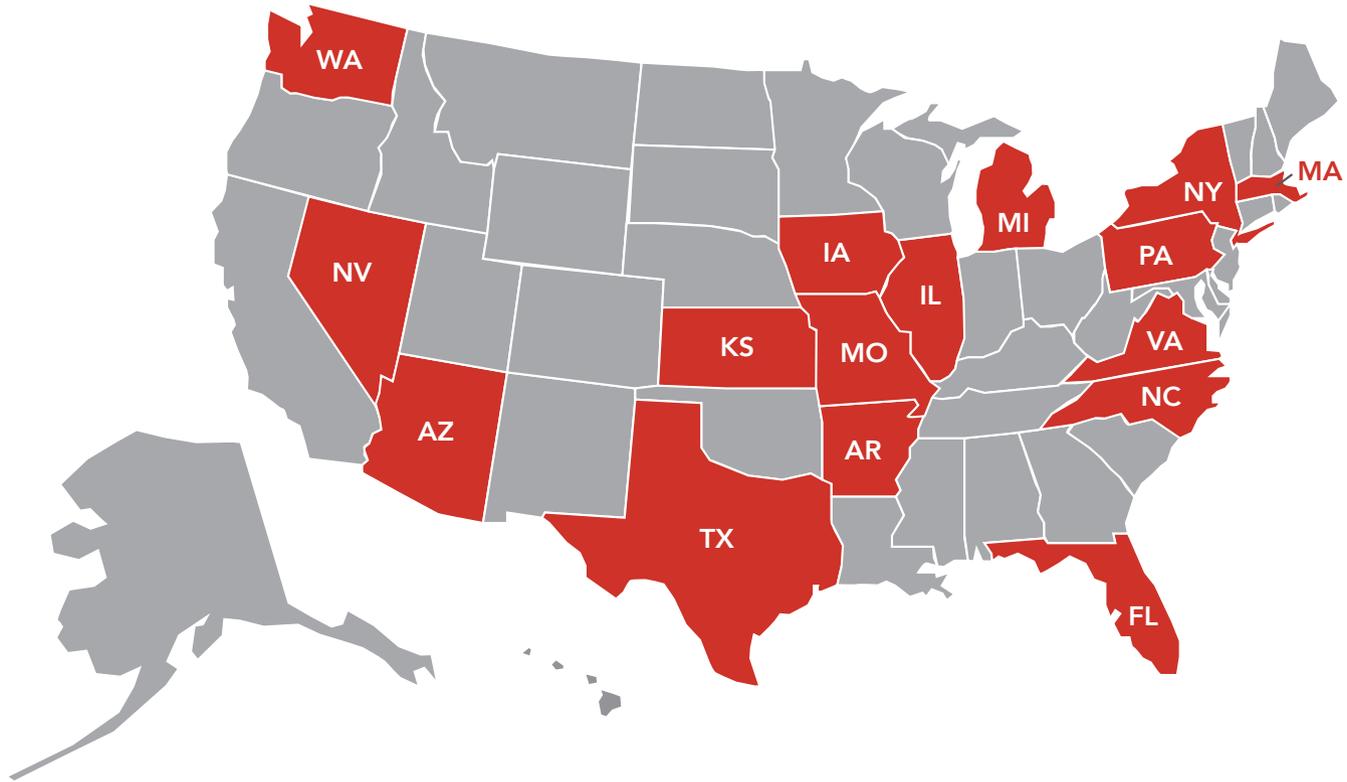
had been teaching for more than 10 years — **59%**

had been teaching for 5 to 10 years — **24%**

Who did we talk to?

81 choicework discussion groups held in 16 states with 698 participants