

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Belk Center for Community College
Leadership and Research

FINISH FIRST NORTH CAROLINA

Evaluation Report Two

Holley Nichols
Rachel Worsham, Ph.D.
Kara Reddish



College of Education
Belk Center for Community College
Leadership and Research

About the Belk Center

The Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research, at North Carolina State University, develops and sustains exceptional community college leaders who are committed to advancing equitable college access and student success, the social and economic mobility of their colleges' students, and the economic competitiveness of their regions. The Center provides professional development and research related to current and emerging student success opportunities and challenges facing community college leaders and policymakers in North Carolina and the nation. The Belk Center commits to dismantling systemic barriers to racial equity in education through evidence-based strategies that focus on the outcomes of Black, Latin* and American Indian students ([read our full Commitment to Equity here](#)).

About the John M. Belk Endowment

Based in Charlotte, North Carolina, the John M. Belk Endowment is a private family foundation committed to transforming postsecondary educational opportunities to meet North Carolina's evolving workforce needs. Its mission is aligned with the vision of its founder, the late John M. Belk who served four terms as mayor of Charlotte and was CEO of the department store company Belk, Inc. He created the John M. Belk Endowment in 1995 to fund a national merit scholarship program for his beloved alma mater, Davidson College. Now led by Mr. Belk's daughter, MC Belk Pilon, the John M. Belk Endowment continues to partner with innovative, results-oriented programs in North Carolina to further Mr. Belk's values, legacy, and focus on the value of education as a means to personal fulfillment and community vitality.

For more information, please visit <http://jmbendowment.org>.

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Contact: Holley Nichols, hbnichol@ncsu.edu

INTRODUCTION

Finish First NC (FFNC) is a software tool that draws on the transcript records of current and past students to identify those who have fulfilled requirements to complete credentials but have not claimed them. FFNC also identifies students who are close to completing a credential and returns which course requirements are still needed for completion. Developed by Wake Technical Community College, FFNC is free to all community colleges in North Carolina through grant funding. As of October 2021, it has been distributed to 52 of the 58 public community colleges in North Carolina.

In the fall of 2020, the Belk Center completed the first installment of FFNC's comprehensive program [evaluation](#). In the first report, the center explored the characteristics of partner colleges (PCs), their approaches to implementing the tool, and the costs and benefits of using FFNC on their campuses. The report that follows builds on the findings of the 2020 report in two ways. First, this report includes the voices of students from PCs, who are the main beneficiaries of the tool. In the spring of 2021, we surveyed 61 students at 6 PCs with the goal of understanding their experiences with outcomes of the tool, their knowledge of resources on campus, and their attitudes toward credential completion. Second, because several PCs implemented FFNC in the past year, we revisited the evaluation questions about staff satisfaction and experiences implementing the tool on new partnering campuses. By revisiting evaluation questions from the last report, we build a more in-depth understanding of tool satisfaction and use across PCs.

DEFINING KEY TERMS

- » **Completer:** Students who completed a credential but have not claimed the award
- » **Near Completer:** Students in striking distance of completing a credential; a student is in striking distance when they have completed 80% of a degree, 75% of a diploma, and 60% of a certificate
- » **Partner Colleges (PCs):** Colleges that have implemented the FFNC tool

EVALUATION APPROACH

The contents of this report are guided by the Evaluation Questions (EQs) provided to the evaluators by Wake Technical Community College and build on the findings in the first evaluation submitted in November of 2020. This report explores one new area of inquiry - student attitudes toward credential completion - and adds to findings related to PC staff satisfaction for colleges that implemented FFNC since our previous report. This section begins with the results of the student survey and their experiences with FFNC.

STUDENT SURVEY

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

To understand student attitudes toward completion and their experiences with the outcomes of the FFNC tool, we surveyed current and recently graduated students identified by FFNC at partnering institutions. 61 students from six different community colleges responded to the survey.

As seen in Table 1, about half of the respondents were first-generation college students, and more than half of the respondents were over the age of 30. Further, the majority of student respondents (43%) first enrolled at their community college in 2019 or 2020, with others noting that they first enrolled in previous years.

Table 1. Student Survey Respondent Demographics (N=61)

Race		Year First Enrolled	
White	69%	Before 2017	25%
Black or African American	6%	2017	11%
Hispanic or Latina/o/x	13%	2018	11%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	2019	34%
Asian	6%	2020	19%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%	Graduated	
Two or more races	3%	Yes	36%
Middle Eastern or North African	2%	No	64%
Prefer to self-describe	0%	Hours Enrolled in Most Recent Semester	
Gender Identity		< 3	2%
Male	53%	3-6	22%
Female	47%	7-9	16%
First-Generation		10-12	26%
Yes	51%	> 12	34%
No	47%	Currently Works	
Unsure	2%	Yes	77%
Pell Grant Recipient		No	23%
Yes	63%	Average Hours Working	
No	36%	< 10	9%
Unsure	1%	10-20	13%
Age		21-30	15%
18-24	37%	31-40	26%
25-29	8%	> 40	37%
30-39	24%	Current Program	
40+	31%	Transfer Associate Degree	18%
		Certificate	18%
		Diploma	20%
		Other Degree	43%

Though the invitation to complete the survey was sent to both students who had completed a degree and those who were identified as near completers, the majority of respondents were near completers. We suspect that the preponderance of near completers among respondents is due to completers having moved on from the community college, and that completers may no longer be receiving emails through their college email account. About a third of the respondents were enrolled full-time during their most recent semester. Over three quarters of student participants reported that they are currently employed, and 63% of those work more than 30 hours per week, which is likely related to the fact that most respondents were 30 years old or older. Of note, the largest portion of respondents reported being enrolled in a program other than a transfer associate degree or diploma.

In the survey, we invited students to share their email address if they were interested in participating in a focus group to talk more about their experiences with credential completion. Eight respondents shared their email address and were invited to discuss their experiences in an interview or as part of a focus group. Two students engaged with us and their experiences add depth to the themes revealed in the student survey. For the purposes of this report, we introduce these students below and will incorporate their experiences and perspectives alongside the survey findings. The names given are pseudonyms.

David:

David is 43 years old and lives in a small city in a predominantly rural region in the western part of the state and attends a medium-sized community college using FFNC. He works in the food supply industry. David attended his local community college after high school, in the early 2000s, but shared that life circumstances changed and he needed to leave college and earn an income before finishing a degree.

When he first enrolled in college, he studied graphic design, and used some of the skills he learned to move up the professional ladder within the same food supply company he works for. He started in sales at his company, where he described all the other employees in food supply sales as either professional salesmen with business degrees or former chefs. "I was neither. So how do I catapult myself in the sales world?" He found that the graphic design strategies he learned at his community college, even without finishing a degree, gave him enough of a knowledge base to build upon, and he started using those skills to design restaurant menus featuring his company's food for potential clients.

David's daughter, who is now eight years old, was the primary catalyst for him to return to college and complete a degree. "So, it's one of those things, I want her to grow up realizing that her dad went to school and is continuing education throughout life." "(I want her to) not give up, right? Like, just keep pursuing education."

Today, he is enrolled at the same community college, but this time is pursuing an associate degree in business administration, which he expects to complete this fall. Because he still enjoys graphic design and came very close to completing that associate degree when he was previously enrolled in the early 2000s, he plans to enroll in the remaining few courses after this fall to complete a second associate degree in graphic design. His employer reimburses his education expenses, so he is also considering transferring to a nearby public four-year institution to earn his bachelor's degree.

Valerie:

Valerie is 32 years old and pursuing an associate degree in Business Analytics with a focus on database programming at a large community college in the eastern part of the state. In high school, she earned a number of credits from her local community college through dual enrollment. She then enrolled in a university in another state, majoring in media arts. She says, "I didn't really apply myself," and stopped attending after a year of enrollment.

Since 2008, most of Valerie's work experience has been in retail management, often clocking fifty hours a week. In her retail position at Walgreens, she also had to coordinate Covid-19 vaccinations, which she found stressful over the past year. In 2018, she looked for higher education options that would fit her goals and available time.

She says the main reason she decided to pursue a degree at her local community college is because she knew that most of the program would be offered online. She has been taking about three classes a semester for three years, and this fall is the first time her classes have been in person.

ATTITUDES TOWARD COMPLETION

This section includes results from the student survey and broadly captures students' attitudes toward degree or credential completion. The following EQs guide our report of findings:

1. What are students' attitudes toward degree completion?
2. What barriers do students perceive related to completion and claiming credentials?
3. Do students know about and use available resources?
4. Do students feel supported by their college?

EQ1: What are students' attitudes toward degree completion?

We began the survey by asking currently enrolled students if they planned to complete their credential and what they would do after graduation. As seen in Table 2, the students who were surveyed overwhelmingly reported that they planned to graduate and begin a job in their field after graduation. **David** is among the minority considering transferring to a university to earn a bachelor's degree, influenced in part by the fact his employer provides financial support for postsecondary education.

Table 2. Plans for Completion (N=61)

Do you plan to graduate?	
Definitely yes	86%
Probably yes	11%
Probably not	3%
Definitely not	0%
What do you plan to do after you graduate?	
Continue Education	31%
Start a Job	69%

When asked about the benefits of a college degree, as seen in Table 3, most students (72%) agreed that college was worth the investment, especially as it relates to their careers. In particular, many noted they have gained skills in their programs that will help them pursue a fulfilling career. **Valerie** speaks to this by saying that the benefit of her college degree was to learn a skill in a structured way.

“I’m interested in the programming language, SQL, and there’s so many resources for computer programming on the internet, but there is a benefit to having an introduction to proper (coding) language because you miss the gaps when you’re training yourself...So that’s one of the benefits of why I decided to just go ahead and get the paper [degree] that goes with the knowledge.”

Table 3. Attitudes Toward Completion (N=61)

	Strongly agree or Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
The benefits of a college certificate/degree outweigh the costs of attending college.	72%	17%	10%
I have gained skills as a result of my courses at my college.	87%	5%	6%
I need a college certificate/degree to pursue my career.	65%	26%	9%
A college certificate/degree will help me get a well-paying job.	79%	14%	7%
A college certificate/degree will help me have a personally fulfilling career.	76%	18%	7%
A college certificate/degree will help me get the job I want.	84%	13%	4%
With a certificate/degree, I will be qualified for more jobs.	88%	11%	2%
Employers in my field prefer applicants with a college certificate/degree	77%	18%	5%

This motivation is a change from the years before she returned to college. As a store manager, Valerie was initially disenchanted with the idea of degree completion.

“There were so many people I would employ at minimum wage who had a bachelor’s in English and they were starting off at minimum wage because they couldn’t find a job. It was very disheartening, maybe I made the right choice (to not initially complete a degree)?”

Her opinion changed when she realized that she wanted to shift her career away from retail, and those doors would only open to her with a degree in hand.

Survey participants also broadly agreed that earning a credential will qualify them for more and better-paying jobs. Though the vast majority of surveyed students agreed with statements about the benefits of a degree, they showed somewhat more ambivalence toward the statement “I need a certificate/degree to pursue my career.” In this case, a quarter of students neither agreed or disagreed and a higher percentage of students (9%) disagreed with this statement than others. One possible interpretation for this finding is that students understood the statement to mean their current career, rather than their aspired career, which may hold different expectations regarding college degree completion.

While many students complete their degrees to meet their career goals, they may have other motivations as well. Upon reflection, David notes that, while his credential may not hold as much value for his employer, the example his educational journey sets for his child makes the degree worth it. He says,

“At the age that I am now, and I don’t mind sharing that I’m 43, when it comes to employment, I think employers prefer experience over education [credentials]. I don’t see myself leaving, but continuing my career path with my current employer, so it’s more experience over education. But from my personal perspective, having a little girl that’s eight years old and in school; she has been my inspiration to go back and finish a degree... That’s the reason why the paper [diploma] to me is important, but for me and my daughter, not so much for my employer.”

EQ2: What barriers do students perceive related to completion and claiming credentials?

In addition to understanding student perspectives on the benefits of completing a college degree, we were also interested in factors that inhibit students from degree completion. When asked about why students stop out of college before finishing their programs, respondents ranked “Student does not need a certificate/degree to advance in their career” and “Goal of graduation feels too far out of reach” as some of the most common reasons (Table 4). These responses may suggest that students do not fully understand how their degree or others align with current labor market opportunities. It’s important to remember that of our sample group, a third of respondents had already graduated and nearly all who had not graduated were enrolled in three or more hours of courses. The sample does not include students who are currently stopped out, thus we can only understand students’ departure from those who are currently enrolled. As noted, those who have departed may no longer be using college-issued email addresses and thus could not respond to the survey.

Valerie and David’s experiences shed light on some of the barriers to student completion, as illuminated in Table 4. Valerie discussed feelings of isolation in the process of completing her degree, often not having enough time to connect to others in the college:

“I’m doing classes online in the middle of a 40 plus hour work week, and it’s hard to make connections.”

David discussed different kinds of difficulties related to navigating educational tools and resources as a student:

“It was hard to navigate through the [college] system...I wished that someone would sit down with me...and just walk through how to navigate through the [college] website, how to navigate through Blackboard....I still feel like this, even at the beginning of every semester, because every instructor is so different...It’s like, man, I don’t know if they’re putting my homework in ‘assignments’ or ‘course content.’ It’s a little confusing. I remember a couple semesters where I couldn’t figure [the course website] out quite quick enough, and then it would result in a bad grade.”

Table 4. Why do you believe other students stop attending college before finishing their programs? Ranked from 1 (most common reason) to 8 (least common reason)

	Average Rating
Financial problems	2.3
Family responsibilities	2.7
Work responsibilities	3.9
Loss of interest in schooling	4.2
Poor grades	4.7
Goal of graduation feels too far to reach	5.2
Student does not need a certificate/degree to advance in their career	5.3
Another Reason*	7.7

*Open text responses for “Another Reason” include: Persuaded or influenced by another individual to stop going; No encouragement from anyone; Not ready to commit; Student moved to another location; Mental health reasons; Pandemic; Electives that have nothing to do with major

While many students who do not complete college stop out before degree completion, there are also cases where students finish degree requirements but do not claim their credential. When we asked survey participants why they believe students who have finished their coursework fail to claim their credentials, respondents ranked “Students do not want credential/degree” and “Students do not think that credential/degree will help them” as some of the most common reasons (See Table 5). Students were invited to offer clarification for “Another Reason” why they believed credentials go unclaimed. While most did not offer specifications, one respondent wrote in “College failed to relay important information about what needed to be done to obtain said degree.”

Reflecting students’ claims that the college did not provide information about how to claim degrees, David provided insight about how graduation paperwork impacts whether students claim an earned credential.

“[The college] reached out to me, probably four emails about certificates that I’ve earned on the way [to completing an associate degree]. And it’s one of those things like, ‘Hey, if you want this certificate, send in your license and a payment, and then fill out this form to us and we’ll ship it out to you. I would love to get that certificate, but when it comes time to do it, I just totally forget sending in the information because it’s not the end goal...I wish they would send me the certificate without me having to pay for it.’”

Table 5. Reasons students do not claim credentials

Why do you believe other students who have finished their coursework for a certificate/degree fail to claim that credential? Ranked from 1 (most common reason) to 7 (least common reason)	Average Rating
Students cannot afford to pay graduation fee	2.5
Students do not know how to file graduation paperwork	2.8
Students do not know they finished their degree	2.9
Students do not want to attend graduation	3.6
Students do not think that credential/degree will help them	4
Students do not want credential/degree	5.7
Another Reason	6.7

EQ3: Do students know about and use available resources?

PCs offer a wide range of resources to help students move from matriculation to completion. In this section of the survey, we asked students about their awareness and use of student success resources. As seen in Table 6, students are most aware of tutoring, academic advising and financial aid resources. Conversely, students were less aware of mental health, disability, and veterans services.

Table 6. Awareness of college resources

	% students who knew these resources were available at their institution.	% students who had personally used these resources at their college
Academic Advising	96%	83%
Tutoring Center	98%	28%
Writing Center	84%	30%
Career Center	85%	10%
Mental Health Counseling	67%	8%
Veterans Services	69%	18%
Financial Aid Counseling	95%	53%
Disability Support Services	78%	3%

When asked about their use of student services, respondents reported primarily using academic advising, writing, tutoring services. Less than 10 percent of respondents had personally used mental health counseling or disability services.

Both Valerie and David noted that there may be resources available that they don't know about and haven't looked for at their college, and they attribute this to their limited available time. David remarked,

“A lot of us are doing community college while working full-time jobs, so...our personal lives overpower our education lives. It's like, man, which way do we go?”

David's limited availability didn't allow him to explore services that were not absolutely necessary for him at any particular time.

EQ4: Do students feel supported by their college?

While most students were aware of the resources at their college, it was important to understand whether they felt their college supported their journey to graduation. As seen in Table 7, most students reported feeling supported by their college as they worked toward their degree, and that if they had academic, personal, or financial problems, there was someone on campus who could help them. About a third of respondents stated that their college or former college cares whether or not they drop out.

Table 7. Perceived support at college (N=61)

	Strongly Agree or Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
I feel supported by my college (or former college) as I work toward my certificate/degree.	83%	11%	7%
If I have a problem in classes, there are/were people on campus who can help me.	81%	14%	6%
If I have a personal problem, there are/were people on campus who can help me.	70%	21%	9%
If I have a financial problem, there are/were people on campus who can help me.	81%	12%	7%
My college (or former college) cares whether I drop out or not.	68%	18%	14%

Valerie noted that in her first semester at the college, an academic advisor helped her identify an appropriate major. The advisor helped her identify **“the favorite part of my job is making spreadsheets, and I should probably get paid for making spreadsheets. And then the advisor was like, ‘Oh, everything you described is business analytics,’**” which helped the student make a good academic decision early on in her enrollment.

But after an initial conversation with advisors to find the right major, both students tempered their experience with academic support by emphasizing the high degree of independence that is expected in course planning. Valerie noted, **“I’m tracking my own courses through the program on a spreadsheet. I haven’t talked to anyone, so I hope I’m on track.”**

Similarly, David said, **“Before [when I was enrolled in the same community college in 2004], the advising department would actually sit down with you and guide you and give you that counseling; but now, it’s all online. ‘Just do it yourself. Go pull your own curriculum’.”**

Student Experiences with FFNC

Given that the purpose of this evaluation is to understand experiences with FFNC, we surveyed students about their interactions with the outcomes of the tool. This section includes results from this inquiry. The following EQs guide this section are:

1. How did near completers experience FFNC?
2. How did completers experience FFNC?

EQ1: How did near completers experience FFNC?

Of the 54 respondents who identified themselves as near completers, 38 (70%) said that they remembered their college contacting them about their near completion status (Table 8). Most respondents said that their college contacted them via email or their student portal, though two students from different colleges said that they were notified through a phone call or during an advising session.

Table 8. Near Completers’ Experience (N=54)

Were you contacted by your college and notified that you were close to earning a credential? N=54		If contacted, were the instructions clear and easy to follow? N= 38	
Yes	70%	Yes	87%
No	19%	No	5%
I do not remember	11%	Don't Remember	8%
If contacted, now were you contacted? N= 38		If contacted, did you then follow-up with an advisor or college staff for help with registration? N= 38	
Email	76%	Yes	71%
Phone Call	3%	No	29%
Email + Phone Call	3%	If contacted, which most closely describes your experience? N= 38	
Email + Student Portal	13%	I already knew I was close to finishing my credential, planned to continue taking courses. The notification didn't change my plan.	82%
Email + Advising Session	3%	I had considered stopping out of college for a while, but when I found out how close I was, I decided to enroll again to finish my degree.	3%
Student Portal + Advising Session	3%	When I got the notification, I thought it was a mistake and disregarded the communication.	3%
If contacted, did you understand the communication? N= 38		When I got the notification, I had already decided I needed to stop out of classes. Even though I knew I was close to completing my degree, I didn't enroll in classes.	3%
Yes	89%	Other	11%
No	5%	Other:	
Don't Remember	5%	I was notified that I was close to earning a credential that I was not pursuing. I enrolled in the classes I need to earn those credentials.	
If contacted, did your college provide you with next steps? N= 38		I contacted the registrar's office for clarification	
Yes	87%	I have so many personal life events right now that this slipped my mind.	
No	5%		
Don't Remember	8%		

When asked if they understood the communication, 90% of student respondents reported yes, 5% reported no, and 5% didn't remember. These notifications were not surprising to most (82%) students, because they already knew they were close to finishing their credential and planned to take courses anyway.

Often notifying students of their status is not enough, as students need information about next steps toward completion. 85% of the near-completer respondents reported that they were given next steps to register for courses and that these instructions were clear and easy to follow. After students received notification of their status, 69% of them followed up with an academic advisor for help registering for classes.

EQ2: How did completers experience FFNC?

Similar to near completers, of the 32 student respondents who identified as completers, most (97%) remembered that the notification came as an email, though one student noted that they were contacted by phone (Table 9). Twenty percent of these students said that they did not know they had completed their credential prior to the notification.

Table 9. Completers' Experience (N=54)

Were you contacted by your college and notified that you finished a credential? N=54		If contacted, were the instructions clear and easy to follow? N= 30	
Yes	84%	Yes	87%
No	39%	No	7%
I do not remember	18%	Don't Remember	7%
If contacted, now were you contacted? N= 30*		If contacted, did you then follow-up with an advisor or college staff for help claim your credential? N= 30	
Email	97%	Yes	73%
Phone Call	3%	No	27%
If contacted, did you understand the communication? N= 30		If contacted, which most closely describes your experience? N= 30	
Yes	83%	I did not know I completed my credential and even though I will be awarded the credential, I will stay enrolled in my current program.	20%
No	7%	I already knew I finished my credential and planned to accept my credential at the end of the semester. The notification did not change my plan.	70%
Don't Remember	10%	Other	10%
If contacted, did your college provide you with next steps to claim your credential? N= 30		Other:	
Yes	90%	I contacted the registrar's office.	
No	3%	I knew I was graduating and would receive my credential, but did not know I needed to fill out paperwork by a deadline to receive it at the end of this semester. So I will not get it till next semester despite being finished.	
Don't Remember	7%	Too many things happening in personal life and this slipped my mind.	

*Two respondents who identified as completers did not answer the additional questions about their experience.

Valerie explained that along the way to completing coursework for her associate degree, she completed a certificate in business analytics. While she does not remember getting a notification via phone or email, she distinctly recalls getting the certificate in the mail. In the virtual focus group, she excitedly took the certificate out to show it.

“I just got it in the mail, and I was like, ‘Oh, Cool! I had no knowledge of this!’”

In general, students reported that these communications were understandable and that they were given next steps to claim their credentials. A small number (7%) of students stated that instructions for next steps were not clear and easy to follow. One student responded that though they were notified that they completed a credential, they had “too many things happening in personal life and this slipped my mind.” However, after receiving notification that they had completed a credential, about three-quarters of students said that they followed up with an advisor or other college employee about their completion. Some colleges, like Valerie’s, may have automatically sent the student’s certificate in the mail, while other students may have needed to follow up with a college employee because certificates were not automatically awarded.

As noted in the 2020 report, the timing of student notifications matters. One respondent noted that they were notified only a few days before the graduation application due date, which did not give them enough time to apply for graduation. This student explained,

“I knew I was graduating...but did not know I needed to fill out paperwork by a deadline to receive it at the end of the semester.”

So, despite this student being finished with coursework, they will need to wait until the following semester to graduate.

When asked if receiving this credential changed their plans for the future, 67% reported no, 13% said they didn’t know, and 20% reported yes (Table 10). Of those who said that receiving this credential changed their plans, three students elaborated that they now intended to pursue transferring for a bachelor’s degree.

“I feel that I want to continue my degree to a higher (level).”
“I now plan on transferring to a four-year college to further my education.”
“I really enjoyed studying in (my) program, and I want to pursue further education for career advancement.”

Table 10. Impact of Credential on Completers’ Future Plans (N=30)

Has receiving this credential changed your plans for the future?	
Yes	20%
No	67%
I don't know	13%

SUMMARY OF STUDENT SURVEY FINDINGS

The findings of the student survey suggest that students at PCs feel that their education is valuable and the benefits of their education outweigh the costs. As such, most respondents planned to complete their degrees. However, students reported that the reason others do not finish their programs is because they either do not need the credential to fulfill their goals or they simply do not want the credential.

These results indicate that students not only stop out because of barriers to degree completion, but also because they view another opportunity as equally or more valuable. When asked about support they receive from their colleges, students generally felt that their college cared about their education.

While most students were aware of multiple resources available, most only reported using academic advising and financial aid counseling. This finding suggests that the colleges surveyed are making their resources known to their students. The findings of this survey also suggest that students identified by FFNC understood and responded when contacted about their degree progress. Notably, some students reported that notification of degree completion was given too late for them to act upon it and apply for graduation. This finding not only highlights the importance of coordinating student notification with the timing of graduation, but also the potential barrier to completion posed by graduation applications.

PARTNER COLLEGE SURVEY

In this section we discuss the results of the survey administered to 18 PCs in the summer of 2021. Of the colleges represented in the survey, six colleges were new FFNC PCs that implemented the tool in 2021. We begin by discussing implementation and utilization of FFNC on PC campuses then we report satisfaction with the tool.

In the spring and summer of 2021, we contacted staff members at institutions that were not included in focus groups from the 2020 evaluation either because they were unavailable or their college had not fully implemented the tool at the time of data collection. Using an email list shared with us by Wake Tech, we reached out to staff members with an invitation to complete a survey.

This list included contacts at PC colleges that attended FFNC site visits and who are mentioned in the FFNC data collection forms administered by the Wake Tech team. The survey was sent using MailChimp personalized email service to 315 individuals, covering 35 PCs. One reminder email was sent three weeks later.

In all, 40 individuals from 19 institutions responded to the survey (Table 11). Respondents represented various levels of responsibility at their institutions, including vice presidents and other executive leaders (18%), deans and associate deans (13%), directors and department chairs (23%), and specialists and coordinators (23%). About half of the respondents worked in the Registrar's office (28%) or the college's institutional research/effectiveness unit (23%).

Table 11. Staff Survey Demographics (N=40)

Colleges Represented by Survey Respondents	
Beaufort County Community College	2%
Bladen Community College	5%
Blue Ridge Community College	2%
Central Piedmont College	12%
College of the Albemarle	7%
Guilford Technical Community College	10%
Haywood Community College	3%
Isothermal Community College	12%
McDowell Technical Community College	5%
Mitchell Community College	5%
Nash Community College	5%
Pitt Community College	5%
Robeson Community College	7%
Rowan-Cabarrus Community College	5%
Southeastern Community College	5%
Southwestern Community College	3%
Vance-Granville Community College	3%
Western Piedmont Community College	5%
Departmental Unit	
Academic Affairs	10%
Academic Department	5%
Enrollment	5%
Executive Leadership	5%
Institutional Effectiveness/Research	23%
None listed	3%
Registrar	28%
Retention	3%
Student Records	10%
Student Services	10%
How survey respondents primarily use Finish First	
I am in a leadership role that champions the college's priorities to other units. I may have led efforts to adopt/implement FFNC at my institution, have worked to develop processes for working with FFNC at the institution, and/or have worked to foster collaboration across departments to ensure the success of the school's FFNC efforts.	37%
I connect with students who have been identified by the FFNC tool. This could mean helping students who have completed a credential graduate from the college, or it could be offering academic advising to students. I may also be in a role that reaches out to previously enrolled students with encouragement to complete their degree.	5%
I work directly with the FFNC tool. I assist with identifying which students have completed or are nearing completion of a degree or credential based on the credits they've earned at my college. I work with available technology (ex: Colleague platform) to create lists for other advisors, faculty members and administration.	45%
None of the above	13%

IMPLEMENTATION AND UTILIZATION OF FINISH FIRST NC

This section discusses various factors that influenced FFNC implementation and utilization across PCs. The following EQs guide our report of findings:

1. What influenced PCs' decision to implement FFNC on their campus?
2. How is FFNC used on PC campuses?
3. What are the challenges associated with FFNC implementation and utilization?

EQ1: What influenced PCs' decision to implement FFNC on their campus?

We began this portion of the survey by asking about campus stakeholders that were vital in the decision to bring FFNC to the campus. Overall, respondents ranked "Provost or other senior leadership" as most influential, followed by the president, the registrar, enrollment administrators, admissions, advising staff and faculty. These results are very similar to those in the previous evaluation report.

It was also important to understand the factors that facilitated buy-in for FFNC at PCs. When responding to this question, most respondents mentioned that they were drawn to the tool's ability to increase institutional completion rates and enrollment. Others offered that the impact on individual students and the opportunity for the college to offer better student advising was the most compelling factor about FFNC. The third most common theme among open-ended responses was the tool's applicability to current processes and increase student success without adding the extra data workload on staff.

EQ2: How is FFNC used on PC campuses?

Next, we sought to understand how FFNC is used on PC campuses. We began by identifying which offices use the tool. When asked which office runs the Finish First tool on their campus, nearly half of the respondents said the Registrar, and about 20% said that their college's Office of Institutional Research/Effectiveness housed the tool. Other units reported include Information Technology (5%), Student Services (8%) and Admissions (5%). Notably, about half of the colleges with more than one survey respondent had staff members report that FFNC is run by different offices across their institution, which may indicate either shared responsibility at the college or confusion about responsibilities for the tool at the institution. These results reflect those in the first FFNC evaluation report.

We then asked how colleges use FFNC data (Appendix B). When asked about how they use near completer data, respondents from half of the colleges noted that they are sharing this information with a centralized academic advising office or sharing lists with specific academic advisors. Importantly, about half of the colleges included in the evaluation have not yet fully implemented a communication plan. Twenty-five colleges surveyed run the tool to identify completers. Staff from most of the colleges included in the evaluation noted that once run, the office hosting FFNC sends lists of completers to their campus' registrar office.

In the last report, we noted that automatic graduation policies may improve the impact of FFNC on completion outcomes. Less than a third of the colleges included in the evaluation automatically graduate completers identified by the tool.

When asked how the college uses data on previously enrolled near completers, nearly all participants stated that their college is still developing their plans and processes to use that information. However, one respondent noted that their college sends previously enrolled near completer data to college recruiting staff.

EQ3: What are the challenges associated with FFNC implementation and utilization?

In the 2020 report, respondents reported that barriers to implementation centered around four areas:

- » Personnel capacity
- » Ability to run the tool in a timely manner
- » Technology issues
- » Existing institutional policies

This year, we heard similar themes from survey respondents. Communication also emerged as a barrier to initial and later stages of implementation. For example, one staff member said that in the initial stages, FFNC “was not widely discussed or made available” which hindered the college’s effective use of the tool. Of the 24 respondents who completed the open-ended question about barriers to later stages of implementation, 4 noted that people who worked most closely with the tool needed to spend more time verifying the tool’s output than they initially anticipated. Several survey respondents said that their college was still too early in the implementation process to identify barriers.

SATISFACTION WITH FINISH FIRST

This section answers the following evaluation questions:

1. What are the benefits of FFNC?
2. How satisfied are PC staff with the FFNC tool?
3. How can the FFNC tool be improved?

EQ1: What are the benefits of FFNC?

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents said that the biggest benefit of FFNC to their college was increasing their completion rate (Table 9). Others noted that cleaning up the data in the college’s student system (8%), contributing to meaningful interactions between advisors and students (5%), and decreasing processing time for our unit (3%) were the primary benefits to their college. However, 5% of the sample said that they did not believe FFNC provided a significant benefit to their college. In the 2020 report, respondents noted one of the main benefits of the tool was its ability to identify formerly enrolled near completers for recruitment purposes, yet that did not seem to be notable benefit for this group of PCs.

EQ2: How satisfied are PC staff with the FFNC tool?

In terms of satisfaction, 87% of respondents said that they were either extremely or somewhat satisfied with FFNC, while 3% responded neutrally, and no respondents expressed dissatisfaction. When asked about perceptions of their colleagues’ satisfaction, results were

similarly positive (77%), with more respondents choosing the neutral response. When asked about their level of satisfaction with FFNC training, a majority (82%) indicated that they were somewhat or extremely satisfied with the training. One respondent reported they were “extremely dissatisfied” with training, while the other respondents responded neutrally or skipped that question (15%).

Open-ended responses when asked about which elements of FFNC are easy to use pointed to the improvements provided in the 3.0 version of the tool.

“Version 3.0 is without question a TREMENDOUS improvement from Version 1.0. The reporting feature has saved me literal hours when the reports are requested.”

“The new updated features of 3.0 are impressive! Very intuitive.”

“All of it. It’s so user-friendly!”

EQ3: How can the FFNC tool be improved?

When asked about the elements of FFNC that staff found difficult to use, 13% of those surveyed wrote “n/a” or otherwise indicated that nothing was difficult to use. Among those who offered feedback about elements that are difficult, we found the following.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE APPLICATION OF FFNC DATA OUTPUTS

One prominent theme in the staff surveys was the impact of the quality of college catalog systems on the effective use of FFNC output. Successfully applying FFNC outputs to meet the PCs’ purposes for the tool’s use requires maintenance and documentation of college’s catalog systems and attention to the timeframes used when running their input files. This level of maintenance and attention varies among PCs, leading to differences in levels of data accuracy. Of particular note, some respondents reported that the generated data includes a number of false positives, meaning students are identified as having completed a credential, but upon a second look they had not completed all requirements.

“[FFNC] produces large quantities of data [at once] that I have to review on my own based on the processes within our institution. It is just too much at times along with my other job duties.”

The “large quantities of data” resulting from running the FFNC tool, runs all transcript course completions against the current course catalog. FFNC features the ability to separate completers from near-completers, however, college staff may or may not be using this functionality.

Another staff member’s comment offered an example of disconnection between the PC end users and the Wake Tech team, because while FFNC has the capabilities to identify the groups described here, the staff member does not know that those capabilities exist.

“FFNC is not able to identify completers/near completers if they meet requirements in a different Catalog than the current one. For example, FFNC can only be run at this time under the 2020 Catalog. If I [as a student] began in the 2014 or 2018 Catalog and need to remain there (and can do so based on my continual enrollment) so that I may

graduate as the program's requirements have changed and I do not wish to take extra courses, FFNC will never identify me as a completer/near completer. Therefore, a supplemental process has to be developed to identify the rest of your completers/near completers."

This suggests opportunities for the Wake Tech team to better explain, prepare and train users in the identification of their purposes, processes, and inputs. Additional comments from the staff survey suggested that PC users did not understand how to include course substitutions that a student may have completed in their FFNC data report. One respondent expanded,

"For example, the fact that [FFNC] cannot recognize in-house course substitutions results in a number of 'false positives' - where someone appears to be missing credits but in reality has already graduated."

Data exceptions such as course substitutions, differences in catalog year, and transferred courses require individual attention, impeding the speed with which colleges can act upon the data. The Wake Tech team administering FFNC has already addressed some of these issues in the 3.0 version and is actively working to address these issues both in the initial setup of the tool on campuses and in regular follow-up meetings with the PCs and tool updates.

Overall, this theme highlights an area where the FFNC project administration can improve training and communication with users rather than FFNC tool issues. While respondents noted tool issues related to updated course catalogs, course substitutions, and transfer credits, the tool has functionality to address these issues.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMOOTHER FUNCTIONING

While overall satisfaction with the tool is very high, data from surveys point to opportunities for the FFNC processes to function more smoothly.

Isolating groups of completers or near-completers - Several respondents noted that they wished they could run the tool in disaggregated ways - such as running the tool only on previously enrolled students, or excluding high school dual enrollment students from the data. Another respondent noted that they did not have a way of excluding completers who had already applied for graduation, which required time-consuming cross-checking before communication to the list of students could go out. It is important to note that the tool does have the ability to isolate completers and near-completers, which indicates that more communication and training is needed from the Wake Tech team to clarify these issues.

Reporting associated with using FFNC - One staff member said that the reporting associated with using the FFNC tool can be burdensome. That person, whose college implemented FFNC prior to spring 2020 commented, **"We have to report to so many entities. When we signed on, the reporting part was not mentioned. I am not sure we would have signed on if we had known."** Wake Tech team changed the content of its initial site visit presentation in the spring of 2020, focusing more attention on explaining reporting requirements for all partnering colleges. Other respondents noted that the improvements to FFNC version 3.0 automated much of this reporting, making it much easier for administrators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings, we offer several recommendations for Wake Technical Community College (the creators and administrators of FFNC), as well as for the colleges as they implement the tool on their campuses.

Recommendations for Improving the FFNC Tool

- 1. Build on Version 3.0 features that link the data to student communications.** Staff surveys found that college partners appreciated the added feature to FFNC that links identified students to email communications with next steps. Likewise, most students who remembered being contacted as a completer or near-completer said that they did take action to register or graduate upon receiving the communication. In the future, the FFNC support team could build on 3.0 communication improvements to maximize the usefulness of the tool. For example, the Wake Tech team may consider incorporating student communication setup and maintenance as recurring training for PC staff that interacts with the tool. The Wake Tech team may also consider expanding this functionality to extend to text messages.

Recommendations for Improving FFNC Implementation & Support

- 2. Consider amending implementation training or in-service training to identify and address PC misconceptions about running the FFNC tool.** Staff that participated in the survey pointed to several perceived issues with the FFNC tool including discrepancies in data accuracy for students who enrolled during a prior year's course catalog, issues implementing course substitutions, and problems tracking transfer courses. Further, our findings suggest that colleges want to isolate near-completers and completers. These are all issues that the FFNC tool 3.0 version has the capability to handle; however, PCs are not fully aware of these capabilities.

The Wake Tech team should consider incorporating short checks for PC staff understanding in their training sessions and monthly webinars. Webinars could include short online real-time polls that ask participants questions such as, "If I wanted to identify near-completers who first enrolled at my college four years ago, I know how to accurately do so using FFNC." Or, "I understand how FFNC identifies course substitutions at my college." Identifying and addressing these perceived issues early on in the training process and often in post-implementation follow-up meetings would help PCs be fully aware of the tool's functionality.

- 3. Future iterations of FFNC training could focus more on working with output data.** College staff members mentioned that isolating FFNC data retrieval by program would aid their college's ability to quickly utilize and act upon the data. FFNC Version 3.0, which 70% of PCs are currently using, addresses part of this issue by including features such as Prior Graduation Check and Course Substitutions Check. As PCs move from early years of implementation to sustaining the tool on their campus, future staff training could put more emphasis on ways partners can optimize the tool's output data.

- 4. Work with Partner Colleges to develop a well-defined purpose for implementing FFNC.** Many of the issues identified by PCs are a direct result of their misunderstanding of the FFNC tool. For example, some colleges were unaware that it is possible to run the FFNC tool on old course catalogs. While we do suggest that the Wake Tech team attempt to head off these concerns by including more content about the tool's functionality in their training, it may also be helpful to work with the college to identify clear goals for implementing FFNC. This may include conversations about the college's graduation policies, specific cohorts to include and exclude, designating institutional communication resources (phone, mail, email, and texting platforms) for possible FFNC integration, and understanding the workflow surrounding the FFNC tool. These conversations may help the Wake Tech team preempt concerns about the functionality of the tool. For example, if a college is interested in identifying formerly enrolled near-completers, the Wake Tech team can focus part of the training on isolating these particular students in the FFNC output.

Further, as mentioned previously, it is important for Wake Tech to ensure that colleges understand the FFNC tool and its functionality prior to implementation. In addition to performing checks for partner college understanding during training, the Wake Tech team could also incorporate these checks into the conversations discussed in this recommendation. Alternatively, the Wake Tech team could include questions that check for understanding as they work through the implementation planning worksheet with colleges (included in Appendix F of the first evaluation report). This will require that the Wake Tech team FFNC compile a list of questions that address most commonly misunderstood aspects of FFNC.

Recommendations for Partner Colleges

- 5. Partner Colleges should implement a communication plan that allows students ample time to act.** Student surveys revealed that while most communications students received based on FFNC data provided clear next steps, the timing of this communication could be problematic for students to take action. Colleges should align the timing of FFNC data retrieval and communications to those students with enough time for registration and graduation application deadlines. Students who described receiving timely communications with clear next steps were more likely to take the next steps toward program completion. For example, colleges who use near-completer information should retrieve the data early enough in the semester to allow enough time for a) initial communication, b) time to connect with an advisor and c) time to decide and register for classes before the college deadline. The FFNC Wake Tech team should consider distributing suggested timelines for both the running of the tool and communication to students that provide students enough time to apply for graduation or adjust their course schedules.

APPENDIX A:

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 5

	Central Piedmont Community College	Wake Technical Community College	All NCCCS Institutions	Like Institutions
Racial/Ethnic Composition				
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	0%	1%	0%
Asian	5%	5%	3%	5%
Black or African American	27%	22%	20%	24%
Hispanic or Latinx	14%	13%	12%	13%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	z0%
White	43%	50%	55%	46%
Two or More Races	3%	3%	3%	3%
Unknown	3%	3%	5%	3%
Non-Resident Alien	5%	3%	1%	4%
N	18,646	22,003	3,836	20,325
Other Characteristics				
Pell+	34%	31%	37%	32%
FTE*	36%	33%	34%	35%
Full Time, First Time*	8%	9%	8%	9%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	31%	37%	36%	34%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Classification 5, which is defined as two-year, very large. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 4

	Cape Fear Community College	Fayetteville Technical Community College	Forsyth Technical Community College	Guilford Community College	Pitt Community College	All NCCCS Institutions	All like Institutions
Racial/Ethnic Composition							
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian	1%	2%	2%	5%	1%	3%	2%
Black or African American	10%	37%	22%	37%	32%	20%	28%
Hispanic or Latinx	10%	13%	15%	11%	9%	12%	11%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	70%	35%	54%	40%	50%	55%	50%
Two or More Races	3%	5%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Unknown	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	5%	4%
Non-Resident Alien	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
N	8,629	12,021	7,695	11,070	8,237	3,836	9,530
Other Characteristics							
Pell+	32%	41%	57%	46%	42%	37%	43%
FTE*	35%	39%	38%	39%	43%	34%	39%
Full Time, First Time*	11%	6%	7%	8%	12%	8%	9%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	37%	34%	27%	37%	40%	36%	35%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Class 4, which is defined as two-year, large. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 3

	Alamance Community College	Asheville-Buncombe Tech Community College	Caldwell Community College	Catwaba Valley Community College	Central Carolina Community College	Coastal Carolina Community College	Davidson County Community College	Durham Technical Community College
Racial/Ethnic Composition								
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian	2%	2%	1%	8%	1%	4%	2%	5%
Black or African American	18%	5%	4%	6%	15%	18%	12%	35%
Hispanic or Latinx	16%	11%	8%	14%	21%	15%	8%	19%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
White	54%	76%	80%	67%	55%	60%	70%	31%
Two or More Races	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	0%	2%	3%
Unknown	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	0%	4%	6%
Non-Resident Alien	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
N	4,328	7,003	3,744	4,693	5,714	3,797	3,734	5,665
Other Characteristics								
Pell+	34%	34%	28%	71%	26%	43%	41%	31%
FTE*	32%	29%	38%	30%	31%	48%	38%	26%
Full Time, First Time*	9%	6%	10%	8%	12%	13%	10%	6%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	32%	38%	40%	23%	49%	40%	38%	31%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Class 3, which is defined as two-year, medium. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 3 (Continued). Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 3

	Gaston College	Johnston Community College	Nash Community College	Rowan-Cabarrus Community College	Sandhills Community College	Surry Community College	Vance-Granville Community College	All NCCCS Institutions	All like Institutions
Racial/Ethnic Composition									
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Asian	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Black or African American	12%	13%	31%	17%	16%	3%	31%	20%	16%
Hispanic or Latinx	7%	17%	7%	13%	12%	17%	8%	12%	13%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	54%	64%	53%	58%	55%	73%	46%	55%	60%
Two or More Races	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Unknown	22%	2%	2%	5%	8%	4%	8%	5%	5%
Non-Resident Alien	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
N	5,655	4,054	2,666	6,379	4,039	3,382	3,158	3,836	4,534
Other Characteristics									
Pell+	33%	28%	39%	47%	29%	26%	33%	37%	36%
FTE*	25%	31%	30%	24%	35%	34%	33%	34%	32%
Full Time, First Time*	5%	10%	8%	6%	11%	6%	7%	8%	9%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	42%	39%	40%	32%	43%	40%	33%	36%	37%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Class 3, which is defined as two-year, medium. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 2

	Beaufort County Community College	Bladen Community College	Blue Ridge Community College	Brunswick Community College	Carteret Community College	Cleveland Community College	College of the Albemarle	Craven Community College	Edgecombe Community College
Racial/Ethnic Composition									
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	16%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Asian	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	4%	0%
Black or African American	24%	25%	4%	11%	7%	18%	12%	17%	55%
Hispanic or Latinx	12%	10%	13%	9%	6%	5%	4%	10%	6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	58%	42%	77%	66%	80%	69%	64%	60%	34%
Two or More Races	2%	4%	0%	4%	3%	2%	4%	4%	1%
Unknown	3%	3%	4%	9%	1%	3%	11%	4%	3%
Non-Resident Alien	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%
N	1,539	1,226	2,332	1,585	871	2,536	2,587	2,961	1,904
Other Characteristics									
Pell+	30%	46%	27%	33%	65%	35%	22%	36%	58%
FTE*	29%	33%	29%	37%	40%	27%	31%	31%	24%
Full Time, First Time*	6%	3%	6%	14%	14%	6%	5%	7%	7%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	21%	32%	37%	43%	47%	28%	33%	31%	25%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Class 2, which is defined as two-year, small. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 4 (Continued). Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 2

	Halifax Community College	Haywood Community College	Isothermal Community College	James Sprunt Community College	Lenoir Community College	McDowell Tech Community College	Mitchell Community College	Montgomery Community College
Racial/Ethnic Composition								
American Indian or Alaska Native	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Asian	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Black or African American	53%	5%	9%	24%	28%	2%	11%	14%
Hispanic or Latinx	3%	5%	8%	25%	12%	10%	12%	21%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	36%	83%	74%	46%	54%	83%	68%	58%
Two or More Races	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%
Unknown	4%	3%	6%	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%
Non-Resident Alien	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
N	1,087	1,632	2,086	1,266	2,526	1,136	3,226	918
Other Characteristics								
Pell+	41%	33%	31%	55%	31%	28%	26%	28%
FTE*	41%	37%	34%	32%	34%	26%	30%	35%
Full Time, First Time*	12%	13%	10%	6%	7%	7%	8%	7%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	33%	44%	38%	30%	34%	33%	38%	45%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Class 2, which is defined as two-year, small. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 4 (Continued). Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 2

	Piedmont Community College	Randolph Community College	Roanoke-Chowan Community College	Roberson Community College	Rockingham Community College	Southeastern Community College	Southwestern Community College	South Piedmont Community College
Racial/Ethnic Composition								
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	1%	2%	46%	0%	6%	8%	0%
Asian	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%
Black or African American	28%	4%	58%	18%	15%	19%	2%	17%
Hispanic or Latinx	5%	14%	2%	11%	10%	6%	9%	14%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	61%	58%	33%	20%	65%	61%	75%	54%
Two or More Races	2%	1%	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Unknown	2%	19%	4%	0%	6%	4%	1%	9%
Non-Resident Alien	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
N	1,414	2,903	649	1,898	2,013	1,524	2,324	3,136
Other Characteristics								
Pell+	28%	32%	45%	49%	33%	38%	34%	20%
FTE*	28%	27%	15%	41%	32%	31%	31%	21%
Full Time, First Time*	8%	10%	2%	8%	13%	11%	5%	5%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	40%	44%	29%	34%	41%	20%	33%	50%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Class 2, which is defined as two-year, small. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 4 (Continued). Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 2

	Stanley Community College	Western Piedmont Community College	Wilkes Community College	All NCCCS Institutions	All like Institutions
Racial/Ethnic Composition					
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Asian	3%	7%	1%	3%	1%
Black or African American	16%	5%	2%	20%	18%
Hispanic or Latinx	4%	9%	10%	12%	9%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	65%	78%	75%	55%	61%
Two or More Races	2%	0%	2%	3%	2%
Unknown	8%	0%	9%	5%	4%
Non-Resident Alien	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
N	2,687	1,820	2,692	3,836	1,946
Other Characteristics					
Pell+	41%	50%	31%	37%	37%
FTE *	25%	35%	37%	34%	31%
Full Time, First Time*	7%	7%	13%	8%	8%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	36%	39%	38%	36%	36%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institutions are Carnegie Class 2, which is defined as two-year, small. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

Table 5: Demographic Characteristics for FFNC PCs with Carnegie Classification of 1

	Martin Community College	All NCCCS Institutions	Like Institution
Racial/Ethnic Composition			
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	1%	1%
Asian	1%	3%	1%
Black or African American	27%	20%	31%
Hispanic or Latinx	1%	12%	7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
White	46%	55%	54%
Two or More Races	0%	3%	2%
Unknown	25%	5%	5%
Non-Resident Alien	0%	1%	0%
N	875	3,836	549
Other Characteristics			
Pell+	19%	37%	28%
FTE*	28%	34%	25%
Full Time, First Time*	6%	8%	4%
Total Entering at Undergraduate Level Fall 2019*	12%	36%	36%

Note: Utilizing 2019-2020 IPEDS data. Like institution is Pamlico Community College. Carnegie Classification of 5 is defined as two-year, very small. +utilizing 2018-2019 data * data is only for students enrolled in the fall.

APPENDIX B: PARTNER COLLEGE PROFILES

College Information			Types of Students			Graduation Policy		Additional Data Uses	
College Name	Implementation Date	Data Collection Date	College uses tool to identify Near Completers	College uses tool to identify Completers	College uses tool for previously enrolled students	College automatically confers credentials	College graduates students without fee	College uses data to advise students	College uses data to recruit students who have some credits but are not currently enrolled
Asheville-Buncombe Tech CC	Fall 2019	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Beaufort County CC	Fall 2020	Summer 2021	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Unknown	Yes
Bladen CC	Fall 2020	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Unknown	No
Blue Ridge CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Brunswick CC	Fall 2019	Summer 2020	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Caldwell CC & TI	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Unknown	Unknown
Cape Fear CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Catawba Valley CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Central Carolina CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Central Piedmont CC	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Coastal Carolina CC	Fall 2019	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Unknown	Unknown
College of the Albemarle	Spring 2020	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
Davidson County CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Durham TCC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
Edgecombe CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Fayetteville TCC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Forsyth TCC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No
Guilford Tech CC	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Haywood CC	Spring 2020	Summer 2021	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Isothermal	Spring 2020	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Johnston CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Lenoir CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
McDowell Tech CC	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Mitchell CC	Fall 2020	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Nash CC	Fall 2020	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Pitt CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Randolph CC	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Roanoke-Chowan CC	Fall 2018	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Robeson CC	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Rowan Cabarrus CC	Fall 2019	Summer 2021	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Unknown
Sandhills CC	Fall 2019	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
Southeastern CC	Spring 2020	Summer 2021	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
Southwestern CC	Spring 2020	Summer 2021	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Stanly CC	Fall 2019	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Surry CC	Fall 2019	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Unknown
Vance-Granville CC	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Wake Tech CC	Fall 2016	Summer 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Western Piedmont CC	Spring 2021	Summer 2021	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes