

RESEARCH BRIEF

Loss/Momentum Framework at NOVA Series: 5. VCCS-NOVA Comparison

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Loss/Momentum Framework at NOVA: Comparison of NOVA and VCCS on Student Success Metrics

This Research Brief is based on data provided by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). The data presented compares NOVA to the VCCS on various student success metrics. Due to the way in which the dataset was packaged, the student cohorts presented vary across metrics but primarily fall between Fall 2012 and Fall 2014. The following represents the main findings of the report.

Connection

- The percentage of applicants who enrolled in credit-bearing classes **increased at NOVA** during the time period from 43 to 47 percent. Similarly, the percentage of applicants who enrolled in credit-bearing classes **increased in the VCCS** from 47 to 48 percent.

Entry

- The percentage of program-placed FTIC students who were placed in developmental math was **higher in the VCCS** than at NOVA.
- The percentage of developmental math students who successfully completed college-level math by the following Fall semester was **equivalent at NOVA and in the VCCS**.
- The developmental English placement rate was **higher in the VCCS** than at NOVA.
- The percentage of developmental English students who successfully completed college-level English by the following Fall semester was **higher at NOVA** than in the VCCS.

Progress

- Generally, Fall-to-Spring retention rates **were similar at NOVA and in the VCCS**; however, Fall-to-Fall retention rates were **higher at NOVA**.

Completion

- **Transfer degrees** accounted for 72 to 73 percent of all awards at NOVA and 51 to 52 percent of awards in the VCCS in 2013-14 and 2014-15.
- Among students who transferred with 16 or more credits, **46 percent at NOVA** transferred with a degree or diploma, compared to **36 percent in the VCCS**.

I. Connection

- Over the three-year period from Fall 2012 to Fall 2014, the number of applications for credit-bearing classes **at NOVA decreased** by 6 percent (-1,663).
- By comparison, the number of applications **decreased in the VCCS** by 7 percent from approximately 119,000 to 111,000.
- The percentage of applicants who enrolled in credit-bearing classes **increased at NOVA** during the time period from 43 to 47 percent. Similarly, the percentage of applicants who enrolled in credit-bearing classes **increased in the VCCS** from 47 to 48 percent.
- The gap **between NOVA and the VCCS** regarding the percentage of applicants who enrolled **decreased** from 4 to 1 percentage point over this time period.

**Table 1. Fall Admissions Applications and Enrollment:
Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts**

Cohort	NOVA		VCCS	
	Applications (N)	Applicants Who Enrolled (%)	Applications (N)	Applicants Who Enrolled (%)
Fall 2012	28,567	43.0	118,811	47.0
Fall 2013	27,520	45.0	114,754	48.0
Fall 2014	26,904	47.0	110,887	48.0

II. Entry

A. Developmental Math Placement

- The proportion of program-placed first-time in college (FTIC) students placed into developmental math **increased at NOVA** by 6 percentage points for the Fall 2014 cohort compared to the previous two years.
- Placement into developmental math increased at NOVA; however, the percentage of program-placed FTIC students who were placed in developmental math was **higher in the VCCS** than at NOVA.

Table 2. Developmental Math Placement: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

Cohort	NOVA			VCCS
	Total FTIC	Developmental Math Students		Developmental Math Students
	N	N	%	%
Fall 2012	8,069	2,093	25.9	39.7
Fall 2013	8,940	2,289	25.6	39.3
Fall 2014	9,000	2,888	32.1	41.1

Note: FTIC Cohort = program-placed FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

B. Success Rates in College-Level Math

- The percentage of developmental math students who successfully completed college-level math by the following Fall semester was **equivalent at NOVA and in the VCCS** (13 percent) for the Fall 2012 and Fall 2013 cohorts.
- Data for the Fall 2014 cohort was preliminary at the time of this publication; however, the data indicates success rates **equivalent at NOVA and in the VCCS** for the Fall 2014 cohort.

Table 3. Success Rates in College-Level Math of Developmental Math Students: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

Cohort	NOVA			VCCS
	Developmental Math Cohort	Successfully Completed College-Level Math		Successfully Completed College-Level Math
	N	N	%	%
Fall 2012	2,093	276	13.2	12.9
Fall 2013	2,289	289	12.6	13.0
Fall 2014*	2,888	243	8.4	8.3

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

Successful completion = completed college-level math course with a grade of C or better by the following Fall semester.

*Preliminary - Fall 2015 data not included

- The success rates in college-level math for college-ready students (i.e., those who placed into a college-level math course) **increased at NOVA** by 4 percentage points from the Fall 2012 to Fall 2013 cohort.
- The success rates in college-level math for college-ready students were **higher in the VCCS than at NOVA** by 3 to 4 percentage points for the Fall 2012 and Fall 2013 cohorts.
- The preliminary data for the Fall 2014 cohort shows success rates in college-level math for college-ready students **equivalent at NOVA and in the VCCS**.

Table 4. Success Rates in College-level Math of College-Ready Math Students: Fall 2012 through Fall 2014 Cohorts

Cohort	NOVA			VCCS
	College-Ready Math Cohort	Successfully Completed College-Level Math		Successfully Completed College-Level Math
	N	N	%	%
Fall 2012	5,976	2,281	38.2	41.4
Fall 2013	6,651	2,816	42.3	45.6
Fall 2014*	6,112	2,983	48.8	49.0

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

Successful completion = completed college level math course with a grade of C or better by the following Summer semester.

*Preliminary - Summer 2015 data not complete.

C. Developmental English Placement

- From Fall 2013 to Fall 2014, the percentage of program-placed FTIC students who were placed in developmental English courses **decreased at NOVA** from 7 percent to less than 6 percent.
- The developmental English placement rate was **higher in the VCCS** by 4 to 5 percentage points for the Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 cohorts.

Table 5. Developmental English Placement: Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 Cohorts

Cohort	NOVA			VCCS
	Total FTIC	Developmental ENG Students		Developmental ENG Students
	N	N	%	%
Fall 2013	8,940	652	7.3	12.4
Fall 2014	9,000	515	5.7	9.7

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

D. Success Rates in College-Level English

- The percentage of developmental English students who successfully completed college-level English by the following Fall semester was **higher at NOVA** than in the VCCS for the Fall 2013 cohort.
- The data for the Fall 2014 cohort was preliminary at the time of this publication; however, the preliminary data also shows a success rate slightly **higher at NOVA** than in the VCCS.

Table 6. Success Rates in College-Level English of Developmental English Students: Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 Cohorts

Cohort	NOVA			VCCS
	Developmental ENG Cohort	Successfully Completed College-Level ENG		Successfully Completed College-Level ENG
	N	N	%	%
Fall 2013	652	249	38.2	32.3
Fall 2014*	515	134	26.0	25.4

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

Successful completion = completed college-level English course with a grade of C or better by the following Fall semester.

*Preliminary - Fall 2015 data not included.

- The success rate in college-level English for college-ready students was **higher in the VCCS** by 3 percentage points for the Fall 2013 cohort.
- The preliminary data for the Fall 2014 cohort shows success rates in college-level English for college-ready students **equivalent at NOVA and in the VCCS (65%)**.

**Table 7. Success Rates in College-Level English of College-Ready English Students:
Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 Cohorts**

Cohort	NOVA			VCCS
	College-Ready ENG Cohort	Successfully Completed College-Level ENG		Successfully Completed College-Level ENG
	N	N	%	%
Fall 2013	8,288	5,085	61.4	63.8
Fall 2014*	8,485	5,527	65.1	65.1

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

Successful completion = completed college level math course with a grade of C or better by the following Summer semester.

*Preliminary - Summer 2015 data not complete.

III. Progress

A. Retention Rates

- **At NOVA and in the VCCS**, the retention rates of full-time FTIC students were around **21 to 23 percentage points higher** than the retention rates of part-time FTIC students over the presented time period.
- Generally, for the Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 cohorts, Fall-to-Spring retention rates **were similar at NOVA and in the VCCS**; however, Fall-to-Fall retention rates were **higher at NOVA**.

**Table 8. Fall-to-Spring Retention by Enrollment Status:
Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 Cohorts**

Enrollment Status	Cohort	NOVA			VCCS Total
		Total FTIC	Fall-to-Spring		Fall-to-Spring
		N	N	%	%
Full-Time	Fall 2013	5,760	5,134	89.1	87.0
	Fall 2014	5,784	5,122	88.6	86.7
Part-Time	Fall 2013	3180	2096	65.9	64.2
	Fall 2014	3216	2154	67.0	65.7

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

**Table 9. Fall-to-Fall Retention by Enrollment Status:
Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 Cohorts**

Enrollment Status	Cohort	NOVA			VCCS Total
		Total FTIC	Fall-to-Fall		Fall-to-Fall
		N	N	%	%
Full-Time	Fall 2013	5,760	3,969	68.9	63.3
	Fall 2014*	5,784	4,124	71.3	64.3
Part-Time	Fall 2013	3180	1547	48.6	42.8
	Fall 2014*	3216	1584	49.3	43.5

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

*Fall-to-Fall retention for the Fall 2014 cohort is preliminary-based on midterm Fall 2015 data.

B. Progression

Progress 12 indicates the number and percent of FTIC Fall cohort students who completed 12 college credits with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher by the end of the Spring semester of the same academic year.

Progress 24 refers to the number and percent of FTIC Fall cohort students who completed 24 college credits with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher by the end of the Spring semester of the next academic year.

- For the Fall 2012 and Fall 2013 cohorts, Progress 12 rates were 1 to 3 percentage points **higher in the VCCS** while Progress 24 rates were **equivalent at NOVA and in the VCCS**.
- Progress 12 and Progress 24 rates were higher for the Fall 2013 cohort than the Fall 2012 cohort.

Table 10. Progression by Benchmark: Fall 2012 and Fall 2013 Cohorts

Progress Indicator	Cohort	NOVA			VCCS Total
		Total FTIC	Progress		Progress
		N	N	%	%
Progress 12	Fall 2012	8,069	3,579	44.4	46.7
	Fall 2013	8,940	4,446	49.7	50.9
Progress 24	Fall 2012	8,069	3,420	42.4	41.5
	Fall 2013	8,940	3,997	44.7	44.2

Note: FTIC Cohort = FTIC students enrolled in any associate degree or diploma program.

IV. Completion

A. Graduates

- At NOVA, the majority of graduates in 2013-14 and 2014-15 earned an Associate's degree (around 88 percent) as their highest award (Table 11, next page).
- **Transfer degrees** (A.A., A.S., or A.A.S.) accounted for 73 percent of all awards at NOVA and 51 to 52 percent of awards in the VCCS in 2013-14 and 2014-15.¹
- A **lower proportion of graduates** earned a certificate or career studies certificate as their highest award **at NOVA** than in the VCCS.

¹ The Associate of Arts and Sciences (A.A.S.) is a transfer degree that is not offered at NOVA but is offered at other institutions in the VCCS.

Table 11. Graduates by Highest Award Earned: 2013-14 and 2014-15

Highest Award Earned	NOVA				VCCS Total	
	2013-14		2014-15		2013-14	2014-15
	N	%	N	%	%	%
A.A.	472	7.8	446	7.3	3.1	3.0
A.S.	3,917	65.1	4,024	65.4	32.9	33.4
A.A.S.	--	--	--	--	15.1	15.3
A.A.S.	916	15.2	922	15.0	25.3	24.4
A.A.A.	30	0.5	18	0.3	0.5	0.4
Diploma	--	--	--	--	0.6	0.5
Certificate	137	2.3	117	1.9	4.7	4.6
CSC*	546	9.1	623	10.1	17.9	18.5
Total Graduate Awards	6,018	100.0	6,150	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Career Studies Certificate

Note: Excludes Certificate in General Education

B. Underserved Populations (USP) Graduates

Underserved populations (USP) include students who are first-generation to college, minority, or Pell grant-eligible.

- The breakdown of awards earned at NOVA by USP graduates was similar to the breakdown of awards earned by the overall graduate population (Table 11 compared to Table 12).
- Similar to the overall graduate population at NOVA, the **majority of USP graduates at NOVA** in 2013-14 and 2014-15 earned an Associate's degree (90 percent and 88 percent, respectively).

Table 12. Underserved Populations (USP) Graduates by Highest Award Earned: 2013-14 and 2014-15

Highest Award Earned	NOVA				VCCS Total	
	2013-14		2014-15		2013-14	2014-15
	N	%	N	%	%	%
A.A.	314	7.6	320	7.4	3.0	3.0
A.S.	2,779	67.5	2,907	67.0	33.3	33.7
A.A.S.	--	--	--	--	12.9	13.5
A.A.S.	573	13.9	592	13.6	26.2	25.4
A.A.A.	16	0.4	7	0.2	0.4	0.3
Diploma	--	--	--	--	0.6	0.5
Certificate	86	2.1	86	2.0	5.2	5.4
CSC*	347	8.4	428	9.9	18.4	18.2
Total USP Graduate Awards	4,115	100.0	4,340	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Career Studies Certificate

Note: Excludes Certificate in General Education

C. Transfer Enrollments

- A **higher proportion of transfer students** (i.e., students earning an A.A., A.S., or A.A.S. degree) **in the VCCS** than at NOVA transferred with 16 or more credits **without earning a degree or diploma** from their institution of origin.
- Among students who transferred with 16 or more credits, **46 percent at NOVA** transferred with a degree or diploma, compared to **36 percent in the VCCS**.

Table 13. Transfer Enrollments at NOVA and VCCS: 2013-14

Transfer Enrollments with 16 or More Credits	NOVA		VCCS Total
	N	%	%
Transferred without degree or diploma	2,357	54.4	64.0
Transferred with degree or diploma	1,975	45.6	36.0
Total Transferred with 16 or More credits	4,332	100.0	100.0

D. Transfer Graduations

- In 2013-14, 71 percent of NOVA transfer students who graduated from a four-year institution had earned 16 or more credits at NOVA. In comparison, a **lower percent of VCCS transfer students** who graduated from a four-year institution had earned 16 credits or more at their institution of origin.

Table 14. Transfer Students Who Graduated from Four-Year Institutions: 2013-14

Transfer Graduations	NOVA		VCCS Total
	N	%	%
Earned 16 or more credits at institution of origin	4,732	71.0	60.8
Did not earn 16 credits or more at institution of origin	1,937	29.0	39.2
Total Graduated from Four-Year Institution in 2013-14	6,669	100.0	100.0