In 2017 Arizona’s community colleges embraced a Strategic Vision for 2030, which focuses college efforts around three major goals: expanding access to postsecondary credentials; increasing transfer and completion of associate degrees and certificates; and improving alignment between college programs and workforce needs.

The Strategic Vision for 2030 builds upon the colleges’ previous long-term plan, published in 2011, and outlines how Arizona’s ten community college districts will continue to improve student outcomes, as well as how the districts contribute to Arizona’s broader economic and educational goals. In particular, the Strategic Vision for 2030 creates a framework for reaching the Achieve60AZ goal that by 2030, 60% of the Arizona working-age population will hold a postsecondary credential.

A major function of the Strategic Vision for 2030 is the collection, analysis, and publication of data pertaining to 33 short-term, mid-range, long-term, and follow-up metrics. The majority of these metrics have been in place for years, making it possible to evaluate trends in student progress and outcomes.

Statewide and district-level data will continue to be used to guide improvement efforts at community colleges across the state. Statewide data will also be shared with the Arizona Board of Regents, the Arizona Department of Education, and Arizona’s workforce development and business communities in order to assist in the improvement of educational and economic pathways.

The Strategic Vision for 2030, as well as a Technical Guide that provides detailed definitions of each metric, can be found online at: www.arizonacommunitycolleges.org.
METRICS

The 2021 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report presents data related to 33 short-term, mid-range, long-term, and follow-up metrics. These data identify areas of strength, as well as places where the Eastern Arizona College (EAC) will need to continue to expand access, increase transfer and completion, and improve alignment with workforce needs.

**Short-term metrics** correspond to enrollment rates, cost measures, and training for high-demand occupations.

**Mid-range metrics** examine student persistence and success in the first two years of college.

**Long-term metrics** pertain to transfer and completion rates.

**Follow-up metrics** examine student success after departing the community college and may be affected by economic forces, as well as the actions of Arizona universities.

COHORTS

The 2021 Strategic Vision Outcomes Report tracks several cohorts of students.

**2018 and 2014 New Student Cohorts** are used to examine student persistence and success after two and six years, respectively.

**2018 and 2014 Credential-Seeking Sub-Cohorts**, defined as cohort members who earned at least 12 credits by the end of their second year, are used for some retention, transfer, and completion measures. Credential-seeking sub-cohorts provide a more accurate gauge of student success, as they take into account learners’ diverse education and training goals.

**2017-18 Occupational Cohort**, comprised of students who exited EAC in 2017-18 after completing a specified number of credits in an occupational pathway, is used in a follow-up metric related to earning industry-recognized credentials.
Total annual enrollment at EAC has declined from its recession-era high in 2010–11, and although full-time student equivalent (FTSE) enrollment has been more stable, it too dropped in 2019–20. Despite this enrollment decline, which mirrors statewide and national trends, EAC has increased the number of graduates and transfers to four-year universities.

EAC did not enroll any students in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and/or General Educational Development (GED) courses in 2019–20. However, total annual enrollment of high school learners in dual credit courses rose to 672. The latter program is essential in expanding access to EAC.
The percentage of EAC students who are members of an historically underserved racial/ethnic group has remained stable but is lower than the percentage of corresponding populations in Graham, Gila, and Greenlee Counties (49%, 37%, and 53%, respectively).¹ EAC enrolls many more adult learners than the statewide average (34%).²

At EAC, only 34% of instruction in 2019–20 occurred in traditional semester-length courses held on campus Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm. Extending access to many diverse populations, 66% of all student credit hours were earned online, at night or on the weekends, at skill centers, or on land belonging to Indigenous Communities.
EAC’s college-going rate has fluctuated in recent years but increased to 31% in 2019–20, matching the statewide number (31%). Both rates are higher than the national average (22%). EAC will continue to work with high schools, the Arizona Board of Regents, and other community colleges to improve college-going across the state.

At just under $6,300 per year, the net price of attending EAC is just 13% of the median household income of Graham, Gila, and Greenlee Counties. This rate is substantially lower than Arizona’s public universities (29–34%), making EAC an excellent and affordable option for postsecondary education and training.
Over two years, 76% of student credit hours attempted in developmental English or reading by EAC’s 2018 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). In that same time period, 70% of student credit hours attempted by the same cohort in developmental math were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass).

After six years, 32% of developmental English or reading learners in EAC’s 2014 New Student Cohort successfully completed a college-level course in English, and 33% of developmental math learners in the same cohort completed a college-level math course. These success after developmental education rates are similar to or lower than statewide or national averages.⁴
Over two years, 86% of student credit hours attempted in college-level courses by EAC’s 2018 New Student Cohort were successfully completed (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass). This rate has remained relatively consistent over the past three years.

The rates at which EAC students successfully complete College Algebra, English Composition I and II, and Speech (with a grade of A, B, C, or Pass) have increased since 2011-12. These rates exceed corresponding statewide and national averages (67-78% and 66-79%, respectively).
By the end of their second year, 49% of part-time learners in EAC’s 2018 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed 24 credits, and 41% of full-time learners in the same cohort had completed 42 credits. Students who attain these credit thresholds are more likely to persist and earn a degree or certificate.6

Eighty-nine percent of EAC’s 2018 Credential-Seeking Cohort (excluding those who transferred and/or earned a degree or certificate) persisted to spring 2018, and 64% of them returned the following fall. Both rates are higher than the national fall-to-fall average of 59%7, as the national figure not being limited to credential-seekers.
Between 2011 and 2020, the number of degrees and certificates awarded by EAC increased by 38% to 1,350, despite declining enrollments. Of the 2020 total, 41% were degrees and 59% were certificates. These data reflect a concerted effort by EAC to increase the number of learners earning postsecondary credentials.

After six years, 26% of EAC’s 2014 Credential-Seeking Cohort had completed a degree or certificate. EAC’s graduation rate is slightly higher than the most recent national comparison (25%), in part because the national number is not limited to credential-seekers.
In 2019–20, EAC awarded 333 Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) certificates, a drop from previous years. The AGEC is comprised of 35–37 credit hours of coursework that, upon completion, transfer to all public colleges and universities in the state and fulfill lower division, general education requirements.

At EAC, 15% of the 2014 Credential-Seeking Cohort completed an AGEC within 6 years, a decrease from previous years. Increasing the AGEC completion rate—a key priority for the state’s community colleges—will not only ease transfer to Arizona’s public universities but also help students earn bachelor’s degrees in less time and with fewer excess credits.
The number of students transferring from EAC to an in-state, public university has remained relatively stable since 2013, despite declining enrollments. As well, the percentage of transfers who earned an AGEC and/or degree prior to transferring has increased substantially, indicating that the transfer process is becoming more efficient and cost effective.

EAC’s transfer rate to public universities rose to 16% for the 2013 ASSIST Transfer Behavior Cohort, but the overall transfer rate (the percent of learners in credential-seeking cohorts who transfer to any four-year college or university within 6 years) rose substantially to 45%. The overall rate is substantially higher than the most recent national average (25%).
Fifty-five percent of learners in EAC’s 2014 Credential-Seeking Cohort achieved a successful outcome within six years. Because community college learners enter college with diverse education and training goals, and because they often attend part-time and/or earn credits from more than one institution, several national accountability initiatives—including the Student Achievement Measure—have broadened the definition of a successful outcome to include earning a degree or certificate, transferring to another two- or four-year college or university, or continued enrollment. Nationally, 56% of all community college students (64% of full-timers and 52% of part-timers) achieve one of these successful outcomes within 6 years.¹⁰
Sixty-six percent of all 2016-17 full-time transfers from EAC to in-state, public universities earned a bachelor’s degree within four years. This rate has remained relatively steady in recent years and indicates that most full-time transfers are graduating from the state’s public universities in a timely manner.

Sixty-five percent of 2016-17 transfers from EAC to all four-year institutions (public and private, in-state and out) earned a bachelor’s degree within four years. This percentage is higher than both statewide (52%) and national (62%)

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In 2020, an estimated 52.3% of the Arizona working-age population (residents aged 25–64) held a workforce certificate, associate degree, or bachelor’s or higher degree (up from 52.2% in 2019). Arizona’s community colleges are working closely with the Arizona Board of Regents and other postsecondary institutions across the state to reach the Achieve60AZ goal that by 2030, 60% of the Arizona working-age population will hold a postsecondary credential.

Note: In 2018 Arizona’s Community Colleges began using data from the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey instead of its American Community Survey to illustrate progress toward the 60% goal. This change accounts for much of the apparent increase between 2017 and 2018.
Over the past four years, EAC’s FTSE enrollment in occupational courses has declined to 1,400. However, many of the district’s enrollments are in degree or certificate programs associated with the highest-demand occupations in the state, including (among others) nurses, preschool teachers, computer support specialists, web developers, and medical or dental assistants.

Out of all learners in the 2017–18 Occupational Cohort who took a technical skill or end-of-program assessment up to one year after college exit, 91% passed the assessment and/or earned an industry-recognized credential. Examples of occupational programs leading to industry-recognized credentials include nursing, EMT, construction, solar technologies, fire science.
Metric 33: Percent of the 25 Highest-Demand Occupations in Graham County requiring more than a High School Diploma but less than a Bachelor’s Degree for which EAC offers Degree and/or Certificate Programs

- Medical Assistants
- Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers
- Computer User Support Specialists
- Dental Assistants
- Respiratory Therapists
- Occupational Therapy Assistants
- Nursing Assistants
- Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary
- Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics
- Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians
- Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
- Forest and Conservation Technicians
- Dental Hygienists
- Firefighters
- Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education
- Chemical Technicians
- Fire Inspectors and Investigators
- Radiation Therapists
- Health Information Technologists, Medical Registrars, Surgical Assistants, and Technologists and Technicians
- Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Workers
- Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment
- Medical Transcriptionists
- Calibration Technologists and Technicians and Engineering Technologists and Technicians, Except Drafters

Eastern Arizona College offers degree and/or certificate programs training workers for 68% (17 of 25) of the highest-demand occupations in Graham County.
Strategic Vision Data: Sources and Attributions