



Elgin
Community
College

Bright Choice. Bright Future.

Just One More

Using national and local evidence to inform advising practice,
promote retention, and accelerate degree attainment

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Overview

- Academic Advising at Elgin Community College
- “Just One More” Initiative impetus and goal
- Foundational research and data
- Initiative description
- Results
- Lessons learned and next steps



Academic Advising at ECC

- 11 FT, 3 PT
- Serve all credit-seeking students
- Case management / assignment
- Generalists, with some specialities
 - Dual Credit
 - Health Professions
 - Veteran
 - International
 - Pathways (education, engineering, etc.)



“Just One More” Initiative

- National research, local data
- Low cost pilot, spring/summer 2023
- Potential for high reward
 - Student success
 - Institutional metrics
 - Advisor mindset - invigorate and empower the team



National Research

- Research by the Center for Community College Student Engagement (2017) found students **enrolled full-time for at least one semester were more likely to complete gateway courses, persist to their second year, and complete a certificate or degree.**
- Civitas Learning (2017) suggests that taking **one additional course may increase persistence** and that this increase may have a compounding effect.



National Research

- The Status Quo
 - A student may continue to enroll in two courses each semester simply because that is what they have done in the past. Students sometimes make choices based on the utility of the moment without considering the longer-term implications of their decisions (McKinney et al., 2015; Reyna & Farley, 2006).
- Increased Surface Area
 - More regular contact with faculty and campus engagement (Attewall et al., 2012)
- Psychological Impact
 - Increased pace in accumulating credits can increase a student's confidence in their ability to complete (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003)



ECC Retention Data

- Of the 9,844 **new** students who started between 2014 and 2021
 - Chance of retention from fall-to-fall increase **12% for each additional credit hour enrolled**

3 credits vs. 4 credits	12% increased likelihood of retention
6 credits vs. 9 credits	36% increased likelihood of retention
12 credits vs. 15 credits	36% increased likelihood of retention

ECC Retention Data – Equity Implications

- Of the 9,844 new students who started between 2014 and 2021
 - **Course completion** (passing grade earned) by race/ethnicity and avg. course load, in first year

Black/African American	Attempted 6 or fewer	57%
	Attempted 7 or more	64%
Hispanic/Latinx	Attempted 6 or fewer	60%
	Attempted 7 or more	73%
Unknown Race	Attempted 6 or fewer	62%
	Attempted 7 or more	73%



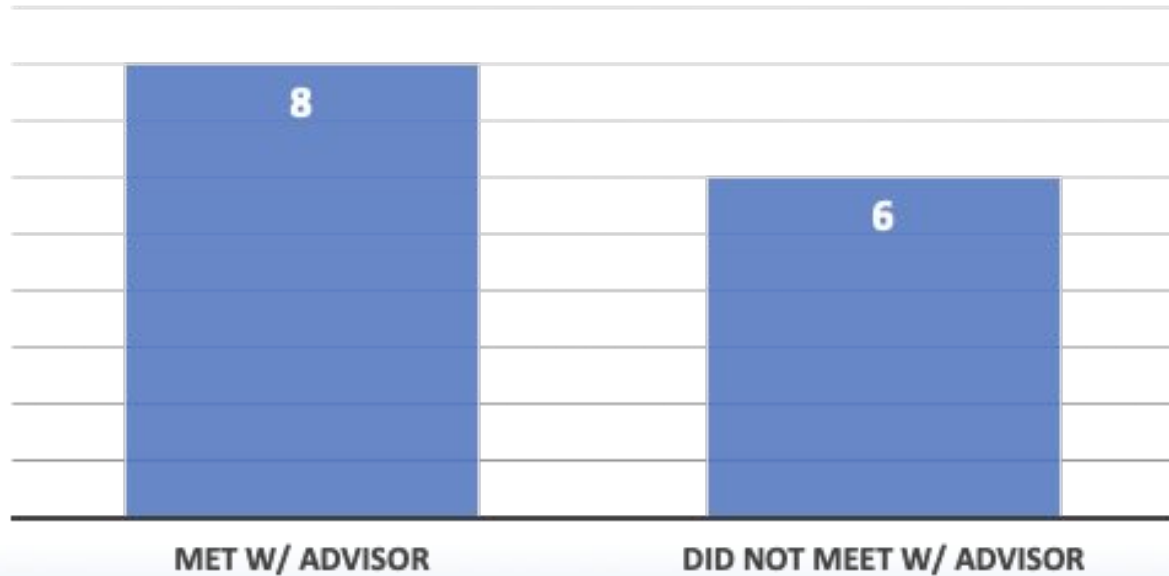
ECC Retention Data – Equity Implications

- Of the 9,844 new students who started between 2014 and 2021
 - For some populations, the **fall-to-spring retention** data are even more compelling:

Black/African American <i>Males, 25 and older</i>	Attempted 6 or fewer	38%
	Attempted 7 to 11	85% (+47%)
Black/African American <i>Females, 25 and older</i>	Attempted 6 or fewer	43%
	Attempted 7 to 11	90% (+47%)
Hispanic/Latinx <i>Males, 25 and older</i>	Attempted 6 or fewer	41%
	Attempted 12 or more	76% (+35%)

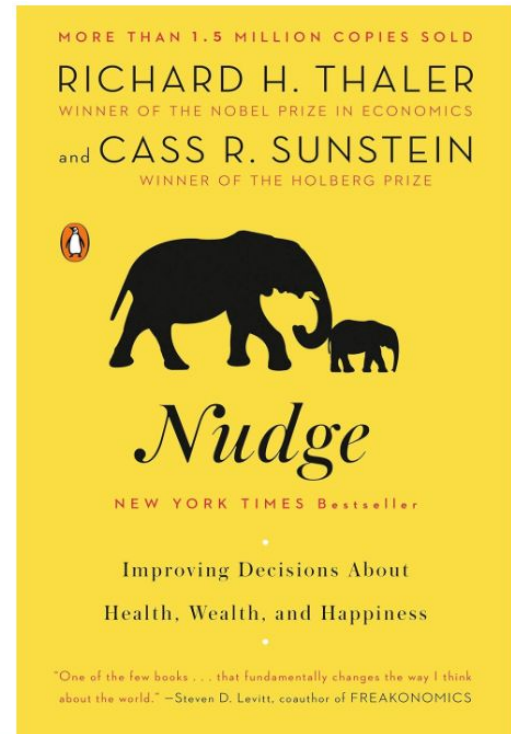
ECC Course Success Data

Average Credits Successfully Completed Fall 2022



Nudge research

- Individuals make decisions with constraints, limited information, and time. Thaler & Sunstein(2009)
- Advisors as “choice architects”
- When do we need a Nudges?
 - Nudges to complete long-term goals



Just One More \neq One size fits all

Factors for Advisors to Consider:

- High School GPA
- High School coursework - AP or honors level
- Does the student have a job in addition to their studies?
 - In one study, students who worked hours 30 hour per week or more did not benefit from taking a higher course load (Attewell, 2016)
- Does the student have dependents?



Advising Action – “Just One More”

- Make **15 credit hours the norm** when planning full-time students
- Make **9 credit hours the norm** when planning part-time students
- **Add additional course to the plan as a nudge** to students
 - “I am going to add this additional course to your plan, after your schedule is set, if time in your schedule allows, consider adding it”
- Advise students in a way that **encourages them to stretch**, while providing them all the **relevant information to make their own informed decisions**
 - **Asset-based advising** assumes that students are **capable and resilient**, and can rise to the demands of their educational journey
- Parallel planning
 - This supports parallel planning – if what you’ve planned is full or has a time conflict the extra class can be used thus eliminating the need for a possible return drop-in during peak time.



“Just One More” Pilot Results

Advising Period March 6th – Sept. 1st, 2023

- 9,800 advising visits by 6,490 students
 - 67% of these students met with an advisor once
 - 22% of these students met with an advisor twice

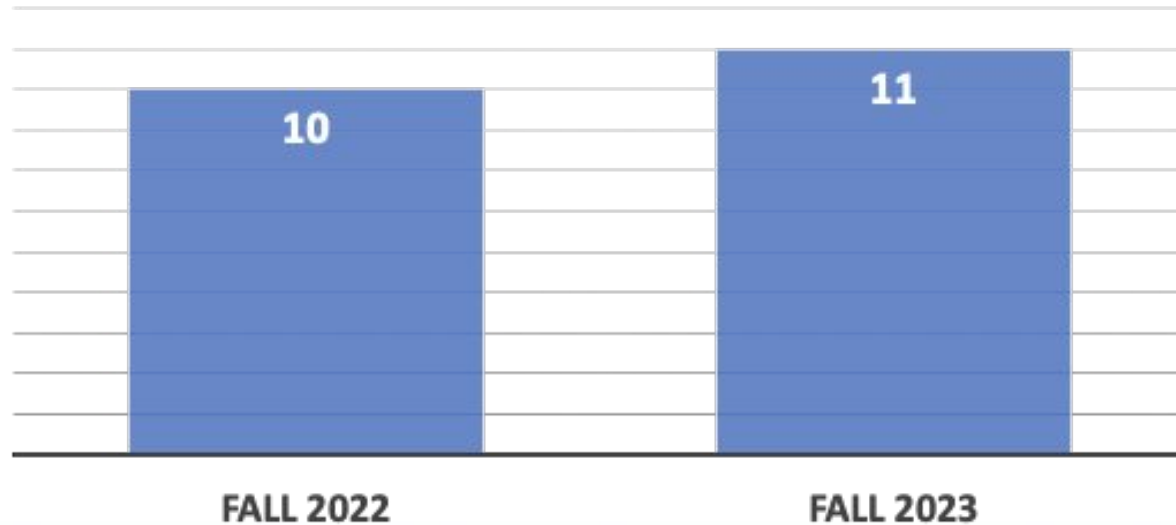
- Representative of ECC student body
 - Race, ethnicity, age, etc.

- Representative of enrollment trends (PT/FT)



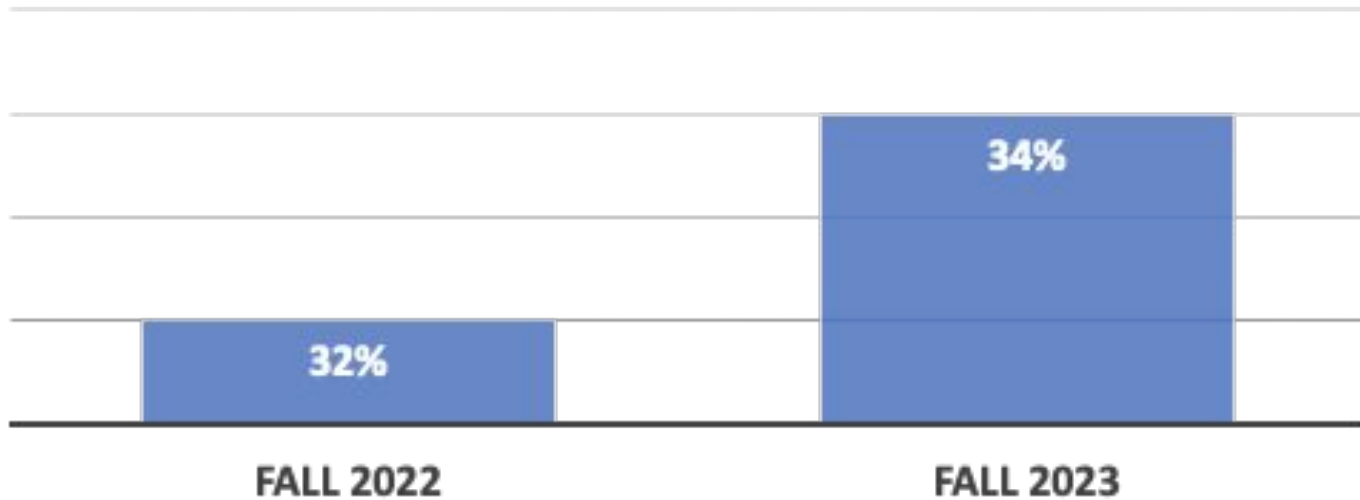
“Just One More” Initiative Results

**Average Credits Enrolled
Students Met w/ Advisor**



“Just One More” Initiative Results

Full-time Enrollment Students Met w/ Advisor



Discussion

- Some evidence that “Just One More” initiative drives increased credits, BUT...
- Part time student data did not show much movement
- Even among some cross sections who did *not* meet with advisors, small increases in credits were observed
- Total ECC Credit Hours: Up 7.7% (fall 22 to fall 23)
 - Just One More may have supported this, but it’s difficult to state conclusively
- Both national and institutional data is clear on the efficacy of increased credit load, so we will continue building upon and evaluating this program



What We Learned and Next Steps

- Collaboration with Institutional Research on credit data was fascinating and exciting – ask the right questions
- Paradigm-shifting initiative, long term commitment
- Advisor Mindset
 - Mindset shift in advisors to make **data supported recommendations based on unique student profiles**
 - **Subconscious biases** based on nature of advising work
 - Introducing data sets like midterm grades more intentionally
 - Empower advisor and students



**“May your choices reflect your hopes,
not your fears”**

-Nelson Mandela



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Institutional Research Team:

Carina Zamudio-Ramos, Data Management Analyst
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