Guttman Community College (CUNY) – Degree Programs that Emphasize Student Support and Experiential Learning

Website: http://guttman.cuny.edu/

Summary of Innovation: Guttman Community College is a new institution within the City University of New York's (CUNY) community college system.[1] It first opened in the fall semester of 2012 as an urban public institution that offers associate degree programs in an environment designed purposefully to nurture student success. Its strategic goal is to increase the graduation rate among community college students, especially those who enter higher education underprepared for college-level work, especially low-income, first generation students from groups that have been traditionally underserved in higher education. The College integrates excellence in teaching with proactive and responsive student supports and external partnerships, designed to increase the number of students who persist in their programs and attain a degree in a timely manner.

Although there are several characteristics of the college's academic offerings, three elements appear to be central to its planned program:

- the College has created extensive pre-college and immersion programs for students in conjunction with the first-year course sequence, designed to integrate academic and occupational majors with remedial education;

- operate a mandatory two-week summer bridge program that introduces students to the GCC curricular model and the demands of college-level work and full-time attendance in the first year;

- deliver a first-year core curriculum that contextualizes skills development in credit-bearing coursework, with embedded student advisement from professional staff; and

- promote connections between college and the workplace by engaging partners from New York City business, non-profit organizations and governmental agencies – formalizing experiential learning and making use of the city as an extension of the classroom.

Guttman is focused on providing education that leads to an associate's degree in business administration, human services, liberal arts and sciences, urban studies, and information technology. [2]

For the school year 2016 – 2017, Guttman charged annual full-time tuition of $4,800 for New York City residents, and $320.00 per credit out-of-city residents[2]

Targeted Populations of Learners: Like all CUNY institutions, Guttman is organized to reflect CUNY's mission as, "a vehicle for the upward mobility of the disadvantaged in the City of New York."

Approximately 45% of all Guttman students enroll under the age of 19. The majority of students are under the age of 22, and reside in the five New York City boroughs. Fewer than 1% of all Guttman students are from out of state.

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[1] The City University of New York. Mission & History, 2018. http://www2.cuny.edu/about/history/

In the fall of 2016,the latest year for which enrollment data is available, Guttman had 995 students enrolled, with 60% identified as Hispanic, 27% identified as African-American, 8% identified as white and 5% identified as Asian or Pacific Islander.

Partners: Affiliate of City University of New York (CUNY) network, Kaplan Education Foundation, The Manhattan Chamber of Commerce. Additional community businesses that align with degree programs are listed on the Guttman Community College website.[2]

Bringing the Innovation to Scale: Guttman has already achieved a three-year graduation rate of 35%. It is only now reaching the period defined by experiential learning, and is working to engage employers and non-profit organizations to provide internships and other experiences. Guttman is also working to develop articulation pathways to higher education, which would enable graduates to earn baccalaureate degrees.

A 2016 case study noted that "Guttman has faced the growing pains that are inevitable in a start-up environment. Defining faculty roles, workload, and representation in Guttman's unique organizational structure—which lacks departments and includes every faculty member in a governing council—has been particularly challenging. In addition, Guttman has had to balance its efforts to provide adequate support to its students with the need to ensure that students are prepared to succeed on their own after they leave".[3]

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[2] Guttman Community College: Fast Facts. http://guttman.cuny.edu/about/fast-facts/

[3] Brown, Jessie & Kurzweil, Martin (2016) *Starting from Scratch: Lessons from Guttman Community College*. http://www.sr.ithaka.org/blog/starting-from-scratch-lessons-from-guttman-community-college/