Students are ...

- Taking too much time
- Taking too many credits
- Spending too much money
- Not graduating
Too Much Time to Degree

Of those who graduate...

2-year
Associate

Full-time students take 3.9 years
Part-time students take 5.5 years

4-year
Bachelor’s (Non-Flagship)

Full-time students take 4.9 years
Part-time students take 6.7 years
Too Many Credits

2-year
Associate

78.8
credits accumulated

60
credits standard

Does NOT count remediation

4-year
Bachelor’s (Non-Flagship)

136.2
credits accumulated

120
credits standard
Very Few Graduate on Time …

On-Time Graduation Rates
(Full-time students)

2-year Associate
5.0%

4-year Bachelor’s (Non-Flagship)
18.1%
Too Few Graduate at All

150% Time Graduation Rates
(Full-time students)

2-year
Associate

12.9%

4-year
Bachelor’s
(Non-Flagship)

43.2%

150% time = 3 years for associate, 6 years for bachelor’s
Part-Time Students Rarely Graduate

200% Time Graduation Rates

(Part-time students)

2-year
Associate

6.9%

4-year
Bachelor’s
(Non-Flagship)

15.9%

200% time = 4 years for associate, 8 years for bachelor’s
Why So Many Excess Credits?

Causes
(in semester credit hours)

- Academic challenges: “F” grades (13)
- Poor student choices (12)
- Transfer problems (3)
- Unavailable courses (3)
- Degree requirements (1)

Academic problems: “W/R” grades (7)

GPS directly addresses these problems
Too Many Choices and Too Little Guidance

- Most colleges have more than 100 majors and hundreds of courses
- Most students are uncertain about their career interests
- 45% of students haven’t seen a counselor by the third week of class
Why GPS?

1 counselor : 400 students
Too much choice — especially uninformed choice — leads to indecision or poor decisions.
Behavioral Economics: Choice

Overwhelmed by Choice

For every 10 plans added, drop of 1.5–2% in participation

2 Plans Offered

401(k) 401(k)

75% Participation

59 Plans Offered

~ 800,000 employees
647 plans
69 industries

60% Participation
Behavioral Economics: Default

A substantial number of people accept — even welcome — a default choice designed by informed professionals.
Behavioral Economics: Default

Organ Donation Rates

Austria (OPT-OUT) 99%

Germany (OPT-IN) 12%
Structure optimizes design elements for success and minimizes mistakes.
GPS: The Solution
GPS: Choice Architecture

A design that leads people to make more informed, deliberate decisions and contains “default choices” that are in the person’s best interest given his or her educational goals.
DO THIS

GPS: Essential Components

1. Default pathways
2. Informed Choice
3. Meta-Majors
4. Academic Maps
5. Milestone courses
6. Intrusive advising
1. Structured, Default Pathways Built for On-Time Graduation

- Students don’t “discover” the right path; the academic map is the default schedule.

- Students do not need permission to register for courses on their schedule.

- They do need permission to take courses not on their schedule.
2. Informed Choice

- Provides information on careers and opportunities for further study
- Uses electronic high school transcripts
- Uses high school performance and other measures to recommend broad academic pathways — “meta-majors”
- Presents default pathways
3. Meta-Majors

- Students must choose a meta-major — broad clusters of majors

  STEM  
  Health Sciences  
  Social Sciences

  Liberal Arts  
  Education  
  Business

- No student is “unclassified” — those who can’t decide are defaulted into Liberal Arts
Math Is Aligned with Meta-Majors

Health Sciences
Social Sciences
Liberal Arts
Education
Business

Quantitative Reasoning/
Statistics

Degree
4-Year Transfer
Certificate
License

STEM

College Algebra/
Precalculus

Degree
4-Year Transfer
Certificate
License
Meta-Major to Majors

- Help students make the big choices
- Once in a meta-major, help students narrow their study to a major
- A semester-by-semester academic map is the sequential, prescriptive schedule of classes for the meta-major and the major
## 4. Academic Maps

### STEM Meta Major

#### TERM 1
- **English 101 | English 101+**: 3 credits
- **Pre-calc 101 | Pre-calc 101+**: 3
- **Biology, Chemistry, or Physics Core w/lab**: 4
- **Biology, Chemistry, or Physics Core w/lab**: 4
- **Student Success Seminar**: 1

**CREDITS**: 15

#### TERM 2
- **English 102 | English 102+**: 3 credits
- **Calculus 101 | Calculus 101+**: 3
- **Bio, Chem, or Physics Core w/lab**: 4
- **Biology, Chemistry, or Physics Core w/lab**: 4
- **STEM or Engineering Options Seminar**: 1

**CREDITS**: 15

*Milestone course required in this term

Gateway course with corequisite support

### Select Major

- **Biology**
- **Chemical Engineering**
- **Chemistry**
- **Computer Science**
- **Environment Studies**

#### TERM 3
- **Conceptual Approaches to Biology**: 4 credits
- **General Chemistry**: 4
- **Humanities, Fine Arts & Design, & Cultural Diversity**: 3
- **Fundamentals of Genetics**: 4

**CREDITS**: 15

#### TERM 4
- **General Genetics**: 4
- **General Organic Chemistry Lab I**: 4
- **Literacy & Critical Inquiry w/lab**: 4
- **Social & Behavioral Sciences & Historical Awareness**: 3

**CREDITS**: 15
# 4. Academic Maps

## Biology

### Term 5
- **Organic Evolution**: 4 credits
- General Physics and Lab: 4 credits
- Plant Diversity and Evolution: 3 credits
- General Organic Chemistry Lab II: 4 credits

**Credits**: 15

### Term 6
- **Bioethics**: 4 credits
- Undergrad Research: 4 credits
- Upper Div Social & Behavioral Sci w/lab: 4 credits
- Elective: 3 credits

**Credits**: 15

### Term 7
- **Conservation Biology & Ecological Sustainability I**: 3 credits
- Fundamentals of Ecology: 3 credits
- Upper Div CLAS Science & Society Elective: 3 credits
- Upper Div Literacy & Critical Inquiry: 3 credits
- Upper Div Elective: 3 credits

**Credits**: 15

### Term 8
- **Developmental Biology**: 3 credits
- History of Science: 3 credits
- Computer Applications in Biology: 3 credits
- Upper Div Elective: 3 credits
- Upper Div Elective: 3 credits

**Credits**: 15

**Total credits**: 120
5. Milestone Courses

- Prerequisite courses are designated for each semester
- They must be taken in the recommended sequence
- The college must guarantee the courses are available in the sequence and terms designed in the academic maps
6. Intrusive Advising

- Students must see their advisors before registering for classes if:
  - they do not complete the milestone course on schedule
  - they fall 2 or more courses behind on their academic map
  - they have a 2.0 GPA or less for the semester
6. Intrusive Advising

Off track — Must see advisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM 5</th>
<th>CREDITS 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Flag] Organic Evolution</td>
<td>✔️ 4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Physics and Lab</td>
<td>✔️ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Diversity and Evolution</td>
<td>✔️ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Organic Chemistry Lab II</td>
<td>✔️ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERM 6</td>
<td>CREDITS 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Flag] Bioethics</td>
<td>![X] 4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad Research</td>
<td>✔️ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Div Soc &amp; Behav Sci w/lab</td>
<td>✔️ 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>✔️ 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Bioethics

4 credits
Highly Structured Option

- Block schedules of classes
- Cohorts of students
- Students choose programs or majors not courses
- Attendance required
Additional Considerations

- Remediation is embedded or corequisite
- 15 credit hours is the default load
- Degree requirements should not exceed 120 credits for a 4-year degree and 60 credits for 2-year degree
Results
Results

Higher graduation rates

More on-time graduates

Closing the achievement gap

Fewer lost credits — saving time and money
Georgia State University

- **Degree maps** and **intrusive advising**
- Graduation rates **up 20%** in past 10 years
- Graduation rates higher for:
  - Pell students, at **52.5%**
  - African American students, at **57.4%**
  - Hispanic students, at **66.4%**
- More bachelor’s degrees to African-Americans than any other U.S. university
Since starting **degree maps**, FSU has cut the number of students graduating with excess credits in half.

Graduation rate **increased to 74%**

- African Americans to **77%**
- First-generation Pell students to **72%**
- Hispanic students to more than **70%**
eAdvisor system boosting retention and success

First-time, full-time **freshman retention** rates climbed to **84%**

91% of all students deemed “**on track,”** up from 22% three years before
Students grouped into cohorts with consolidated block schedules

Doubled graduation rates for associate degrees

Graduation rate 3x higher than national average for urban community colleges

55% of fall 2007 cohort earned associate degrees in 3 years
Highly structured, block schedule program

More than 75% of students graduate, at rate 3x higher than peers, even though slightly poorer and older.

Center has certificate programs have job placement rates of 80% or higher.
Established in 2009, Complete College America is a national nonprofit with a single mission: to work with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally under-represented populations.

The need for this work is compelling. Between 1970 and 2009, undergraduate enrollment in the United States more than doubled, while the completion rate has been virtually unchanged. We’ve made progress in giving students from all backgrounds access to college — but we haven’t finished the all-important job of helping them achieve a degree. Counting the success of all students is an essential first step. And then we must move with urgency to reinvent American higher education to meet the needs of the new majority of students on our campuses, delicately balancing the jobs they need with the education they desire.

Complete College America believes there is great reason for optimism ... and a clear path forward. With a little more support — and a lot of common sense — we can ensure that many more get the high-quality college education that will help them live productive and fulfilling lives. All Americans will share in the benefits of their success.
COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

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completecollege.org