The Program Control Number and Pillar III: Monitoring Students’ Progress on their Pathways

The issue

In order to monitor students’ progress in their pathway, we must first know what pathway students are on. California Community Colleges have struggled to identify the specific program pathways of students who are in progress.

The current situation

- Understanding and definition of a “program” is ambiguous – often conflated with major, TOP code, department, etc.
- Students are asked to select a major or program of study when they apply via CCCApply.
- Major selection is not necessarily informed.
- Undecided is typically the most common major.
- Individual colleges are in charge of maintaining the major or program of study lists that populate CCCApply – typically through the admissions & registration area.
- Majors are coded by TOP code.
- When students receive an award (i.e., complete a pathway), the award is coded with a unique Program Control Number – like a social security number for a program of study. Until 2015 this was known as the Chancellor’s Office Unique Code and it is generated by the Chancellor’s when a program of study is approved.
- Programs that are not approved by the Chancellor’s Office do not have PCNs.

Proposed solution

- Emphasize use of the Program Control Number (PCNs).
- PCN should be used to anchor program of study choices in CCCApply
- PCN should be used in the development and recording of student education plans
- Once students are unambiguously assigned to a particular program, it is possible to track their progress along that program pathway.
- In this way we are connecting students programs of study to a particular pathways to a particular outcome rather than to a vaguely

**SP04 STUDENT-PROGRAM-CO-UNIQUE-CODE X(05)**

This element uniquely identifies the program the student completed. This code is assigned by the Chancellor's Office and provided to the institution offering the program.

CODING

Report the Chancellor's Office unique 5-digit code that best describes the certificate or degree program awarded to the student.

Enter "YYYYY" for noncredit awards.

Enter "999999" for credit awards under 18 units which do not have a Chancellor's Office assigned program code.

Enter "AAAAAA" for "catalog rights" awards that are conferred in programs that do not have a unique 5-digit code because they are no longer offered by the college, but which were previously offered as approved programs. (If the discontinued but previously approved program has a reasonably related successor program, "catalog rights" awards may be reported under the unique 5-digit code for the successor program. If there is no reasonably related successor program, enter "AAAAAA.")

NOTE: All awards submitted with an SP04="AAAAA" shall be reviewed by the Chancellor's Office for validity.