Meaningful Connections: Service-Learning,
Peer Advocacy & Student Success

4

SECTION 4: Program Evaluation

A Resource Guide for Integrating the Connect2Complete
Approach into Developmental Education Courses

Campus Compact

This section offers information on measuring program impact, including guidance and tips specific to C2C, as well as the C2C Pilot Program Evaluation Report examining results from Campus Compact's C2C pilot, conducted during 2012–2014. The evaluation process should be built into the program from its inception to help guide ongoing assessment and improvement.

Measuring C2C Program Impact

Cathy Burack and Susan Lanspery, Center for Youth and Communities, Brandeis University

The Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University and Campus Compact share a vision for evaluation that is rooted in the conviction that project evaluation and project management are inextricably linked. Effective evaluation is not an "event" that occurs at the end of a project, but rather an ongoing process. This means collecting and analyzing data to guide decision making throughout the life of a project. In other words, evaluation should be conducted not just to prove that a project worked, but also to improve the way it works.

> "Program evaluation is the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming."
>
> —**Michael Quinn Patton,** *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*

WHY DO EVALUATION?

There are multiple reasons to evaluate programs and to plan for ongoing data collection efforts. Reasons include:

1. **Accountability**—Key stakeholders require it.
2. **Proving program impact**—To make the case that what you do makes a difference.
3. **Program improvement**—To see what's working and use data for program management and improvement.
4. **Marketing/fundraising**—To generate support for your program.
5. **Knowledge development**—To generate information that will improve the quality of practice in the field.

TYPES OF EVALUATION

The three major types of evaluation each have different purposes as well as different requirements for the resources, expertise, and time required to carry them out:

Context evaluation, for understanding the circumstances/context of the program. This is most useful in the early stages of planning a program. In the case of C2C, a context evaluation might include needs assessments and reviews of campus policies, structures, and institutional history related to student retention and success as well as to peer advocacy and service-learning.

Implementation/process evaluation, for understanding how the program is being implemented, documenting program elements and activities, and assessing fidelity to the model you want to implement. This is also most useful in the early stages of implementing a program. Implementation evaluation

measures may include, for example, determining the ways in which a service is provided to beneficiaries (and by whom), the number/type/frequency of components in a program, and who is (and is not) offered services. In addition, implementation evaluation may address program participation levels, quality of services, program costs, satisfaction with services received, and other aspects of the program.

Impact/outcomes evaluation, for assessing the impact of the program on students and other participants. This type of evaluation is best undertaken once the program is under way. A C2C impact evaluation for students would examine effects on outcomes such as retention, GPA, adjustment to and affiliations with college, academic confidence, social integration, educational and career aspirations, and level of civic skills and awareness.

KEY QUESTIONS IN PLANNING C2C PROGRAM EVALUATION

Ideally, planning for evaluation will begin at the same time you are planning how to implement C2C. Even if your C2C program is under way, consider answering these questions when planning your evaluation:

1. **What stakeholders need to be involved?** Examples include your campus institutional researcher or assessment professional, developmental education faculty members, the service-learning coordinator, advisors, and students.

2. **What do I want to know about the program?** It is important to identify what questions you want to ask, especially when resources are limited. For example, the C2C Pilot Program Evaluation Report (see p. 105) looked at a number of outcomes, including those associated with academic performance, retention, and service-learning.

3. **What kinds of information can I use to answer my questions?** If possible, use a logic model to identify priorities for which data to collect (see The C2C Theory of Change, p. 6, and Developing Logic Models, Appendix 3-1). Identify what you want to measure. You might discover that there are things that you need to know about now (e.g., the impact of the service-learning experience) and things that can, or have to, wait until later (e.g., graduation rates). Match the data to the questions and see what kinds of information fit. Next, create a flexible and responsive evaluation design, remembering that the program should drive the evaluation, not the other way around. For instance, while it might be ideal to follow students over a full academic year, the nature of the program and the attendance patterns of your students may require that the evaluation follow students one term at a time. Think about what you already collect; there may be opportunities to build on existing survey or student record data. Finally, collect and
analyze data from multiple perspectives and sources (keeping available resources in mind).

4. **How am I going to use the results?** Will the primary audience for the evaluation be internal, for program management purposes, or external (e.g., to show funders that this is an effective way to retain students)? The answer will influence evaluation design as well as reporting.

EVALUATION DESIGN

It's important to think critically about evaluation design up front, taking into account the questions you are asking, your audience(s), and your available resources. Common approaches include quantitative (experimental or quasi-experimental) and qualitative designs.

Experimental design (randomly assigned comparison groups). In this research design, the effects of a program, intervention, or treatment are examined by comparing individuals who receive it with a comparable group who do not. In this type of research, individuals are randomly assigned to the two groups to try to ensure that, prior to taking part in the program, each group is statistically similar in ways that are observable

(e.g., race, gender, years of education) and unobservable (e.g., levels of motivation, belief systems, disposition toward program participation). Experimental designs differ from quasi-experimental designs in how individuals are assigned to program participation (see below). An experimental design has greater validity because of the demonstrable similarity of the groups before the intervention; however, the idea of randomly assigning subjects (e.g., students) to various programs is often challenging to carry out in educational settings given that it requires one group not to receive services. There are ways to do this (e.g., staggered program entry), but it requires spending resources on monitoring and tracking.

Quasi-experimental design (non-randomly assigned comparison groups). A quasi-experimental design also uses control groups, but subjects are assigned to groups on a non-random basis; other means are used to control bias, such as matching participants on factors that relate to the measured outcomes. Non-randomization reduces evaluators' confidence that both observable and unobservable characteristics are similar in each group (CNCS, 2013). Employing this type of comparison group is often easier and more feasible within an educational setting, however. For example, an evaluation of the impact of C2C might include comparing two groups of similar, if not randomized, developmental education students, one that has engaged in service-learning and one that has not.

Qualitative/observational design. This design provides an in-depth look at the impact of programs on individuals through interviews, focus groups, and observations. It is often used in conjunction with experimental and quasi-experimental quantitative designs as a way to deepen interpretation of the results and to help identify not only what has occurred but why.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Some final advice for ensuring the success of evaluation efforts:

- Design evaluation to meet your needs—there is no one "right" approach.
- Start with the questions, not the instrument.
- Involve your stakeholders in the process.
- Make effective use of the resources (people and information) that you have on hand.
- Use logic models as tools for planning and reflection—the time invested is well spent.
- Make evaluation a living, useful process—a "want to" instead of a "have to."

C2C Pilot Program Evaluation Report

Cathy Burack and Susan Lanspery, Center for Youth and Communities, Brandeis University

This evaluation report covers the C2C pilot program conducted at nine community colleges in three states during 2012–2014. The evaluation was conducted by the Center for Youth and Communities, Heller School, Brandeis University, on behalf of Campus Compact. The evaluation is presented here to provide an overview of the program's strengths and lessons learned. This report may also help campuses create evaluation mechanisms for their own programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the findings from quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis undertaken to assess the outcomes of the C2C pilot project (2012–2014). The C2C pilot project combines service-learning and peer advocacy for low-income community college students in developmental education classes. The C2C strategy encourages students' academic, personal, and social development, as well as development of students' cultural identity and critical civic consciousness—all key factors for student persistence.

The data reveals that the C2C model shows promise. Over the course of the pilot, C2C students (low-income students enrolled in one or more developmental education classes) were retained at higher rates than comparison group students. Most notably, when institutions implemented the model with fidelity, retention among C2C participants was higher than among a comparison group of developmental education students not in C2C. After six semesters, the persistence rate among C2C students was six percentage points higher than among the non-C2C comparison groups.

In addition, service-learning increased C2C students' level of civic skills and awareness expressed in part through a commitment to participating in community work and an awareness of the importance of political participation. Peer advocates (enrolled college students who serve as service-learning leaders, mentors, and advisors to C2C students) had a positive impact on C2C students' adjustment to college, particularly in the areas of helping them sign up for courses, learn about others on campus who could help, and learn about academic support services.

The program conferred other benefits as well. Students experienced a reduction in personal, financial, academic, social, and other challenges over the course of their C2C student experience. Students reported that their affiliations with the college, their peers, faculty, and key campus resource staff became more positive during their time as a C2C student. C2C students also reported an increase in academic confidence during the period of the intervention, specifically in the areas of passing courses, re-enrolling in college the next term, achieving academic and career goals, pursuing a career that will help their community, and applying to become a peer advocate. Similarly, the C2C students' educational aspirations increased over the pilot period, regardless of site, status, gender, or race.

While C2C was aimed at increasing the C2C students' chances for success, the evaluation also examined the impact of C2C on peer advocates' career aspirations, sense of self as a leader, and affiliation with their college. Peer advocates reported dramatically increased confidence and changes in their self-perception, expectations, and goals due to C2C training and experience. The evaluators found the peer advocates' growth and leadership development especially noteworthy.

Finally, C2C helped shift the culture at some of the participating community colleges so the idea that students empower each other and see themselves as change agents on campus is central to the way the college operates. Service-learning and peer advocacy became important strategies for increasing student retention rather than being implemented as add-on programs.

EVALUATION DESIGN

The C2C evaluation was designed to assess the effectiveness of a pilot intervention employing service-learning and peer advocacy with underprepared, low-income students who were placed into one or more developmental education courses at the nine colleges participating in the pilot program. The evaluation was both quantitative and qualitative, and focused on student outcomes that included student academic achievement and success, campus integration, and retention. Research questions for this study were:

1. What is the impact of C2C program practices on the retention, academic success, college knowledge, self-efficacy, and community engagement of C2C students?

2. What program elements are associated with positive outcomes, and is there a differential impact across different types of students (e.g., by sex, race, age, levels of aid)?

Data Collection

Four sources of data were used to provide evidence of the extent to which the outcomes had been achieved:

1. **C2C student surveys.** Surveys were administered to C2C students at the end of each term. The study utilized a retrospective post-then-pre survey design. C2C students responded to questions about their demographics, implementation of the C2C model, and the impact of the C2C student experience on their educational and career aspirations, college knowledge, self-efficacy, and community engagement.

2. **Peer advocate surveys.** Surveys were administered to peer advocates at the completion of each term they served. They responded to questions about implementation of the C2C model, along with questions about the impact of the peer advocate experience on their career and educational aspirations, sense of self as leader, and level of affiliation with their college.

3. **Student record data.** Colleges were asked to collect term data on their C2C students and a comparison group,[1] across each term for the duration of the pilot. Using campuses with a semester calendar as an example, there was a Spring 2012 cohort, a Fall 2012 cohort, a Spring 2013 cohort, and so on. All cohorts were tracked across all subsequent semesters so that persistence, time to degree, and completion rates could be measured to the extent possible within the limited time frame of the pilot.

4. **Interviews.** Brandeis evaluators conducted multiday site visits to each of the nine campuses in Spring 2014, a year to a year and a half after the implementation of the C2C pilot program. Evaluators conducted group and individual interviews with C2C students, peer advocates, C2C and other faculty, C2C program staff, service-learning/community engagement staff, and other relevant campus personnel. The goal was to take a more in-depth, nuanced look at promising practices, program impacts on student outcomes, program elements associated with positive outcomes, and sustainability of the C2C program and/or practices.

Outcome Measures

Table 4-1 shows the anticipated outcomes for C2C students and the data collected to measure each outcome.

---

1. Colleges were asked to choose a comparison group of students who were demographically and academically similar to C2C students. The key difference between the two groups of developmental education students is participation in a C2C class. Since registration in C2C classes was "blind" (i.e., C2C students did not knowingly enroll in C2C classes), differences between the two groups would not be a result of differences based on self-selection.

Table 4-1. C2C Student Outcomes and Measures

C2C Student Outcomes	Measures
Increased persistence (movement out of developmental education courses, passing intro gate-keeper courses)	Student record data, student survey
Re-enrolling for consecutive terms	Student record data
Graduation/transfer to 4-year institution/certificate completion	Student record data
Increased affiliation with the community college	Student survey, interview
Increased college knowledge (e.g., where to register, get advised, get help, get involved)	Student survey, interview
Increased confidence in academic abilities and career aspirations	Student survey, interview
Improved academic performance (e.g., credit hours earned vs. attempted)	Student record data
Increased civic skills	Student survey, interview
Intent to move into peer advocacy role	Student survey, interview

Expected outcomes for the peer advocates were increased career aspirations, increased sense of self as leader, and increased affiliation with the community college.

QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION FINDINGS

Quantitative data came from student surveys and from aggregated student record data. Over the pilot period, 1,968 C2C students from the nine C2C colleges completed the survey, a 30% response rate overall.

C2C Student Demographics

Based on student record data, a total of 6,579 students participated in the C2C program across the nine colleges. The students were racially and ethnically diverse: roughly 36% were white, 31% were black, 3% were Asian, 4% identified as two or more races, 18% identified as Hispanic, and less than 1% identified as American Indian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Nearly two-thirds were female.

A goal of the C2C program was to focus on low-income students, using Pell eligibility as a threshold criterion (household income of $50,000 or less). Due to the program design, students could not be screened for income eligibility prior to their admission to C2C, but it was assumed that most would meet the criterion based on the general financial aid data from these campuses. This assumption proved true. Both the survey data and the student record data indicate that roughly 80% of the C2C students came from households with incomes of less than $50,000.

Peer Advocate Demographics

A total of 271 peer advocates from the nine C2C colleges responded to an end-of-term survey. The respondents were racially and ethnically diverse: roughly 39% were black, 37% were white, 5% were Asian, 15.6% identified as two or more races, and 22% identified as Hispanic.[2] Nearly two-thirds were female and 72% came from households with incomes less than $50,000.

---

2. The percentages for race and ethnicity for C2C students and peer advocates do not add to 100%. Averages were calculated based on the data from each institution for the specific racial/ethnic category based on all available data in each time period. Thus, the sum of the percentages will not be 100%.

Fidelity to Model Elements

At the close of the pilot project, we reviewed all quantitative and qualitative data with respect to the fidelity of implementing the model. In order to more accurately evaluate the impact of the model and its elements, we needed to look most closely at sites that had been able to fully implement the model—including both peer advocates and service-learning—over the approximately two years of the pilot. To that end, we chose six colleges that had demonstrated the most fidelity to the model. The analysis of outcomes for C2C students and peer advocates based on quantitative data comes from these six colleges.

C2C Student Outcomes

Retention. Term-to-term retention using student record data was calculated for C2C and comparison group students at the five campuses for which there was complete data, accounting for students who left due to graduation or transfer. As Figure 4-1 shows, over the course of the pilot, C2C students were retained at higher rates than the comparison group students were. The exception is the retention rate from Term 2 to Term 3, which drops approximately 20% for both groups, showing only slightly lower retention of C2C students.

Looking across all terms, it is worth noting that by Term 7, 32% of the C2C students were retained from the prior term, compared with 26% of the comparison group. (Note: "term" here is student-based and is not defined by "Fall," "Spring," "Winter," or "Summer." Rather, Term 1 reflects the first term that students are counted as either a C2C student or as a comparison group student; thus, Term 1 retention is 100%. Term 2 shows the retention rate of all students from Term 1; Term 3 shows the percentage of students retained from Term 2; and so on. This analysis calculates term-to-term retention and so does not account for students who may have stopped out for one or more terms and then reenrolled.)

Figure 4-1. Term-to-Term Retention for C2C and Comparison Group Students
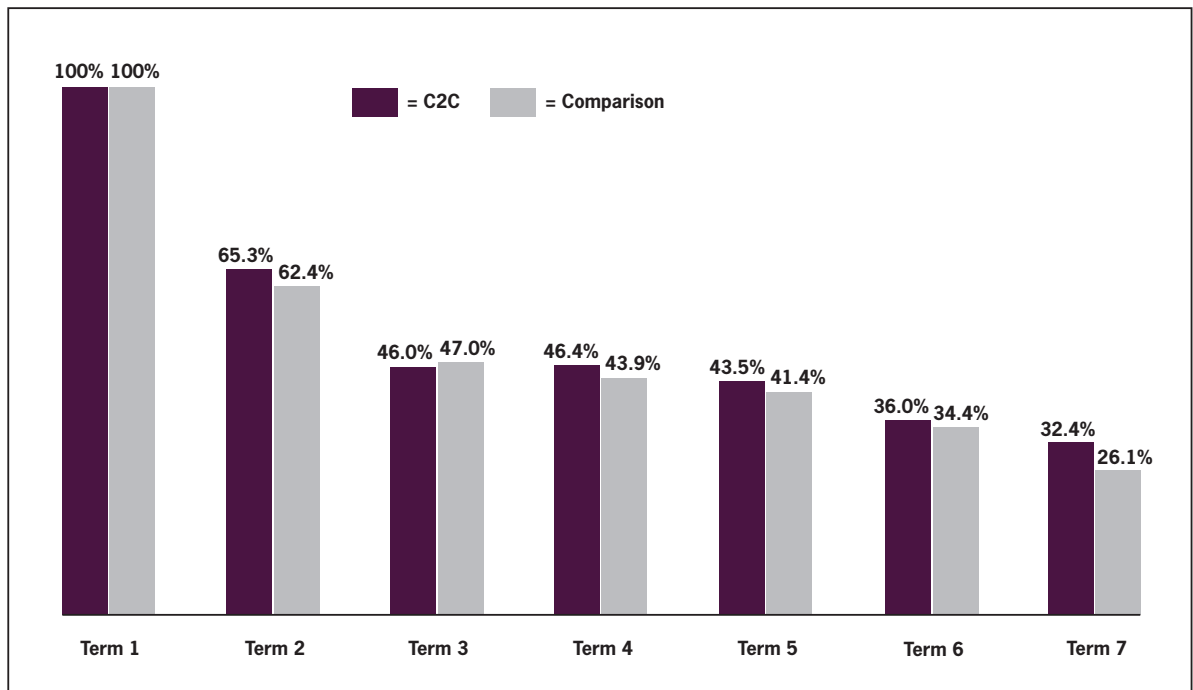
Impact of service-learning. Table 4-2 shows the percentage of students who "agreed" or "strongly agreed"[3] with statements about the impact of their service-learning experience. In almost all cases, more than half of students indicated that they agreed with the statement. The highest percentage of students, 90%, indicated that service-learning showed them the importance of political participation.

---

3. This was a 5-point scale.

Table 4-2. Impact of Service-Learning

Service-learning:	% of Students Who Agree or Strongly Agree
Showed me the impact that I can have on solving problems that face my local community	64%
Deepened my concern about community issues	58%
Showed me the importance of political participation	90%
Showed me that contributing to solving social problems is my responsibility	59%
Made me face my discomfort in working with people who are different from me in such things as race, wealth, and life experiences	46%
Made me aware that I am able to see a situation from someone else's point of view	61%
Made me want to invest time in learning about social issues and problems (for example, check the web, read the paper or magazines, attend community meetings)	56%
Motivated me to improve my community by being more involved in the near future	61%
Increased my understanding of concepts taught in my class(es)	61%

Impact of the peer advocate. C2C students were asked about the helpfulness of their peer advocate in a range of areas, from information on services to serving as a role model. More than half of the students responded that their peer advocate was somewhat helpful or very helpful in all areas (Table 4-3). The highest percentage of positive responses had to do with college knowledge—signing up for courses, supporting the C2C student's academic success, learning about others on campus who could help, and learning about academic support services.

Table 4-3. Impact of Peer Advocate

How helpful was your peer advocate in the following areas?	% of Students Responding Somewhat or Very Helpful
Support for engaging in the broader community through community engagement/ service-learning	59%
Adjusting to the academic demands of being a student	57%
Connecting to financial supports and work	57%
Adjusting to college social life, including clubs and organizations	59%
Time management	55%
Stress management	55%
Learning about others on campus who can help me with personal challenges	59%
Learning about academic support services (e.g., writing lab)	63%
Learning about academic and transfer advisers	59%
Knowledge about how to sign up for courses	64%

SECTION 4: PROGRAM EVALUATION

How helpful was your peer advocate in the following areas?	% of Students Responding Somewhat or Very Helpful
Learning about others on campus who can help me get what I need in order to be a successful student	63%
Providing an example of someone who is succeeding in college	61%
Making connections to helpful faculty	60%
Support for success in my college course(s)	64%
Making connections to helpful students	61%

Reduction in challenges. Consistent with the positive findings above is a reduction in the various challenges C2C students faced. Challenges were broken into five general categories: personal, financial and work, academic, social, and other. While the level of individual challenges was relatively low at baseline, in nearly all cases there is a statistically significant decrease in the extent to which C2C students experienced the challenges. In thinking about the cumulative negative effects of stress on students, these data suggest that C2C students experienced an overall easing of stress. (See Appendix 4-1, Table A.)

> *"One of the big challenges I faced this semester was reaching out to other students and getting to know them. After I started making friends, my college life has become much greater, and it has helped me improve academically."*
>
> *–C2C student*

Affiliation with the college. C2C students were asked about their experience with others on campus (other students, faculty members, financial aid office staff, advising, counseling, math and writing center staff) at the start of being a C2C student and after being in C2C. In all instances, students perceived their experiences with these people as becoming increasingly positive during their time as a C2C student. As with reduction in stress, affiliation and integration with the campus are associated with student success. It is notable that 96% of the students indicated that they would recommend their college to a friend. (See Appendix 4-1, Table B.)

Educational aspirations. Low-income and academically underprepared students are at great risk for not succeeding academically, which is why they were targeted for this program. C2C students were asked about their attitudes toward achieving educational and career goals at the start of being a C2C student and after being in C2C.

On all measures (passing courses, improving GPA, re-enrolling in college the next term, achieving academic and career goals, pursuing a career that will help their community, and applying to become a peer advocate), C2C students reported an increase in both academic confidence and educational aspirations. More than half indicated they wanted to become a peer advocate; the likelihood that they would apply increased over time. (See Appendix 4-1, Table C.) It is important to note that the C2C students' educational aspirations increased across the board, regardless of site, status, gender, or race. (See Appendix 4-1, Table D.)

> *"Being in this program has made me want to push myself to do better and to have a better future…. The mentors are really good at getting me to understand, and try to help in any way they can to see me be successful."*
>
> *–C2C student*

Other C2C student outcomes. The data was inconclusive on the impact of the C2C intervention on GPA, credits earned/credits attempted, and passage out of developmental education courses.

Peer Advocate Outcomes

Peer advocates participated in service-learning with the C2C students and also received training and support in their roles. When asked about the impact of leadership training, nearly all agreed or strongly agreed that training and development activities made them more effective as peer advocates, boosted their self-confidence, and increased their own knowledge of the resources available on their campus (Table 4-4). Other positive effects included outcomes related to their ability to succeed as students, including managing time, clarifying career and educational goals, and identifying financial support and work.

Table 4-4. Impact of Leadership Training and Developmental Activities on Peer Advocates

Leadership training or developmental activities have:	% of Peer Advocates Who Agree or Strongly Agree
Helped me be more knowledgeable about the resources available at this college	90%
Provided support for engaging in the broader community through service or volunteering	84%
Helped me adjust to the academic demands of being a student	75%
Helped me connect to financial supports and work	69%
Helped me adjust to college social life, including clubs and organizations	72%
Helped me with time management	68%
Helped me with stress management	59%
Helped me clarify my career goals	64%
Helped me clarify my educational goals	76%
Helped with my overall adjustment to and success at college	74%
Helped me be a more effective peer advocate	92%
Improved my self-confidence	91%

The peer advocates also reported positive impacts of service-learning, including their understanding of both class content and community issues (Table 4-5).

Table 4-5. Impact of Service-Learning on Peer Advocates

Service-learning:	% of Peer Advocates Who Agree or Strongly Agree
Showed me the impact that I can have on solving problems that face my local community	91%
Deepened my concern about community issues	80%
Showed me the importance of political participation	78%
Showed me that contributing to solving social problems is my responsibility	76%
Made me face my discomfort in working with people who are different from me in such things as race, wealth, and life experiences	61%

SECTION 4: PROGRAM EVALUATION

Service-learning:	% of Peer Advocates Who Agree or Strongly Agree
Made me aware that I am able to see a situation from someone else's point of view	77%
Made me want to invest time in learning about social issues and problems (for example, check the web, read the paper or magazines, attend community meetings)	66%
Motivated me to improve my community by being more involved in the near future	75%
Increased my understanding of concepts taught in my class(es)	75%

QUALITATIVE STUDY FINDINGS

The qualitative study was intended to supplement and complement the quantitative study and help to identify the essential elements of an effective peer-to-peer model. This section summarizes insights gained from site visits to each of the nine C2C colleges in late 2013 to early 2014. During the site visits, the researchers conducted group and individual interviews with C2C students, peer advocates, C2C staff, service-learning/ community engagement program staff, C2C and other faculty, and other relevant campus personnel.

C2C Students: Profile

In general, based on C2C student interviews and on descriptions from peer advocates and others, the C2C students' profiles reflected those of the majority of students enrolled at community colleges. Most were very low-income, first-generation students, and on average they were older than students enrolled at four-year institutions. Many were involved in other support programs, such as TRIO (a federal outreach program for students from disadvantaged backgrounds) but may have needed additional support to succeed.

Several respondents had raised families or had been in the workforce, or both, before deciding to pursue a college education. Many had significant work and family responsibilities. Some were young single mothers eager to create a fulfilling life for themselves and their children but uncertain about how to accomplish their goals; others had recently graduated from high school but lacked confidence about their role as college students and their ability to envision their futures as adults. Still others had suffered homelessness, neglect, or abuse during childhood. In addition, lack of role models with college knowledge along with a lack of financial, housing, and other resources often impeded their ability to succeed.

At the same time, these students brought strengths to their experience, despite the obstacles and challenges they faced. For example, many had developed the motivation to pursue challenging goals having already succeeded in overcoming obstacles in getting secondary credentials and reaching community college.

C2C Student Outcomes

Interviews revealed a broad range of benefits conferred by participation in the C2C program. The following examples suggest some of the impacts of C2C on student outcomes.

Greater connection with other students and with the campus. A common theme among interviewees was that the peer advocate and the service-learning experience helped get students talking to others on campus. Many made friends with other students for the first time, and said they felt much more a part of the campus.

One student's comment was similar to many others: "I've been here for a semester and never talked to another student. Now I know almost everyone in this class." Students also reported knowing a lot more about campus services and resources than they had before. One faculty member said that C2C created a "buddy system" where C2C students "can get support and help. It also acted as positive peer pressure to do better academically."

Advancement from developmental education to credit-bearing classes. The researchers found some evidence of students moving through developmental education levels; from developmental education to regular English; and from developmental education English into majors. Many faculty members noted better results within C2C developmental education classes: "I saw fewer students languishing"; "[C2C made it] much easier for students who usually sit on the sidelines to engage"; "students are writing essays that would get them a good grade in a credit-bearing course."

Increased civic skills and awareness. Many interviewees described students' increased capacity to think about life beyond community college and their role as a community member. Similarly, several students talked about learning about the power of helping others through service projects. This seemed particularly true when they could relate the experience to their own lives; for example, one student said, "At first some of the elderly people were rude and that was hard. But I took a deep breath and continued. I work and go to school but still help my grandmother. These personal experiences helped: I can relate to helping my grandmother and this inspired me to help others."

Enhanced self-perception, motivation, and confidence. Many respondents mentioned these outcomes. One student put it this way: "In high school, there is the person you think you're going to be but then you're so quiet when you get to college. C2C brings out what you wanted to be." At two colleges, C2C students were reluctant to engage in the tutoring program (they saw themselves as needing, instead of being, tutors), but most ended up proud of their work. The impact of C2C translated into reframing goals for some: "I was going to get my associate's degree and join the military. But connecting with other students in C2C and hearing about their career plans changed my view. Now I want to go to a 4-year college and major in criminal justice."

Improved class attendance. Attendance correlates with success. Several faculty members, peer advocates, and C2C students mentioned improved attendance in C2C developmental education classes.

Increased writing sophistication. Several developmental education English faculty and students mentioned significant improvements in writing ability.

Attainment of transferable skills. One faculty member said, "Students gained critical thinking skills. They were more mentally active and able to come up with good ideas to solve problems." Interviewees also mentioned other skills such as time management, organization, project planning, and communication.

Greater optimism. One faculty member described a young woman who came to her C2C class expressing a strong belief that people cannot change. By the end of the term, she was more optimistic about both personal and social change: "[Participating in C2C] changed her views, and she was transformed in that process." Other students and faculty talked about how C2C gave students hope and, as one put it, "renewed faith that there are people out there who want to help."

> *"At first, I thought the whole idea of having a peer advocate/mentor/leader was just silly. After completing this course I am more aware of my community and the importance of social networking in the college. I enjoyed having the extra help from a peer/mentor. Honestly, I would like to do the same one day. I think there is a personal gain for both the student and the mentor."*
>
> *– C2C student*

SECTION 4: PROGRAM EVALUATION

Peer Advocates: Profile

The peer advocates interviewed were similar in many ways to the C2C students. Most were first-generation college goers who, like the C2C students, had struggled with their identity as college students when they arrived on campus. Many had been C2C students themselves. All were in good standing academically.

Peer Advocate Outcomes

While C2C was aimed at increasing the C2C students' chances for success, peer advocate interviewees reported dramatically increased confidence and changes in self-perception, expectations, and goals due to C2C training and experience. On several campuses, the combination of the hiring process, training, and relationships with C2C staff and faculty served to initiate peer advocates into a professional culture.

A common theme among peer advocates was C2C's role in raising their personal and educational aspirations, as well as their belief in themselves. Staff, faculty, and peer advocates themselves described the peer advocate process as being at least partly about leadership development. For example, peer advocates on various campuses took the initiative to:

- Meet with the dean of academic affairs and enrollment center director to discuss how to make resources more visible to students.
- Meet with the campus president to discuss C2C.
- Make a presentation to the student activities committee to request financial support for C2C.

Campus Practices, Culture, & Policies

On most campuses, C2C raised awareness about the potential of service or experiential learning and peer mentoring to increase student success. In a number of cases, C2C influenced—at least to some extent— campus practices, culture, and policies:

Retention strategies. Most C2C campuses now see peer mentoring and service-learning as important retention strategies. One college, for example, is considering other ways to integrate these components, such as in the summer bridge program and orientation.

Awareness of campus services. In one case, locating service-learning experiences in the college's Math Learning Center exposed C2C students to college tutoring services.

Integration of service-learning. On campuses in the early stages of adopting service-learning, C2C complemented efforts to integrate service-learning and other forms of experiential learning into the campus:

- One interviewee noted that "C2C created a resurrection in the service movement [on our campus]."
- At one campus, service-learning has become a common thread in the on-campus learning communities that bring together different courses and faculty.
- As C2C faculty and staff connected with local nonprofits and other organizations, many campuses saw an increase in the number and importance of community partners in roles such as speakers, co-developers of service projects, and internship sites.
- Staff at some campuses said that C2C helped them increase the number of ways for students to connect to and do something for the community. One said that C2C "inspires true motivation around service versus thinking in terms of points and hours."

Awareness of students as a resource. On several campuses, C2C increased faculty and administrator awareness of students as an underutilized resource and of the value of peer-to-peer connection and support. As

one interviewee noted, "Others are coming to us [C2C faculty and staff] about peer mentoring and how we do it."

Creating a culture of engagement. C2C was instrumental in efforts to change the culture on some campuses. For example, civic engagement is now explicitly a part of the mission statement at one college, and service- learning is listed as a strategy for student success. On another campus a staff member said, "C2C was one of the catalysts for a shift in culture. [It] provided some of the language and concepts behind the reorganization intended to integrate student activities, civic engagement, and leadership." On yet another campus, key stakeholders shared the goal of creating a culture where students empower each other and see themselves as change agents on campus and in the community: "[Service-learning] gets students engaged outside of the structured didactic approach…. It shows students that our focus is on enriching them as individuals."

Connecting faculty, students, and staff. C2C helped faculty and students connect by providing more opportunities to meet beyond the classroom. It also helped staff and faculty connect as they jointly worked to improve the peer advocates' work, refine the service-learning experience, and otherwise move the model forward.

Faculty rewards. C2C opened the door to giving credit to faculty who do extra work to integrate service-learning into the curriculum.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

The C2C model shows promise. The positive movement on retention and other student outcomes at institutions that implemented the model with fidelity are meaningful in a context where so many community college students fail to complete their degrees. On the site visits, C2C staff, faculty, peer advocates, and students described many positive effects of the presence of a peer advocate to assist C2C students with navigating their college experience. The service-learning activities boosted C2C students' engagement with each other and with the college, while helping them to feel a sense of responsibility for contributing to solving social problems.

Two unexpected and interesting stories emerged from the data collection and analysis. One is the effect of C2C on the peer advocates. Their growth and leadership development was noteworthy and sometimes dramatic. Another is the effect on many faculty members, who found inspiration in these new ideas for helping the most underprepared students succeed. Although following up on these findings was outside of the scope of the evaluation, further analysis is recommended.

REFERENCES

Corporation for National and Community Service. (2013, May). *Social innovation fund: Content requirements for subgrantee evaluation plans.*

Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

SECTION 4: PROGRAM EVALUATION

APPENDIX 4-1. C2C Pilot Program Evaluation: Numerical Findings

TABLE A: CHANGES IN REPORTED CHALLENGES FOR C2C STUDENTS

Type of Challenges	Mean Before C2C	Mean Now
Personal Challenges		
Family **	2.08	1.99
Age ***	1.62	1.47
Roommates	1.63	1.62
Physical health	1.65	1.67
Mental/emotional health **	1.83	1.75
Adjustment to college life ***	2.30	1.81
Personal safety ***	1.52	1.42
Other personal concerns **	1.90	1.83
Financial/Work Challenges		
Tuition/books ***	2.31	2.07
Child care **	1.75	1.64
Lack of employment ***	2.03	1.91
Stress from work demands **	2.19	2.11
Housing ***	1.79	1.70
Transportation/travel expenses ***	1.90	1.79
Other financial or work concerns	2.09	2.07
Academic Challenges		
Keeping up with reading, papers, exams, etc.**	2.34	2.25
Motivation/focus **	2.34	2.24
Learning disabilities ***	1.77	1.68
Other disabilities **	1.59	1.52
Lack of, or poor, advising ***	1.68	1.54
Faculty attitudes and support ***	1.62	1.55
Other academic concerns *	1.69	1.63
Social Challenges		
Balance**	2.23	2.14
Connecting with activities, clubs, friends ***	1.98	1.81
"Fitting in" ***	1.90	1.70
Other social concerns ***	1.61	1.53
Other Challenges		
Time management ***	2.54	2.29
Stress management ***	2.46	2.28
Speaking in public ***	2.40	2.07

4-point scale: 1 "Not at all" to 4 "To a large extent." *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

TABLE B: CHANGES IN AFFILIATION WITH THE COLLEGE

Experiences	Mean Before C2C	Mean Now
With other students ***	2.91	3.32
With faculty members ***	2.94	3.27
With staff at the Financial Aid Office ***	3.01	3.25
With Advising Center staff ***	2.98	3.22
With Writing Center staff ***	3.24	3.43
With Math Center staff ***	3.25	3.44
With Counseling Center staff ***	3.22	3.40

5-point scale: 1 "Very Negative" to 5 "Very Positive" *p < .05, **p <.01, ***p <.001

TABLE C: CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER GOALS

Outcomes	Mean Before C2C	Mean Now
I will pass all my writing courses ***	2.84	3.02
I will pass all my reading courses ***	2.93	3.10
I will pass all my math courses ***	2.75	2.94
I will improve my GPA ***	2.77	2.90
I will complete my developmental/gateway courses by next term ***	2.73	2.88
I will apply to become a peer advocate ***	2.17	2.37
I will re-enroll in this college next term ***	3.06	3.15
I will achieve my academic goals ***	2.95	3.06
I will achieve my career goals ***	2.94	3.08
I will pursue a career that will help my community ***	2.86	2.99

4-point scale: 1 "Not Likely" to 4 "Very Likely." *p < .05, **p <.01, ***p <.001

SECTION 4: PROGRAM EVALUATION

**TABLE D: INCREASES IN EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS—
FROM ASSOCIATE TO BACHELOR'S DEGREE**

	Before C2C		Now	
	Less than Bachelor's	Bachelor's & Above	Less than Bachelor's	Bachelor's & Above
College				
College 1	64.5%	35.5%	44.2%	55.8%
College 2	66.7%	33.3%	40.9%	59.1%
College 3	61.5%	38.5%	54.8%	45.2%
College 4	48.0%	52.0%	33.1%	66.9%
College 5	71.6%	28.4%	55.0%	45.0%
College 6	61.3%	38.7%	43.7%	56.3%
Part/Full Time				
Part-time	66.6%	33.4%	52.4%	47.6%
Full-time	63.4%	36.6%	45.8%	54.2%
Gender				
Male	58.2%	41.8%	46.5%	53.5%
Female	68.2%	31.8%	48.6%	51.4%
Race				
American Indian	71.4%	28.6%	42.9%	57.1%
Asian	60.4%	39.6%	50.0%	50.0%
Black	71.9%	28.1%	50.8%	49.2%
Native Hawaiian/P.I.	37.5%	62.5%	25.0%	75.0%
White	63.0%	37.0%	47.9%	52.1%
Multi-racial	54.9%	45.1%	52.8%	47.2%
Totals				
	64.1%	**35.9%**	**47.7%**	**52.3%**

Appendix 4-2. Sample Retrospective Question

Retrospective questions are used in place of a baseline/post-survey design.

The following question, from the C2C student survey, provides an example of a retrospective question designed to measure program impact.

College Social Life Challenges: Please indicate the extent to which the following have been a challenge for you while attending college. On a 1 to 4 point scale, with 1 being "Not at All" and 4 being "To a Large Extent," how much of a challenge was each one when you started this term? How much of a challenge is each one now? (NA = Not applicable.)

College social life challenges	How challenging at term start?	How challenging now?
Maintaining a work/play balance		
Connecting with campus activities, clubs, or friends		
Feeling like I "fit in"		
Other social concerns		