

**Valencia College Key Points**

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**1. Providing Significant Returns on Investment and Economic Impact to our Region**

Recognized nationally as one of the best community colleges in America, Valencia is also one of the largest, translating student success into significant impact economically, academically and socially on Central Florida.

- Valencia was the inaugural winner of the 2011 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence as “the best community college in the nation.” The prize was based on measurable achievements in graduation rates, workforce placement and innovative programs.
- The total annual economic impact of Valencia College to the region exceeds \$1 billion (See *Analysis of Investment Effectiveness and Economic Growth* by EMSI, January 2012.)
- State government sees an annual rate of return of 8.9 percent in their support for Valencia. For every dollar invested in support from the state, the return to taxpayers is \$2.80.
- The average Valencia student’s income increases by \$5.60 for every dollar invested in tuition giving them a significant 15.1 percent average rate of return on their educational investment.
- Near the bottom in state funding per F.T.E (Full Time Equivalent) from among the state’s 28 community colleges, Valencia nevertheless achieves a graduation rate nearly three times the national average for similar institutions.

**2. Improving Graduation Rates**

One of the largest colleges in America, Valencia is also one of the most effective at increasing student access to college and completion rates.

- Valencia is ranked first in the nation among all community colleges in the number of associate degrees awarded, second in the number of associate degrees awarded to Hispanics and third in the number awarded to African Americans. (Source: Community College Week)
- Valencia’s overall graduation rate is nearly three times that of similar, large urban public community colleges as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. (Source: 2010 IPEDS Feedback Report) In the last decade, graduation rates for college ready students increased at Valencia by almost ten percent to 44.8 percent from 35.9 percent after four years. (UCF’s graduation rate is 63 percent after six years.)
- Valencia’s graduation rate for African Americans is more than twice that of similar, large urban community colleges as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. (Source: 2009 IPEDS Feedback Report) There have been dramatic increases in graduation rates for Valencia’s

college ready African American students climbing to 44.3 percent up from 15.4 percent in the past decade.

- Valencia's graduation rate for Hispanics is twice that of similar, large urban community colleges as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. (Source: 2009 IPEDS Feedback Report) College-ready Hispanic student gains in graduation rates at Valencia over the last decade are outpacing all students, increasing to 45.5 percent from 33.7 in the last decade.
- Valencia is achieving improvements in graduation rates for students who started college mandated into college prep courses in the last decade with graduation rates at 20.2 percent up from 15.1 percent, almost doubling for African American students at 14.5 percent up from 7.9 percent. Hispanic students mandated into college prep saw gains as well with graduation rates reaching 19.7 up from 14.8 in the last decade.
- Students at community colleges often take longer to complete a degree than those of other institutions. Many have work and family obligations while enrolled. Valencia has achieved impressive results in helping college ready students progress more efficiently to a degree, reducing by two years the average time to complete a degree since 2002.

### **3. Building Pathways to Bachelor's Degrees**

DirectConnect to UCF is the most productive university-community college partnership in the country and was designed to expand students' access to higher education.

- 60,000 Valencia students have enrolled in DirectConnect since the program began.
- 81% of Valencia A.A. graduates who transfer to the State University System attend UCF. (Source: UCF Office of University Analysis and Planning Support)
- 20% of all UCF graduates started at Valencia. (Source: UCF Office of University Analysis and Planning Support)
- 34% of UCF's community college transfer students are from Valencia, making it the largest feeder into UCF among community colleges. (Source: UCF Office of University Analysis and Planning Support)
- Nearly one out of two undergrad minority students who started at UCF in 2008-2009 were Valencia transfer students. (Source: UCF Office of University Analysis and Planning Support)
- In fall 2011, Valencia began to offer bachelor's degrees for the first time with the launch of two new programs: Radiologic and Imaging Sciences, and Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology. In addition, UCF offers bachelor's degrees in Nursing, Electrical Engineering, Applied Science, Business Administration, Interdisciplinary Studies and Psychology on Valencia's campuses.

- In addition to UCF, Valencia has more than 20 articulation agreements that allow students to seamlessly transfer their credits to the upper division, including ones with the University of Florida, University of Miami and Embry-Riddle University.

#### 4. Valencia's Innovative Programs:

Valencia has been a national leader in finding innovative ways to help students learn – and has developed programs specifically designed to help students who start college without the skills they need.

- **LifeMap**, launched in 1998, empowers students to chart their own paths through college to achieve career and life goals through connections with advisors, faculty, staff and interactive tools.
- **Learning in Community (LinC)** pairs two courses from different disciplines, and instructors teach the course as a team. Students take the classes as a group, while the college provides academic and social support for the students.
- **Supplemental Learning** classes augment the traditional class with small-group study sessions that are led by a Supplemental Learning Leader – a student who has already taken the class and been successful in it. Since 2005, more than 9,500 students have taken SL courses – one of the largest scale learning experiments that has taken place in a U.S. community college.
- **Bridges to Success**, which started in 2007, is a scholarship program for disadvantaged high school students. Designed to keep disadvantaged students from dropping out of college, the program currently has 261 new students and is on target to admit 400 students each year by 2013.
- **Take Stock in Children**, in partnership with Orange County Public Schools, pairs community mentors with students starting in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The program rewards students with a 2+2 Florida Prepaid scholarship opportunity to students who successfully graduate high school. Students can attend a two year community college and state university of their choice.
- **Student Success**, a course that teaches study skills, time management skills and college survival skills, is designed to improve student success rates. In 2006, Valencia made the course mandatory for students who need remedial courses in reading, writing and math. Today, more than 40 percent of Valencia's freshmen take the Student Success course within their first year.
- **Project REACH**, which launched this fall at Valencia's Osceola campus, places students who need remedial courses in reading, writing and math together for all their first-year classes. In addition, the students will have the same six teachers for their entire first year of studies. Forty-five students are currently participating in the pilot program, which includes advising, workshops and team-building exercises. After the first term, they are guaranteed a \$500 scholarship to continue their education.

## 5. Increasing Workforce Preparedness/A.S. Degree & Certificate Completions

Not all community college students are headed for four-year universities. Thirty-nine percent of Valencia students are learning skills that prepare them for the workforce through the college's Associate in Science (A.S) programs or Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees. The college works closely with 400 area businesses to produce graduates who meet the needs of the workforce.

- In 2010-2011, the number of students graduating from Valencia with an A.S. or A.A.S. jumped 15 percent from 2009-2010 – from 1,044 to 1,198.
- Valencia's A.S. and A.A.S. degree graduates earn an average annual salary of about \$42,000 – more than double that of a high school graduate, according to the latest data from the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program.
- 95 percent of Valencia's A.S. and certificate graduates were placed in jobs, according to the latest data from FETPIP.
- In 2010, 94 percent of Valencia's nursing graduates passed the national registered nursing exam – higher than the state and national average.
- In 2010-2011, Valencia was ranked first among the state's community colleges in the total number of A.S. and AAS degrees, technical certificates and Applied Technology Diplomas completed.
- Valencia has added more technical certificates to serve as achievement mileposts – so A.S. students can track their growing skillsets in their fields of study.