FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

DOCTORATE IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

DCCL Highlights 2024-25

Newest Alumni

December 2024,
Texas Cohort 3 Hooding and Commencement:

- 5 of 10 students participated in Big Rapids (pictured right)
- Rich DeShields, Promising Leader Award winner
- Michael Walsh, Scholar-Practitioner Award winner
- Commencement video:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seFvrrnPTMk

May 2025,
Cohort 13 Hooding and Commencement:

- 9 of 11 students participated (pictured left)
- Tamara Williams, Promising Leader Award winner
- Elise Gramza, Scholar-Practitioner Award winner

Alumni News

- Sedgwick L. Harris (C6) named President at Bristol Community College (MA)
- Peggy Heinrich (C5) named President at Elgin Community College (IL)
- Leonor Calderon (Tx2) named Interim Chair of the English and Humanities Division, Lee Community College (TX)
- Theresa Glenn (Tx2) promoted to Dean of Faculty Development and Evaluation, Austin Community College (TX)
- Michael Walsh (Tx3) promoted to Dean of Creative Arts and Education, Lone Star College-Montgomery (TX)

Student Updates

In February, Dr. Paige Neihaus (C5), president of the Dale Mabry campus, welcomed 5 members of Cohort 14 to Hillsborough Community College, in Tampa, FL, to conduct research for their Practicum Course project.

Alumni Gatherings

League for Innovations in the Community College Annual Conference, March 2024

- Julie Howar (C8)
- Stephanie Stuart (C12)
- Marcus Matthews (C11)

participated in a panel discussion with Sandy Balkema.

DCCL Alumni Symposium, June 11-12 in Grand Rapids.

- 17 alumni and 6 faculty and staff participated in 1.5 days of discussions about current research and events in community colleges.

New Cohorts

January 2025 welcomed Texas Cohort 4 in Houston (7 students)

May 2025 welcomed Cohort 16 in Big Rapids (10 students)

Dissertations Defended

Summer 2024 dissertation defenses:

- Laura Hapner (C11), *Comprehensive Mentorship: Onboarding Faculty with a Focus on Promoting Women to Leadership Positions*

- Christopher MacKersie and Jennifer Jones (C12), *A Guide to Community College Planning*

- Marcus Matthews (C11), *Developing Effective Internship Programs: A Training Framework for Community College Leaders*

- Amy Carzoli (C12), *Developing a Community College Student Recruitment and Onboarding Plan: A Guide to Increasing a Sense of Belonging for Prospective and New Students*

Fall 2024 dissertation defenses:

- Cassandra Andrews-Fluker (C10), *The Impact of Support Services on the Career Decision Process Among Detroit Promise Path Students*

- Michael Mendez (C8), *A Toolkit for Minnesota Small Business Awareness of a Diverse Workforce*

- Diane Rhodes (Tx3), *Do Active Learning Strategies Impact Student Achievement and Engagement in an Introduction to Programming Class?*

- Daniel Myers (C12), *Industry Perceptions of College Credentials*

- Michael Walsh (Tx3), *LGBTQ+ Student Perceptions of Belonging at a Community College in Suburban Texas*

- Jonathan Miller (C9), *A Guide for Effective Onboarding and Training of One-Stop Staff*

- Peggy Elder and Nijia Thomas (Tx2), *From Application to Acceptance: Developing a Comprehensive Online Resource for Students*

- Varnessa Dorsey (Tx3), *Higher Education Completion Rates for Black/African Americans: The Challenge to Increasing Completion Rates and Decreasing Achievement Gaps*

Spring 2025 dissertation defenses:

- Gwenn Eldridge (C8), *Co-Requisite Course Design: A Guide for Implementation*

- Devethia Guillory (Tx1), *Mapping the Pathway to Success: Exploring Factors that Promote First-Generation College Students' Attainment of Graduate Degrees*

- Tamara Williams (C13), Voices for the Top: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Black Women Chief Workforce Officers at Community Colleges

- Elise Gramza (C13), *Returning to College: A Phenomenological Study of Student Motivations and Experiences After a Post-Pandemic Enrollment Break*
- Matt Smith (C13), *Assessing Online Infrastructure: A Diagnostic Tool for Higher Education Institutions*
- Jolene Chapman (C13), *A Qualitative, Phenomenological Study of the Perceptions of Faculty and Administrators on Shared Governance in Community Colleges*
- Jon Moroney (C11), Business Model Innovation in Higher Education: *A Guide for Implementing an Innovation Incubator Program*
- Matt Bedard (C9), *Blended Leadership Styles of Remote-Rural Community College Instructors, through Roles and Applications in Teaching and Advising*

Summer 2025 dissertation defenses:

- Richard DeShields (Tx3), *An Exploratory Study of Higher Education Association Leaders and Professional Development*
- Jennifer Hasso (C13), *Shaping Kinship: Community College Campus Design in the Greater Chicago Area*
- Ronique Hinchen Bryan (Tx3), *Examining the Relationship between Academic Experiences of African-American Males and College Completion at the Community College Level: Influence of Academic Preparedness Factors*
- Darnell Lewis (C13), *The Impact of the Southfield Kappa League on Alumni Sense of Belonging at Predominately White Institutions*
- Ted Robles and Sharonda Prioleau (Tx2), *Empathic Perspectives: A Hands-On Professional Development Experience for K-12 and Higher Education*
- Lori Stephens (C12), *Exploring the Influence of Empowering and Disempowering Thoughts on the Post-Secondary Educational Behaviors of Community College TRIO SSS Students*
- Archie Thomas (C10), *The Essential Components of a Cohort Model Promoting Retention and Completion of African American Males in Community Colleges*

Faculty, Staff, and Advisory Board Updates

- Dr. Debbie Courtright-Nash joins the staff as co-Dissertation Director. She'll phase in as Dr. Sandy Balkema plans to retire in Spring 2026.
- NISOD Faculty Award to Dr. Lynne Adams, faculty for IDSL 825 (Foundations of Effective Leadership) and IDSL 865 (Leveraging Human Resources). Current position: Chief Human Resources Officer, University of Maryland Baltimore County.
- New Texas Cohort Facilitator hired: Dr. Antrece Baggett (Texas Cohort 1), Faculty, Houston City College

Partnerships

- In the fall of 2024, we signed a Credit for Credential Agreement with the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA). Completers of the MCCA Leadership Academy earn 3 credits applied to the DCCL program.

DCCL Swag Shop

We have teamed up with Ferris Custom Design to offer DCCL-branded clothing. Be sure to check out the website below and have fun shopping!

https://ferrisoutfitters.com/shop_product_list.asp?catalog_group_id=MzM&catalog_group_name=RmFjdWx0eSBBcHBhcmVs&catalog_id=116&catalog_name=RG9jdG9yYXRlIGluIENvbW11bml0eSBDb2xsZWdlIExYWRlcnNoaXA

Have an announcement to share?

Send all job changes and other announcements to ccleadership@ferris.edu.

Look for us at upcoming events!

DCCL will be represented at the following events in 2025-26:

- MCCA Student Success Summit, Lansing, MI, September 18-19, 2025
- Trends, Muskegon, MI, October 22-24, 2025
- ICCCA, Peoria, IL, November 19-21, 2025
- League for Innovation in the Community College, Indianapolis, IN, March15-18, 2026
- AACC, Seattle, WA, April 11-14, 2025