

CCCSE/NISOD 2027 Conference

Advancing the Student Experience: The Next Frontiers

Conference Track Descriptions

What do our colleges look like through students' eyes? What helps students find direction, experience meaningful learning, and move toward the futures they want? What should we change when their experiences reveal something we have missed?

The 2027 CCCSE/NISOD conference brings CCCSE's expertise in the student experience together with NISOD's commitment to excellence in teaching, learning, and leadership. Student voice will guide conversations about what colleges do, how students experience those efforts, and what we can improve together.

Inspired by CCRC's *More Essential Than Ever: Community College Pathways to Educational and Career Success*, the first five tracks explore opportunities to strengthen students' experiences from entry through learning, completion, and their next steps in education and careers. A sixth track explores how colleges turn what they learn from students into lasting improvements. Across all six tracks, participants will examine institutional practices through the lens of the student experience.

Whether your college is exploring new approaches, testing ideas, or expanding effective efforts across the institution, you belong here. Faculty, staff, and administrators each shape the student experience through classroom learning, support services, program design, career advising, and much more. Every track welcomes these perspectives, with opportunities to learn within your role and across roles.

We welcome proposals about classroom practices, student services, program improvements, and college-wide change. Share what you are trying, what you are learning, and the questions you are still exploring. Work led by an individual or a team is welcome at every stage; you do not need a fully implemented college-wide model to contribute.

Across all tracks, we encourage presenters to include student perspectives through feedback, survey findings—including CCCSE data, if available—stories, or student co-presenters and panelists. Colleges do not need to administer CCCSE surveys to submit a proposal. We also welcome collaborative presentations that bring together faculty, staff, administrators, students, and external partners.

For any topic, help participants understand how students experience your approach, what you have learned from listening to them, and how that understanding guides your improvements. Consider whose perspectives may be missing and how experiences differ across student groups.

Through sessions, hands-on activities, and conversations, participants will connect what they hear from students to decisions about teaching, services, and college processes. We encourage proposals that give participants an opportunity to apply ideas and leave with a useful question, tool, or next step for their own colleges.



Track One: Connecting Programs to Good Jobs and Transfer

How do students see where their program can take them—and understand the time and cost involved?

This track explores how colleges connect programs to good jobs, career advancement, and affordable paths to bachelor's degrees. Share how your college is beginning, expanding, or sustaining efforts to make those opportunities clearer and more accessible, especially for students who need to work while they learn.

Proposals might include:

- Aligning curriculum and assignments with the skills and knowledge students need for careers and further education.
- Building affordable transfer pathways that help students earn bachelor's degrees without unnecessary credits or delays.
- Creating career ladders in high-demand fields so working students can earn credentials and advance while they learn.
- Making career and transfer program maps a regular part of how faculty and staff guide students and help them understand their options.
- Using living-wage, employment, transfer, and student feedback data to improve students' access to programs that lead to good jobs and further education.



Track Two: Teaching for Different Learners in a Changing World

How do students experience learning that challenges their thinking and prepares them to navigate change?

This track explores teaching that engages students and develops critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and other skills they can use throughout their lives. Share classroom approaches, collaborative efforts, and college-wide practices that make continuous improvement in teaching and learning part of the culture.

Proposals might include:

- Testing teaching approaches and using student feedback to improve learning in online, hybrid, and in-person courses.
- Connecting tutoring, library services, and other learning supports with classroom instruction so students can access the help they need.
- Engaging students through active learning, real-world problems, and assignments connected to their interests and goals.
- Supporting faculty development and teaching innovation that respond to students' feedback, strengthen engagement, and improve learning.
- Building thinking skills through research, work-based learning, internships, service learning, and other hands-on experiences.
- Preparing students to use AI and other emerging technologies thoughtfully and ethically in their fields.



Track Three: Recruitment and Onboarding That Connect Students to Purpose

How do we help students move from an interest in college to a program and plan that fit their goals?

This track explores recruitment and onboarding that help students explore their interests, choose and enter a program, and build a plan aligned with their career and transfer goals. Onboarding extends through the first year. Share how your college connects students with people and learning experiences that help them gain early momentum toward completion and success after graduation.

Proposals might include:

- Recruiting students into programs by connecting outreach to their educational and career interests.
- Coordinating onboarding across departments to provide guidance that responds to students' goals and circumstances.
- Helping students explore options and choose a program through faculty-led exploration, first-year experiences, and engaging first-term courses.
- Connecting students early with faculty, advisors, peers, and employers in their fields of interest.
- Developing customized, full-program educational plans that account for students' goals, completion time, cost, and work and family commitments.



Track Four: Helping Students Stay on Schedule and Keep College Affordable

Can students complete their programs on their planned timelines with the courses, guidance, and resources available to them?

This track explores how colleges make timely, affordable completion possible for students balancing school, work, family, and financial pressures. Share efforts to connect advising, progress monitoring, course scheduling, and basic needs support around students' individual plans, including plans for part-time study.

Proposals might include:

- Using individualized educational plans, technology, and early alerts to recognize challenges and reach students before they fall behind.
- Providing ongoing advising, including required advising models, with an assigned advisor in the student's field who knows their goals, monitors progress, and helps them navigate challenges.
- Coordinating faculty and staff outreach so students receive timely, connected support when challenges arise.
- Testing whether students can complete their programs on their planned timelines with the courses offered, and adjusting schedules, staffing, and resources to address gaps.
- Embedding food, housing, childcare, mental health, and emergency aid support into programs and classrooms through college and community partnerships.
- Using program enrollment data and student feedback to identify barriers and reduce unnecessary credits and delays.
- Helping students manage college costs through financial aid guidance, scholarships, affordable course materials, and clear information about the full cost of completing their programs.



Track Five: Dual Enrollment as an On-Ramp to College and Careers

How can dual enrollment help more high school students see a future in college and take purposeful steps toward it?

This track explores how colleges and K–12 partners transform the transition from high school to college through purposeful dual enrollment. Share approaches that connect students' interests to programs and careers while expanding access for students historically underserved.

Proposals might include:

- Providing engaging dual enrollment instruction and academic support that build students' confidence and prepare them for further study.
- Helping high school students and their families navigate enrollment, explore careers, plan their education, and transition into college programs after high school graduation.
- Aligning dual enrollment courses with college programs, credentials, bachelor's degrees, and career opportunities.
- Reaching students and schools not yet participating and addressing barriers to dual enrollment access.
- Strengthening K–12 partnerships, scheduling, funding, and policies so students can access dual enrollment, receive consistent support, and continue into college programs.



Track Six: Turning Student Voice into Lasting Change

How do we turn what we learn from students into improvements that last?

This track explores how faculty, staff, and administrators work together to improve the student experience. Leadership happens throughout the college. Share how your institution builds trust, coordinates efforts, and provides the resources needed to move from promising ideas to sustained practice.

Proposals might include:

- Bringing students, faculty, staff, and administrators together to identify priorities and design improvements.
- Faculty- and staff-led teams that improve teaching, services, and everyday processes in collaboration with students.
- Reorganizing roles and responsibilities so students experience connected guidance and services across departments.
- Aligning budgets, staffing, professional learning, and policies to sustain the teaching, guidance, and support students need.
- Building trust and engaging colleagues in changes informed by students' experiences, while addressing challenges as those practices expand across the college.
- Using student voice and institutional data to assess whether changes improve students' experiences and outcomes.