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Degrees When Due

Cohort 2 Application

The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), in partnership with Lumina Foundation and the Kresge Foundation, is pleased to announce an open call for applications for the second cohort of [Degrees When Due](#) (DWD), an initiative aimed at helping higher education institutions increase degree attainment, particularly among the nation’s students who started college, but paused their studies for various reasons. Many students find hurdles, such as institutional policies, family obligations, financial challenges, and scheduling conflicts, in their path to degree completion. Low-income, first-generation, and minority students are most likely to encounter these hurdles. Despite the fact that nearly two-thirds of all jobs in our economy will require postsecondary education and training beyond high school, there are nearly four million students alone who have completed at least two years of college coursework yet have no degree to show for it.

In its first year, Degrees When Due supported forty-five institutions from eight states in their implementation of degree reclamation strategies. Generous grant funding covers the enrollment costs for Degrees When Due Cohort 2, making this program free of charge to participants.

What is Degrees When Due?

The Right Teams + The Right Tools = Degrees When Due

Degrees When Due is a national initiative to increase degree attainment among the “some college, no degree” population. DWD promotes evidence-based degree reclamation strategies that help systems and institutions identify students who either earned enough credits to earn an associate’s degree, yet left without receiving one, or those students who left just before completing enough credits to earn a degree. DWD helps institutions re-engage those students to complete their studies if necessary, so that they may finally receive the degree they’ve earned.

Degrees When Due will help institutions and systems improve their student completion rates by sharing data-driven strategies and tactics through a web-based platform. The learning experience will help institutions assemble the right teams to work with their own real-time student data, in order to identify eligible students and confer actual degrees at the end of nine months. Institutions will be guided through applying an equity lens to their data analysis in order to make sure that today’s students—students of color, low-income students, working students, student parents, and others—are re-engaged to cross the finish line.

Teams have the option to pursue distinct strategy tracks through the platform: **reverse transfer**, **adult re-engagement**, or both tracks simultaneously. The reverse transfer track helps two and four-year institutions partner and use real-time data to effectively confer degrees to students who transferred without receiving their associate's degree. The adult reengagement track guides both two and four-year institutions through data analysis and communications strategies to identify, locate, re-engage, and successfully support eligible stopped-out students complete their degrees.

What does Degrees When Due offer?

IHEP developed DWD to scale up the lessons learned from [Projects Win-Win](#) and [Credit When It's Due \(CWID\)](#), two earlier models that focused on helping institutions reclaim associate's degrees. DWD builds on proven strategies that collectively helped institutions award 20,000 new associate's degrees to hard-working students.

IHEP provides each participating institution with the tools and coaching support in order to successfully confer degrees to stopped-out students who meet pre-existing degree criteria. Institutions receive support with identifying near-completers—students who stopped out just shy of the finish line—and re-engage them to complete their studies. All participants will have access to:

- **Web-based platform providing instruction, tools, and resources to campuses** – Key staff enroll into a web-based platform where they will receive instruction and assistance in implementing degree reclamation strategies.
- **Team assembly** – Applicants receive assistance assembling the right cross-sector institutional team.
- **Customizable workplan generation** – Applications will complete concrete workplans with clear tasks to make campus staff's current work easier and integrate degree reclamation tasks with current responsibilities.
- **Live coaching** – A coach will be assigned to every participating campus to support staff and facilitate opportunities to connect with subject matter experts who have successfully implemented degree reclamation strategies on their campuses.
- **Expert advice** – Participants will have access to webinars and content from subject matter experts who have successfully implemented degree reclamation strategies on their campuses.
- **Community of Practice** – Campus staff will be connected to other professionals engaging in degree reclamation across the nation. Staff will be encouraged to share lessons learned and hear from experts in degree reclamation.
- **Opportunity to report nationally on campus successes** – All participating staff will be invited to a national convening in 2020, where attendees will share success stories with colleagues.
- **Communications strategies** – Participants will learn about communication strategies proven to improve rates of student consent and engagement.
- **Completion strategies** – Participants will improve student success rates after stopped-out students re-enroll.
- **Policy recommendations** – Lessons from participants will inform policy recommendations at the federal, state, and institutional levels that enhance degree reclamation efforts.

Who Should Participate in Degrees When Due?

IHEP seeks **Lead Applicants that have experience working in partnership with multiple colleges or universities** and will apply with a critical mass of committed institutions (Participating Institutions) that can bring these evidence-based strategies to scale across a region or state's postsecondary landscape. Examples of Lead Applicants include, but are not limited to, statewide coordinating boards or associations, state higher education executive offices, Student Success Centers, or established groups of institutions already partnering together on a different initiative. In the last case, an institution of higher education may be the Lead Applicant if able to coordinate a consortium of institutions. Successful applicants will be able to demonstrate their ability to coordinate participation among a critical mass of their state's institutions.

Eligibility criteria for participating institutions:

- **Institutional Sector:** Public two- or four-year institutions are eligible to participate in DWD.
- **Completion culture:** Institutions should demonstrate institutional commitment to student completion (e.g. current initiatives, strategic plans, etc.)
- **Data:** Each institution must be a member of the National Student Clearinghouse. Each institution must also agree to IHEP's data submission requirements, as outlined in the DWD FAQ.

Eligibility preferences for participating institutions:

- **Stable leadership:** Institutional executive leadership should be in their current role for at least a year by the start of the Cohort 2 (September 9, 2019)
- **Technological compatibility:** The institution's Student Information System must have been in place for at least six months by the start of Cohort 2, with no planned system overhauls during participation in the initiative.

Individual institutions are not eligible to apply on their own. Interested institutions without a Lead Applicant should contact IHEP to be connected to other efforts in their state or region.

IHEP's Commitment to Degrees When Due

IHEP is a nonpartisan research, policy and advocacy-oriented organization located in Washington, DC that serves as a resource for government agencies, higher education organizations, philanthropic foundations, and others committed to increasing access and success in postsecondary education. IHEP innovates, educates, and leads – offering research-based policy recommendations in order to improve postsecondary access and success for the nation's most underserved students. Through its DWD initiative, IHEP commits to **provide the technical assistance tools and service** described above to help institutions improve their student completion rates, build relationships across state stakeholders to integrate state and institutional completion initiatives, and elevate completion practices to inform policy change at the institutional, state and federal levels.

Lead Applicants commit to:

- **Coordinate participation among constituent campuses** – Each participating state/system/community will agree to coordinate the participation of constituent campuses.
- **Support DWD Research** – Support the DWD research by distributing a DWD campus readiness survey, serving as a liaison between the DWD research team and institutions, sharing DWD research and reporting information with institutions, and facilitating data collection (if applicable).
- **Identify a state liaison for campus teams** – An individual familiar with the state policy environment in the areas of completion and equity will be needed to assist campus staff with state policy questions, facilitate discussions with community and state stakeholders, assist with agreements between state data entities and campuses, assist with negotiating consortia contracts with third-party vendors, and so on. This individual will likely dedicate roughly 3 days of full-time work per month to this effort.

Participating Institutions commit to:

- **Designate an accountability lead at the institution** who is able to agree to all participation details, including the selection or appointment of an institutional DWD implementation team, data sharing as outlined above, future agreements between the institution and IHEP, and the 9-to-18-month timeline for project completion. This individual will also be responsible for ensuring meaningful and timely institutional team participation in the DWD initiative.
- **Form an institutional DWD team**, including decision making representatives from the following offices: Registrar, Institutional Research, Information Technology, Communications, Student Affairs, and Academic Advising.
- **Share data necessary to implement degree reclamation strategies and report on student outcomes**; each participating institution must be a member of the National Student Clearinghouse. All implementation metrics and indicator data will be reported at the aggregate level; student-level data will not be reported to IHEP.

Application Process

Lead Applicants should complete the lead applicant application form, while a separate institutional application form should also be filled out for *each* participating institution designated in the lead applicant's form. The lead applicant should submit the compiled application to dwd@ihep.org by 5:00pm PST on May 31, 2019.

To learn more about Degrees When Due and see a sneak peek into the web-based tool, IHEP will host two webinars:

- [April 16th at 1pm EST](#)
- [April 23rd at 1pm EST](#)

Please contact dwd@ihep.org for more information.

Application Timeline

- March 25, 2019: Application opens
- May 31, 2019: Application deadline
- July 15, 2019: All applicants notified
- September 9, 2019: Launch of Degrees When Due – Cohort 2

Inquiries

For questions related to Degrees When Due or completing an application, please contact dwd@ihep.org.

To learn more about Degrees When Due, please visit our website at degreeswhendue.com.