

BROOKLYN COLLEGE ***THE ON-COURSE ADVANTAGE (TOCA)***

Program Overview

As one of his first priorities upon taking office as President of Brooklyn College in spring 2000, Dr. Christoph M. Kimmich announced the creation of a fast-track program for first-time freshmen and transfer students. The On-Course Advantage (TOCA), launched in January 2001, enables academically strong students with a commitment to full-time study to accelerate their progress towards graduation.

For students selected for the program, Brooklyn College provides priority registration and evaluation of transfer credits; guaranteed access to required courses; opportunities for affiliation with the College's honors programs; structured, individual advisement; workshops on career and pre-professional planning; internship opportunities; and, upon graduation, a special note on their transcripts.

Eligible second-semester freshmen and transfer students are invited to participate in TOCA. Only students who have successfully completed at least 12 credits at Brooklyn College with a GPA of 3.0 or higher are considered for the program. Transfer students must have completed a minimum of 45 credits and declared a major.

TOCA students are expected to earn at least 30 credits per year, either by registering for 15 credits per semester or by taking 12 credits per semester and supplementing these programs with summer or intersession classes. Freshmen must declare a major by the end of their second semester. All TOCA students must maintain continuous enrollment and remain in good academic standing both in their overall GPA and in their major.

The program allows for some individual flexibility for participating students to extend the standard number of semesters required to complete their degree. In consultation with the program director, students in degree programs that may require more time for completion (accounting, speech, education, and health and nutrition science) or with extenuating life-situations may be granted an extra semester to graduate.

Program Highlights

- Beginning with an initial cohort of 235 students in spring 2001, TOCA currently serves 1,047 students. 693 of the current TOCA students entered as first-time freshmen and 354 transferred in from another institution. This represents approximately 10% of all undergraduate students.
- Each year between 250 and 300 new students register in the TOCA program.
- Over 51% of the initial TOCA cohort (first-time, full-time freshmen in fall 2000) graduated within four years. An additional 30% are enrolled in their ninth semester and finishing their degree requirements. Overall persistence (graduation + retention) through fall 2004 is 81%. For non-TOCA students who were TOCA-eligible, the four-year

graduation rate was 41% with 27% still pursuing their degree goals -- a persistence rate of 68%.

- 98% of the TOCA students from the fall 2003 entering freshmen cohort enrolled in fall 2004 compared to 87% of the TOCA-eligible/non-TOCA entering freshmen.
- 58% of TOCA students who entered as transfer students before fall 2002 have graduated and 26% are still enrolled in fall 2004. The persistence rate is 84%. Comparable transfer students who were TOCA-eligible but did not participate had a 41% graduation rate, with 30% still enrolled.

In addition to the benefits of improved rates of retention, graduation, and satisfaction for students in the program, TOCA benefits undergraduate students as a whole because it has led to improvements in departmental planning and advisement for all majors. Other benefits include students' increased confidence in their ability to navigate college rules and requirements and a greater sense of belonging to the Brooklyn College community.