



An evaluation of Joliet Junior College's progress towards meeting the  
goals of the Illinois Commitment

Submitted to the Illinois Community College Board  
by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness

AUGUST 2005

JOLIET  
Junior College



## EFFECTIVE PRACTICE: BEST PRACTICE MANUAL

**Direct Connection to The Illinois Commitment:** Goal 5. Illinois colleges and universities will hold students to even higher expectations for learning and will be accountable for the quality of academic programs and the assessment of student learning.

**Title:** Quality of Student Life & Learning (QSLL) Best Practices Manual

**Issue and need addressed by effective practice:** The *Best Practices Manual* was compiled by the QSLL committee in Fall 2004. It was the hope of the QSLL committee members that these contributions will continue to enrich the dialogue and practices that best serve the campus community. Thus, the goals of the *Best Practices Manual* were: 1. Articulate learning outcomes and 2. share best practice ideas throughout the campus

**Description of the effective practice:**<sup>1</sup> In the 2004-2005 academic year, the QSLL committee decided to address those issues most vital to first-year, full-time students, a population the JJC community feels is “at risk.” In Fall 2004, the committee solicited faculty and staff to aid in compiling “Best Practice” narratives that had special relevance to first-time, full-time students. Contributions outlining practices that could easily be adapted to this population were also requested. The contributions were compiled into a *Best Practice Manual* in January 2005. The best practices varied in scope and variety. Projects qualified by data, as well as efforts recorded by anecdotal information, were sought. The form for recording the content of the scenarios was provided as a general template and contributors were asked to consider the description of their projects as the central and essential information.

**How does this practice achieve sustainability?** The *Best Practices Manual* is now an annual part of the QSLL committee’s activities.

**What are the results/measurable outcomes?** Response to the committee’s requests was voluntary. Still, 9 academic departments and 11 student service areas responded. Topics included:

- A self-assessment tool used by Math instructors in Developmental courses gives students the opportunity to communicate with instructors and reflect on learning.
- A personal reflection journal used by a Physics instructor to provide visual maps for students to understand links between Physics concepts and what areas might need improvement.
- The AUTO-CAD program uses a program called *Make it Personal and Keep it Real*. The goal of the program is to help students relate what they do in the classroom to real life activities.
- The Office of Student Financial Aid instituted an on-line quiz to ensure that students are familiar with financial aid policies before they receive their award.

**Contact Information:** Carol Gordon, 815-280-2671, [cgordon@jjc.edu](mailto:cgordon@jjc.edu)

---

<sup>1</sup> Much of this narrative is quoted directly from the 2005 Best Practices manual.

## **EFFECTIVE PRACTICE: PROJECT ACHIEVE**

**Direct Connection to The Illinois Commitment:** Goal 4. Illinois will increase the number and diversity of citizens completing training and education programs.

**Title:** Project Achieve

**Issue and need addressed by effective practice:** The persistence, completion, and transfer of low-income, first-generation, and disabled college students.

**Description of the effective practice:** The goal of Project Achieve is to provide support services to low-income, first-generation, or disabled college students. These support services should increase the persistence and completion of students who participate in the program by fostering an institutional climate that enhances program participants' abilities to succeed.

**How does this practice achieve sustainability?** Project Achieve is funded by a performance-based federal TRIO Grant. In addition, JJC contributes to some of the costs of grant and 40% for a full-time tutor in 2005. JJC's contribution has increased annually over the past several years.

### **What are the results/measurable outcomes?**

- All students in Project Achieve received financial aid in FY 2004. This is an accomplishment because research shows that low-income students at community colleges are less likely to apply for financial aid.
- At the end of FY 2004, 89% of Project Achieve participants were in good academic standing.
- The Fall to Spring retention rate of Project Achieve participants was 90%.
- In FY 2004, 64 Associate's Degrees were awarded to Project Achieve participants.

Contact Information:

Jewel Dennis, 815-280-2455, [jdennis@jjc.edu](mailto:jdennis@jjc.edu)