AmeriCorps National Performance Measures
Pilot Year 2: 2011-2012
Output and Outcome Instrument Packet

MEMBER COLLEGE COURSE COMPLETION

Opportunity Focus Area: AmeriCorps Members

National Performance Measure: ***If you select this national performance measure, you must choose both this output and outcome.***
Output: Number of unduplicated AmeriCorps members who have their high school diploma or equivalent but have not completed a college degree prior to their term of service (O14).
Outcome: Number of unduplicated AmeriCorps members that complete a college course within one year after finishing AmeriCorps (O17).

Definition of Key Terms[1]

- ***Individuals [AmeriCorps members]****:* Individuals who are entered into the CNCS National Service Trust database, who complete their term of service, earn an Education Award, or leave service due to compelling circumstances (see 45 CFR §2522.200). *Individuals who are not enrolled in the trust, or who are dismissed, will not be counted.*
- ***College:*** Refers to any postsecondary higher education institution including colleges, universities, and technical and vocational schools (definition of college per U.S. Census).
- ***Complete a college course:***
  - Members may have enrolled in course <u>during</u> term of service and completed it after term of service ends or may enroll and complete <u>after</u> term of service ends.
  - Members may or may not pass course but did not drop out and did not take an "incomplete".
  - Course schedule would indicate that course has finished by the time measure has been taken.
- ***Within one year:*** Refers to 12 months after a member leaves service, or within the subsequent cycle for the Alumni survey.

Considerations for this National Performance Measure[2]

General

- Is a primary activity of your program to assist AmeriCorps members pursue higher education by enrolling in and completing a college course?

[1] 2011 National Performance Measures: Background Information References and Authorities, Definitions, Suggestions Regarding Data Collection, and Additional Notes, CNCS: http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_1018_americorps_nofo_background_document.pdf

[2] For more on alignment of performance measures, see the AmeriCorps Toolkit: http://nationalserviceresources.org/star/ac-program-toolkit

Output

- Are you able to identify and recruit AmeriCorps members that have a GED/high school diploma but not a college degree?

Outcome

- Will the members receive the level of training or support and type of service needed during their term of service necessary to contribute to their ability to complete a college course?
- Will an acceptable percentage of the members who participate in services be able to complete a college course either during their term of service or within 12 months from the time they complete service?

Data Collection Challenges

- Do you have a way to ensure that the members who fit the criteria (i.e. have a high school diploma or the equivalent but not a college degree) are tracked in a database or Excel spreadsheet?
- To count AmeriCorps members toward the output, you must count unduplicated, eligible members who do all of the following:
    - are entered into the CNCS National Trust database,
    - complete their term of service **and,**
    - earn an Education Award.

  You may also count enrolled members who have a compelling reason for leaving. Are you able to document and access this information for each AmeriCorps member? (e.g. *My AmeriCorps* portal tracks the Education Award).
- Members who complete a college course while enrolled in the program or one year after service can be counted under this measure. Can you develop a tracking system to count each member who completes a college course up to one year after completing his/her term of service?
- For those who do not complete a college course by the end of their term of service, do you have a way of maintaining contact during the year after service? It is suggested that you contact members twice within the 12 month period after the end of their term of service, at the 6 and 12 month points, to track the completion of a college course.
- After using instruments to track members, do you have a safe place to store these documents? This "raw data" will serve as evidence that you collected the outputs and outcomes in a systematic manner and can verify the results reported.

Data Collection Strategies

Output

- During the intake process, make sure you inquire about the education status of the members; that they have a GED/high school diploma but no college degree.
- Track members who have obtained a high school diploma or the equivalent but have not completed a college degree. To avoid counting members for this national performance measure who do <u>not</u> fit the eligibility criteria, consider sorting targeted members by using the columns on criteria (see "Member College Course Summary Log" in this document), using an Excel spreadsheet or put this group of members into a separate Excel spreadsheet.

- Recommended: To show how member development services may have contributed to the outcome, track the services related to educational advancement (academic support for college, enrollment assistance) by using an Excel spreadsheet to document assistance or class attendance (dosage of service) of the targeted members.

Outcome

- The course schedule of the educational institution will provide end dates of the courses offered. During the term of service, track member course work and note end date. Using your existing end of term or exit instrument, add a question to assess whether the target members have completed a college course during their term of service and whether it contributes to a recognized college degree or educational credential.
- Likewise, if members start or continue a course after the end of the term of service, use your Alumni or follow-up instrument to assess whether the target members completed a college course within 12 months after term of service and whether it contributes to a recognized college degree or educational credential.
- To ensure that you can administer the survey at the 6th and 12th months after the end of service, make sure you get email and phone contact information from at least two sources (e.g. member's parents and friends).

Sample Instruments in this Packet

Note: The Corporation is exploring the capability of *My AmeriCorps* to handle the collection of exit and follow-up data for those national performance measures pertinent to AmeriCorps members. However, at this time, each program will need to collect and report its own data.

Member Eligibility and College Course Assessment Questions – Output and Outcome

On the following pages, you will find specific questions which allow you to ascertain the educational status of members, pre-service and post-service, as required of this national performance measure. No doubt, your program has intake and exit instruments and possibly a follow-up or Alumni instrument (surveys, interviews). Follow-up or Alumni instruments are routinely administered by programs and in addition to assessing skills, satisfaction with assignment, and civic engagement in the community, they inquire about career or educational activities and aspirations of the members. Consider adding those questions to your current instrument.

Member College Course Summary Log – Output and Outcome

This summary log can be used to document members who fit the eligibility criteria, complete their service and earn an Education Award (output), and complete a college course (outcome). You are encouraged to develop an Excel spreadsheet with this information and use the spreadsheet to document unduplicated members.

Member College Course Completion

Sample Instruments:

Member Eligibility and College Course Assessment Questions – Output and Outcome

Member College Course Summary Log - Output and Outcome

Member Eligibility and College Course Questions – Output and Outcome

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To determine how many members fit the eligibility requirement for this performance measure (have a GED or high school diploma but no college diploma at the start of service), and completed a college course (post-service)
Who should complete this instrument?	AmeriCorps members should be responsible for reporting educational eligibility (pre-service) and whether they completed a college course (post-service). If enrollment in and completion of a college course is part of your member development activities, staff may want to track enrollment and completion of college courses.
When should we complete this instrument?	At the start of the service year (education eligibility requirement). At the end of the service year and/or 6 and 12 months after service ends (completed college course- outcome). Optional: At the end of the service year and/or 6-12 months after, collect information on the college course and whether it applies to a college degree or educational credential.
What should we do to prepare?	Review and modify your current intake, exit and follow-up instruments used to track members in order to ensure that you can collect and report the data according to the national performance measure specifications. Consider adding or adapting the educational status questions to your existing instruments, as needed.
What should we do afterwards?	Keep all completed instruments together in a safe place; **this is your data.** You will enter the data into a log (Excel spreadsheet, database) to determine if you met your output and outcome targets.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Programs may be able to access educational background information from *My AmeriCorps* or directly gather it from members and enter it into an existing database or Excel spreadsheet. It is likely that your AmeriCorps program has an existing database or Excel spreadsheet to track members from the beginning of service. Likewise, many programs have exit and follow-up or Alumni instruments used to gather information after the term of service ends. The questions on the following page can be added to your program instruments (electronic or paper) or included as you develop instruments to document unduplicated members who meet the “GED/diploma but no college degree” eligibility requirements (output) and complete a college course (intermediate outcome). Whether your instrument is in paper format or electronic format, remember to save this “raw” data as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outputs/outcomes.

Member Eligibility and College Course Questions
Output and Outcome

Pre-service: Intake or start of service questions to be completed before or at the time AmeriCorps members begin service. Add these questions to your existing intake instrument or form to determine which members can be counted in this performance measure.

1. Have you obtained your GED/diploma?
☐ Yes [Continue to next question]
☐ No [STOP]
☐ Not sure. Explain. _____ [Continue to next question]
[If a member answers "not sure", follow up to determine the eligibility (need a "yes" to be able to count the member for this output) and the education plan.]

2. Have you completed a college degree?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure. Explain. _____
[If a member answers "not sure", follow up to determine the eligibility (need a " no" to be able to count the member for this output) and the education plan.]

End of Service: Exit questions. If your members will complete a college course during their term of service, add the questions 1-3 to your existing exit instrument, to be completed at the end of the term.

1. Did you complete a college course during your AmeriCorps term of service?
☐ Yes [Continue to next question]
☐ No [STOP]

2a. What is the name of the course that you completed? _____

b. Number of units: ____ c. Date of completion: _____

3. Does this course count toward a recognized college degree or educational credential?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not Sure. Explain _____
[Though this information is not required as a part of this national performance measure, the Corporation may track this information in the future. You may find it helpful in reviewing program effectiveness. If a member answers "not sure", follow up to determine if the course is a recognized college course so you will be able to track this information.]

Post-Service: Follow-up and Alumni questions. For those members who do not complete college courses during the term of service, add questions 1-3 to your existing follow-up or Alumni instrument to collect information within 12 months after the end of service. It is recommended that the follow-up instrument is administered at two intervals after the term of service ends: at 6 months and again at 12 months (only to those who did not complete a college course when last contacted).

1. Have you completed a college course since leaving the [AmeriCorps] program?

☐ Yes [continue to next question]

☐ No [STOP]

2a. What is the name of the course that you completed? _____

b. Number of units: ____ c. Date of completion: _____

3. Does this course count toward a recognized college degree or educational credential?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure. Explain _____

[Though this information is not required as a part of this national performance measure, the Corporation may track this information in the future. You may find it helpful in reviewing program effectiveness. If a member answers "not sure", follow up to determine if the course is a recognized college course so you will be able to track this information.]

Member College Course Summary Log - Output and Outcome

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To track and determine how many members that fit the criteria (obtained GED or high school diploma, but no college degree) completed AmeriCorps service, earned an Education Award and completed a college course. The log can also be used to track members' college courses and whether they apply to a college degree.
Who should complete this instrument?	A designated person (e.g. the program staff member) should be responsible for entering eligibility criteria, completion of service, earning an Education Award and results from survey (completion of college course).
When should we complete this instrument?	At the start of the service year (eligibility requirement). At the end of the service year (completion of service - output). After analyzing the exit, follow-up and/or Alumni survey (college course completed - outcome). Optional: At the end, record college courses and whether they apply to a college degree or educational credential.
What should we do to prepare?	Enter the names of the enrolled members. Collect and record information from other tracking systems (intake, *My AmeriCorps*, member database) to determine eligibility and completion of service. Enter results from educational status questions at the end of service and 6 and 12 months afterwards. Modify the "Member College Course Summary Log" to fit your member development services.
What should we do afterwards?	Keep all the logs together in a safe place; **this is your data.** You will aggregate this data later to determine if you met your output and outcome targets.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Different forms can be developed or revised in order to collect and document unduplicated members who meet the eligibility requirements (GED/high school diploma but no college degree), complete their term of service and earn an Education Award (output) and complete a college course (intermediate outcome). In addition, it is recommended that you track the actual college courses completed and whether they apply to a college degree or educational credential. You may want to develop an electronic member log (e.g., Excel spreadsheet) as demonstrated on the following page. Whether your instrument is in paper format or electronic format, remember to save this "raw" data as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outputs/outcomes.

Member College Course Summary Log - Output and Outcome

Program Name: _____

Person completing this Log: _____ Program Year: _____

Instructions: Enter the members' names in the first columns. Document those members who met output eligibility (Columns 1 and 2), accomplished the output (Column 3 or Columns 4 and 5) and completed a college course within 12 months (Column 6 or 7) by placing a numerical "1" in the column. Put a "1" in the three summary columns (A: met output criteria; B: met output; and C: met outcome) if the conditions for each have been met. You are encouraged, though not required, to track and report whether the college course applies to a college degree or educational credential (9). This information may be requested in the future.

Member		Eligibility prior to service*		Output (O14)					Outcome (O17)			Optional Outcome detail	
Member Name													
Last	**First**	**(1) GED or diploma yes=1**	**(2) no college degree prior to service yes=1**	**(A) Met output criteria 1 and 2 Yes=1**	**(3) Left for a compelling reason yes=1**	**(4) Completed term yes=1**	**(5) Earned Ed. Award yes=1**	**(B) Met output 3 or 4 and 5 yes=1**	**(6) Completed college course by end of service yes=1**	**(7) Completed college course within year of end of service yes=1**	**(C) Met outcome 6 or 7 yes=1**	**(8) College course (end dates)**	**(9) College course applies to degree or educational credential yes=1**
sample: Diaz	Lisa	1	1	1		1	1	1		1	1	Eng. 101 7/5/10	

*Before determining whether the output has been met, members must meet output eligibility criteria.
(1) and (2) Both must be present to meet output criteria.
(3) or (4) and (5) Count members that left service due to compelling circumstance OR members that completed their term of service and earned an Ed. Award.
(6) or (7) Identify members that completed a college course during or within 12 months after the end of service.

Totals:

Output (O14): Total number of eligible members (A) that completed term of service and earned Education Award or left due to compelling circumstances (B): ____

Outcome (O17): Total number of members that completed a college course within 12 months of completing service (C): ____