



Guide to Using Results



Contact Information

For assistance, call ACT Engage Customer Service at 319.337.1893, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., central time, Monday through Friday, or email engage@act.org.

Resources

To access User Guides, Resources for Students and Parents, Research, and Case Studies, visit www.act.org/engage/downloads.html and www.act.org/engage/college_materials.html.

Guide to Interpreting and Using ACT Engage[®] College Reports

By using ACT Engage College, students and institutional personnel can identify student strengths and areas for improvement in student motivation, social engagement, and self-regulation, all of which are related to student academic success. Scores on ACT Engage scales provide an avenue for identifying and intervening with students who may be at academic or retention risk. Further, each ACT Engage scale yields results that can be used in specifying appropriate interventions for students and for identifying areas where institution-wide interventions may be needed.

Reports

There are four reports:

- a Student Report that includes a student's scores and interpretative statements
- an Advisor Report that includes the same information as the Student Report, as well as the Academic Success and Retention indices
- a Roster Report that includes all ACT Engage scores and demographic information for students who took ACT Engage
- an Institution Aggregate Report (discussed in more detail later)

Student Report

This report features a student's summary profile of ACT Engage scores (expressed as both scale scores and percentile scores), high school grades, and information on how to understand the scores. Further, the Student Report provides interpretive feedback for each ACT Engage scale. The scores are sorted into three categories that help to emphasize the developmental aspect of the feedback:

- *Capitalize on Your Strengths*, which includes high scores (i.e., those at or above the 76th percentile)
- *Continue to Develop Your Skills*, which includes moderate scores (i.e., those between the 26th and the 75th percentiles)
- *Make Plans for Improvement*, which includes low scores (i.e., those less than or equal to the 25th percentile)

Finally, the Student Report provides a Recommended Plan of Action to help students get started with their developmental plans. See Figure 1 for a sample Student Report.

Figure 1. Student Report, front

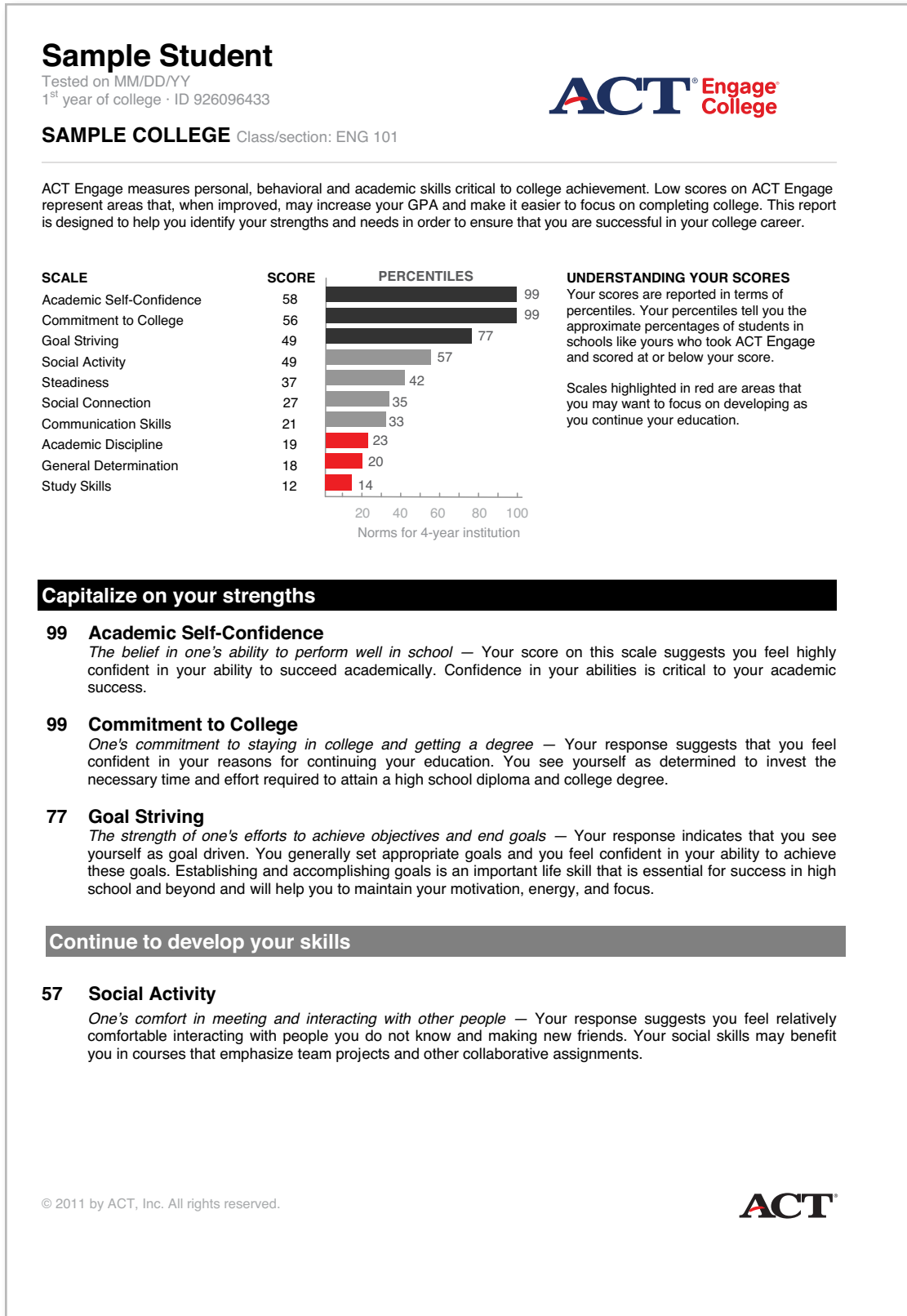


Figure 1. Student Report, back

Sample Student Page: 2

42 Steadiness
One's responses to and management of strong feelings — Your response indicates that you see yourself as capable of effectively controlling your emotions. You feel as though you do not often lose your temper and you manage frustration well. You are fairly effective in keeping emotions from affecting your academic performance and other important activities in your life.

35 Social Connection
One's feelings of connection and involvement with the college community — Your response suggests you see yourself as connected with your school and its student body. Your involvement in school activities will provide a valuable source of stress relief and social interaction that will serve to enhance feelings of connection.

33 Communication Skills
Attentiveness to others' feelings and flexibility in resolving conflicts with others — Your score on this scale suggests that you tend to see yourself as fairly comfortable when communicating with others, handling interpersonal conflicts, and working collaboratively with others. These skills will help you in learning and work environments as you effectively exchange information, cooperate with others, and work as a team member.

Make plans for improvement

23 Academic Discipline
The amount of effort a student puts into schoolwork and the degree to which a student is hardworking and conscientious — Your response suggests you frequently approach academic related tasks with less enthusiasm and effort than other students. You may frequently rush through your homework without giving much attention to detail, turn in poor or incomplete work, or give up on difficult tasks or problems.

20 General Determination
The extent to which one strives to follow through on commitments and obligations — Your score on this scale suggests that you see yourself as someone who often has difficulty fulfilling your assigned responsibilities or duties. If something more interesting presents itself, you may pursue that interest rather than uphold your prior obligations and/or tend to your commitments. Other people may not be able to depend on you to fulfill your promises.


14 Study Skills
The extent to which students believe they know how to assess an academic problem, organize a solution, and successfully complete academic assignments — Your response indicates that you feel you lack good study skills, problem-solving skills, and learning strategies. Like academic abilities, these skills are important in predicting your success in high school and beyond.

Recommended plan of action

Overall, your ACT Engage scores suggest that you are likely to benefit from campus resources for promoting academic success and attaining a college degree. Consult with a counselor or academic advisor who can assist you to develop a plan of action for improving your skills. Further, consult the [student tool shop](#) for helpful information and sample strategies.

There are services available at your institution that may be helpful to you:

- Develop strategies for improvement. Take advantage of campus resources recommended to you. By using campus resources, you can enrich your college experience and improve your chances for success. Your advisor can help you customize a plan of action.
- Capitalize on your strengths. Talk to your academic advisor about ways to take advantage of your strengths.
- Find out more about campus services and get a list of helpful workshops and events at your institution's website or advisory office.
- Visit the [student tool shop](#) for information and exercises to aid you in constructing your improvement plan.

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Advisor Report

The Advisor Report (see Figure 2) contains the same information as the Student Report, as well as the Academic Success and Retention indices. Each index is based on a probability score ranging from .01 to .99, with larger values representing increased likelihood of success (i.e., less risk of dropping out or of poor academic performance—GPA < 2.0).

Institutions can use ACT Engage Success indices to proactively identify students who may have academic difficulty and/or drop out before their second year of college. Although cutoffs for identifying these students have been initially set at the lowest quartile (e.g., lower probabilities of retention and academic success), an institution may choose to modify this cutoff depending on (a) the portion of students the institution wishes to target and (b) resources available for intervening with such students.

These indices incorporate information from the different ACT Engage scales and self-reported information (e.g., high school grades) that are most predictive of student success into a single number that can facilitate identification of those students most at risk. You may find the following score ranges useful as broad guidelines for sorting students into various levels of risk:

Academic Success or Retention Index Percentile Score	Interpretation
Low (\leq 25th percentile)	A low percentile score suggests a higher probability of risk
Moderate (26th–75th percentile)	A moderate percentile score suggests a moderate probability of risk
High (\geq 75th percentile)	A high percentile score suggests a lower probability of risk

Since baseline academic performance and retention rates vary across institutions, these indices should not be interpreted as explicit predicted probabilities of academic performance or retention for an individual student; rather, these indices are approximate measures of how each student's psychosocial factors lend themselves to persistence and academic performance through the first year of college.

The ACT Engage Advisor Report also provides checks for scoring issues in each student's report. Checks are in place to flag response inconsistencies and lack of variability, as detailed below. To check for response inconsistencies, we use forward and reverse keyed items (e.g., answering "I like school" versus "I cannot stand school" should elicit responses from different parts of the score scale). Implementing both forward and reverse keyed items enables us to more accurately report when there are response inconsistencies. To check for lack of variability across items, we compare all of a student's responses. When a student provides the same answer (or nearly the same answer) to many or all ACT Engage items, the lack of variability flag is triggered. When either scoring issue occurs, there will be an additional note, prior to the interpretive portion of the report, that indicates a student presented an unusual response pattern (e.g., the student was using the same response option regardless of content, was responding randomly). Therefore, scores based on these responses may not be accurate. Since this occurrence may be in itself a red flag concerning a student's likely success, the student's advisor may want to follow up with questions, such as:

- Were you distracted while taking ACT Engage?
- Were you motivated to complete ACT Engage?
- Did you understand the questions in ACT Engage?
- Do you understand the purposes of ACT Engage?
- Did you complete ACT Engage accurately and honestly?

Figure 2. Advisor Report, front

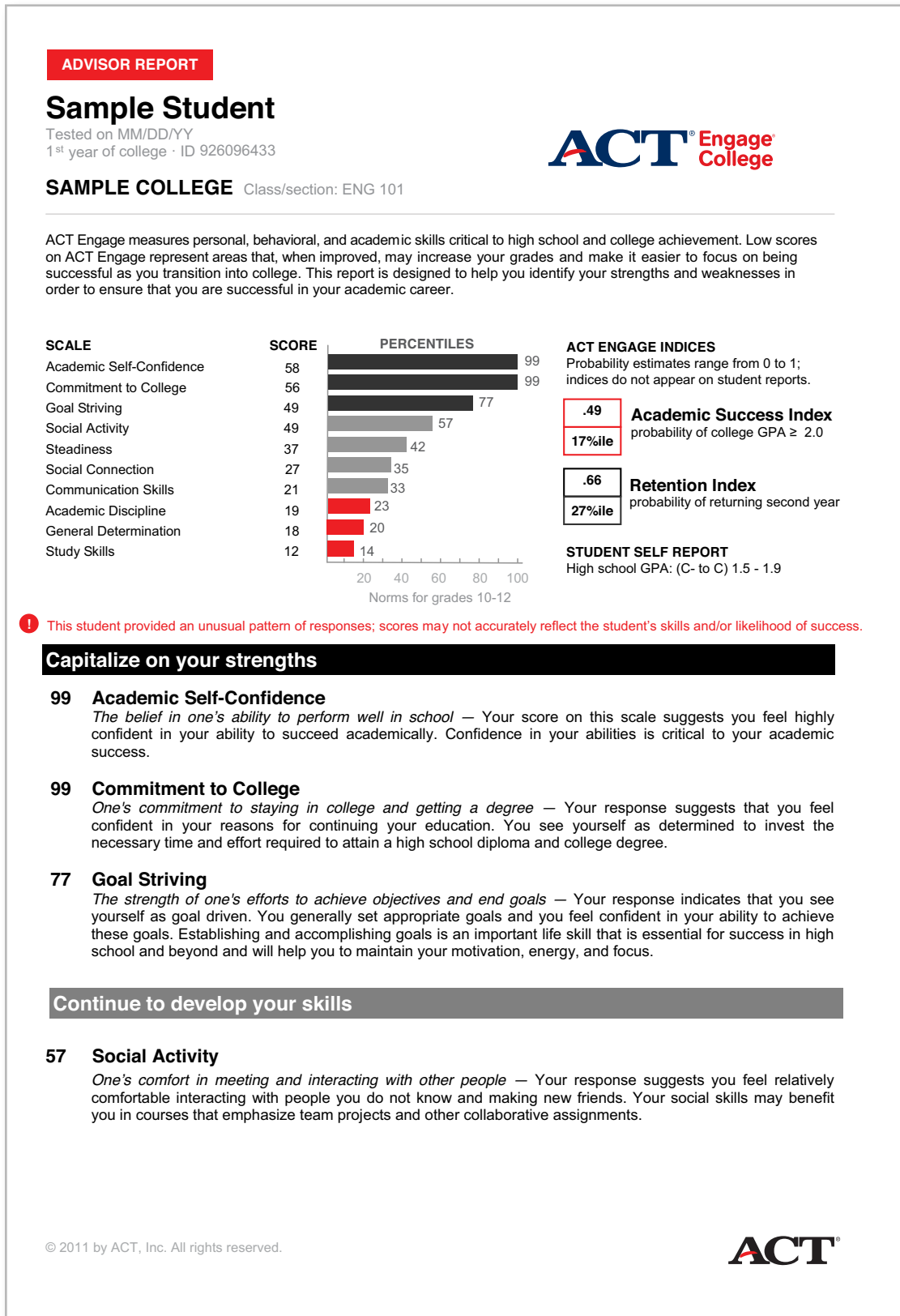


Figure 2. Advisor Report, back

Sample Student Page: 2

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Make plans for improvement


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Recommended plan of action

Your ACT Engage scores provide information that can help you develop your personal and academic-related skills, which in turn can help you to perform well in high school and facilitate your transition to college. By focusing on building those skills for which you obtained relatively lower scores, you can derive maximum benefit from the learning and growth opportunities available to you.

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Roster Report

The Roster Report contains information from all ACT Engage assessments scored in any given batch. It includes students' names, IDs, demographics, ACT Engage scale and percentile scores, the Academic Success Index score, Retention Index score, and flags for scoring issues (e.g., missing data, response inconsistency). As a reference point, approximately 8.6% of students from the ACT Engage field study were flagged for scoring issues. The Roster Report is in a Microsoft Excel format, which gives schools the flexibility of merging ACT Engage scores with other school data. See Figure 3 for a sample Roster Report.

Figure 3. Roster Report

Student ID	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Grade Level	Class/Section	Date of Birth	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
20064204	Romer	Rongre	A	1st year of college	Course 101	2/22/1993	Male	Hispanic/Latino
20064037	Ctmer	Cichcan		1st year of college	Course 101	12/1/1992	Male	White
20059291	Drosta	Dydidia	D	1st year of college	Course 101	8/24/1993	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20182906	Sannis	Sobes	R	1st year of college	Course 101	4/10/1994	Male	Hispanic/Latino
20029710	Heiny	Hshlhey	L	1st year of college	Course 101	3/9/1993	Female	Prefer not to respond
20046146	Idanim	Irlinit	A	1st year of college	Course 101	6/2/1992	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20064121	Bafaro	Bubebn		1st year of college	Course 101	6/11/1992	Male	Hispanic/Latino
20159879	Ramanza	Rarirssa		1st year of college	Course 101	10/5/1992	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20064339	Navizo	Nyndnj	C	1st year of college	Course 101	2/13/1993	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20055998	Caragat	Cstacr	A	1st year of college	Course 101	7/8/1993	Male	Hispanic/Latino
20013516	Raista	Rarern	A	1st year of college	Course 101	6/22/1993	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20179552	Baippe	Rorema		1st year of college	Course 101	11/26/1991	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20030972	Natragh	Nonanch	A	1st year of college	Course 101	10/13/**	Male	Hispanic/Latino
129801120	Tbdigar	Nunints		1st year of college	Course 101	11/23/1992	Female	Asian
20064342	Rbena	Raririn	J	1st year of college	Course 101	1/3/1993	Male	Hispanic/Latino
20052699	Ebllester	Elejeand	L	1st year of college	Course 101	1/13/1993	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20037939	Nbrretir	Nandnyce	J	1st year of college	Course 101	12/7/1992	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20051065	Rbrrosk	Rargrar		1st year of college	Course 101	8/17/1993	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20065089	Vbrtle	Veviv	S	1st year of college	Course 101	11/3/1992	Male	Hispanic/Latino
20183496	Cbcerra	Cectcor		1st year of college	Course 101	10/9/1992	Male	Hispanic/Latino
20057259	Dblmont	Dndrdea	N	1st year of college	Course 101	1/17/1993	Female	Hispanic/Latino
20193269	Ybnet	Yayrya	A	1st year of college	Course 101	11/29/1991	Female	Hispanic/Latino

Aggregate Report

ACT Engage College also provides an Aggregate Report. The Aggregate Report includes information about all ACT Engage assessments administered by an institution during its window of administration. It features aggregate summaries at the institutional level. Thus, it can be used to identify areas where institution-wide resources or interventions may be needed. The report contains average scores showing how your sample of students scored on the ten ACT Engage scales and the Academic Success and Retention indices.

For more information about Aggregate Reports, consult the *ACT Engage User Guide* or the ACT Engage website, www.act.org/engage/downloads.html.

Examples of How to Use ACT Engage College Results

ACT Engage College can be used to identify and intervene with individual students who may be at risk for experiencing academic problems during their first year of postsecondary studies. The following sample student profiles illustrate how to use ACT Engage with individual students.

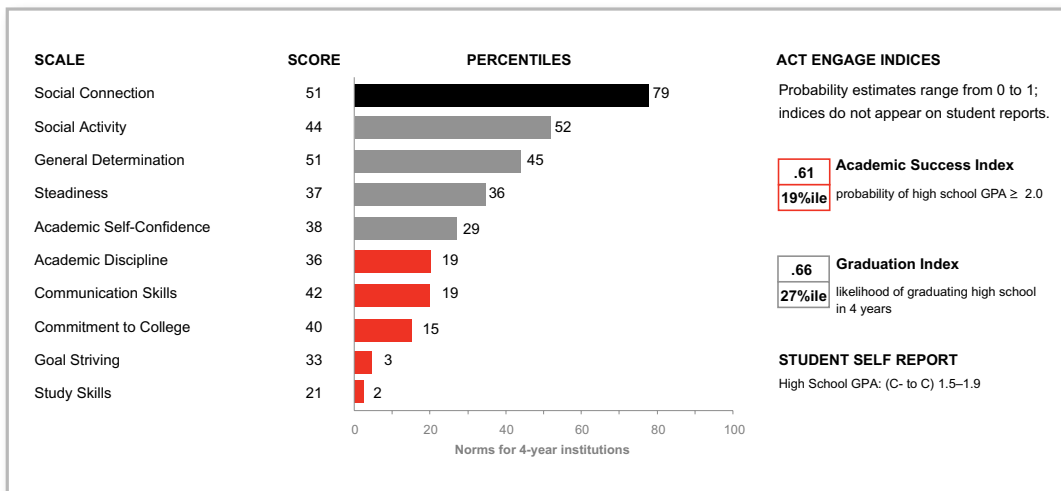
Sample Student Profiles

Student who may be at risk: Cynthia

Cynthia, a freshman at Eastern University, completed ACT Engage during the fall semester. Although her scores differed by scale, many of her scores were in the lowest quartile of those earned by students nationally. Her Academic Success Index, a strong predictor of academic risk, also was in the lowest quartile (19th percentile), suggesting that Cynthia may be at high risk of experiencing academic difficulties and struggling with her future education. Furthermore, her Retention Index score, which predicts her risk of dropping out of college before the second year, was in the mid-range (51st percentile), suggesting the possibility that she may not persist with postsecondary studies.

To determine how to best help Cynthia leverage her strengths and work on her needs, her advisor first focused on understanding her ACT Engage profile, shown here in Figure 4. An explanation of her scores follows.

Figure 4. Cynthia's Student Profile



Capitalize on Strengths and Continue to Develop Skills. There were areas in which Cynthia scored at a moderate or high level, suggesting that these areas are less likely to require intervention at this time:

- She scored relatively high (79th percentile) on the *Social Connection* scale. Her feelings of connection and involvement with the college community make her less likely to want to drop out and indicate that she will likely continue to seek involvement.
- *Steadiness* (36th percentile), *Academic Self-Confidence* (29th percentile), *General Determination* (45th percentile), and *Social Activity* (52nd percentile) are areas that could be developed later on, after more critical areas (i.e., lower scores) have been addressed.

Make Plans for Improvement. These are the areas that would benefit the most from focused intervention and areas that may put Cynthia most at risk for experiencing academic difficulties and/or dropping out of college:

- Cynthia scored very low (3rd percentile) on *Goal Striving*. This suggests that she does not make efforts to achieve objectives and goals. She does not show confidence in her ability to succeed in achieving goals and, perhaps as a result, does not tend to set important goals or put forth effort to achieve the goals she does set.
- She also scored low (19th percentile) on *Academic Discipline*. This indicates that she often approaches academic tasks with less effort than other students. She may avoid homework, skip classes, or view other aspects of her life as more important than the completion of class-related tasks and assignments.
- Cynthia scored low (15th percentile) on *Commitment to College*. This puts her at risk for dropping out early. She may have difficulty identifying how college can benefit her and may feel ambivalent about completing a degree. She may find it useful to think about her career and life goals and to consider how a college degree will help her attain those goals.
- She also scored at a very low percentile (2nd percentile) on *Study Skills*. This suggests that Cynthia may need help addressing traditional studying techniques and building problem-solving skills. Working on these skills would improve her ability to study for tests effectively and thus improve her academic performance.
- Another area requiring attention is *Communication Skills*. Cynthia scored in the 19th percentile, indicating that she may have difficulty working in teams and may exhibit some rigidity. She may need some assistance in learning how to handle interpersonal problems effectively.

Recommended Plan of Action. Based on these results, the university created interventions for Cynthia. Since she had several areas recommended for improvement, it was necessary for the university to prioritize interventions and plan them accordingly.

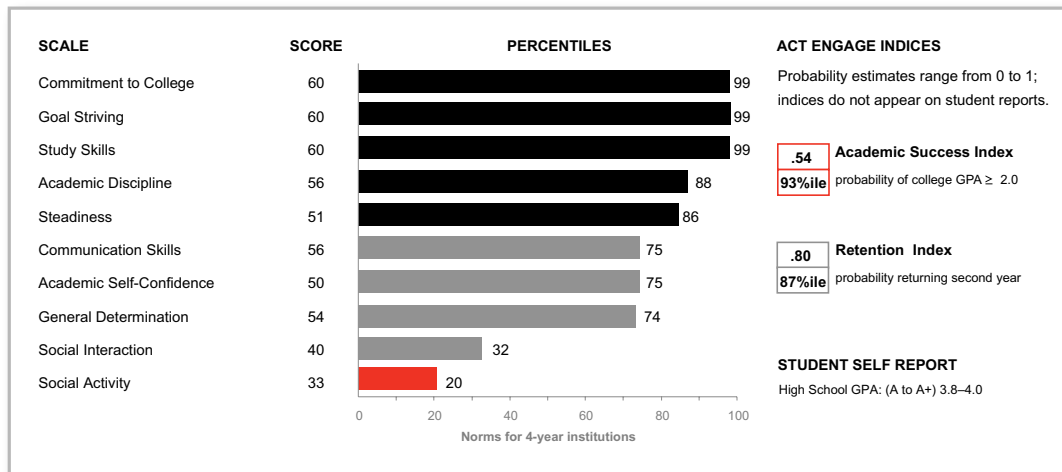
1. Cynthia needed assistance with *Goal Striving*. She had a tendency not to set goals for herself and to just “go through the motions” of attending classes without a real purpose in mind. She was set up with an advisor who discussed goals with her. She was asked to set both short- and long-term goals related to her classwork and college career. Short term goals included “I will turn in projects on time during the month of November” and “I will finish the semester.” Long-term goals included “I will choose a college major” and “I will attain a college degree.”
2. Cynthia scored low on *Academic Discipline*. Since academic success is closely linked to this dimension, it was considered a top priority. To improve, Cynthia and her advisor met to discuss her projects and attendance in class. Part of Cynthia’s problem with completing tasks and projects was that she did not pay attention to assigned due dates, so she often would forget to complete tasks and did not seem very concerned about meeting deadlines. The advisor helped Cynthia to put together a planner to organize her projects and tests. They also worked together to set up a schedule for Cynthia’s evenings that included time to study.
3. *Commitment to College* was another priority and was also addressed in the meetings with the advisor. Topics specific to *Commitment to College* that were discussed included connections between projects and college majors/careers and increasing Cynthia’s exposure to the benefits of increased education (e.g., earning potential, job security, improved quality of life).
4. Cynthia needed help in developing her *Study Skills*. Since good study skills are necessary in order to effectively prepare for tests, she was enrolled in a Study Skills workshop at the university that focused on tips regarding studying techniques and problem-solving skills.
5. Although a lower priority on her list, *Communication Skills* also needed some attention. To develop this area, Cynthia was encouraged to join an intramural sports team or club to learn how to better participate in group activities and solve conflicts within a team.

On-track student: Will

Will, a first-year student at Johnson Community College, completed ACT Engage a month after starting college. Although his scores suggest that some areas may benefit from improvement, Will generally scored in the upper quartile when compared to other students nationally. His Academic Success Index was in the upper quartile (93rd percentile), suggesting that Will is at low risk of experiencing academic difficulties, and his Retention Index was also high (87th percentile), indicating that he is likely to persist in his education through a college degree. Although Will seems to be a well adjusted student who is on track on his academic and psychosocial development, he may benefit from further development in some areas.

To determine how to best help Will leverage his strengths and develop his skills, Johnson Community College used his ACT Engage profile, shown here in Figure 5. An explanation of his scores follows.

Figure 5. Will's Student Profile



Capitalize on Strengths. These are areas in which Will showed strength and that could be leveraged to increase his chances for academic success:

- Will scored relatively high (88th percentile) on the *Academic Discipline* scale. He consistently puts forth effort in completing academic tasks. He sees himself as a hardworking and detail oriented student who can usually work through difficult tasks, strives to turn in high-quality work, and makes academic tasks, projects, and assignments a high personal priority
- Will also evidenced strength in *Commitment to College*, scoring in the 99th percentile. He is confident in his reasons for continuing his education through a college degree. He sees himself as determined to invest the time and effort needed to complete college, regardless of obstacles.
- *Goal Striving* (99th percentile) and *General Determination* (74th percentile) also are strengths. Will sets goals for himself and is confident about his abilities to meet them. He also has a strong sense of responsibility to his commitments and is likely to fulfill his promises.

- Will also scored in the upper quartile on *Study Skills* (99th percentile), *Academic Self-Confidence* (75th percentile), and *Communication Skills* (83rd percentile), indicating that he has a good handle on studying techniques and problem-solving skills, is confident in his ability to perform well in school, and works well with others on team or group projects.
- Will scored in the upper range on *Steadiness* (86th percentile). This suggests that he usually can manage his emotions and keep them from negatively impacting other activities. However, sometimes he seems to over-control his emotions and does not allow himself an adequate outlet for stress. This could be a possible area to keep an eye on or improve.

Continue to Develop Skills. Will had middle range scores on one scale. This may not require immediate intervention, but should be developed as resources allow. This skill should also be monitored to ensure that it does not pose challenges at a later time:

- Will scored at the 32nd percentile in the *Social Connection* scale. This suggests that he generally feels somewhat connected to the college and the people in it, although the connection may not be strong. He may not be very involved in student activities and while he cares about the college, he may not completely understand his place in it and could benefit by becoming more involved.

Make Plans for Improvement. Based on his ACT Engage profile, there is one area that may benefit from focused intervention:

- Will's *Social Activity* score fell in the low range (20th percentile). This suggests that he may feel shy or nervous when talking with others, may avoid social activities, or may feel isolated at times.

Recommended Plan of Action. These results indicate that Will has many strengths and the potential for high academic achievement in college. However, it is important to address the areas that need development or improvement. It is also necessary not to overlook his strengths, but to work on cultivating them and teaching him to use them further to his advantage. His prioritized intervention plan follows:

1. The highest priority on Will's plan is improving *Social Activity*. As a naturally shy student, Will may have trouble making social connections and enjoying his time in college if he does not participate in social activities. He may also have difficulty networking with other students and professionals in order to obtain employment in his chosen field after graduation. To help him become more sociable, Will was encouraged to participate in a film club. Will enjoys watching movies and found that there are other students at the college who get together to watch and discuss films. Being a part of a group helped increase his comfort with social interactions, and helped him feel a part of a group, which also helped strengthen his *Social Connection*.
2. While it wasn't identified as a high priority, Will had a higher-range score on *Steadiness*. His advisor thought it was important that Will focus on finding positive ways of expressing his emotions. Will was encouraged to keep a journal of his thoughts and to use that journal as a place to express his frustrations as well as positive feelings. He also worked with a personal trainer through the student athletic department to develop a personalized exercise plan to keep him healthy and help relieve stress after a long day of classes and studying. Topics emphasized include focusing on strengths as a way to address challenges, avoiding putting themselves down, and overcoming pessimism. Students practiced these skills through role playing and interacting with each other.

Implementing ACT Engage at Your Institution

In the classroom, instructors and students can take advantage of ACT Engage results in a variety of ways, including discussion of ACT Engage scales and their implications for academic success, one-on-one or group feedback using students' scores, and discussion of action steps that can be taken by students to develop their skills further. Toward this end, we developed a crosswalk (see Table 1) as a quick reference for institutions to map each ACT Engage scale with resources. The crosswalk template allows instructors or administrators to map each scale with the range in which each student scored. This crosswalk can help determine which areas should be the main focus and links those areas with available resources. We encourage institutions to use this crosswalk as a template for their available programs and services.

Table 1. Student Crosswalk of Institutional Resources

Scales	Percentile	Resources
Academic Discipline	High Medium Low	
Commitment to College	High Medium Low	
General Determination	High Medium Low	
Goal Striving	High Medium Low	
Communication Skills	High Medium Low	
Study Skills	High Medium Low	
Social Activity	High Medium Low	
Social Connection	High Medium Low	
Academic Self-Confidence	High Medium Low	
Steadiness	High Medium Low	

Your institution can create a typical institutional crosswalk of resources that instructors and students can use to create the student crosswalk in Table 1. Figure 6 is an example institutional crosswalk of ACT Engage scales with programs often found at colleges and universities. You may want to modify this crosswalk for your institution and provide it to your instructors to assist them in determining which resources are appropriate for individual students.

ACT Engage College Scales

Figure 6. Institutional Crosswalk

Support Services at Johnson Community College	Academic Discipline	Academic Self-Confidence	General Determination	Commitment to College	Communication Skills	Steadiness	Study Skills	Goal Striving	Social Activity	Social Connection
Tutoring Center				✓		✓				
Writing Center				✓						
Career Advisement Workshop			✓				✓			
One-on-one career consultation			✓				✓			
Advisement	✓		✓							
Physical Science tutoring										
Disability Access Center (referral)										
Learning Styles Workshop										
Social Support Network (referral)		✓			✓					
Study Skills Workshop						✓				
Student clubs and organizations								✓	✓	

✓ = Required

ACT Engage College provides a wealth of information that can be used by institutions in a variety of ways, individually or at the institutional level, to facilitate student psychosocial development and academic success.

ACT[®]