The Enhanced Focus of Community Colleges as “The Solution”

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What is the Problem?

• International comparisons
• Skill needs of the contemporary economy
  ▫ Some college is necessary for access to decent jobs
  ▫ Employer needs
• Continued inequality in higher ed access and completion for low income and minority students
Solution—Increase in Degrees and Certificates

- **Obama Administration**
  - An additional 5 million CC awards by 2010

- **Gates Foundation**
  - Double the percentage of low-income young people who earn a post-secondary credential by age 26 (from 30 percent to 60 percent)
  - Strong emphasis on community colleges

- **Lumina Foundation**
  - Increase share of population with high quality credentials from 40 to 60 percent by 2050
  - Community College initiatives but less exclusive focus
Why Community Colleges

• Presumed lower cost
• Shorter time to degrees
• Many students enroll, but most do not graduate
• Concentration of underserved students
• Job growth in middle skill jobs
• Close connections to the local economy
Recent Articles on Whether CCs Can Meet This Challenge

• How Community Colleges Can Reach Obama’s Goals (Jenkins and Bailey) *Inside Higher Ed* (10/13/2009)

• Can Community Colleges Rise to the Occasion? (Bailey and Jacobs) *The American Prospect* (10/26/09)
  http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=can_community_colleges_rise_to_the_occasion
Community College Degrees have Value in the Labor Market

• Benefits of an Associate Degree (compared to a high school degree)
  ▫ Men earn 15 to 30 percent more
  ▫ Women earn up to 50 percent more

• Certificates
  ▫ Positive for women
  ▫ Uncertain for men

• Varies by field

• Earnings benefit of an associate degree is at least half of the benefit of a B.A.
How Can This Be Done?

• Obama—CCs produce about 855K awards a year—average of 500K
• Lumina—Compounded annual increase of 5% - 150K more than the year before
• Certainly can’t be done by enrollment increases—unrealistic, inefficient, and impossible financially—must increase graduation rates
Community College Graduation Rates

- No single definition of graduation rate or student outcomes
- Student Right to Know (SRK) most common
  - “Three” year rate for 1st time, full time degree seeking students
- Low rates—high cost per degree
Many Alternative Outcome Measures

“Milestone Events” in a Student Enrollment Pathway

- Basic Skills Conversion Rate
- Developmental Completion Rate
- Skills-Deficient Completion Rate
- SRK Completion Rate
- “College Path” Completion Rate
- “Workforce Ready” Employment Rate
- “College Path” Completion Rate
- Developmental Completion Rate
- X Credits – 1 Term College-Level [“College Path”]
- Y Credits – 1 Year College-Level [“Transfer Ready”] [“Workforce Ready”]
- Certificate
- Associate Degree
- Employment [Field Earnings]
- BA Degree

Source: Pete Ewell, NCHEMS, 2006.
Three criticisms of SRK

- Only full time students
- The time period is too short
- Institutional graduation rates count transfers (without graduation) as “non-completers”
## Accuracy of the SRK Graduation Rate (National Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Institutional Rate</th>
<th>Individual Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three year</td>
<td>22.9 %</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six year</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BPS 96/2001
“CC First” PSE Students
Total Credits Earned in All PSE Within Eight Years
NELS
“CC First” PSE Students
Percent Distribution by Highest Outcome in All PSE Within Eight Years (NELS)

- Certificate: 6%
- Associate: 15%
- Bachelors: 18%
- 10+ Credits (no deg/cert/xfer): 33%
- <10 Credits (no deg/cert): 17%
- Transfer (no deg/cert): 11%
“CC First” PSE Students in Various Groups Percent Distribution by Highest Outcome in All PSE Within Eight Years (NELS)
“CC First” PSE Students
Percent Distribution by Highest Outcome in All
PSE Within Six Years (BPS96)

- Certificate: 10%
- Associate: 16%
- Bachelors: 10%
- No Longer Enrl (No Deg/Xfer): 43%
- Transfer (No Deg) Still Enrl: 9%
- Transfer (No Deg) No Longer Enrl: 4%
- Still Enrl (No Deg/Xfer): 8%

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How Do We Increase Graduation Rates?

• Many definitions of outcomes
• CC students face many social and economic barriers
• Weak academic skills are a particular barrier
Community College Students Must Overcome Significant Social and Economic Barriers to Achieve their Educational Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>Community College (public 2-Year)</th>
<th>Public 4-Year</th>
<th>Private 4-Year (not-for-profit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income less than $30,000</td>
<td>42.9³¹</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Under 25</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has Dependent Children</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Enrollment</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Year Enrollment</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Parents' income for dependent students; student's (and spouse's) income for independent students.

Developmental Education

• Huge barrier to increased completion
• Evidence suggests that current practices do not work well
• Most students do not complete their developmental sequences
Incidence of Remediation

• 58 percent—at least one course (NELS)
• 44 percent—1 to 3 courses (NELS)
• 14 percent—more than 3 courses (NELS)
• 59 percent—at least one course (ATD)
Outcomes for remedial students

Outcomes for college ready students

Local treatment effect
Completion of First College-Level Course and Retention by CPT Score and Subject

Outcome: Completion of First College-Level Course
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 4) = -0.061(0.013)

Outcome: Fall-to-Fall Retention
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 4) = -0.021(0.011)

Estimated Discontinuity (Reading ITT Table 4) = -0.068(0.008)

Estimated Discontinuity (Reading ITT Table 4) = -0.009(0.008)
Transfer to State University System and Degree Completion by CPT Score and Subject

Outcome: Transfer to SUS
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 5) = -0.019(0.008)

Outcome: Degree Completion
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 5) = -0.030(0.008)

Estimated Discontinuity (Reading ITT Table 5) = -0.019(0.004)
What Does This Say About Assessment?

• No obvious cutoff point
• Confusion about what it means to be “college ready”
• Assessments are not good predictors of future success in college
• Do they measure current skill levels?
Implications for Effectiveness

• Current system neglects the academic needs of weaker “college level” students
• Applies primarily to upper level developmental ed students
• We know little about the effectiveness of services for students far from the cutoff scores
• We do know that few referred to multiple levels of remediation finish
Achieving the Dream Database

- 250,000 students
- All first time (in the college) degree seeking students (full or part time)
- 57 colleges in CT, FL, NC, NM, OH, PA, TX, VA, WA
- Not representative of all CCs—similar to large, urban institutions with lower funding per student
Referrals to Levels of Dev. Ed.

Math - Full Sample
- Not referred: 41%
- 3 levels below: 19%
- 2 levels below: 16%
- 1 level below: 24%

Reading - Full Sample
- Not referred: 67%
- 3 levels below: 8%
- 2 levels below: 7%
- 1 level below: 23%
In-Order Course Completion and Enrollment for Math Remediation

- 3 levels below:
  - 41% Enroll
  - 57% Pass
- 2 levels below:
  - 22% Enroll
  - 29% Pass
- 1 level below:
  - 25% Not completed
- Completed: 16%
- Not completed: 6%
- Not enrolled: 7%
- Not enrolled: 12%
- Not enrolled: 16%
- Not enrolled: 18%
- Referred to Level 3 46824

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In-Order Course Completion and Enrollment for Reading Remediation

- Completed: 22%
- Not enrolled: 31%
- Not completed: 13%

1 level below
- Enroll: 25%
- Pass: 35%
- Not enrolled: 10%
- Not completed: 4%

2 levels below
- Enroll: 39%
- Pass: 56%
- Not enrolled: 17%
- Not completed: 4%

3 levels below
- Enroll: 69%
- Not enrolled: 31%

Referred to Lev. 3 7987

Not completed: 13%
Enrollment and Progression Patterns Among Achieving the Dream Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referred to</th>
<th>Not Enrolled</th>
<th>Not Passed</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 level below</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 levels below</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 levels below</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Enrollment and Progression Patterns Among Achieving the Dream Students

![Graph showing enrollment and progression patterns for reading among students referred to different levels below. The graph indicates the percentage of students not enrolled, not passed, and completed at each level below.]

- **Total:**
  - Not Enrolled: 41%
  - Not Passed: 16%
  - Completed: 44%

- **1 level below:**
  - Not Enrolled: 38%
  - Not Passed: 13%
  - Completed: 48%

- **2 levels below:**
  - Not Enrolled: 42%
  - Not Passed: 21%
  - Completed: 36%

- **3 levels below:**
  - Not Enrolled: 57%
  - Not Passed: 21%
  - Completed: 22%
Student Progression by Enrollment and Gatekeeper in Math

Math - Full Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referred to</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>1 level below</th>
<th>2 levels below</th>
<th>3 levels below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11% 4% 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6% 21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>10% 4% 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>5% 2% 8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- Never enrolled
- Not re-enrolled
- Not completed dev
- GK Not enrolled
- GK Not passed
- GK Passed
Student Progression by Enrollment and Gatekeeper in Reading

Reading - Full Sample

- **Total**: 35% Never enrolled, 6% Not re-enrolled, 16% Not completed, 12% GK Not enrolled, 8% GK Not passed, 24% GK Passed
- **1 level below**: 37% Never enrolled, 13% Not re-enrolled, 13% Not completed, 9% GK Not enrolled, 28% GK Passed
- **2 levels below**: 28% Never enrolled, 15% Not re-enrolled, 21% Not completed, 11% GK Not enrolled, 6% GK Not passed, 18% GK Passed
- **3 levels below**: 31% Never enrolled, 26% Not re-enrolled, 21% Not completed, 7% GK Not enrolled, 3% GK Not passed, 12% GK Passed
Accelerate Remediation

- Too many opportunities to leave
- Improve diagnostic power of assessments
- Combine college level and developmental instruction (help “college ready” students as well)
- Compressed schedules
- Summer bridge programs
Strengthen the Pipeline to College

• Early warning
  ▫ College Now
  ▫ EAP in California

• Dual enrollment

• Access for adults--IBEST
Educational Access and SES Experience by 2000 for HS Class of 1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SES Quartile</th>
<th>No college</th>
<th>Two-year college</th>
<th>Four-year college</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clearer Guidance and Pathways

- Student success courses—Florida and California studies
- Simplified program structures
- Advising?
- Technological solutions
Discrete Programs versus Institutional Change

• Proliferation of small programs
• Many of them are not evaluated
• Have little relationship to a college’s strategic plan and overall goals
• Use scarce faculty resources
• Rarely “go to scale”
• Don’t lead to improvements in overall institutional performance
Strong Role for States

• State in which college is located is the strongest predictor of graduation rates
• Innovation can be promoted by state policy
• Ability of state to influence college depends on governance structure
• Integrated state data promotes strong role for state higher ed agency
For more information:

Please visit us on the web at http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu, where you can download presentations, reports, CCRC Briefs, and sign-up for news announcements.

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