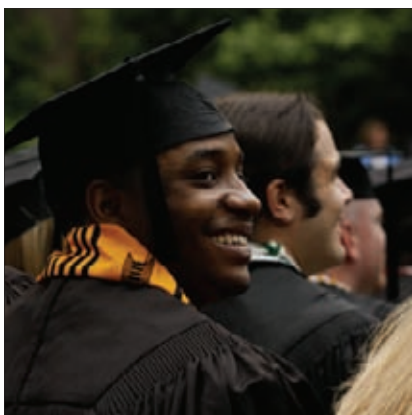


Diversity & Democracy

CIVIC LEARNING FOR SHARED FUTURES

VOL. 13, NO. 3 | FALL 2010



Rhodes College

FEATURED TOPIC

In the face of today's financial challenges, higher education institutions across the country are struggling to provide pathways to quality higher education and academic success, particularly for underserved students. This issue of *Diversity & Democracy* offers concrete suggestions for how higher education can improve **access and success** and strengthen learning outcomes despite economic barriers.

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

- 05 | Connecting the Dots between Learning and Resources
- 08 | How Higher Education Can Support Working Students
- 10 | The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color
- 13 | Working with Working-Class Students

Investing in Education and Equity: Our Nation's Best Future

■ MICHELLE ASHA COOPER, president of the Institute for Higher Education Policy

As momentum builds around the goal of increased college completion, pockets of American society still ask, "Does college matter?" To them, I respond unequivocally: "YES!"

Educational opportunity yields a broad array of benefits to both individuals and society. Reports like the College Board's *Education Pays* (Baum and Payea 2007) have consistently shown that going to college has far-reaching and quantifiable personal and national benefits, including higher salaries, improved health, increased volunteerism, and reduced reliance on welfare and other social support programs. In recent years, higher education advocates have attempted to better articulate these benefits and the related need for individuals and society to invest in higher education. National organizations such as the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good and the Association of American Colleges and Universities have made higher education's role in sustaining the public good a central theme of their ongoing campaigns.

Yet despite these efforts, access to and success within higher education remains unequal. Many students—particularly those who are black, Latino/a, first generation, and low income—face numerous challenges throughout their educational journeys that obstruct their paths to and through college. In order to meet current national goals for increased access and completion, higher education leaders must clear these pathways so all students can succeed.

Necessary Investments

Increasing college completion rates is a national priority and an economic necessity. President Obama has given marching orders, issuing a challenge to education leaders. He has said that in the twenty-first century,

every American will need to get more than a high school diploma. And dropping out of high school is no longer an option. It's not just quitting on yourself, it's quitting on your country—and this country needs and values the talents of every American. That is why we will provide the support necessary for [all students] to complete college and meet a new goal: by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. (2009)

The White House's commitment to making college access and completion a national priority is a huge opportunity for those of us in the higher education community. It calls us not only to invest in education, but also to invest in equity. Such investments will require the higher education community to ensure that substantial

Diversity & Democracy



Association
of American
Colleges and
Universities

Continued on page 3

CONTENTS

Investing in Student Success

- 01 | Investing in Education and Equity: Our Nation's Best Future
- 05 | Connecting the Dots between Learning and Resources
- 08 | How Higher Education Can Support Working Students
- 10 | The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color
- 13 | Working with Working-Class Students

Perspectives

- 15 | Layered Mentorship as Meaningful Leadership
- 20 | Reducing Internship Inequity

Campus Practice

- 16 | Resource-Friendly Reform in General Education
- 18 | From Service to Science in the Energy–Climate Era

Research Report

- 21 | How Grade Point Average Correlates to Various Personal Characteristics
- 22 | In Print
- 23 | Resources
- 23 | Opportunities



Published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009; tel 202.387.3760; fax 202.265.9532. *Diversity & Democracy* (formerly *Diversity Digest*) is published three times per year and is available at www.diversityweb.org/DiversityDemocracy.

Note: *The opinions expressed by individual authors in Diversity & Democracy are their own and are not necessarily those of the Diversity & Democracy editors or AAC&U.*

ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

Investing in Student Success: The Equity and Excellence Imperative

The economic troubles of California’s state higher education system have sent tremors across the country. California’s Master Plan was once considered a blueprint for educational equity. Now, the California system is a test case for the economic challenges facing colleges and universities nationwide. According to 2009 projections, the California State University system alone will need to cut enrollment by 40,000 in 2010-11 (Reed 2009), even as tuition grows by over 30 percent (Hebel 2010). The implications for access and success are alarming, to say the least—and the conditions that caused them are far from limited to California.

Faculty and administrators across the country are acutely aware of how budget reductions have affected their lives: furloughs, obliterated travel funds, reduced course offerings, cuts in departmental spending and even in departments themselves (*Chronicle of Higher Education* 2009). From an employee’s perspective, these changes are upsetting and consequential. But for America’s college students—who are themselves facing reduced budgets and increased tuition, trends that narrow their paths to economic stability and to democratic participation—they are even more problematic. With the looming possibility that higher education will be less able to serve its students, pleas to “do more with less” take on particular urgency.

The authors in this issue of *Diversity & Democracy* offer concrete suggestions for how higher education can improve access and success and strengthen learning outcomes despite mounting economic barriers. With a focus on underserved students, the authors challenge colleges and universities to rally their resources and strengthen their resolve to give students the support they need in these challenging times. Some offer suggestions specifically aimed at stretching thin budgets; others share program, policy, or pedagogical models that apply more generally to the challenge of bolstering student success. In all cases, they press higher education to solidify its commitment to equity despite economic constraints.

As Michelle Asha Cooper argues, resources directed toward that commitment should be seen not as expenditures, but as investments: in education, in equity, in “our nation’s best future.” In this moment of economic constraint, higher education must combine its various resources to collectively ensure a secure future for itself, its students, and the nation at large. Like the ground in California, the economy is bound to be occasionally unstable. But with foresight and commitment, we can build a foundation strong enough to sustain access and success, even in shaky economic times.

—Kathryn Peltier Campbell, editor

REFERENCES

CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION. 2009. Michigan State U. may cut at least 9 academic departments. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 31. chronicle.com/blogPost/Michigan-State-U-May-Cut-a/8666/.

HEBEL, S. 2010. State cuts are pushing public colleges into peril. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 14. chronicle.com/article/In-Many-States-Public-High/64620/.

REED, C. B. 2009. California values prisoners over students. *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 27. articles.sfgate.com/2009-07-27/opinion/17218827_1_higher-education-state-general-fund-support-budget-cuts.

Continued from page 1

resources—financial resources, human resources, and resources of talent, training, and mentoring, among others—are directed toward historically underrepresented students and the institutions that strive to educate them well. It will also require us to focus strong efforts on creating and sustaining innovation.

Investment in education and equity is the first and most essential step to improving college access and success for all students. If we are unable to make strong commitments in these two areas, our best efforts will fall short of their full potential. These investments are critical to securing our nation's best future. Nothing matters more to our country—not military defense, not health care, not even the economy. If our educational system is broken, all of these are broken, too.

Investment is Essential

The notion of investing in education and equity is a simple one, but the task is not. Many education advocates have been working at it for decades. Nevertheless, it is absolutely necessary that those of us in higher education continue to make these investments. In order to sustain favorable returns, we must reach out to new communities: rural and urban, racial and ethnic, low income and first generation. For some in the higher education field, this outreach will be new and perhaps even a little uncomfortable. But if we are going to transform the educational system, meet workforce demands, and ultimately improve the economy, we need to invest in both education and equity.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, by 2050, racial and ethnic minorities will compose 55 percent of the working-age population, with Latinos representing 30 percent, African Americans 12 percent, and Asian Americans 8 percent (n.d.). Research confirms that fewer than half of black and Hispanic students who

enroll in college graduate from four-year institutions within six years (Carey 2008; Kelley, Schneider, and Carey 2010). Thus the only way to reach college completion goals will be to make these emerging populations central to our efforts. Another important group for whom higher education is currently inaccessible and unaffordable is low-income young adults: eighteen- to twenty-six-year-olds living in poverty. The overwhelming majority of these students are African American, Latino, Native American, and female (Institute for Higher Education Policy 2010). These diverse individuals experience socioeconomic hardship in different ways.

In 2008, of the 15.5 million low-income young adults in the United

goals or collectively benefit from the anticipated economic boost that a more educated workforce will generate.

Despite the Recession

In spite of the data's clear case for investing in education and equity, some even within the higher education community believe that college completion goals are not attainable, and that the required investments are not feasible. They believe that the goals are too lofty, the communities in need too hard to reach. In conversation, these individuals tend to offer a litany of reasons for supporting the status quo. Their rationale often touches on the effects of the recession and the financial hardships it has placed on states and institutions.

In order to sustain favorable returns, we must reach out to new communities: rural and urban, racial and ethnic, low income and first generation.

States, nearly 47 percent were currently or previously enrolled in higher education. Given low-income young adults' substantial representation in the college-going population, attention to their status and experiences in higher education is particularly important. These students face greater academic and financial risks than their more well-off peers (Cunningham and Santiago 2008; The Pell Institute 2004), which can stymie their progress toward degrees (Engle and Tinto 2008). (See IHEP's examination of the experiences of low-income young adults in *Portraits: Profile of Low-Income Young Adults in Education*, available at www.ihep.org.) In spite of these challenges, investing in low-income students is an absolute necessity. Without including low-income young adults in higher education, we cannot possibly achieve our national college completion

Certainly, the recession has affected higher education, and it would be naïve not to acknowledge the fiscal constraints facing the higher education community. Some states have responded to the economic crisis by slashing higher education budgets. Some institutions have capped enrollments, cut courses and student services, increased tuition, and implemented a host of other measures all aimed at containing costs. Without adequate financial support, it is becoming more difficult for faculty to address the educational and developmental needs that many students bring to college. In addition, most institutional leaders must contend with costs associated with technology, facilities, and general infrastructure. The costs of running an institution and of educating students well are high indeed.

These and other costs are converging, threatening to narrow the promise of

equal opportunity in American higher education. But in spite of these challenges, we have the chance to change course and turn a potential crisis into an opportunity. To do so, the higher education community will have to get even more serious about its investment in education and equity. This will require self-evaluation on the part of higher education leaders, who will need to consider the extent and status of their institutions' current commitments.

Priceless Dividends

A few years ago, IHEP published a report on the nation's investment in education. We began with the question, does

college matter? We concluded that a college education makes a big difference. This is true for individual Americans, but it is especially true for the nation's shared economic, social, and cultural well-being. People with more education tend to have higher salaries, greater savings, more leisure time, better health, and longer life expectancy. Societies whose citizens are better educated benefit from the collective consequences flowing from these individual improvements. (See *The Investment Payoff* at www.ihep.org for more information.)

Over the coming decade, it will be increasingly vital for the higher education system to close enrollment and completion gaps and to educate a growing share of students from historically underrepresented communities. To ensure that all students have clear pathways to college and to completing their degrees, we educators may need to change some of our assumptions about students and their capacity for learning; we may need to change our modes of operating. We may need to rethink our priorities and develop new problem-solving strategies if higher education wants to fulfill its longstanding obligation of meeting the country's social and economic needs.


This issue of *Diversity & Democracy* outlines several practical approaches to facilitating the type of change needed to transform our institutions, meet labor and workforce demands, and enable more young people to contribute to the world's collective well-being. But to achieve these ends, we need courageous leaders, both in our states and in our institutions, to enact the strategies that this issue's authors and others in higher education have proposed. We need leaders filled with conviction who work hard in spite of the obstacles along the way; leaders who foster change, recognizing that maintaining the status quo won't improve our lives today and certainly won't secure our future tomorrow.

The leaders we need are already present within the higher education community, but their existence alone is not enough to achieve our goals. The higher education community needs them to invest, making substantial contributions of time, resources, and creativity. Investments in education and equity will increase student learning and graduation rates and in turn secure our nation's economic future. But more importantly, they will move us closer to obtaining a priceless dividend: a more equitable and just society. ☐

REFERENCES

- BAUM, S., and K. PAYEA.** 2007. *Education pays: The benefits of higher education for individuals and society*. New York: The College Board.
- CAREY, K.** 2008. *Graduation rate watch: Making minority student success a priority*. Washington, DC: Education Sector.
- CUNNINGHAM, A.F., and D. SANTIAGO.** 2008. *Student aversion to borrowing: Who borrows and who doesn't*. Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy and *Excelencia* in Education.
- ENGLER, J., and V. TINTO.** 2008. *Moving beyond access: College success for low-income, first-generation students*. Washington, DC: The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education.
- INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY.** 2010. *Portraits: Profile of low-income young adults in education*. Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy. [www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/m-r/\(Brief\)_A_Portrait_of_Low-Income_Young_Adults_in_Education.pdf](http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/m-r/(Brief)_A_Portrait_of_Low-Income_Young_Adults_in_Education.pdf).
- . 2005. *The investment payoff: A 50 state analysis of the public and private benefits of higher education*. Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy. www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/g-1/InvestmentPayoff.pdf.
- KELLEY, A.P., M. SCHNEIDER, and K. CAREY.** 2010. *Rising to the challenge: Hispanic college graduation rates as a national priority*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute.
- OBAMA, B.** 2009. Address by the president delivered to a joint session of Congress on February 24, 2009—PM 8. *Congressional record*, S2421. www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CREC-2009-02-24/pdf/CREC-2009-02-24-pt1-PgS2419.pdf
- THE PELL INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF OPPORTUNITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION.** 2004. *Raising the graduation rates of low-income college students*. Washington, DC: The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education.
- UNITED STATES CENSUS BUREAU.** n.d. *U.S. population projections*. www.census.gov/population/www/projections/index.html.


NETWORK FOR ACADEMIC RENEWAL



AAC&U Working Conference

Facing the Divides
Diversity, Learning, and Pathways to Inclusive Excellence

Houston, Texas
October 21–23, 2010



For more information or to register:
202.387.3760 • network@aacu.org
www.aacu.org

[INVESTING IN STUDENT SUCCESS]

Connecting the Dots between Learning and Resources

■ **JANE V. WELLMAN**, executive director of the Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity, and Accountability

For the better part of the last fifteen years, leaders in American higher education have been working to improve student success, focusing particularly on assessment of learning outcomes and getting more students to degrees. But progress in translating good intentions into improved educational practices is at risk of being erased by eroding fiscal support. In response to current financial pressures, leaders are asking how to allocate scarce resources for the greatest payoffs in student learning and degree attainment. This is a particularly critical issue for institutions serving at-risk students, as they work to meet low-income students' educational and financial needs with far fewer dollars than their wealthier counterparts.

To better understand what is known and what remains to be discovered about cost effectiveness and the differences money either does or does not make in getting students to degrees with acceptable levels of learning, I created an occasional paper titled "Connecting the Dots Between Learning and Resources" for the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. In the paper, I present a conceptual approach for analyzing the relation of spending to student success, followed by an examination of existing research on the topic. While the full paper is available online at www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/documents/Wellman.pdf, I will summarize some key points for *Diversity & Democracy* readers here.

A Conceptual Framework for Thinking about Cost-Effectiveness

Ideally, to look at cost-effectiveness, one would look at the role of funds in producing educational value added,

or the translation of inputs into outputs. Such a look would require better ways of evaluating learning than are currently available, as well as better ways to look at how funds are used within institutions. In the absence of ideal measures, a number of proxies can be created that measure different dimensions of spending in relation to types of outcomes:

Cost Variables

- Spending per student or total revenues from all resources
- Spending per student from unrestricted resources only
- Spending per student by functional area (e.g., for instruction, student services, financial aid)
- Spending per student for education and related expenses only (excluding sponsored research and public service and auxiliary enterprises)
- Trends over time in spending and by functional area

Outputs

- Credits earned
- Completion of twelve units or more
- First-year retention
- Degrees completed
- Certificates completed
- Transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution
- Job placement rates
- Pass rates on examinations such as the GRE or licensure examinations
- Lifetime earnings

Using this framework, one can imagine a number of ways to connect topics on the cost side of

the matrix to the outputs side, to look at spending in relation to different measures of performance.

Spending on Academic and Student Services

A few studies have focused on spending and performance as measured by student degree attainment and effective teaching practices. For example, researchers Patrick Kelly and Dennis Jones of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) looked at data for public institutions to see whether spending makes a difference in access to higher education, in state-level degree productivity, or in research funding (2005). Recognizing that these measures say nothing about quality, the researchers found no consistent relationship between levels of spending and measures of performance. Although their major finding was that funding levels overall do not explain differences in performance, Kelly and Jones found that spending on student support services does correlate with higher levels of degree attainment. Their research suggests that the way resources are used may matter as much as or more than the absolute level of funds available.

In another study, NCHEMS researcher Peter Ewell (2003) compared spending per student for instruction and related expenses at two sets of institutions: one set identified by the National Survey of Student Engagement as outperforming its peers in student engagement and retention, and a second set of peer institutions. Ewell found that the more effective institutions did not spend more per student than their peers, but they did spend differently, putting proportionately more money into academic and student support. A follow-up study from Iowa State University found the same thing: total spending levels evidently mattered less to effective educational practices than did the distribution of the resources within the institution (Gansemer-Topf et al. 2004).

Another recent study provides additional support for the theory that student services expenses make a difference in low-income students' retention and degree completion. Using panel data developed by the Delta Cost Project, Cornell Higher Education Research Institute researchers Webber and Ehrenberg (2009) examined how spending in instruction, student services, and other areas influences the graduation and first-year persistence of undergraduate students. The stron-

interaction with university staff and faculty and cultivate the student's identity as a member of the campus community.

A second consistent finding in the research literature relates to student financial aid. Institutions have rapidly increased their resources for student aid, through both "tuition discounts" and grants. Research shows that the majority of this has gone to "merit" aid, which is distributed primarily on the basis of academic merit rather than financial need (College Board 2008). Since merit aid

found that increases in nontenured and part-time faculty reduced both rates. Using data from Ohio public institutions, Bettinger and Long (2004) also looked at how adjunct faculty affect student interest and course performance. This study found different effects depending on discipline, with an overall slight loss of student interest in subjects for courses taken from graduate students and adjuncts compared to full-time faculty, and with a slight positive effect from use of adjunct professors among disciplines with an occupational or vocational focus.

Spending on student support services does correlate with higher levels of degree attainment.

gest influence they found was from student service expenditures, with the highest marginal effects for students in institutions with low admissions selectivity and high proportions of Pell grant recipients. Simulations of the effect of reallocation from instruction to student services showed enhanced persistence and graduation rates.

Spending on Student Aid

Some consistent themes relevant to the role of student aid in increasing access and student success appear in the research. One finding is that achievement gaps between low-income students and other students are far wider in terms of college completion than in terms of various measures at the point of initial college entry (Kane 2004; McPherson, Schapiro, and Winston 1993; Mortenson 1998; Pell Institute 2004). Most student financial aid programs, however, make access and not degree attainment their primary goal. Work-study programs are an exception, and the research shows that these programs have had some success in increasing degree persistence among low-income students. In addition to providing financial help, these work opportunities increase student

goes to students who would go to college without it, institutions would better increase college access and persistence by spending their limited dollars in grant aid, in work-study programs, or on programs to enhance student success.

Spending on Faculty and Teaching

As institutions work to contain costs, the use of part-time and contingent faculty has increased precipitously. Some researchers have looked at the relationship between the use of part-time and contingent faculty and measures of student learning. Umbach (2007) surveyed faculty using data from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement to evaluate the relationship between faculty appointment status and institutional engagement with effective teaching practices. He found that contingent faculty showed less use of active and collaborative teaching techniques, less likelihood of challenging students academically, less likelihood of spending time preparing for class, and less likelihood of interacting with students.

Examining first-to-second-year persistence and graduation rates and use of part-time or nontenured full-time instructors, Ehrenberg and Zhang (2005)

Learning Productivity

A promising area of work has been in what Bruce Johnstone calls "learning productivity"—ways to increase learning with either less time or less costly inputs (1995). A good example comes from Carol Twigg (1999) and her colleagues at the National Center for Academic Transformation, who assessed learning and costs for courses delivered through a traditional lecture/discussion session format and compared them to those of courses delivered using distance-learning technology. The primary cost difference came from less time spent in course and materials preparation and from labor savings by substituting low-cost "coaches" for faculty and teaching assistants. The researchers found superior results at reduced costs for the technology-enhanced courses.

The revenue meltdown of 2008 and 2009 has meant that "learning productivity" efforts are expanding rapidly through the efforts of several state systems and other college leaders. In the University of Maryland system, a comprehensive initiative to tackle inefficiency and to increase effectiveness included limitations on reimbursements for credits earned above the 120 units required for the degree, and a requirement that all students earn at least one semester's worth of credits through some form of off-campus instruction: credit by examination, study abroad, or distance-based courses.

Reconnecting the Threads

Although more research is sorely needed, threads of an emerging consensus begin to appear in what is known and what might reasonably be surmised from the research:

- **Intentionality matters as much as, or more than, money alone.** Institutions whose leaders put resources behind instruction and student services show greater rates of persistence and graduation per dollar spent. If the national priority is to increase academic attainment, more can and should be done to focus on student learning and degree attainment as the first priority for resource use.
- **Focusing resources on instruction and student services helps to increase learning, retention, and degree attainment.** Investments in faculty resources make a difference in student learning. Student services investments are especially important for increasing retention at institutions serving large proportions of at-risk students. Yet the pattern among public institutions across the country has been to disproportionately reduce funding in instruction and student services. Deliberate efforts must be made to protect funding for these resources.
- **Student financial aid programs need to be restructured to support the goal of student degree attainment as well as access.** Student aid makes the biggest difference in access for low-income students, but less of a difference in student success. Grant aid allowing students to attend college full time and increased funding for on-campus work programs can help improve retention and graduation.
- **Excess credits and student attrition cost money and do not help students get to the finish line.** Curriculum realignment, aggressive academic counseling, and attention to course scheduling can all help increase student success at reduced cost, both to the

student and to the institution. Redesigning curricula to ensure coherence and to focus on learning results can be cost-effective if done with an eye on spending as well as on student success, and if accompanied by attention to student and academic support services aligned with the goal of increased learning success.

Our country is faced with the daunting challenge of increasing educational attainment despite negative funding patterns that threaten access and quality. We cannot meet these attainment goals unless we are successful in closing achievement gaps all across the educational pipeline. We need an investment strategy to do this, one that supports our educational and attainment goals. While the findings from this research are still quite tentative, they can help point the way to spending decisions that will make a difference in increasing success for all students. ☐

This article has been adapted with permission from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

REFERENCES

- BETTINGER, E.,** and **B. T. LONG.** 2004. *Do college instructors matter? The effect of adjuncts and graduate assistants on students' interest and success.* NBER Working Paper No. 10370. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- COLLEGE BOARD.** 2008. *Trends in student aid.* New York: College Board. professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/trends-in-student-aid-2008.pdf.
- EHRENBERG, R. G.,** and **L. ZHANG.** 2005. Do tenured and tenure-track faculty matter? *Journal of Human Resources* 40 (3): 647-59.
- EWELL, P.** 2003. *Do DEEP institutions spend more or differently than their peers?* Boulder, CO: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.
- GANSEMER-TOPF, A., K. SAUNDERS, J. SHUH,** and **M. SHELLEY.** 2004. *A study of resource expenditures and allocation at DEEP colleges: Is spending related to student engagement?* Ames, IA: Iowa State University, Educational
- Leadership and Policy Studies. nsse.iub.edu/pdf/DEEP_Expenditures_Schuh.pdf.
- JOHNSTONE, B.** 1995. *The imperative of productivity in higher education.* Learning Productivity Network. gse.buffalo.edu/org/LPN/lpn.htm.
- KANE, T. J.** 2004. College going and inequality. *Social inequality*, ed. K. M. Neckerman, 319-54. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- KELLY, P. J.,** and **D. JONES.** 2005. *A new look at the institutional component of higher education finance: A guide for evaluating performance relative to financial resources.* Boulder, CO: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. www.nchems.org/pubs/docs/Policy_Guide_Jan2007.pdf.
- MCPHERSON, M., M. O. SCHAPIRO,** and **G. WINSTON,** eds. 1993. *Paying the piper: Productivity, incentives, and financing in U.S. higher education.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- MORTENSON, T.** 1998. Students from low-income families and higher educational opportunity. *Postsecondary Education Opportunity* 78, 1-2.
- PELL INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF OPPORTUNITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION.** 2004. *Indicators of opportunity in higher education.* Fall 2004 status report. Washington, DC: Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education. www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1b/c4/be.pdf.
- TWIGG, C. A.** 1999. *Improving learning and reducing costs: Redesigning large-enrollment classes.* Troy, NY: National Center for Academic Transformation. www.thencat.org/Monographs/ImpLearn.html.
- UMBACH, P. D.** 2007. How effective are they? Exploring the impact of contingent faculty on undergraduate education. *The Review of Higher Education* 30 (2): 91-123.
- WEBBER, D. A.,** and **R. G. EHRENBERG.** 2009. *Do expenditures other than instructional expenditures affect graduation and persistence rates in American higher education?* Ithaca, NY: Cornell Higher Education Research Institute. www.ilr.cornell.edu/cheri/upload/cheri_wpl21.pdf.



King's College

[INVESTING IN STUDENT SUCCESS]

How Higher Education Can Support Working Students

■ **JON ROCHKIND**, director of research, and **JEAN JOHNSON**, executive vice president, both of Public Agenda

According to the U.S. Department of Education, more than six in ten young people who begin higher education at two-year schools fail to graduate within six years (U.S. Department of Education 2008). The same is true for about four in ten students who set out in four-year institutions of higher education (U.S. Department of Education 2003). Why do so many American students leave college without a degree? Experts and policymakers cite many culprits, from rising tuition costs to poor academic preparation. And many offer promising suggestions for reform, from providing more students with

then compared the experiences of those who successfully completed their programs with those who didn't make it. Although some conceded that they were poorly prepared for college and some said tuition cost was the chief problem, most offered a somewhat different explanation: it was not college itself that represented the greatest hurdle. It was the students' responsibilities and activities outside of class.

Balancing the Demands of Work and School

The number one reason students said they left school is that they had to

The number one reason students said they left school is that they had to work while enrolled.

financial support to revamping higher education policies and programs to encourage more young people to complete a degree or certificate. But what do students themselves have to say—particularly those who began college, but did not complete their degrees? What prompted them to leave, and what would they need to return?

To answer these questions, Public Agenda recently interviewed 614 young adults between the ages of twenty-two and thirty who had started some form of higher education—be it at a four-year undergraduate institution, a two-year community college, or in a vocational or technical program (Johnson and Rochkind 2009). We

work while enrolled. Despite their best efforts, the stress of trying both to work and to study eventually took its toll. More than half of those who left higher education before completing a degree or a certificate said that the “need to work and make money” while attending classes was the primary reason they left. Balancing work and school was an even bigger barrier than finding money for tuition. Those who dropped out were almost twice as likely to cite difficulty juggling work and school, rather than paying their tuition bills, as their primary problem. And when asked to think back to their first year of school, more than six in ten said that they

“had to work as well, and it was too stressful trying to do both.”

More than a third of those who left school said that even if they had a grant that fully covered tuition and books, it would be hard to return to college. A majority cited “working full time” and “family commitments” as the major reasons. In focus groups, young people often talked about the difficulties of balancing school and work. One woman who had recently returned to school said, “It's very hard because I go to school three nights a week. I work from 8 to 5...I don't get home until 9:30 to 10 at night....my dedication to my classes could also be better if I didn't work as much.” Similarly, a young man who hoped to return to school described his fears that he might never get a credential: “The reason why I'm set back is because I got a wife, kids. My wife's doing her thing [in college]. Once she's done with that then she can stay at home and take the side job....Then I can do my thing at school, and then once I'm done we'll have the jobs.”

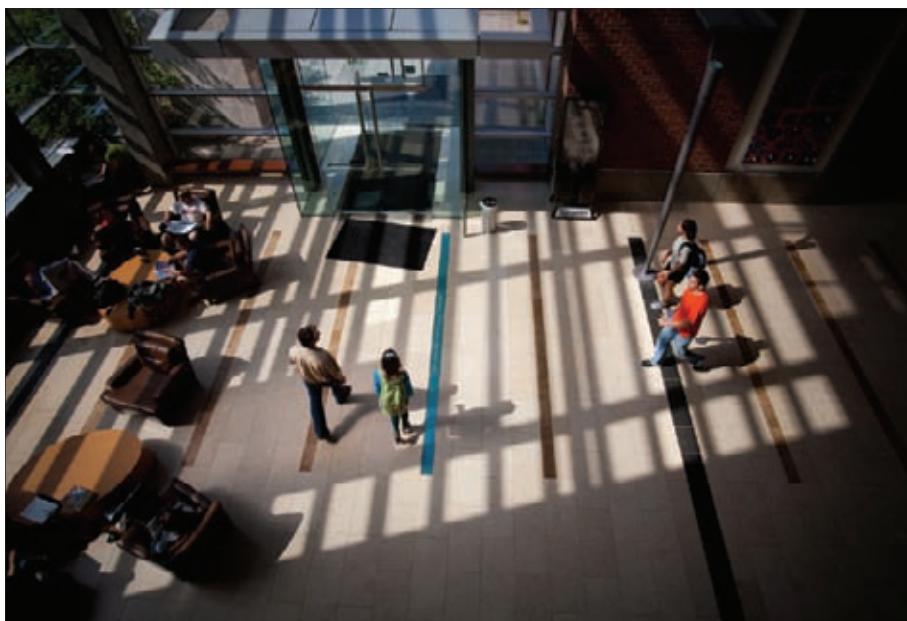
Caught Between Reality and Ambition

For most students we interviewed, not working is not a realistic option. Young adults who did not finish college were more likely than those who finished to be paying for school out of their own pockets. Nearly six in ten said that they had to pay for college costs themselves, rather than receiving help from their families. In contrast, more than six in ten of those who graduated said their families had helped them cover the cost of school. In addition, about seven in ten of those who left said they did not have any scholarships or financial aid. And about three in ten reported that they have college loans—money that has to be repaid even though they have not completed college.

Nearly all young Americans understand that having a college degree is a financial asset in today's economy. In fact, nearly 90 percent of young people who left college without a degree said they have considered going back to school, with nearly two-thirds saying they have thought about it "a lot." However, as a group, young people who drop out are slightly more likely to show doubt about the value of higher education. They are less likely than those who complete school to strongly agree that their parents always instilled in them the importance of college, less likely to strongly agree that people with degrees make more money, and less likely to say they would still go to college even if they knew they could get a good job without a degree. Thus while economic factors clearly predominate as the reason most young people drop out, subtle differences in attitude may be a factor, especially for young people paying their own way and experiencing the stress of working and attending classes at the same time. For these young people, even a small amount of uncertainty about whether the struggle is worth it may be a tipping point.

What Can Be Done?

Policy makers and educators are debating and testing scores of reform proposals. Some focus on government policy, some on K–12 preparation, and some on higher education itself. When we asked young adults for their feedback on a list of twelve proposals that would help "someone like them" get a college degree, more than three out of four of those who did not complete a degree said that five of the proposals would help "a lot." Two of their favorite ideas involved reducing the cost of college: cutting costs by 25 percent and increasing the number of government loans. The other three



Oregon State University

proposals they favored could greatly improve students' chances of graduating if implemented by institutions:


Allow part-time students to qualify for financial aid. Many students say that even with tuition and books paid in full, they still would need a job and might only be able to attend school part time.

Offer more courses in the evenings, on weekends, or in the summer. Institutions should examine what they can provide beyond the traditional schedule for students who are juggling school, work, and family commitments.

Provide child care for students who need it. In one focus group, a young woman who left school said, "The one [school] I was at, they have a huge waiting list for the day care. It was just really difficult to get in...." In another group, when the moderator suggested the possibility of having child care on campus, one woman asked incredulously, "Would a college ever do that?"

The 40 percent of students who do not finish a four-year college program

and the more than 60 percent who do not finish community college have the desire and the wherewithal to pursue higher education, but too many encounter significant obstacles that stand in their way. Is the higher education community concerned and resourceful enough to give them a better chance? And in the end, can we afford not to?

For more information, visit www.publicagenda.org/theirwholivesaheadofthem. 

REFERENCES

- JOHNSON, J., and J. ROCHKIND. 2009. *With their whole lives ahead of them*. With A. N. Ott and S. DuPont. New York: Public Agenda.
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS. 2003. *Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study 1996/01*. nces.ed.gov/surveys/bps.
- . 2008. Table 329: Percentage distribution of enrollment and completion status of first-time postsecondary students starting during the 1995–96 academic year, by type of institution and other student characteristics: 2001. *Digest of education statistics, 2008*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

[INVESTING IN STUDENT SUCCESS]

The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color

■ RONALD WILLIAMS, vice president, and ADRIANA FLORES-RAGADE, director of diversity initiatives, both of the College Board

If the United States is to thrive as a country, educators and communities must work together to develop the full potential of America's citizens. Despite the fact that the United States is losing ground in international comparisons of postsecondary attainment, particularly among the younger segment of the population and with respect to communities of color (College Board 2010), recent enrollment data provide hope. According to the Pew Research Center, fall 2008 had the greatest

the outlook for communities of color will be essential to securing the future of the United States. The fastest-growing segments of the U.S. population are emerging communities of color—the same groups that currently have the lowest levels of educational attainment. The U.S. Census projects that racial and ethnic minorities will represent more than half of all children in the United States by 2023, and that the U.S. population will be 54 percent minority by 2050 (College Board 2010). Youth from these

Minority men have vast untapped potential that could help support the United States' social and economic development—but only if higher education institutions commit to connecting with and retaining these men.

growth in first-time postsecondary enrollment in four decades. Students of color led the enrollment boom, with a 15 percent increase for Hispanics, followed by increases of 8 percent for African Americans, 6 percent for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and 2 percent for Native Americans (Fry 2010). These statistics are promising, but with minority males lagging behind their female peers in college completion rates (see fig. 1), they are not enough to close the gaps (College Board 2010). Minority men have vast untapped potential that could help support the United States' social and economic development—but only if higher education institutions commit to connecting with and retaining these men.

Far-reaching policies and action can make a difference. In fact, improving

communities need full preparation for and access to higher education. It would be both immoral and impractical to ignore the disparities facing these young people, as a brighter future for them means a brighter future for all.

Conversations about the Educational Crisis

In the 2007 edition of its annual publication *The State of Black America*, the National Urban League investigated challenges and highlighted critical issues facing African American men. The publication inspired the College Board to prioritize increasing the visibility of contemporary educational issues facing not only African American men, but all young men of color. To this end, in 2008 the College Board organized a series of conversations called Dialogue

Days. The Dialogue Days convened researchers, activists, and practitioners to discuss concerns about challenges facing young men from four groups: African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The College Board's recent report *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color* draws from these conversations to call attention to current challenges and provide a hopeful perspective on how the nation might make real progress in addressing the circumstances that underlie these disparities.

The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color draws from existing research to amplify the voices of those from the affected communities. The report found that “across the board, young men were not persisting in school or achieving at the same level as young women” (College Board 2010). While it is clearly important for young women to continue achieving at high levels, men's absence on campus and their resulting lack of preparation for the workforce create new dilemmas. The report therefore highlights the fact that many men, especially men of color, are being left behind, and a collaborative effort is needed to improve their condition.

Communities at Risk

Men in each of the four groups face problematic conditions. Although these conditions are not monolithic, research on African American men has often served as a springboard for discussions about other “at risk” communities. Until recently, only limited information on Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American men has been available. Scholarly interest is rapidly growing, and with appropriate funding, new research will yield specific strategies to strengthen each community. *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color* represents one attempt to understand the different circumstances that affect each group's progress.

While recognizing that great variation exists within as well as between groups, participants in each Dialogue Days cohort underscored some of the circumstances affecting each group. For example, participants in the African American Dialogue Day highlighted the importance of mentorship for African American males and expressed frustration that young African American men's concerns about image may prevent them from actively seeking mentorship. In the Native American Dialogue Day, participants suggested that circumstances in remote rural schools might negatively affect Native American males (College Board 2010). Rural communities often suffer from a lack of access to working computers, libraries, and transportation services. Native American students in particular are often isolated and must travel long distances to participate in information sessions, overnight programs, entrance exam testing, and other events hosted by urban institutions.

In both the Hispanic and Asian American and Pacific Islander dialogue groups, participants pointed out that students face challenges related to limited English proficiency. Language barriers affect student performance, since students who are not entirely fluent in English are often unable to fully engage in activities that place them on the path to higher education. The language barrier is one obstacle that students who persevere tend to conquer.

Students in the Asian American community also face unique barriers related to the stereotype of the "model minority." As a whole, the Asian American community is quite successful, but reality is much more complex than the myth of the "model minority" suggests. Within the Asian American community, men from Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands have performance profiles similar to those of less successful minority groups. More research is needed to identify strategies to help Hmong,

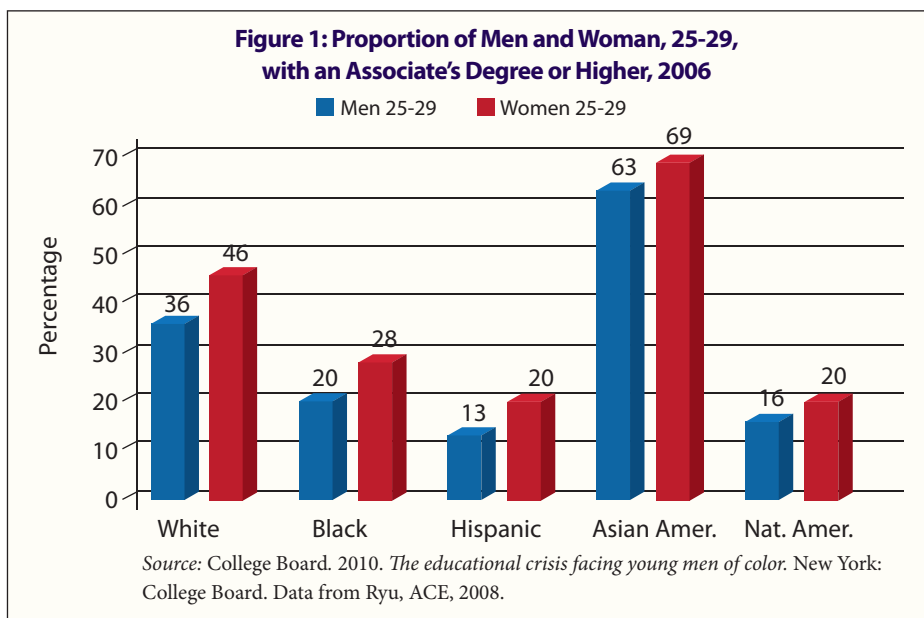
Vietnamese, Cambodian, Samoan, and other underserved communities that fall under the Asian umbrella. Additional resources should be focused on these lowest-performing subgroups.

Among the many challenges facing different communities, a few in particular stand out as affecting young men across groups. For example, the overrepresentation of minority men among those held back in or suspended from school is a significant component in young men's lack of academic success (Fenning and Rose 2007). These two factors affect school readiness and contribute to the often-cited "pipeline to prison" for African American boys in particular (Rashid 2009). While African American men compose about 7 percent of the overall U.S. population, they constitute over 40 percent of the prison population. Similarly, Hispanic men compose about 8 percent of the U.S. population but make up 20 percent of the prison population (U.S. Census Bureau 2010; Bureau of Justice Statistics 2009). As the vast majority of inmates are poorly educated, it stands to reason that education could be one tool to reverse this trend. The United States needs to build more schools instead of more prisons.

Another important factor is the "overemphasis on special education as a solution for boys acting out" (College Board 2010). Instead of addressing behavioral issues, schools are inclined to place a disproportionate number of male students of color in special education programs (Davis and Polite 1994). This pattern is evident early in students' educational experiences: sixteen percent of males receive special education in at least one grade, compared with only 8 percent of females in primary grades K through 3 (National Center for Education Statistics 2007). Poverty, lack of parental involvement, and poor study habits are other factors contributing to lower academic achievement for minority men.

Models of Success

The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color highlights the importance of collaboration by various stakeholders: foundations, government agencies, K-12 and higher education institutions, and community-based organizations. Working together, these entities can advocate for policies that support the success of young men of color and secure resources to design and implement promising models. The report confirms the value of services like mentoring,



partnerships, male role modeling, and (when carefully implemented) single-gender schooling (College Board 2010).

Mentoring is central to keeping young men engaged and involved, and several examples provide guidance in this area. At Sweetwater Union High School in San Diego, educators have created a template for African American student–parent conferences that allow community leaders to mentor and empower students, engaging a diverse array of stakeholders in students’ success (Del Rio 2010). Peer mentorship can also be effective: at Northern Arizona University, the Native American Peer Mentorship program has improved retention by focusing on the unique needs of Native American students (Doctor 2010). Mentoring programs like Call Me MISTER (www.clemson.edu/hehd/departments/education/research-service/callmemister) and the Harlem Children’s Zone (www.hcz.org) have also provided important comprehensive support services.

Partnerships between schools and communities are indispensable. For example, Lufkin High School in East Texas has developed a program to help male Hispanic students prepare for Advanced Placement courses. In addition, the school supports young Hispanic men as they prepare for college by building students’ academic skills and encouraging them to consider college as a viable option. These programs allow families to become partners in helping young Hispanic men enroll and succeed in higher education—for example, by engaging parents and students in financial planning (Jackson and Stewart 2010). The collaborative approach provides incentive for the young men to become academically prepared and familiarizes participants with what can be an overwhelming college admission process.

Single-gender secondary institutions like Urban Prep (www.urbanprep.org) and leadership development programs like Kenwood Academy Brotherhood

(www.kenwoodbrotherhood.org) serve the needs of minority men by providing role models, a support system, and a curriculum to help students achieve academically and move on to higher education. Successful college-level intervention programs that use role modeling as a strategy include the Minority Male Initiatives at Maricopa Community College and Houston Community College (Maricopa Community College 2010; Houston Community College 2010).


Moving Beyond Research

Major challenges and opportunities exist in the call to create innovative supports that improve young men’s educational performance. America’s youth are experiencing intense pressure to succeed, but they are not receiving the academic and social supports they need to thrive. The education system must give young people multiple opportunities to fulfill their potential in college, work, and life. Early and sustained engagement in a continuum of meaningful educational opportunities helps instill belief in the value of education, work, and lifelong learning. Access to these opportunities is essential to the ultimate success of youth who would otherwise be in danger of permanent disfranchisement.

With a genuine and sustained public and political will for change, the nation can create a campaign that supports world-class educational experiences for millions of young men of color. Only with dedication and long-term commitment can educators and policy makers begin to dismantle the barriers that prevent millions of men from contributing to the country’s economic and social good and from achieving their own personal and professional goals and aspirations.

Dialogue Days participants eloquently and powerfully expressed the challenges facing young men of color. Yet the conversations’ tones were hopeful. If this hopefulness is the preeminent

message readers take from the report, it will have served its purpose. For if the United States is to achieve President Obama’s goal of producing eight million additional college graduates by 2020, educators must move forward with clear purpose and with all due speed.

To download *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color*, visit www.collegeboard.com. 

REFERENCES

- BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS.** 2009. Prison inmates at midyear 2008: Statistical tables. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- COLLEGE BOARD.** 2010. *The educational crisis facing young men of color*. New York: College Board.
- DAVIS, J. E., and V. C. POLITE,** eds. 1994. Pedagogical and contextual issues affecting African American males in school and society. *Journal of Negro Education* 63.
- DEL RIO, R.** 2010. African American student–parent conferences. Model presented at the College Board’s annual A Dream Deferred conference, Atlanta.
- DOCTOR, S.** 2010. Native American peer mentorship. Model presented at the College Board’s annual Native American Student Advocacy Institute, Albuquerque, NM.
- FENNING, P., and J. ROSE.** 2007. Overrepresentation of African American students in exclusionary discipline: The role of school policy. *Urban Education* 42 (6): 536–59.
- FRY, R.** 2010. Minorities and the recession-era college enrollment boom. Washington, DC: The Pew Research Center.
- HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE.** 2010. www.hccs.edu.
- JACKSON, A., and A. STEWART.** 2010. Identifying gifted Hispanic male students and preparing them for college success. Model presented at the College Board’s annual Prepare conference, San Diego, CA.
- MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES.** 2010. Minority male initiative. www.maricopa.edu/studentaffairs/minoritymales.
- NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS.** 2007. *Timing and duration of student participation in special education in the primary grades*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- RASHID, H. M.** 2009. From brilliant baby to child placed at risk: The perilous path of African American boys in early childhood Education. *Journal of Negro Education* 78 (3): 347–58.
- U. S. CENSUS BUREAU.** 2010. Table 3: Annual estimates of the resident population by sex, race, and Hispanic origin for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2009-srh.html.

[INVESTING IN STUDENT SUCCESS]

Working with Working-Class Students

■ **MIKE ROSE**, professor of social research methodology in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, University of California-Los Angeles and author of *Why School?: Reclaiming Education for All of Us*

I've been spending a lot of time lately conducting research in an urban community college, and I'm struck by how readily memories and feelings from my own freshman year come to mind. Like many of the students I'm observing, I was the first in my family to attend college. And as is the case for the students I meet, my first year was a mixture of hope and anxiety, moments of success and moments of being at a loss.

All new college students experience a range of emotions in this

well-resourced K–12 schools. Through school, possibly through enrichment programs, and perhaps through the social capital of extended family and friends, they were well prepared, cognitively and socially, for college. In this article, I focus on those who are having a harder time with the transition.

Sources of Conflict

If a working-class student does feel out of place, the sense of discomfort might well involve more than social and

What I and many others find so fulfilling about teaching working-class students is that by making the hidden visible, by putting in a few extra minutes to strengthen a referral, by just talking straight, you can make a difference in someone's life.

unfamiliar place, but chances are that children of working-class families are less familiar than their middle- and upper-class peers with a college's instructional practices and modes of interaction. They are often more prone to wondering if they belong.

I certainly don't want to claim that all students from working-class families experience higher education in the same way. As much variability exists within social class as in any other social category. And though socioeconomic status and educational inequality are closely related, some working-class undergraduate students attended

interactional factors. Because of gaps in previous education, there might be fairly basic material that students don't know and skills they don't have. That was certainly the case for me. My knowledge of mathematics or formal analytics was so spare that I had to drop introductory economics after a few weeks of fearful incomprehension.

Less dramatic but equally difficult to surmount are the mismatches between strategies students used to good effect in high school and the demands facing them in college. When I was running the Equal Opportunity Program's Tutorial Center at UCLA,

I would regularly encounter students from courses like general chemistry who would labor night after night, highlighter in hand, memorizing facts and formulas—and would then fail a test. The test required students to think through a problem and apply what they had learned to solving it. Demonstrating what they had memorized was suddenly not working.

Related to this mismatch issue is the issue of “doing school”—that is, appropriating the routines and practices of schoolwork but not using them to their most effective end. I saw an example of this the other day at the community college I was visiting. A student in the fashion program pointed to her notebook with pride and surprise and told me that she recently realized that her notes were a resource, that she could return to them and consult them as she struggled with an assignment. Before this insight, notes were something she took in school and used to study for a test, and that was that. They were not a tool or a resource to aid thinking and problem solving.

Some working-class students can be reluctant to ask questions, fearful of calling attention to themselves and appearing stupid. Again, these worries are not held exclusively by less-affluent students, but they can be more acute for those who already feel out of place. We teachers are fond of saying things like “there is no such thing as a stupid question.” But let's face it: there are ways to phrase a question that sound smart and mask how little one knows. This is a powerful defensive skill that calls for rhetorical savvy and a sense of academic assurance, the kinds of things that come with a privileged education.

A related issue is a reluctance to seek help. This reluctance can be rooted in pride and notions of self-reliance. It can stem from shyness or embarrassment. But something else can be at play: an unfamiliarity or lack

of comfort with help-seeking behavior within institutions. Many middle-class kids are socialized from day one in seeking out resources and engaging members of institutions to help them attain their goals. This seems so much like second nature to most academics that we forget that it is a culturally influenced, learned behavior.

All of the above—the out-of-place feelings, the cognitive-behavioral disjointedness—are complicated by a larger conflict, one central to American cultural history: the tension between book learning and schooling versus practical experience and working in the world. “It took a guy with a college degree to screw this up,” a cousin of mine is fond of saying, “and a guy with a high school degree to fix it.” Some working-class students struggle with this tension or feel it at home. It’s a complex issue. Many working-class families see education as a pathway to economic opportunity, and they bust their backs to send their kids to college. Yet they might also wonder exactly what their kids are learning and worry that advanced education will make their children grow distant, and, at worst, regard their parents’ lives with disdain. All these dynamics affect a young person’s experience in school, and might well emerge in class or during office hours.

Interactions of Consequence

The good news is that these tensions and reluctances are open to intervention. The teacher in the fashion program I mentioned above intersperses her lectures and demonstrations with specific tips on everything from how to keep track of appointments to how to use the textbook. Instructors can schedule students into office hours, make referrals to tutoring centers, and call or e-mail the centers ahead of time to smooth out the process. On several occasions, I’ve walked a



Grand Valley State University (Photo by Andrew Terzes)

student in distress to the counseling center. Some problems require substantial interventions (it would have taken a lot of tutoring to get me through that economics course). But some are more easily remedied, like the fashion teacher making tricks of the scholastic trade explicit.

What I and many others find so fulfilling about teaching working-class students is that by making the hidden visible, by putting in a few extra minutes to strengthen a referral, by just talking straight, you can make a difference in someone’s life. There were about a half-dozen people who made my journey out of high school and through college possible. I’m not exaggerating when I say I couldn’t have done it without them.

And there’s something else, something that doesn’t get articulated nearly enough. Teaching people whose backgrounds don’t fit the mold can be a deeply rewarding intellectual experience. I was tutoring a student who was reading excerpts from Plato’s

Republic for a political science class. The student was mystified by the passage on the cave. I talked through the passage paragraph by paragraph, situating Plato historically and offering my prepackaged definition of idealism. It didn’t work. Frustrated, the young man blurted out two or three questions: How can anyone believe we’re like shadows? Why did Plato use fire and a cave to try to convince us of this?

These basic questions made Plato strange to me in a way I hadn’t experienced since I was an undergraduate. Frankly, I felt uncomfortable. And then, probably because I didn’t know what else to do, I repeated the student’s questions, asking them of both of us. That questioning set us off on a more thoughtful consideration of this central Western text.

Moments like these get us to return to basics, first principles, and long-held perspectives. The intellectual unsettling that happens, the fresh take on things, is what brought us to this work in the first place. ☐

[PERSPECTIVE]

Layered Mentorship as Meaningful Leadership

■ **DERRON WALLACE**, Posse Foundation alumnus and Marshall scholar studying educational policy and research at the University of Cambridge, England

Nearly a decade ago, I found a formula for meaningful leadership. As a ninth grader living in Jamaica, I learned that even with limited resources, a concerned, close-knit group could provide the functional and fluid mentorship I needed to thrive.

Thanks to my family, I experienced this form of leadership long before I understood it. My mother worked

I found navigating the multiple cultures, relationships, and languages particularly challenging. I knew that if I wanted to excel at the college level without my family nearby, I could benefit from a posse of sorts.

I found just the program I needed. The collective encouragement of my high school principal and teachers helped me win a full-tuition scholarship

met with me on a biweekly basis to assess my personal and intellectual growth. I took classes with other Posse faculty mentors, and they consistently held me to high standards. Finally, I benefited from numerous visits and phone calls from Posse staff, who were interested in my personal and professional development. Together, Posse and Wheaton provided careful and consistent mentorship that afforded me an empowering educational experience.

These rich, interconnected relationships remained valuable during my years of international service after graduation. As I expanded my involvement in projects around the world, I realized that it was important to build a new “posse network” for the professional sphere of my life. To this end, I not only sought out colleagues who were interested in my development, but worked passionately to mentor others as well. Mentorship was a much-needed resource when I taught schoolchildren in rural Thailand and when I worked with youth in South London to improve community safety. My previous mentorship experiences aided me in providing meaningful leadership in foreign territories.

At every phase of my academic and professional development, nurturing networks, or “posses,” have been integral to my advancement. This model of layered mentorship—with its multiple, linked relationships—is powerful infrastructure for successful educational and professional trajectories. I am often reminded that leaders and students who succeed are frequently hoisted by a team of supporters. I pay my debt of gratitude to my posses (personal, academic, and professional) by extending the circle of support to another generation of students. The potential for meaningful leadership would be immense if educators throughout higher education could do the same. 📍

At every phase of my academic and professional development, nurturing networks, or “posses,” have been integral to my advancement.

late nights to ensure that I had the books I needed for school while reminding me of the power a bright future can yield. My father frequently challenged me to study harder and washed my school uniforms for me so I would have time to do so. My siblings travelled with me to school and double-checked my assignments, even if they didn’t always understand them. Although I did not realize it at the time, my family provided a series of sound, overlapping relationships that positioned me for high achievement. With their layered mentorship, my success was never a casual consequence; it was the primary goal.

After we immigrated to the United States at the close of my ninth-grade year, I started to crave more support than my family alone could provide. Attending high school in the Bronx,

to Wheaton College sponsored by the Posse Foundation—one of the nation’s most renowned college-access schemes. Posse selects students from urban areas based on academic and leadership excellence and sends teams of ten to first-rate colleges across the United States. The Posse model provided an ideal substitute for the family support I would no longer have close by.

Although the transition from my new urban home to suburban Massachusetts proved difficult, Posse and Wheaton used their institutional resources to weave a thick web of support through which it was hard to fall. They provided engagement and accountability. The nine Posse peers who accompanied me from New York City supported my social and intercultural development. My assigned Posse mentor, a professor of English,

[CAMPUS PRACTICE]

Resource-Friendly Reform in General Education

■ JANET HECSEH, associate professor of teacher education, California State University-Sacramento

California State University–Sacramento is currently developing a general education (GE) pathway to provide access to effective practices and pedagogies for all students, regardless of major. Despite important curricular changes in previous decades (such as the development of ethnic and women’s studies, first-year experiences, and learning communities), the current GE program is an artifact of the early twentieth century, emphasizing

outcomes and establishing an assessment system focused on student learning.

Our philosophy of curricular reform is grounded in theories of experiential education (Dewey 1997) and culturally responsive teaching and learning (see, for example, Ladson-Billings 1992). It draws on what AAC&U has called high-impact practices, such as first-year seminars, learning communities, and collaborative assignments (Kuh 2008). Our demonstra-

Each nine-unit collaborative will meet three times a week—for example, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00 to 11:45 a.m.—with each day reserved for a different teaching format: large-lecture meetings, small-group meetings, and nonclassroom activities such as online discussions and field trips. These rotating configurations will address constraints related to classroom capacity, scheduling conflicts, and class size. For example, three nine-unit courses will use the same large lecture hall on the same schedule, but with lectures on different days of the week. At the same time, the rotating configurations will expose students to several high-impact pedagogies, as described below.

Interdisciplinary Themes and Practices

The learning collaboratives will address all of Sacramento State’s recently adopted Baccalaureate Learning Goals (which draw from the recommendations of AAC&U’s Liberal Education and America’s Promise campaign) in a developmentally appropriate fashion over the course of four semesters. Their interdisciplinary, team-taught nature will ensure that faculty design activities that facilitate students’ understanding of connections between, and differences among, academic disciplines.

The collaboratives will be organized around broad contemporary themes, including globalization, sustainability, society and the digital age, and social change and social justice. Each collaborative will explicitly incorporate what Sacramento State calls Interdisciplinary Core Experiences, including leadership, service, experiential learning, community engagement, learning communities, and development of information literacy and intercultural perspectives. These high-impact practices correlate positively with retention and graduation, particularly for first-generation college students and

In redesigning GE, faculty members at Sacramento State are attempting to change a paradigm by retaining its most useful features.

learning for its own sake, transfer of content knowledge, and random acts of course selection through which students may eventually “find themselves.” But beginning in fall 2011, a new GE pathway will offer a coherent program with integrated high-impact practices to a cohort of incoming first-year students.

A Compass for Reform

Currently, incoming students at Sacramento State can take any combination of more than four hundred approved courses to fulfill GE requirements. GE is something students “get out of the way”—or not, in the case of those who don’t graduate. Sacramento State’s Compass Project, conducted with support from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), aims to change this. A grassroots, faculty-driven endeavor, the Compass Project seeks to bring coherence to GE by reconciling goals and

tion project, Sacramento State Studies, applies these philosophies and practices using a small-scale model that can be expanded for broader structural reform. While the project currently targets first-time freshmen who are undeclared or pursuing majors with relatively few credit hour requirements, a second demonstration project will target high-unit majors.

Sacramento State Studies

Beginning in Fall 2011, Sacramento State Studies will offer a group of first-time freshmen—probably the university’s most diverse segment in terms of linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds—an opportunity to complete 90 percent of their lower-division GE requirements in a four-semester series of learning collaboratives. Each learning collaborative will consist of 150 students and be cotaught by three instructors using a variety of pedagogical strategies.

those from historically underrepresented and minority communities (Kuh 2008). Many faculty already use them, but they are less evident in lower-division courses.

Given the correlation between high-impact practices and graduation rates, we are hopeful that the new pathway will support the current systemwide initiative that aims to improve graduation rates for first-time freshmen by 8 percent while also halving the 11 percent graduation rate achievement gap between underrepresented minority (URM) and non-URM students by 2015 (Sacramento State 2010). Project leaders will collect data to provide feedback on progress toward these goals and to improve program design. The project will also use electronic portfolios and AAC&U's VALUE rubrics—available at www.aacu.org/value/—to assess student learning over time.

Meeting Multiple Challenges


Importantly, the demonstration project will support students in their often-transient educational trajectories. Within the California State University (CSU) system, GE programs must align with transfer policies requiring portability both within and across institutions. The pilot project is thus designed to allow students who leave early or join late to transfer their credits. Each nine-unit learning collaborative will cover three areas of GE, and faculty will grade in three-unit increments in keeping with CSU's one class-one grade requirement.

The project will also address challenges rooted in the GE program's history. While GE curriculum is the purview of the faculty, few faculty currently teaching GE were its designers or its original instructors. Furthermore, Sacramento State is committed to alignment of its GE goals and its new Baccalaureate Learning Goals. Finally and importantly, the current GE program is difficult to assess, and the creation of a more assessment-friendly program will allow faculty, students, and external stakeholders to benefit from data about teaching and learning.

To effectively address the challenges, those with the greatest investment in GE—faculty who currently teach it—will engage in the redesign process. The demonstration project will thus sponsor summer institutes and ongoing faculty interest groups to assist interested faculty in repurposing their existing GE courses. In addition, existing GE committees will retain oversight of the demonstration project.

A Paradigm Shift

In redesigning GE, faculty members at Sacramento State are attempting to change a paradigm by retaining its most useful features. We are working within existing structures, making use of existing processes and initiatives, and drawing from past and current best

practices. We are engaging stakeholders to provide students with educational programs that are rigorous, relevant, and geared toward improving access to high-impact educational practices for all. 

REFERENCES

- DEWEY, J.** 1997. *Experience and education*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- KUH, G.** 2008. *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- LADSON-BILLINGS, G.** 1992. Culturally relevant teaching: The key to making multicultural education work. In *Research and multicultural education*, ed. C. A. Grant, 106-121. London: Falmer Press.
- SACRAMENTO STATE.** 2010. Increasing graduation rates and closing the achievement gap. saweb. csus.edu/students/download/Graduation_Initiatives_Report_Sacramento_State_03_05_2010.pdf

Sample Learning Collaboratives

Privacy: An Outdated Concept?

Description: Is the notion of privacy disappearing? Advances in computing power and new data mining and electronic surveillance methods have enabled governments, corporations, and individuals to intrude on others' privacy in unprecedented ways, but have also contributed greatly to our convenience. This class explores the human need for (varying degrees of) personal privacy, as it has manifested itself in diverse cultures and in the legal and policy systems of different nations. In considering the interplay of culture and technology, students will debate whether an erosion of privacy is occurring—and if so, whether it is worth worrying about.

Theme: Technology, Society, and the Digital Age

GE Areas Covered: World Civilization, Foundations in Social and Behavioral Sciences, Understanding Personal Development

Environmental Chemistry and Justice for Minority Communities

Description: Nuclear waste dumps on reservation land. Smokestacks and incinerators in poor urban neighborhoods. Coal mines in rural Appalachia. The toxic burden of persistent environmental chemicals often falls upon the powerless. Building on a foundation of basic chemical and physical concepts, this course equips students to understand the long-term harm imposed on minority communities by chemical toxins, and to analyze alternative waste and emission policies in terms of fairness, ethics, and justice. Students will do twenty hours of experiential learning with the Sacramento office of the Environmental Working Group or the Department of Toxic Substances Control.

Theme: Social Change and Social Justice
GE Areas Covered: Written Communication, Physical Science, Major Social Issues of the Contemporary Era

[CAMPUS PRACTICE]

From Service to Science in the Energy–Climate Era

■ **ROBERT FRANCO**, professor and director of the Office for Institutional Effectiveness, Kapi‘olani Community College, University of Hawai‘i

In *Hot, Flat, and Crowded*, Thomas Friedman claims that “five trends—energy and resource supply and demand, petro-dictatorship, biodiversity loss, climate change, and energy poverty—have all been driven past a tipping point” such that humanity must now adapt to a new “energy–climate era” (Shea 2008). This new era requires American higher education to reform its educational programs to prepare an increasingly diverse generation of graduates for engaged citizenship. Now more than ever, all college graduates need to be scientifically literate in topics affecting what Scott Thomas and others have called the “global public square” (2005). More graduates also need to be experts in the interdisciplinary realms where climate, energy, environment, economics, technology, spirituality, and human well-being coalesce and collide.

America’s community colleges, already leaders in closing minority academic achievement gaps, can be leaders in developing scientific literacy and expertise as well. Fortunately, as we have discovered at Kapi‘olani Community College, the goals of overall student success and scientific literacy and expertise can be mutually reinforcing. At Kapi‘olani, we believe that we can enhance student learning and degree completion in science and beyond by embedding three high-impact educational practices (Kuh 2008) in courses: community service, undergraduate research, and internships.

Service-Learning Pathways

Since 1995, with funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service, service learning has been a priority at Kapi‘olani; since 2002, we have

organized our service-learning initiatives into “pathways” that link courses and communities across multiple semesters. These pathways are designed to address several issues affecting urban Honolulu: education; environmental sustainability; health; long-term care; arts, history, and culture; and international perspectives. In the past fifteen years, nearly nine thousand students have provided two hundred thousand hours of community service related to these topics—equivalent to an economic contribution of nearly \$2 million. The service-learning pathways have been so successful that the college has twice received the Community College National Center for Community Engagement’s award for Partnerships with Social Agencies, in both 1995 and 2010.

As of 2008, 35 percent of part-time students and 45 percent of full-time students reported having participated in “a community-based project as part of a regular course” (Franco 2008). Students have benefited deeply from this engagement. Quantitative and qualitative assessments have consistently demonstrated that students who participate in service learning show improvement in their attitudes about making a difference in the community and working as a team, and more positive beliefs about their instructors’ propensity to be caring. Service learners have also demonstrated retention and persistence rates and grade point averages that are consistently higher than those of the overall student population (Renner 2006; Hill and Orozco 2010). Ongoing assessments of over five thousand students by community partners have shown Kapi‘olani students to be highly responsible, sensitive to diverse clients, willing to

learn, and skilled in communication. In addition, Kapi‘olani’s student leaders have presented in national venues and received high praise for being some of the most compelling student voices in the field.

Service–Science Connections

Kapi‘olani is aligning its highly successful service-learning pathways for first- and second-year students with its degree and career pathways in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Focused specifically on degree completion in six fields (education, health science, ecology, engineering and space science, biotechnology, and human physiology), service to science pathways provide contexts that stimulate and sustain student learning across undergraduate and graduate study and into civic life and work. They also enable female students, who are typically overrepresented in service-learning placements, to explore the STEM fields, where women remain underrepresented.

Nine first-year science courses currently offer opportunities in the service-learning program’s environmental sustainability and health pathways. Students can continue in these pathways across their undergraduate experiences. These courses and the talented professors who teach them prepare students for second-year STEM study and undergraduate research in biology, ecology, chemistry, microbiology, and biotechnology.

Undergraduate Research Experiences

Since 2005, Kapi‘olani has received several grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to engage more historically underrepresented Native Hawaiian and other talented students in STEM degree programs and careers. The college has developed a unique two-year STEM degree, with four transfer pathways into baccalaureate programs in engineering, ecology, biotechnology, and physiology. Since 2008, fifty

students have completed this two-year degree. Two hundred more are currently enrolled, preparing for successful transfer to major research universities and for careers in Hawai'i's STEM workforce.

Research opportunities have been central to these degree programs. Kapi'olani is now the leading community college participant in NSF's new Hawai'i-based Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). The college is leading the Diversity, Education, and Workforce (DEW) component of this project, which aims to engage more students underrepresented in STEM (Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Filipinos, and others) in undergraduate research, prepare them for degree completion, and direct them toward careers as technicians, researchers, and professors.

Internship Opportunities

Internships with university researchers and private-sector partners are a third high-impact practice positively affecting STEM participation at Kapi'olani. Native Hawaiian and other students underrepresented in STEM can now engage in funded pretransfer internships in two Hawai'i EPSCoR research areas: Environmental Dynamics and Ecosystem Responses, and Ecological Genomics and Metabolomics. Students successful in these internships can qualify for both undergraduate- and graduate-level EPSCoR internships in the years ahead. Internships provide students with supervision and coaching from STEM professionals in both research and career settings. They also provide the college with a basis for collaboration and fund development with emerging STEM businesses and industries.

Of course, effective mentoring cannot begin with college internships. As we align engagement pathways on campus with the goals of our university and industry partners, we recognize that building a more diverse STEM workforce will require sustained, high-quality support systems for students as early as middle school.

To address this need, the service-learning program, in conjunction with the EPSCoR DEW initiative, is forming a student-led program called College and Career Cadres, which will provide mentoring services in STEM and promote financial aid awareness for middle school students and their parents and guardians.



Students work to restore taro fields, protecting this nutritious and spiritually important natural resource

Final Thoughts

In the energy-climate era, Kapi'olani and America's other leading community colleges need to prepare students for the civic and scientific challenges, economic opportunities and constraints that will affect the nation and the planet. We need to reform our programs and refocus our efforts on degree completion and student learning for a complex and capacious future. For community college students, local and national economies, and earth itself, STEM degrees matter. 📍

REFERENCES

- FRANCO, R.** 2008. Report to the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. Honolulu: Office for Institutional Effectiveness, Kapi'olani Community College.
- HILL, Y., and M. OROZCO.** 2010. *Drilling down: Service-learning student performance, fall 2009*. Institutional research brief. Honolulu: Office for Institutional Effectiveness, Kapi'olani Community College.
- KUH, G.** 2008. *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- RENNER, T.** 2006. Assessing service-learning: Student outcomes at Kapi'olani, 1996-97, 2006. Internal assessment. Honolulu: Kapi'olani Community College.
- SHEA, D.** 2008. Tom Friedman calls for green revolution. *Huffington Post*, July 4. www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/07/04/thomas-friedman-the-5-key_n_110933.html.
- THOMAS, S. M.** 2005. *The global resurgence of religion and the transformation of international relations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

High-Impact Practices with STEM Connections

Kapi'olani students have participated in a variety of high-impact practices related to their STEM disciplines:

Community Service

- Restoring fields of taro, a spiritually significant and nutritious Native Hawaiian food
- Monitoring the quality of water entering Maunalua Bay, O'ahu
- Delivering workshops on diabetes prevention to the Native Hawaiian community

Undergraduate Research

- Engineering Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs), used to assess coral reef restoration efforts
- Determining virulence in strains of Hawaiian *Campylobacter* (a food-borne bacteria)
- Exploring the impact of historical reforestation efforts on contemporary forest composition

Research Internships

- Participating in one of two ongoing projects: Environmental Dynamics and Ecosystem Responses, and Ecological Genomics and Metabolomics

—Robert Franco

[PERSPECTIVE]

Reducing Internship Inequity

■ **LUCY MAYO**, acting director of the Economic Opportunity Program, and **POOJA SHETHJI**, research assistant, Dēmos

Although college students are in the midst of a new semester, summer internships remain a popular subject of conversation. Weeks after returning to campus, some students are still discussing the responsibilities they were given, the experience they gained, and the personal connections they made during the summer.

servative cost estimate, excluding travel, of holding a three-month internship in Washington, DC, is \$4,050 (Edwards and Hertel-Fernandez 2010, 3). Students interested in nonprofit or government positions have a particularly difficult time finding paid opportunities: in contrast to for-profit firms, nonprofit organiza-

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may need a summer income in order to pay for college, leaving the career-rich opportunities unpaid internships provide off the table.

Not everyone, however, can participate in these conversations. Why? Because many college students cannot afford to hold internships, even as employers increasingly expect them to do so.

Internships have become a critical component of students' resumes. More than three-quarters of college students at four-year institutions complete at least one internship before graduation (Edwards and Hertel-Fernandez 2010, 2). Internships have numerous benefits, including skills training and exposure to a network of professionals. They are an important stepping stone when applying for jobs after college, with 76 percent of employers citing relevant work experience as the primary factor in hiring decisions (Edwards and Hertel-Fernandez 2010, 5).

Financial barriers, however, often prevent low-income students from accessing high-quality internships, many of which are unpaid. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may need a summer income in order to pay for college, leaving the career-rich opportunities unpaid internships provide off the table. The con-


tions and government agencies are not legally obligated to pay their interns.

The decision to accept an unpaid internship becomes more difficult for college students in the context of rising tuition costs, cuts to state financial aid, and the increasing emphasis on loans in place of need-based grants. Rising levels of student debt—and the growing number of hours students work in attempt to offset this debt—translate into low college completion rates for those from low-income backgrounds. Young adults in their mid-twenties with highly paid, highly educated parents are eight times more likely to attain a bachelor's degree than those from more disadvantaged households (Edwards and Hertel-Fernandez 2010, 1). The lack of affordability of both internships and, more broadly, a college education, leaves low-income students at a significant disadvantage in a competitive labor market.

A recently proposed program provides a potential solution for increasing access to internships for low-income students. In *Paving the Way through Paid Internships*, a joint report by Dēmos and the Economic

Policy Institute, Kathryn Anne Edwards and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez recommend that federal financial aid help fund public service internships for less affluent students (2010). The existing Federal Work Study Program would be the vehicle for these grants. Based on the number of low-income students receiving financial aid at the institution, colleges would receive funding that they could disburse to qualified students with family incomes below 300 percent of the poverty line. The proposal calls for grants of \$3,500 for three-month full-time internships and \$7,000 for six-month full-time internships. It suggests funding these grants through consolidated higher education tax credits, among other sources.

Limiting internships to those who can afford them simply perpetuates existing inequalities. Students from high-income backgrounds are more likely to hold internships that can help them gain the contacts and experience needed to secure positions in their preferred careers after graduation. Meanwhile, their less affluent peers graduate with college degrees financed by burdensome loans—while lacking the relevant work experience to get jobs that will allow them to pay off those loans. Providing low-income college students with opportunities to pursue paid internships ensures that they will be able to reap the same benefits from the experience as students from high-income families. Furthermore, opportunities to intern in the nonprofit and government sectors could foster interest in public service and public policy careers among financially disadvantaged students. This potential for increased awareness of civic affairs would represent an important step toward a more engaged and inclusive democracy.

To download *Paving the Way through Paid Internships*, visit www.demos.org/pubs/intern_work_study.pdf. 

REFERENCES

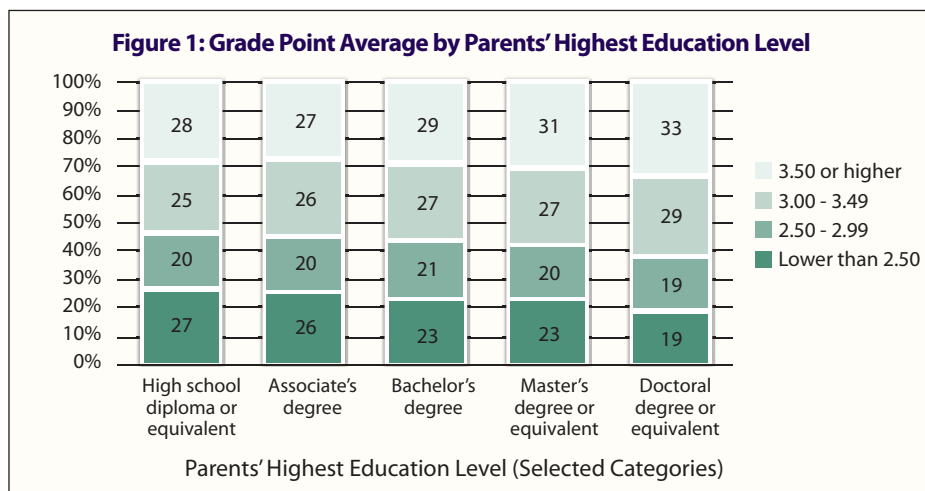
EDWARDS, K. A., and A. HERTEL-FERNANDEZ. 2010. *Paving the way through paid internships*. New York: Dēmos.

[RESEARCH REPORT]

How Grade Point Average Correlates to Various Personal Characteristics

As an indicator of student learning, grade point average is a perennially suspect category. Nonetheless, college GPA can play an important role in graduates' future success, whether in advanced education or in the job market. A consideration of how personal factors correlate to grade point average reveals potentially problematic relationships between students' personal characteristics and their eventual college success.

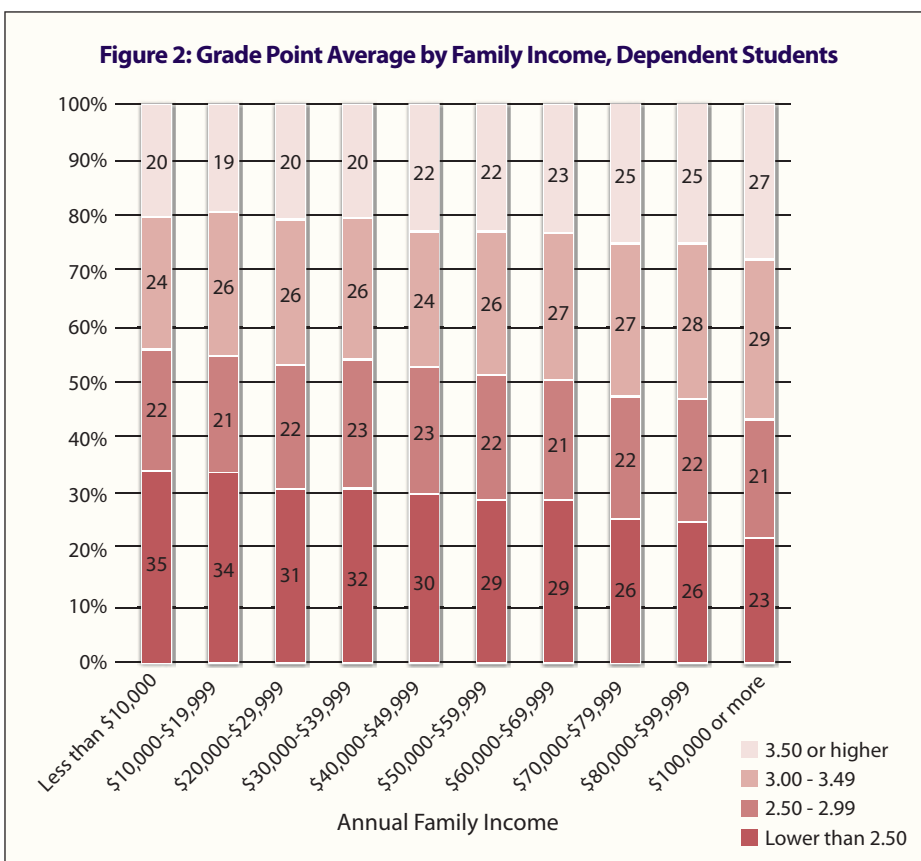
Figure 1 suggests that college students whose parents had higher levels of education were significantly more likely to have higher GPAs than their first-generation-student peers. Sixty-two percent of students with doctoral-degree-holding parents



had at least a 3.0, compared with 53 percent of students whose parents had only a high school diploma. Similarly,

Figure 2 suggests that students at the highest income level were significantly more likely than those at the lowest income level to have GPAs of at least 3.0 (56 percent versus 44 percent, respectively). Insofar as GPA relates to future economic and educational opportunities, the data suggest that disparities in GPA may contribute to perpetuating inequity for low-income and first-generation students.

Although multiple studies have explored these correlations for different student groups and in different contexts, data for the graphs shown here come from the U.S. Department of Education's National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (2008). To learn about the study's data collection process, which includes institutional and government data and online interviews, visit nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/about.asp.



REFERENCE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS. 2008. 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08). nces.ed.gov/datalab/quickstats/createtable.aspx.

In Print

***Understanding the Working College Student: New Research and Its Implications for Policy and Practice*, Laura W. Perna, editor (Stylus Publishing 2010, \$32.50 paperback)**

With this in-depth, comprehensive collection of recent research, editor Laura W. Perna draws much-needed attention to the needs of the growing share of students who work. Using contributions from leading scholars, the volume details the vast diversity in students' experiences surrounding work and school. The collection emphasizes the significant contributions that policymakers and educators could make by creating academic cultures, educational initiatives, and financial practices that acknowledge the reality of work in students' lives. It also underscores the importance of using work as a lever for increasing student engagement. The book is an important resource for anyone considering how economics can and could affect student success.

***The First-Generation Student Experience: Implications for Campus Practice, and Strategies for Improving Persistence and Success*, Jeff Davis (Stylus Publishing 2010, \$29.95 paperback)**

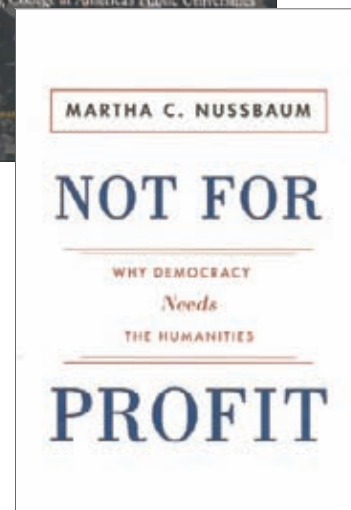
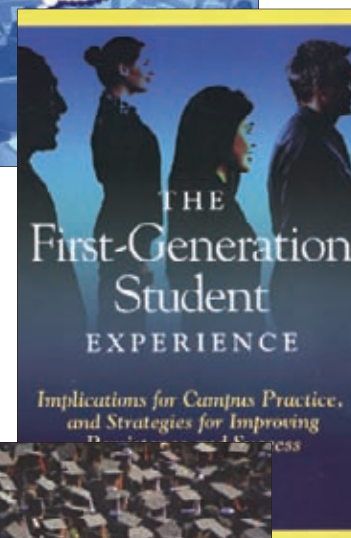
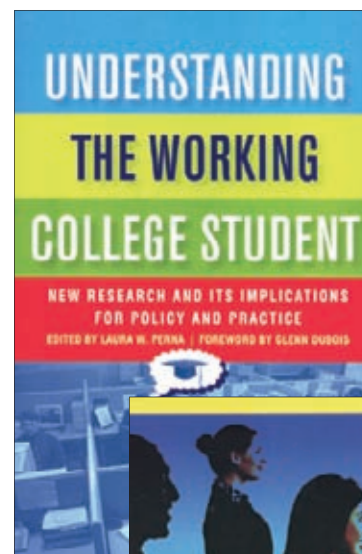
Author Jeff Davis offers keen insight into the first-generation student experience with this readable, informative, and persuasive volume. Smartly pairing academic analysis with student narratives, Davis describes and demonstrates the key barriers to student success for this growing contingent of American students. By decoupling parental education from family income, Davis underscores how many first-generation students' struggles originate in a lack of experience with college culture or college-going identity. He presents a range of promising recommendations to support the increasing number of first-generation students who are now enrolling in American higher education.

***Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Public Universities*, William G. Bowen, Matthew M. Chingos, and Michael S. McPherson (Princeton University Press 2009, \$27.95 hardcover)**

This ambitious data review explores how students' success in higher education correlates to various characteristics, including race, socioeconomic status, and parental education level. Using data collected from twenty-one flagship public universities and four statewide systems, the study tests old assumptions (regarding the value of SAT scores in predicting college success, for example) and proposes new hypotheses (such as the somewhat counterintuitive idea that students who choose schools for which they are overqualified are more likely to fail). Full of important information about who succeeds in American public education, this book is a key contribution to the literature on who graduates, what they study, and what circumstances seem to support or impede their success.

***Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Martha Nussbaum (Princeton University Press 2010, \$22.95 hardcover)**

In this "manifesto," Martha Nussbaum issues a "call to action" for educational reform focused not on economic productivity, but on democratic citizenship. Drawing examples primarily from the United States and India, Nussbaum delineates a history of educational philosophy grounded in the liberal arts and geared toward an appreciation of the fullness of human experience. This brief volume incisively argues that higher education around the globe must reprioritize toward preparing students to become "citizens of the world"—a task that will require schools to cultivate imagination, empathy, and other trademarks of humanistic education. Nussbaum's analysis is a moving reminder of the humanities' practical consequence.



Resources

The Quality Imperative

AAC&U's board of directors recently released a statement on the critical need for educators to focus on the quality of all students' education in addition to the quantity of degrees completed. Emphasizing that "the quality of individuals' actual learning is the most important resource we have as a society," the statement outlines essential goals that should be central to all students' experiences within the framework of access and success. To download the statement, visit www.aacu.org/about/statements/documents/Quality_Imperative_2010.pdf.

Achieving the Dream Equity Resource Center

The Achieving the Dream initiative aims to improve success for community college students, particularly those low-income students and students of color who have been traditionally underserved. The Web site includes an Equity Resource Center with helpful readings for colleges at all stages of the self-improvement process. To access these resources, visit www.achievingthedream.org/campusstrategies/equityresourcecenter/default.tp.

Pathways to College Network

The Pathways to College Network, directed by the Institute for Higher Education Policy, supports research and practices that undergird and improve access and success for underserved students. The Web site offers a variety of topical libraries and online toolboxes with resources to improve college readiness, attendance rates, and persistence. To download these and other items, visit www.pathwaystocollege.net.

Opportunities

Diversity, Learning, and Pathways to Inclusive Excellence

AAC&U's Network for Academic Renewal will host "Facing the Divides: Diversity, Learning, and Pathways to Inclusive Excellence" on October 21–23, 2010, in Houston, Texas. The conference will focus on ways to bridge the divides of ideology, belief, and access that are affecting democratic discourse and student success in college and beyond. For more information or to register, visit www.aacu.org/meetings/diversityandlearning/DL2010/index.cfm.

Keeping Our Faculties of Color

The University of Minnesota will host the fifth Keeping Our Faculties of Color symposium on November 1–2, 2010, at the Radisson University Hotel in Minneapolis. Designed to promote conversation and research about faculty diversity, the symposium will feature presentations from researchers Sylvia Hurtado and Lester Monts, among others. For more information, visit www.cce.umn.edu/Keeping-Our-Faculties.

AAC&U Annual Meeting 2011

AAC&U will hold its Annual Meeting on January 26–29, 2011, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in San Francisco. Titled "Global Positioning: Essential Learning, Student Success, and the Currency of U.S. Degrees," the event will provide opportunities for faculty and administrators to ponder liberal education's role in preparing students to participate in and contribute to today's interconnected global society. To learn more, visit www.aacu.org/meetings/annualmeeting.

Diversity & Democracy Advisory Board 2010–11

- NANCY "RUSTY" BARCELÓ**,
Northern New Mexico College
- JOYCE BYLANDER**, *Dickinson College*
- MITCHELL CHANG**, *University of California-Los Angeles*
- HARVEY CHARLES**, *Northern Arizona University*
- MICHELLE ASHA COOPER**, *Institute for Higher Education Policy*
- ROBERT FRANCO**, *Kapi'olani Community College, University of Hawai'i*
- L. LEE KNEFELKAMP**, *Teachers College, Columbia University*
- CATHERINE MIDDLECAMP**, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*
- ELIZABETH K. MINNICH**,
AAC&U Senior Fellow
- PAUL PETREQUIN**, *Chandler-Gilbert Community College*
- MARGARET A. POST**, *College of the Holy Cross*
- DARYL SMITH**, *Claremont Graduate University*
- EVE W. STODDARD**,
St. Lawrence University
- NANCY L. THOMAS**,
The Democracy Imperative

Diversity & Democracy AAC&U Staff

- KEVIN HOVLAND**
Executive Editor
- KATHRYN PELTIER CAMPBELL**
Editor
- LAURA DONNELLY-SMITH**
Associate Editor
- ANN KAMMERER**
Production Editor
- DARBI BOSSMAN**
Production Manager

AAC&U Editorial Advisers

- CAROL GEARY SCHNEIDER**
President
- CARYN MCTIGHE MUSIL**
Senior Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Global Initiatives
- DEBRA HUMPHREYS**
Vice President for Communications and Public Affairs



Association
of American
Colleges and
Universities

1818 R Street, NW,
Washington, DC 20009

tel 202.387.3760
fax 202.265.9532

US Postage
PAID
Nonprofit
Organization
Permit No. 8410
Washington, DC

Upcoming AAC&U Meetings

MEETING	LOCATION	DATES
Facing the Divides: Diversity, Learning, and Pathways to Inclusive Excellence	<i>Houston, Texas</i>	OCTOBER 21-23, 2010
Creativity, Inquiry, and Discovery: Undergraduate Research In and Across the Disciplines	<i>Durham, North Carolina</i>	NOVEMBER 11-13, 2010
Global Positioning: Essential Learning, Student Success, and the Currency of U.S. Degrees (AAC&U Annual Meeting)	<i>San Francisco, California</i>	JANUARY 26-29, 2011

AAC&U Associates

Enrollment in the Associate program provides an opportunity for individuals on AAC&U member campuses to advance core purposes and best practices in undergraduate education and to strengthen their collaboration with AAC&U's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Global Initiatives. Associates pay \$60 per calendar year and receive the same benefits as AAC&U Campus Representatives, including subscriptions to our print publications, *Liberal Education*, *Peer Review*, and *Diversity & Democracy*, electronic copies of *On Campus with Women*, invitations to apply for grant-funded projects, and advance notice of calls for proposals for institutes and meetings. For more information, please visit www.aacu.org or call Renee Gamache at 202-884-0809.

About AAC&U

AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises 1,200 member institutions—including accredited public and private colleges and universities of every type and size. AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Information about AAC&U membership, programs, and publications can be found at www.aacu.org.

From AAC&U Board Statement on Liberal Learning

AAC&U believes that by its nature... liberal learning is global and pluralistic. It embraces the diversity of ideas and experiences that characterize the social, natural, and intellectual world. To acknowledge such diversity in all its forms is both an intellectual commitment and a social responsibility, for nothing less will equip us to understand our world and to pursue fruitful lives.