Annotated Bibliography: Perspectives in Postsecondary Education Programs and Student Support Interventions

R. Denise Myers
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PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE NETWORK

Annotated Bibliography: Perspectives in Postsecondary Education
Programs and Student Support Interventions

For the past eight months research has been conducted looking at the literature on college success programs. Specifically, only those programs that have conducted an in-depth evaluation, and thus have demonstrated their effectiveness in retaining and graduating traditionally underrepresented students, were considered in this search. This population would include ethnic minority, first-generation, low-income, English as a second language, and “non-traditional” adult learners, commuters, academically underprepared and part-time students. The resources utilized for the search were the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), First Search, OCLC, and Article First, as well as resources from the Pell Institute. Additionally, the web sites of the institutions that were highlighted in the articles were researched. The criteria focused on were student engagement—both academic and social—and student satisfaction, grade point average (GPA), retention into the sophomore year, graduation, and the possibility of entering a graduate or professional program, as well as the program’s role on the campus and institutional commitment.

Generally, the research garnered few postsecondary retention programs that had been thoroughly evaluated. Rather, much of what was found were no more than descriptive reports or articles offering recommendations for implementing activities that would effect an increase in student retention. However, there are many institutions that are having very positive results. There are several approaches to teaching and learning, and ultimately student retention that currently are being utilized: summer bridge programs, extended orientation programs, freshman seminars, and learning communities. Some institutions are utilizing “cutting edge” techniques, such as the “Personal Development Portfolio” at Bridgewater College in Virginia. Other institutions implement programs specifically committed to increasing minority retention in the hard sciences and mathematics, like the Emerging Scholars Program and the Meyerhoff Program. Still others institutions successfully recruit and retain minority students by acknowledging their backgrounds, needs, and expectations and then taking action to accommodate them. The Puente Project, for instance, addresses the needs of first-generation Latino college students from a cultural context.

Again, while many of the institutions in this bibliography have not conducted an in-depth evaluation of their programs, it is clear that their efforts are indeed having a positive impact on their student retention.

--R. Denise Myers
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The retention strategies utilized by institutions of higher education are grounded in the proven theoretical models of retention researchers such as Tinto, Bean, Braxton, Pascarella and Terenzini, Braxton, and Astin. There are several different theoretical orientations, including organizational, sociological, and psychological.


This book presents the extensive results of a study of how students are affected by their college experiences. Chapter 1 discusses the question of how to assess the impact of the college experience and outlines the overall design of the study. Chapter 2 describes each of the 135 college environmental measures and 57 "student involvement" measures used in the analysis. Chapter 3 presents a detailed evaluation of how the environmental characteristics and the experiences of involvement affect a single outcome measure: the student's political identification. The next six chapters present findings concerning environmental and involvement effects on 81 other outcomes. Chapter 4 treats personality and self-concept. Chapter 5 covers attitudes, values, and beliefs. Chapter 6 details behavior patterns and changes. Chapter 7 looks at academic and cognitive development. Chapter 8 discusses career development. Chapter 9 treats satisfaction with college. Chapter 10 summarizes the results separately for each environmental measure, and Chapter 11 summarizes results separately for each involvement measure. The final chapter discusses the implication of the study for educational theory and practice. Appended are additional technical details concerning the analyses. Also included are an index, and over 80 references.


Describes the psychological processes that lead to academic and social integration based on a retention model proposed by the authors. Describes how successful retention programs such as learning communities, freshman interest groups, tutoring, and orientation rely on psychological processes. Four psychological theories form the basis for recommendations: attitude-behavior, coping behavioral (approach-avoidance), self-efficacy, and attribution (locus of control).


Models that have appeared in the student attrition literature in the past decade and behavioral models from the social sciences that may help explain the dropout process are examined, and an attempt is made to synthesize a causal model of student attrition. The models of Tinto, Spady, and Rootman in the area of student attrition, and models of student participation (Boshier), status attainment (Sewell and Hauser), turnover in work organizations (Price), suicide (Durkheim), and the relation between intentions and behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen) are addressed. Bean's industrial model of student attrition and Pascarella's model concerning student/faculty informal contacts also are included. The synthetic model identifies four classes of variables: background variables, organizational variables, environmental variables, and attitudinal and outcome variables, all of which have direct or indirect effects on intent to leave, which is the immediate precursor of dropping out. Variables can be added to or deleted from the model to match the particular needs of an institution. Twenty-three variables that may be important predictors of dropping out are identified. The relative causal importance of these variables to dropping out can be assessed using stepwise multiple regression analysis in a path analytic framework. In addition, effects coefficients can indicate the total contributions of one variable on dropping out in terms of both indirect and direct effects. Charts that depict the various models and a bibliography are included.


Discusses the focus of this special issue on college student retention and describes the issue's articles, which advance recommendations for institutional action that emanate from theory and research rooted in several different theoretical orientations: organizational, sociological, and psychological.

Discuss institutional practices springing from empirically grounded forces that influence students' social integration and retention. Presents 20 recommendations for implementation in eight domains of institutional practice: academic advising, administrative policies and practices, enrollment management, faculty development, faculty reward system, student orientation programs, residential life, and student affairs programming.


Classifies 47 recommendations gleaned from the articles appearing in this special issue according to their consistency with Tinto's three principles of effective student retention. Orders recommendations by the institutional domain most likely to implement them. Views the recommendations as multiple, powerful levers to reduce college student departure.


This literature review considers the theory and practice of retention efforts in higher education, with special focus on community college programs. Introductory material looks at the conditions (e.g., tighter budgets and decreased enrollments) that have brought the issues of attrition and retention to the forefront. The next section reviews studies of rates of retention, attempting to identify factors associated with high rates of attrition or persistence. Findings discussed here indicate that attrition is heaviest at the freshman level, and that most school withdrawals are voluntary in nature, with only 20-25% of students leaving for academic reasons. Next, models and theories of retention are reviewed, including models focusing on social integration, competing forces in students' lives, competency and commitment, and values added by educational experiences. After considering the design of campus-based research on retention, the paper reviews various definitions of successful retention. The next sections offer a summary of the literature concerning successful retention and conditions promoting attrition, retention strategies for developmental programs, literacy issues, and the use of information on learning styles in program planning. Suggestions regarding the development of retention programs are offered, followed by a summary of the characteristics of successful programs, including the program at Miami-Dade Community college. A 52-item bibliography is included.


The first phase of a study to predict retention and withdrawal among disadvantaged students at an urban commuter institution is described. Variable selection for the study was guided by Tinto's (1975) and Bean's (1982) models. Pilot testing was undertaken to estimate some psychometric characteristics of Pascarella and Terenzini's institutional integration scales (that were developed to operationalize Tinto's model) for these students. Longitudinal tracking was undertaken with freshmen enrolled in a developmental studies program at the City University of New York. Pilot testing appears to suggest the factorial validity of the institutional integration scales for this group of students. The results revealed suspected reading comprehension problems and a possible halo effect, but when several items were revised and retested, the scales showed improved characteristics. Appended materials include a diagram of Tinto's conceptual schema for college withdrawal; a diagram of Bean's synthetic causal model of student attrition; a list of background, organizational, environmental, and outcome/attitudinal variables; and the Pascarella/Terenzini Institutional Integration Scales, modified versions.


Retention and attrition after the freshman year among disadvantaged students at a senior college of the City University of New York were studied. A conceptual model of Tinto (1975) was applied to a group of students participating in the Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK) program, which provided remedial and/or developmental instruction in reading, writing, and/or mathematics, as well as supplementary stipends,
academic and personal counseling, and tutoring. The sample was approximately 49% Black, 38% Hispanic, and 13% other (White, Asian, Caribbean, and Latin American). Attention was directed to student characteristics and family background, educational background, student goals, academic and social integration, and persistence/withdrawal. The results indicate that Tinto’s model was sensitive to the dimensions of student-institutional fit operating in the situation, while showing that academic integration was the most salient aspect of development for this group of students. In particular, the receipt of unofficial withdrawal grades in individual classes, which reflects psychological disengagement in addition to academic difficulty, showed an ability to identify students for whom attrition is an immediate possibility.


Describes the development of a framework for minority—specifically Chicano—student participation in predominantly White colleges and universities. Development involved analysis of interviews, observations, and documents. The framework posits minority students as cultural workers who actively fight their marginalization while seeking a synthesis between their own culture and the university culture.


African American nurses’ perceptions of their baccalaureate nursing school experiences were examined in relation to Vincent Tinto’s (1987) theory of student retention and Alexander Astin’s theory of student involvement. In-depth interviews were conducted with four graduates of a predominantly Black southeastern university and four graduates of a predominantly White southeastern university. Individual commitment to degree completion was a major factor in persistence. Respondents generally perceived the Black campus as comfortable, warm, and nurturing, while they tended to perceive the White campus as cold and uncaring. Satisfaction with the academic experience was related to a combination of factors, including self-esteem, relationships with other students, and pride in the university. Positive role modes were important for respondents for personal and professional guidance and increased self-esteem. All of the participants worked off-campus at some time during college, which supports Astin’s proposal that working off-campus, as long as it is less than 25 hours a week, is instrumental in promoting student persistence. Financial aid was identified as a major component of student persistence, which supports Astin’s theory but contradicts Tinto’s assertion that finances are not a major factor in degree completion. Except for assumptions regarding financial aid, findings corroborated Tinto’s theory. (Contains 64 references.)


The authors discuss the effectiveness of cooperative learning over competitive and individualistic learning. They offer three interrelated types that have been developed (formal, informal, cooperative base groups), that provide a framework for effective college teaching, in contrast to independent and competitive learning. They include a short history of how cooperative learning has been utilized. In the conclusion they cite five basic elements that have emerged as critical to cooperative work in classrooms: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing.


This paper examines some theories and approaches for better integrating minority students into college environments for creating a good “fit” for an increasingly diverse student body, and thereby increasing student retention. Several factors are found to affect diversity: an increased proportion of minorities, an increase in the average age of students, and the large number of employed students. While feeling a part of the campus community is important to all students, minority students face unique problems and have lower graduation rates. The study suggests that a significant, if simple, way to assist adjustment to college for all students, but particularly for minorities, is to encourage the maintenance of attachment to significant people from home. That has often not been the policy of colleges in recent years, but research suggests that connection to home has a significant impact on academic and
intellectual development and on commitment. Aggressive recruiting of minority students will create a larger community of similar students, with less chance of their feeling isolated. Similarly, recruiting minority faculty and staff members will provide role models. A diverse faculty can be effective in combating racial prejudice, together with appropriate attitudes of administrators. (Contains 36 references.)


This journal issue discusses student attrition and the major recurring themes regarding students withdrawing from college. It is revealed that less than 15% of student departures are as a result of academic dismissal, with the remaining students leaving voluntarily, even when their academic performance is clearly acceptable. The following recurrent themes of student attrition are examined: (1) uncertainty both about what to expect from college and about its rewards; (2) transition/adjustment problems; (3) financial difficulties; and (4) academic underpreparation. The extremely high attrition rates during the freshman year underscore the difficulties students face in making the adjustment to college life. Careerism may contribute to the stress of adjustment by forcing an early decision about majors and careers. Integration into college life, particularly among minorities, is important for sustaining student commitment. However, minority students, particularly Blacks, have difficulty with integration into a largely White environment; this may explain their lower persistence rates. These theories point to the selection process as one way to increase persistence, but such approaches may drive selection to a more homogeneous population rather than facilitating the adjustment of all students. (Contains 38 references.) A brief "Viewpoint" column (Carole Morning) addresses college attrition. (Contains 11 references.)


Learning improvement programs for underprepared postsecondary students are reviewed, and a Decision Guide for Effective Programs, which summarizes knowledge needed for decision-making, is presented. Research data are analyzed to identify features of learning improvement programs associated with improved grade point average and retention. Successful programs were found to have two broad characteristics in common: comprehensiveness in their support services, and institutionalization into the academic mainstream. The Decision Guide for Effective Programs includes a hierarchy of learning improvement programs that describes and ranks four types of programs: remedial courses, learning assistance to individual students, course-related learning services, and comprehensive learning systems. Twenty-six critical variables for learning improvement are presented in the Hierarchy of Decisions. The possible choices that educators can make for each variable are identified and ranked for effectiveness in increasing overall academic achievement. The 26 variables are grouped as decisions relating to goals and rationale, instructional methods and content, institutional policies and standards, professional and paraprofessional staff and roles, and the evaluation of learning improvement programs. A bibliography is appended.


A study used Alexander Astin's (1993) Input-Environment-Output (I-E-O) model to examine persistence at the United States Coast Guard Academy (Connecticut). Because the study was conducted in a controlled social environment, measures of social environmental influence were derived from multiple inputs, including adaptability polls wherein every student's "fit" was assessed by all others in his organizational unit each semester. Subjects were 619 cadets entering the Academy with the classes of 1991 and 1993; the groups had similar profiles. The research questions addressed the extent to which (1) input variables and academic and social involvement at the end of each of the first four semesters differentiated between persisters and non-persisters; and (2) how input variables related to academic and social integration. Results confirmed the longitudinal nature of the model and the general longitudinal theory of student retention. They also established that the effects of academic and social integration were time-dependent and had their most dramatic impact in the time periods immediately after being received. Results further indicated that the effects of early measures of academic performance and social integration were important indicators.
of long-term persistence. Additional findings suggest the need for further examination of the effects of the required pre-freshman summer program on persistence. (Contains 47 references.)


This annotated bibliography describes resource materials on educational theory and practice related to the first college year. This edition contains nearly twice as many entries as the second edition. Works are grouped into these topical headings: (1) "Academic Advising and Student Counseling"; (2) "Academic Support"; (3) "Assessment and Evaluation"; (4) "Career Issues"; (5) "Community and Two-Year Colleges"; (6) "Curriculum and Teaching"; (7) "Faculty"; (8) "Financial Issues"; (9) "The First Year"; (10) "First-Year Seminars"; (11) "Health Topics and Issues"; (12) "International Perspectives"; (13) "Learning Communities"; (14) "New Student Orientation"; (15) "Parental and Family Influence and Issues"; (16) "Peer Influence, Interaction, and Training"; (17) "Reports with Implications for the First-Year Experience"; (18) "Residence Life"; (19) "Retention and Success of First-Year Students"; (20) "Student Behavior, Characteristics, and Development"; (21) "Student Sub-Populations"; (22) "Summer Bridge Programs"; and (23) "Technology." [This abstract also appears in the "First-Year Experience Programs" section of the bibliography.]


This monograph on learning communities and the first-year college experience presents 12 chapters that combine theory with examples of good practice and recommendations for building and sustaining effective learning communities. Following an introduction by the editor, the included chapters are: 1) "What Are Learning Communities?" (Anne Goodsell Love); 2) "Learning Community Models" (Anne Goodsell Love and Kenneth A. Tokuno); 3) "Garnering the Fundamental Resources for Learning Communities" (Jeanine L. Elliott and Emily Decker); 4) "Planning the Production: Scheduling, Recruiting, and Registering Students in Learning Communities" (Michaelann M. Jundt, Kenneth K. Etzkorn, and Jason N. Johnson); 5) "Teaching and Learning in a Learning Community" (Diane W. Strommer); 6) "Faculty Development in Learning Communities: The Role of Reflection and Reframing" (Scott E. Evenbeck, Barbara Jackson, and John McGrew); 7) "Learning Communities: Partnerships between Academic and Student Affairs" (Charles C. Schroeder, Frankie D. Minor, and Theodore A. Tarkow); 8) "Learning Communities, Academic Advising, and Other Support Programs" (Jack W. Bennett); 9) "A Natural Linkage—The First-Year Seminar and the Learning Community" (Betsy O. Barefoot, Dorothy S. Fidler, John N. Gardner, Philip S. Moore, and Melissa R. Roberts); 10) "Learning Communities in the Community College" (Valerie A. Bystrom); 11) "Evaluating and Assessing Learning Communities" (Kathi A. Ketcheson and Jodi H. Levine); and 12) "Trends and Future Directions" (John N. Gardner and Jodi H. Levine). (Individual chapters contain references.)


In this article Levitz, Lee, and Richter first discuss retention as it relates to recent budget issues, the increase in competition for students, shrinking resources, and institutional accountability and survival. They list the characteristics of the most effective innovations and best practices that institutions have adopted and that have achieved cost-effective results: 1) highly structured programs; 2) extended, intensive contact with “at-risk” students; 3) interlocks with other programs and services; 4) a clear strategy of engagement; 5) qualified staff; 6) faculty members in critical roles; and 7) a focus on the affective as well as cognitive needs of students. [This abstract also appears in the “Studies/Reports” section of the bibliography.]


This report examines best practices in the delivery of Student Support Services (SSS), one of the three Special Programs for Disadvantaged Students known as the TRIO programs. Data have shown that participation in SSS has a positive effect on student outcomes, but many participants do not receive enough services to receive significant benefits. This study was based on case studies of five local projects in 1996, drawn from 30 projects in the National Study of Student Support Services, a longitudinal survey of students begun in 1991. The five sites ranged
from a small, rural community college to a large state university and also included an historically Black college and a small-town branch of a large, public institution. The most important common practices across the projects were: (1) a project-designed freshman-year experience, (2) an emphasis on academic support for developmental and popular freshman courses, (3) extensive student service contacts, (4) targeted participant recruitment and participation incentives, (5) dedicated staff and directors with strong institutional attachments, and (6) an important role on campus. The dynamics of different modes of service are summarized. These include discussion of group learning, active counseling, and integrated services. Appended are reports of project characteristics in 1992 and 1996 and project budgetary information for 1995-96. (JLS) [An abstract for this document also appears in the “Comprehensive Programs” section of the bibliography.]


A study that tested a modified version of Tinto's student attrition model on a Chicano student population in two-year colleges is discussed. Measures of goodness-of-fit were examined to provide indices for the overall fit of the causal model in the study. (Author/MLW)


Theorizes about interrelations between "rites of passage" in Tinto's (1993) Student Integration Model and support from significant others in Nora and Cabrera's (1996) Student Adjustment Model. Depicts how both sets of factors impact social and academic experiences and integration, commitment levels to attainment of an educational goal and to an institution, and decision to drop out or remain enrolled. (Contains appendixes and references.)


The influence on freshman student attrition of the group with whom a student lives (i.e., the composition or contextual character of the collegiate residence unit) was investigated. Based on Tinto's (1975) model of college student attrition, a longitudinal study was conducted at a large, independent, residential university in New York State having total undergraduate enrollment of approximately 10,000. Responses from 1,457 students to an initial questionnaire were evaluated in the summer of 1976 to assess students' expectations of a variety of aspects of the college experience, as well as selected background information. During the spring semester of 1977, a second questionnaire sought information on the reality of college experience. Usable responses were received from 763 freshmen. After controlling for students' precollege characteristics and individual levels of academic and social integration in the institution, the residence unit context was found to be reliably related to attrition/retention among men, but not among women. For men, those living in a residence unit characterized by comparatively higher levels of occupant commitment to the institution and to personal goals were significantly more likely to enroll as sophomores than were freshmen in units with lower levels of commitment among the residents. The results suggest that in assessing the influence of residence arrangements on attrition (or on any other educational outcome), the influence of the context of the residence can be differentiated (at least for men) by the influence of the unit's type (e.g., dormitory, fraternity/sorority).


This article reviews recent literature related to student retention in TRIO/Student Support Services Programs. First-generation and low-income students in particular, are the least likely to persist to a four-year degree. With that in mind, institutional retention efforts must address the needs of this population of students if more equitable educational attainment rates are desired. Thayer reviews theoretical models of retention, special characteristics of first-generation and low-income students, and retention efforts that address these characteristics. He suggests that structured first-year and learning community programs respond in practical ways to established retention theory and to the specific needs and characteristics of students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds. Drawing
upon “promising practices” that are the hallmark of Student Support Services programs, he highlights four institutions—Skagit Valley College, Drexel University, Colorado State University, and Michigan State University—that have implemented learning community strategies in the form of summer bridge programs, academic year programs, and linked summer/academic year programs. [An abstract for this document also appears in the “Learning Communities” section of this bibliography.]


This book provides a synthesis of wide-ranging research on student attrition at American colleges and universities and outlines actions that institutions can and should take to reduce attrition. The key to effective retention is shown to lie in a strong commitment to quality education and the building of a strong sense of inclusive educational and social community on campus. Chapter 1 examines the dimensions and consequences of student departure from institutions of higher education and sets out the goals of the book. Chapter 2 explores the scope and patterning of student departure, looking at the entry and exit of individuals from institutions of higher education and group differences in rates of degree completion. Chapter 3 addresses the roots of individual departure, examining the specific reasons why individuals leave college. Chapter 4 advances a model of individual departure from higher education that sees as the major cause of student attrition the inability of students to make the transition to college and become incorporated into the institution’s ongoing social and intellectual life. Chapter 5 explores the dimensions of institutional action, examining the definition of “dropout,” the principles of effective retention, and appropriate retention policies for different types of institutions and students. Chapter 6 presents conclusions and directions for further research. Two appendixes examine the assessment of student departure and propose a model of doctoral student persistence. (Contains approximately 430 references.)
COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

Comprehensive programs are defined as programs that have the following concepts in common: proactive interventions; small-group tutorials; teaching of study strategies and test-taking techniques in the context of courses in which students are enrolled; development of students’ basic language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening); quality instruction; efforts in place to reduce program “stigma;” building community; collaborative learning; and program adaptability by other institutions.


This article highlights seven retention programs that are considered to be on the “cutting edge” for promoting student success and satisfaction. Each won the 2001 Noel-Levitz Retention Excellence Award at the National Conference of Student Retention. Institutions included are Bridgewater College in Virginia, Central Wyoming College, Loyola University in New Orleans, Oakland University in Michigan, San Diego State University, University of Minnesota, and Villa Julie College in Maryland. The article includes a brief description of each institution’s program.


Describes three retention programs for regularly admitted students of color. Outlines each program’s history and inception; its funding, staffing, and facilities; and how the program has become institutionalized and marketed. The key components of the program and assessment of program effectiveness are presented, as well as the crises encountered and overcome in establishing the program. There is great potential for any of these programmatic pieces to be implemented at other institutions. Texas A&M’s primary retention program is “ExCEL,” Excellence Uniting Culture, Education and Leadership. The program consists of an extended orientation conference for first-time-enrolled African American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American (AHANA) students. No specific qualitative or quantitative results were offered. Funded by student service fees and the state. University of Louisville’s Center for Academic Achievement’s “Thriving and Surviving” Program’s initial goal was to recruit 400 regularly admitted minority students in three years and to improve these students’ retention rates by 15-20%. At the end of its eighth year statistics showed that, university-wide, the retention rates of first-time freshmen who enrolled for their second year from 1984-91 was on average 66.2%, in contrast to CAA participants, whose average was 83.7%. University of Texas at Austin’s Preview Program is an intense seven-week summer residential program targeted at incoming African American and Mexican American students. The program’s effectiveness is continually measured quantitatively (graduation rates) and qualitatively (student, faculty, and staff complete written evaluations). The program is cost-effective and adaptable to other institutions.


In this article, the author assesses the effectiveness of student retention in the community college system, using as an example the Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOP&S) program, available at all 106 California community colleges. EOP&S provides opportunities for student integration and involvement. Program standards include: 1) outreach/recruitment, 2) orientation, 3) registration assistance, 4) needs assessment, 5) mandatory multiple counseling contacts, 6) progress monitoring, 7) basic skills and special instruction, 8) tutoring, 9) ethnic diversity staff training, 10) cultural events, 11) peer advising, 12) mentoring, 13) education plan and goal development (academic advising), and 14) services targeted at students with children. These supportive services and activities have proven to enhance persistence and academic achievements for 80,000 low-income, educationally disadvantaged students enrolled in the program. Results of current EOP&S research indicate significant levels of persistence with high-risk community college populations. Statewide data indicate that 1) EOP&S students had a four-year average persistence rate of 82.64% from 1993 to 1997, in contrast to a 53.95% persistence rate for non-EOP&S students who were enrolled full time the first 10 days of instruction during the four fall terms; and 2) the EOP&S students yielded an average GPA of 2.0 or greater for 78.6% of the students served, in contrast to 81% for
non-EOP&S students.

Dale, P. M., Ph.D. (1995). A successful college retention program. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University. HORIZONS Student Support Services is a federally funded program designed to increase the retention of first-generation, low-income, or disabled students. The program implemented a "matched-pairs" research design to assess the program's impact on participants' success. The cornerstone of the project and the vehicle through which most services are delivered is the freshman orientation course, "Strategies for Effective Academic Performance," which addresses cognitive and affective needs. Students meet for three hours per week in a classroom to address the cognitive portion of the course and for two hours per week in a "Community Building/Personal Growth Laboratory" to work on the affective portion of the course. This study compared all 47 freshmen who entered the program in Fall 1990 with a matched group of those who did not. Results showed that participation in HORIZONS had a dramatic impact on student retention and rate of graduation. The HORIZONS group retained 85% through 10 semesters, while the control group retained only 47%. The increase in retention and graduation rates resulted from the delivery of a comprehensive set of services. Students evaluated the services and indicated that belonging to a support network, instruction in effective study methods, and tutoring were the most important services.


Glassboro State College's (New Jersey) retention program is an institution-wide, comprehensive, coordinated program based on the concept of early provision of quality services and programs to provide students with positive linkages to the institution. Persistence to graduation is the long-term goal of the retention program. Additional goals include: 1) increasing minority student enrollment in undergraduate programs; 2) developing social and cultural programming appropriate to a pluralistic society, particularly in residence halls; and 3) developing a learning-friendly campus ethos that encouraged integration of minorities and minority-related programming into the mainstream of the college community. The Academic Advancement Center offers a "one-stop shopping center" for students. First year students and their parents are introduced to college personnel, programs, and services during a summer orientation program. A freshman summer institute is offered for educationally deficient but capable students. During the freshman year, students are given academic assistance and support through a freshman seminar with formal instruction and follow-up mentoring. Peer mentoring and peer tutoring, leadership programs, residence hall programming, and cross-cultural awareness events also are offered. The program received a Noel-Levitz Institutional Award in 1989. Data are provided to illustrate the program's success in improving retention rates.


This report looks at a retention program implemented to address the institution's declining retention rates. The PASS Program is an attempt to create a retention model that addresses the needs of the increasing populations of non-traditional students, including older students (aged 25 years and older), single mothers, and learning disabled students. Objectives of the program include: 1) providing academic and other support services for students, 2) developing a comprehensive retention model that addresses the needs of a diverse student population, and 3) disseminating results of the program to other institutions who might benefit from its implications. The student retention rate has increased from 82% in 1999 to 89.7%.


This article examines the unique experiences of the EXCEL Special Student Services TRIO program at California State University-Hayward, from the perspectives of program staff. Staff members considered their program effective because it was responsive, synergistic, supportive, and successful. The article explores these four attributes as causative factors leading to the program's status as one of the most popular and highly utilized student service programs on campus. The results indicate that over its 29-year history, the program has consistently achieved its primary goals for student retention, graduation, and academic performance. The findings were based on both quantitative and qualitative evaluation.

This brochure summarizes results of a study of "best practices" in the Student Support Services program (SSS), a federal program intended to increase the college retention and graduation rates of participants who are the first generation in their families to attend college, are disadvantaged, or are disabled. To identify best practices, SSS projects with statistically significant positive outcomes were identified from the National Study of Student Support Services. This study followed SSS freshman participants and comparable nonparticipants at 50 institutions—30 with SSS projects and 20 without SSS projects—for three years. This brochure specifically reports on five of these projects visited in 1996. Common features of successful projects are identified as including: (1) a project-designed freshman year experience for most or all participants, (2) an emphasis on providing academic support for developmental and popular freshman courses, (3) extensive student service contacts, (4) targeted participant recruitment and participation incentives, (5) dedicated staff and directors with strong institutional attachments, and (6) an important role for the project on campus. Characteristics of service delivery in these programs also are noted; they include an emphasis on group learning (though courses, supplemental instruction, and study groups/group tutoring); active counseling; and integrated services.


This article highlights the efforts of 10 of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to address the issues of student retention and graduation. They participated in the Third Black Colleges Program, a five-year program (1993-98) administered by the Southern Education Foundation, in Atlanta, Georgia. Funded by a $4.4 million grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the institutions linked their programs to Tinto's premise that retention is closely tied to students' intellectual and social development and that involvement and commitment to the institution are key ingredients of student development. Each institution shared their campus-wide efforts to increase student retention and progression through a program emphasizing ongoing evaluation. Each institution—Dillard, Fisk, Hampton, Howard, Xavier, and Johnson C. Smith Universities, and Morehouse, Rust, Spelman, and Tougaloo Colleges—developed evaluation plans, comprehensive databases for monitoring progress, instruments for assessing factors that contributed to progress, and annual reports. They measured their progress through retention rates, progression (persistence), and graduation. The components of each program were varied: residential learning communities; a mandatory summer school prior to the freshman fall term, for which students were given a stipend to forego summer employment; faculty mentoring; a freshman orientation course; tutoring; and internships. Each school showed improvement in one or more of the performance indicators.


This report is an evaluation of the progress and effectiveness of the student services and special programs within the California Community Colleges (CCC). They are: Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSP&S), Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE), Board Financial Assistance Program (BFAP), Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), Foster Care Education, Child Development, and Matriculation. The programs and services target a diverse student population and together enhance student equity, access, retention, persistence toward goal completion, and successful educational outcomes. The evaluations on progress and effectiveness are based on information from research studies, student surveys, and anecdotal evidence. Each program or service is described and evaluated separately. The results indicate the following: 1) the programs and services have a positive impact on access, retention, persistence, and outcomes of students with special needs; 2) many colleges within the CCC have matched state funding for the services and programs in excess of that required by law; 3) the instructional and student services staff are becoming more actively involved; 4) there is increased coordination among the support services in the colleges, as well as stronger integration of special needs students into the college mainstream; and 5) lack of adequate funding threatens to impede the ability of these programs and services to fulfill their purposes.

The Adventor Program is an intervention initiative designed and implemented at Kutztown University in Kutztown, Pennsylvania, to promote the academic success and retention of students of color. This article focuses on the applicability of the program. Data and outcomes were collected during the program's pilot year, 1995-1996, and comprise a small sample. Results were based on end-of-year surveys by both participants and faculty mentors. Eighty-eight percent of the students and 91% of the faculty enjoyed their advising/mentoring experience. Seventy-seven percent of the pilot Adventor students returned for a second year of study, compared to only 67% for the control group. The GPA of the control group, however, was higher than the Adventor group by 0.13. A longitudinal study needs to be conducted to help determine the full effect of the program.

*NOTE:* A search on Kutztown's Web site found no such program. However, the institution has a Department of Developmental Education that houses the Act 101 Program, Pennsylvania's Equal Opportunity Program, Student Support Services, Supplemental Instruction, Counseling, Tutoring labs, Academic skills labs, Peer Tutoring, and a Microcomputer Laboratory.


This article investigated the graduation rates of students in Rutgers University's 1980-92 first-time, full-time freshman cohorts of Student Support Services participants. Cohort groups had a mean graduation rate of 56.2% (comparable to national data for similar students and to regular enrollment at Rutgers). The strong outcomes were attributed to the network of federal-, state-, and university-funded support services programs. The article also describes Rutgers' integrated services model, a network of variously funded support services for underprepared students, as the context within which RSSSP participants' graduation rates or outcomes were generated.


The paper discusses the various services provided through the federally funded TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) program at Kankakee Community College in Kankakee, Illinois. The author delineates some of the most effective practices of the program, including: helping students gain career clarity, providing intensive academic planning, monitoring academic progress, developing comprehensive transfer services, offering learning enhancements, and recognizing achievements and resources that contribute to student success. More than 80% of the TRIO students persist in their academic goals each year. The graduation rates, transfer rates, and GPA levels of these students far exceed those of similar students who are not enrolled in the TRIO program as documented in annual program evaluations.
CULTURALLY CONSCIOUS PROGRAMS

The term “culturally conscious” refers to those programs that utilize distinctive cultural elements in their approach to recruiting, educating, retaining, and graduating a specific ethnic group.


Among factors affecting African American males' academic achievement, student/faculty relationships are vital. Using theory-based teaching strategies, faculty can support student success by designing in-class experiences to incorporate racial-identity development activities. The author suggests three components that can serve “as a conduit for facilitating identity development and thus provide positive results and success” are 1) including a safe space for expression of personal experience, 2) facilitating and promoting the understanding of difference, and 3) providing the opportunity to explore Black manhood issues. The classroom should be a safe space for expression of personal experiences, acceptance of differences, and exploration of issues.


The author discusses the Puente Project, a California community college program that addresses the needs of first-generation Latino college students from a cultural context. The word puente means bridge; thus, the project serves as “a bridge between the cultural context of the students and the academic environments of the program and the larger organization as a whole.” The uniqueness of the project, the author states, is its focus on “welcoming students of color into the organization by affirming who they are and what they bring with them as valuable cultural assets that provide a foundation and a framework for their learning experiences.” At the time of this article the Puente Project was in its 17th year, one very strong measure of its success. Additionally, the retention rate for participants is 97%. Also included is a brief review of the research on mentoring and the role of organizational socialization. Included are highlights of the program successes and an explanation of the methods used to collect and analyze data about mentoring and the Puente Project.


This article addresses the educational approaches, programs, and services developed for American Indians at both tribal colleges and non-tribal community colleges that are transferable to other institutions. These institutions are successful in retaining American Indian students because they combine distinctive cultural elements with a pragmatic approach to education. Instructors serve as “agents” of American Indian history, language, and culture, fostering in students the belief that their culture and community have great value. At the same time, students are acquiring the skills necessary for future educational and occupational endeavors. Culturally-conscious approaches to instruction include emphasizing visual and cooperative learning. The authors cite three non-Indian community colleges that have been responsive to Indian students: San Juan College in New Mexico, American River College in California, and Truman College in Illinois.
DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In his article “The Future Trends in Developmental Education,” David Arendale states that the predominant approach today is based on a medical model of diagnosing students and then prescriptively placing them in separate developmental education courses or mandated activities. Moreover, he says that, nationwide, four-year institutions are considering eliminating developmental education because it “waters down” the academic standards. Arendale refutes this; developmental education programs in fact allow faculty to maintain high academic standards since students can develop the requisite skills in a separate developmental course or an adjunct academic support activity (Arendale, 2001).


The authors present a seven-step model for analyzing the impact of retention programs on students. Their goal was to provide a straightforward, common-sense approach to research that has the potential for yielding the appropriate data and then to present it in a format and style useful to decision-makers only marginally familiar with research methodology. At each step, they utilize examples from actual research and analysis done on one SI program at a four-year public urban university. The steps are: 1a) Identify the outcome [dependent] variables (GPA, graduation rates, final course grade); 1b) Identify the input [independent] variables (SAT scores, high school class rank, frequency of SI attendance); 2) Gather the data on the independent variables for each student in class; 3) Maintain an ongoing data on the information needed for the dependent variables; 4) Enter the data into a computer in an organized format that eases analyses; 5) Define the criteria that determine who is an attendee or participant; 6) Analyze the data using an appropriate data analysis software package; and 7) Set up the results in a readable manner, including relevant narratives necessary to explain and clarify the data.


Describes Rutgers University's Gateway Retention Program, which involves a number of academic departments in the development of retention programs. Additionally, the article discusses the importance of selecting faculty who are motivated and committed to assist underprepared students in succeeding in their courses. Highlights particular Gateway courses in the sciences, humanities, and social sciences. Discusses the benefits of faculty involvement and the importance of incentives for involvement. Reports a 90% first-to-second year retention rate.


Describes the developmental studies program at Prince George’s County Community College, a successful effort to improve retention rates and graduate students with high levels of academic competence. Stresses the importance of testing and remediation in reading, English, and mathematics; coordination with high schools; the learning community concept; and learning lab requirements for developmental students.
The following articles discuss how some institutions are using financial assistance as a retention tool.


This report examines how seven merit scholarship programs in six southern states help increase participation in postsecondary education. The programs are: Florida Bright Futures; Georgia HOPE Scholarships; Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships; Louisiana Tuition Opportunity Program for Students; Maryland Science and Technology Scholarship Program; South Carolina Palmetto Scholars, and South Carolina Legislative Incentives for Future Excellence. The report finds in the programs such common features as: a basis only in academic achievement, encouragement to attend colleges in the student's home state, and provision of financial aid to middle income families. The report identifies factors that influenced the establishment of these programs, including increases in college costs, reductions in the share of public college revenues from state appropriations, and changes in the type and sources of financial aid. An evaluation of Georgia's program notes that: (1) more students from low-income families are applying for federal Pell Grants (required of HOPE applicants from low-income families); (2) both high school grades and college entrance examination scores have improved; and (3) HOPE recipients (in comparison with similar students) have earned more college credits, have higher grade-point averages, and are less likely to drop out of college. A table that compares all seven programs is included. (Contains 10 references.)


This article focuses on the William H. Gray III College Completion Challenge Grant Program, H.R. 3223. In an effort to stem the increase in the college dropout rate, this program would offer institutions grants to develop and implement student retention programs. The article also outlines the requirements an institution must meet in order to be eligible for the funds.


The author evaluates the performance of engineering institutions in graduating minority freshmen, in order to develop a better understanding of the institutional factors that determine success in encouraging retention through the bachelor's degree. In this study, four indices were used to evaluate the performance of engineering institutions in graduating minority freshmen: 1) total number and proportion of minority graduates, 2) proportion of full-time minority freshmen who earned a bachelor's degree (graduate/retention rate), 3) retention rate of minorities relative to the retention rate of non-minorities, and 4) total number and proportion of entering full-time minority freshmen. Justification for including enrollment data on entering full-time minority freshmen allows the assessment of the pool of future potential students and determination of their institutional commitment. Some of the findings are as follows: 1) national retention rates for minorities—African American, Latino, and American Indian students—in engineering is 36%, based on analysis of entering freshman cohorts from 1991-93 and graduating classes from 1996-98; 2) at current graduation rates, a minority student entering a college engineering program is only half as likely to obtain an engineering degree as a non-minority; 3) the minority retention rate at highly selective institutions is 49.55—well above the national average, while non-selective institutions retain minority students at a rate of about 17.6%; and 4) availability of financial aid is an important factor in accounting for the differences in the performance of individual institutions.
First-Year Experience programs generally provide academic and transitional support to first-year students, particularly low-income, first-generation students, and academically underprepared students. These programs may provide some or all of the following activities: assistance in getting acquainted with the institution (orientation), academic advising and counseling, career exploration assistance, a freshman seminar, student-peer and/or student-faculty mentoring, academic-skills training, and social-support activities.


After studying the national literature and local needs, Kutztown University (Pennsylvania) created the Student Support Services Freshman Year Program to help at-risk freshmen acclimate to the campus environment and succeed in college. The program consists of five components: academic advising/counseling, a freshman colloquium, a student-mentor program, academic-skills training, and social-support activities. The authors assert that this program differs from other freshman year programs in two very important ways: The program utilizes intrusive intervention, including mandatory program requirements. Also, the program provides extrinsic rewards, such as early registration, a faculty advisor's support and attention in academic and personal concerns, program support, the representing of student needs to faculty and other university offices, free tutoring, and other study skills support through the Department of Developmental Studies.


This annotated bibliography describes resource materials on educational theory and practice related to the first college year. This edition contains nearly twice as many entries as the second edition. Works are grouped into these topical headings: (1) "Academic Advising and Student Counseling"; (2) "Academic Support"; (3) "Assessment and Evaluation"; (4) "Career Issues"; (5) "Community and Two-Year Colleges"; (6) "Curriculum and Teaching"; (7) "Faculty"; (8) "Financial Issues"; (9) "The First Year"; (10) "First-Year Seminars"; (11) "Health Topics and Issues"; (12) "International Perspectives"; (13) "Learning Communities"; (14) "New Student Orientation"; (15) "Parental and Family Influence and Issues"; (16) "Peer Influence, Interaction, and Training"; (17) "Reports with Implications for the First-Year Experience"; (18) "Residence Life"; (19) "Retention and Success of First-Year Students"; (20) "Student Behavior, Characteristics, and Development"; (21) "Student Sub-Populations"; (22) "Summer Bridge Programs"; and (23) "Technology."


Muraskin discusses the need for structured first-year programs that help at-risk students make a successful transition to college, and gives a detailed description of the components of such a program. She concludes with examples of programs at Marquette in Wisconsin, Lewis-Clark State College in Idaho, the University of New Orleans, the University of Maryland-College Park, and the University of South Carolina.


The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship, if any, between participation in an institution's freshman-year experience (FYE) course and student retention and success for first-year students enrolled in the course. In a study conducted at a medium-sized, regional, predominantly White, public, four-year university in the Midwest, a group of students enrolled in the institution's freshman-year experience course were compared to students who had a similar academic, ethnic, and gender profile, who were not enrolled, and who took similar courses. They were tracked for the Fall 1993, Spring 1994, Fall 1994, Spring 1995, Fall 1995, and Spring 1996. Results showed that 63% of the students who participated in the freshman-year experience course persisted to the
next fall term, compared to 56% of the control group. Additionally, FYE students tended to earn higher grade point averages than the control group, with a mean GPA of 2.17 compared to 1.99, on a 4.00 scale. Lastly, while both groups completed fewer than one-third of their general education requirements by the end of the first year of enrollment, the FYE students tended to have higher ratios of earned credit hours in relation to the number of credit hours attempted than the control group.


This final report describes activities and accomplishments of a three-year program, the Queens College (New York) Freshman Year Initiative (FYI), which emphasizes the importance of the academic community and the role of faculty in integrating freshmen into the college community. The program has become institutionalized and currently involves 600 freshmen (two-thirds of the 1996 entering class), 24 upper-class teaching assistants, and 60 faculty from 22 departments across all divisions of the college. The major accomplishments are seen to be: (1) creation of a freshman class integrated into the academic and cultural life of the college, (2) involvement of full- and part-time faculty in the common enterprise of teaching freshmen, (3) institutional change that integrates all academic programs and support services affecting freshmen, and (4) a changed ethos that makes teaching freshmen a valued endeavor. Evidence of the program's success includes establishment of a new office for the ongoing program and formation of a new Provost's Steering Committee on Freshmen. Individual sections of the report include an overview; the project's purpose, background and origins, and major activities; and an evaluation. Appendixes include an article on the FYI, the FYI schedule, reports from a faculty member and a teaching assistant, an informal evaluation report (Thomas Frosch), and a brochure.
FRESHMAN ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

Freshman Orientation activities help students to establish a firm connection with key faculty, staff, and campus administrators, as well as to become aware of important programs and services that are critical to the student’s first year of success. Additionally, testing and course registration are done during this period. While some orientations can be one-day, many are two-day and even weeklong sessions.


The author discusses the impact of the Freshman Orientation Week (FOW) at Mount Ida College. The FOW is the first component of an academic achievement and retention enhancement program for at-risk students, called “The Learning Circle.” (The other four components of The Learning Circle include a personal Learning Specialist; a weekly group meeting with the Director of the program; a peer mentoring system; and the Muhammad Ali Study Group.) The core operating principle is that the most effective support programs for at-risk students provide affective, behavioral, and social assistance in addition to cognitive support services to achieve academic success. A blind cohort group of at-risk students was chosen for comparative assessment. The FOW students developed a strong sense of solidarity between themselves and with the participating faculty and personnel, which enabled them to integrate into the campus community successfully. All 23 students stated that they would be more successful academically and socially during the fall semester, based on what they learned and experienced during FOW. They all completed the first semester and 91% preregistered for the spring semester. Their mean fall semester GPA was 2.3. In comparison, the Cohort Group retention rate was only 80% and the mean GPA was 1.58. Average GPA for the FOW students was 2.29, compared to 1.65 for the Cohort Group. The author concluded that, while a freshman orientation week is both costly and labor-intensive, its benefits are nonetheless well worth the cost and effort.


This article examines the role of orientation programs from a student learning perspective and reviews current orientation programming practices. The authors state that orientation programs facilitate student learning in three general dimensions: transition processes, academic integration, and personal and social integration. Included are descriptions of some exemplary orientation activities which demonstrate the varied aspects of high-quality orientation programs.
FRESHMAN SEMINAR PROGRAMS

Freshman Seminar Programs provide a rigorous, integrative intellectual experience for students in their first semester of college study. Seminars provide students with a common learning experience, build a sense of community among small groups of freshmen, and improve retention from the first to the second semester. Additionally, Freshman Seminars are often a component of a Structured First-Year program.


This article describes the internationally acclaimed freshman seminar program, University 101, at the University of South Carolina, and how it has helped to improve the retention rate of African American students. The author cites Pounds’ (1989) three “avenues of change” that any predominantly White institution should pursue to improve retention of African American students: a) provide meaningful ways to involve African American students in campus life; b) help them form positive attachments to adults; and c) provide security from threatening situations. The author also reviews the important developmental needs of African American students and offers examples of how freshman seminars can be designed to meet such needs.


This monograph provides 17 essays on characteristics, programs, and outcomes related to students’ freshman year. It focuses on the community college’s role in enrolling first-year students.


The College developed and implemented a course, "College Success," to address detected deficits in learning and study skills. The course is voluntary, and provides small group experience on issues related to effective learning, orientation, advisement, and personal development. The class meets twice weekly for the first half of the Fall semester, and once a week for the remainder of the semester. The course covers effective reading of texts, abstracting critical information, note- and test-taking, problem solving, and decision-making. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the course was measured by first semester grades, academic dismissal rates, student feedback, and instructor feedback. Based on these results it was determined that the course was successful.


The author describes how implementing the portfolio project can provide the reflective practice needed by first-year students. At the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the portfolio projects are semester-long assignments in which the portfolio serves as a “capstone” activity to help freshmen more thoroughly analyze their freshman year experiences and more meaningfully integrate them into their overall academic and personal development. The portfolio also is a way to build in accountability for quality performance in the Freshman Seminar. Portfolio entries fall into three categories: those that show evolution and change; those that illustrate accomplishment, and those that encourage integration and application. The model is easily adapted to other types of seminars; for instance, for discipline-based seminar courses the assignments could include a "State of the Discipline" section and a "Future Trends" section. Sample evaluation grids are provided.
These programs are designed to prepare students for graduate school, and generally target first-generation, low-income, ethnic minority students, and students least likely to be retained through the baccalaureate degree. Other than research opportunities, financial support, mentoring, and internships are some of the components of these programs.


The authors assess the satisfaction rate of 68 graduates of the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program for disadvantaged students at a major state university. The study focused on this broad research question: How effective were selected McNair program components in preparing targeted students for graduate schools? Students evaluated the relative importance of each component and their levels of satisfaction regarding each. Financial support, research, mentoring, and internships were among the most useful components.


This article summarizes programs that target undergraduate minorities for matriculation into graduate programs in which they are underrepresented. The author cites three factors that have resulted in lower graduate degrees—which remain at about 8-125—for these students: substantially lower mean performance scores, lower grades at undergraduate level, and less interaction with undergraduate faculty (Nettles, 1990; Brown, 1987) and highlights programs created as far back as the 1970s. The author discusses programs and strategies in three major components: academic assistance, traditional forms of financial support, and mentoring strategies. Each area includes "best practices." Only one program is cited with program results, the Purdue-Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC), established in 1979. Participants have been tracked, with the following results: nine pending master's degrees, one earned M.D./Ph.D., and several M.D. degrees.


The authors surveyed 157 Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate research internship programs and their effectiveness in promoting graduates' success in entering and persisting through graduate school. They discuss the most effective components, and examine the relationship between the characteristics of the internships and the degree of success in placing students in graduate school programs. Data were based on a questionnaire distributed to all 157 programs. From the 35 useful responses they determined that there was a weak relationship between preparation for the research internship and graduate school success. Three key elements—preparation, presentation, and publications—were missing from most of the programs. The authors highlight one effective McNair program at Truman State University, which includes a pre-research internship for sophomores. Effectiveness was measured through a survey they sent to Truman McNair alumni who were either currently enrolled in, or had completed, a postgraduate program. On a scale of 1-4 (low to high) alumni found the program effective for admission and placement in a graduate program (3.17), for effectiveness for obtaining funding (3.00), and effectiveness for completion of a graduate degree (3.00). The analysis indicated that most McNair programs are not particularly demanding when it comes to the research internship. They conclude that the Truman McNair program was successful because it had the three crucial elements of preparation, presentation, and publication.


Tennessee State University implemented Project Bridge in an effort to increase the number of qualified and motivated Black students for graduate study leading to a career in public service. The project emphasized curricular and extracurricular activities; it included two special courses on computer use and statistical applications, seminars and a summer internship program. The project served three consecutive cohorts of students entering the upper
division of their undergraduate programs. This report discusses the components of the program and the outcomes and includes samples of project materials.
LEARNING COMMUNITIES

“Learning community” refers to a curricular restructuring approach that links or clusters classes around an interdisciplinary theme, and enrolls a common cohort of students. Learning communities provide intellectual interaction between students and their peers and with their faculty. The four basic models are linked courses, course clusters, freshman interest groups, and coordinated studies. Learning communities can be most effective in improving student performance and persistence.


This article discusses a new model for expanding the role of academic support in higher education. Georgia State University’s Learning Support Programs initially had provided only developmental courses and a tutorial center. Based on Keimig’s (1983) “hierarchy of learning programs,” the Learning Support Program was expanded to include both Supplemental Instruction (SI) and adjunct, or “co-courses.” The authors describe how the programs were used and the results, and conclude by offering 10 steps for other institutions to consider in expanding their academic support programs.


This publication presents essays by members of Restructuring for Urban Student Success (RUSS) and other faculty, administrators, staff, and graduate students on participating campuses. RUSS is described as a partnership of three institutions—Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Portland State University in Oregon, and Temple University in Pennsylvania—whose goal is a voluntary self-study, assessment, and improvement of the education of entering students in urban universities (first-time and transfer students). Urban institutions strive to offer “cutting-edge” research and competitive graduate and professional programs, while also attending to the needs of underprepared and/or nontraditional first-year and transfer students. Each of the institutions has five to seven years of experience implementing different models of learning communities. The partners have developed voluntary self-study and assessment practices that make public their challenges and successes in improving undergraduate education. Two main questions the partnership addresses are: 1) Does implementation of learning communities in urban universities lead to improved student engagement? and 2) Does the self-study/site visit process the partnership developed advance the institutional change process? The collaborative was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts in 1996. These essays represent a comprehensive portrait of the results of the RUSS project in meeting its goals in its fourth year. Part 1 includes essays by all RUSS partners. Part 2 features Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Part 3 features Temple University and Part 4 features Portland State University. (Contains references or bibliographies.)


During the last two decades, learning communities, which are felt to have benefits that extend beyond students to faculty and the institution, have expanded to include many different models. This digest reviews five major higher education learning community models currently in existence: (1) Linked courses, which link cohorts of students taking two courses in common, with one course typically content-based and the other application-based (faculty in each course may teach independently or together); (2) learning clusters, where instead of linking two courses together, a student cohort is linked in three or four courses, which often serve as the students’ entire course load; (3) freshmen interest groups (FIGs), which are linked around academic majors and include a peer-advising component that allows students to discuss course work and other college adjustment problems (faculty play a lesser role in FIGs); (4) federated learning communities, the most complex of the models, in which a cohort of students takes three theme-based courses in addition to a three-credit seminar taught by a Master Learner (a professor from a different discipline who takes the courses and fulfills all class requirements along with the students); and (5) coordinated studies, in which faculty and students participate in full-time active learning based on an interdisciplinary theme.

Discusses some initiatives that use restructuring to address problems of a fragmented curriculum and student isolation in large college classes. These initiatives include Peer-Facilitated Learning Communities, such as Supplemental Instruction, invented at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (Deanna Martin and David Arendale) and the Emerging Scholars Programs, which emerged from the University of California Berkeley (Uri Treisman); Linked Freshman Seminars at Washington State University (Jean Henscheid); and the Learning Communities/Freshman Interest Groups, invented at the University of Oregon (Jack Bennett). The Linked-Class Learning Communities include Wraparounds Seminars (Monica Devanas) at Rutgers University and the Linked Writing Courses such as the Interdisciplinary Writing Program at the University of Washington. Course-Cluster Learning Communities include the Freshman Year Initiative at CUNY-Queens College and the Triads at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Lastly, the Learning Communities as Teaching Communities refers to the impact that teaching in these different learning communities has on the instructors who are involved. Faculty members, students, and student affairs professionals describe how team-planning and team-teaching opens “fascinating windows” on their discipline and their teaching.


This report discusses the STAR program, a student-centered learning project. It was developed to increase the success and retention rates of underrepresented students. The “learning community” is created by grouping classes around a common theme. The STAR program theme was “college success for the basic skills student.” A key component of a learning community is the linkages between the classes selected to support this common theme. The community serves to assist students in developing communication skills, utilizing interdisciplinary curricula and cooperative learning. It also facilitates faculty involvement, helps build students' self-esteem, and offers academic and social support. In its assessment, the college determined that the program had significantly improved students' reading and writing skills, advanced a larger number of underrepresented students to higher course levels than usual, improved retention, reduced the number of underrepresented students on academic probation, increased their credit completion ratio, and elevated their self-esteem. The report includes appendixes with a description of the basic skills and competencies emphasized in the project, and a learning community action plan.


This article reviews recent literature related to student retention. First-generation and low-income students in particular, are the least likely to persist to a four-year degree. With that in mind, institutional retention efforts must address the needs of this population of students if more equitable educational attainment rates are desired. Thayer reviews theoretical models of retention, special characteristics of first-generation and low-income students, and retention efforts that address these characteristics. He suggests that structured first-year and learning community programs respond in practical ways to established retention theory and to the specific needs and characteristics of students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds. Drawing upon “promising practices” that are the hallmark of Student Support Services programs, he highlights four institutions—Skagit Valley College, Drexel University, Colorado State University, and Michigan State University—that have implemented learning community strategies in the form of summer bridge programs, academic year programs, and linked summer/academic year programs.


Tinto discusses the role of the college classroom as it pertains to effective learning and academic integration. For commuter students, often the only connection they have with the "college community" is through the classroom activities; consequently, it is what happens in the classroom that could significantly affect how and what students learn, and how their involvement affects student persistence. Tinto studies the Coordinated Studies
Program (CSP) at Seattle Central Community College to determine whether the program makes a difference in student learning, and if so, how, compared to "traditional" classroom learning. Two forms of inquiry were performed: a longitudinal study in the form of two questionnaires—one administered at beginning of the fall quarter and the other later at the end of the quarter—and a qualitative case study. The survey questions indicated that CSP students showed greater involvement in academic and social activities and greater perceived developmental gains over the course of the year than did students in the comparison classes of the regular curriculum. The qualitative case study revealed that there were three main components that showed the ways in which the communities influenced persistence: a) building supportive peer groups, b) shared learning-bridging the academic/social divide, and c) gaining a voice in the construction of knowledge. Thus, the learning community can significantly affect how students, peers, and faculty connect inside and outside of the classroom.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES
Freshman Interest Groups


This article examines the relationship between residential learning communities and students' experiences and persistence during the first year at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Two questions guided the research: First, do students in residential learning communities have more positive college experiences and outcomes than do their counterparts in traditional residence halls? Second, are the relationships between college experiences and outcomes different for the two residential groups? The Learning Communities/Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs) were modeled after those at the Universities of Oregon and Washington. Data taken from 2,678 students indicated that, while the residential learning communities did not improve students' academic achievement and persistence directly, they did indirectly improve students' success by enhancing their incorporation into college.


The authors describe an innovative and effective partnership for promoting student success: residential learning communities at the University of Missouri-Columbia called Learning Communities/Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs). The chapter is structured according to the following questions: 1) How did this collaboration get started? 2) How was the need for such collaboration determined? 3) What form did the collaboration take? 4) Who provided the leadership and the resources? 5) What did the campus do? 6) What problems were encountered? 7) How was the program evaluated? The last section provides recommendations, implications, and conclusions for institutions seeking to create learning communities through partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs.


This study compared the support provided by the University of Washington's Freshman Interest Group (FIG) program, which emphasizes interaction with faculty and peers, as compared to the support provided in a traditional academic structure. Results confirm that FIGs provide more support, especially through classmates, but produce no overall difference in adjustment.
LEARNING COMMUNITIES
Learning Clusters


In this paper the author discusses a collaborative learning program implemented at the University of Texas, El Paso (UTEP) designed to help improve the performance of minority students, particularly Hispanics, in the fields of math, science, and engineering. Through the learning communities initiative, UTEP aims to redesign education to fit the specific needs of the Hispanic student population. The program is sponsored by the National Science Foundation, as part of its “Model Institutions for Excellence” initiative, and links courses in English composition with either science and math or engineering and math. A Cluster of 25 students takes classes as a group, which fosters collegiality and familiarity. Each Cluster is provided with a physical place where they can meet outside of class, work on joint projects, receive free tutoring from peer facilitators, or just chat. All courses use learning communities and collaborative projects and most including writing across the curriculum. The role of English composition serves as a means to articulate what is being studied in all Cluster classes. Results show that 75-80% of the students are passing precalculus math courses, as compared to a 75% failure rate before implementing the Cluster initiative. Additionally, there has been a marked improvement in students’ and faculty relationships, as well as a significant increase in levels of student self-confidence.
MENTORING PROGRAMS

Mentoring is typically defined as a relationship between a more experienced and a less experienced person in which the mentor provides guidance, advice, support, and feedback to the protégé (Haney, 1997). Mentors provide encouragement and support as students develop habits and attitudes that lead to academic and personal success, particularly first-generation, low-income, ethnic minorities, and academically underprepared students. By working with students beginning in their first year, mentors can assist their “mentees” in building solid academic foundations, as well as forestalling the potential isolation and loneliness that ethnic minority students often experience on a majority White campus. There are student/student and faculty/student mentoring programs, as well as programs that pair students with leaders or business people in the community.


This article highlights the art of mentoring and its effects on retention and success as it applies to African American men. The article provides an overview of the process of mentoring as well as the theoretical framework. Four successful mentoring models are presented, in which African American men are known to benefit: 1) The “Black Man’s Think Tank” at the University of Cincinnati; 2) the “Student African American Brotherhood” at Georgia Southwestern University; 3) the “Black Male Initiative” at Texas Southern University; and 4) the “Meyerhoff Program” at the University of Louisville, at which two-thirds of the mentored African American men were retained over five regular semesters, and nine out of fourteen achieved junior status. Additionally, the article presents eight recommendations for viable, effective mentoring programs to promote the retention, academic achievement, and leadership development of African American men.


This case study describes a two-model mentoring program implemented at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to increase the retention rate among entering students. It was implemented during the 1990-1992 academic years. The focus of this mentoring project was to enable students to persist through graduation. Four operational goals were developed: 1) to assign each freshman a mentor, 2) to increase retention of freshmen by 15%, 3) to decrease probation rate of freshmen by 15%, and 4) to increase the mean cumulative GPA of freshmen by 5%. One model, the Preventive Model, was used with first-year students; this emphasized the practices that freshman students should engage in and negative behaviors they should avoid. Mentors were recruited from within the institution. Each mentor was to help the student develop, not lose, his identity. A “Skills Enhancement Booklet” was provided to serve as a guide for refining designated skills. The Clinical Model targeted all levels of students who were experiencing academic difficulty and had been placed on probation. Mentors were recruited from off-campus—mostly SU graduates, or other community professionals. Students in the Preventive Model met individually with their mentors, while those in the Clinical Model were “group mentored,” and these sessions focused on the benefits of a college education. Students participating in this model were encouraged and monitored throughout the semester as they followed a planned schedule of meetings and activities. At the end of the fall semester students in the Preventive Model had a retention rate of 85%, a probation rate of 8%, and a cumulative GPA of 2.668. Eighty percent of the students in the Clinical Model were taken off probation and placed in good standing. Spring semester results were similar. While the results seem very positive, it is not clear what actions or interventions were used in either model.
MINORITIES IN HEALTH CARE & OTHER PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

These programs all specifically target Native American students in an effort to increase their chances of choosing careers in the fields of psychology and rehabilitation training programs, Nursing, Teacher Education, Social Work, Law, and Medicine. Minorities still make up a very small percentage of students receiving degrees in math, science, and engineering.


This report focuses on retaining Native American students in psychology and rehabilitation training programs. Recruitment practices geared toward minorities are different from those for Anglo students. Based on a survey of Native American undergraduates this report offers 10 ideas that will improve recruitment. Additionally, there are four main potential barriers that must be addressed with regard to retention: financial need, the environment of the institution, student characteristics, and academic support. The article is divided into three sections: strategies to improve recruitment, strategies to improve retention, and model programs and best practices. Model programs that have been implemented at the University of North Dakota, the University of Arizona, San Diego State University in California, Binghamton University in New York, and Antioch University in Ohio are highlighted.
MINORITIES IN MATH, SCIENCE, & ENGINEERING PROGRAMS

These programs all specifically target ethnic minorities in an effort to increase their chances of choosing careers in these fields. Minorities still make up a very small percentage of students receiving degrees in math, science, and engineering.


This report is a review of minority student success programs in Washington State and around the country. Program directors, deans, state higher education boards, students, counselors, and researchers were contacted for information about successful programs. It was found that there were key elements that the programs shared: 1) institution-wide commitment; 2) strong community linkages; 3) increased access through focused recruitment, admissions, and financial aid practices; 4) comprehensive, systematic, and integrated student support services; 5) assessment, course placement, and student progress reporting systems; 6) good student data and ongoing program evaluation; 7) a campus climate infused with a sense of the value of diversity; 8) the hiring and development of minority faculty, administrators, and staff; 9) training for all in the understanding of their own and other cultures; 10) a multicultural curriculum; and 11) pedagogical strategies that encourage student involvement and honor diverse perspectives. The program descriptions herein are grouped under the headings "early intervention and recruiting," "college student and academic support," "transfer and articulation," "instructional programs with integrated student support services," and "curriculum and pedagogy." Additionally, the author discusses what doesn't work, and practices that often stand in the way of establishing successful minority success efforts, including, but not limited to: responsibility for minority student success as the responsibility of one person or office, responsibility assigned to student services alone, piecemeal programming, focusing studies only on understanding unsuccessful students rather than the successful ones, and brief basic skills programs as a "quick fix." Four programs from the state of Washington and 37 programs from around the nation are highlighted.


This study examined the academic and social integration of Black students, all of whom were recipients of scholarships in a science and math scholarship program for Black students at the University of Maryland (Baltimore County). The Meyerhoff Program provides a range of support services in addition to the scholarship support that includes study groups and personal and academic advising. This study compared 15 Meyerhoff scholars and 15 non-Meyerhoff White students with similar academic credentials. Qualitative data were collected from interviews (sophomore and senior years) with the Meyerhoff students and were organized around the six principles in Tinto's theory of student persistence. Results pointed to a theme of black achiever isolation. Academically talented Black students entered college with few, if any, academic relationships with other achieving Black students. Meeting and studying with other talented Black students was highly valued by the Meyerhoff participants. The study's conclusions also underscored the importance of strong relationships between faculty and students even when those faculty members are predominantly White. The study's overall conclusion is that being in a "race-specific" program at a predominantly White institution contributed to the success of the students. The senior year interview form is appended. (Contains 47 references.)


This article examines the unique challenges faced by the gifted and talented Black man and reviews issues of identifying gifted African American male college students and factors affecting their retention. It profiles the Meyerhoff Scholars Program at the University of Maryland. It outlines seven recommendations that address campus-wide attitudes and practices impeding the progress of Black men: 1) support and conduct extensive research on gifted Black men; 2) look for examples of high achievement and capability in Black men who demonstrate a wide range of capabilities, including intelligence, leadership, artistic ability, communication, etc.; 3) recruit and encourage the participation of gifted Black men in existing honors programs; 4) establish a support network (critical mass) of
gifted Black students; 5) work with faculty to increase their understanding of the needs of all Black students, especially the issues experienced by gifted Black students; 6) encourage gifted Black students to network with a diverse group of students, especially the larger community of Black students; and 7) help gifted Black students make connections with mentors and professionals who share their abilities and interests.


The National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME) mentors underrepresented students and encourages their significant achievements in science, mathematics, and engineering. NACME develops many of its mentoring strategies through its Corporate Scholars Program (CSP), a comprehensive scholarship program linking engineering undergraduates to major technology-intensive companies for internship, professional development, and mentoring. This paper examines the role of mentoring and the internship experience in this successful program. NACME distributed surveys to the interns and their supervisors to elicit their satisfaction with the program. The resulting responses indicated that the program had a significantly positive impact on both. The survey also led to four recommendations: 1) recognize the value of teaming; 2) invest time in developing engineering talent; 3) respect the ambition and abilities of interns; and 4) engage interns in exploring future possibilities.


Freeman Hrabowski III, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, created the Meyerhoff Program to increase the number of African American males earning doctorates, and ultimately to increase minority faculty in engineering, medicine, and the sciences. The program enhances the success of talented African American men in science and engineering by focusing on knowledge and skills, motivation and support, monitoring and advising, academic and social integration, mentoring, leadership training, and early intervention in Black male education. Outcome data show that Meyerhoff students (n=69) achieved GPAs significantly higher than a comparison sample.


This article focuses on the findings of an evaluation study of the Wisconsin Emerging Scholars Program, a nonremedial, multicultural workshop approach to learning calculus that emphasizes community and collaboration. This approach is designed to foster substantial participation of underrepresented ethnic minority students and alleviate the problems of isolation and lack of support in a large, predominantly White university. The UW-Madison implemented the Wisconsin Emerging Scholars Program (WES) in 1994 to assist ethnic minority students in both attaining higher calculus grades and achieving a more successful long-term academic experience in mathematics and science. The students participate in all aspects of the calculus course except that they enroll in a workshop for two hours three times a week, as opposed to enrolling in a discussion section led by a graduate teaching assistant, twice a week for 50 minutes. Qualitative data was collected primarily through open-ended interviews and workshop observations. Quantitative data was obtained through student records. Similar data was collected from a control group comprised of students from traditional discussion sections. The two outcome measures were end-of-course grades (GPA), and percentage of course completers. The WES students consistently outperformed the students in the traditional discussion sections. Their mean grades were four to seven grade points higher. Additionally, the WES students consistently outperformed the ethnic minority students enrolled in traditional discussions in terms of adjusted mean grades since the program's inception.


This article analyzes whether improved performance in calculus by women and minorities influences their choosing and persisting in mathematics, science, or engineering majors. The University of Texas at Austin established the Emerging Scholars Program (ESP) in 1988 to facilitate positive experiences for students in freshman
calculus by providing them a diverse, supportive group with whom they could share and exchange calculus knowledge. The findings indicate that ESP students earn higher calculus grades than other students and are more likely to enroll in second-semester calculus.


Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) has developed a series of minority science, engineering, and mathematics (SEM) programs to address the growing need for students receiving college and advanced degrees in science-based career fields and the underrepresentation of minorities in these fields. The goals of the SEM programs are to interest more women and minorities in pursuing SEM degrees, prepare students for the academic and personal challenges of college, improve the probability of student success in SEM programs, and increase the number of transfer students. Eight of the nine current SEM programs at SFCC focus specifically on college retention: (1) a Summer Institute Pre-College Bridge program, an eight-week summer session including a math/science class, college orientation, and career counseling; (2) scholarships to cover tuition, books, and fees; (3) a faculty mentoring program; (4) an SEM Hispanic Organization; (5) tutorial labs for developmental, entry-level, and other science and math courses; (6) distance learning; and (7) work study positions in the Math/Science department. Decisions related to what programs to propose and how they should be run are made by all members of the Math/Science Department. Program coordination is handled by the Math/Science Coordinator, an educational technician who handles grant writing and program administration and evaluation, and faculty members. Evaluation results indicate that the Summer Institute is effective in encouraging students to take science and math courses and in preparing them to succeed in the courses, and that the tutorial labs reduce attrition.
MULTIPLE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

These programs self-describe as providing “multiple intervention” strategies to increase the academic success, persistence, and retention of academically underprepared students.


Concern about retention and attrition rates in higher education have increased over the years and efforts to identify and treat potential dropouts have grown considerably. Studies investigating the retention and attrition of community college students have found specific characteristics related to outcomes, including full- or part-time attendance, age, employment status, grade point average, being a member of an ethnic minority other than Asian, family obligations, financial concerns, and gender. Since determining predictive characteristics can be difficult, intervention strategies represent an alternative way of approaching retention and attrition and may have greater impact in the long run. Strategies that are widely used and demonstrate the greatest impact include orientation programs, mentoring programs, and multiple strategy approaches combining various efforts. Studies have shown that completion of an orientation program promotes and improves student performance. Faculty and peer mentoring programs aim to improve teacher-student interaction through the use of guidebooks, workshops, tutorial programs, and other academic and social support strategies. Multiple strategy efforts in place at community colleges include the use of campus-wide handbooks of student retention strategies; women's centers to provide support to nontraditional, female students; freshman seminars to promote supportive relationships among students and student-faculty interaction; and the implementation of college funded work-study for on-campus employment. (Contains 16 references.)


This academic assistance program at Washington State University was designed to help ethnic minority students adjust to the demands of university life and succeed both academically and personally. The program was designed to be a proactive, empirically, and behaviorally based intervention. The three major components of the Excel program consist of 1) a two-semester, two-credit core seminar; 2) weekly instructional support groups; and 3) cooperative learning through peer led tutorial/discussion groups. The positive performance of the freshmen in the Excel program suggest that a highly structured and aggressively proactive multi-component program can make a difference. Program effectiveness and student success were measured by GPA: At the end of Year 1 the Excel group had a mean cumulative GPA of 2.10. The non-Excel students' mean cumulative GPA was 1.275. Academic Standing: At the end of Year 1, 60% of the Excel group were in good academic standing, compared to 23% for non-Excel students.


At Bronx Community College about 90% of the student body requires remedial coursework. Dr. Finkelstein, Director of the Coordinated Freshman Program, discusses intervention methods that have worked for their institution: 1) consider the student culture on campus and the lives of students off campus; 2) provide early registration; 3) put the best/most experienced teachers with freshmen; 4) use students to help other students (peer tutors), which is both cost-effective, and a powerful way to provide services; 5) use proactive monitoring, by both faculty and peer tutors; 6) provide "good customer service"; 7) provide a "learning community" that will foster socialization, involvement, and support among the students, as well as between students and faculty and peer tutors; 8) use research to inform and strengthen program development.


This article discusses Santa Fe Community College's "College Success Program" and its effectiveness in
assisting underprepared freshmen in getting a solid start on their postsecondary careers. The institution used strategies from David Ellis' "College Survival Inc." model, creating a three-credit-hour class. The components of the program constituted an extended intervention strategy developed to reinforce the importance of the relationship between study skills, time management, career goal assessment, and academic success. Analysis results revealed that participation in the program decreased the fall course failure rate for African American and female students, and increased fall GPA for African American and male students.


This article analyzes the three main campuses of the Seattle Community Colleges and the constituencies each serves. The main focus is on Seattle Central Community College, which concentrates on meeting the needs of its ethnically diverse, older, and international students and exemplifies the commitment to the urban college mission that characterizes Seattle's community college system. (VWC) Central has the largest percentage of students of color at 31%, compared to 25% at Seattle North, and 21% at Seattle South. The institution has implemented the Coordinated Studies Program, patterned after one at The Evergreen State College. Intervention strategies include mandatory advising for all new students, a stringent academic alert system tracking students for three quarters, and a pilot program requiring entering students who test at developmental levels to take a one-credit orientation course. A large tutoring program is available. Additionally, there is a strong commitment to bringing technology to the students, including the commitment of all available funds to keeping up-to-date technology on the campus. To encourage campus participation, there are over 50 organizations, including ethnic clubs for any group that wishes to form one. The institution also serves ESL students and students with disabilities.


This paper examines what public colleges are doing to improve the retention of students and provides a synopsis of 12 examples of "best practices" in Indiana and three from other states. The commission also presents 11 observations, each accompanied by one or more possible strategies that might improve student retention. The observations and strategies fall under the following categories: (1) Knowledge of literature and practices, (2) Scope of programs and activities, (3) Data gathering and analysis, (4) Incentives, (5) Community, (6) Two-year college education, (7) African American students, (8) Program measurement or assessment, (9) The role of administration and faculty, (10) Student performance, and (11) The future of retention programs in the academic community. Appended are detailed descriptions of the 14 examples of "best practices." Among the schools discussed are Indiana University Bloomington, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Ball State University, the University of Michigan, Florida State University, and Xavier University (Louisiana).


This article highlights successful retention programs at three Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hampton University, Xavier University, and Spelman College, as part of a five-year project funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts. The project's mission is to help improve academic achievement and graduation rates at 10 private Black colleges and universities. These three have made significant progress in improving academic achievement and retention through the efforts of the leaders of each of these institutions, who each brought stability, financial resources, innovation, and standards of excellence to their institutions. Academic support is realized through the faculty, administration, and students. Each utilizes some or all of the following: intrusive advising and academic monitoring, registration advising, strong faculty/student relationships, weekly or bi-weekly meetings with students, small discussion groups, counseling, tutoring, and cultural activities. Upper class students serve as tutors and mentors. Results: Hampton saw a decrease in percentage of freshmen on academic probation, from 20% in 1994-95 to 15% in 1996-97. At Xavier more students are passing the sophomore mathematics competency exam (the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency), from 65% in Fall 1994 to 76% in Spring 1997. Students who spent more than 20 hours in the Academic Support Program spring semester 1996 increased their GPAs by .71, on average, over the previous semester. Retention improved, and the six-year graduation rate is 45%, over the national average for African American students, which is 34%. No data was provided for Spelman, a women's liberal arts
college. However, 40% of the current students (1998) major in sciences; Spelman awards the second-highest number of baccalaureate degrees granted to African Americans in mathematics; it is ranked second among the top 26 institutions that send African Americans on to science and engineering doctorate programs; and 72% of Spelman women graduate in six years (over the national average, 37%).
Summer Bridge programs enable students to get a head start on building academic skills, especially in English and math. Additionally, they provide opportunities for students to become acquainted with college resources and college expectations, and opportunities for interaction between students and faculty and staff. Finally, Summer Bridge programs help students develop an attachment to the campus community.


The author discusses her study of the Freshman Summer Program and Transfer Summer Program (FSP/TSP) at the University of California, Los Angeles, and its effects on low-income and minority group students during their first year. There are six goals and objectives inherent in the program. Her results "clearly suggest that these programs can help facilitate their transition and adjustment to university or college life, as well as improve their academic performance and persistence rates." The first comprehensive, external evaluation of the UCLA Academic Advancement Program's Freshman Summer Program and Transfer Summer Program took place in 1988 and focused on the five components that had the greatest impact on student success: 1) academics, 2) student and professional staff training, 3) parental involvement, 4) social and cultural awareness, and 5) counseling services. The cohort was tracked through their first two quarters at UCLA, in order to determine how they adjusted to the academic, social, and cultural demands of university life. Attitudinal data were collected using the FSP/TSP Final Questionnaire (Ackermann 1989), designed to give students an opportunity to assess the extent to which the goals and objectives of the program were met. Student success was measured by GPA, ethnic breakdown, persistence, and class attendance. Students who attended discussion sections maintained a higher GPA than non-attenders.


This article describes Boston College's successful six-week summer program, "Options Through Education—Transitional Summer Program" (OTE) and its academic year follow-up program, which assists AHANA (African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American) students to successfully negotiate the university. Although the program's target students enter with below-average SAT scores and as first-generation college students, their retention rate is above 90%.


The University of California, San Diego has developed and implemented a four-week summer residential program designed to improve students' academic performance and integrate them into university life. Targeted students are low-income, educationally or culturally disadvantaged, or from five minority ethnic groups, who have had poorer academic performance and retention rates than traditional students have in the past. Retention rates for Bridge students through graduation have dramatically improved to equal the university-wide rate and Bridge students have become leaders.


This article highlights the successful four-week Bridge Program, specifically for African American students, at Georgia State University. The program was implemented in 1984, and offers preparatory sessions designed to orient students to college life and to provide non-credit remedial assistance in reading, mathematics, and composition. Additionally, students receive mentoring, career counseling, computer education, and training in study skills. The curriculum has evolved over the six years of its existence, in an effort to incorporate the best elements from previous years' experiences into a sound theoretical foundation. According to the author, both internal and external evaluations indicate that Bridge has been a successful program.

This final report evaluates these programs' effectiveness in increasing the enrollment and retention of underrepresented groups in the CSU system. The three-year findings were the following: 1) enrollment of a higher percentage of underrepresented minorities, special admits, and underprepared students; 2) the retention rates for the Summer Bridge students were higher than those for students throughout the CSU system; and 3) the retention rates for the ILE students varied widely by campus program and ethnic group.


Kezar presents a concise report on the summer bridge program, one of the most popular programs that emerged out of the various waves of increased access to higher education. Summer bridge programs are designed to provide assistance to individuals entering college in the fall. The focus of programs varies depending on the specific program mission and goals. The main thrust of the programs is to retain these new populations within higher education and to provide them an equal footing with other students. This article discusses the range of activities and types of summer bridge programs, research to support the importance of summer bridge programs, benefits for students, model programs, and evaluation of programs.


Describes the University of California, Berkeley's current undergraduate population (1994), affirmative action and diversity programs, and retention programs targeting minority students, including the Summer Bridge Program and Student Learning Center. Identifies factors critical to successful retention: understanding and overcoming student resistance to seeking learning assistance, building a peer community, and small-group collaborative learning.
SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS


This article examines the effectiveness of Supplemental Instruction (SI) using 11,390 participants in eight varied courses at a large Rocky Mountain research university. Results indicate that students participating in SI earned higher average course grades than non-participating students. Findings portray SI as an effective program that can enhance student learning and development.


This study addressed two questions about the impact of Supplemental Instruction (SI) on students in a large urban university: 1) what academic performance benefit is realized beyond the target course supported by SI, and 2) whether SI participation strengthens the persistence patterns of particular student populations. Participants from various student groups were tracked for a period of eight semesters beginning in Fall 1991, and their performance and retention patterns were compared with those of control peer groups of non-participants. SI was found to have essentially an immediate impact (target course and semester GPA) on traditional students; however, it had a substantial impact on both performance and retention for special-admit students and a definite benefit for underrepresented/underprepared students. Low motivated students, as evidenced by their prior college performance, maintained consistent improvement after SI participation.
TUTORING


Out of a need for students to find a sense of belonging, Bainbridge College (Georgia) has started a peer-tutoring program, which recruits, trains, and retains tutors of quality. The program has been in place for four years and has been very successful. Not only do tutors get the chance to help others with schoolwork, they also achieve personal goals. Peer-support leads to personal academic accomplishment, increased self-esteem, rewards, and recognition. Four components make up the program: (1) campus-wide tutor recruiting and learning center utilization (all students and staff must submit applications and take part in interviews to become tutors); (2) training that achieves a standard of performance, develops accountability, and fosters professional behavior (weekly training sessions for tutors exist); (3) learning community traditions (tutors express to future applicants the benefits of becoming tutors); and (4) fostering self-assessment and transition through mentoring (tutors are mentored by directors to achieve goals). Because of this program, student retention is up by 5% over the last three years, and many students now use the learning center for educational support.


A three-year longitudinal study of student support service programs prepared for the U.S. Department of Education indicated that peer tutoring during the first year of college has a positive and statistically significant impact on students in each of three outcome areas: grades, credits, and retention, and that participation in the first year has an even bigger payoff for students than participation in later years. The report examined five key issues in the design and implementation of tutorial services: (1) institutional context, or awareness of how the program’s structure influences student learning and persistence, as well as how tutorial services contribute to the campus climate; (2) tutor selection, training, and support; (3) program evaluation and outcomes; evaluations can focus on short-term student outcomes directly related to tutoring (grades and grade-point averages) as well as longer term outcomes such as retention; (4) noncognitive factors such as the ability of staff to assess students’ initial reactions to academic difficulties and their readiness to make changes; and (5) cognitive factors; successful programs also provide course content while helping to improve student learning styles. Examples from current programs at Drexel University (Pennsylvania), Luther College (Iowa); University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire; and Southwest Texas State University illustrate key points in the monograph. (Contains 20 references.)

The author discusses the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) and describes a longitudinal evaluation of an ongoing five-year program at the University of Michigan to improve minority student retention and academic performance. The program creates research partnerships between first and second year students and University of Michigan faculty. The students are provided peer counseling, workshops in learning skills, and research peer groups. The evaluation compared students in the program with students matched for grade-point averages and college entrance examination scores who had applied to the program. Among evaluation findings are: (1) UROP students had an attrition rate 32% lower than underrepresented students university-wide; (2) African American students in UROP showed an attrition rate 51% lower than control group students; (3) participation in UROP resulted in grade-point averages some 6% higher than all students; and (4) UROP appeared to positively affect student self-esteem, coping strategies, learning behaviors, and expectations about academic performance. UROP was one of several initiatives created to improve the retention and academic achievement of underrepresented students on the University of Michigan campus. Today, the program includes both minority and majority students but maintains its original emphasis on underrepresented minority students and an emerging focus on women in science students.
The programs presented in these articles are descriptive, rather than quantitative and/or qualitative evaluations.


IUPUI has an "open access" admissions policy, but also strives to maintain high standards for classroom performance and student progress. This article describes five academic support programs—the ARCHE program, Student MAP, Learning Communities, Horizons, and Student Mentoring—incorporated into the University College. Each program is analyzed: there is a program description, including its program content and target audience; a description of the method used to identify one or more comparison groups of "untreated" students; and a statistical profile of both the target and comparison groups in terms of background, enrollment, performance, and persistence indicators.


This article discusses a national study conducted to assess the efficacy of developmental education programs on students' retention and academic success. Funded by the Exxon Education Foundation, this study examined which components were most closely associated with the success of students participating in developmental education. The findings were that a centralized structure of services, tutoring with tutor training, mandatory assessment and placement, and ongoing and systematic program evaluation were related to more success variables than other components. The dependent variables were first-semester GPA, cumulative GPA, retention, and success in developmental courses.


This article examines challenges to educational access at the community college level related to college mission, funding, assessment, academic placement, staff development, articulation/transfer, college-school relations, and student support services. Considers public policy influences on access. Additionally, it describes four Maricopa County Community College District programs (Phoenix, AZ) that facilitate access to higher education for minority students: 1) The "Think Tank" is a consortium of educational institutions that span the educational continuum from kindergarten to the community college. The programs that are developed will be organized into a model that will "wrap around" students to promote academic success (Jordan, 1990). The participating institutions have made a long-term commitment (10-15 years) to foster positive results. 2) "Achieving a College Education (ACE)" is a program to increase the numbers of students who achieve a baccalaureate degree after successfully completing high school and community college. 3) "Urban Teacher Corps Partnership" addresses the need for qualified minority and bilingual teachers in Phoenix. 4) The "Student Monitoring and Alert System" is a follow-up program to ACE which will allow longitudinal comparisons of program, group, and individual student performance so that timely and effective interventions can be planned.


This follow-up study compares 2,900 students receiving services through Student Support Services (SSS) to a like cohort not receiving services, over a period of three years. Services offered varied among institutions but all were intended to help students stay in and graduate from college. Among key findings were the following: 1) SSS participation showed a small but positive and statistically significant effect on the students' grades, credits earned, and persistence in college; 2) the average impact was small because most students received a modest amount of services; 3) program impact correlated to the degree of student participation in the program; 4) estimated impact of SSS also varied based on which particular services were received; and 5) SSS effects were consistent across different subgroups of students. Peer tutoring appeared to have the most consistent and positive impact on student
outcomes. The study concludes with extensive detail on the methodology and findings.

Provides definitions of assessment and evaluation, with particular attention to how each may be used to gauge a program's effectiveness. Offers suggestions for using assessment and valuative data proactively to empower students of color and to effect institutional change. Suggests strategies for implementing effective program assessment and evaluation.

Gladieux and Swail report on the state of higher education and the inequities in higher education. While more people are attending college and attaining higher levels of education, the reality is that opportunities for underrepresented individuals remain unequal across society. Gladieux and Swail present information on the current trends of who goes to college, where they are going (two- vs. four-year institutions) and who completes, and why the gaps in postsecondary education remain so wide. They then examine recent policy trends, look at the roots of unequal educational opportunity, and suggest strategies to address some of the underlying problems. They maintain that neither financial aid nor access to college is enough. They suggest that, to equalize college opportunities for the poor and minorities, more fundamental, complementary strategies are required.

This monograph provides 17 essays on characteristics, programs, and outcomes related to students' freshman year. It focuses on the community college's role in enrolling first-year students.

The mission of the American Youth Policy Forum is to publicize best practices in the education and youth development fields to help policymakers and practitioners make informed decisions. This compendium includes school initiatives and youth programs that provide concrete examples of efforts to increase achievement for minority youth. There were fewer quality evaluations of postsecondary programs with data disaggregated by race or ethnicity. The programs included are the Compact for Faculty Diversity, Emerging Scholars, Chicanos in Higher Education, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and the Puerto Rico Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participants. Each program is briefly summarized.

The authors discuss the effectiveness of cooperative learning over competitive and individualistic learning. They offer three interrelated types that have been developed (formal, informal, cooperative base groups) that provide a framework for effective college teaching, in contrast to independent and competitive learning. They include a short history of how cooperative learning has been utilized. In the conclusion they cite five basic elements that have emerged as critical to cooperative work in classrooms: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, social skills, and group processing.

Michael Hovland, the senior consultant at Noel-Levitz Centers, responds to questions about summer bridge programs, first-year seminar programs, Rutgers' retention model, faculty reactions to retention programs, the impact of retention programs on institutional mission, administrative involvement in retention, student assessment, retention efforts for special populations, and retention models that do not work.

This monograph on learning communities and the first-year college experience presents 12 chapters that combine theory with examples of good practice and recommendations for building and sustaining effective learning communities. Following an introduction by the editor, the included chapters are: (1) "What Are Learning Communities?" (Anne Goodsell Love); (2) "Learning Community Models" (Anne Goodsell Love and Kenneth A. Tokuno); (3) "Garnering the Fundamental Resources for Learning Communities" (Jeanine L. Elliott and Emily Decker); (4) "Planning the Production: Scheduling, Recruiting, and Registering Students in Learning Communities" (Michaelann M. Jundt, Kenneth K. Etzkorn, and Jason N. Johnson); (5) "Teaching and Learning in a Learning Community" (Diane W. Strommer); (6) "Faculty Development in Learning Communities: The Role of Reflection and Reframing" (Scott E. Evenbeck, Barbara Jackson, and John McGrew); (7) "Learning Communities: Partnerships between Academic and Student Affairs" (Charles C. Schroeder, Frankie D. Minor, and Theodore A. Tarkow); (8) "Learning Communities, Academic Advising, and Other Support Programs" (Jack W. Bennett); (9) "A Natural Linkage—The First-Year Seminar and the Learning Community" (Betsy O. Barefoot, Dorothy S. Fidler, John N. Gardner, Philip S. Moore, and Melissa R. Roberts); (10) "Learning Communities in the Community College" (Valerie A. Bystrom); (11) "Evaluating and Assessing Learning Communities" (Kathi A. Ketcheson and Jodi H. Levine); and (12) "Trends and Future Directions" (John N. Gardner and Jodi H. Levine). (Individual chapters contain references.)


In this article Levitz, Lee, and Richter first discuss retention as it relates to recent budget issues, the increase in competition for students, shrinking resources, and institutional accountability and survival. They list the characteristics of the most effective innovations and best practices that institutions have adopted and that have achieved cost-effective results: 1) highly structured programs; 2) extended, intensive contact with “at-risk” students; 3) interlocks with other programs and services; 4) a clear strategy of engagement; 5) qualified staff; 6) faculty members in critical roles; and 7) a focus on the affective as well as cognitive needs of students.


The author reviews recent approaches and models for diverse learning environments, with specific emphasis on fostering the retention and educational achievement of ethnic minority students at community colleges. Strategies include freshman seminars, mentoring, and creating a supportive campus environment.


Tinto's theory of college retention suggests that minority students must assimilate into the cultural mainstream to succeed on predominantly White campuses. This theory overlooks the U.S.’s history of ethnic oppression and discrimination. Delineates an alternative model based on cultural integrity and Bourdieu's notions of cultural capital. Describes a program that instills these qualities in urban, minority, college-bound students.