



HOW COLLEGE AFFECTS STUDENTS: AN OVERVIEW OF STUDENT SUCCESS FINDINGS

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Findings from *How College Affects Students* (HCAS Vol. 3)
 - Co-authors: Matt Mayhew (NYU), Alyssa Rockenbach (NC State), Tricia Seifert (Montana State), and Greg Wolniak (NYU), with Ernie Pascarella (Iowa) and Pat Terenzini (Penn State)
- Practical implications from these findings



HCAS SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

- Inclusion criteria
 - Published in 2002-2013
 - Peer-reviewed outlets (with a few exceptions)
 - Outcomes: course completion, retention, persistence, graduation
- Emphasis on high-quality studies



HCAS SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

- Today's session
 - Focus on "within-college effects"
 - Cover wide range of topics (same organization as book)
 - Limited discussion of methods



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- Strong, positive effects
- Reasons
 - Academic dismissal
 - Feedback from grades



PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS

- Types
 - Remedial or developmental education
 - First-year seminars
 - Student services (broadly defined)



REMEDICATION (DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION)

- No effect on student success
- Problem is achieving successful remediation
- Can remediation be effective?

ACCELERATED STUDY IN ASSOCIATE PROGRAMS (ASAP)

- Comprehensive program
 - Full-time enrollment
 - Remedial coursework early
 - First-year seminar
 - Block scheduling
 - Career and academic advising
 - Financial aid
- Massive effect on 2.5-year graduation: 33.3% vs. 18.2%



FIRST-YEAR SEMINARS

- Various types
- Mix of positive and non-significant results
- More effective for lower-achieving students
- Unclear what constitutes an effective seminar



STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

- Covers a range of activities
 - Academic advising
 - Tutoring
 - Structured mentoring
 - Supplemental instruction
- Challenges in studying these
 - Varied services
 - Choice of participation

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

- Importance of providing comprehensive programs
 - Academic advising + financial aid
 - ASAP study (FYS + remediation + services + aid)
 - Potential role of employee training and feedback
 - Importance of utilizing available services
 - Supplemental instruction (linked with specific course)



FINANCIAL AID

- Contradictory findings
- Conclusions from best research
 - Grants and scholarships are good
 - Work-study and loans may be good
 - Grants may be better than loans
 - Unmet need is probably bad
 - Aid is most helpful for underrepresented students and at less selective schools



EMPLOYMENT

- Findings tell a coherent story
 - Working a lot is bad
 - Working a little may be good
 - Working on campus may be good



EXPERIENCES WITH FACULTY

- Faculty-student interactions
 - Quality of teaching (instructor practices and student evaluations)
 - Overall frequency of interactions



EXPERIENCES WITH FACULTY

- Instructor characteristics
 - Part-time and non-tenure-track faculty
 - Possible roles of instructor time constraints and academic integration (but not grades)



EXPERIENCES WITH FACULTY

- Course delivery format: online vs. face-to-face
 - Research is often very weak (so view results cautiously)
 - Online courses may reduce successful course completion
 - Similar predictors of online and face-to-face success



INTERACTIONS WITH PEERS

- Quality of relationships and friendships (not quantity)
- Positive campus climate (esp. for students of color)
- Role of belonging/social integration and institutional commitment



ON-CAMPUS RESIDENCE

- Living on campus is good
- Explained by social involvement and integration



LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- Experimental versus non-experimental results
- Potential importance of student services
- Similar disparities for summer bridge programs




ACADEMIC MAJOR

- Mixed results
- Undeclared vs. declared
- Majors that prepare students for high-paying jobs
- Major-interest congruence

SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC INTEGRATION/INVOLVEMENT

- Lots and lots of research
- Academic involvement → GPA → retention/persistence
- Social involvement → institutional commitment → retention/persistence
- Enrollment intensity (e.g., full-time status)



PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: STUDENT AFFAIRS

- Contributions of student affairs practitioners
 - On-campus residence
 - Student clubs/groups (including athletics)
 - Peer interactions and relationships
 - Campus climate

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS

- Some programmatic interventions should be (re)considered
 - First-year seminars
 - Learning communities
 - Remedial/developmental education
- Importance of “packaging” student services with other interventions



PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: FACULTY INVOLVEMENT

- Benefits of quality teaching and interactions
- Drawbacks of part-time and contingent faculty
- Face-to-face versus online coursework




PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: STUDENT ENROLLMENT

- “Traditional” approach to coursework and integration
 - Full-time attendance
 - Strong grades
 - Living on campus
 - Social and academic involvement
 - Limited paid employment (on campus)

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: POSITIVE MINDSETS AND APPROACHES

- Importance of normalizing help-seeking and belonging
 - Pairing student services with other efforts
 - Limited student use of “optional” resources
 - Potential ineffectiveness of remediation and first-year seminars
 - Potential drawbacks of online coursework
 - But “social norming” campaigns and related activities can backfire



PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: TECHNOLOGY

- Can facilitate or detract from social and academic integration
 - Social media
 - Smartphones
 - Textbooks
 - Learning management systems
- Online courses and academic success



PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: ASSESSMENT

- Role of self-selection into experiences
- Obscuring relationships between experiences and outcomes
- Matching experiences with appropriate outcomes
- Examining different effects across subgroups



PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Financial aid for recruitment and persistence
- Allocating funding to instruction and student support
- Improvements in state support for institutions

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

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