Closing the Gap: Progress Toward Accessibility
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In this presentation...

- Investment in education
- Who goes to college?
- Who goes where?
- Who completes?
- Why haven’t we done better?
- Public Policy
- Higher Education’s Responsibility
Who Goes Where?

College Participation Rates of 1972, 1980, & 1992 High School Graduates within Two-Years of Scheduled Graduation

Who Completes College?

- Roughly three-quarters of high school seniors go on to higher studies.
  - Half receive some type of degree within five years of entering postsecondary education.
  - One-quarter receive a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- As with access, gaps persist by both SES and race/ethnicity.
Who Completes College?

Percent of 1989 BPS who attained a degree or certificate or was still enrolled as of 1994, by SES and R/E.

Who Completes College?

Bachelor’s Degree Attainment Rates
by SES and Race/Ethnicity, Five-Years After Matriculation (all PSE students)

**Who Completes College?**

Bachelor’s Degree Attainment Rates by SES and Race/Ethnicity, Five-Years After Matriculation (B.A. Directed Students only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SES/Quartile</th>
<th>Asian/Pacific Islander</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCES BPS Persistence and Attainment. Table 6.1

**Why Haven’t We Done Better?**

- It’s not just the ability to afford higher education; financial aid is important, *but...*
- The roots of unequal opportunity *run deep*: societal conditions/expectations; school quality/resources; counseling/tracking
- Of all the variables that influence college enrollment and success, *aspirations and academic preparation* are the most powerful
- Nearly all students *expect to go to college*—but low-income and minority students leave secondary school less well-prepared, on average, than higher income, majority students, making it difficult to meet their expectations.
### Why Haven’t We Done Better?

#### Planned PSE Enrolled Immediately Enrolled w/2 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Planned PSE</th>
<th>Enrolled Immediately</th>
<th>Enrolled w/2 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Income</th>
<th>Planned PSE</th>
<th>Enrolled Immediately</th>
<th>Enrolled w/2 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Income</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Income</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents Highest Level of Education (Educational Legacy)</th>
<th>Planned PSE</th>
<th>Enrolled Immediately</th>
<th>Enrolled w/2 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School or less</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**College-Preparation Index for High School Graduates**

- **Family Income**
  - Low (less than $25,000): 53
  - Middle ($25,000-$74,999): 68
  - High ($75,000 or more): 86

- **Race/Ethnicity**
  - Black: 47
  - Hispanic: 53
  - White: 68

*4-year college qualification index developed for NCES based on high school GPA, senior class rank, NELS 1992 aptitude test, SAT and ACT scores, and academic coursework.

Why Haven’t We Done Better?

College-Preparation Index for Four-Year College Students

Public Policy

Tuition and aid policies obviously make a difference—and issues of affordability have been at the center of policy debates.

But more fundamental, complementary strategies are required to equalize college opportunities.
Public Policy

For future generations
• K-12 Reform
• National standards and higher expectations
• Beyond classroom doors

For the current generation
• intervention programs that make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged children

Getting disadvantaged students prepared and into college is “retail not wholesale work…”

one arm around one child...

Levine & Nidiffer
Public Policy

Outreach/Intervention Programs

• “I Have a Dream” and similar outreach/mentoring programs can make a difference.
• But for the millions whose life chances might be lifted by such intervention, the movement is like a wheel of fortune.
• The challenge for public policy is to expand programs that work to a vastly larger scale.
• TRIO/GEAR-UP: new federal funding opportunities for college-access partnerships.

Higher Education’s Responsibility

If demography is destiny, colleges have their work cut out heading into the next century. The college-age population will be:

• more ethnically diverse
• less likely to enroll in college prep work
• less likely to graduate from high school
• less likely to enroll in college
• least likely to persist to degree
Higher Education’s Responsibility

It is in the enlightened self-interest of colleges to invest in partnerships with schools that will expand the college-bound--and qualified--pool.

“If we do affirmative action in grade three, we won’t have to do it in grade thirteen.”

Cliff Adelman

Higher Education’s Responsibility

Both public and institutional policy needs to focus on student success--not just access; persistence to degree--not just getting student in the door.

“Do institutions serve the needs of students, or is it the other way around?”

Harold Howe
No Silver Bullet

Higher education cannot alone redress social deficits and imbalances that threaten our country’s future--but neither can colleges and universities stand apart.

All of us--policymakers, educators, analysts, citizens--are challenged to try to make a difference

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