Creating a More Level Playing Field for Underresourced Students

Academic Affairs Forum

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Academic Affairs Forum

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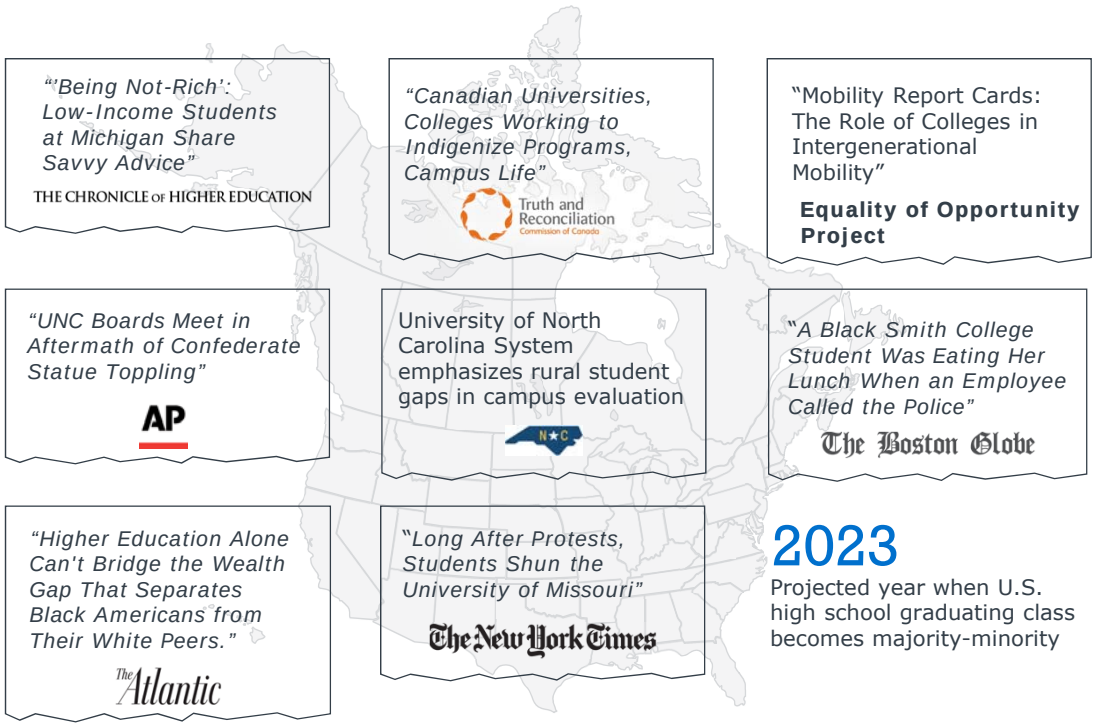
An Equity Moment in Education and Beyond

Political and Social Forces Bring Historical and Current Inequalities to Light



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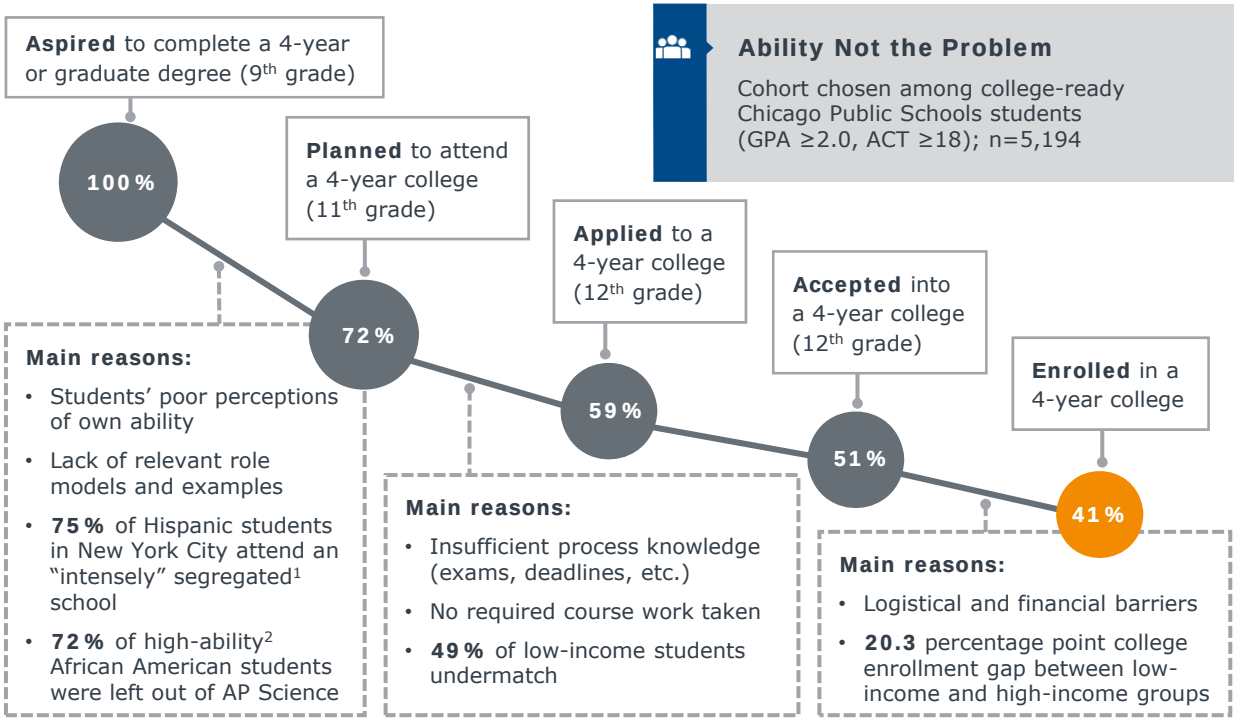
Source: From news organization websites, full list available upon request; Rick Seltzer, "The High School Graduate Plateau", *Inside Higher Ed*, December 6, 2016; EAB interviews and analysis.

Pre-College Narrative Focuses on Access

Identifying the Breaks in the High School to College Pipeline



1) Schools that are less than 10 percent white
2) With PSAT scores suggesting success in relevant AP course.

Sources: "From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College," Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, March 2008; Nikole-Hannah Jones, Choosing a School for My Daughter in a Segregated City, *The New York Times*, June 9, 2016; "Finding America's Missing AP and IB Students," The Education Trust, June 2013; Jonathan Smith, Pender Matea, and Jessica Howell, "The Full Extent of Student-College Academic Undermatch," The College Board, October 2012; "Percentage of recent high school completers enrolled in 2- and 4-year colleges, by race/ethnicity: 1960 through 2015," National Center for Education Statistics; EAB interviews and analysis.

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College Choice Reinforces Existing Inequity

Postsecondary Institution Choice Impacts Likelihood to Succeed

Lower-Income Students More Likely to Undermatch…

Rates of Student Undermatch and Substantial Undermatch[1] by SES[2]

	Average	Higher SES	Lower SES
Undermatch (%)	40.9	34	49.6
Substantial Undermatch (%)	16.1	13.6	22.7

…And Suffer the Consequences

Crossing the Finish Line (2009)

Major longitudinal research of North Carolina graduates finds that **students who undermatch are 6–8% less likely to graduate** than their peers.

Among the chief reasons cited are lower standards, fewer support services, and less challenging environment.

1) Defined as attending institution of one selectivity band lower (undermatch) or two selectivity bands lower (substantial undermatch) than one's combination of GPA and test scores would suggest. Selectivity bands chosen from Barron's "Profiles of American Colleges."
2) Socioeconomic status. "Lower-SES" students are below the median SES as determined by an NCES index of parental income, education, and occupation; "higher-SES" refers to students above the median SES.

Sources: Fosnacht K, "Selectivity and the College Experience: How Undermatching Shapes the College Experience Among High-Achieving Students," Indiana University, Bloomington, April 2014; Smith J, Matea P, and Howell J, "The Full Extent of Student-College Academic Undermatch," The College Board, October 2012, drive.google.com/file/d/0B5c--a90k-_zdnRLc3MwTHZTY28/view; Jaschik S, "(Not) Crossing the Finish Line," Inside Higher Ed, September 2009, www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/09/09/finish; EAB interviews and analysis.

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Off-Campus But Not Off Our Minds

Post-Graduate Outcomes Muddled by Bias and Economic Conditions

Attempted Intergenerational Mobility…

3x Expected family income of children raised in the 90th income percentile is three times that of children raised in the 10th percentile

21% Of African American men who grew up in the top income quintile are in the bottom quintile as adults compared to 10% of white men

…Thwarted by Bias and Debt

10% Of African American college graduates are under-employed compared to 5% for white graduates

15% Hispanic applicants received 15% fewer call backs from job applications than similar white applicants

23% Of African American college graduates default on their student loans

"With family income too low to afford tuition payments or qualify for additional credit, low-income students must often carry the debt themselves… This debt greatly compromises social and economic mobility while simultaneously obstructing their pursuit of the American Dream."

- The Horatio Alger Association

Mitnik, Pablo A. and David B. Grusky. "Economic Mobility in the United States." *Stanford University's Center on Poverty and Inequality.* July, 2015.; Badger, Emily, Claire Cain Miller, Adam Pearce, and Kevin Qealy. "Extensive Data Shows Punishing Reach of Racism for Black Boys." *New York Times,* March 19. 2018.; Carnevale, Anthony P. and Nicole Smith. "Sharp Declines in Underemployment for College graduates." *Center on Education and the Workforce,* 2015.; Qullian, Lincoln, Devah Pager, Ole Hexel, and Arnfinn H. Midbøen. "Meta-Analysis of Field Experiments shows no Change in Racial Discrimination in Hiring over Time." *PNAS* 114, no. 41: 10870-10875.; Miller, Ben. "New Federal Data Show a Student Loan Crisis for African American Borrowers," *Center for American Progress,* October 16, 2017." "Student Debt and the American Dream." *The Horatio Alger Association,* 2014.

Attempting to Navigate Shifting Policy Agendas

Financial Aid and Student Equity Policy Under Growing Scrutiny

Still Awaiting a Two-Page FAFSA

Photo: AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta

Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) unrolls full FAFSA form to illustrate its length and complexity.

Use of Race in Admissions in the Spotlight as SCOTUS Changes

Justice Department sides with groups suing Harvard over use of race in admissions

Title IX Regulations in the Crosshairs of DeVos's ED

Changes in accountability, due process, and standards of evidence add to an already confusing set of rules and requirements

Free College Spreads, but not Without Controversy

Questions remain about who benefits most, low-income or wealthier students?

Source: Katie Benner, "Justice Dept. Backs Suit Accusing Harvard of Discriminating Against Asian-American Applicants", *The New York Times*, August 30, 2018; Anya Kamenetz, "Is Free College Really Free?", *NPR*, January 5, 2017; Sarah Brown, "DeVos's Rules on Sexual Misconduct, Long Awaited on Campuses, Reflect Her Interim Policy", *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 29, 2018.

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More Innovation May Not Equal More Equality

Questions Remain about Discrimination Hardwired into Technology

Bias in Predictive Analytics and Artificial Intelligence

How do predictive analytics engines influence personal bias when interacting with a student?

An Emerging Paradox Colors the Debate about Equity as More Students Embrace Multi-Modality

Lower grades, higher completion rates among multi-modal students

0.5

Point decrease in GPA of lowest performing students (based on previous term GPA) in online courses

45%

Of low-income adults have access to broadband service at home

1) Refers to historically underrepresented groups, including racial and ethnic minorities

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Source: "Internet/Broadband Fact Sheet", Pew Research Center, February 5, 2018; Eric Bettinger and Susanna Loeb, "Promises and pitfalls of online education", *Brookings Institution*, June 9, 2017; EAB interviews and analysis.

Focusing on What Higher Ed Can Control

What Institutions Do (or Don't) to Create or Worsen Gaps

Seeking to Increase Access and Improve K-12 Education

Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success on Your Campus

Helping to Create Jobs and Meet Employer Workforce Needs

Two Guiding Questions

"What gaps do we have to react to and attempt to remedy?

"What gaps do we contribute to or make worse by action or inaction?"

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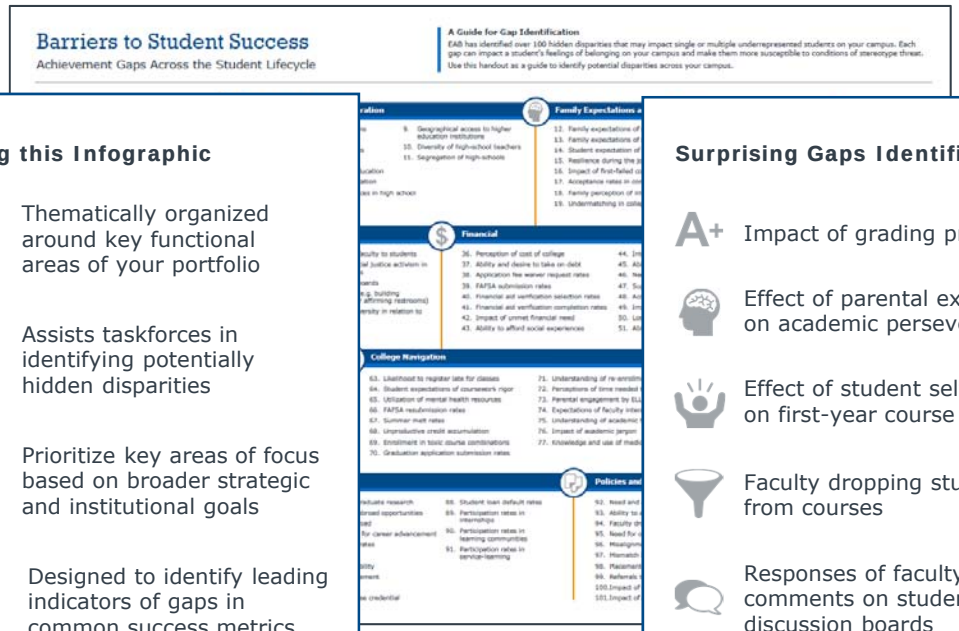
Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Infographic: Barriers to Student Success

102 Disparities Identified Across the Student Lifecycle



Using this Infographic

- Thematically organized around key functional areas of your portfolio
- Assists taskforces in identifying potentially hidden disparities
- Prioritize key areas of focus based on broader strategic and institutional goals
- Designed to identify leading indicators of gaps in common success metrics

Surprising Gaps Identified:

- Impact of grading practices
- Effect of parental expectations on academic perseverance
- Effect of student self-efficacy on first-year course grades
- Faculty dropping students from courses
- Responses of faculty to comments on student discussion boards

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Source: Bibliography available upon request; EAB interviews and analysis.

How to Use the Infographic on Your Campus

Creating a Data-Driven Student Equity Action Plan

5 Steps to Use EAB's Student Equity Audit

- Start with common success metrics e.g. graduation rates, first-year retention
- Consider your current student success and equity goals
- Select two to three of the gaps EAB has identified that align with your institutional and strategic goals
- Work with your institutional research office and academic units to collect relevant data to understand your current practice
- Develop a solution-oriented action plan

Forthcoming Resources in Q1 2019

- Updated Student Completion Policy Audit
- Student Equity Diagnostic
- Innovative Institutional Gap Analysis Repository

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Source: Bibliography available upon request; EAB interviews and analysis.

Limits to Advising's Economics and Reach

Difficult to Invest in Enough Staff, and Peers Remain Underutilized

Never Going to Hire All the Advisors and Staff We Need…

Current Staffing → *Ideal Staffing*

Not enough funding to make initial investment

Struggle to determine the exact placement of new staff

…And We Miss an Opportunity to Engage Students and Close Trust Gaps

Chance to build belongingness among current students plus experiential learning among mentors

Perceived lack of common experience

Less able to normalize help-seeking behaviors among hesitant students

Clear Benefits to Using Peers as Coaches and Mentors

Retention

- Retention gains over similar non-participants

Sense of Belonging

- Students with engaged mentors report less feeling of isolation on campuses

Lower DFW, Higher GPA

- Course performance gains in sections with course assistants

Failing to Deploy Peers Broadly

Disconnected from core academic experiences

Mentorship not leveraged as experiential learning

Relegated to programs tangential to primary student success efforts

Source: Kring, Matthew. "Supporting College Students through Peer Mentoring: Serving Immigrant Students." *Metropolitan Universities*, 28 no. 3: 102-110.; Kochenour, E.O., D.S. Jolley, J.G. Kaup, D.L. Patrick, K.D. Roach, and L.A. Wenzler. "Supplemental Instruction: An Effective Component of Student Affairs Programming." *Journal of College Student Development*, 38 no. 6.; EAB interviews and analysis.; EAB interviews and analysis.

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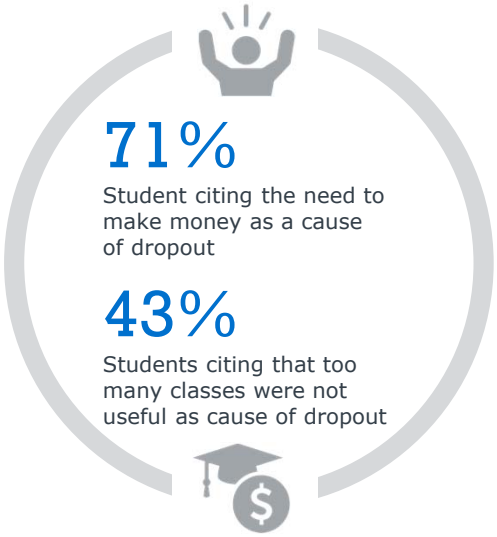
A Vicious, Self-Reinforcing Cycle

Financial Need and Lack of Perceived Educational Relevance Fuel Stop-Outs

Financial and Personal Obligations



71%

Student citing the need to make money as a cause of dropout

43%

Students citing that too many classes were not useful as cause of dropout

Perception of Irrelevance Adds to Stop-Out Pressure

"[Y]oung Americans who dropped out of college often faced the double-edged challenge of working to make a living and going to school at the same time. What's more, **many seem to have drifted into college without a specific goal or purpose beyond hoping for a "better job" or a "better future**... the findings here suggest that young people who leave college before finishing…are less likely to strongly agree that their parents always instilled in them the importance of college, **less likely to strongly agree that people who have a college degree make more money and less likely to say they would still go to college if they knew they could get a good job without a degree.**"

"With Their Whole Lives Ahead of Them," Public Agenda

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Source: Jean Johnson, Jon Rochkind, Amber N. Ott, and Samantha DuPont, "*With their whole lives ahead of them* (New York: Public Agenda, 2009); EAB interviews and analysis.

Today's Focus

Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success

The Two Questions Guiding Our Research

What disparities from outside of higher education do institutions need to remedy when their students enroll?

What do institutions do (or not do) to create or make gaps worse among their increasingly diverse student bodies?

Three Imperatives to Reduce Demographic Disparities in Academic Performance, Retention, and Graduation

1. **Create opportunities for early academic wins to prepare students for future challenges**
   - Growth mindset priming exercise
   - Pre-college academic simulation
   - Math catch-up pathway
2. **Scale student support and normalize help-seeking behavior by expanding the use of peer coaches and mentors**
   - **Peer support expansion diagnostic**
   - **Peer advisor-led outreach and service referral campaigns**
   - **Mentor career skill reflection exercises**
3. **Regularly reinforce the connection between students' education and long-term goals**
   - **Course-based goal reflection exercise**
   - **Step-by-step bounce back plans**
   - **Scholarship recovery intervention**
   - **Experiential learning incentive scholarship**

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

1. Create opportunities for early academic wins to prepare students for future challenges

2. **Scale student support and normalize help-seeking behavior by expanding the use of peer coaches and mentors**

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Student-Teacher Trust Deficit Emerges Early

Peer Support Bypasses Fraught Relationships with Authority Figures

Inconsistent Relationship with Authority Figures

Discipline

48% of preschool children receiving multiple out-of-school suspension are African American

Physical Restraint in Schools

75% of students who are subjected to physical restraint at school are students with disabilities

Referrals to Law Enforcement

24% of students who are referred to law enforcement at school are Hispanic

Teacher Expectations

Secondary teachers predict that high-poverty students were **53%** less likely to earn a college diploma

…Creates Lasting Impression on Students

Reliance on Peers and Informal Networks Impossible to Overcome

47%

Increase in proportion of URG[1] students receiving As and Bs when peer-led workshops introduced

58%

Of adults with a four-year degree received advice about major choice from informal social networks[2]

> "…as a student, I can identify with my peers and imagine myself using the course material in the same way they do. This gives the material meaning and a sense of purpose that goes beyond memorization. **When I hear a peer's story, it connects to the story I am telling myself about who I want to be in the future.**"
>
> *Cary Roseth, Professor of Educational Psychology, Michigan State University*

1) includes African American, Hispanic, and Native students
2) Compared to 45% who mentioned formal networks

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Source: Ulrich Boser, Megan Wilhelm, and Robert Hanna, "The Power of the Pygmalian Effect: Teacher Expectations Strongly Predict College Completion", *Center for American Progress*, October, 6, 2014; U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, *Civil Rights Data Collection, Data Snapshot: School Discipline*, March 2014; "Peers, More Than Teachers, Inspires Us To Learn", *MSU Today*, March 21, 2017; Ralph W. Preszler (2009). Replacing lecture with peer-led workshops improves student learning. *CBE: Life Sciences Education*, 8, 182–192.; Major Influence: Where Students Get Valued Advice on What to Study in College, STRADA Education Network & GALLUP, September 2017; EAB interviews and analysis.

Four Ways to Deploy Peers

A First Line of Defense for Academic, Social, and Personal Support

Common-experience mentors for all students

Students in a holistic mentoring program reported that personal and emotional support was most beneficial

RYERSON UNIVERSITY

- Mentors provide personal, emotional, career, and academic support
- Each session focuses on a different skill development area, such as life skills

Extension of advising, particularly for high-need groups

Retention gains of up to 15-20% over similar control group populations, at public and private institutions

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

- Program designed for immigrant and ELL students
- Mentors are trained to support the unique needs of these students

Course assistants in high DFW courses

Students in classes with course assistants have higher semester GPAs and lower DFW rates

UMKC

- 0.45 GPA gain for supplemental instruction participants in study of 37 institutions
- Course assistants drawn from past successful students, though typically not the highest performers

Study group facilitators

Study sessions at one University have attendance rates of 80% despite not being mandatory.

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
Be The Difference.

- Students can opt into a well-advertised weekly study group for high DFW courses
- Attendance agreement states students can only miss three sessions

Source: Gunn, Frances, Seung Hwan Lee, and Madelyn Steed. "Student Perceptions of benefits and Challenges of Peer Mentoring Programs: Divergent Perspectives from Mentors and Mentees." *Marketing Education Review*, 27 no. 1: 15-26.; Kring, Matthew. "Supporting College Students through Peer Mentoring: Serving Immigrant Students." *Metropolitan Universities*, 28 no. 3: 102-110.; Kochenour, E.O., D.S. Jolley, J.G. Kaup, D.L. Patrick, K.D. Roach, and L.A. Wenzler. "Supplemental Instruction: An Effective Component of Student Affairs Programming." *Journal of College Student Development*, 38 no. 6.; EAB interviews and analysis.

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Peers Help Overcome Resource Constraints and Belonging Gaps

> "For a university as large as UCF, when resources are limited, we likely need to implement a robust peer-to-peer success model."
>
> *Elizabeth Dooley, Interim Provost, University of Central Florida*

> "Students are on campus with people who they can relate to, who have similar life experiences which I think has added to the draw of this place. At Whittier, there is mentoring with students who look the same. That is a draw. **That helps a lot to dispel imposter syndrome**."
>
> *Joel Pérez, VP and Dean of Students, Whittier College*

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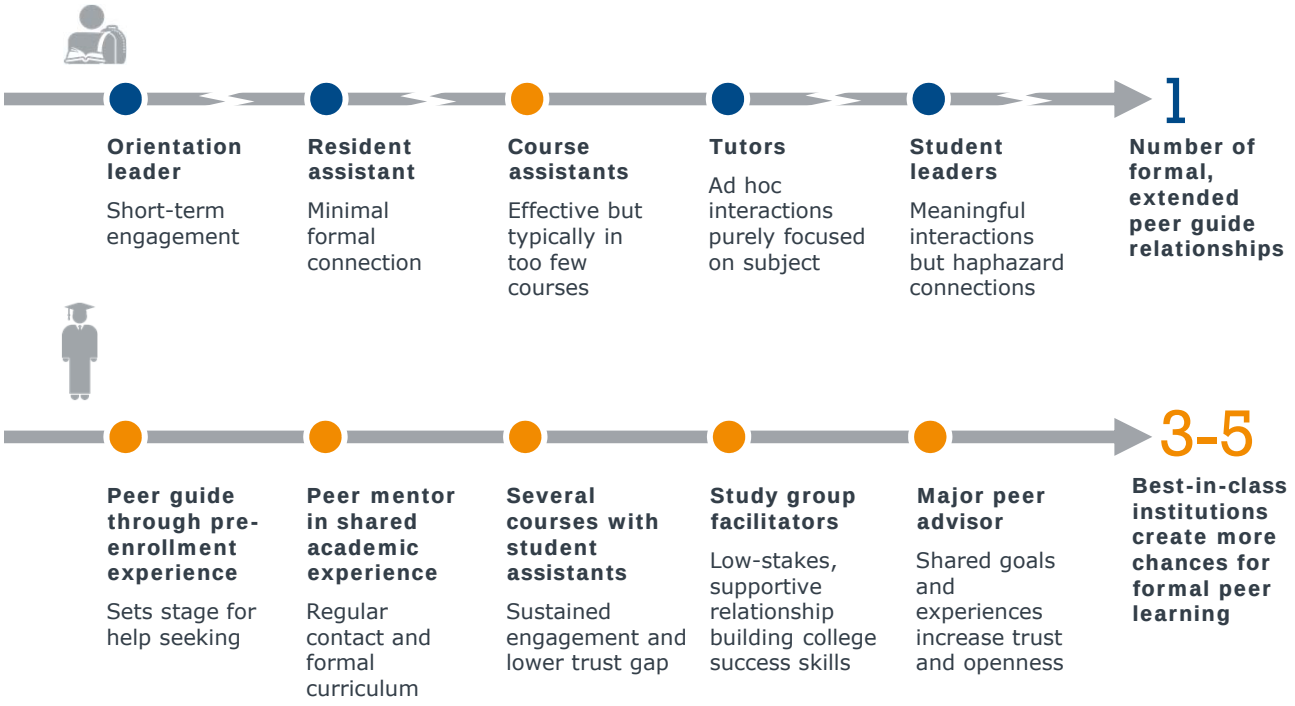
Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Leaving Peer Advising to Chance

Too Few Students Have Formal, Structured Peer Learning Opportunities

Haphazard Connections vs. Multiple Formal Near-Peer Relationships



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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Critical Overlaps with Central Success Programs

Leading Peer Programs Complement All Aspects of Professional Support

Questions to Guide Analysis of Your Campus' Portfolio of Peer Support Programs

How extensively have you deployed peers as course assistants?

At University of Utah, students who attended one peer-led study session per week earned **a course GPA one letter grade higher than students who attended none**[1]. The effect was especially pronounced for students with lower predicted GPAs

Do peer mentors help students set academic and career goals regularly?

Peer mentoring that incorporated peer mentor-led early and regular goal setting exercises report **strong positive effects on GPA, retention, and goal achievement**

Do peers facilitate year-long or term-long common academic experiences for all students?

Every UT Austin student is assigned to a <20-student cohort with a peer mentor who facilitates shared academic experiences

Do peers extend the reach of advising in encouraging students to seek help?

West Coast University[2] hires "Commuter Assistants" to ensure that commuter students know the resources on campus and remember critical deadlines, which **has eliminated gaps between commuters and resident students**

1) The effect was especially pronounced for students with lower predicted GPAs.
2) Pseudonym for a small, private university on the West Coast

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Source: Sorrentino, Diane M. "The SEEK Mentoring Program: An Application of the Goal-Setting Theory." *Journal of College Student Retention*, 8 no. 2: 241-250.; Ward, Elija G., Earl E. Thomas, William B. Disch. "Goal Attainment, Retention and Peer Mentoring." *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, Summer 2010.; Flaherty, Colleen. "Nevertheless She Persisted." *Inside Higher Ed.* September 18, 2018.; Smith, Jennifer L. "Innovating for Student Success: The University Leadership Network (ULN) and Tiered Undergraduate Peer Mentor Model." *Metropolitan Universities,* 28 no. 3.; EAB interviews and analysis.

An Initial Investment Saves Time in the End

When Trusted with Some Advisor Duties, Peers Can Free Up Time

An Overwhelmed Associate Director for Campus Life[1]

Attempting to Manage a Changing Student Population

- Connecting students to resources across campus
- Outreach for events and service referrals
- Academic Support
- 1:1 advising sessions

40%

Commuter population quadrupled to 40% in just three years

Commuter Assistants Build Engagement and Add Capacity

Shifting Transactional and Low-Level Interactions to Peer Advisors

- Managing higher level cases for students
- Support for other student populations on campus

Peer "Commuter Assistants" Lighten the Workload

- 3000+ text messages sent to commuters
- Over 200 student meetings in first year, 89% of commuters reached
- Retention gap between commuters and residents narrowed to only 1.6%

1) At a small, private university on the West Coast

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Scaling Peer Support and Experiential Learning

Make Peer Support a Career-Relevant Opportunity

Do Your Peer Mentors Realize These Benefits?

- ✓ *Regular intensive training*
- ✓ *Reflective exercises*
- ✓ *Career-relevant skills*
- ✓ *Progressive leadership opportunities*
- ✓ *Course credit and/or stipend*

"What mentors liked most about the program was that they gained leadership skills, gained a chance to share their experiences, and participated in planning and organizing activities for mentees. This was seen as a great benefit as it gave them **the opportunity to take on a position as a role model and provide an influence** to upcoming students."

- Gunn, Lee, and Steed 2017

A631

Case in Brief: University of Texas, Austin's University Leadership Network Peer Mentors

- **Program:** 2,000-student cohort with a four-year experiential learning curriculum, peer mentoring, and dedicated advising based on lower predicted graduation rates
- **Mentors:** 70-80 second-, third-, and fourth-year Network participants with multiple mentor ranks to offer more benefit to mentors and more management capacity
- **Experiential Learning Component:** Mentors produce a capstone project in which they reflect on the skills and knowledge learned in the program

Source: Gunn, Frances, Seung Hwan Lee, and Madelyn Steed. "Student Perceptions of benefits and Challenges of Peer Mentoring Programs: Divergent Perspectives from Mentors and Mentees." *Marketing Education Review*, 27 no. 1: 15-26.; Smith, Jennifer L. "Innovating for Student Success: The University Leadership Network (ULN) and Tiered Undergraduate Peer Mentor Model." *Metropolitan Universities*, 28 no. 3.; EAB interviews and analysis.

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A631 For MD/DJB: Fix citation, add more sources for the ULN stuff?
Author, 9/19/2018

Elements of Successful Peer Support Programs

Forthcoming Tools and Resources in Late 2018 and early 2019

Maintain Regular Formal Contact with Mentees

- Mentors meet with students weekly or bi-weekly
- Frequent check-ups help students stay on-track

Mentorship calendar templates

Provide a Mentor Curriculum Mapped to the Mentee's Academic Milestones and Deadlines

- Sessions are catered to important moments during the semester
- Mentors provide students with:
  - Transition support
  - Direction to campus resources
  - Goal setting

Mentor curriculum templates

Training Focuses on Relationships and Professional Skills

- Intensive, multi-day initial training followed by regular professional development
- High expectations for mentor responsibility and professionalism

Peer mentor training guide

Ensure That Mentors Understand the Benefits They Gain

- Mentors value the leadership opportunity and mentees value academic and social support
- Enthusiasm and high expectations contribute to success

Mentor experiential reflection tool

Marquette University – Be The Difference. | The University of Texas at Austin | Whittier College | University of Nevada, Reno

Source: "Standards, Outcomes, and Possible Assessments for ITTPC Certification," College Reading and Learning Association, 2013; Rogawski, D.S. and Juliano Ndoj. "The Case for Student-to-Student Mentoring in Bench Science." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. May 8, 2018.; EAB interviews and analysis.

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1. Create opportunities for early academic wins to prepare students for future challenges

2. Scale student support and normalize help-seeking behavior by expanding the use of peer coaches and mentors

3. **Regularly reinforce the connection between students' education and long-term goals**

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Student Focus Pulled in Multiple Directions

Doubts about Relevance and Practicality Compound Existing Pressures

Relevance Concerns

Financial and Life Pressures

Ability to Give Attention to Courses

Is this course relevant?

Study or take a few more hours of work?

Pressures on Major Choice

I picked this major because my parents thought it was best

If I'm already not going to succeed in the major, should I just leave?

Ability to Access Experiences

How much would study abroad help me get a job?

I need to keep working the whole time in college

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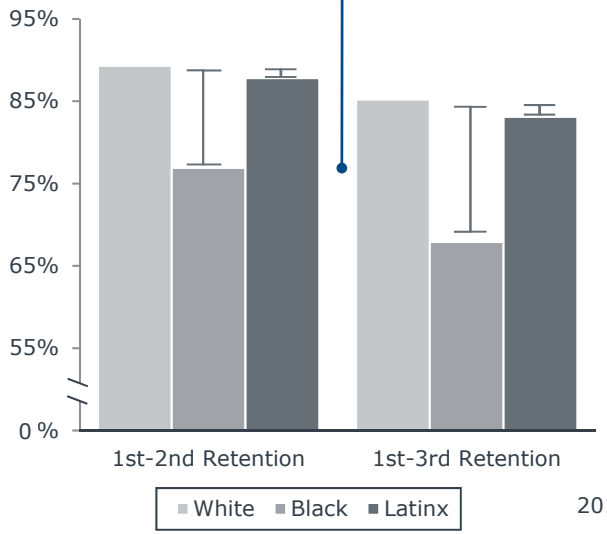
Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Attention on First Year But Gaps Worsen Later

Selective Private University[1]

Retention Gaps Widen 2nd to 3rd Year

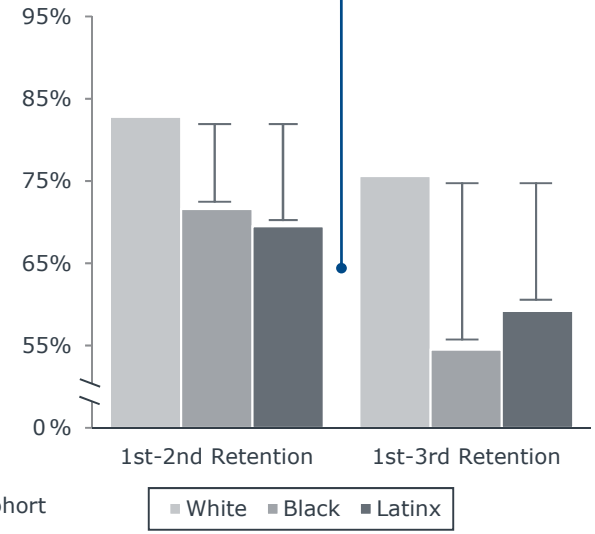
"When I step on this campus… I feel like a tourist… I feel a distinct feeling of 'you are not supported to be here.'"



Large State Institution[1]

Retention Gaps Widen 2nd to 3rd Year

"Sophomore year brought a whole new round of challenges. I felt old habits returning and let myself slip."



2015 Cohort

1) Data is for the 2015 cohort

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Source: Marketwatch. "'I Feel like a Tourist': Inside Poor Students' Ivy League Isolation." *New York Post*. April 22, 2015.; Seamands, Rachael. "Why I left College, Twice, and Why I Came Back." *Study Breaks*. April 26, 2017.; Data obtained from institutions via Tableau Public sites; EAB interviews and analysis.

Reinforce Link Between Courses, Goals, and Values

Simple Class Activities Buffer Students Against Doubt and Stereotypes

Sample Syllabus: Biology 111

Professor B. Macklin

Course Goals:

- Goal 1

Assignments:

- Assignment 1

- Conduct at multiple times during semester, especially prior to major exams
- Include activities on course syllabi

In-class writing assignment to target students' perceived value of and engagement in coursework

"Write an essay addressing [topic] and discuss the **relevance of the concept or issue to your own life**…include some concrete information from the unit, **explaining why this specific information is relevant to your life or useful to you**."

61%

Decrease in course performance gap[1] between first-gen URM students and continuing-gen majority students in biology course

In-class exercise to safeguard students against the possibility of confirming stereotypes about their groups

"From the list provided, **select two or three values most important to you and explain**, in a few sentences, **their importance and relevance to you**. List the top two reasons the selected values are important to you."

61%

Decrease in in-class exam score gap between men and women in introductory physics course[2]

1) Based on course grade
2) Results after controlling for prior SAT/ACT Math scores

Source: Harackiewcz et al., Closing Achievement Gaps With a Utility-Value Intervention: Disentangling Race and Social Class, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2016, Vol. III, No. 5, 745-765; Miyake et al., Reducing the Gender Achievement Gap in College Science: A Classroom Study of Values Affirmation, SCIENCE, 2010, Vol 330.; Harackiewicz et al., Closing the Social Class Achievement Gap for First-Generation Students in Undergraduate Biology, J Educ Psychol. 2014 May 1; 106(2): 375-389.

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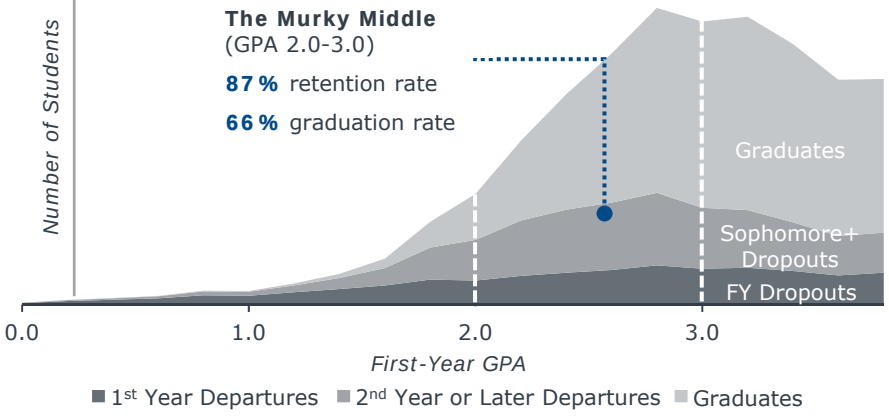
It's Not an Ability Problem

Focusing on Those in Good Standing to Find Equity Gaps

A Topographical Map of National Student Outcomes

6.7 million student records, Student Success Collaborative



Critical Decisions on the Horizon	Possible Roadblocks	Loss of Motivation
• Chose a major • Consider jobs and internships • Begin a career path	• Inability to get into a major • Financial pressures • Increasingly challenging work	• Coursework doesn't connect to goals • Conflicted about need to support dependents

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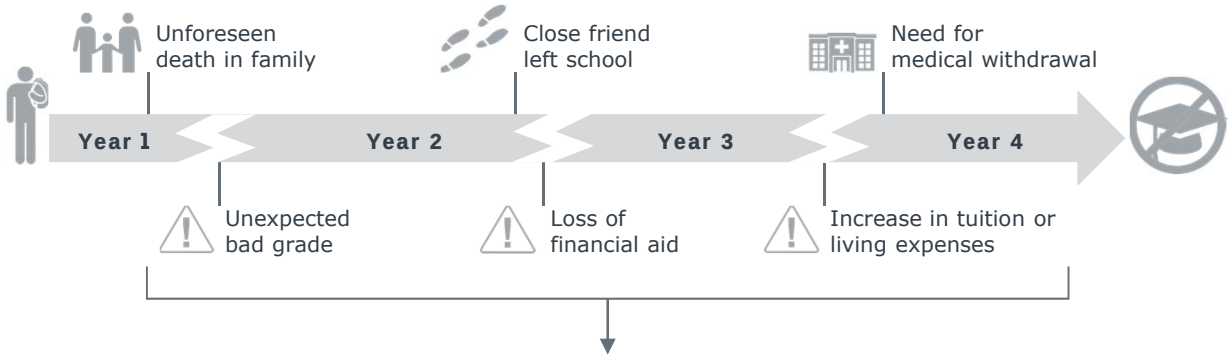
Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Pain Points Amplify Belonging Uncertainty

Determining Which Shocks Worsen Demographic Disparities



Harmful to All, but Worse for Those Already Experiencing Uncertainty and Distress

- Creates potential for stereotype threat to arise
- Reinforces uncertainty of ability to succeed
- Challenges college navigation skills during recovery
- Inspires doubts about relevance of education due to immediacy of financial needs

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Source: Timothy Pleskac, Jessica Keeney, Stephanie Merritt, Neal Schmitt, and Frederick Oswald, "A Detection Model of College Withdrawal", Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 2011; EAB interviews and analysis.

Set a Specific Recovery Plan

Beyond an Advisor Meeting, A Step-by-Step Plan Helps Close Gaps

- Student GPA declines
- Meets with adviser

Course Correction Never Fully Takes Hold

- Sophomore Year Experience staff typically suggests resources
- Onus is on the student to seek support
- Guidance remains vague and disconnected from student's goals

- Student still stops out after failing to reengage

Step-by-Step Positive and Negative Goal Setting Makes Course Correction a Reality

Student Self-Authoring Worksheet

Goal 1
Goal 2
Goal 3

What will your life look like if you meet these goals? If you do not?

In detail, describe your plan for meeting these goals. Also, describe what will happen if you don't follow this plan.

Mohawk · McGill · University of Redlands · University of Toronto · Johns Hopkins University

Implementing a Goal-Setting Intervention

Who	Benefits new first-year and continuing students
Format	Interventions have been effective both in-person and online
Results	• Closed ethnicity GPA gaps • Increased credits earned • Students made significant progress towards stated goals

Source: Schippers, Michaéla C., Ad W. A. Scheepers, and Jordan B. Peterson. "A Scalable Goal-Setting Intervention Closes Both the Gender and Ethnic Minority Achievement Gap." *Palgrave Communications*, June 2015.; Morisano, Dominique, Robert O. Pihl, Bruce M. Shore, Jacob B. Hirsh, and Jordan B. Peterson. "Setting, Elaborating, and Reflecting on Personal Goals Improves Academic Performance." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95 no.2: 255-264. Sorrentino, Diane M. "The SEEK Mentoring Program: An Application of the Goal-Setting Theory." *Journal of College Student Retention*, 8 no. 2: 241-250.; Ward, Elija G., Earl E. Thomas, and William B. Disch. "Goal Attainment, Retention and Peer Mentoring." *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, Summer 2010.; EAB interviews and analysis.

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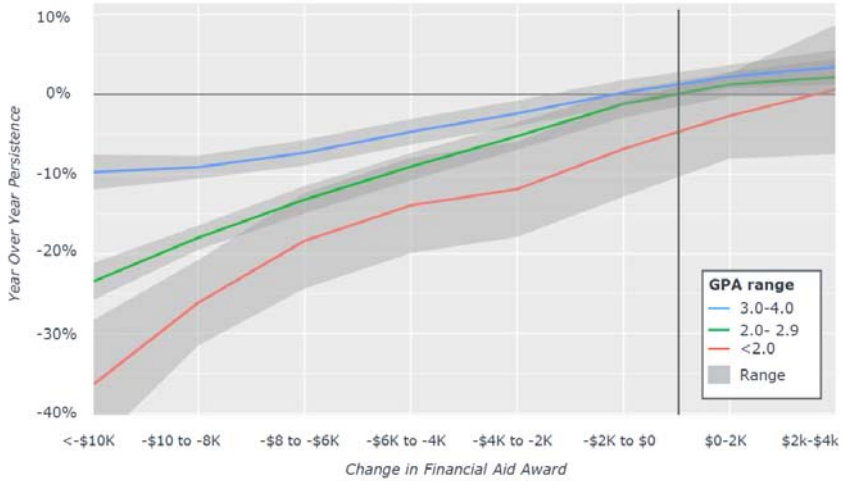
Depleting the Already Depleted

Across All GPA Bands, Students Who Lose Aid Are Less Likely to Persist

Next-Year Persistence Rates by GPA Range and Change in Financial Aid Award[1]



Institutional, GPA-Dependent Aid Can Be a Double-Edged Sword

18%

Proportion of first year students who lose GPA-restricted scholarships at EAB University[2]

$1,000

Average amount of institutional grant aid students at private colleges lost between first and senior year 2011-12

19

Percentage point increase in proportion of student costs covered by Gates Millennium Scholars Program from first year to sophomore year[3]

1) Data from SSC analysis of data at three large public universities
2) Private university in the north east
3) Attributed to change in financial aid from first to second year

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Source: Rochelle Sharpe, "Why Upperclassmen Lose Financial Aid", The *New York Times*, April 6, 2016.; EAB interviews and analysis.

A Plan to Keep HOPE Alive

Academic, Personal, and Financial Intervention Course Corrects Students

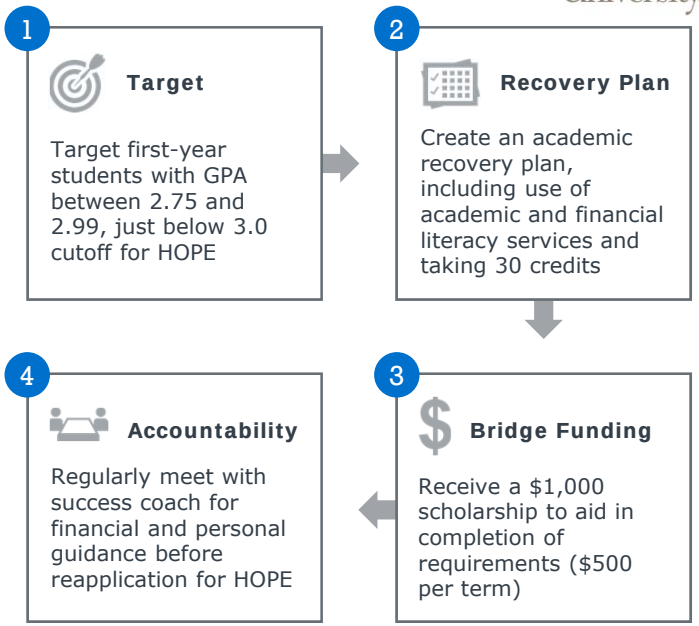
Georgia State University

Improving Outcomes for HOPE Regainers and All Participants

20.2
Percentage point improvement in 6-year graduation rate of participants, even for students who never regain

55%
Of participants regained the scholarship by the next marker (2011-2015)

>377
Number of students served since 2009



Source: Tim Renick; *Four Strategies for Supporting Low-Income Students*, Student Financial Success Conference at Georgia State University, May 30, 2018; Georgia State University, Keep HOPE Alive; Complete College Georgia, "Georgia State 2016 Financial Aid Interventions"; Martin Kurzweil and D. Derek Wu, "Building a Pathway to Student Success at Georgia State University", *Ithaka S+R*, April 23, 2015; Georgia State University, "Keeping HOPE Alive", Georgia State University Giving, September 26, 2012.

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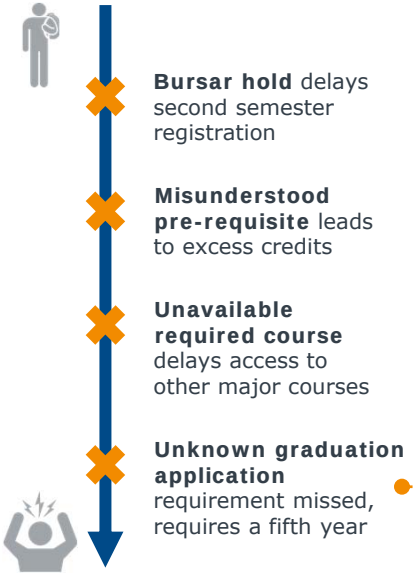
Obstacles to Degree Cluster Around Graduation

Removing Simple Policy Barriers Boosts Graduation Rates

A student starts their educational journey…



Bursar hold delays second semester registration

Misunderstood pre-requisite leads to excess credits

Unavailable required course delays access to other major courses

Unknown graduation application requirement missed, requires a fifth year

…and ends it delayed and frustrated.

UT Austin Revised Graduation Policies and Procedures

1 Regular Monitoring of Progress Toward Degree

Regularly updated degree audit system plus communication to students about expected graduation semester

2 Automatic Graduation Procedure Boosts Four-Year Rate by 2 Points

Removing the application for graduation eliminates the chance that students miss the application or fail to complete it

3 Graduation Help Desk Clears Many Barriers for Seniors

Over 1200 cases of helping students get into needed courses or overcoming administrative hurdles

To learn more about how your academic rules, regulations, and processes may create unnecessary obstacles for students, please see "*Student Completion Policy Audit*" on eab.com

Source: Alvarado, C.G., Connerat, C., & Smith, J. (2018). Every Student Graduates: The University of Texas at Austin Strategies to Increase Graduation Rates 2012-2017, The University of Texas at Austin: Austin, Texas.

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Experiential learning incentive scholarship

Ensuring Regular Education-Career Connections

Get Ahead of Critical Loss Points to Keep Focus on Student Goals

Curriculum of Career Development Milestones

Career development course

Meetings with peer and professional staff

Proactive Clearance of Administrative Barriers

Guaranteed access to high-demand courses

Access to a Pre-Made, Engaged Professional Network

Special events with industry leaders

Mentoring relationships with alumni and campus partners

Compliance-Based, Aid-Like-A-Paycheck Scholarship

Monthly distribution of aid after hitting milestones

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

UT Austin University Leadership Network

55% **Actual** four-year graduation rate of first ULN cohort

> **33%** **Predicted** four-year graduation rate of first ULN cohort

Hamilton

Hamilton College First-Year Forward

90%

Summer internship participation for Hamilton First-Year Forward first-gen students

BRAVEN

Braven Fellowship Program with Rutgers, SJSU, and National Louis University

+30

Percentage points **more likely to have an internship** than first-generation students nationally

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Source: Braven, 2017-18 Impact Report. Hamilton College, "Onward First-Year Forward." 2016. Alvarado, Cassandre, "Every Student Graduates," UT Austin, 2018. EAB interviews and analysis.

Today's Focus

Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success

The Two Questions Guiding Our Research

What disparities from outside of higher education do institutions need to remedy when their students enroll?

What do institutions do (or not do) to create or make gaps worse among their increasingly diverse student bodies?

Three Imperatives to Reduce Demographic Disparities in Academic Performance, Retention, and Graduation

1 **Create opportunities for early academic wins to prepare students for future challenges**

- Growth mindset priming exercise
- Pre-college academic simulation
- Math catch-up pathway

2 **Scale student support and normalize help-seeking behavior by expanding the use of peer coaches and mentors**

- Peer support expansion diagnostic
- Peer advisor-led outreach and service referral campaigns
- Mentor career skill reflection exercises

3 **Regularly reinforce the connection between students' education and long-term goals**

- Course-based goal reflection exercise
- Step-by-step bounce back plans
- Scholarship recovery intervention
- Experiential learning incentive scholarship

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

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