

# EMERGING MARKETS, EMERGING STRATEGIES

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## Workday Student Recruiting



Recruiting is one of the most important activities that higher education engages in. It is extremely important for recruiters to identify, recruit, and cultivate the right students.

The right student is different for every institution and the cost of recruiting just one undergraduate student is high. A college may spend this money even when a student chooses to go somewhere else, or accepts but doesn't complete a degree—perhaps because it wasn't a good match from the beginning.

It's a big problem, and the only way it can be solved is with better data. In conversations with both customers and prospective customers, we've heard time and again about the pressures school administrators face to back up their decisions with good information, and the solution lies in finding ways to use both their own data and external data sources to recruit students. Using a data-driven approach, institutions can better target and recruit students that are more likely to accept their admissions offers and persist at institutions to achieve their desired academic outcomes, whether it be a professional certificate or a four-year degree.

Our Workday Student team is constantly thinking about the power of data and the best and easiest ways to get it into the hands of higher education. Workday Student Recruiting helps our customers leverage data to better create and manage recruiting campaigns and strategies, and also analyze their spend on campaigns. They can use it to gauge campaign effectiveness based on quantifiable data about specific targeted students, and then track progress against their institutions' strategic objectives.

We're continuing to do a lot of work in this area to help customers solve recruitment challenges and meet admissions goals, by gaining insights from the historical data in their student systems combined with data from admissions applications and outside sources, such as the National Student Clearinghouse. With this robust information, an institution could answer a variety of questions about the students it's been recruiting and those who are successful at its institution. For example: What's the average GPA or academic index of successful students? Where are they coming from? How much is it costing to reach them? Institutions could then use all these data points to start targeting the right students—maybe it's women for their STEM programs or piano prodigies for their music departments—as well as to determine who is most likely to persist and succeed in their programs. This is exciting stuff we've been working on, and I'm looking forward to sharing more about it in the near future.

Modern technology approaches, including advanced analytics capabilities, are essential for helping institutions make sure they are pursuing the right students based on cultural fit, students' goals, and institutional objectives. The more institutions succeed at finding these meant-to-be students, the more they'll be able to make a difference across the entire spectrum of institutional and student success, from recruitment and revenue to student satisfaction and job placement.

Sincerely,

**Liz Dietz**

Vice President, Workday Student

For more information on Workday Student Recruiting visit [www.workday.com/student](http://www.workday.com/student)

# INTRODUCTION

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The student body – and potential student body – for American higher education is changing in dramatic ways. No longer can colleges assume a steady supply of well prepared high school graduates capable of enrolling and of paying. Likewise, no longer can colleges assume that employers will believe a college degree means that someone is ready for a job.

The articles in this booklet explore these issues, looking at the changing demographics of students and the new ways colleges are trying to recruit. Other articles look at demands for better alignment between student capabilities and workforce needs.

*Inside Higher Ed* will continue to cover these and related issues, and we welcome your thoughts on these articles and topics for future attention.

-The Editors  
editor@insidehighered.com

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# MATCHING THE 'UNDERMATCHED'

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*BY SCOTT JASCHIK*

INTERVENING WITH LOW-INCOME, HIGH-ABILITY HIGH SCHOOLERS CAN CHANGE COLLEGE CHOICES IN FAVOR OF MORE COMPETITIVE INSTITUTIONS, STUDY FINDS. BUT THEIR IMAGES OF LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES AND FLAGSHIP UNIVERSITIES MAY STILL DETER ENROLLMENTS.



**E**ver since a 2012 study found that a majority of high-achieving, low-income high school seniors don't apply to a single competitive college, educators and policy makers have been debating what to do about "undermatching," as the issue has come to be called.

Some have argued for more attention (and resources) for the institutions that enroll these students in significant numbers, especially community colleges and regional public institutions.

But many have looked for ways to attract more of these students to top colleges, which tend to have more generous aid offers and higher graduation rates than less competitive colleges.

Caroline Hoxby and Sarah Turner in January 2015 released evidence that the right interventions (largely providing certain types of information) can in fact alter the choices of these undermatched students. These interventions could send a significant number of low-income, high ability students to

the nation's top colleges, they find. At the same time, their study found that many of the undermatched students have incorrect images of liberal arts colleges and, to some extent, flagship universities, that may deter them from enrolling at these institutions.

Hoxby and Turner are economics professors at Stanford University and the University of Virginia, respectively. They presented their findings at the annual meeting of the American Economic Association. Hoxby was co-author

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of the 2012 study that set off the undermatching discussion, although Hoxby and Turner don't use the term in their new paper.

In their study, they explore the impact of a series of interventions offered through a program called Expanding College Opportunities, or its acronym ECO. Hoxby and Turner earlier found that these interventions encouraged more high ability, low-income students to apply to more-competitive colleges than they were doing otherwise.

Their new finding is that these interventions carry through to actual enrollments. But using interviews with students about why they didn't apply to certain types of colleges where they had a good chance of being admitted and offered generous aid packages, they found gaps



Sarah Turner

in information about liberal arts colleges in particular that could require further interventions or education campaigns.

The study was based on a national sample of 18,000 high school seniors who had scores in the top decile on the SAT or ACT, had family income in the bottom third for families with high school seniors, and did not enroll at "feeder" high schools (such as magnets) that regularly send many students to top colleges.

Those who were not in the control group received personalized information that did not recommend particular colleges, but that told the students and their families about the "net price" they would pay (typically much less than sticker price), the graduation rates at a range of colleges and the educational resources at a range of institutions.

Further, the students who were not in the control group received fee waivers to apply to competitive colleges. (Most such colleges let low-income students skip fees, but the waivers were without any paperwork.)

As in an earlier study, Hoxby and Turner found that students who received the full ECO intervention were more likely to apply to more colleges and to "peer" colleges – those that reflect their academic abilities. In the new study, they found a clear impact on the students' actual enrollment



Caroline M. Hoxby

patterns.

Students with the intervention were 46 percent more likely to enroll at "peer" institutions that reflect their abilities. And the institutions they enrolled in had graduation rates that were, on average, 15.1 percent higher than the institutions at which the control group enrolled. Instructional spending was 21.5 percent higher at the institutions at which the students who received the intervention enrolled.

The paper argues that the interventions used directly countered a sense from some low-income students that competitive colleges are either beyond their economic reach, or no different from other colleges that are easier to get into.

But another part of the research project asked students in the study who opted not to apply to certain kinds of colleges why they avoided them. The authors share findings

"THE PAPER ARGUES THAT THE INTERVENTIONS USED DIRECTLY COUNTERED A SENSE FROM SOME LOW-INCOME STUDENTS THAT COMPETITIVE COLLEGES ARE EITHER BEYOND THEIR ECONOMIC REACH, OR NO DIFFERENT FROM OTHER COLLEGES THAT ARE EASIER TO GET INTO."

about flagship universities and liberal arts colleges.

## Misinformation About Liberal Arts Colleges

At least some of the reasons given about flagship universities are true. Many students said that they wanted to go far from home, or to avoid institutions where many of their fellow students from high school were enrolling -- and indeed for most students their home state flagship would be closer to home than many other institutions.

Other common comments on flagship state universities may be true for some institutions more than others, or for some students at some flagships. For instance, students expressed worries about enrolling at institutions with a

heavy emphasis on athletics and/or a "party scene."

While those views may be true of some students' experiences at some flagships, the comments about liberal arts colleges suggest a large disconnect between those institutions and the high ability, low-income students in the study.

Many of the students admitted to not knowing what a liberal arts college is, or their answers suggested that they had the wrong idea. Among the responses quoted in the paper:

"What is a private liberal arts college?"

"I don't know what this is."

"I don't like learning useless things."

"I am not liberal."

And of students who had some sense in their minds (not necessarily correct) of what goes

on at liberal arts colleges, many seemed to equate the institutions only with arts/humanities fields, unaware that math and science are very much part of most liberal arts colleges and that one can go to graduate or professional school from liberal arts colleges (and that many boast of very high acceptance rates at such institutions). Here are some of these comments about liberal arts colleges:

"I plan on attending medical school."

"I plan on grad school later."

"I don't like art/art related subjects."

"I'm a math/science guy. I'm not very good at liberal arts."

"Liberal arts is for people who aren't good at math."

"Liberal arts colleges typically do not have mathematics majors." •

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/01/05/intervening-high-performing-low-income-students-changes-enrollment-patterns-study>

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# PREDICTING WHERE STUDENTS GO

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*BY RY RIVARD*

COLLEGES USE DATA TO PREDICT WHO THEY SHOULD  
TARGET AS THEY HUNT FOR STUDENTS.



**I**NDIANAPOLIS -- A trio of senior college enrollment officials gave a peek into how they decide which students to recruit. The process now involves number-crunching students' demographic and economic information -- not just sending chipper ambassadors to every nearby high school, mailing glossy books to students' homes and relying on gut instincts.

The discussion, during a session at the 2014 annual meeting of the National Association for College Admission Counseling, was one of many to take place here about how to hunt for students. The search for students involves a web of data

points, formulas and consulting firms that perhaps few parents and students are aware of.

Don Munce, the president of the National Research Center for College and University Admissions, or NRCCUA, offers a modeling service meant to predict which high school students are most likely to enroll at a particular institution. The center sells data on students to college admissions officials.

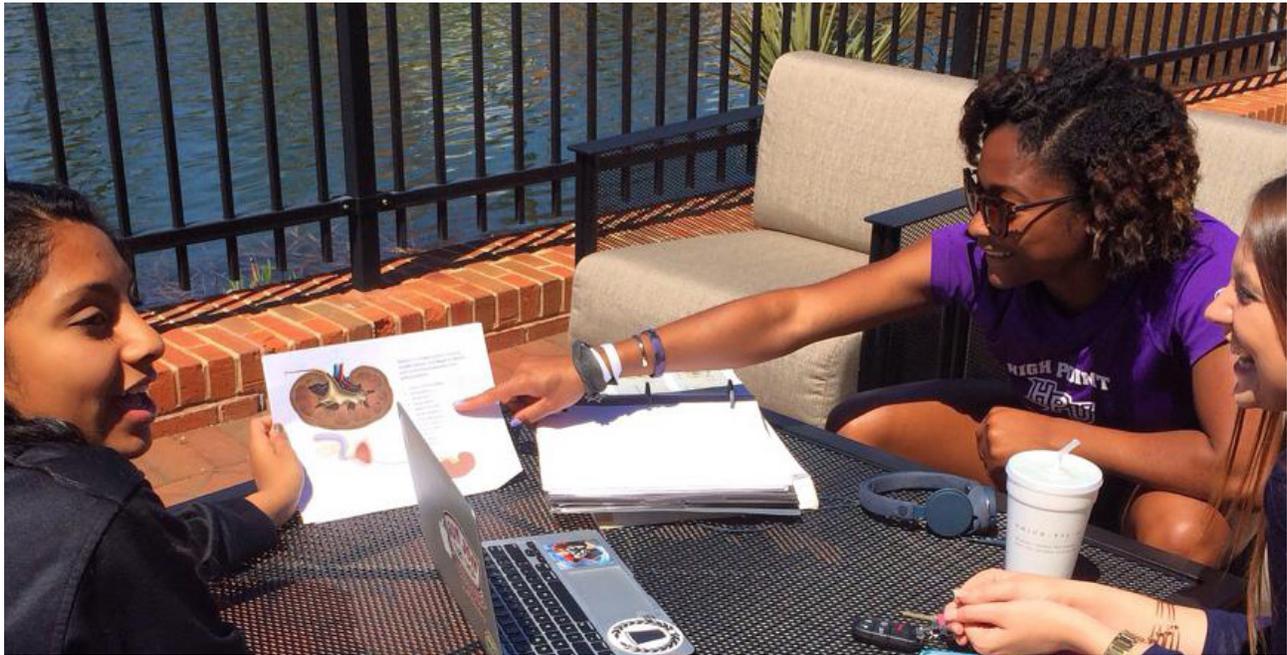
Munce moderated the panel of three college admissions officials who use his predictive modeling service. One of the college officials joked he bought so many student names from NRCCUA that he probably paid for Munce's yacht.

Munce advocates a "smart approach" -- which is the brand name of the modeling service he sells -- that would help colleges target the students most likely to enroll.

Are officials targeting students likeliest to attend their college, "Or are you throwing a lot of activity out there at students who don't enroll or may never enroll?" Munce asked.

NRCCUA, the College Board and ACT all gather data on students. The three services sell millions of student names for about 37 cents apiece to colleges and consulting firms hired by the colleges. They also all sell colleges predictive

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High Point University

modeling services based on the data they collect – things like family income, GPA and zip codes. NRCCUA gathers data on students through surveys they are asked to take in high school and has about 300 data points it can use.

There's a funnel for prospective students that admissions officials – and chief financial officers and presidents – pay a lot of attention to. It starts with a general population of students. Then there are inquiries, which means the students who ask a college for information. Then there are those that really apply, those that are actually admitted and those that finally attend.

The funnel can be huge at the top. High Point University, a private college in North Carolina, gets

inquiries from 70,000 students. This fall, 1,370 freshmen enrolled, said Andrew Bills, High Point's vice president for enrollment.

High Point has grown rapidly. In 2005, its freshmen class was just 412.

Bills said the university decides what prospective students to focus on using modeling.

About 90 percent of the students who enrolled at High Point came from the 40 percent of students a model scored above a .66 on its scale going to 1. The factors include geography, academic interest, whether students would prefer a private college and family income. So, for the university, it makes sense to focus its recruitment effort on those students, rather than students with a lower score.

"We were wasting our time messing with a lot of those inquiries," Bills said.

Stephen Lee, the executive director of admissions and recruitment at West Virginia University, uses modeling to help sort through the pool of out-of-state students and find out which out-of-state students recruiters should spend time communicating with.

"We wouldn't be able to do that if our mission was, 'Get to every high school,'" Lee said. He showed a chart that had some Pennsylvania students – a key feeder state for West Virginia. And that showed how many prospective students went to each high school and of those students how many had a predictive modeling score that

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"THERE'S A FUNNEL FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS THAT ADMISSIONS OFFICIALS — AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICERS AND PRESIDENTS — PAY A LOT OF ATTENTION TO. IT STARTS WITH A GENERAL POPULATION OF STUDENTS. THEN THERE ARE INQUIRIES, WHICH MEANS THE STUDENTS WHO ASK A COLLEGE FOR INFORMATION. THEN THERE ARE THOSE THAT REALLY APPLY, THOSE THAT ARE ACTUALLY ADMITTED AND THOSE THAT FINALLY ATTEND."

showed they were likely to attend.

James Steen, the vice president for enrollment management at Houston Baptist University, uses modeling to target students but also to figure out what traditional recruitment methods work or not.

Houston Baptist used to send out about 12,000 viewbooks — those glossy guides aimed at prospective students that cost a lot to make and mail. One year, Steen decided to not send viewbooks to 2,000 of the students his model predicted were most likely to attend.

He found would-be students in the group that didn't get the

viewbook actually were more likely to attend than those that got one.

"So guess what? We didn't do a viewbook last year and we lived to tell about it — our enrollment was still up this year," Steen said.

The ability to slice and dice prospective students has helped some colleges diversify their class and target students who might not think about going to their college or even college at all, but also raises the specter that some colleges with worrisome bottom lines will only go after certain kinds of students — like wealthy students who can pay their way without

scholarships — at the expense of others. Traditional recruiting already targets wealthier families in some cases. For instance, the *Los Angeles Times* found that college recruiters gave low-income high schools fewer visits than affluent high schools.

Advisers to the College Board — which has data on seven million students it sells to about 1,100 institutions each year — met last summer and talked about doing more to police how colleges can use the board's student data, but a committee decided not to change its policies. •

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/09/19/colleges-now-often-rely-data-rather-gut-hunt-students>

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# 'THE TYRANNY OF THE MERITOCRACY'

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*BY SCOTT JASCHIK*

LANI GUINIER DISCUSSES HER NEW CRITIQUE  
OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS.



**E**lite colleges admit students in a way that will fail to diversify higher education -- and the current use of affirmative action has little impact, according to a new book by Lani Guinier. Her new book, *The Tyranny of the Meritocracy: Democratizing Higher Education in America*, has just been published by Beacon Press. In it she argues that current admissions systems are based on tests, rankings and prestige -- in ways that undermine American democracy. And she argues for replacing what she calls "testocratic merit" with a new "democratic merit." This shift would place more emphasis on the good to society of educating a diverse

group of people than on identifying the people with the best credentials (as currently defined by society) for admission. Guinier, a professor of law at Harvard University, responded via e-mail to questions about her new book.

**Q: What is the difference between democratic merit and testocratic merit and why does this difference matter?**

A: Democratic merit is the form of merit that views higher education, at least partially, as a public good. As such, admissions criteria to colleges and universities should continuously be reassessed for the degree to which they help the institution and its constituents

to make present and future contributions to society, that is, our democracy. Democratic merit does what our current meritocracy fails to do: it creates a system that incentivizes individuals who serve the goals and contribute to the conditions of a thriving democracy for both their own good as well as for the collective good. Granting these individuals educational access, regardless of their supposed possession of abstractly measured and individualized "talent," is what will contribute to the creation of higher-level problem solving.

Testocratic merit makes the assumption that test scores are the best evidence of applicants' worth,

without paying much attention to the environments in which one finds those individuals. It thereby ignores several built-in biases that privilege those who are already quite advantaged. And it ignores those who could make a valuable contribution to the institution but who have not been the beneficiaries of the privileges of those who may test higher -- including growing up in thriving neighborhoods and homes, attending well-equipped and funded schools, having tutoring and other extra help.

If our society truly values education as a means of preparing citizens to participate in the decisions that affect their lives as individuals and the society they create as a collective, as well as to enable individuals to improve their lots and their society, then we need to reexamine exactly how we define merit.

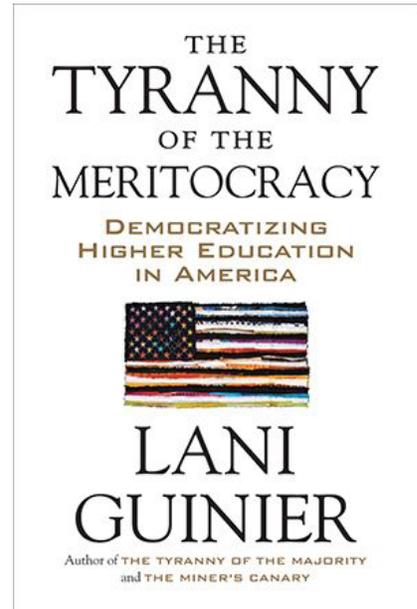
We can alter how we think about merit, from something a child is born with to something that she (and/or we) can help cultivate. We can shift from prioritizing individualized testing to group collaboration among all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers and administrators. Unfortunately, it's not going to be easy, as the entire undergirding of our educational system rests upon notions of individual achievement and the promotion of competition. But somehow we must shift from promoting testocratic merit, which

has produced dubious results, to developing democratic merit, because the latter is the foundation upon which our national values truly ought to rest.

**Q: Defenders of standardized testing say that the differential scores by race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status reflect inequalities in American society, not problems with the tests. How would you respond?**

A: Well, yes, that's undoubtedly true. And if it is, then that is a problem with the test, because it is not lifting up students with potential, but simply showing us who has been the beneficiary of relative wealth. And if we want to thrive in a multicultural society, we need to address that problem in two aspects: we need to close the wealth gap and work to achieve more economic justice in this country, and we have to be sure that our access to higher education isn't perpetuating the economic inequality by keeping out students who have grown up in underserved communities and attended underfunded schools.

**Q: Many proponents of affirmative action view it as an alternative or supplement to test-based admissions, yet you are critical not only of testing, but of current models of affirmative action as used by elite colleges and universities. What's wrong with current approaches to affirmative action?**



A: The loud debate over affirmative action is a distraction that obscures the real problem, because right now affirmative action simply mirrors the values of the current view of meritocracy. Students at elite colleges, for example, who are the beneficiaries of affirmative action tend to be either the children of immigrants or the children of upper-middle-class parents of color who have been sent to fine prep schools just like the upper-middle-class white students. The result? Our nation's colleges, universities and graduate schools use affirmative-action-based practices to admit students who test well, and then they pride themselves on their cosmetic diversity. Thus, affirmative action has evolved in many (but not all) colleges to merely mimic elite-sponsored admissions practices

that transform wealth into merit, encourage overreliance on pseudoscientific measures of excellence and convert admission into an entitlement without social obligation.

Indeed, where affirmative action has failed, it has failed because it has not gone far enough to address the unfairness of both our current merit system and its wealth-driven definition of merit. However, when we redefine merit by those characteristics that indicate a student's potential for future success in our democracy -- leadership, the ability to collaborate with others, resiliency and a drive to learn, among others -- then we might be able to make use of actions that prioritize such traits. If we commit to mentoring and nurturing that potential in our students, universities might more successfully cultivate potential leaders.

**Q: You write with enthusiasm about the Posse program, in which small cohorts of low-income and minority students from various cities are admitted together to colleges. But at most campuses in Posse, those admitted this way represent only a very small minority of students. How big could this model get?**

A: Students of color often struggle at the higher echelons of education; they may have trouble advocating for themselves

or finding necessary resources, they may have never learned the principles of time management, or they may suffer from insecurity as to whether or not they "belong." For certain students, such as children of parents who did not go to college or in some cases didn't even go to high school, gaining admission to college is only the beginning of the battle; adjusting to college life proves in some cases to be even harder than getting in. This is where democratic merit can truly shine: when students work together to solve problems and make advances, rather than scratch their lonely way to the top, they can create a supportive learning environment, one I find wonderfully embodied by the Posse Foundation. I cannot say how big this model will ultimately get, but as I note in the book, there is a growing demand among majority-white colleges for ways to diversify their campuses without resorting to race-based affirmative action programs, which are increasingly maligned by the public and disfavored by the courts.

**Q: If you were named admissions dean at an Ivy university or an elite public flagship -- an institution with far more demand for admission than there is space -- how would you admit students?**

A: There are several models I describe in the book, and I might try elements of each of



Lani Guinier

them. Turning again to the Posse Foundation, I would borrow from one of its most innovative features, which is its selection process. With a \$1.9 million grant received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 1999, Posse has developed a college-admissions assessment tool known as the Bial-Dale Adaptability Index, cocreated by Posse Foundation founder Debbie Bial. BDI is designed to identify students with specific leadership traits, such as social interactions skills and the ability to work in groups, that predict their ability to succeed in college and become active members of their campuses. BDI evaluates students in groups of 10 or 12 at a time through exercises such as the Lego test, in which members study a robot built of Lego blocks and then try to reconstruct it based on

THUS, AFFIRMATIVE ACTION HAS EVOLVED IN MANY (BUT NOT ALL) COLLEGES TO MERELY MIMIC ELITE-SPONSORED ADMISSIONS PRACTICES THAT TRANSFORM WEALTH INTO MERIT, ENCOURAGE OVERRELIANCE ON PSEUDOSCIENTIFIC MEASURES OF EXCELLENCE AND CONVERT ADMISSION INTO AN ENTITLEMENT WITHOUT SOCIAL OBLIGATION.

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sharing their collective memories. Observers watch students taking the Lego test -- as well as engaging in other dynamic interactions, such as running impromptu discussions on genetic testing or creating a public service announcement -- to see who takes initiative, who collaborates well and who is persistent.

By scoring and tracking hundreds of New York City high school seniors who have applied to college through the Posse program, the study found that BDI

can in fact predict these attributes in students: persistence, ability to access resources and ability to contribute to a campus community (leadership).

After controlling for SAT scores, the study found that students with a high BDI were more likely to graduate in four years than were low-BDI students, and that high-BDI students had considerably higher GPAs than low-BDI students (again controlling for SAT scores). In fact, students' SAT scores had very little correlation with their BDI

scores, and the former did not reflect the likelihood of success in school or graduation rates. Moreover, BDI students were shown to graduate at rates similar to those of the overall student body, despite having much lower SAT scores. BDI was found to be a particularly strong outcome predictor for black students, in contrast to standardized tests, which are even weaker predictors of black students' success than white students'. I think that would make a good start. ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/02/03/qa-lani-guinier-about-her-new-book-college-admissions>

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# ANALYZING APPLICATION ESSAYS

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*BY SCOTT JASCHIK*

DOES LANGUAGE USE AND TOPIC SELECTION PREDICT  
ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN COLLEGE? A NEW STUDY  
SUGGESTS IT DOES. (HINT TO HIGH SCHOOLERS:  
MOVE BEYOND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.)



Admissions essays are thought of by many as less scientific than other parts of the college application process -- a chance to share a personal story, to inject personality into the process, to become more than just a grade-point average or test score.

But it may be that statistical analysis can be applied to application essays -- and that some words and some topics correlate with better performance in college. That's the conclusion of a January 2015 study published in *PLOS One* that analyzes the words used in application essays with grades earned once enrolled.

The study found that the essays

that predicted the most academic success demonstrated "categorical thinking," which involves writing that categorizes things, and that connects concepts and ideas. Generally, writing with categorical thinking uses many articles such as "the" and prepositions such as "on" and "of."

Essays that show "dynamic thinking," in contrast, predict lower G.P.A.s in college. This writing tends to use pronouns such as "I" and "they" and to rely on personal narratives.

The authors of the paper -- all at the University of Texas at Austin -- are James Pennebaker, a psychology professor, David

Beaver, professor in of linguistics; Gary Lavergne, program manager in the Office of Admissions; Cindy Chung, psychology postdoctoral fellow; and Joey Frazee, a linguistics graduate student.

The analysis is based on data from 50,000 essays from 25,975 applicants who, after being accepted, enrolled at "a large state university" from 2004 through 2007, and were then tracked for their grades. The study does not explicitly state that the students are at UT Austin, and the researchers declined to name the institution. But the size of the university seems to match UT, and the institutional review board that

*Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?*

*Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.*

reviewed the project was at that university.

Via email, Professor Beaver answered some questions about the study. While much of the analysis focused on relatively short words, the scholars also noticed trends with longer words, he said.

Generally, those applicants who, compared to the average applicant, used greater numbers of long words (6 letters or more) than others, used more complicated sentences, and wrote longer essays all ended up with slightly higher GPAs than did other admitted students.

Asked if applicants should thus avoid personal narratives, Beaver said it was too early to act on the new research because, to his knowledge, no admissions offices

are analyzing applicants' essays based on this type of review.

"But I would advise students at the high school level that most colleges are more interested in writing about the world of ideas and things than in personal narratives," Beaver said. "Even when a college sets an essay title that seems to be asking for the applicants' personal story, it's a safe bet that the admissions officers (whether consciously or not) are looking for people who can put their own history in a broader context."

He said that he thinks college admissions officers should consider applying this study as one way to help predict applicant success. "The way people use language is one of many predictive factors a college admissions

officer can use," he said. "Of course, admissions officers need to take many other factors into consideration when building a new incoming class, including the student's specific interests and abilities, and all sorts of evidence of independence, maturity, and excellence in academics and beyond. But having said that, if you forced me at gunpoint to decide who to admit to the college, and gave me nothing to go on except the language measures developed in the new study, I'd do O.K. Based on the data I've looked at, and just considering the later academic performance of the students I picked, I wouldn't do much worse than a professional admissions officer who had access to every student's complete file." ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/01/08/new-study-links-certain-application-essays-and-college-success>

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# NEW WAYS TO GET IN

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*BY SCOTT JASCHIK*

IN FIRST YEAR GOUCHER APPLICANTS MAY BE JUDGED ON A SHORT VIDEO AND BENNINGTON APPLICANTS BY AN APPLICATION PORTFOLIO THEY DESIGN, BOTH COLLEGES REPORT EARLY SIGNS OF SUCCESS.



**I**t turns out that there are students who want to apply to college based on a two-minute video. These applicants may be more likely than others to be non-white and women. But it's also the case that, given the option, most potential students won't apply that way.

At least that's the early word from Goucher College, which decided to let students use that method to apply, starting for the class that will enroll in fall 2015. Bennington College, which also introduced a non-conventional application system (in which students can design their own application portfolio) also reports early success with its new option.

The Goucher option, announced

in September 2014, attracted the most attention. Applicants can be judged simply on the basis of a two-minute video, although they also must submit two pieces of work from high school. Applicants need not submit test scores (Goucher has for some time been test-optional).

But in an unusual move, applicants need not submit transcripts (those applying for financial aid must do so, although the information isn't considered in the admissions decision).

Through January 2015, the college has received 64 applicants through the video option, and admitted 48 of them. The remainder included 2 applicants whose videos couldn't be seen (and

who are being helped to resubmit them) and 14 who were asked for some more information pending a final decision. So while no video applicants have been rejected, not all have earned admission.

The 75 percent admission rate (which could still grow in theory up to 100 percent) is slightly higher than the 72 percent rate for applicants who applied through traditional means. But Goucher officials say that the numbers suggest success beyond having 64 more applicants.

Whether from the attention the college received or other reasons, early action applications reached a record high of 1,761 (not counting the 64 video applicants) by the December 1 deadline. The figure



for traditional application early action is up 12 percent over the total of each of the previous two years.

Of particular interest to Goucher is that there are signs that the video option is attracting more minority students -- particularly black students.

Of non-video applicants, 41.5 percent were members of minority groups, while the figure was 52.0 for video applicants. And while 18 percent of traditional applications were filed by black students, 39 percent of the video applications were.

Women make up a solid majority of Goucher's applicant pool so far in the new system (68.4 percent) and an even larger share of the video applicants (73.4 percent).

Further, by looking at the transcripts submitted by video applicants (but not considered in

admissions decisions), Goucher officials say that the grades suggest a similar academic performance level to those who apply through traditional means. So thus far, Goucher officials are pleased with the experiment and hopeful about the rest of the admissions cycle.

Bennington's new option is called "dimensional" admissions, under which applicants themselves decide what to submit (and can opt not to submit traditionally required items like transcripts, although they may opt to send them as well).

As is the case at Goucher, Bennington is seeing good overall numbers in 2014-15, Early decision applications (only some of which use the new option) are up more than 60 percent.

To date, 61 people have applied through dimensional admissions, and 8 have been admitted, but

many others haven't been reviewed yet.

For the two application periods for which deadlines have been passed, dimensional applicants made up 11 of 39 for early decision applicants and 31 of 345 early action applicants.

Hung Bui, vice president and dean of admissions and financial aid at Bennington, said via email that, so far, the new option has "exceeded our expectations with regard to quantity and quality." He noted that 77 percent of those using the application applied in various "early" rounds of admission (Bennington uses early action and early decision).

This indicates a "genuine interest," he said, as does the quality of the material submitted. Bui said that the new approach lets students share "more of their personality." ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/01/13/goucher-and-bennington-both-report-success-highly-nontraditional-admissions-options>

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# THE OPPOSITE OF HELICOPTER PARENTS

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*BY JAKE NEW*

PROFESSORS COMPLAIN ABOUT HOVERING MOMS AND DADS, BUT MANY EDUCATORS FIND THAT THIS ISN'T AN ISSUE FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS, WHO NEED MORE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.



**A**s the associate provost of Chaminade University of Honolulu, Curtis Washburn has met many first-generation college students.

A small Roman Catholic institution located near the white sands of Waikīkī, Chaminade has a significant population of Polynesian students. More than 400 of the university's 2,700 students are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The majority of these students are low-income and the first in their family to go to college, Washburn said.

"They may be 1 of 10 kids, and they're the one child that the family decided to send," he said. "They

give him a \$100 and send them off to school. 'Here's 100 bucks. That should last you four years. Now, go save the family.'"

And that's where their guidance may end. If so-called helicopter parents typically hover above students from more elite and educated families, many first-generation college students have the opposite problem: parents who may as well be watching their children from a space station.

A study published in the *Journal of College Student Retention* in 2012 found that first-generation college students receive far less emotional, informational, and financial support from their parents

than the continuing-generation students. Those less-supported students also reported having higher levels of stress and anxiety than the few first-generation students who did feel supported by their parents.

That's not to say the parents are uncaring or don't want their children to succeed. In many cases, the parents want to be involved, Washburn said, but they are not sure what level of involvement is appropriate and what advice to provide.

In other cases, he said, parents may not understand the value of college, even encouraging students to drop out so they can

## EMERGING MARKETS, EMERGING STRATEGIES

more immediately help support the family.

"The problem is that many these parents know nothing about college," he said. "Students with parents that didn't go to college don't have that person they can call when they have a question. They have no map. That child is lost."

Students whose parents never attended college are less likely to take college prep courses in high school, discuss college with their parents, and apply to college at all, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. First-generation students consistently take fewer classes, complete fewer classes, and earn lower grades than their classmates whose parents attended college, according to the NCES. As a result, they're less likely to graduate.

As part of a recent program funded by the Walmart Foundation, 50 member institutions of the Council of Independent Colleges received grants to improve the retention of first-generation college students. Several of the colleges focused on parent involvement, among other solutions including building a community for first-generation students, providing mentors, and tracking their progress.

At Chaminade, the university created brochures, handbooks, and videos in Samoan and Micronesian languages to better communicate with students and their parents,

who may not speak English. Students are also invited to share cultural dances, legends, and myths as part of the curriculum, and these too are video taped and shared with family members back home.

The College of Mount Saint Vincent, in the Bronx, started a program called the Parent Support Initiative that helped educate



Danneal Jones

parents about the rigors of college.

At the College of St. Scholastica, parents were invited to a two-day "Summer Launch" event that included a family luncheon and a break-out session for parents about adjusting to college life. The College of Idaho reimbursed the travel expenses of families

who made the trek to its summer orientation for first-generation students.

At Florida Memorial University, a college preparatory program called Black Male College Explorers helped first-generation students graduate from high school and college, providing them with mentoring and other help along the way – including buying them their first suits.

The program costs each student \$300, said Danneal L. Jones, vice president for student affairs at the university, and if parents do not get involved in the programs too, their child's spot can be given to another student.

"We are making a commitment to their child," Jones said. "And so we make it clear that they have to as well."

While many of the institutions reported improved retention rates for first-generation college students at the end of their programs, several said parent and family involvement was still "disappointingly low," according to Kerry J. Strand, a sociology professor at Hood College who wrote a report about the initiatives.

"Almost every college or university that attempted to involve parents in their programming for first-generation students expressed some disappointment in the low response and lack of participation," Strand said.

Not all professors and

administrators are hoping for more parental involvement, however. At an event promoting the CIC programs, several faculty and staff members expressed apprehension toward, as one audience member put it, "inviting parents in even more." Professors take enough

phone calls from helicopter parents, they argued.

Marilyn Moller, director of teacher education at Rosemont College, said it's important to remember that those phone calls -- as annoying as they can be -- are rarely coming from the parents of

low-income and first-generation students.

"I really don't see that as much anymore, and especially with these kinds of students," Moller said. "I hope for phone calls. Often times, with these students, a parent may be his or her only advocate." •

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/08/13/colleges-struggle-engage-parents-first-generation-college-students>

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# GRANTS FOR TODAY'S STUDENT

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*BY KELLIE WOODHOUSE*

A NEW REPORT CONTENDS THAT STATE AID PROGRAMS SHOULD BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF MODERN STUDENTS IN TODAY'S COLLEGE LANDSCAPE, WHICH IS VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM WHEN MOST SUCH PROGRAMS WERE DEVELOPED.



**W**ASHINGTON -- Get a group of higher education wonks in the same room talking about public funding and they're

bound to discuss how flattening and declining state investment is hurting students and colleges alike.

But while a group of experts

acknowledged this fact during a forum at the National Press Club in April 2015, the main discussion centered around not only a lack of

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money but a lack of vision in the implementation of state-awarded grant programs.

Experts and authors of a report, “Redesigning State Financial Aid,” released in 2015 by the nonpartisan Education Commission of the States (ECS), contend state grant programs should better meet the needs of modern students, who have access to a growing number of pathways to higher education.

“The era for when many of these programs were formed [was] very different” from today’s higher education landscape, said Carol D’Amico, an executive vice president at USA Funds, a nonprofit student loan guarantor and scholarship provider that

collaborated with ECS on the report.

By overhauling aid programs, authors and experts claim, states -- which in 2013 awarded \$11.2 billion in student aid to 4.5 million students -- can boost nontraditional students’ access to aid money and potentially improve their postsecondary education success rates.

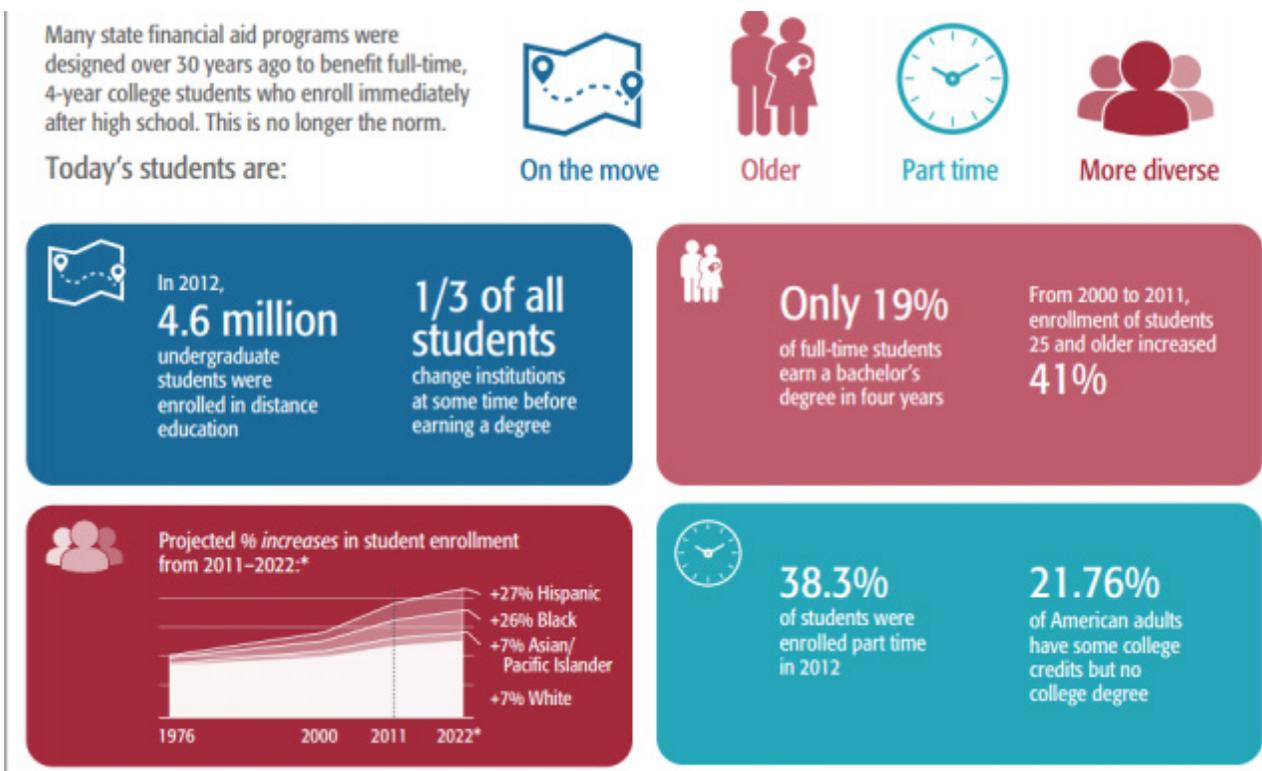
In 2012 states spent \$1,420 in grant aid per student, covering about 16 percent of public college tuition, which that year averaged \$8,800.

State aid programs were developed with a focus on traditional college students -- young adults who enroll right after

high school and are between 18 and 24.

But the report’s authors note that today’s college students are a much more diverse set than several decades ago, and often learn in less traditional ways than in the classroom at a four-year institution.

They highlight a bevy of statistics: 4.6 million undergraduate students were enrolled in distance education in 2012; one-third of all students transfer institutions before earning their degrees; from 2001 to 2011, the enrollment of students 25 and older increased 41 percent; nearly 22 percent of American adults have some college education but no degree; 38 percent of college



**"JUST GIVING MONEY TO THOSE STUDENTS IS NOT ENOUGH. IT'S MORE ABOUT PROVIDING INCENTIVE AND SUPPORT THAN IT IS ABOUT JUST REWARDING PEOPLE."**

students were enrolled part time in 2012; and, perhaps most telling of all, only 19 percent of full-time undergraduates earned a bachelor's degree in four years.

Despite these statistics, ECS researchers found that of the 100 largest state-funded financial aid programs in the U.S., 29 only funded students who enrolled full time and 43 limited the number of years a student can receive a grant, a restriction not conducive to part-time students who take several years longer to graduate than do their full-time peers.

Another statistic: 33 programs link aid eligibility to standardized test scores and grade point averages, measures that, according to the report, "are of little relevance" to adults already in the marketplace.

During the forum, experts explored the possibility of linking state aid to student performance while in college, or finding ways to

encourage part-time students to take more credits and thus increase the likelihood for completion. One thought was to offer grants to all students, but increase them in proportion to the number of credits a student takes.

"Just giving money to those students is not enough," Sandy Baum, a senior fellow at the Urban Institute, said of nontraditional students. "It's more about providing incentive and support than it is about just rewarding people."

The report offers a number of suggestions beyond expanding the pool of students who are eligible for grants.

It suggests that states make students aware of their grant award as early as possible, even before they enroll in an institution. It also suggests that aid not be tied to academic semesters or quarters, but that it be available for students in programs with alternative enrollment schedules.

Authors call for grant aid to be student centered, rather than institution centered.

"Program design decisions [should be] predicated by how states can utilize financial aid programs to support student access and success first, rather than employing student aid as a conduit of institutional support," the report says.

Flattening and declining state investment has caused many public universities and community colleges to raise tuition. It's this fact, panelists said, that makes it imperative for nontraditional students to have access to grant funds.

ECS is still in the early stages of a longer-term project to overhaul state grant programs. It's in the process of compiling a database of state aid programs and hopes to consult with states individually about overhauling outdated programs. ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/04/30/report-calls-states-adapt-grant-programs-modern-student>

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# PLAUSIBLE PROMISES

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*BY KAITLIN MULHERE*

"PROMISE PROGRAM" SCHOLARSHIPS ARE APPEALING TO CITIES AND COUNTIES LOOKING TO BOOST THEIR LOCAL EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT. BUT IT'S TOO EARLY TO SAY FOR SURE THAT THE PROGRAMS WORK.



Nearly a decade after the Kalamazoo Promise was launched to nationwide buzz, the fanfare around promise programs has remained strong. Several cities, large and small, are considering launching their own versions of the programs -- in which they pledge help for their residents to pay for college -- while the national attention on free community college can be traced back to the model founded in Kalamazoo, Mich.

But despite the enthusiasm and positive anecdotes surrounding the promise program model, there's little research showing how effective and sustainable the fairly new movement is over the long term.

"Most of the replication of this model is kind of being done on a

gut feeling that it's a good idea, rather than empirical data that it's a good idea," said Michelle Miller-Adams, a fellow at the Michigan-based W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment, who studies promise programs.

So far, few programs have had to walk back on the promises they've made to students, and it doesn't appear that any have altogether foundered. But with only a few years under their belts, the programs are still very much in the growth and development stage.

Promise programs are place-based scholarships, generally tied to a city or school district, that offer near-universal access. Promise programs are unlike other scholarships, because they also seek to change schools and communities, Miller-Adams said.

The programs are long-term, so students know about the potential benefits long before they apply to colleges. The Upjohn Institute's directory lists about 40 programs that meet those requirements.

But under that umbrella, there's wide variation among the programs. Some, such as the Kalamazoo and El Dorado, Ark., versions, are paid for mainly through one set of wealthy funders. Other programs have to collect a hodgepodge of donors each year, while some zones in Michigan are paid for through tax increment financing.

Many programs restrict the colleges that recipients can attend, tying the money to a single local community college. Others give students money to attend any accredited college in the state or country. Most programs award

money based on a sliding scale for how long a student has lived in the area.

That variability makes it difficult to evaluate or research promise programs as a group, Miller-Adams said.

The programs can undoubtedly produce a significant morale boost and generate positive coverage for a school district, Miller-Adams said. But it will take a lot more time to determine whether and how the scale moves on larger goals around closing achievement gaps or improving local economies.

The effects of the programs are likely to change over time, too. After all, part of the fabric of promise programs is that families can plan on having an affordable college option from the time their children start grade school. In theory, the outcomes of the first rounds of scholarship recipients will look different from those who grew up in the "college-going culture" these programs aim to build.

With all these unknowns, there's the risk that stakeholders in these programs may overpromise, Miller-Adams said.

"We caution people to underpromise and overdeliver."

### Lottery Program Precedents

If promise program organizers need a cautionary tale, they have to look no farther than similar

statewide programs that preceded them.

Beginning with the Georgia Hope Scholarship in the 1990s, a handful of states launched expansive scholarship programs funded through state lotteries. At the time, there was a lot of excitement around the idea of boosting college enrollment with the fortunes made by lotteries, Patricia Melton, executive director of the New Haven Promise, wrote in a blog post on CitiesofPromise.com.

But as the years passed, a combination of factors put those programs in what Melton calls a "promise pinch."

"There was a sense of 'the pot of money is endless,'" Melton said in an interview. "But that's of course not true."

College enrollment spiked. State appropriations for colleges fell, driving tuition higher. The economy tanked, meaning people had less disposable income to spend on lottery tickets.

To rein in spending, Georgia and Florida reduced what was covered through the program. The states also tightened requirements to qualify for funding, which some criticized as a way of cutting out the low-income and at-risk students who most need the money. In Georgia, for example, the number of HOPE recipients dropped from 256,938 in the 2010-11 academic year to 178,742 by 2012-13.

In South Carolina, the public is paying for a growing portion -- now more than a third -- of a scholarship program that was supposed to be funded mostly by lottery revenues. And Wisconsin's Covenant Grant Program, modeled as a promise to eighth graders, was phased out starting in 2011, after Republican lawmakers said there wasn't an identified source of revenue for the program.

These stories should serve as reminders to promise programs that no money source is safe forever, and that program directors have to be wise stewards of money year to year, always on the lookout for fluctuations in economics, enrollment and even politics, Melton said in an interview.

### A Case Study

Officials in Peoria, Ill., know all about that year-to-year struggle. The city launched a promise program in 2008, assuring graduates within city limits that they could attend the local Illinois Central College tuition-free. The award amount was tied to the student's length of time living in the city.

But unlike Kalamazoo, the program never had a guaranteed source of money, and it relies on annual fund-raising.

"Everyone who contributes to Peoria Promise each year could say, 'Well, I don't want to donate to Peoria Promise anymore,' and

## EMERGING MARKETS, EMERGING STRATEGIES

we'd have no funding," said its director, Sheri McGill.

Since 2008, the cost per credit hour at Illinois Central College has increased 56 percent, from \$80 to \$125, as a result of shrinking state support.

Enrollment in the program also expanded quickly at first, though McGill said hard data are limited because the program only started handling its own applications in 2014. Prior to that, it was managed through the college like any other scholarship.

Peoria Promise didn't have a privacy waiver, and so the program couldn't track the progress or outcomes of students who received scholarships. Managing on its own required more money for staff, but it also meant Peoria Promise could see where its money was going.

Those two changes -- increased costs and more autonomy -- led to major changes in how the program awards scholarships. Peoria Promise in 2015 announced that it would switch to a tuition reimbursement program.

The calculation for how much students are eligible to receive also is changing. Instead of being based solely on the length of time a student has attended Peoria public schools, points are awarded for residency length, but also for factors such as grade point average, entrance exam scores, attendance rates and extracurricular involvement. Officials removed the program's 12-credit-per-semester cap and



also decided it would pay the tuition of students enrolled part-time, even for those taking just one course.

The new system provides a little more incentive and "skin in the game" for students to do better during their high school years, McGill said.

Likewise, the reimbursement means students will have more incentive to complete courses, since scholarship money will be tied to completion. McGill said the program has paid out an extraordinary amount for classes that students didn't attend regularly, but also didn't drop, so they received a failing grade.

"When we started looking at 'course work attempted' compared to 'course work completed,' it wasn't a pretty picture," she said. "We really needed students to be

more accountable."

McGill said she thinks an endowed fund is a necessity for a program to be truly universal and pay 100 percent tuition without any questions.

When the Upjohn Institute consults for cities that are considering launching their own programs, they forecast a cost analysis for 10 years. There are a lot of assumptions in those forecasts, including what will happen with tuition, school enrollment and immigration, Miller-Adams said.

What many communities may not realize, though, is how affordable at least some version of a promise program can be, she said. Last-dollar programs that are tied to a specific community college only pay out what isn't covered by Pell Grants and other scholarships. (Kalamazoo is a first-

dollar program.)

Still, even for those cheaper versions, the ability to raise large amounts of money isn't uniformly distributed across the country.

In Pittsburgh, even with a generous gift of \$100 million over 10 years from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the promise organization still had to come up with \$15 million in matching money from the community.

It takes resources to raise those sort of resources, said Rodney Andrews, an assistant professor of economics at the University of Texas at Dallas, who focuses on the economics of education.

The promise model also isn't ideal for any communities experiencing rapid population growth, since costs will grow quickly.

And for being a model for so many programs, the Kalamazoo Promise is actually fairly unusual, Andrews said. The size of the donors' investment sets Kalamazoo apart. The program also has the Upjohn Institute in the same city to study the program and track its results. Most cities lack the money to pay for such evaluation.

### Early Payoffs

The short-term effects of Kalamazoo's program are encouraging.

The school district's enrollment has grown 24 percent, and the

number of Advanced Placement courses offered in the district has more than doubled.

An analysis by the local newspaper showed Kalamazoo graduates were more likely than peers from similar demographic groups at other high schools to finish one year of college.

New Haven's program also has produced some positive signs. The program recently had its first years studied by the RAND Corporation. The results showed a 6 percent increase in college enrollment between 2008 and 2013, along with slight improvements in achievement scores at the high school level.

But even for the oldest of the programs -- Kalamazoo -- six-year college completion rates are available for only a few years' worth of participants. Bigger-picture questions about the ways in which these programs can lift a community are still hazy, Miller-Adams said.

One of those larger goals -- spurring local economic development -- is where Andrews grows skeptical.

Numbers so far have shown that students respond to the incentive of promise programs by going to the colleges that are made more affordable because of them. That's largely public colleges in their home state.

But research also shows

college-educated people tend to be more mobile, meaning students who earn a degree actually may be more likely to leave their hometown. Ultimately, those with college degrees are going to go where the best work opportunities are, Andrews said.

The programs are certainly beneficial for most students, but calculations about whether promise programs benefit a local economy with higher tax revenues or jobs created will take longer to figure out, Andrews said.

While finances may be one of the most obvious challenges, the success of the programs comes down to more than money, Miller-Adams said. The most important characteristic is the engagement and buy-in from the community.

Melton and Andrews made similar remarks, highlighting the importance of marketing the program to the community, building up support services and involving grade-school teachers to ensure students are prepared for college.

There's no one formula for success. But programs need those components and a reliable stream of money to support them if they want to develop into something families can count on, Andrews said.

"If not, you have to make some changes to the promise, which sort of defeats the purpose of making a promise." ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/04/07/promise-programs-thrive-despite-unanswered-questions-about-long-term-effects-and>

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# NO TRANSFER NEEDED

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*BY PAUL FAIN*

DREXEL UNIVERSITY TAKES ITS BACHELOR'S DEGREES AND FACULTY TO THREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAMPUSES, AN UNUSUAL MOVE FOR A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY.



**D**ozens of universities recently touted transfer agreements with community colleges as part of President Obama's 2014 summit on higher education. Drexel University didn't participate in the event. But it can hang with any private university when it comes to working closely with community colleges.

For eight years the Philadelphia-based university has taken its bachelor's degree programs across state lines to New Jersey's Burlington County College.

Students can earn a Drexel degree on Burlington's campus after first earning an associate degree. They get a tuition discount in the program (see box for pricing), which remains more expensive than most public institutions.

Drexel's faculty members teach the courses at Burlington. The university's instructors do stints at the community college, which is 30 miles from Drexel's campus.

There are no other colleges in Burlington County. And it isn't easy for most Burlington students who want to pursue a four-year degree to leave home to enroll elsewhere. That's because a large number of students at the college are working hard to balance job and family commitments, as well as their budgets, said David Hespe, Burlington's president.

He said Drexel makes a bachelor's degree possible for them.

The draw isn't just convenience. Hespe said the jump to a university looks less intimidating when

students can continue on at a campus where they've already succeeded once. Drexel is sending a message to Burlington's students that "you can do this," said Hespe. "You can do this academically. You can do this within your budget."

Drexel in 2014 announced it was taking the model to the next level, by exporting it to two other community colleges. Experts said the approach is unusual for a private institution. Other universities have similar agreements in place, but Drexel's partnership with Burlington is one of the most extensive.

About 300 students are currently enrolled in Drexel degree tracks at the two-year college campus.

In January 2014 the university announced that students at

Montgomery County Community College, which is located in suburban Philadelphia, could earn Drexel degrees. Drexel also recently announced a similar partnership with Delaware County Community College, which is about 35 miles from the university's campus.

The program "expands and elevates the educational opportunities in the region," said John Fry, Drexel's president

Many graduates from the three colleges also enroll in Drexel's online degree programs, which are extensive. But Fry, who was a commencement speaker at Montgomery County in 2013, said the university wants to continue developing a "third way" for community college students to earn Drexel degrees.

"We're going to think about as many different ways to connect with them as we can," Fry said.

The partnership isn't just about altruism. Drexel benefits in several ways, including financially.

"There's a good, healthy margin there," Fry said. "Both institutions do well financially."

The university also gets pipelines to motivated, prepared students. The Burlington students are treated like their peers at Drexel's main campus, Fry said. They can attend cultural events and basketball games. Even better, they can get a Drexel degree in the co-branded program.

"These are Drexel students," Fry said.

### Branching Out

Kay McClenney is a fan of Drexel's approach. McClenney, who is director of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, said other private institutions have brought their degree programs to two-year campuses.

For example, she cited Lone Star College's University Center, which hosts bachelor's and master's degrees from six institutions.

Our Lady of the Lake University and the University of St. Thomas (Houston) are all private university partners at the center, joining four state universities.

"This model is not uncommon, though also not yet pervasive," McClenney said in an email. "It's very good, for everyone -- students, community colleges, universities and communities."

Officials from Burlington said Drexel brought disciplines that would be difficult for a community college to create, even if it tried to go down the four-year degree



Drexel's John Fry and Montgomery County's Karen Stout

## EMERGING MARKETS, EMERGING STRATEGIES

path by itself. The university offers several STEM degree tracks at Burlington, including degrees in engineering, computer technology and biology.

Exporting those degree programs is no easy task. "These are very difficult majors to have off of your campus," Hespe said. "You need specialized faculty," as well as labs and equipment.

Fry, who arrived at Drexel in 2010, said he was impressed by faculty enthusiasm for the collaboration. (Instructors get bonus pay for the work.)

"I was amazed that we had so many faculty members willing to do this," he said. "We had no problem getting faculty energized."

The emerging partnership at Montgomery County will also feature a healthy dose of engineering and science, said Stout.

"It really strengthens our STEM pathways," she said.

The college has solid connections with several nearby public institutions, particularly Temple University. Stout said Temple has long been the number one transfer option for Montgomery County students – more than 200 transferred there last year.

While a partnership with a private institution might raise some eyebrows, Stout said it's not a threat to the college's relationship with Temple and other public universities. "I don't see this competing," she said.

Stout thinks community colleges must get creative about partnerships to stay relevant. "We can't survive anymore as independent operations."

And while she had nothing but praise for the college's public university partners, Stout said Drexel brought one competitive advantage to the table.

"I don't see the publics being as flexible and nimble," she said.

Familiarity was helpful when Burlington and Drexel's leaders first crafted their deal back in 2006. "We knew them well. And they knew us well," said Robert Ariosto, director of Burlington's transfer center, who worked on the partnership's creation.

The state's government had previously set rules for degrees offered by out-of-state providers on public college campuses. They are stringent, said Ariosto.

Degree programs have to be an "exact mirror image" of the ones offered on a university's home campus, he said. "They could not be a second-class operation."

Drexel got it done, however.

Hespe said the college plans to grow the program. And he's not worried about criticism of a private university doing what one of the state's public institutions might do instead.

"You can't argue with success," he said. ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/02/04/drexels-community-college-partnerships-win-fans>

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# SHORT-LIVED TRANSFER DEGREES

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*BY PAUL FAIN*

DREXEL UNIVERSITY NIXES ON-SITE BACHELOR'S DEGREE OFFERINGS AT THREE LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES, ONE YEAR AFTER CREATING TWO OF THE HIGHLY TOUTED PARTNERSHIPS.



**D**rexel University in January 2014 earned praise for expanding a transfer program that brings the university's faculty members to local community colleges. But Drexel announced in January 2015 that it is phasing out the program less than a year later.

As *The Philadelphia Inquirer* first reported, the university will no longer offer bachelor's degrees on the campuses of two Pennsylvania community colleges and one located across the Delaware River, in New Jersey.

Drexel issued a written statement explaining the decision. It didn't offer specific reasons for nixing the relatively new programs with

Montgomery County Community College and Delaware County Community College, as well as one with New Jersey's Burlington County College, which has been in place for almost a decade.

"We now believe that students are best served by completing their degree on Drexel's campus," the written statement said, "where they will have access to the full Drexel experience, including interactions with a wide range of faculty and other students and to all of the resources available on campus."

The university has recently spent heavily on expanding and improving its main campus in Philadelphia. As a result, the

statement appears to suggest that taking degrees to the suburbs has become less of a priority for Drexel, one source speculated.

It would be surprising if money concerns killed the on-site degrees, given Drexel's confidence about the programs' bottom line.

John Fry, Drexel's president, told *Inside Higher Ed* in 2014 that the goal was to develop a third way for community college students to transfer to the university.

Drexel has a healthy conventional transfer pipeline from the three colleges, as well as others in the region. Montgomery County sent 75 students to Drexel in 2013, for example. Many graduates from



Delaware County Community College

the three institutions also enroll in Drexel's online degree programs.

But the expansion of the Burlington-style partnership to the two Pennsylvania colleges meant Drexel was bringing its degrees -- and faculty members -- directly to community college students at their campuses. That approach is rare in higher education, particularly for a private university.

After first earning an associate degree from the two-year colleges, students have been able to continue on to earn bachelor's degrees from Drexel without leaving their community colleges. They also received substantial tuition discounts, which reduced the price of a Drexel degree by 37 percent.

The relationship is good for

students, experts said, in part because it sends a signal that they can complete a bachelor's degree without too much disruption to their lives. It also paid off for the community colleges and Drexel, Fry said in 2014.

"There's a good, healthy margin there," he said. "Both institutions do well financially."

### Six Months In

Drexel said it remained committed to strengthening its already deep partnerships with the three community colleges.

The university will offer enhanced transfer articulation agreements, targeted scholarships and other ways to "make it as easy as possible for community college graduates to obtain their bachelor's

degrees from Drexel."

While Karen Stout, Montgomery County's president, said the news of the on-site degrees' demise was an "abrupt" surprise, she remains confident that transfer pathways to Drexel will continue to grow. In particular, she praised the university's efforts to bring in transfer students in STEM tracks. And she said a successful transfer program with Montgomery County for online nursing degrees will remain in place.

Students who are currently enrolled in the on-site programs will be able to complete their degrees at the same tuition rate, the university said. Drexel will work with each student to develop a plan for completion, which may include some online courses and

others offered at the Philadelphia campus.

Burlington County said in a written statement posted to its website that a guaranteed admissions transfer path to Drexel stays in effect. The college also said it is “working toward securing agreements with other universities to provide on-site four-year degree programs in engineering, technology and

related degree programs.”

Montgomery County’s on-site program has only been up and running for six months. But while it was later to the game than Burlington County, the college moved quickly to create six bachelor’s programs with Drexel.

That may have been too many, Stout said. While the college was able to drum up some student

interest in the degrees, each one came with different sets of faculty members and other costs.

“We should have started with fewer areas,” said Stout.

Even so, six months was not much time to see whether the partnership would work financially.

“It was so early it was hard to tell if there was more demand,” she said. ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/01/06/promising-partnership-between-drexel-university-and-three-community-colleges-ends>

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# STUDENT AND SHIPBUILDER

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*BY PAUL FAIN*

NEW APPRENTICESHIP AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY MAY BE FIRST OF ITS KIND TO INCLUDE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE, PAID FOR BY THE SHIPYARD, WHICH ALSO KICKS IN AT LEAST \$225,000 DURING EACH APPRENTICE'S COURSE.



Apprenticeships often are touted as a neglected alternative to enrolling in college, one that leads to jobs. A smattering of colleges, however, think apprenticeships can go hand in hand with earning a degree. Students at Old Dominion University, for example, now can

## EMERGING MARKETS, EMERGING STRATEGIES

do a four- to eight-year stint as apprentices at a nearby shipyard while simultaneously earning a bachelor's degree in mechanical or electrical engineering. The apprentices spend a day or two per week in the classroom and the rest of their workweek on the job at Newport News Shipbuilding.

Incoming apprentices earn \$16 per hour at the shipbuilding company's Apprentice School. For the Old Dominion students, that works out to at least \$225,000 during the course of their apprenticeships. They also get free tuition, fees, textbooks, a benefits package and a guaranteed job when they graduate.

"They come in earning a good living wage," said Todd Estes, the Apprentice School's university liaison. "Not only is there no cost of instruction, but we actually pay them."

Old Dominion's new apprenticeship began in 2013. It may be the first in the country to be tied to a bachelor's degree. And while the university is particularly well-placed for such a program -- given that a shipyard with 23,000 employees is in its backyard -- several experts said the apprenticeship could be a national model for other institutions to emulate with their local businesses.

Robert Lerman, a professor of economics at American University, is the founder of the American Institute for Innovative

Apprenticeship. He said apprenticeships remain woefully underdeveloped in this country.

The numbers back him up. About 288,000 apprenticeships were filled in 2013, according to federal statistics, about 200,000 fewer than a decade ago. (That number grows to 375,000 when military programs are included.) By comparison, Germany has 1.8 million apprenticeships with about 500,000 sponsoring companies, according to a recent report from the Center for American Progress.

Apprenticeships are different and more intensive than internships. An apprentice gig is typically formal training for a job, where the employer plans to hire the apprentice. And apprenticeships last longer and pay better than internships.

A better comparison is cooperative education. Northeastern University has the most widely acclaimed co-op program, where students combine classroom studies with full-time work for six months. The university's co-ops are with 2,000 partner employers in 69 countries.

While the co-op model is spreading in higher education, apprenticeships appear to be a tougher sell.

Relatively few colleges in this country have partnered with companies to offer apprenticeships that lead to degrees, Lerman said. The reason, he said, is inertia. But that may be changing, slowly. And

community colleges are where most of the action is.

For example, lawmakers in South Carolina located the state's apprenticeship office within the technical college system, according to the Center for American Progress report. The left-leaning center, which said apprenticeships can help meet the demand for skilled workers, also praised Indiana's Ivy Tech, a statewide two-year college system, for its collaboration with employers on apprenticeships.

Ideally, experts said, community college programs are linked to degrees.

For example, North Carolina's Central Piedmont College offers an apprenticeship with Siemens USA. As *U.S. News & World Report* wrote, students at the college can earn an associate degree in mechatronics while working on building gas and steam turbines at a Siemens plant in Charlotte. The company pays for the degree. And graduates of the program automatically get a \$55,000-a-year job with Siemens.

The Obama administration has done its part to encourage more apprenticeships. The White House successfully found \$100 million, a rare new federal funding stream, to create the American Apprenticeship Grant program. The U.S. Department of Labor is administering the competitive grants, which it said will go to

public-private partnerships in high-growth fields.

### A New Model

The apprenticeship bachelor's degree may only exist at Old Dominion. The partnership between the university and the shipyard is a "natural fit," said Anthony Carnevale, director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Carnevale is a fan of the degree-linked apprenticeships. "The learning you're doing in school is reinforced on the job."

Newport News Shipbuilding, which is owned by Huntington Ingalls Industries, first approached Old Dominion to propose the program, university officials said. The company said it needed more employees with engineering degrees.

A key reason, according to the Apprentice School, is that former apprentices tend to become managers. And the degree can be an asset for employees who want to climb the ladder. Roughly 44 percent of the company's production managers

are graduates of the Apprentice School, and 58 percent of general foremen are graduates.

"We're looking at career growth and commitment to the company," said James H. Hughes, the school's manager of academics. "Over 80 percent of our graduates will be with the company at least 10 years."

Estes said the Old Dominion partnership didn't grow out of a scarcity of applicants to the Apprentice School or to the shipyard itself. The goal, he said, is identifying future leaders and helping to develop the "highest-caliber engineer who could be hired."

Old Dominion's apprenticeship began in 2014 with 15 students. There are two main paths into the program.

Current students at the university who have completed the equivalent of two years of relevant course work in engineering -- a minimum of 60 credits -- can apply. So can direct applicants who hold an associate of science or associate of arts and sciences in engineering.

Old Dominion worked on the

program for three years, said Renee Olander, an associate vice president for regional higher education centers at the university and an associate professor of writing.

One key step was for the two engineering departments to make shifts in course schedules for apprentices, to accommodate their schedules at the shipyard.

Students must complete both intensive degree work on campus, she said, as well as working full-time as shipbuilders.

"You wear a hard hat," said Olander. "It's a hard program."

However, apprentices also are integrated into the upper-class population at the university. Olander said they get "full access to all academic support services, as well as recreation, social, honors and sports activities."

More colleges will try something like Old Dominion's apprenticeships, Lerman predicts, because the payoffs for students, employers and colleges are too much to ignore.

"The logic is inexorable," he said. ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/04/06/old-dominion-us-new-shipbuilding-apprenticeships-come-bachelors-degree>

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# TECHNICALLY LIBERAL ARTS

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*BY PAUL FAIN*

GEORGIA'S PRIVATE COLLEGES INK DEEP TRANSFER AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE'S TECHNICAL COLLEGES, AND SOME WAIVE GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS.



**A** group of 19 private colleges in Georgia in 2013 struck a deep transfer agreement with the state's technical college system, guaranteeing admission to any student with a grade-point average of at least 2.5 and an associate of science or applied science from one of the state's 25 technical colleges.

Four of the private institutions went a step farther with the agreement. Those colleges -- Brenau University, LaGrange College, Paine College and Reinhardt University -- agreed to waive their general education requirements for students who transfer in from the technical college system with an associate

degree in science or, in two cases, in applied science.

Many four-year institutions around the country, including private ones, are working to improve their transfer pathway from community colleges. Statewide groups of private colleges in North Carolina and Tennessee have also developed deep transfer agreements with their counterpart community college systems. Other states, like Hawaii and Maryland, are encouraging "reverse transfer," where transfer students finish associate degrees at four-year institutions.

The Georgia Independent College Association's new transfer agreement is particularly broad,

experts said. Stephen Katsinas, director of the Education Policy Center at the University of Alabama, called it a "significant step forward for students in the Peach State."

Beyond the waiving of general education requirements by four institutions, the agreement includes a long list of courses offered by technical colleges that participating colleges have agreed to accept for transfer credit, when students complete them with a grade of C or better.

"Admission is important, but it is the transfer of credit that could be the game changer," said Mark D'Amico, an assistant professor of educational leadership at the



LaGrange College

University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Six of the association's 25 members did not sign onto the pact. But Susanna Baxter, the group's president, said the February announcement was just the beginning.

"We really hope that this agreement can be the tip of the iceberg in terms of what could be," she said.

For example, Baxter predicted that more of the private colleges would agree to drop general education requirements in exchange for associate degrees.

That move can be controversial, particularly among faculty members who question whether coursework at two-year institutions can adequately substitute for the general education curriculum they

teach. Baxter said the transfer agreement faced substantial opposition, particularly the general education piece, which was "not an easy discussion."

It helped, however, to have several colleges at the table at which transfer students from Georgia technical colleges had been successful. Baxter said the colleges that had "already plowed ahead" made a compelling case to their peers.

Katsinas said the decision by LaGrange and other Georgia colleges can make sense. "Advances in technology require technical workers with higher order learning skills," he said in an e-mail, "which in turn is breaking down former barriers between general education and technical education related to transfer."

The private college group is not that odd of a transfer fit with the technical college system. For starters, 43 percent of students who attend member colleges receive Pell Grants. They also serve a large number of adult students, and the majority of the group's overall enrollment is nonwhite.

A number of academic tracks could be popular with transfer students from technical colleges, Baxter said, including criminal justice, nursing and several of the sciences.

For example, a student might want to go on to earn a bachelor degree in criminal justice after first earning a certificate.

The Georgia association first broached the idea of the transfer agreement. While several member institutions had their own "one off"

agreements in place with local technical colleges, Baxter said “some were doing a much better job than others.”

The idea also partially had roots in the 2011 creation of Complete College Georgia, which is a joint effort by the technical college system and the University System of Georgia to boost college graduation and retention rates.

Georgia is one of many states participating in the campaign led by Complete College America. The state’s governor, Nathan Deal, a Republican, has taken an active role encouraging that and other collaborations between the state’s colleges.

Baxter said the private college group watched the Complete College rollout and said “we have

to figure out a way to be a part of this.”

The main goal of the transfer agreement is for students to face fewer barriers when they want to continue their education at a private college.

“We want to provide those options when they make sense,” Baxter said. “It was not easy to do, but it was a no-brainer.” ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/04/02/private-colleges-ga-open-doors-students-technical-colleges>

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# GRADING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

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*BY PAUL FAIN*

COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN N.C. PLANS TO EVALUATE "SOFT SKILLS" AND ISSUE WORKPLACE READINESS CERTIFICATES FOR STUDENTS WHO GET PASSING MARKS.



**G**rades earned by many students at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College factor in “soft skills,” such as whether they show up for class

on time or work well in groups. And the college issues workplace readiness certificates alongside conventional credentials to recognize those skills.

Located in Asheville, N.C., A-B Tech, as it is commonly known, has developed a template that helps faculty members determine how to incorporate eight primary

## EMERGING MARKETS, EMERGING STRATEGIES

workplace expectations into grading, including personal responsibility, interdependence and emotional intelligence. Soft skills should count for 8 to 10 percent of grades in courses that adopt those guidelines, college officials said. “We’re teaching our students to walk the walk,” said Jean B. Finley, an instructor of business computer technologies.

Academic departments will have flexibility in deciding how to use workplace readiness grading. For example, some soft skills might be easier to measure in disciplines like nursing or culinary arts, which generally lead to jobs with clear demands. Liberal arts programs can be trickier. However, the central concept will be applicable across the curriculum, according to college officials.

A certificate based on a student’s passing marks on self-awareness – one of A-B Tech’s soft skill categories – might seem like a squishy idea. But the benefits of learning to how behave and perform in the workplace are very real, said Sue Olesiuk, A-B Tech’s dean of academic success.

“You’re going to have a better chance of getting a job and keeping a job,” she said.

The certificates will come with short explanations aimed at employers. And students will be able to earn them in tandem with traditional degrees and certificates.

The project is not just about getting

to class on time (although A-B Tech does take roll in all its classes, and requires a minimum threshold of attendance). For example, community college students are often more independent than their counterparts at residential, four-year colleges. They may be older and typically have less guidance on how to navigate college or the office-place. So Olesiuk said A-B Tech plans to grade students on how they work with others, including peers in study groups, librarians and faculty members.

In addition, some students at A-B Tech need to learn that it’s better to communicate their competing time demands to a professor, or future boss, rather than staying mum. That could mean explaining in a professionally worded e-mail why they need to get their kid to school and will be late for class. And the expectation is that students will take the initiative to figure out what they missed in class.

The main goal is to encourage students to take personal responsibility and display a strong work ethic, said Melissa Quinley, A-B Tech’s vice president of instructional services. That’s because the college wants its students to believe that “I’ve got to give it my very best,” she said, both in class and on the job.

### Making It Mandatory

Colleges are facing increasing pressure to measure student



learning and to prove that the degrees they issue are worth the investment. And employers say they want to hire graduates with critical thinking skills who arrive understanding how to be professional.

Quinley said local employers are generally pleased with the technical and academic accomplishments of A-B Tech students. But soft skills can be a problem. For example, she said the college recent held a focus group with welding companies, where some participants said A-B Tech graduates were talented and got the welding part, but that some showed up late for work too often.

Hank Dunn, A-B Tech’s president since 2010, wants to change that. He got the ball rolling for the college’s workplace readiness program. And while the central administration leaves many decisions to department chairs and individual faculty members, they want it to be adopted broadly.

For example, if a department decides that soft skills should be graded in one course, all sections of that course must incorporate them.

## EMERGING MARKETS, EMERGING STRATEGIES

College officials also said the workplace readiness certificate must be based on rigorous assessment if it is to carry any weight with employers.

The project will obviously backfire if A-B Tech students go into the workplace armed with the certificates but can't perform well on the job.

"We're putting our name on the line, too," said Olesiuk.

A-B Tech's approach gels with the recommendations of Kay McClenney, director of the Center for Community College Student Engagement. McClenney advocates for community

colleges to set more mandatory requirements for students, including the use of academic support services.

That's not always an easy ask in the two-year sector, which generally resists paternalism. Elite private colleges make their students do lots of things, like requiring them to attend orientation or meet with their academic advisers.

But community colleges like to treat students like adults. While there's nothing wrong with that principle, McClenney and other experts said community colleges need to push mandatory requirements if they help students

get to graduation, even basic ones like participation in study groups.

Not everyone at A-B Tech is fully on-board with the workplace readiness program, Quinley said. But she predicted that the holdouts would come around quickly, in part because the approach will boost academic performance.

Finley agreed. She has been teaching soft skills for more than 20 years, which she said encourages higher quality academic work.

"My students are able to prioritize better," Finley said. "My supervisor expects me to be a problem solver. And that's what I expect of my students." ●

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VIEW THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/12/13/nc-community-college-issue-grades-certificates-soft-skills>

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