Through the Gate:
An Examination of Factors Determining whether Students Achieve Transfer or Get Stuck At or Near the Gate

Strengthening Student Success Conference
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Darla Cooper, EdD
Andrew Kretz, PhD
Alyssa Nguyen, MA
The RP Group
www.rpgroup.org

Mission
• Strengthen CCCs’ ability to gather, analyze, and act on information in order to enhance student equity and success

Services
• Research, evaluation, planning, professional development, and technical assistance—designed and conducted by CCC practitioners

Organization
• 501(c)3 with roots as membership organization
College Futures Foundation
www.collegefutures.org

Vision
• More graduates for a thriving California

Mission
• Removing barriers so more low-income and underrepresented students attain bachelor’s degrees
Today’s Presentation Outcomes

Participants will…

• Learn what factors influence whether students transfer or stop at or near the transfer gate, and how these factors differ by region and student sub-group

• Know specific next steps in this transfer research:
  – Understanding the stories of students stuck at the gate
  – Informing practitioners and policymakers about ways to remove barriers and increase student transfer to university
Today’s Presentation Outline

• Through the Gate Study Recap
• College Application of Study Findings
• Transfer Decision-Making Framework
• Examining Factors Determining whether Students Achieve Transfer or Get Stuck At or Near the Gate
• Getting Better Directions: Phase II
Through the Gate Transfer Study

A Fresh Take on the Transfer Challenge
Setting the Stage

Reflecting on the Through the Gate Study…

• How can you utilize this study to enhance your students’ transfer journey?
• How can it help inform other campus-wide initiatives?
Through the Gate Aims to...

Identify individuals who have completed all or most of their transfer requirements, but who do not make it “through the gate” to university.

Identify strategies for increasing transfer, boosting baccalaureate production, and enhancing students’ social and economic mobility--especially for underrepresented populations.
Research Approach

Phase I: Mapping the Transfer Landscape
Quantitative research to better understand the transfer landscape focusing on students who met all or most of their requirements but have not transferred.

Phase II: Getting Better Directions
Mixed-methods research to understand what factors impact these students’ journeys and how policy and practice might change to propel them through the gate.
A Fresh Take on the Transfer Continuum

- **Transfer Achievers**: Made it through the gate by transferring to any university, with or without a degree.
- **Students At the Gate**: Achieved an AD-T or completed the requirements for transfer (≥60 transferable units, 2.0 GPA, and transferable English and math); have not yet transferred.
- **Transfer Explorers**: Show behavioral intent to transfer by completing 12 – 44 transferable units within 6 years of first-time enrollment; have not yet transferred.
- **Students Near the Gate**: Earned ≥60 transferable units with a 2.0 GPA, but missing transferable English and/or math; have not yet transferred.
- **Momentum Students**: Demonstrate momentum toward a transfer goal by achieving 45 – 59 transferable units, and maintaining a 2.0 GPA; have not yet transferred.
Study Sample

- 875,630 CCC students
- Enrolled between 2010-2011 and 2014-2015
- Outcomes through spring 2016

Three subgroups:
1. Transfer Achievers (583,074)
2. Students At the Gate (135,557)
3. Students Near the Gate (156,999)
Overview of Phase I Findings

Transfer Achievers
- Majority transferred without a degree or certificate (68.5%, \( n=399,635 \))

Students At the Gate
- Over half of transfer-ready students left without a college credential

Students Near the Gate
- 92% needed to complete math requirements in order to transfer
- Nearly half exited the system without a college credential
- Time is the enemy; students who did not transfer within a year of becoming transfer-ready were less likely to transition to university
Role of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Region

• 75% of African-American students who make it near or at the gate, made it through the gate (yet most do not make it near, at, or through the gate)

• Latino male students and Native-American female students were less likely to transfer

• Latino students were also more likely to earn an AD-T, but halt their transfer journey

• Inland Empire students were least likely to make it through the transfer gate
College Application of Phase I Findings
College Applications

• Crafton Hills College
  – Scheduled presentations on transfer to key stakeholder groups

• Napa Valley College
  – Utilized methodology to identify how many students satisfy 3 of 4 criteria (and which 3 are the most common) (see Phase I report appendix)

• Bakersfield College
  – Hung transfer continuum posters and presented during convenings with discipline faculty to help make the case for guided pathways
How Has Chaffey College Utilized the Study?

– Participated in pre-survey focus groups
  • Findings shared with shared governance and planning groups
  • Discussed during development of guided pathways

– Experienced an “ah-ha” about the number of students who earned an AD-T but did not transfer and who were transfer-prepared or transfer-ready

– Disaggregated data by student characteristics
  • Plan to replicate annually and have Transfer Center reach out to these students to assist them in transferring
  • Helps to inform equity planning and other major initiatives
Group Discussion

• Has your college utilized findings from Phase I?
  – If yes, what has your college done?
  – If no, what could your college do?
What Colleges Can Do

• Figure out who these students are at your college
  – Identify how many students are at or near the gate
  – Analyze to see if certain student groups are more likely to be at or near the gate

• Reach out to these students to explore barriers and identify needs

• Develop plans to help address emerging barriers and needs
Examining Factors Determining Whether Students Achieve Transfer or Get Stuck At or Near the Gate
Purpose

Further understand the connection between student- and college-level factors with the odds of remaining near or at the gate rather than achieving transfer.
Methodology: Multinomial Logistics Regression

Predictor Variables

Student Level
- Asian [White]
- Black [White]
- Hispanic [White]
- Pacific Islander [White]
- Native American [White]
- More than Two [White]
- Unknown [White]
- Female [Male]
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) [Not LEP]
- Disabled Support Programs & Services (DSPS) [Not DSPS]
- First Generation [Not First Generation]
- CalWorks [Not CalWorks]
- Cumulative GPA
- Completed Transfer Units

College Level
- Number of Full Time Equivalent Students (FTES)
- Number of ADT programs
- Miles to the nearest CSU/UC

Outcome Variable
- At the Gate
- Transferred
- Near the Gate
Findings

More Likely to Transfer Than Remain Near the Gate
Multiple Ethnicities
Male
CalWorks
Cumulative GPA

More Likely to Transfer Than Remain At the Gate
African American/ Black
CalWorks
Cumulative GPA

More Likely to Be At the Gate Than Transferred
Asian
Hispanic
Unknown Ethnicity
DSPS
First Generation

More Likely to Be Near the Gate Than Transferred
Native American
Unknown Ethnicity
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS)
First Generation
Transfer Decision-Making Framework
Student Factors

- Academic (e.g., GPA, transfer units completed)
- Demographics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity)
- Psychological (e.g., confidence, fear of unknown)
- Sociocultural (e.g., family expectations)
- Financial (e.g., college affordability)

College Factors

- Transfer Support (e.g., robustness of Transfer Center)
- Culture (e.g., intersegmental alignment, messaging)
- Policy (e.g., # of AD-Ts available)
- Regional (e.g., proximity to university, population density)
Group Discussion

• What about this framework resonates with you?
• What, if any, factors/concepts are missing/unclear/unnecessary?
• How might you be able to use this framework in your work with transfer students?
Getting Better Directions
Phase II Research
Phase II Research Questions

- **Why** do so many students who are close to achieving their transfer goal stop short of making this transition?

- **What can we do** to help students who are at or near the gate transfer?

- **What is holding back different student groups**, and **how can we help** them continue their journey?

- **What is impacting IE and CV students’ transfer progress**, and what strategies can be pursued to increase their success?
Phase II Methodology: Study Sample

- Recruiting 34 colleges to participate by region:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Valley</th>
<th>Inland Empire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles/Orange County</td>
<td>San Francisco Bay Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td>Greater Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central Coast</td>
<td>Far North</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Phase II Methodology: Online Survey

**Exploration of the obstacles that prevented or dissuaded students from transferring as well as the supports that could bring them back onto the transfer path**

- **Student Sample**
  - Near the gate students still enrolled and exited
    - Missing English, math, or both academic requirements
  - At the gate students still enrolled and exited
    - AD-T earners, associate’s degree earners, or students without a degree
Phase II Methodology: Telephone Interviews

Student voices collected through telephone interviews to take an in-depth look at students’ non-transfer stories – what barriers emerged and how they faced them, what drove their decision-making at various exit points – and collect quotes that capture the participants’ perspectives and ideas.

- **Student Sample**
  - 25 near the gate students still enrolled and exited
    - Missing English, math, or both academic requirements
  - 75 at the gate students still enrolled and exited
    - AD-T earners, associate’s degree earners, or students without a degree
Questions?
For more information on the Through the Gate Study

Project Directors:
Dr. Darla Cooper
dcooper@rpgroup.org

Dr. Kristen Fong
kfong@rpgroup.org

www.rpgroup.org/through-the-gate
#StudentsThroughtheGate
Thank you!