Understanding our Students: Low Income and First Generation Students

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Data Provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning
Among our enrolled, full-time freshmen for Fall 2015...

- 40% from below median income households
  - Defined nationwide as $80,500 for four-person household
- 6% at or below poverty line
  - Defined nationwide as $24,000 for four-person household
- 23% are Pell Grant recipients
- 14% are first-generation college students (self-report)
Distribution of Low-Income and First-Gen Students Across Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Units</th>
<th>First Generation</th>
<th>Pell Recipient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Academic Units</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Income and First-Gen Status as Predictors of Academic Achievement

Fall 2015 Full-Time Freshmen One-Year Retention

- Pell Recipient: 83.8%
  - Not Member: 71.1%
  - Member of Group: 83.0%
- First Generation: 68.4%
  - Not Member: 83.0%
  - Member of Group: 68.4%
Income and First-Gen Status as Predictors of Academic Achievement

Six-Year Graduation Rate, Five-Year Averages (2006-2010)

- Pell Recipient:
  - Not Member: 49.3
  - Member of Group: 64.6

- First Generation:
  - Not Member: 50.1
  - Member of Group: 64.5
Income and First-Gen Status as Predictors of Academic Achievement

![Bar Chart: Six-Year Graduation Rate, Five-Year Averages (2006-2010)]

- High Ability Band Students (Bands 1 and 2)
- Pell Recipient:
  - Not a Member: 87.0
  - Member of Group: 75.2
- First Generation:
  - Not a Member: 86.6
  - Member of Group: 75.7
Income and First-Gen Status as Predictors of Academic Achievement
Income and First-Gen Status as Predictors of Academic Achievement, by CLAS Major Area

Six-Year Graduation Rate, Five-Year Averages (2006-2010)
Subset by Pell Recipient Status and Academic Unit

- All Students, Not Pell & Pell
  - Not Pell Recipient: 63.0%
  - Pell Grant Recipient: 48.3%

- Humanities
  - Not Pell Recipient: 62.7%
  - Pell Grant Recipient: 51.9%

- Natural Sciences
  - Not Pell Recipient: 65.5%
  - Pell Grant Recipient: 45.2%

- School of Arts
  - Not Pell Recipient: 65.8%
  - Pell Grant Recipient: 61.0%

- Social Sciences
  - Not Pell Recipient: 65.2%
  - Pell Grant Recipient: 47.7%
What research tells us....

- Navigating institution bureaucracies
- Understanding academic pathways and their relative preparation
- Feeling a sense of belonging/community
- Handling financial difficulties
- Dealing with mental health/wellness
- Supporting other family/personal circumstances
From recruitment to graduation...

- Admitted/Enroll
- Declare a Major
- Follow 4 year Plan for Major
- Graduate
Faculty Critical Role in Navigating the “Hidden Curriculum”

• Understanding their own progression
  – Through a course
  – Through a major towards a degree

• Establishing strong relationships with faculty

• Engaging with academic opportunities inside and outside of the classroom

• Utilizing academic resources available
Setting Low-Income and First-Gen Students up for Success – Outside the Classroom

• Engagement in High-Impact Practices (e.g., Undergraduate Research, Internships, etc.)

• Local Evidence: Emerging Scholars Program
Teaching Transparently *(Winkelmes et al., 2016)*

**FIGURE 1. TRANSPARENT ASSIGNMENT TEMPLATE**

**Purpose**
- Skills practiced  
  relevance to students 5 years out
- Knowledge gained  
  connection to Learning Outcomes

**Task**
- What to do
- How to do it

**Criteria**
- What excellence looks like (multiple annotated examples)
- Criteria in advance to help students to self-evaluate

**FIGURE 3. FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS IN LESS TRANSPARENT VERSUS MORE TRANSPARENT COURSES—END OF TERM**

First-Generation College Students, End of Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Transparency</th>
<th>Less Transparent N=246</th>
<th>More Transparent N=188</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ES=0.80</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer-valued Skills*</th>
<th>Less Transparent N=245</th>
<th>More Transparent N=188</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ES=0.58</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Confidence</th>
<th>Less Transparent N=242</th>
<th>More Transparent N=183</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ES=0.50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of Belonging</th>
<th>Less Transparent N=246</th>
<th>More Transparent N=188</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ES=0.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY: N: number of students responding
- ES: effect size (Hedges’ G). Effect sizes of 0.25 standard deviations or larger are "substantively important" (US Dept of Education WW, 2014, p. 23).
- Less Transparent: mean perceived transparency <3.3/4
- More Transparent: mean perceived transparency ≥3.3/4

*Hart Associates 2015, 2013