Annotated Bibliography of Recent Research Related to Academic Advising

Collins, M. E. & Mowbray, C. T. (2005). Higher Education and Psychiatric Disabilities: National Survey of Campus Disability Services. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 75*(2), 304–15.

The number of college students with psychiatric disabilities appears to be growing. While Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American Disabilities Act of 1990 guarantee the rights of students with disabilities, services offered to students with psychiatric disorders may vary considerably by institution. According to Collins and Mowbray, an estimated 86% of students with psychiatric disabilities withdraw from college prior to completing a degree, yet little factual data have been gathered on the services provided by college and university campuses to these students.

Collins and Mowbray surveyed 587 colleges and universities in 10 states to investigate institutional practices and policies with respect to students with psychiatric disabilities, perceived barriers to services, and common concerns of faculty members, staff, and administrators with respect to this population. Surveys were sent to directors of student disability services or student support services offices. When the name of a specific director could not be ascertained, surveys were mailed to a generic director. When no office could be identified as providing disability services, the survey was mailed to the dean of students. Two hundred and seventy-five surveys (47% response rate) were returned.

Forty percent of the respondents reported having a specific disability services office, while 50% indicated these services were provided by an office with multiple responsibilities. Five percent of the institutions reported having some other type of location in which disability services are offered, and the remaining 5% had no specific services for students with disabilities. Sixty-two percent of the schools reported having staff with specific qualifications related to psychiatric disabilities. With regard to student population, the number of students with psychiatric disabilities ranged from 0 to 1,668 with a mean of 48 and a standard deviation of 118. Disorders included anxiety (34%), affective (25%), psychotic (15%), mixed (15%), eating (3%), and those in a category of other (5%).

Participating schools ranked the extent to which they provided various services to students with psychiatric disabilities. The most common services were individual support, accommodation letters, referrals to off-campus mental-heath care providers, and assistance with documentation of a disability. Cosponsored workshops or presentations regarding psychiatric disabilities and organized support groups were the least-offered services. Forty percent of the institutions had supported education programming, defined as a "specific type of intervention for persons with psychiatric disabilities for access, enrollment, retention and success in post-secondary education" (p. 310). Most (72%) of these programs were located off campus. Only 25% of the institutions surveyed reported having someone with training in supported education on their disability-services office staff.

With regard to institutional policies, 77% of the institutions reported having policies related to documentation requirements, while fewer reported having outreach and recruitment policies (16%), leave-of-absence policies (13%), and dismissal policies (11%). Nevertheless, 94% of the schools reported being supportive or very supportive of students with psychiatric disabilities.

With regard to government regulations, only 5% of the schools reported having "a lot" of difficulty understanding federal policies related to students with psychiatric disabilities, with a similar percentage (4%) reporting the same level of difficulty in understanding state policies. Twenty-eight percent of the institutions surveyed reported having no difficulty understanding federal regulations, and 39% reported having no difficulty in understanding state legislation with respect to students with psychiatric disabilities. Sixty-seven percent of the institutions had "some" or "a little but not much" difficulty in interpreting federal policies, while 57% gave similar rankings to their ability to interpret state policies.

Open-ended questions in the survey revealed that accommodations or support, general coping with school, attendance, diagnoses, and nontest-induced anxiety are the most frequently raised issues related to serving students with psychiatric disabilities. According to the findings, faculty members, staff, and administrators have general questions about how to work with students with psychiatric disabilities. They have questions concerning classroom behavior problems and attendance and have concerns about whether students with psychiatric disabilities can handle their own course loads. The greatest perceived barriers to accessing

services were fear of disclosing a disability, lack of knowledge about psychiatric disabilities, fear of being stigmatized, lack of specific supported education programs or referral resources, failure to perceive psychiatric disorders to be a disability, and not wanting help.

The authors concluded that services and policies supporting students with psychiatric disabilities vary considerably by institution. They proposed structural changes for providing more homogeneous services such as readily identifiable offices of disability services and training for staff in the area of psychiatric disabilities. Brochures and materials regarding the rights, capabilities, and appropriate services for students with psychiatric disabilities should be provided to students, faculty members, and administrators.

Eveland, S. (2005). The Numbers Game: Phasing in Generated ID Numbers at the University of Oregon. *College and University Journal, 80*(2), 13–18.

In this article, Eveland outlined the daunting but important multistage task of converting social security numbers (SSNs) for identification purposes to generated identification (ID) numbers at the University of Oregon (UO). In a technologically advanced society, protecting student records in compliance with the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act as well as student and employee identities becomes more challenging. Eveland stressed the need for institutions of higher education to protect the information and identities of the people who have entrusted them with such sensitive data and security.

The task of moving from SSNs to generated IDs was coordinated by the Banner Coordinating Group (BCG) and led by the UO Computing Center. A task force consisting of representatives from Student Financial Aid, Admissions, the Registrar's Office, Payroll, Human Resources, the ID Card Office, the Business Office, and the library began working on the conversion in November of 2001. The task force concluded that to succeed in establishing an efficient information migration, ID numbers and cards should be converted simultaneously. However, changing all faculty, staff, and student information at once could ignite major disruptions in the daily functioning of the university; thus, it implemented the changes in phases by group.

Upon approval to execute the changeover in stages by BCG, the task force became an implementation team and developed its goals. These goals included starting the staggered migration from SSNs to generated ID numbers and removing SSNs from the Banner system as much as possible. The first step was to stop creating new records with SSNs. Some IDs, which began with the numerals *950*, had already been generated. The ID committee decided to implement a one-up system starting with this series despite concerns that such a system would make guessing someone's ID number relatively easy. The complex organizational structure and size of the institution countered the ease with which an individual's generated ID number could be determined.

With new records addressed, the task force initiated the process of converting current records. The most expeditious method would involve creating a one-stop procedure that allowed for easy compliance by students, faculty members, and staff; however, student-to-faculty ratio, high student attrition rate, replacement IDs for lost cards, and the higher likelihood that faculty and staff would more readily comply than students were all issues of concern.

The staff phase was completed rather easily. Individuals committed approximately 15 minutes to the process. In less than one calendar year, most faculty members and staff had been assigned new IDs. The IDs of those who had not voluntarily completed the process were changed by Payroll, and the staff member was notified by E-mail.

The student phase proved to be more challenging. First, E-mail invitations to complete the changeover were sent to students. However, few students took action with the initial invitation. A reminder message increased the response, but the compliance of students was not as it had been for the university employees. Juniors and seniors (75%), who did not want to learn a new number so close to graduation, were the most resistant. Other interesting issues arose, such as students not wanting ID cards with a 666 series or those who did not want to risk a priority registration that had been based on SSN.

To encourage compliance, "annoyance" messages were sent to students. When students used their SSNs to access the Banner Self Serve system, they received reminder and how-to messages about the conversion. According to the author, this proved to be very effective, but the number of students making the change as a result of the annoyance messages is not indicated. To meet the goal of completing the change by fall 2004, the Registrar unilaterally changed the remaining SSNs to IDs and sent E-mail notifications to students. The change of records of past students remains the present challenge.

Eveland pointed out that changing SSNs to generated IDs impacts all aspects of the university. In

addition to issues involving the use of paper forms used by multiple offices, the UO Financial Aid office spent considerable resources and time to convert paper files and paper forms that had required the input of SSNs for processing.

The author did a very good job of describing the step-by-step conversion process that UO underwent so that the operation could be duplicated or amended to fit the needs of other colleges and universities planning to make a similar conversion. In addition, she highlighted some of the expected and unexpected problems that others can proactively address, and she also emphasized that this change will impact how higher education administrators conduct their daily work. Therefore, she encouraged them to think logistically about how all the transactions and procedures will be affected by such a conversion. She concluded that, although this process is intensive and pervasive, it can be done in a cost-effective manner with a collaborative effort throughout the university.

Feldman, D. C. & Whitcomb, K. M. (2005). The Effects of Framing Vocational Choices on Young Adults' Sets of Career Options. *Career Development International, 10*(1), 7–25.

Many young adults have difficulty committing to initial career goals. A major objective in career counseling and advising is to help students narrow down their career choices to a reasonably sized, appropriate set of options. Feldman and Whitcomb proposed that the way in which career decision making is framed affects the number of career alternatives students consider. They further found that Holland's (1985) model of vocational choice may be differentially useful in helping students effectively select potential career options.

In a common practice for delimiting a set of potential careers, students complete interest and skills inventories and then identify careers that share these characteristics. Feldman and Whitcomb hypothesized that making career decisions on the basis of skills rather than interests is more likely to help individuals effectively limit their choices. Counselors or advisors may ask students to select from a list of careers those that interest them (inclusion processes) or eliminate the ones that do not (exclusion processes). In the latter process, an individual excludes only those options that appear to be strongly inappropriate, leaving many choices still open. In contrast, through the inclusion process, he or she keeps open only those choices that seem to be very appropriate. On the basis of findings from general studies in behavioral decision making by Levin et al. (1998) and Yaniv and Schul (1997, 2000), Feldman and Whitcomb hypothesized that inclusion processes for selecting career alternatives would generate fewer options than exclusion processes.

The study included 129 participants, aged 17 to 19 years, who were enrolled in Introduction to University Life at a large public university in the United States. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Sixty-five males and 49 females participated in the study, which reportedly reflects the overall gender distribution of the student population at that institution. Fifteen percent of the participants in the sample indicated that they anticipated their major to be in math, science, or engineering; 35% indicated that they would major in a liberal arts or humanities area; 50% indicated that they were planning to enroll in a pre-professional program such as accounting, business, journalism, or like major.

The researchers used a 2×2 experimental design to investigate how career-exploration techniques affect the size of students' resulting career-alternative sets. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental groups. The first (n = 42) completed abilities and inclusion inventories; the second (n = 38) completed abilities and exclusion inventories; the third (n = 41) responded to interest and inclusion inventories; the fourth (n = 38) responded to interest and exclusion inventories. The inventories were based on Holland's (1985) model of vocational choice. Participants in the two interest conditions were given a list of activities and instructed to check "like" if they enjoyed the activity and "dislike" if they did not. In the abilities condition, participants were given the same set of activities as in the inventories but asked to check "yes" if they felt themselves to be competent in the activity and "no" if they did not. In the inclusion condition, students were provided with a list of careers and asked to check those they would consider pursuing; in the exclusion condition, students were given the same set and asked to check the careers they would not consider pursing.

Gender was used as a control variable. Based on data from the National (USA) Center for Educational Statistics (1996) that indicate that females are more likely to attend college right after high school than males and more likely to graduate from college and in shorter periods of time than their male counterparts, Feldman and Whitcomb speculated that females may make career decisions somewhat earlier than do males. Thus, the authors wanted to see if different framing models produced results that varied by gender. The

researchers also included Holland's six career orientation types (realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional [RIASEC]) as covariates in the present study because evidence from a previous study by Feldman (2002) has suggested that young adults' options may be more or less obvious and restricted because of personality type and career orientation. Using Holland's coding scheme, Feldman and Whitcomb calculated students' career orientation scores from 0 to 11 on each of the six (RIASEC) Holland types; they wanted to see how these scores related to the number of options in students career sets.

Feldman and Whitcomb found a significant effect for the abilities versus interest mindset. Students who completed the abilities inventories had a significantly smaller set of feasible career options left open (mean of 24.69) than did those in the interest conditions (mean of 28.38). The second hypothesis, that inclusion processes would result in smaller choice sets than would exclusion processes, was also statistically verified. In fact, the mean number of choices left in the exclusion conditions was almost double the mean number left in the inclusion conditions (36.62 vs. 17.28, with the original list containing 84 possible careers). While the researchers did not explicitly set out to examine an interaction effect, they found that the students in the interests/exclusion condition had, on average, 39.47 career choices left after completing the inventories, while those in the abilities/inclusion group had a mean of 16.48 choices left after completing the inventories. The inclusion/exclusion manipulation had a much larger impact on career choices than did the abilities/interests variable.

The authors found no significant effects for gender but found statistical significance for two covariates, artistic and enterprising orientations. For each 1-point increase, for example a score of 8 versus 7 in the artistic and enterprising categories, the mean number of remaining career choices also increased by 1.05 and 1.10 points respectively, suggesting that Holland's model of vocational choice might indeed be differentially useful in helping students reduce the size of their career choice set. That is, for some personality types, narrowing down one's options may be relatively difficult because more options are initially available.

On the basis of their findings, the authors concluded that the inclusion procedure seems particularly advantageous in helping students overcome career indecision because it may help them eliminate "middling options" (p. 28). The authors noted that while the abilities condition significantly reduced option set size, interest inventories may be more practical on large campuses with understaffed career centers because abilities inventories generally require more professional scoring and interpretation than do interest inventories.

For future research, Feldman and Whitcomb recommended consideration of other variables, such as prior work experience, noting that not all young adults "enter the vocational choice decision with an empty slate" (p. 17). Self-efficacy, extroversion, and socioeconomic background are additional variables that should be explored. The authors noted that participants in the present study were at the very beginning stages of the career-exploration process and emphasized that the investigation should be repeated with different or more heterogeneous samples. Moreover, they pointed out that because interests and abilities interact over time, the interplay of interest and skill fit warrants closer attention.

Konick, L. C. & Gutierrez, P. M. (2005). Testing a Model of Suicide Ideation in College Students. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 35*(2), 181–92.

The authors of this study examined three common risk factors believed to precede suicide ideation in college students. These risk factors are negative life experiences (NLE), hopelessness, and depressive symptoms. According to Konick and Gutierrez, these factors have not been studied extensively in combination with respect to college students. The researchers underscored the importance of understanding suicide ideation among this population by pointing out that 50% of college students experience this phenomenon. They also reported that past research indicates that 8 to 15% of these students act on that ideation in some manner.

Their review of the literature demonstrates effectively that each of these risk factors independently have been shown to have strong predictive value with regard to suicide ideation. Depression was cited as the most common precursor to suicide. Approximately 17% of all college students will experience depression, and 83% of them will require intervention. The literature suggests that severity of hopelessness is the best predictor of the number of suicide attempts and level of injury. NLE has been associated with increased levels of hopelessness.

To conduct their research, the authors applied a cognitive vulnerability-stress model. In this model, NLE contributes to self-evaluations and future events. This leads to hopelessness, which develops into depressive symptoms that lead to thoughts of suicide.

The study consisted of 345 participants from a large midwestern university. Participants were racially diverse and consisted largely of freshmen (62%). Sixty-seven percent of the sample was female. The *Life Experiences Scale*, *Beck Hopelessness Scale*, *Beck Depression Inventory*, and the *Adult Suicidal Ideation Questionnaire* were used to measure NLE, hopelessness, and depression. The results from these measures as well as one-on-one debriefing culminated in 12 individuals being referred for follow-up risk assessments.

The results indicated, however, that the overall population exhibited low levels of depressive symptoms and suicide ideation. Five percent demonstrated high levels of hopelessness. The researchers used regression analysis to confirm a path model. They concluded that depressive symptoms fully mediate the relationship between NLE and hopelessness.

In conclusion, the researchers found evidence to support the existence of an interrelationship among NLE, hopelessness, and depression. The resulting path model shows a direct relationship between hopelessness and depression leading to suicidal ideation, while NLE has an indirect relationship fully mediated by the former indicators. However, the model accounted for 39% of the variance, leading the researchers to conclude that these variables may be core indicators with other factors, such as low social support.

Clearly, suicidal ideation among college students is an important topic for academic advisors to understand so that appropriate interventions and referrals are made. This article offers some insight about the indicators to recognize when interacting with students on college campuses. This article also supports a holistic and developmental approach to advising. The stressors of challenging curriculum, transition issues, lack of social support, and negative perceptions about their ability to succeed may lead students to thoughts of suicide. Helping students develop good decision-making skills and connecting them to appropriate support resources may help to lower the likelihood of suicide ideation.

Lopez, G. E. (2004). Interethnic Contact, Curriculum, and Attitudes in the First Year of College. *Journal of Social Issues, 6*0(1), 75–94.

As diversity and multiculturalism are being promoted on college campuses, how experiences in higher education affect students' attitudes toward racial inequality in the United States and their support for educational equity are important areas of exploration. Using pre- and postmeasure design, Lopez examined how intra- and intergroup contacts, curriculum, residence hall programs, political ideology, and socioeconomic status impact on the attitudes of first-year students from three ethnic groups: European American, Asian American, and African American. The study was conducted at a large midwestern university by means of two surveys. An entrance questionnaire was administered to all first-year students at the start of the semester, and a first-year survey was administered toward the end of the students' first year. Only those participants who responded to both instruments were included in the study. In all, responses from 480 European Americans, 165 Asian Americans, and 92 African Americans were included. The data sets from Latino/a and Native American populations were too small for statistical generalizations and were excluded.

Lopez hypothesized that outgroup contact (i.e., contact with people from ethnic groups different than one's own) would have an important impact on European American students' attitudes. This group, Lopez posited, tends to come from ethnically homogenous environments and thus would likely gain new information and insights through contact with persons from other ethnic groups (p. 77). By contrast, Lopez expected that ingroup contact, which allows for new and different opportunities for socializing, developing shared understandings, and evaluating the subordinate status of one's own group, would have a greater impact on Asian American and African American students. She further predicted that a social science curriculum, which provides information and opportunities not available elsewhere to explore race, ethnicity, and intergroup relations would have an impact on the attitudes of all three groups. Residence hall programs that deal with issues of race and ethnicity likewise can provide information not available from other sources. This led Lopez to make an "exploratory prediction" (p. 79) that residence hall programs would show a positive relationship with attitudes for all three groups.

Previous research studies have suggested that background characteristics may affect students' intergroup attitudes and the choices they make regarding contact experiences, curriculum, and participation in residence hall programs. To account for this, Lopez examined two background variables: socioeconomic status (SES) and political ideology. In general, persons of a higher SES tend to show a greater awareness of racial and ethnic inequality, although when it comes to support for policies to redress inequality, the relationship between SES status and action is weaker. Individuals

who identify themselves as politically liberal are more likely than their conservative counterparts to be aware of inequality and to support policies that promote equity. Multiple regression analyses were used to test the predictions about group contacts, curriculum, and attitudinal change while controlling for SES, political ideology, and intergroup attitudes at the start of the semester.

For the European American group, initial attitude, SES, and political ideology were important predictors of awareness of inequality: Students from the highest SES were the most aware of inequality. Politically conservative students from this ethnic group showed the least awareness of inequality and the least support for educational equity. Curriculum that involved studying race and ethnicity raised European American students' awareness of inequality. While the author found some evidence of self-selected enrollment, the impact of curriculum on European Americans' awareness was statistically significant (initial attitudes toward inequality were taken into account). By contrast, intergroup contact and participation in residence hall activities were not significant predictors of end-of-the semester attitudes toward equality within this group.

For European Americans, curriculum was significantly related to support for educational equity as was outgroup contact with African American students. There was no evidence that self-selection accounted for this latter finding. Participation in residence hall programs was not a significant predictor for European American participants' increased support of equity in education, nor did SES play a role in predicting end-of-the-semester attitudes toward educational equity.

For the Asian American group, political ideology and attitudes at entrance predicted awareness of ethnic inequality and support for educational equity at the end of the semester, with conservative students being less aware of inequality and less supportive of educational programs promoting equity. Other background and first-year experiences were not statistically significant.

For the African American group, with the exception of curriculum, which was significant in predicting increased support for educational equity, none of the variables examined was a significant predictor of change in attitudes from the start to the end of the semester. However, the variables accounted for minor variance in attitudes. Most notable among the findings for this group was contrary to the prediction: Ingroup contact did not result in changes in attitudes. Lopez suggested that this result may be due to the relatively short amount of time between pre- and postmeasures, and she speculated that ingroup contact may become more important to African American students over time.

Lopez posited that environments with structured group contact, such as courses, may have the greatest potential to change the attitudes of students from various ethnic groups. She pointed out that group contact experiences outside of the classroom are difficult variables to control whereas contact in curricular contexts can be controlled via course requirements and pedagogical techniques that encourage students to learn from each other and to engage in intergroup dialogues. She does not discount the value of residence hall programs but hypothesized that the programs in her study may have been too short-term to produce statistically significant results. She called for further investigation into the effects of residence hall programming.

In her suggestions for further research, Lopez indicated that multiple experiences within higher education must be considered. For example, participation in student organizations, which was not explored in this study, may play a role in shaping attitudes. Likewise institutional demographics and availability of programs should be explored. Lopez speculated that curriculum may have had no impact on Asian American students' attitudes because of underrepresentation in the general curriculum and absence of an Asian American studies program. In conclusion, she pointed out the need to gather similar data in other geographical regions and at other types of institutions.

MacDonald, R. & Bernardo, M. (2005). Reconceptualizing Diversity in Higher Education: Borderlands Research Program. *Journal of Developmental Education, 29*(1), 2–8 & 43.

MacDonald and Bernardo offered a unique approach to defining diversity for higher education professionals; it is grounded in developmental education theory. They conceptualized diversity as the "continually expanding awareness of the dynamics" with respect to difference. Difference is measured by one's position with respect to social power and personal perceptions as well as judgments made about others. This definition is important because typical discussions around diversity tend to be too simplistic. Without a more purposeful construct, competencies exhibited by developmental education students as a result of marginalization may not be recognized or incorporated into developmental education curricula.

This paper is divided into four major sections. The first section is focused on defining the concept

of diversity within a dynamic framework that suggests that marginalized students, although "invisible," have an unrecognized impact on higher education. Moreover, the typical standards for defining diversity, such as race and gender, fail to detect or develop student talents that are not discerned by standard assessment tools or included in developmental or higher education curriculum. The categories of race and gender are perceived as static and mutually exclusive. A dynamic approach allows students to avoid being pushed to the fringes and their skills to be more readily appreciated.

The second section highlights empowerment in higher education. Developmental education underscores a lack of certain skills while not addressing the possibility that students may possess compensatory skills. The authors introduced the concept of multiplicity, which refers to the presence of multiple identities, contexts, experiences, and standpoints. They pointed to past research that describes how providing multicultural experiences and taking multiplicity into account encourages students to exhibit increased civic responsibility that requires certain skills. According to the authors, these skills could be nurtured by developmental educators.

The authors also discussed the importance of understanding social power as two-fold. First, social power drives the dynamic of diversity because it leads to marginalization. Second, being judged as different may cause the development of a broad spectrum of skills.

In the third section, the authors considered adaptive strategies that marginalized students develop due to their lack of social power. The authors posited the concept of borderland in which all parts of one's identity are present but some are unseen. Borderland is also manifested in creative responses to marginalization as are skills and competencies for adapting.

In the final section, the authors mapped diversity and outlined the Borderlands Research Program. The authors offered a more distinct description of borderland as " … that figurative place where issues of who one is (identity) and the principles to which one aspires (integrity) are made complex by the simultaneous presence of more than one way of being and knowing (culture)" (p. 8). They contend that when borderland consciousness occurs (i.e., the state of being aware of and attempting to reconcile identity with inequitable distribution of power), anxiety is produced. This leads to the adaptive behavior that accounts for multiplicity.

The authors are conducting research that speaks to how developmental educators can create inclusive and expanding environments for borderland students. By extension, this research has implications for academic advisors. Advisors are charged with helping students clarify their academic and career goals based on their skills, values, and goals. Having a better understanding of additional skills that may be possessed as well as how they are developed may have implications for helping students identify and persist in a gratifying course of study. Thus, future Borderland Research Project findings may be instructive for developmental educators and academic advisors alike.

Marcotte, D. E., Bailey, T., Borkoski, C., & Kienzi, G. S. (2005). The Returns of a Community College Education: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Survey. *Education and Policy Analysis, 27*(2), 157–75.

In this empirical research project, the authors attempted to discern the ramifications and economic advantages for students who attend community colleges. Due to their democratic approach to education, community colleges attract students who may be economically disenfranchised, academically challenged, or expected to balance multiple roles; each of these situations may impede scholastic success. These student characteristics result in criticism of community colleges for producing low graduation rates while commanding sizable tax support government subsidies.

The authors noted that 40% of all students enrolled in higher education attend community colleges. Because of the large proportion of students attending such institutions, the economic advantages afforded these students, if any, should be measured. However, contributors to higher education literature have not adequately addressed the returns of receiving a community college education. In fact, the extant research is based on data from the late 1970s. Due to major technological advances and social changes in the past 25 years, the environment in which people are currently employed is very different and requires varied skills. Thus, findings and implications derived from previous research no longer apply.

The researchers of this project used data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS), which is based on a nationally representative sample of 11,599 respondents. They used measurements for economic outcomes in early adulthood.

The findings of this study demonstrate financial reward to individual students who attend community colleges. The researchers found that students who completed associate degrees earned statistically

significant higher wages than students who did not continue their education beyond high school. More impressive results indicate that male students who had completed one year of full-time community college course work earned 6% more than male students who did not continue their education beyond high school. The authors concluded: "We generally found substantial returns whether or not students completed degrees" (p. 171).

In an economy where resources for education are becoming increasingly scarce, the efficiency of current educational structures must be documented. The dearth of knowledge with respect to the economic returns of community colleges reflects an ongoing prejudice toward these schools. Instead of embracing an educational system that fully utilizes the 2-year campus, academic researchers are perpetuating divisiveness by not adding to the body of knowledge concerning the effectiveness of these institutions.

The concept of efficiency speaks not only to the returns afforded to the individual but to the community at large. These researchers have demonstrated that students who take courses at community colleges fair economically better than those who do not attempt any postsecondary education. However, they did not address the benefit to the community. Until the economic efficacy of community colleges is addressed for both the individual and the community as a whole, these institutions may still be criticized for higher stop-out and nondegree completion rates.

These findings also may dictate a need to reassess how higher education institutions calculate retention in general and community colleges in particular. If students are meeting their goals and are achieving financial security after only one year of attendance at a community college, then maybe such outcomes should be taken into account when retention is measured. Because the goals and missions of community colleges vary from that of 4-year institutions (in which graduation rates are, in irony, based on 6 years of student attendance), retention may also need to be measured by learning outcomes and goal attainment of the student body and not just by a numerical index.

Tag, S. V. (2004). A Library Instruction Survey for Transfer Students: Implications for Library Services. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 30*(2), 102–108.

As a group, transfer students are central to several questions raised in libraries at 4-year institutions. Many universities, like Western Washington University (WWU), where Tag gathered the presented data, offer library instruction to first-year students. Individual academic departments may also offer gateway courses that utilize bibliographic instruction to introduce students to research paradigms and methodology in specific fields. However, transfer students, who often begin study at the upper levels at the new institution, may not receive adequate orientation to their new campus library. Becoming familiar with the library will be one of the many ways in which transfer students must "independently adjust to a new campus" and "compensate for the disparity in academic acculturation" between their own academic experiences and those of their counterparts who have been on the same campus for their entire program (p. 102). To provide a basis for expanding library instruction services to transfer students, the library staff at WWU undertook a study of transfer students' library research skills, experiences, and needs.

A survey was administered during transitions fairs for incoming transfer students. The fairs were organized by the WWU Office of New Student Programs. The library staff were permitted a space to administer the survey at a table at the end of a series of tables where arriving students pick up materials for the fair. As students passed by the library table, the librarians requested that students complete the survey and put it into a box. A total of 526 students attended the transitions fairs. Three hundred and seven attendees (58% participation rate) completed library surveys (this number represented 31% of the 981 transfer students for that year because not all transfer students attended the transitions fairs).

The survey consisted of nine multiple-choice or yes-no questions in which students indicated how much instruction or experience they had had with various library and research skills. Students were asked to indicate whether they would like further instruction in using the library, researching on the Internet, or using computers. Respondents were instructed to check all that applied. A final open-ended question asked, "What would you like to know about doing research at the college or university level?"

The quantitative findings indicated that entering transfer students were arriving at WWU with considerable research experience. The majority of respondents (54%) reported having used library research databases like EbscoHost, Proquest, or Infotrac more than five times, and 27% reported having used such databases three to five times. Most respondents (87%) reported having received instruction on using the Internet for research.

Likewise most (74%) reported having prepared bibliographies for research papers, and 91% reported having had instruction on plagiarism. Even so, 51% of the respondents indicated they would like additional instruction on using the library; 27% indicated that they would like additional instruction on using the Internet to conduct research; 28% indicated they would like more instruction on using computers. Moreover, 93 of the 307 respondents answered the open-ended question at the end of the survey.

The open-ended question produced responses that can be organized around several themes. Fourteen comments indicated that students wanted to know about the organization of the WWU library and its policies. For example, one student commented, "Where do you start? The library is huge! (and confusing.)" (p. 106). There were a handful of additional comments relating to navigating the library. Citing Staines (1996), Tag pointed out that transfer students commonly return to their community college libraries to conduct research. These responses might, in part, provide insights about why transfer students return to the familiar library. In another emerging theme, respondents wanted knowledge of research strategies. Although in the quantitative section students reported that they had a relatively high amount of research experience, 18 comments indicated that students wanted to improve their research techniques. Six additional comments concerned learning how to better use research databases, and five comments related to discipline-specific research. Ten responses related to using computers and the Internet.

Tag viewed the survey results as a call for action, and indeed WWU has taken some. The WWU library now has a section in the New Student Programs quarterly newsletter for transfer students. The library has its own newsletter that is packaged with transfer students' other orientation materials. The WWU library has created a Web page especially for transfer students with links from the Admissions, Academic Support, and New Student Programs Web pages. Tag noted that collaborations with the New Students Programs Office were instrumental in launching their projects and implicitly suggested that librarians who work with transfer students should become familiar with the research in leading journals on student development. Tag also called for collaboration and support from faculty and administration. She sees the fact that transfer students are requesting research instruction as an opportunity for librarians to propose course-integrated instruction with department faculty. She also emphasized the need to connect transfer students directly with subject librarians.

Because of the short amount of time the librarians had available for administering the survey (check-in at the transitions fairs), the instrument was necessarily brief. Tag suggested that future studies could involve more rigorous data collection that measures information literacy skills. Departmental faculty might also contribute to the development of library skills assessments so that they can obtain information about transfer students' research skills in their specific disciplines.

The bibliography is compiled by Jessie Carduner and Barbara Miller.