

## **Volume 12, Number 1 Fall 2004 Abstracts**

### **Student Readiness for Postsecondary Coursework: Developing a College-Level Measure of Student Average Academic Preparation**

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California's community college accountability strategy, the Partnership for Excellence program, includes, as an aspect of the outcome assessment component of the program, a mechanism to "level the playing field" between colleges. This function is accomplished through adjustment models, statistically derived equations that "adjust" for observed relationships between exogenous variables and college-level outcomes of interest. The development of adjustment models for each of the several outcomes has relied upon an exploratory process to derive a parsimonious set of exogenous variables with nonzero (statistically significant) relationships to the outcome of interest. One previously unmeasured adjustment variable has received considerable interest in discussions of the adjustment model development process, namely the academic preparedness of entering students at each college. This article addresses the work of the authors to develop a measure of student average academic preparation for use in "leveling the playing field" in community college outcome measurement and accountability.

### **Demand Characteristics of Post-Secondary Education: Evidence from Grande Prairie Regional College Case Study**

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Post secondary enrolment demand has received increasing attention over the last few decades as numerous studies have attempted to provide accurate explanatory models for strategic enrolment management purposes. However, these studies typically make the assumption that enrolment is a homogenous commodity where the demand within a post-secondary institution is narrowly defined by a single set of explanatory variables. This study presents evidence that enrolment demand characteristics within any specific institution are not homogeneous in nature. Therefore, components of enrolment management should be decentralized to the various enrolment categories within the institution. Support for this hypothesis can be demonstrated by the influence of different independent variables on first-year, full load equivalent enrolment trends for multiple degree levels within Grand Prairie Regional College for the period 1987 to 2000.

## **Employment Outcomes of Community College Equity Group Graduates**

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The initial school to work transition is a critical time for individuals in achieving the economic benefits of post-secondary education. Community colleges perform a key role in this connection to the workplace for disadvantaged groups. This research examined the effectiveness of a large comprehensive community college in achieving successful transition to the workplace for equity and female graduates. Data were derived from a recent graduate survey and from institutional data on demographic and achievement characteristics. Various statistical techniques were used to analyze the initial workplace conditions for disadvantaged groups and the influence of explanatory variables on employment and earnings. Findings indicate that women earn less than men and that equity graduates have higher initial unemployment rates. Results suggest human capital theory may not be able to explain these differential occupational outcomes and the lower returns for equivalent educational investments.

## **Project ProBase and the Process to Design Bridge Competencies for Community College Technical Programs**

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Project ProBase (problem-based technology curriculum) is a National Science Foundation funded project designed to develop an innovative curriculum that more adequately prepares high school technology education students for success in advanced technical studies at the community college level. The purpose of the project is to design and test curriculum materials that stimulate technological understanding and technical problem solving abilities that help establish a broad foundation for advanced study at the postsecondary level. The project is developing a set of eight curriculum learning units for use in advanced level technology education programs. A key component of the project and the focus of this article is research conducted to identify and refine a set of bridge competencies for the curriculum. These competencies are designed to guide curriculum developers as they seek to maximize student performance in community college level technical programs. The bridge competencies presented in this article are being infused throughout the ProBase curriculum materials and are designed in such a way as to augment other technical curriculum packages at the secondary or community college levels.

## **Rural Community Colleges and Economic Development: Leaders' Perspectives on Collaboration**

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Rural communities often lag behind urban and suburban areas in economic development. Community colleges may be able to contribute to economic development projects in rural areas, but they often seek collaboration with other community partners. This research study was conducted to better understand rural community college presidents' perceptions of the partnerships their institutions enter into for economic development purposes.

## **Community College Institutional Effectiveness: Recent Literature**

[Rozana Carducci](#), UCLA Community College Studies (no abstract).