



Increasing Student Access in Practice

Finding the Balance: Access, New Models and
Internationalization
UCLA and the British Council

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ACCESS IS ABOUT THE ALLOCATION OF OPPORTUNITY

- ▶ **But the allocation of opportunity is growing progressively more skewed:**
 - ▶ **Today's income achievement gap is now 2X greater than black-white achievement gap (the reverse was true 50 years ago)**
 - ▶ **Income achievement gap is large when children enter kindergarten, and remains so as children progress**
 - ▶ **Rising income inequality exacerbates this, but is not the dominant factor in the growing income achievement gap; rather, it's the increasing association between family income and children's academic achievement for families above median income level**
 - **Family income now corresponds to 30-60% larger difference in achievement for children born in 2000, than it did for those born in 1975 (a result of increasing parental involvement in children's cognitive development)**
 - ▶ **Growing achievement gap not due to children of highly or less educated parents (which has remained stable over the last 50 years); rather, the relationship between income and achievement has grown sharply**
 - ▶ **Therefore, family income is now nearly as strong as parental education in predicting children's achievement.**

OPPORTUNITY WITHOUT A HIGH PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS IS NOT ACCESS

For example: California Community Colleges (2.6 million, 25% of the nation's CC enrollment):

By 2020 minority students will account for 45% of the nation's public HS graduates, up from 38% in 2009. California, like Texas, has already reached "majority-minority status"

- ▶ Most of the Community College's 2.6 million students are unprepared for college-level work—and the resulting numbers make this very clear:
 - ▶ 85% need remedial English, 73% need remedial math. Of students needing remedial courses, only about a third of them will ever transfer to a four-year school or graduate with an associate's degree
- ▶ In short, only 3 in 10 (33%) CA community college students complete a degree, transfer, or earn a certificate after six years
 - ▶ This falls to only 2 in 10 for Latino (22%) and black (26%) students compared to 4 in 10 white students (37%)
 - ▶ And Latino students are only half as likely as white students to transfer (14% versus 29%)

ACCESS IS NOT NECESSARILY THE OPPOSITE OF EXCLUSION

- ▶ Taxpayers are investing far more for each bachelor's degree awarded by the most selective institutions than they are investing in educating students in less selective institutions
- ▶ *But even as taxpayers funnel more money to more selective institutions, the number of students from low-income families who benefit from these higher subsidies declines*
- ▶ For example, the concentration of Pell Grant students falls dramatically with increasing levels of selectivity just as the level of subsidy increases—resulting in a perverse pattern: *Students from low-income families are concentrated in colleges and universities that get the lowest levels of taxpayer support*

Table 5: More Selective Institutions Enroll Fewer Students With Pell Grants and Receive More Government Subsidies

Barron's Rating	Percent Students With Pell Grants	Average Annual Government Subsidy per Student ¹
Non/Less Competitive	45.36	\$6,056
Competitive	32.33	\$7,189
Very Competitive	22.43	\$8,288
Highly Competitive	15.45	\$10,625
Most Competitive	11.29	\$15,102

¹The average annual government subsidy per student is derived from Appendix Table 8 by adding the total annual benefit (cost) to taxpayers of each of the Barron's ratings and dividing this sum by the total number of students in that rating.

INCREASING STUDENT ACCESS IN PRACTICE

Requires investment from pre-K through college.

- ▶ **An unlikely event until middle- and low-income families are willing to advocate for same**
- ▶ **And until colleges begin to show meaningful results based on increased subsidies and a redesign of the institutions that serve middle- and low-income families**

Such a redesign must include:

- ▶ **Rewarding completion and retention**
- ▶ **Focusing support for completion on less selective institutions**
- ▶ **Focusing support for completion on the neediest students**
- ▶ **Lowering costs and increasing capacity by supporting high-quality, nontraditional providers**
- ▶ **Making the gathering of student-unit data possible**



SOURCE: Details on recommendations are found in J. Klor de Alva, M. Schneider, *Who Wins? Who Pays? The Economic Returns and Costs of a Bachelor's Degree*, Nexus Research and Policy Center/American Institutes for Research (May 2011) available at www.nexusresearch.org