

Measuring Opportunity: Definition, Metrics, and Strategy

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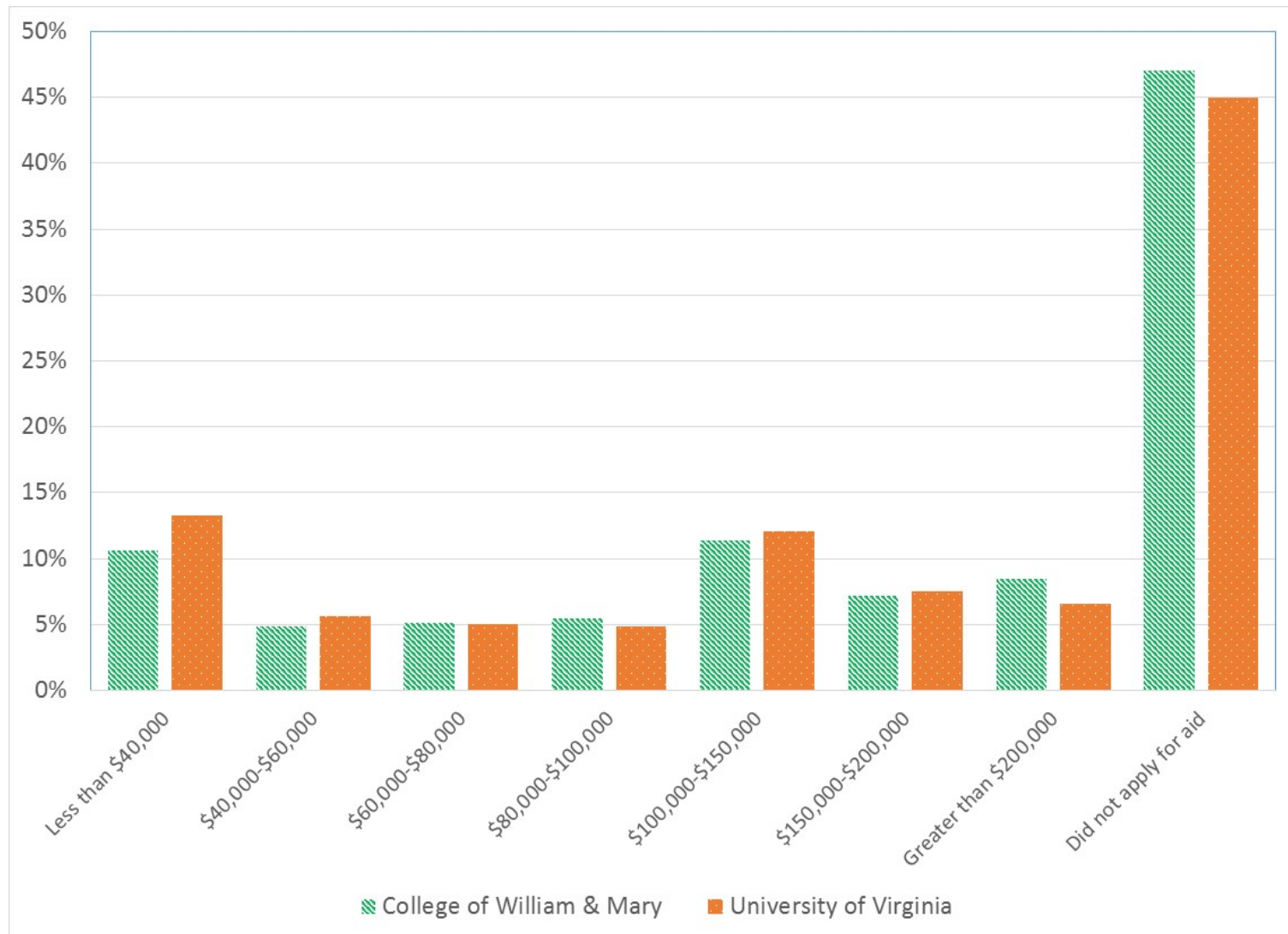
Why should the Board of Visitors of the College of William & Mary care about “economic diversity”?

3. Published numbers appearing in places like the *New York Times* for Pell share and % bottom quintile “look bad.”

2. Policy makers raise concerns when it appears that public institutions may not be “affordable” or providing “access” to all citizens

1. Recruiting a well-qualified and diverse class is an investment in academic quality. Excellence and equity need not be tradeoffs.

Distribution of In-State Undergraduates



Definition

- What is (or should be) meant by economic diversity in college enrollment?
- To what extent does the pool of students matriculating at a college match the pool of students in a college's "market"?
 - "Market" is linked to mission, academic range and geography

Metrics and Measures

Good measure: Capture enrollment at different levels of income relative to “market”

- Distinguish in-state vs out-of-state
- Limit pool to achievement eligible

Flawed Measures:

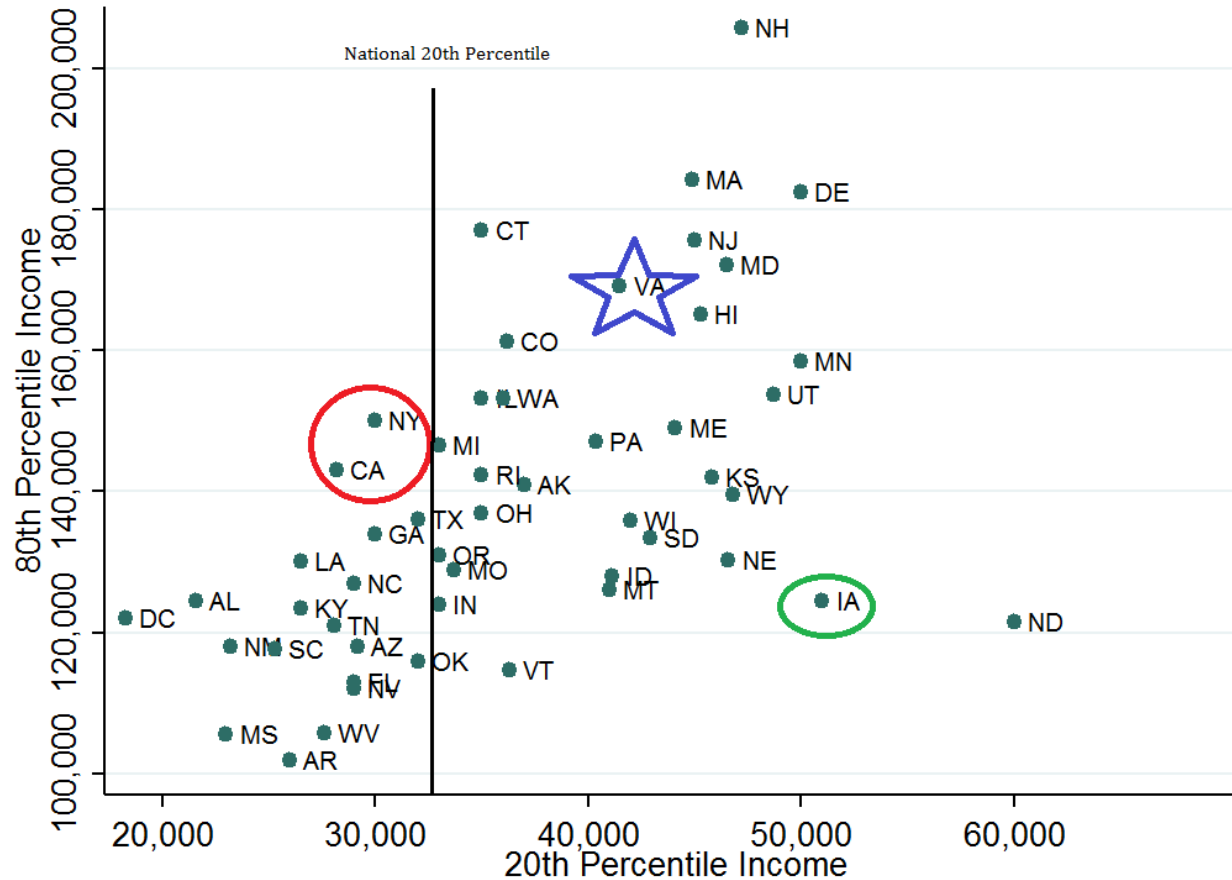
- Pell shares
- Percent bottom quintile of national distribution (Chetty, *New York Times*)

Problems with “Common” Metrics

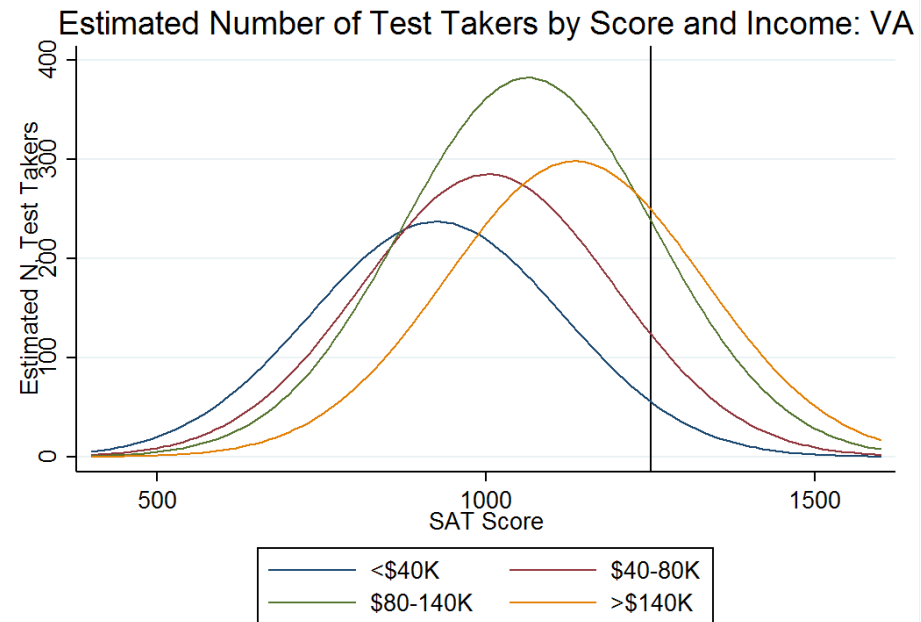
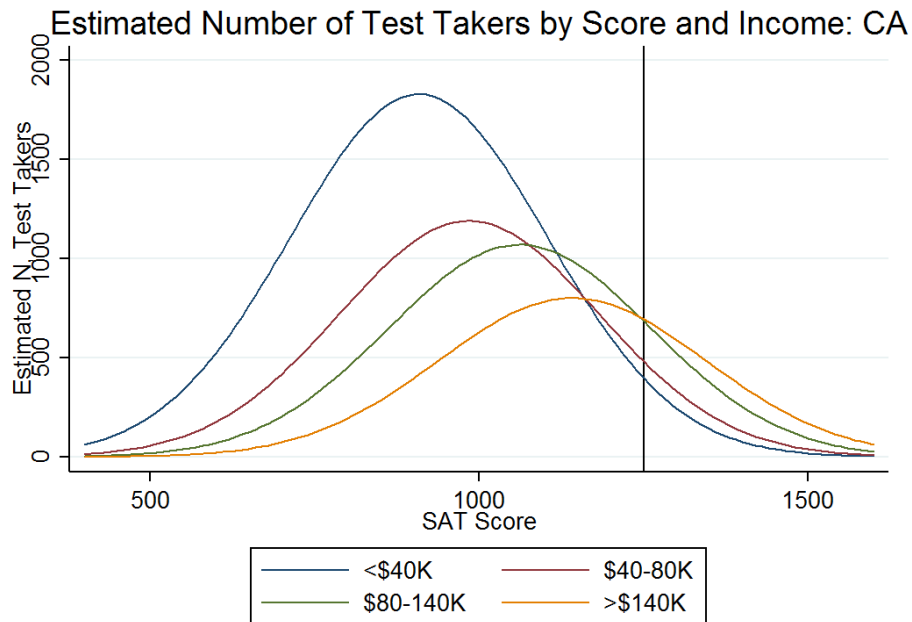
- Typically capture differences in state-local income distributions, not success of institutional policy
- Colleges and universities differ in ways that make cross-institution comparisons misleading:
 - Percent out-of-state
 - Percent independent
 - Academic preparation required for success
- Need to examine the distribution not just thresholds
 - More well-prepared students in the “near poor” range
 - Problem of distorting recruiting around threshold

Differences in Income Distribution by State

Families with 15-17 Child

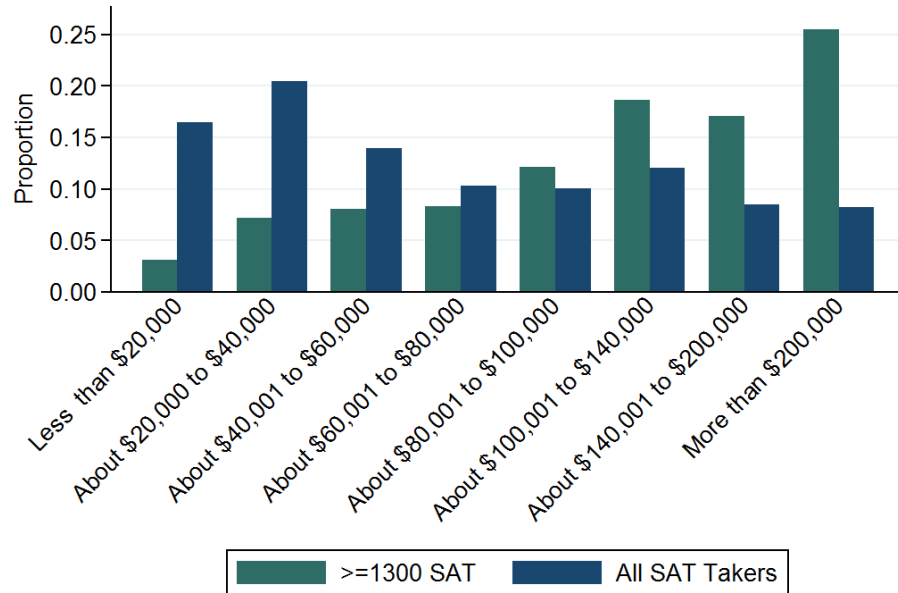


Achievement and Income California and Virginia

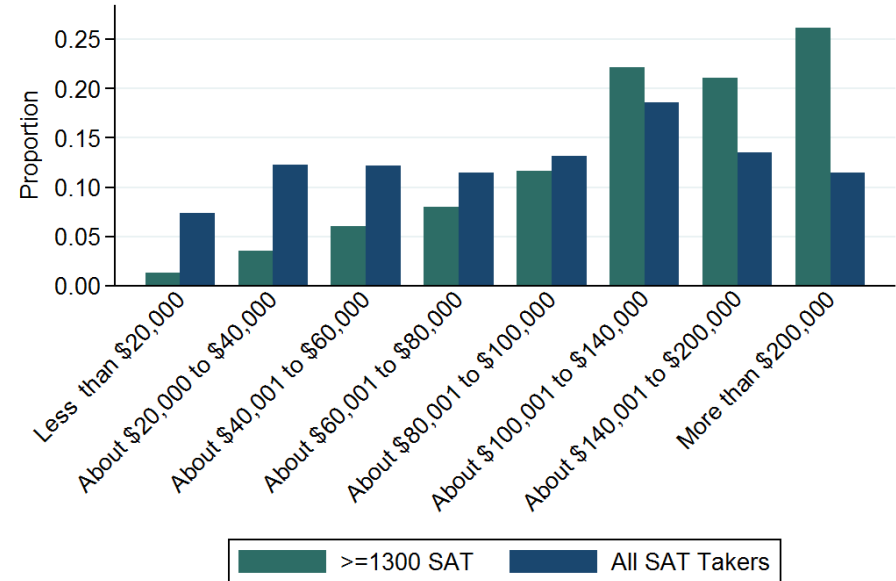


Compare California and Virginia

Income Distribution of SAT Test Takers: CA



Income Distribution of SAT Test Takers: VA



Understanding Causes, Considering Strategies

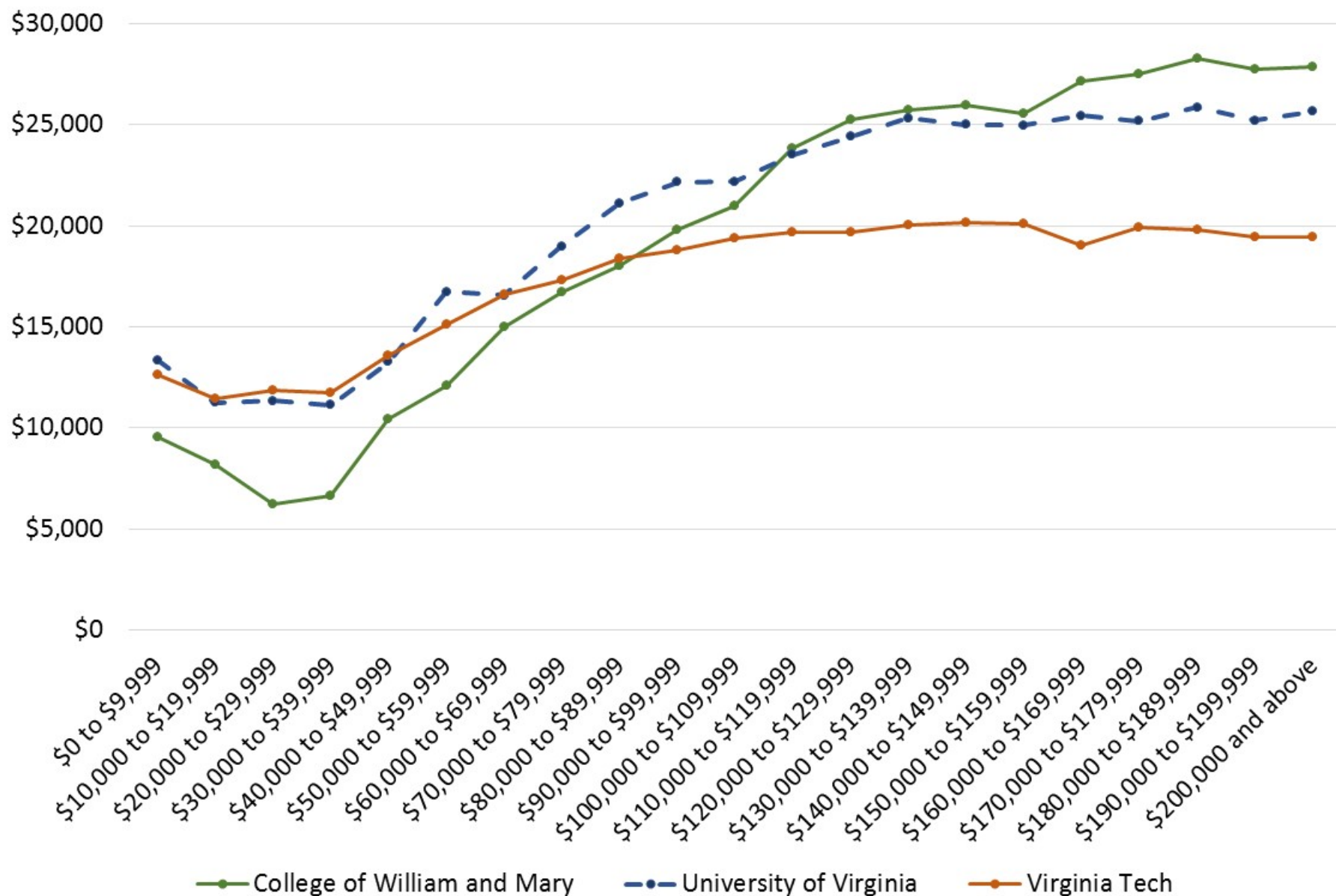
Attracting students in the existing market

- *Net price*: Not binding given W&M aid, but information may be issue
- *Application strategies*: Consider UM example (“HAIL Scholars”)
- *Preferences*: Students or their parents may not think W&M a “fit”

Expanding the pool

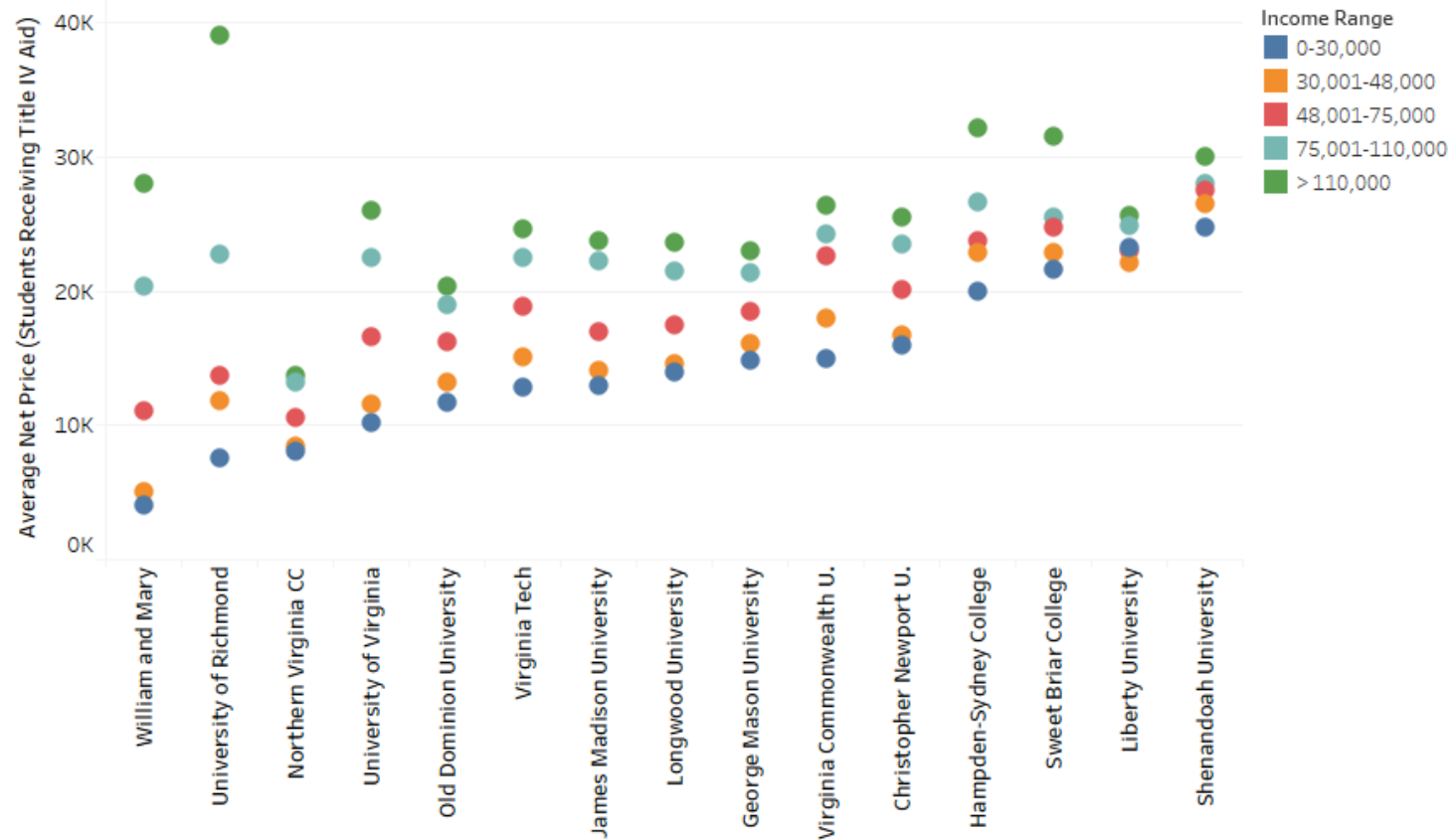
- Do some high-ability in-state students “fall off” academically between 8th and 12th grade? Can these behaviors be changed?
 - Note that W&M is not well positioned to “fix” this problem statewide
- Are there well-qualified community college transfer students from low- and moderate income families to recruit?
- Are there well-qualified out-of-state students from low- and moderate income families to recruit? Can W&M afford this strategy?

Net Price by Family Income Range, In-state Students, SCHEV Data



Net Price by Income

Federal Data



University of Michigan

(Dynarski Experiment, HAIL Scholars)

- Promise of full tuition and fees for 4 years at UM conditional on admission, essentially existing aid
- Information delivered as student packet, letter to parents, letter to high school principal
- Provided to free lunch-eligible juniors in MI public schools who meet ACT/GPA requirements defined by UM
 - 43 ppt increase in application rate relative to control
 - 15 ppt increase in matriculation rate

Why couldn't this be done in Virginia?

Answer: Data availability. All HS students take ACT in MI.

Takeaways & Next Steps

Recruit low- and moderate-income students for the benefit of the College of William & Mary

- Choose sensible measures rather than distorting behavior
- Monitor and evaluate the strategies chosen

Encourage SCHEV to compute and disseminate sensible measures of representation by income

Stay the course of William & Mary Promise!