Social Mobility: Can Community Colleges Make a Difference?

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Factors Influencing Student Success

Institutional Effectiveness— influenced by:

- **Internal factors**—students admitted, curriculum, budget priorities, campus processes, leadership

- **External factors**—location, business cycle, national and local labor markets, distribution of income, funding support, migration patterns, state and national fiscal policy (less/no influence)
Measuring Social Mobility

Factors include: Education, occupational status, and income

- **Intra-generational mobility** (many studies)
  Lifetime income streams, rates of return
  Studies of these show that it pays to go to the community college

- **Inter-generational mobility** (few studies)
  Chetty et al. studies on mobility includes CCs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mobility Rate = Access</th>
<th>Success Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cal State, LA</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pace University-New York</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SUNY-Stony Brook</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Technical Career Institutes</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>University of Texas—Pan American</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CUNY System*</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Glendale Community College</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>South Texas College</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cal State Polytechnic-Pomona</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>University of Texas—El Paso</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes both 2- and 4-year colleges; (Chetty et al., 2017, p. 64)
# Top 10 Community Colleges by Mobility Rate (Bottom to Top 20%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mobility Rate</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Success Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Glendale Community College (CA)</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CUNY Borough Of Manhattan Community College (NY)</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CUNY LaGuardia Community College (NY)</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CUNY Bronx Community College (NY)</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Southwest Texas Junior College (TX)</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Queensborough Community College- CUNY (NY)</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Imperial Valley College (CA)</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pasadena City College (CA)</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>El Paso Community College (TX)</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Odessa College (TX)</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Compiled from data tables supplied by Chetty et al., 2017)
Findings

- Border states
- Hispanic/immigrant students
- Large/Urban locales
- Labor markets
The Case of Glendale Community College (CA)

- Mobility rate = access x success (32.4% x 21.9%) = 7.1%

- City of 200,000 with large Armenian population
  40,000 Armenian immigrants in 1970-1980

- Chetty et al. baseline study includes many of the children
  - Classic assimilation model
  - External factors more important than internal
The Case of ASAP-CUNY Community Colleges

Money matters—Extra cost= $16,300/student over 3 years

- Elements of program—full-time study, counseling and tutors, restricted program of study, free tuition & fees (last $), metro cards and textbooks

- MDRC random control experiment:
  40% graduation rate for treated group vs 22% in control
  22% increase in credits accumulated
  25% transferred to 4-year vs 17% in control group
The Case of the ASPEN Prize for CC Excellence

- Million dollar prize given every other year since 2011
  - Process guided by accomplished panel, includes campus visits
  - Focus on student outcomes: retention and completion; learning; employment and earnings; equity for underserved

- Aspen winners don’t match up well with Chetty et al. winners

- Aspen winners better measure of institutional effectiveness—focus on factors which colleges have some control over
Comparison of Mobility Rates

- National Average: 1.7%
- Community College Average: 1.6%
- Aspen Winners: 1.7%
- Elite private (Ivy-Plus): 2.2%
- Top 10 Colleges: 7.8%
- Top 10 CCs: 5.6%
Walla Walla (2013)
Santa Fe (2015)
Valencia (2011)
CUNY Borough of Manhattan Community College
CUNY LaGuardia Community College
CUNY Bronx Community College
CUNY Queensborough Community College
Aspen Prize Winners
Chetty et al. Top 10 CCs
Role of Leadership

Aspen Institute winners evidenced:

(1) strong leadership and culture
(2) guided pathways to continuing education and well-paying jobs
(3) intentional focus on improving teaching and learning
(4) strategic data use to improve practice and close equity gaps
(5) partnerships and structures aligned to defined student outcomes  (Aspen Institute, 2014, p. 10)
Framework for Change

- Leadership, organization, and support
- Adoption and adaptation
- Networks and professional development
- Policy-focused and publically financed reform
- Technology support and technology assistance
- Targeted sharing and dissemination
- Evaluation utilization to grow impact (Bragg et al., 2014, p. 7)
Conclusions

- Chetty et al. data hold great promise of adding to our knowledge, provides a possible new measure of college excellence.....But
  - Also measures influence of external factors which the college can’t control
  - Correlates with demographic and location factors
- Aspen prize better indication of institutional effectiveness
- Community colleges can contribute more to social mobility if they improve completion rates—money matters
- Campus leadership matters in addressing positioning for success and addressing external factors—advocacy