

Reported Progress under the Student Right-to-Know Act:

How Reliable is It?

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ABSTRACT

The Student Right-to-Know Act requires colleges to provide institution-specific information on graduation rates for students initially enrolling full-time in the fall term. Not all students enroll in that fashion, especially at two-year institutions. We use data on degree-seeking students from the 1996/2001 Beginning Post-Secondary Survey to identify students for whom statistics are and are not reportable under the Act and to track their progress. Results indicate the published progress rates are substantially higher than the progress rates for the non-reportable populations, whether students enter a two-year or a four-year institution. While progress rates for the two samples are significantly correlated within four-year institutions, they are not within two-year institutions. For those beginning at two-year institutions, the progress rates reported under the Student Right-to-Know Act are indicative of neither their absolute nor their relative (cross-institution) probability of success. Policy makers and prospective students will not make efficient decisions without better information.

JEL Codes: I28 Education: Government Policy

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On any given day, the public will be offered a half-dozen different statistics on high school graduation rates, college-enrollment rates, **college completion rates**, grades, and **time-to-degree**. . . . For any of these statistics, **we never ask** who is in the denominator: that is, **who are we counting, and who are we not counting**—and how? As a consequence, what often pours out are scare stories that make for good press and bad policy. The bad data-driven scare story, in fact, has become the preferred narrative. (Adelman, 2006, pp. 104-05. Emphasis added in bold.)

Although more students are pursuing higher education, there continues to be substantial concern about reported graduation rates and institutional accountability. These concerns are stressed in a recently released report (known as the Spelling’s report) on the future of higher education (U.S. Department of Education 2006). The Spelling’s report calls on colleges and universities to provide consumers and policymakers with easy access to reliable and useful information on student success outcomes that will allow cross-institution comparisons. An earlier step in this direction was the 1990 Student Right-to-Know Act (RTK Act), which required colleges to report graduation rates but only for full time degree- or certificate-seeking students who initially enrolled in a fall term. Such data restrictions fail to provide pertinent information about part-time students, students starting in a non-fall term, and students who transfer between institutions. As Adelman states, the choice of “who we are counting, and who we are not counting” may substantially influence both reported enrollment and reported success. We use longitudinal data from the 1996/2001 Beginning Post-Secondary Survey to estimate the value of the information available under the RTK Act.

Background

The RTK Act of 1990 requires institutions of higher education receiving federal assistance to provide information regarding their graduation rates. Institutions are required to provide information on the fraction of certificate- or degree-seeking students who complete or graduate within 150 percent of the “normal time”.¹ This asks two-year colleges to report three-year graduation rates and four-year colleges to report six-year graduation rates. Two year institutions are permitted to count students who transfer to a four-year institution as ‘successes’. However, information on transfers is generally difficult to obtain and is not always reported². We denote students who are to be reported under the RTK Act as “reportable” and students who institutions need not report as “non-reportable.”

The reported statistics have some serious shortcomings. First, since the data exclude those initially enrolling in a non-fall term, enrolling part-time, or transferring from another institution, the data will not reflect all students. Thus, the concerns voiced by Adelman (2006) in the opening quote regarding sample selection are quite relevant.³ Second, “success”, defined as either degree completion or transfer, may be quite different for non-reportable as compared to reportable students. Third, the reported rates are institution-specific and fail to identify individuals who transfer and complete their degree at a different institution, even though Adelman (2006) reports that 60% of undergraduates accumulate credits at more than one institution. Following students across institutions is not easy. Romano and Wisniewski (2003) discuss the difficulty of tracking transfer students, and both Romano and Wisniewski (2003) and

¹ The law allows schools to exclude students who leave school for service in the armed forces, on an official church mission, or with a recognized foreign aid service, or who died or were totally and permanently disabled.

² Some such information can be obtained from the National Student Clearinghouse. Romano and Wisniewski (2003) provide a nice review of these data and their limitations.

³ See Dellow and Romano (2002) for a particular critique of these selection criteria for community college assessment.

Ehrenberg and Smith (2004) document the tremendous heterogeneity of students at the two-year college level in terms of degree receipt, transfer, and success following transfer. Fourth, the published progress rates for the reportable students may not be at all indicative of the progress rates of the non-reportable students either within a particular institution or as compared across institutions. These last three points speak to the validity of the ‘stories’ that may be reported using the RTK data on student progress.

Data

To evaluate the coverage and reliability of the information provided under the RTK Act, we use data from the 1996-2001 Beginning Post Secondary (1996/01 BPS) survey conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). This survey follows a group of nationally representative, first time undergraduates interviewed initially in the 1995-1996 academic year as part of the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study 1996 (NPSAS:96). These students were reinterviewed first in 1998 then again in 2001 so as to construct a six year longitudinal data set. Individuals not seeking an academic degree and enrollment at institutions not likely to offer credit toward an academic degree (such as beauty, training, and trade schools) are excluded from the analysis.⁴ We also restrict our analysis to individuals whose activities are followed through Spring 2001 to allow more time for students to be observed either graduating or making progress toward a degree. Finally, we distinguish between students who initially enrolled at a four-year versus a two-year institution, calling these the four year and two year groups respectively.

⁴ Most enrollment studies impose some sample restrictions. Adelman’s (2006) work does not support the significance of reported intentions but he limits his work to those ever attending four year institutions. Others (Dellow and Romano 2002, Romano and Wisniewski 2003) impose restrictions based on the programs in which students are involved or the credits earned,

For each of these groups we proceed as follows. First, we determine who is reportable and who is not-reportable under the RTK Act. This tells us the coverage of the RTK Act reporting requirements. Second, we construct progress measures that distinguish between progress at the initial institution and progress at any institution, and distinguish among degree receipt, continued enrollment, and non-enrollment. Third, we compare progress towards a degree for the reportable students with progress towards a degree for the non-reportable students. This analysis indicates how representative the information provided under the RTK Act is. For institutions with large fractions of reportable students, the reported data should be quite representative of all students; for institutions with very low reporting rates, the reported data may be highly unrepresentative of overall progress rates if graduation rates are substantially different for the two subsets of students. Fourth, we calculate the degree of intra-institutional correlation in the progress of the reportable and non-reportable samples. If institutions that have high graduation rates for reportable students also do a good job of graduating non-reportable students, the reported data provide all students with a useful means of comparing institutions. If, however, there is relatively little correlation between the performance of reportable and non-reportable students, then the reported progress rates will not be very useful in predicting the rates for the non-reportable students and may actually be misleading for non-reportable students trying to compare graduation rates across institutions. This type of cross-institution comparison is a specific concern of the Spelling's report and apparently has not been previously addressed in empirical research.

Coverage and Progress towards a Degree

Table 1 provides summary statistics for the BPS sample by four year and two year groups for the reportable and non-reportable samples. Of those in the four year group, 13.8% are non-reportable. By contrast, 57.1% of those students in the two-year institution sample are not reportable under the RTK Act.⁵ While the published statistics cover most students at four-year institutions, they cover less than half the students attending two-year institutions. Hence, it is critical to examine whether the progress rates for the reportable students are also representative of progress for the non-reportable students in order to determine if the available statistics are appropriate for assessing the likelihood of success for all students.

Within the four year sample, the primary progress measure we utilize mimics that collected from four-year institutions under the RTK Act: BA degree receipt six years following matriculation. The BPS data, however, allow us to identify not only the fraction graduating from the initial institution attended (as recorded by the RTK data), but the fraction graduating from any institution and the fraction still persisting in any institution in Spring 2001. The latter measure helps to capture the potentially longer time-to-graduation necessary for those non-reportable students who miss the initial fall term or initially enroll part-time, as well as for students who later interrupt their enrollment for a time or later decide to enroll part-time.⁶

To accommodate the wide range of possible outcomes for those beginning at two-year institutions, we construct a larger set of progress measures. We consider success for both a three year time frame, as designated by the RTK Act, and for a six year time frame to include the possibility of transferring and obtaining a four-year degree. Our three year outcome measures include: first, the fraction graduating with an AA degree; second, the fraction either graduating with an AA or attending a four-year institution in fall 1999; and third, the fraction who are not

⁵ All figures are weighted so as to replicate national statistics. See National Center for Education Statistics (2002) for details regarding the longitudinal weights.

⁶ Many other studies look at persistence as well as graduation. See for example Ehrenberg and Smith (2004).

attending in fall 1999 and do not return prior to the spring of 2001. The second measure is roughly comparable to the progress rate two-year institutions are permitted to report under the RTK Act. The third measure identifies long term dropouts – those relatively unlikely to return. Our six year outcome measures include: the fraction with a BA/BS degree, the fraction with an AA/AS degree (but no BA/BS degree), and the fraction with no degree. For those with an AA/AS degree or no degree, we further distinguish between those who are still attending in the spring 2001 term and those who are not.

Table 1 presents these progress measures as well as some information on the characteristics of both the four year and two year samples. Progress measures for the four year sample indicate that 65% of the reportable but only 26% of the non-reportable group achieve a BA within six years. This is a striking difference. Furthermore, looking six years down the road, of those who start at a four-year institution in the non-reportable group, almost half (49%) have neither graduated nor persisted. This figure is just over twice as large as the comparable figure (23%) for the reportable group. Success rates by any measure are better for those in the reportable sample. There is also evidence that success is understated by the RTK Act in general, since about 13% of those graduating in each sample do so from a school other than the one initially attended and would not be reported as graduates under the Act. Clearly, however, these individuals are successful from a larger social or national perspective.

For those starting at a two-year institution, there is a similar disparity between progress for the reportable and non-reportable samples. While 24% of the reportable group received an AA/AS degree within three years, the same is true for only 7% of the non-reportable group. Furthermore, only 40% of the reportable students without a degree as compared to 51% of the non-reportable students without a degree fail to continue their studies beyond the third year.

Differences are still substantial at the six year point. For the reportable students about 21% have a BA/BS degree in six years whereas only 6.5% of the non-reportable students achieve that level of success. Some 43% of the reportable group have at least one degree, as compared to less than 20% of the non-reportable group. Forty-one percent of the reportable group have no degree and are no longer attending, as compared with over 60% of the non-reportable group. Progress by any measure is greater for the reportable as compared to the non-reportable sample.

Intra and Cross-Institutional Comparisons

The statistics reported under the RTK Act will provide a useful point of reference for cross institutional comparisons if institutions that are more successful at graduating students in the reportable student group are also more successful at graduating students in the non-reportable group. Thus, we calculate the degree to which the intra-institution outcomes for reportable and non-reportable students are correlated. This is possible because of the complex sample design of the BPS. The BPS data were collected by first randomly selecting a set of institutions, and then gathering data on a random set of students at each of those institutions. This structure means that there are often many students beginning at the same institution in the survey and hence enables us to perform comparisons that otherwise would not be possible.⁷

By using the BPS information on schools represented by both reportable and non-reportable students we can compare the progress of both groups within a single institution. Of 456 four-year institutions represented in the data, 254 or 56% have respondents of both types and these respondents account for 65% of our weighted sample of respondents. Of the 172 two-year institutions represented in the data, 133 or 77% have respondents of both types and these

⁷ Specifically, of the 456 four-year colleges represented in our four year sample, only 20 have only one student in the sample. Of the 172 two-year colleges represented in our two year sample, only 18 have only one student in the sample.

respondents account for almost 80% of our weighted sample of respondents. These statistics reflect the greater likelihood that non-traditional students attend two-year institutions but also document the substantial degree of heterogeneity even within traditional four-year institutions.

Table 2 presents the progress measures separately for reportable and non-reportable students at those institutions with both types of students in the BPS. Table 2 then presents measures of the degree of intra-institution correlation in the progress of these two groups. The top panel of Table 2 focuses on four-year institutions; the bottom focuses on two-year institutions.

The finding in Table 1 of differential progress for reportable and non-reportable students at four-year institutions could have reflected attendance at institutions that cater to one or the other type of student. Table 2 suggests that these students progress differently even when they are attending the same institution. The six-year graduation rate of 61% for the reportable students is almost twice the 32% rate for the non-reportable students. To gauge whether institutions that are more successful at graduating reportable students are also more successful at graduating non-reportable (or less traditional) students, we calculate the degree of correlation between the six year progress measures for the reportable and non-reportable students within an institution. Our results indicate a positive intra-institution correlation of 0.31 between the six-year graduation rates and of 0.25 between the non-attendance rates for the reportable and non-reportable students. Both of these correlations though low are significant at the 0.1% level. Further analysis regressing each institutions weighted average graduation rate for the reportable students against their weighted average graduation rate for the non-reported students indicates that for each ten percentage point increase in the graduation rate of the reportable students, the probability of non-reported students graduating rises about two percentage points. Similarly for

each ten percentage point increase in the fraction of reportable students who fail to persist, the probability of non-reported students failing to persist rises just over one percentage point. Thus, while statistically significant, the relation between the reportable and non-reportable populations is small.

For the two-year institutions, the findings using three year progress measures, while similar, are substantially weaker. Progress, as measured by AA/AS degree receipt or a transfer to a four-year institution, is about a three times as great for those students in the reportable group (50%) as for those students in the non-reportable group (18%). This suggests that progress within two-year institutions is also quite different for these two groups. The intra-institution correlation measures between the reportable and non-reportable students are positive. However, they are about one-third lower in magnitude than those observed at four-year institutions and are not statistically significant at the 5% level. Regression analysis indicates that for every ten percentage point increase in the three year ‘success’ rate for the reportable group, the probability of success increases by about two percentage points for the non-reportable group.

The results using six year progress measures for those entering two-year institutions are even weaker. Progress is still clearly greater for those in the reportable group than in the non-reportable group.⁸ However, for the six year time frame none of the intra-institution correlation measures are statistically significant at even the 10% level and some of the correlation measures are actually negative. The smaller number of two-year institutions in the BPS sample will act to

⁸ Interestingly, the fractions reporting a BA degree or not attending are similar between Tables 1 and 2, but the fraction of students who have an AA but not a BA degree flip flops between the tables depending upon current enrollment status. While Table 1 indicates that 14% of reportable students have an AA degree and are still attending and 8% have an AA degree and not still attending, the comparable figures in Table 2 are 7% and 15%. These results are not an error. The numbers reported in Table 1 are a weighted average of the individually reported values. Those reported in Table 2 are an average of the institution-based values (where the institution-based values are the weighted average for those attending the institution). Thus, these results suggest that it is more common to find individuals with an AA degree who are still attending than individuals with an AA degree who are not still attending. However, it is more common to find institutions where more students with an AA degree are not still attending as compared to institutions where students with an AA degree are still attending.

reduce the statistical significance of these correlation terms, but not the correlation itself. Two-year institutions that are more successful at graduating students in the reportable group in three years may also be slightly more successful at graduating students in the non-reportable group in three years – but the six year progress rates for these two groups do not appear to be correlated.

Comparison with Rates Published by the Department of Education

The analysis reported so far relies entirely on statistics derived from the BPS. These statistics should yield unbiased estimates of progress, but small sample sizes mean these estimates have large variances. Fortunately institution-level data for the entire population of full-time, fall term matriculants are available from the Department of Education (DOE) under the RTK Act. A comparison of the BPS-based statistics with the DOE statistics provides a valuable cross-check on our findings (details available upon request).

Looking first at the 438 four-year institutions for which both BPS and DOE statistics were available⁹, we find the average 6-year BA/BS graduation rate to be 16% higher as derived from the BPS sample of reportable students versus the DOE data. This differential is explained by the fact that the DOE statistics only capture graduation at the institution initially attended whereas the BPS statistics follow individuals as they progress across institutions. When the BPS statistics are adjusted to exclude those who graduate from another institution, the progress measures are indistinguishable. A comparison of the DOE-based 6 year graduation rates and the unadjusted 6 year graduation rates for the reportable BPS sample yields a significant and substantial correlation of 0.71. When we further compare the intra-institution DOE progress measures with the BPS progress measures for the non-reportable group, we find a statistically significant correlation of 0.43. This is lower than the correlation obtained using the BPS

⁹ DOE statistics are missing for 6 schools. There were no ‘reportable’ students in the BPS for 12 others.

statistics alone, but still suggests that the published progress measures for four-year institutions allow all students (not just those beginning full-time in the fall term) to compare progress rates across four-year institutions.

A comparison of the DOE and BPS progress measures for those beginning at a two-year institution suggests more heterogeneity in these data. The DOE measures for the 123 institutions in an overlapping sample¹⁰ suggest a higher average 3-year 'graduation rate' (23.4%) as compared to the BPS reportable sample (19.2%). This differential may reflect the fact that the BPS sample focuses only on academic degrees whereas the DOE statistics are more inclusive and include certificates. These measures are significantly positively correlated at the institution level, but that correlation measure is lower at only 0.29. As was the case with the BPS data alone, a comparison of the three year graduation rate for the reported DOE and the non-reportable BPS samples indicates a statistically insignificant correlation (0.09). The data provided by the DOE for two-year institutions will not help the many students who begin part-time or in a non-fall term to compare the probability of graduating at one institution versus another.

Discussion of Results

Table 1 clearly indicates that coverage by the RTK statistics is not comprehensive or particularly representative. About one of every eight students is missed at four-year institutions; over four of eight are missed at two-year institutions. While fully 25% of the non-reportable students in each sample are still attending an academic institution at the six-year market, fewer have graduated and more appear to have dropped out as compared to reportable students. Furthermore, the sample characteristics reported in Table 1 indicate that African Americans,

¹⁰ DOE statistics are missing for 21 schools. There were no 'reportable' students in the BPS for another 28.

Hispanics, older persons, married persons, parents, and independent persons are all more heavily represented in the non-reportable subgroups. Thus, statistics reported under the RTK Act are unlikely to reflect actual enrollment, graduation, or persistence for historically underserved students such as African Americans and Hispanics, since so many of them never appear in the data stream.

The data might still be useful if they allow all students to make cross-institutional comparisons. We indeed find evidence that four-year institutions that are more successful at graduating students in the reported population are also relatively more successful at graduating students in the non-reported population. One possible explanation for this finding is that four-year institutions may utilize the same admission standards for all students but some simply start in a non-Fall term or enroll part time. Our results for two-year institutions, however, indicate little discernable correlation. Two-year institutions that graduate a higher fraction of reportable students, do not also graduate a higher fraction of non-reportable students. Even though we limited our analysis to those students who indicated they were pursuing an academic degree, students entering in two-year schools probably have more varied backgrounds as well as more heterogeneous expectations and goals relative to those who start at four-year institutions. Thus, the intra-institution correlation at the two-year schools may be low as reported in Table 2 in part because the reportable and non-reportable populations are different.

Suggestions for Improving Information

The poor coverage of the RTK Act reporting requirements is well known (see Adelman 2006 and the U.S Department of Education's Spelling's report 2006), but this analysis also documents the failure of the published statistics to accurately reflect within institution outcomes

and, particularly for two-year institutions, cross-institution rankings. For statistics like those provided under the RTK Act to be of use, they must be reliable. Collecting and disseminating better statistics may be expensive, but a substantial amount of information that students may find useful is already collected and could be made available to prospective students at relatively low cost.

This analysis suggests several avenues for improvement. First, initial enrollment statistics and progress measures should be reported for the entire student population. As Adelman's quote indicates, "who we are not counting" and thus leaving out of the current reported data base, is incredibly important. Data on race or ethnic background is easily available. In addition institutions should report such characteristics on their entering student population as the percentage who initially attend part-time, the percentage of both in- and out-transfers, the age distribution at initial enrollment, and if possible the percentage working full-time (or more than say 20 or 30 hours a week) and the percentage of first-generation college students. These additional characteristics at least partially reflect the set of risk factors "that threaten persistence and graduation from college" as discussed in a comprehensive review of the literature by Kuh et al. (2006, p. 27). Some of these statistics should be inexpensive to report as the data are already collected – for example, age distribution, enrollment status, in-transfer status. Other data may not be "on file" and hence require some greater expense to obtain.

Such information provides both students and policy-makers a better profile of the students at an institution and identifies each institution's client base. This information also provides some measure of "fit" for prospective students and "fit" likely correlates with student success as discussed by Tinto's Student Integration Model (Tinto, 1975). Race and ethnicity may be useful to policy makers who are seeking to increase the numbers of historically

underrepresented students and may be of interest to those applying. However as a cautionary note, research (for example, Adelman 2006) points out these factors are not strongly associated with success once other factors are taken into consideration. Kuh et al. (2006) point out that it is other factors such as being a first-generation college student, working more than 30 hours a week, attending part-time, being a single parent, not entering college directly from high school, being academically underprepared for college-level work, caring for children at home, and being financially independent that “partially explain the low baccalaureate rates of certain groups of students, such as community college students and many ethnic minorities.” (p. 27). Thus, great care should be taken to point out the importance of those risk factors and the distinction between “risk factors” and demographic characteristics when reporting race and ethnic backgrounds. It is important that students, the general public, and policy makers are aware of the fundamental risk factors that affect student enrollment decisions since that knowledge may help avoid the “scare stories that make for good press and bad policy” (as per the initial quote from Adelman).

Second, the progress data should be expanded to include not only graduation but also persistence rates. Ideally, these statistics should be available for multiple observation periods: perhaps four, six, and eight year benchmarks for four-year institutions and two, three, four, and possibly six year benchmarks for two-year institutions. Ideally institutions should follow those who transfer out and evaluate their progress as well. Transfer data are, of course, more difficult and potentially much more costly to obtain, particularly for an institution with substantial out-transfers. Since many states already collect that information for their public institutions, public institutions could make that information accessible.

Third, from a policy perspective better data will help institutional researchers and policy makers more clearly identify particularly successful institutions in terms of value-added.

Currently it is difficult to assess whether an institution has more success simply because it has better applicants or because the institution is doing something “better” than other institutions. . Better data may help identify institutions that are doing “something right”. In addition, as noted earlier, better data may help policy makers more accurately compare and reward institutions.

Conclusion

Under the RTK Act, institutions generally report graduation rates for those initially enrolled full-time in a fall term. We find that these reporting criteria provide comprehensive coverage for enrollment at four-year institutions (where over 80% of first time students enroll full-time in a fall term), but not at two-year institutions (where less than half do so). Progress for non-reportable students is substantially worse than for students in the reportable population, especially at two-year institutions. Furthermore, while four-year institutions that graduate a higher percentage of reportable students also graduate a higher percentage of non-reportable students, the same can not be said for two-year institutions and even at four-year institutions the magnitude of the association is low.

Policy makers should heed the call of Adelman as cited in the opening section of this report and revise reporting requirements in order to provide prospective students, policymakers, and educators with more reliable information regarding graduation and persistence rates for different student sub-populations, particularly at two-year institutions. Reliable cross-institutional information is critical to policy makers and educators trying to evaluate the effectiveness of different institutions. For example, four-year institutions that only accept full-time students will have very different graduation and persistence rates four, five, and even six years following student entrance as

compared to institutions with larger numbers of students who work full-time and a greater proportion of part-time students. These institutions serve a different client base and need to be judged and funded accordingly. The TV and movie image of the “traditional” student is dissolving into the reality of the working student who may be taking two or three classes a semester and perhaps one or two during the summer.

Given the changing demographics in this country, new growth in the labor force will disproportionately come from individuals of African American or Hispanic heritage, from low income households, and from first generation college-goers. Thus it is imperative to know how many individuals from these demographic groups actually enroll and how many actually graduate from college. If we did not exclude those who started in a non-fall term or who started part-time reported under the RTK Act, the reported proportion of college students of African American or Hispanic heritage would be higher. With a more complete picture of enrollments, the representation of these groups in college is much closer to their representation in the entire population. The story becomes more complex, however, as we expand our analysis from ‘access to’ to ‘completion of’ higher education. The non-success rate is much higher for the current non-reportable subset of the student population.

Both individuals’ self-interest and our nation’s self-interest underscore the need to provide better statistics than currently available so that prospective students and policy makers can make more cost effective decisions. Adelman states that without better statistics “what often pours out are scare stories that make for good press and **bad policy**. The **bad data**-driven scare story, in fact, has become the preferred narrative.” (Adelman, 2006, p. 105). Emphasis added in bold.) In this case, interestingly, the reportable statistics may in fact paint a rosier picture of reality. However, reliable and accurate information is still necessary to avoid “bad policy.”

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Table 1
Progress and Characteristics
by Population Type

	Four Year Sample		Two Year Sample	
	<u>Reportable Population</u>	<u>Non-Reportable Population</u>	<u>Reportable Population</u>	<u>Non-Reportable Population</u>
<u>Reporting Status</u> (% of total)	86.3%	13.8%	43.0%	57.1%
Did not begin in the Fall term	0.0%	42.6%	0.0%	62.6%
Initially enrolled part-time	0.0%	70.0%	0.0%	83.6%
 <u>3-yr Progress Measures</u> ^a				
AA Degree			23.9%	6.8%
AA Degree or enrolled in 4-yr Instit.			49.1%	17.0%
No Degree and not attending Fall 1998+			39.7%	51.4%
 <u>6-yr Progress Measures</u>				
BA Degree	64.9%	25.5%	20.9%	6.5%
% graduating from a diff. instit.	12.8%	13.0%		
AA Degree (no BA) & Still Attending ^b			14.3%	7.5%
AA Degree (no BA) & Not Attending ^b			8.3%	5.4%
No Degree & Still Attending ^b	12.0%	25.5%	15.8%	18.4%
No Degree & Not Attending ^b	23.1%	48.9%	40.7%	62.1%
 <u>Sample Characteristics</u>				
Female	55.6%	50.5%	47.6%	54.7%
African American	10.1%	15.3%	8.2%	11.5%
Hispanic	10.1%	13.0%	8.8%	15.5%
Age	18.47	21.96	19.61	23.55
Currently or Previously Married	2.0%	20.7%	4.6%	30.8%
Persons with Children	1.8%	18.7%	8.5%	26.3%
Independent	3.9%	30.7%	13.4%	41.1%

Data are from the 1996/2001 BPS. Restricted to academic degree-seeking students beginning in the 1995-96 academic year.

a: The three-year progress measures are not all inclusive and hence do not sum to one.

b: Attendance noted in the Spring 2001 term.

Table 2
Progress within Heterogeneous Institutions
by Type of School First Attended & Type of Population

		<u>Four-Year Institutions</u>	
		Population Type	
		<u>Reportable</u>	<u>Non- Reportable</u>
6 Year Progress Measures:			
BA Degree		60.9%	32.3%
No Degree & Still Attending		13.7%	25.5%
No Degree & Not Attending		25.4%	42.2%
Intra-Institution Correlations Between 6 Year Progress Measures:		<u>Correlation</u>	<u>P-Value</u>
Reported and Unreported BA Receipt		0.310	0.000
Reported and Unreported Non Attendance		0.249	0.000
		<u>Two-Year Institutions</u>	
		Population Type	
		<u>Reportable</u>	<u>Non- Reportable</u>
3 Year Progress Measures:			
AA degree or enrolled in 4-year Institution		49.5%	18.2%
Not attending after Spring 1998		34.3%	44.3%
Intra-Institution Correlations Between 3 Year Progress Measures:		<u>Correlation</u>	<u>P-Value</u>
Reported and Unreported AA Receipt or in 4-year Inst.		0.150	0.085
Reported and Unreported Non Attendance after Spring 1998		0.164	0.059
		<u>Reportable</u>	<u>Non- Reportable</u>
6 Year Progress Measures:			
BA Degree		21.1%	6.8%
AA Degree (no BA), still attending		7.0%	4.3%
AA Degree (no BA), not still attending		14.8%	9.4%
No Degree & Still Attending		14.4%	20.9%
No Degree & Not Attending		42.7%	58.5%
Intra-Institution Correlations Between 6 Year Progress Measures:		<u>Correlation</u>	<u>P-Value</u>
Reported and Unreported BA Receipt		-0.013	0.882
Reported and Unreported Non Attendance/No Degree		0.120	0.170
Reported and Unreported Any Degree Receipt		0.064	0.464

Data are from the 1996/2001 BPS. Restricted to academic degree-seeking students beginning in the 1995-96 academic year at an institution with both reported and unreported populations in the sample. Institution-specific progress measures are based on weighted individual outcomes. Institutions are weighted based on the number of students in the sample so that those with more sample observations (and hence likely more accurately represented) receive a higher weight.