Research to Practice Partnership (RPP)
Resilient City College (RCC) and UCLA

R = Radically student-centered
E = Equity-oriented
S = Supportive
I = Intellectual
L = Labor market driven
I = Innovative
E = Evidence-based
N = Nurturing
T = Transformative

Our RPP Process

DIG = data inquiry group
Students, administrators, faculty, counselors, and researchers.

EQUITY

Labor market data
Institutional data

Identify:
High-leverage problems
Best processes

Student voices/resources:
Interviews
Focus groups
Observations

3

Completion to what? For whom? And under what conditions?

"It is hard to be excited about the trip when you don't know the destination"

Listening to Student Voices

× **Case 1**

Dewayne, 18

African American

Full-time, Theater

First Generation to College

IDENTITY FORECLOSED

× **Case 2**

Diego, 20

Mexican American

Part-time, Fire Science

Physical disability

IDENTITY ACHIEVED

× **Case 3**

Ashante, 19

African American

Full-time, Undecided

Mother

IDENTITY DIFFUSED

Today, community college students are tasked with making high-stakes decisions about their major and career paths in a very confusing decision-making environment that requires navigating a **dynamic and shifting labor market**, a **complex system of postsecondary credentials**, and **structural affordances barriers, and constraints**" (Colina Neri, 2019)

1.

Dynamic and shifting labor market

WHY IT MATTERS: We Must Retire These Questions

What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up?

What Is Your Major?

What Do You Do?

65% Jobs That Do Not Exist Yet

47% Automated by 2033

27% Work In Their Major

17 Jobs   5 Industries

www.heathermcgowan.com

PREPARING STUDENTS TO LOSE THEIR JOBS

Career Arc: New Economy Shifts Life Blocks

OLD ECONOMY
EDUCATE   WORK   RETIRE
Lifespan = 73 Years

NEW ECONOMY
ENGAGE
LEARN
RETIRE RECONDITION
Lifespan = 90 Years

@heathermcgowan
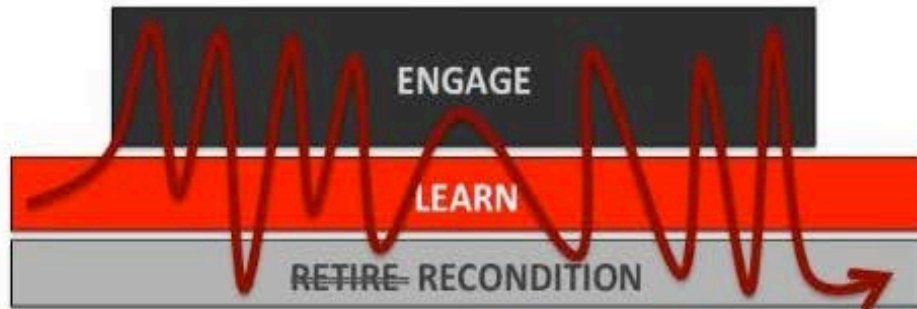
Degrees at Work

× Serendipitous outcomes of diverse degrees

(Emsi, 2019)

Language and philosophy

Social science

Business

Communication

Engineering

IT

25%
STEM jobs
Software development, electrical engineering, etc.

54%
Major business functions
Tactical communication, strategic communication, operational oversight, interpersonal oversight

21%
Interpersonal & creative jobs
Education, graphic design, etc.
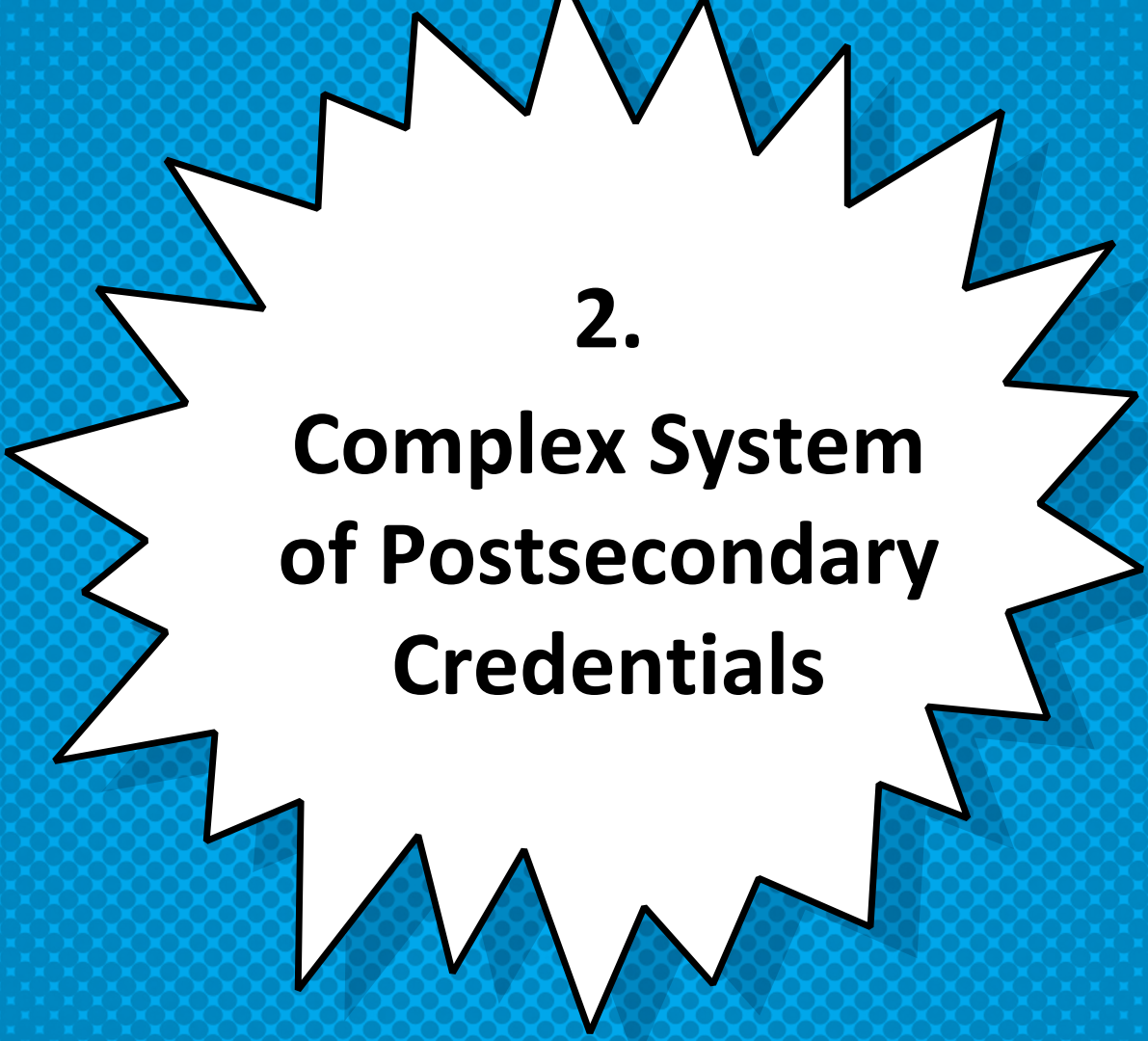
OSN
Open Skills Network

Building the skills ecosystem.

OUR VISION

The Open Skills Network (OSN) is a coalition of employers, education providers, military, and other stakeholders dedicated to advancing skills-based education and hiring. The OSN envisions a world where individuals are trained for in-demand skills and hired for what they can do.

Learn More

OSN
Open Skills Network

2.

Complex System of Postsecondary Credentials

College degrees are necessary, BUT…

Today, a degree is all but necessary for the job market. Still that alone is no guarantee for a job and yet we are paying more and more money for one.

Not sure, go to STEM or Health

Lawyer? Do pre-law, want to be a journalist? Study journalism. Not sure? Then go to STEM so you can be an engineer or an IT specialist. No matter what you do, forget the liberal arts.

Multiple non-linear pathways and multiple institutions

Certificates (long-term or short-term?)

Associate or Bachelor Degree?

Transfer: Vertical pathway?

For-profit institutions?

**Table I.** Transfer Patterns, Terms, and Definition(s).

Transfer patterns and terms	Definition(s)
Vertical transfer	Students who begin at a 2-year and transfer to a 4-year with or without an associate's degree (Townsend, 2001).
Lateral transfer	Students who transfer from a 2-year institution to a 2-year institution, or a 4-year institution to a 4-year institution (Bahr, 2009).
Reverse transfer	Students who begin at a 4-year and transfer to a 2-year institution, including undergraduate reverse transfer students, postbaccalaureate reverse transfer students, double reverse transfer students, and summer sessioners (Hagedorn & Castro, 1999; Townsend, 2001; Townsend & Denver, 1999).
Reverse credit transfer	The transfer of credits from a 4-year institution back to a 2-year institution for the purpose of conferring an associate's degree (Taylor, 2016).
Swirlers and alternating enrollees	Students who attend more than two institutions and transfer or who transfer from and to community colleges (Adelman, 2004, 2006; de los Santos & Wright, 1989; Townsend, 2001).
Concurrent enrollees, co-enrollment, double-dipping, simultaneous enrollees	Students who attend more than one institution at the same time and who transfer courses (Adelman, 2004, 2006; Crisp, 2013; McCormick, 2003; Townsend, 2001; Wang & Wickersham, 2014).
Dual credit, dual enrollment	Transfer of college-level courses taken during high school.
Transient	Students who take courses as nondegree seeking students at institutions other than home institution with intention to transfer credits to home institution (McCormick, 2003).

Note. These transfer terms are commonly used in the literature. We recognize these terms could be interpreted as hierarchical, deficit, and/or problematic, and we advocate for the development of critical and appropriate language to describe transfer patterns and experiences.
Source. Adapted from Taylor (2016).

Nonlinear and multidimensional college-going pathways

- Attending multiple CCs at the same time

- Full-time to part-time, stopping out, etc.

- Negotiating roles, distance, and cost

- Assessing their ethical costs
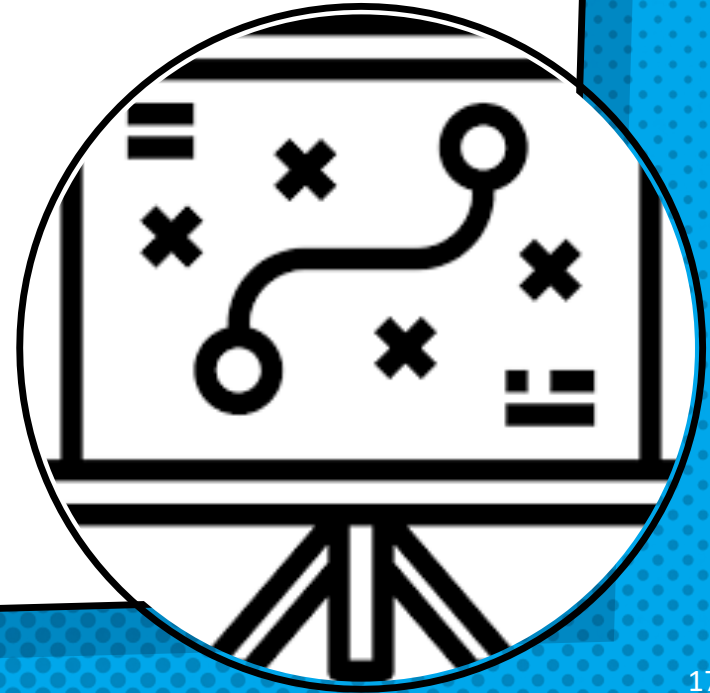
MOVING UP

WITHOUT LOSING

YOUR WAY

THE ETHICAL COSTS OF UPWARD MOBILITY

JENNIFER M. MORTON

3.

Sociopolitical barriers and previous schooling experiences

× Sociopolitical barriers–**under-resourced schools, access to quality instruction, racism, limited structures of opportunity, poverty**– play a large role in the perpetuation of disparities between the vocational aspirations and outcomes of Students of Color and their White counterparts.

The "Geography of Opportunity" in Community Colleges: The Role of the Local Labor Market in Students' Decisions to Persist and Succeed

Maria Reyes[1], Amalia Dache-Gerbino[2],
Cecilia Rios-Aguilar[3], Manuel Gonzalez-Canche[4],
and Regina Deil-Amen[5]

The "**Geography of Opportunity**" for Community College Students

Housing, Food, Transportation, Health Care, Child care, Books, etc. **COA**

Racism and Other Forms of Oppression

Segregation in Schools and Previous Educational Experiences
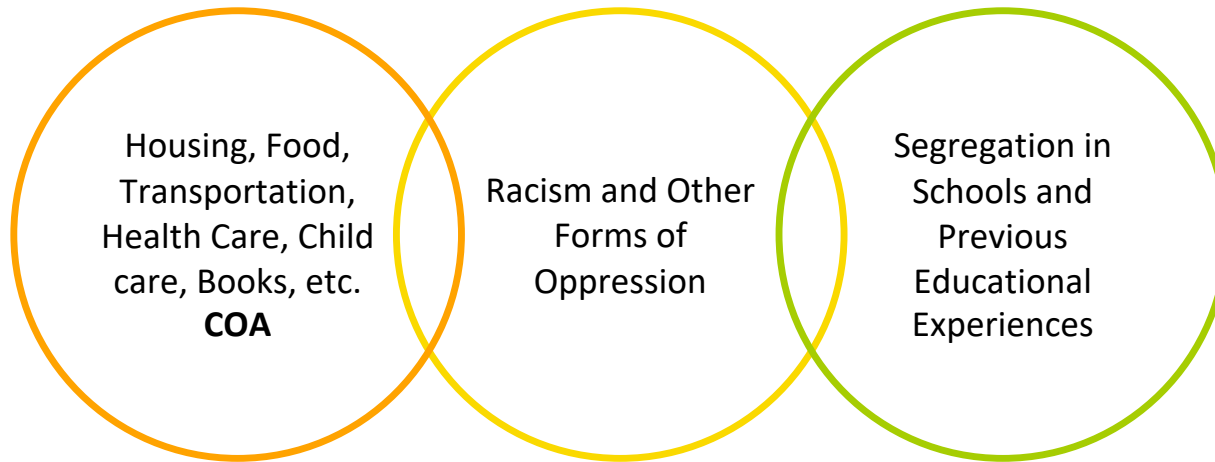
How much are students paying for housing?

Students reported the following average monthly costs of housing:

$1,235
On Campus/dorm

$1,244
Off Campus: Rent/own

Housing challenges students encountered within the last 30 days:

21% said they did not pay the full amount of a gas, oil, or electricity bill

18% said there was a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay

10% said they did not pay or underpaid their rent or mortgage

10% said they lived in a house or apartment with more people than were listed on the lease or rental agreement

5% said they moved in with others, even for a little while, because of financial problems

2% said they moved two times or more

1% said they had no consistent place to sleep (e.g. homeless, couch-surfing, living in a car/shelter)

35 percent of students surveyed experienced one or more conditions of housing insecurity

All in all, 35 percent of students surveyed experienced one or more conditions of housing insecurity. Students experiencing housing insecurity reported unstable living conditions, which included the inability to pay rent or utilities, or the need to move frequently.[2]

Students who were classified as housing insecure were more likely to be:

☑ older (age 22 and above);
☑ female;
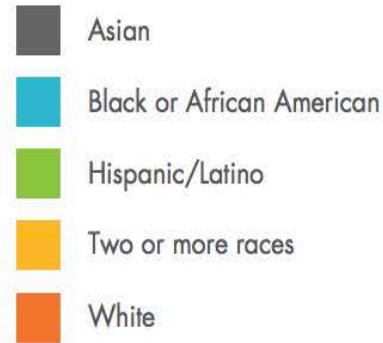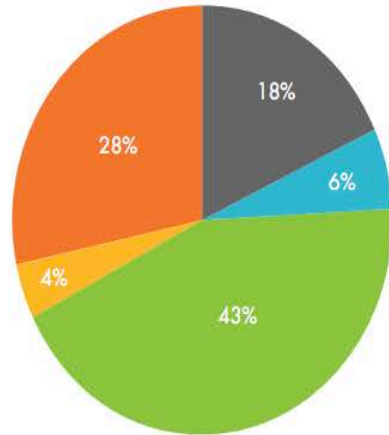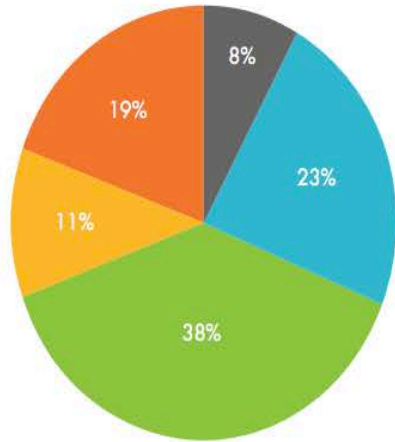☑ Black or Hispanic/Latino;
☑ having dependents

Housing insecurity is correlated with lower completion, persistence, and credit attainment.[3]

Homeless Students

While Hispanic/Latino students make up the largest percentage of homeless students, black students are disproportionately affected by homelessness.

Homeless Students

8%
23%
38%
11%
19%

All Surveyed Students

18%
6%
43%
4%
28%

Legend:
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Two or more races
- White

70% of homeless students are age 22 and older.

[2] Those with no consistent place to sleep are classified as housing insecure and those on campus are classified as housing secure. These groups did not see the housing insecurity module.

The Inner Life of the Poor (Rose, 2013)

"We don't know them. And because we don't know their values and aspirations, the particulars of their daily decisions, and the economic and psychological boundaries within which those decisions are made, they easily become psychologically one-dimensional, intellectually, emotionally, and volitionally simplified, not quite like us. This fact has huge implications for public policy, education and work, and civic life" (Rose, 2013)

How do students make decisions about majors, careers and jobs?

150+ Interviews with CC students

Whoa! That's a big number!!!

Decision-making about majors, careers, and jobs

- Over half of the participants, 59%, felt a degree of **uncertainty** throughout their career decision-making process. Many participants were worried they would choose the wrong path and wanted to be certain about their chosen major and career path to avoid changing paths in the future.

- A majority of participants were also worried about the level of competition in the labor market and were therefore looking for a career that they were certain they could obtain and through which they could become an irreplaceable worker.
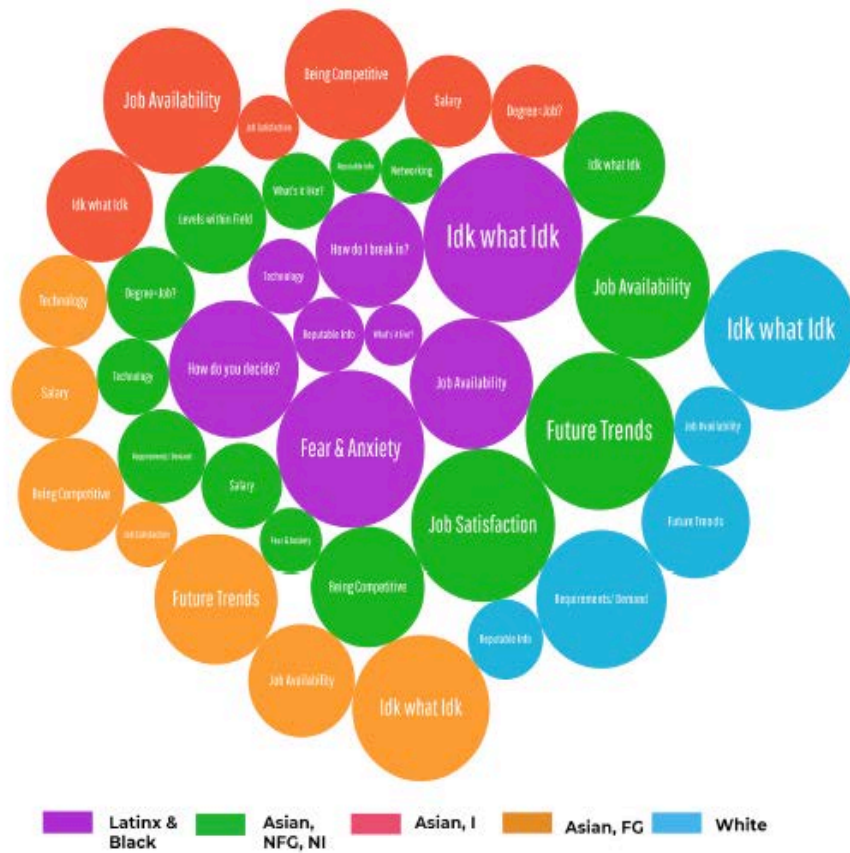
Why did you change your major?
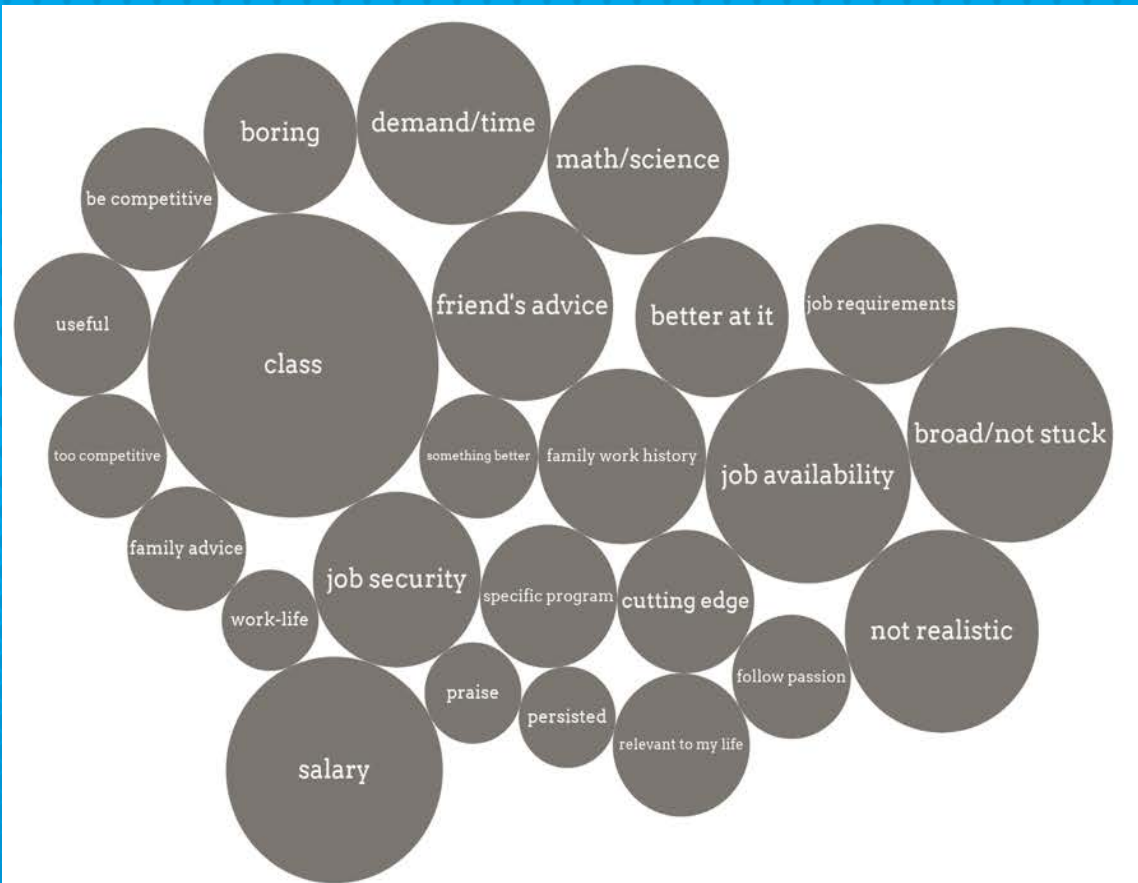
Figure 21. Variation in participants' questions about the labor market by race/ethnicity.
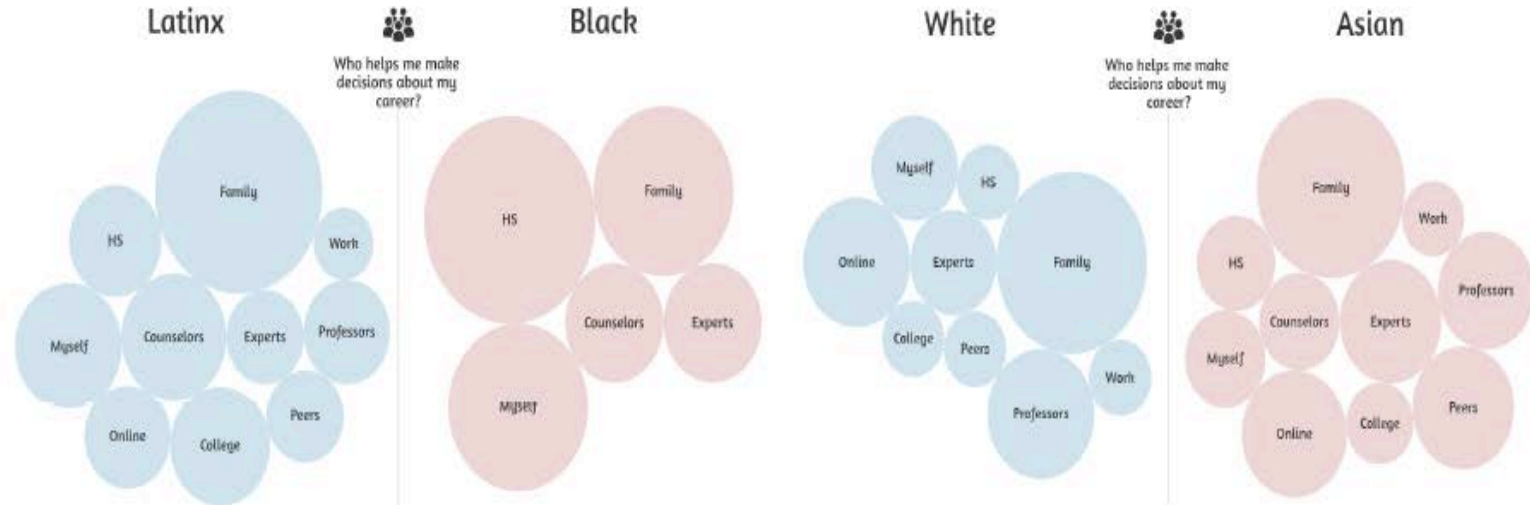
Who informs students' decisions?

Figure 5. Networks of support and information by race/ethnicity.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAREER DECISION-MAKING SPACE

Individual

- Critical Consciousness
- Exploration
- Self-efficacy & Outcome Expectations
- Career Adaptability
- Uncertainty
- Mental Health
- Interests, goals, values

Context

- Complex Ecosystem of Postsecondary Credentials
- Sociopolitical Barriers
- Work
- Career Exploration Opportunities
- Peer Groups
- Prior schooling experiences
- Family responsibilities & obligations

Institutional

- Course Availability
- PD
- Empathy & Mindset
- Transparency & Communication
- Knowhow
- Work-based Learning
- Partnerships with HS & Employers
- Labor Market Knowledge
- Transparency & Communication

Networks of Support & Information

- Family & Types of Support
- Front Staff & Counselors
- Expert Knowledge
- Connections
- Professors
- Reputable Sources
- Advocates & Allies
- HS
- Online Sources

Classes

- Performance
- Praise & Persistence
- Demand, Time, & Availability
- Preparation
- Professor-student Relationship
- Math/Science

Labor Market

- Work Environment
- Future Outlook
- Job Satisfaction
- Degree-Work Relationship
- Salary
- Job Availability, Sustainability, & Security
- Knowhow

Decision-making

1. Educational experiences as well as engagement in other activities prior to college matter in choosing a major/thinking about a career

2. Negative ideas about race/ethnicity/gender/different abilities are very present in students' ideas about themselves/ their capabilities and how the world perceives them

3. Students are making decisions about their majors in casual brief conversations with counselors

4. Relationships with faculty make a difference in students' academic and occupational trajectories

Implications

× Students need to understand that part of doing college entails a holistic process of evaluating their passions, skills, identities, experiences, values, and personalities

× Talk to institutional agents who made similar decisions

× Examine/reflect on past experiences, failures, barriers, and resiliency

× Reflect on what is unique about them, what are their dreams

× Understand (local) labor market data and connections between majors, skills, and jobs/careers

× Consult their networks to contrast information

What do students need?

1. Access to labor market knowledge and know how

2. Differentiated career guidance and career exploration opportunities

3. Career guidance that extends into the classroom and is contextualized in disciplinary learning

4. Opportunities to explore and cultivate their sociopolitical development across career fields

emotional and psychological support to navigate the stress, anxiety, and uncertainty they report feeling throughout their major choices and transitions,

and career development and decision-making processes.

Misinformed: Informal Knowledge as a Neglected Challenge to Racial Inequality (Hill, 2020)

In the era of both unprecedented access to information and increasing economic inequality, what challenges do low-income communities of color face in a search for upward mobility?

Opportunity seekers need "**mobility knowledge**":

✕   1.How social mobility actually occurs = success rates of a variety of social mobility strategies

✕   2. Labor market information

✕   3. Broader income distribution

Needed Mobility Knowledge	Related Questions
Processes of social mobility	"How do people (like me) move into the middle class?" "Which approach has the highest odds of success?
Occupational rankings	"What jobs pay a middle-class wage and which do not?" "Which of those jobs require educational credentials that I have or can obtain?" "What are the requirements to enter those job?
Sense of one's relative position in society (class and race)	"How much do most Americans earn?" "Which racial groups succeed economically, and why? "How does my financial situation compare to most Americans?"

What to do?

Under current conditions

AB 705

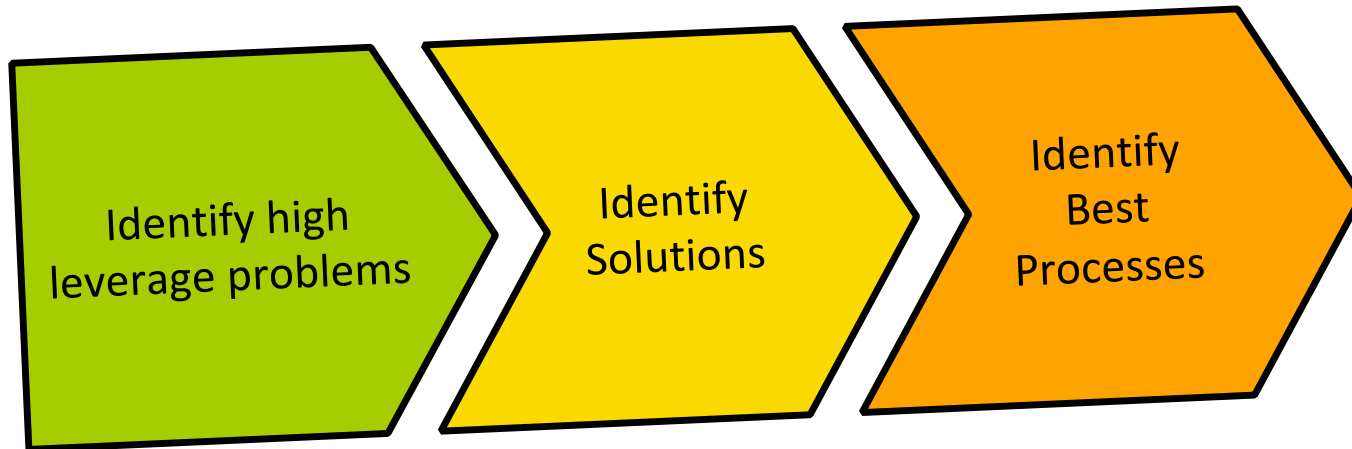Guided Pathways

The California College Promise

Student-Centered Funding Formula

Radical Help (Cottam, 2018)

Managing needs vs. **creating capabilities** = addressing both the internal feelings and the external structural realities that hold students back.
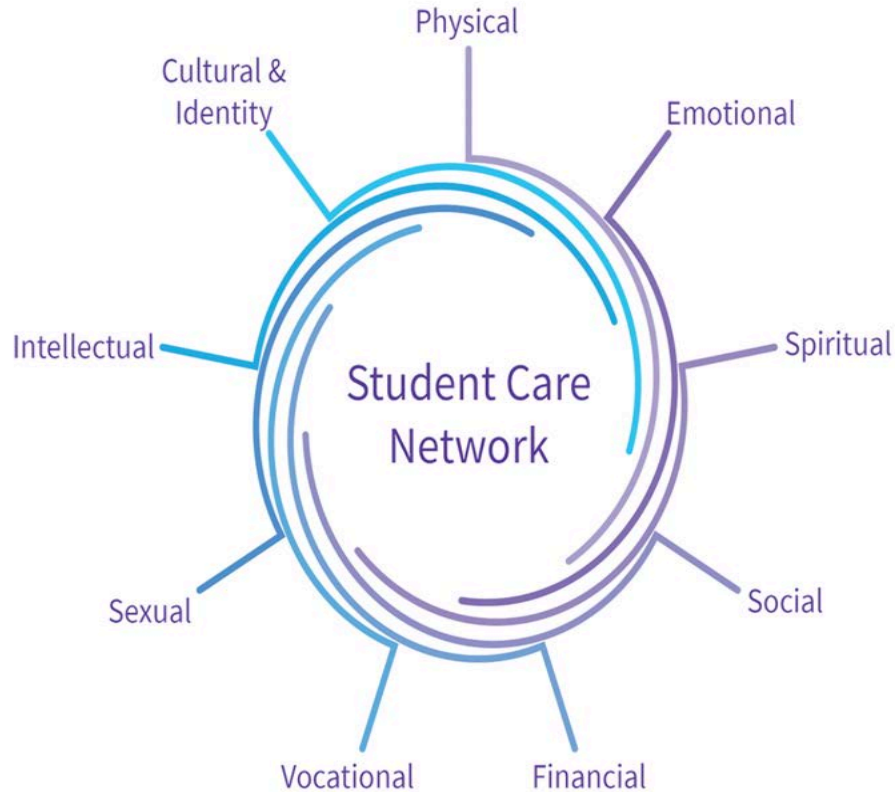
Our process

Identify high leverage problems

Identify Solutions

Identify Best Processes

Institutional Problem Statement: RCC does not provide a customized student experience through program of study that embeds academic and career supports.

Creating a Culture of Caring and a Network of Care

Ideas and Tools

Classrooms

Integrate career exploration

Use labor market data in classrooms

Learn about students' labor histories

Data

Why students leave? Why they move FT to PT?

Integrating data

Financial Aid

Increasing verification

Work across

Pedagogies

Career Community faculty work together

Use labor market data/info as professional development tool

Use students' labor histories to design curriculum and assignments

Technology

Meet ups

Nudges/reminders

Canvas

Career across College

Work-base learning opportunities

Alumni data

THANKS!

Any questions?

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