Challenging Our Assumptions

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CRC Study

• Examined the fall ’05 GPA of **first-time students**

• Examined interactions between and effects of
  – ethnicity
  – first generation status
  – economic status

• In order to
  – test assumptions and theories
  – identify relationships
Beliefs

• Take a few minutes to discuss this question with colleagues around you:
  – What do you believe about first generation college students?
First Generation Status

• Literature cites that first generation students are negatively affected by
  – academic preparation
  – psychological barriers
  – lack of family support structures
  – Issues related to social and cultural capital
  – family obligations and financial pressures
CRC Data

- Overall success rates and GPA of first-generation students is comparable to other students.
- GPA of first generation students differed significantly* from non-first generation students only in the Latino student population.

*(at .05 level)
Beliefs

• Take a few minutes to discuss this question with colleagues around you:
  – What do you believe about the influence of economic status on academic success?
Economic Status

• Studies find that lower economic level students are negatively impacted by
  – family responsibilities
  – academic preparation
  – identity development issues
  – cultural capital
  – financial stresses
Data

- GPA is generally correlated with income level at each LRCCD college
- Within the ethnic groups in this study
  - No differences* in GPA
    - based on economic status within Asian/Pacific Islander and White student populations
    - when comparing low and middle-income students within each of the major ethnic groups
  - Differences* in GPA only for poverty-level students within Latino and African American student populations

*(statistically significant at .05 level)
CRC Data

• Comparing ethnic groups
  – No differences* in GPA of
    • Latino and White students with the same economic status
    • middle-income students in the Asian Pacific Islander, White and Latino populations
  – Only differences* when comparing
    • poverty and low-income Latino students with Asian Pacific Islander students (with the same income level)
    • African American students with students from the other ethnic groups of the same income level (all economic levels)

*(statistically significant at .05 level)
Implications

• What we believe is not universally true
• Students from different ethnic, economic status and first generation groups should not be viewed as uniformly at-risk
• A more complex view of the influences of ethnicity, economic status and first generation status on academic success is needed
• A deeper level of information about our students is needed
• Educational interventions should respond to college-level research
Limitations

- Self-reported data elements
- Many students removed (missing data)
- Some students had previous college experience
- Multiple ethnicities grouped together
- Limited number of factors included
In Conclusion

• Questions/additional comments?
• Acknowledgements
References (First Generation Status)

References (First Generation Status)


References (Economic Status)

References (SES)