



UTRN

Urban Transfer Research Network



Project Status and Summary of Findings July 2009

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About the Project

- The Urban Transfer Research Network is a collaborative multi-institutional research project focused on underrepresented students who begin their postsecondary careers at community colleges and have a goal of attaining at least the Bachelor's degree.
- By the end of the project, the network will include urban regions from across the U.S. in order to have a broad impact on Bachelor's degree attainment rates by underrepresented students.

Project Participation

- Portland State University and local-area community colleges (Portland, Mt. Hood, Clackamas, Chemeketa, Clark)
- Arizona State University and Maricopa Community College District

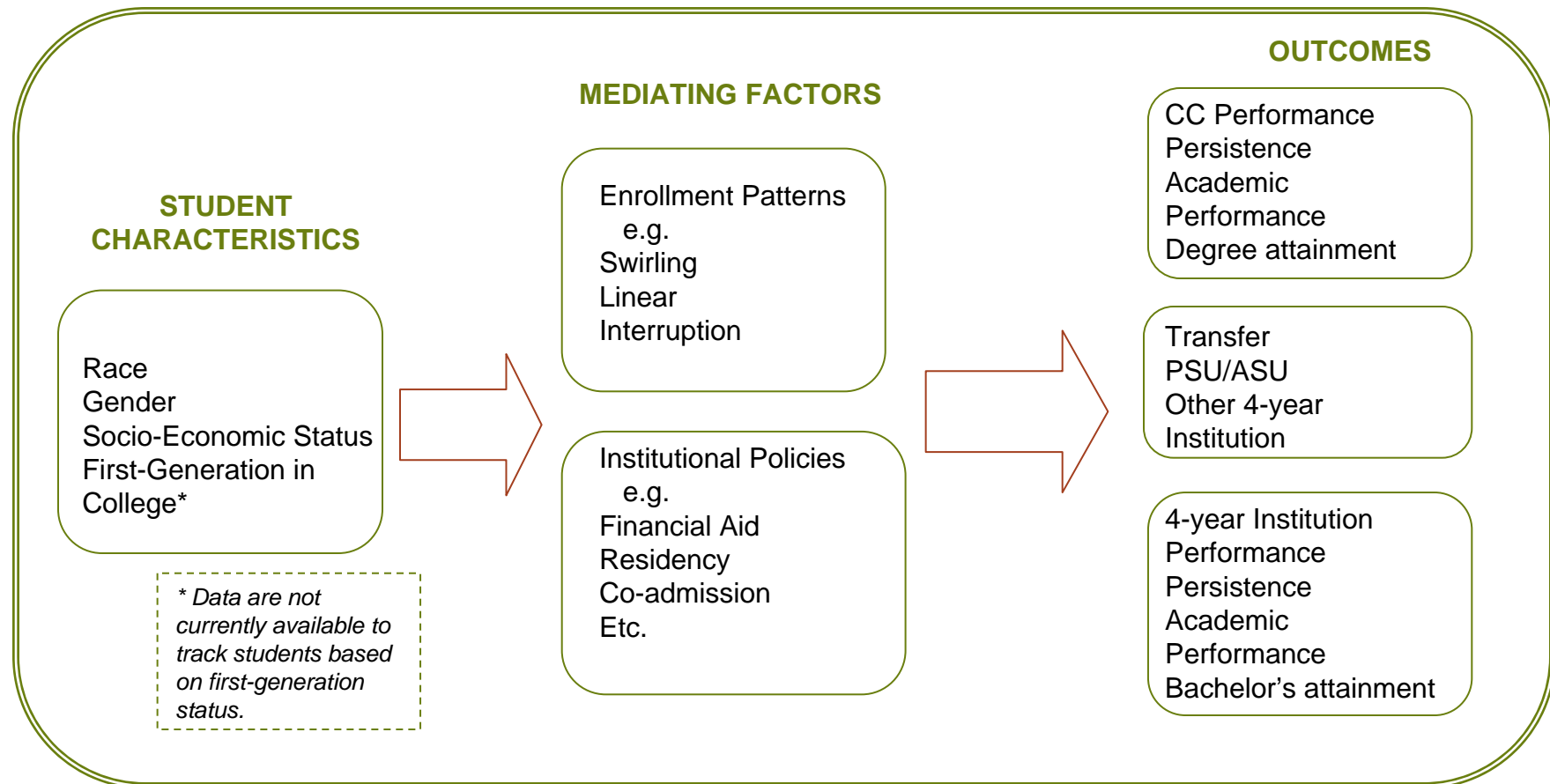
Research Questions

- What pathways through community college and university lead to or hinder successful baccalaureate completion?
- How do transfer and degree attainment rates of various sub-groups differ?
- What are the major contributors to discrepancies in attainment rates?
- How are the patterns similar or different across research sites, and how do state, regional or institutional policy contexts contribute to those differences?

Two Approaches to Studying Transfer

- Tracking student characteristics, enrollment patterns, progress and outcomes using term-by-term data
- Interviews with faculty, staff, administrators, and students

Quantitative Research Design



Target Cohort for Student Tracking

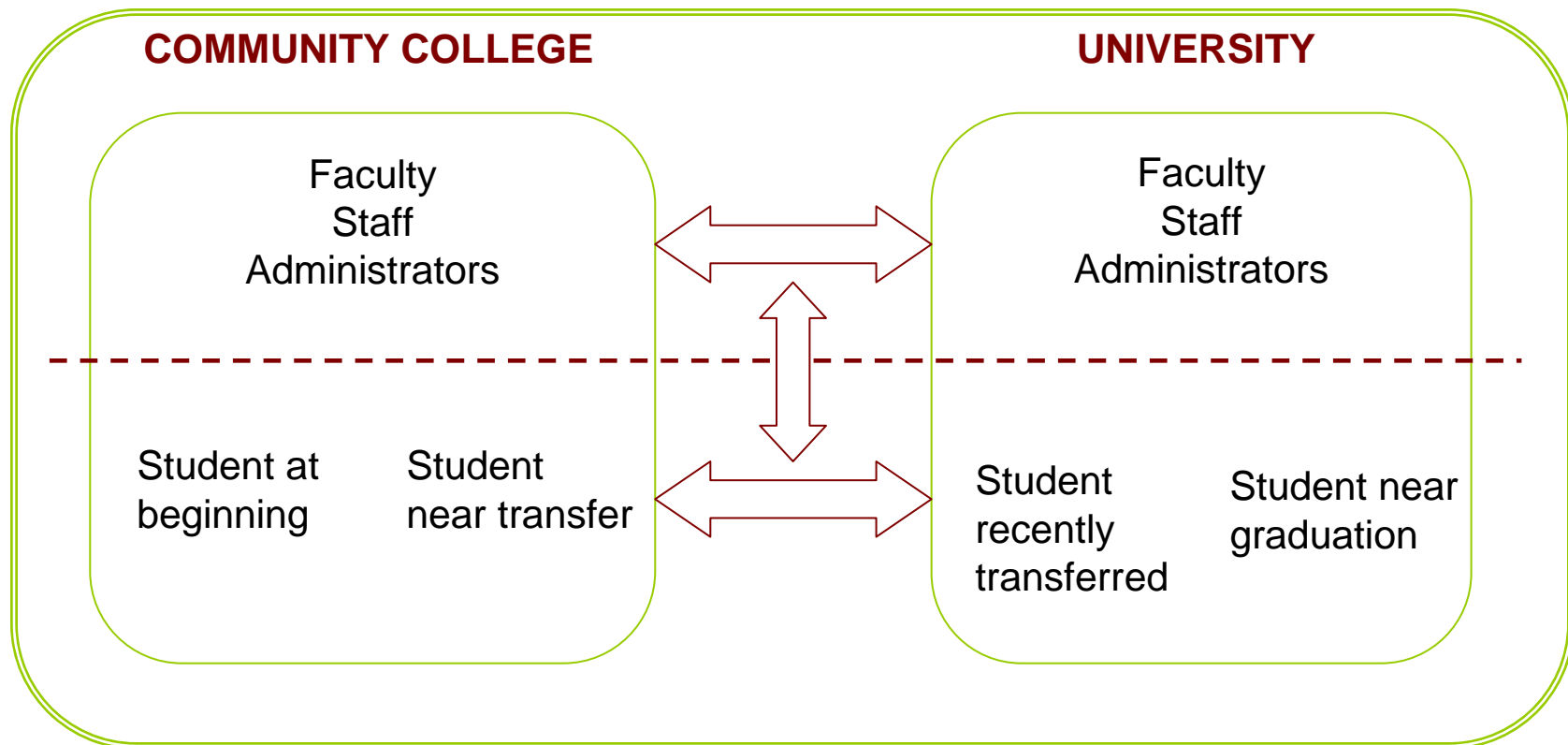
Students who begin at a local-area community and exhibit characteristics and behavior consistent with preparing for transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution

- Attended community college for more than one term
- No previous bachelor's degree or record of college attendance
- Evidence of at least one of the following:
 - Took lower division collegiate transfer coursework
 - Traditional age
 - Indicated transfer intention

Qualitative Research Design

- Identify factors that facilitate and factors that hinder transfer
- Identify structural and interpersonal factors
- Identify factors of particular significance for under-represented students

Qualitative Research Design





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Community College Course-taking Behavior

- More lower-division college credits are associated with greater success
- Students who are able to enroll full-time or to take more credits per term are more successful
- More developmental credits earned during Year 1 is associated with lower success rates

Financial Aid

- Fin Aid information available for approximately 20% of CC students
- Despite earning more credits during year one, students who receive need-based aid at the CC are less likely to transfer than other students

Enrollment and Degree Pathways

- Most students never leave their home community college
- Among students who transferred, different enrollment patterns emerged: linear, structured swirl, and complex swirl
- Structured swirl and linear are the most productive pathways to baccalaureate success.

Attainment of Associate Degree

- Most students do not earn an associate degree at the CC
- Most students who transfer have not earned an associate degree
- Students who earn a transfer degree have a higher rate of transfer than students who earn other degrees or earn no degree

Small Group Discussion

- Is this a problem we care about?
- What are the community colleges or universities are doing now to address it?
- What recommendations do we have for new or additional ways to address it?
- What more do we need to know about this issue in order to take action that will support students?