

Annotated Bibliography of Recent Research Related to Academic Advising

Blair, B. F., & Millea, M. (2004). Student Academic Performance and Compensation: The Impact of Cooperative Education. *College Student Journal*, 38(4), 643–52.

Researchers examined how cooperative education impacts academic performance (grade-point average [GPA] at graduation), market benefits (salary differential), and costs (measured by duration in school). Cooperative (co-op) education is defined as a program in which students alternate semesters of full-time study and full-time paid employment. The typical length of a co-op program is at least 12 months.

The sample for this study included 5,506 students who graduated from a midsized, southern, public university between the fall 2000 and spring 2002 semesters. The average age of the sample at matriculation was 20.3 years and the average GPA at graduation was 3.06 (on a 4.00 scale). The gender breakdown was 45.7% female and 54.3% male. Approximately 20% of the sample was comprised of minority students and 5% of the sample consisted of international students. Seven hundred eighty students participated in the co-op. In the co-op cohort, 18% were women and the average age upon enrollment was 23.2 years. The final, mean GPA for the co-op group was 3.16 and the average starting salary was \$41,738 per annum.

Statistical analyses indicate that the co-op program in this study had a positive impact on GPA and starting salaries. Those students participating in the co-op program increased cumulative GPAs by an average of 0.07 points on a 4.00-point scale. More significant was the impact of participation on starting salaries. Those who participated in the co-op had an average of \$6,900 more in their starting salaries and those who completed the program had an average \$17,279 higher salary than those who were not in the co-op program. However, participation in the co-op also seemed to affect time to degree completion. On average, the co-op experience delayed graduation by 6.7 months.

The authors of this study provided quantitative data about the positive and negative aspects of participating in co-op programs. They suggested that longitudinal research be conducted to determine the impact that co-operative education has on an individual's career over the course of his or her life.

Creamer, E. G., & Laughlin, A. (2005). Self-

authorship and women's career decision-making. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(1), 13–27.

This article uses the theory of self-authorship to examine young women's career decision making. Self-authorship is defined as the cognitive process that people use to make meaning of experiences.

Creamer and Laughlin utilized both quantitative data from a questionnaire and qualitative data from interviews. Students from 10 high schools, 2 community colleges, and 4 universities in Virginia completed questionnaires in spring 2002. The questionnaire contained questions regarding participants' computer-related attitudes, career influences, and career decisions. The response rate for the questionnaires was 62% (74.1% women and 25.9% men). Out of the women respondents, 117 were enrolled in one of the four universities. In this study, the data from the questionnaires were used to triangulate interview and questionnaire responses. Forty telephone interviews were conducted from the 117 women who completed the questionnaire. Women were asked a series of questions pertaining to career decision making. Each question was categorized according to a different dimension of self-authorship: interpersonal, epistemological, and intrapersonal.

Results indicate the importance of interconnectivity in women's decision making with particular emphasis on parental involvement and the role that parents play in women's self-authorship. In addition, this research provides a theoretical explanation for why students may be resistant to following through with career advice. These findings suggest that students reject advice because they have not developed the cognitive complexity to manage different perspectives.

The interpersonal dimension of self-authorship emphasizes the role of interconnectivity and community in learning and decision making. The process of career decision making is expanded to include the influence of people in a woman's environment. Academic advisors play an important role in encouraging women to consider a variety of academic majors and careers, including those fields in which women have been traditionally underrepresented. In addition, advisors can help students to develop more complex ways of knowing by encouraging them to step outside of their comfort zones to include people that represent viewpoints that are different than their own.

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Dellow, D. A. (2004). A Management Tool for Reallocating College Resources. *Community College Journal*, 28(8), 677-88.

Community college administrators frequently need to deal with program enrollment shifts resulting from economic and demographic shifts. Reallocating resources between areas of the college to adjust to those enrollment shifts can become a difficult process if enrollment patterns and program costs are not monitored closely.

Dellow described the use of an enrollment- and cost-trends report that covers 10 years of data and is published and distributed yearly on campus. The report is utilized to provide a basis for planning, budgeting, and prioritizing personnel decisions. In the described model, public records were used as source documents for analysis and included cost date, enrollment data, and cost per credit hour.

The author contends that the public nature of the report is necessary to educate personnel on the importance of controlling program costs. For several years, the administration offered assurances and demonstrated practices to convince stakeholders that the enrollment-costs analysis information was not the only source used in making program cuts or resource allocations. The resulting campus awareness assists administrative efforts to reallocate funds within and between program areas and to provide benchmarking comparisons.

In terms of implications for practice, the author highlights and discusses seven topics: Cost analysis is a useful fiscal management tool for administrators who need to reallocate resources; enrollment and cost information should be routinely shared with campus personnel; enrollment- and cost-analysis information needs to be institutionalized into decision-making processes if it is to be a useful management tool; administrators must clearly communicate that the enrollment and cost information is not the only criterion used to make academic program decisions; only direct costs should be allocated to departments; data should be offered in comparison with information from peer institutions; data must be accurate and automated to minimize costs. The usefulness of the data in legislative lobbying and fund-raising also is described. For academic advisors interested in conducting assessments of their programs, this article provides insights into how such activities can be integrated into campus-wide efforts.

Ehrmann, S. C. (2004). Beyond Computer Literacy: Implications of Technology for the Content of College Education. *Liberal Education*, 90(4), 6-13.

Technology has become an integral tool for learning in 21st-century liberal education. The author highlights five key educational outcomes identified in the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) *Our Students' Best Work* and discusses how they are beginning to affect faculty thinking about the substance and process of student learning. The five key educational AAC&U outcomes are strong analytical, communication, quantitative, and information skills; deep understanding of the hands-on experience with the inquiry practice of disciplines in which the natural, social, and cultural realms are explored; intercultural knowledge and collaborative problem-solving skills; a proactive sense of responsibility for individual, civic, and social choices; and habits of mind that foster integrative thinking and the ability to transfer skills and knowledge from one setting to another.

The author provides an analysis of current practices and examples of successful outcomes by showing how technology widens the range of experiences and resources available to the students and enhances the role of the faculty. Using the key educational outcomes as a foundation, academic advisors might better integrate their use of technology, when working with their students, with the learning outcome focus of their institutions. Such an approach could lead to a better understanding of academic advising practices and mission on campus.

Gore, P. A., Metz, A. J., Alexander, C. S., Hitch, J. L., & Landry, J. (2004). Assessing the short-term career goals of first-year business students. *First-Year Experience and Students in Transition*, 16(2), 67-84.

First-year seminar courses are used to provide students with a structured orientation to resources at a college or university. These courses almost invariably emphasize academic, social, and career development. Recently, first-year seminar courses have been adapted to meet the unique needs of students in various academic disciplines. Very little is currently known about career development goals of first-year students in general or about the goals of students in specific disciplines; such information is essential to developing career-related materials for use in first-year seminar courses.

The present study was undertaken with business students in an effort to describe career development status and short-range career goals of first-year students. Participants were 438 first-semester, first-year students enrolled in a competitive school of business at a highly selective, large, south-central university. Each participant completed a demographics

questionnaire used to collect information about gender, ethnicity, educational background performance, and four career-related behaviors. Each participant also completed a free-response goal attainment questionnaire. Surveys were administered to each participant as part of a comprehensive course packet. Written responses to the goal attainment questions were subjected to qualitative content analysis based on grounded theory methods.

Students in this sample had high educational aspirations. More than 92% of the first-year students in this study planned to obtain a graduate degree. However, behaviors that are often associated with later stages of career development (e.g., shadowing an employee, visiting employers, attending a career fair, informational interviewing) were endorsed at a relatively low rate by student participants.

The authors suggest that the results of the study have important implications for the implementation of career development and exploration activities in first-year business seminars. Lessons that emphasize the processes that involve gathering and evaluating quality academic and career information or that focus on self-discovery and the relationships between personal characteristics and work environments would be consistent with the stated goals of the students in this study. The authors suggested that further study of the unique career developmental needs of various populations would help educators and counselors better develop career programs and exercises.

King, B. M., Eason, B. L., O'Brien, G. M. S. L., Johnson, E., & Hunt, N. P. (2004). Effects on Grades of a New University Policy Requiring Faculty to Take Attendance. *Journal of the First-Year Experience, 16*(2), 9–18.

Research was conducted at a large, metropolitan, state university to determine the impact of a new policy requiring faculty to take attendance in first-year courses. The authors looked at the grades of first-time, full-time, first-year students.

Academic data were collected and analyzed on three different samples: a) all first-time, full-time, first-year students enrolled in the university during the fall semesters from 1998 through 2002, b) undergraduate students enrolled in two sections of a human sexuality course (Psychology 1520) during the fall 1999 semester, and c) undergraduate students enrolled in Psychology 1520 for the fall semesters 1998 through 2002. The same instructor taught all sections of the human sexuality course with identical content during the time frame of the study. In the fall 2002 semester, under the new policy, faculty

members were required to take attendance in first-year courses. Beginning in fall 2002, attendance was taken on a daily basis in Psychology 1520. In addition, attendance or nonattendance points were figured into the course grade. Students could earn a maximum of 4 bonus points by attending class if not more than 5 hours were missed and could lose points if they were absent 6 hours or more.

Results of comparison analyses indicate that the new attendance policy had a positive effect on academic success for many first-year students. When fall 2002 semester grades were compared to semester grades for the previous 4 years, researchers found that the percentage of first-time, full-time, first-year students who had earned a 2.0 or better GPA increased by 10% or more. All other variables (i.e., ACT scores for entering first-year students) were constant between samples. Grades in the human sexuality course in fall 2002 significantly improved over grades in the same course in fall semesters 1998 through 2001. In 2002, with the implementation of the new policy, attendance increased 40% over previous semesters.

These results may have been even more significant if all faculty members had counted attendance toward the final grade. An informal survey found that only one half of the faculty figured attendance into course grades; some faculty members may not have followed the new attendance policy at all. The authors are hopeful that the long-term effects of the new policy will have an impact on retention and graduation rates.

Attendance is an important component of academic success for all students, but it is an especially important factor for first-year student success. Many first-year students take their new found freedom too far and elect not to attend classes. Advisors who teach first-year seminar courses can intervene with these students before the students get into academic difficulty. Nonattendance in the first-year seminar may be a red flag that students are not attending their other classes.

Malott, K. M., & Magnuson, S. (2004). Using Genograms to Facilitate Undergraduate Students' Career Development: A Group Model. *The Career Development Quarterly, 53*(2), 178–87.

Genogram-based activities were used in a career development course to assist students exploring the impact of family on career decision making. Although family genograms are typically used in family counseling to document family dynamics, they can also be used in a more specific context to facilitate discussion and reflection of family influ-

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ence and career choice.

Structured genogram activities were designed for a 1-credit hour, elective career course for undergraduate students at a state-supported, regional university. Students enrolled in the course spent 5 weeks engaged in activities that included the following steps:

1. diagramming the genogram (parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and significant cousins or other distant relatives),
2. examining the information documented in the genogram by using a series of reflection questions, and
3. conducting individual meetings with the instructor to process the experience and gain further insight.

In step 2, students were asked to think about prominent gender roles, attitudes toward monetary issues, values related to work and career, relationship patterns, beliefs and practices related to education, leisure activities, significant life events, familial role models, and family successes and failures.

Students' feedback about the value of the genogram activities was positive. Students reported that gaining a better understanding of their families provided insight into career options and caused them to think about options that they had not previously considered.

The authors caution that using genogram activities could result in disclosures of personal and family experiences that may lead to unexpected results or distress. The genogram process needs to be fully described to students so that they understand that the activities encourage disclosure of personal information. Instructors also need to have a complete understanding of diverse family structures and be comfortable with an inclusive approach. Future studies that test the effectiveness of the activities with pre- and postmeasures are suggested.

Family is an important consideration in career decision making and can significantly influence choice of academic major. This article reveals important topics that academic advisors may incorporate in sessions with students. This may be particularly valuable for undecided students or those students who are changing their majors. Family patterns of occupational choice may reveal why students have made certain choices and why those choices are positive or negative.

Mattson, K. (2005). Why "Active Learning" can be Perilous to the Profession. *Academe*, 91(1), 23–26.

Mattson offers a unique perspective on the current usage of active or engaged learning techniques being discussed on most campuses. From his viewpoint, it is a philosophy and movement that portends trouble for the future of higher education and the American professoriate. He does not necessarily oppose the underlying assumptions of active or engaged learning. He offers a synopsis of its evolution from the progressive education movement at the beginning of the previous century. He is concerned that the misuse of active learning principles may cover up deeper problems within the academe. For him, the burden of active learning is clearly being placed on the shoulders of the professoriate. He believes that the central message of much of the active learning literature seems to be "Change your attitude, even if you are staring out at 400 students!" He argued that higher educational leaders should expect a new generation of professors to be good teachers, but that teaching well is no longer the standard. Rather, the new professor must make large classes as entertaining as video games or else take students out for coffee and memorize their hobbies. In other words, professors must do whatever it takes to secure their jobs. He stated that if active learning is the goal, professors need smaller classes; the attitude of professors is not the only component of the active learning approach. Mattson's article provides a nice, balanced perspective to this current issue on campus.

Southard, A. H., & Clay, J. K. (2004). Measuring the Effectiveness of Developmental Writing Courses. *Community College Review*, 32(2), 39–50.

The community college is the only academic safety net for underprepared students seeking a college education, and the number of developmental students continues to grow. Reasons for this trend include reforms in welfare that have led more people to prepare for jobs that pay a living wage, increases in refugees and immigrants, increases in the native population's needs for remedial course work, and more states limiting the teaching of remedial courses at 4-year institutions. As these underprepared students are welcomed in postsecondary institutions, community colleges have an obligation to equip their students with the skills needed to succeed in college courses.

The researchers wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of preparing developmental writing students to succeed in college-level writing-intensive courses, and they were interested in whether the mandatory placement-test assignment of students in developmental courses was accurate for a Florida

community college. The placement test, designed by The College Board, consists of 35 questions of two different types. The first type requires students to choose the correct word or phrase to substitute for the underlined incorrect part of a sentence, and the second type requires that students choose a version of a sentence rewritten to specific criteria but that retains the meaning of the original sentence.

The researchers examined the transcripts of 929 students. The participants were divided into four groups of students who attended the community college and were enrolled in the English course sequence between the fall 2000 and fall 2001 semesters. Students in Groups 1, 2, and 3 scored 82 or below on the placement test and were placed in College Prep English II or had been placed in and passed College Prep English I. Group 4 students had never taken Prep English II and were able to enroll in Composition I based on their placement scores. To determine the effectiveness of College Prep English II in preparing developmental students for success in Composition I, the researchers compared the Composition I course grades of Groups 1 and 4 and ran a Pearson correlation between the grades in College Prep English II and Composition I, setting a *p* value of less than .05 to determine significance. To determine the correlation of the placement test scores with student success in writing-intensive courses, the researchers performed three Pearson correlations.

Results show that developmental English students passed the Composition I course at a higher level rate than did nondevelopmental students, confirming the effectiveness of developmental education English courses. The developmental students also required fewer attempts at Composition I to pass. The lack of a significant relationship between state-mandated placement-test scores and students' grades in all writing-intensive courses raised concern about placement test scores and grades in all writing-intensive courses. The researchers believe that the placement test identifies some students who need remediation but not all who could ben-

efit from developmental work. This study provides support for the need for content specialist to participate in interpreting students' scores for course placement.

Strivers, J., & Garrity, N. B. (2004). Catalyst for Change: A Case Report of a Campus-Wide Student Information System Software Implementation Project. *College and University Journal*, 80(1), 3–12.

When a midsized public college made a politically unpopular decision to purchase new student-information system software, a team of 14 people from across campus was assembled and charged with facilitating the transition from the homegrown system. To allow for successful implementation of the new software, team members described the challenges they faced as they worked to understand their mission, function effectively as a team, keep the campus apprised of developments in the project, and bring about changes in longstanding policies and practices.

Strivers and Garrity examined the human side of information technology, and provide a glimpse of the complex nontechnical factors that must be considered in any software implementation project. For example, the authors provide a helpful list of dos and don'ts for guidelines of selection of team members and the ground rules for the team. The authors identify four significant lessons learned: spread the word because the importance of communication cannot be overestimated; honor the fault finders by taking advantage of candid team members and campus colleagues; be patient, but persistent, because many obsolete processes will be eliminated if reasonable options are presented through necessary approval channels; keep the end in sight and plan for sustained financial support throughout the project as well as for postimplementation activities and ongoing maintenance. Because many institution stakeholders are planning on adopting either student information systems or course management systems that will have a campus-wide impact, this case study offers valuable suggestions for an implementation blueprint.

The bibliography is compiled by George Steele and Melinda McDonald.