

ABSTRACT

***Different Patterns of Student-Faculty Interaction in Research Universities:
An Analysis by Student Gender, Race, SES, 1st Generation Status, and Major Field***

**Young Kyoung Kim and Linda J. Sax
UCLA**

While the positive effects generated by student-faculty interaction associated with multiple student outcomes are well-documented, little is known about how various student subgroups experience student-faculty interaction differently. Among studies that have investigated this issue, some demonstrate that the levels and effects of student-faculty interaction may differ by student gender, race, and major field. The current project improves our understanding of the conditional effects of student-faculty interaction by examining different patterns of student-faculty interaction for various student subgroups, as well as their implications for higher education theory and practice. Specifically, it seeks to answer the questions: 1) How does the level of student-faculty interaction vary by student gender, race, SES, 1st generation status, and major field? 2) How does the student satisfaction with faculty contact vary by these student characteristics? 3) How does the relationship between student-faculty interaction and student educational outcomes vary by these student characteristics?

ABSTRACT

Transfer Student Experiences and Success at the University

Sereeta Alexander, Doctoral Student, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education
Rodolfo Mendoza-Denton, Assistant Professor, UC Berkeley Department of Psychology
Debbie Ellis, OSR
UC Berkeley

This study focused on some of the psychological and social experiences of undergraduates who entered into the university via the transfer process. In a university endorsed electronic survey to all graduating transfer students, responding participants reported on their academic, social, and psychological experiences related to college life. The existence of experiences of rejection on the basis of being a transfer student were examined along with the relationship between perceived rejection and the concealment of one's transfer student standing. Results indicated that nearly one-fifth of the respondents concealed at least once in the past and approximately one-fourth of the respondents had experiences of transfer related rejection. Further, those who reported experiences of rejection were more likely to conceal that they had transferred into the university than those who did not experience such rejection. Despite these reported experiences of concealment and rejection, the overall group of surveyed transfer students in this study nonetheless proved to be very successful academically. The theoretical and practical implications of this research are discussed.

ABSTRACT

Linking Undergraduate Value Orientations to Student Engagement Behaviors

Allison M. Cantwell
University of California, Riverside

Much research has been conducted in higher education to determine how student behaviors influence students' educational outcomes. Though this research has helped to clarify what types of behaviors influence such outcomes as student GPA, intellectual skills, and interpersonal gains, the reasons why students engage in certain behaviors seems overlooked. Utilizing the University of California Undergraduate Education Survey, this paper investigates how students' values relating to being oriented towards education, career, personal development, and social development influence such factors as degree of engagement behaviors, GPA, and degree aspirations. By looking at students' value orientations, we can better understand how these values influence behavior and develop teaching strategies to appeal to myriad student types in hopes to increase engagement behaviors and motivations to learn.

ABSTRACT

Asian American College Student Leadership Involvement

Melissa Kwon
University of California, Santa Barbara

College student involvement and leadership plays an important role in college student development. Although research has been conducted on the importance of college student involvement and student leadership involvement, few studies explore ethnic differences in participation in and impact of these activities. The present study addresses these limitations regarding ethnic differences in student leadership involvement, focusing on Asian American students. A structural equation model was created to explore the impact of student involvement activities on student leadership experience and the impact of student leadership experience on student leadership skills. The purpose of this study is to determine which student involvement activities contribute to student leadership experience and whether student leadership experience contributes to perceived student leadership skills for Asian Americans.

ABSTRACT

The Two Cultures of Undergraduate Academic Engagement and How to Bridge Them

Steve Brint
University of California, Riverside

Evidence from UCUES 2006 indicates that two cultures of academic engagement can be found on campus. One culture of engagement is based on classroom interaction and participation and is located primarily in the arts, humanities and social sciences. The other is based on collaborative work in the service of improving problem-solving skills and is located primarily in the natural sciences and engineering. The paper compares the characteristics of students who score high on factors measuring these two cultures of engagement and those who score high on a theoretically-attractive alternative measure of engagement. The alternative measure combines indicators of work effort, subject matter interest, and student-faculty interaction. Students scoring high on this alternative measure are found more often in engineering and less often in the social sciences. They are also more likely to have been involved in undergraduate research and other study enrichment activities.

ABSTRACT

An Exploratory Study of Parent Involvement in the Academic Lives of College Students

Wolf, D., Harper, C., & Sax, L. J.
University of California, Los Angeles

Despite the abundance of literature on parent involvement in K-12 education, information on the involvement of families in the academic experiences of college students is still lacking. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of parental involvement in college students' academic lives and how this involvement relates to students' personal and academic development. This study will build upon theories of attachment and separation-individuation to establish a connection between parental involvement in students' academic experiences and emotional and academic adjustment to the college environment. Data from the 2006 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey's (UCUES) Core Items and Student Development Module will be analyzed using crosstabulations and factor analysis. Special attention will be paid to variations in parental involvement across students' race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Implications of this research will extend to campus student services and parent programs designed to facilitate healthy academic and personal development for all students.

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ABSTRACT

***Ethical Decision-Making in College: Choosing Between Right, Wrong & the
Space In-between***

**Fanny Yeung and Jennifer Keup
UCLA**

Given the rise of questionable behaviors in corporate and governmental institutions, many are looking to improve ethical standards through the improvement of moral development in higher education. The purpose of this study is to examine students' ethical beliefs and how students' perceptions of moral and amoral choices may have changed. Institutions need to consider how their fluctuating roles and relationships within society influence students' undergraduate experience and their academic and moral development. This study will address students' ethical beliefs and values and how beliefs differ from behavior. This paper will also explore some of the underlying motives regarding students' ethical decision-making in college.

ABSTRACT

Institutional Versus Academic Discipline Measures of Engagement—A Matter of Relative Validity

Steve Chatman
University of California, Berkeley

The University of California's census survey of undergraduates, UCUES, presents an opportunity to measure the contribution of disciplinary differences to observed institutional differences in academic engagement as reported by students. Results of nearly 60,000 responses (38%) from the 2006 administration find greater variance among majors within an institution than between equivalent majors across institutions. Cluster analysis techniques were employed to establish disciplinary patterns with traditional distinctions between hard and soft sciences generally supported. Among reporting practices called into question are institutional comparisons that ignore academic program mix and discipline to campus performance comparisons that do not recognize pedagogical differences by major.

ABSTRACT

Who Participates? The Causes and Consequences of Political Participation and Community Service Among University of California Undergraduates

**David Radwin, OSR
UC Berkeley**

This paper examines the demographic, social, and economic determinants of political participation and community service among undergraduates at the University of California and briefly considers their effects on political engagement. The Civic Engagement module of the 2006 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey measures the patterns of participation, volunteering behavior, and political attitudes of nearly 12,000 undergraduate students. These results can be matched to a rich collection of demographic data from survey and administrative sources to provide a detailed look at civic engagement among undergraduate students.

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***Mind the Gap: Attributes, Attitudes and Academic Experiences of STEM and Non-STEM
Majors in the University of California System***

**Bob Cox
UCLA**

Bachelor of Science degrees awarded to students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors account for about one-third of all baccalaureate degree production at the University of California. Multi-dimensional profiles of students in STEM and non-STEM majors, derived from UCUES 2006, offer a fresh perspective on familiar demographic differences and explore other differences (and similarities) in attitudes and experiences that will be of particular interest to policy makers concerned with patterns of STEM major participation. Results of the study consider interactions among personal attributes such as gender, ethnicity, family education history and American immigrant generation, as well as structural differences corresponding to student mode of access (freshman vs. transfer) and specific STEM major area (life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics, engineering).

ABSTRACT

Demographic and Engagement Factors that affect UC GPA and Student Learning Outcomes as Measured by UCUES

Paula Zeszotarski and Samuel J. Agronow
UCOP

This paper will explore two dimensions of the student experience that may affect student learning outcomes as measured by UCUES.

I. Engagement Factors affect on UC GPA and Student Learning Outcomes. In Agronow, et al. (2005) the authors found some evidence that engagement leads to improvement in student learning outcomes, but did not take the next steps to explore more carefully how academic success, itself might influence engagement. Moreover, in this earlier study, based on 2003 UCUES data, they were unable to evaluate how perceived “change” in self-reported measures of engagement measures might influence academic outcomes. Through linear regression, the current study will examine how change in self-reported skills over time, as well as current measures of engagement effect change in UC GPA.

II. Demographic and other student characteristics impact on Student Learning Outcomes. The recommendations of the Spellings Commission indicate a growing interest in providing accurate measures of the impact of the undergraduate experience on key academic skills. Self-reported measures of student skills from UCUES have been used to address these concerns. However, the validity of these measures has not been established and intercampus comparisons show some anomalous differences between students from different campuses. The second aspect of this study will use regression analysis to examine the relationship between family background and pre-college academic cores (e.g. parental education, family income, high school GPA and SAT scores), campus environmental characteristics, and college GPA to student learning outcomes.

ABSTRACT

Pell Grant Recipients, Middle Income Squeeze, and the Challenges of Social Mobility in the Public Research University

**Gregg Thomson and Branessa Kunitz, OSR
UC Berkeley**

This paper examines the ways in which differences in cultural capital and financial resources affect the undergraduate experience in the postmodern university. Its focus is on the large number of students for whom the University of California represents the promise of social mobility. At UCLA and Berkeley, for example, more than thirty percent of all enrolled undergraduates are Pell Grant recipients, a figure that far surpasses that of other top-ranked universities. In terms of numbers, UCLA and Berkeley each have more Pell students than all the Ivy League schools combined. As impressive as these numbers are, however, very little is known about the actual undergraduate experience for these low-income students. Given limited cultural capital and financial resources, how do Pell students fare in a highly competitive academic environment? In addition, qualifying for less if any financial aid, students from middle-income families may experience the same lack of resources as low-income students--the so-called "middle income squeeze." Does this "middle income squeeze" adversely affect the quality of the undergraduate experience?

To address these questions we use the results of the spring 2006 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) to define four groups of Berkeley undergraduates: (1) Pell Grant recipients, (2) Non-Pell students with parental incomes under \$80,000, (3) Non-Pell students with parental incomes from \$80,000-124,999, and (4) Non-Pell students with parental incomes of \$125,000 and up. Because UCUES is a census survey our research findings are based on more than two thousand respondents in each of these four groups (2973, 2032, 2235, and 2146, respectively).

We first examine differences in background characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, immigrant origins, freshman vs. community college transfer admissions status) and institutional outcomes (e.g., choice of major, UC Berkeley gpa, academic progress) across the four groups. We then turn to the extensive UCUES results to assess the extent to which the quality of academic engagement and undergraduate life at Berkeley is stratified by cultural capital and socioeconomic status. Are there, for example, significant barriers to full participation and academic compromises made by low-income and middle-income students because of constraints of time (i.e., significantly greater paid employment) and money? Conversely, to what extent does the promise of significant social mobility offset or even trump relative disadvantage in determining satisfaction with one's undergraduate experience? The paper concludes with a discussion of the policy implications, if any, of observed differences or disparities by socioeconomic status in the experiences of undergraduates at a public research university.

ABSTRACT

From Diversity to Educational Equity: A Discussion of Academic Integration and Issues Facing Underprepared UCSC Students

**Holly Gritsch de Cordova
UC Santa Cruz**

The admissions policies and procedures as established by the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid (CAFA) at the University of California Santa Cruz effectively support the importance of admitting and yielding a diverse student population. All but approximately 120 (4%) of these students (who are Admit by Exception students from low-income backgrounds) meet UCSC eligibility criteria. Yet, each year an increasing number of students coming from high schools with Academic Performance Index scores in the mid to low range accept their UCSC offers of admission. The campus community is enriched by the diverse socio-economic, ethnic, and educational interests of its students. However, it is important to consider to what degree the campus is successfully addressing the academic needs of this diverse student body such that all students are assisted to maximize their academic potential. This paper, then, begins to consider to what degree UCSC is succeeding in providing its students educational equity. In general, although low-income, ethnically diverse students persist and earn degrees, their cumulative Grade Point Averages tend to be lower than their more privileged peers.

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How Students Relate to the Political: A Descriptive Report of Political Ideology and Engagement

**Dick Flacks, Professor Emeritus
Stacie Furia, Graduate Student
UCSB**

Using data from 2006 UCUES we provide a description of student political and civic involvement and attitudes: patterns of tuning in and out to the news, political activism, ideological and attitudinal perspectives, and a preliminary exploration of some factors that account for the patterns we discern.

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ABSTRACT

Student Subcultures and Engagement

Dick Flacks, Professor Emeritus, UCSB
Scott Thomas, Assoc. Professor, Georgia State

UCUES data provide ways to examining how students' identification with various subcultural types affects their involvement in academic demands and community activity. We examine whether such identification is an important mediator between 'cultural capital' and academic outcomes, and helps explain patterns of student disengagement that faculty tend to view as problematic.

ABSTRACT

Immigrant University: The Dynamics of Race, Major and Socioeconomic Characteristics at the University of California

John Douglass, CSHE, UC Berkeley
Heinke Roebken, Oldenburg, Germany
Gregg Thomson, OSR, UC Berkeley

The University of California has long been a major source of socioeconomic mobility in California. Recent UCUES data indicates that more than half the undergraduate students in the UC system have at least one parent who is an immigrant. The percentage is even higher at UC Berkeley. What do such a high percentage of students with recent immigrant backgrounds tell us about the University of California and socioeconomic mobility? How is it influencing the academy and the academic and civic experience of undergraduates who are largely first or second-generation immigrants?

This working paper tests the hypothesis that immigrant students tend to come from professional and well-educated families, are career oriented and strongly academically engaged, but are not civically engaged. Using the Berkeley campus as an example, this working paper explores the dynamics of race and ethnicity, academic major, and the differing socioeconomic backgrounds of immigrant students, in comparison to “native” students. This study indicates a complex set of differences between various “generations” of immigrant students that reflect historical patterns among earlier waves of immigration to the United States in their desire of higher education; that the startling number and range of students from different ethnic, racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds point to the need for an expanded notion of diversity beyond older racial and ethnic paradigms; and while there is growing numbers of immigrants from different parts of the world, and often from lower income families, most have relatively high levels of socioeconomic capital, described as a variety of factors, but most prominently the education level of their parents and family. Students at Berkeley who come from lower income families and have relatively low socioeconomic capital (in particular Chicano/Latinos) do well academically, only marginally less well than those with higher rates of educational capital. At the same time, they also spend more time in paid employment, spend approximately the same amount of time as Euro Americans studying and going to class, and have relatively high rates of overall satisfaction with their social and academic experience.

ABSTRACT

Facebook in the Lives of Berkeley Undergraduates: From "Horror Story" to Research Findings

**Gregg Thomson & David Radwin
OSR, UC Berkeley**

Few recent developments in the lives of undergraduates have caused more concern and alarm among student affairs professionals than the rapid ubiquity of Facebook and the "cyber communities" it has produced on college campuses. Both the negative repercussions of Facebook usage (vulnerability to stalkers or sexual predators) and the disturbing "dark side" and narcissistic content of student postings have motivated this concern (Vito, Thompson, Alfred, & Skevakis, 2006). Many institutions, including Berkeley, have now instituted mandatory orientation programs to warn students about the "dangers" of Facebook. Despite the ubiquity of Facebook and the intense concern about it, however, there is almost no empirical research on its role in the lives of undergraduates. An exception is Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2006), a study that emphasizes the positive role of Facebook in the social and psychological integration of university students, but it is based on fewer than 300 survey responses. Our study is based on two thousand student responses to the "wildcard" module of the Berkeley spring 2006 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES). Preliminary results confirm the pervasiveness of Facebook among Berkeley undergraduates: four-fifths use Facebook and nearly half use it daily; for freshmen these figures are 91% and 62%, respectively. Our paper examines in detail student reports of intensity and importance of Facebook use and their relationship to student demographics and patterns of academic and social engagement. We also provide an analysis of open-ended responses to questions about the best and worst things that have happened as a result of using Facebook.