

# **Issues and Trends in College Readiness:**

*Exploring Education Reforms for Addressing Remediation  
of Community College Students*

**Community College Deans' Inservice  
March 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

Presented by Dr. Eboni M. Zamani-Gallaher  
Mary E. Osborne, Doctoral Fellow  
Shaftone B. Dunklin, Doctoral Fellow  
Department of Leadership and Counseling  
Eastern Michigan University

# What we'll cover...

- Community Colleges as Prisoners of Elitism
  - The Stigma of Remediation & Institutional Resilience
- Trends in Community College Assessment and Placement
- Who are the Remedial Students?
- Current Research on the Remediation Problem
- Educational Reforms and Strategies to Facilitate the Transition of HS graduates to College
- Addressing Academic Underpreparedness through Tech Prep Benchmarks
- Policy Implications of the Perkins Reauthorization
  - College Readiness and Career Pathways
- Tracking Michigan Community College Transfers
- Needs Analysis and Utilizing Data
  - Sources of Data
  - National Student Clearinghouse and Institutional Data Sharing

- "I am increasingly impatient with people who ask whether a student is 'college material.' We are not building a college with the student. The question we ought to ask is whether the college is...student material. It is the student we are building, and it is the function of the college to facilitate that process."

Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr. 1970

# Community Colleges as Prisoners of Elitism

- Comparison breeds discontent: The Stratifying of CCs
  - U.S. News and World Report, Time, Newsweek & Federal measures of quality/outputs
- Success of Community Colleges in meeting student needs debatable (Cohen, 1996; Dougherty, 1994; Pascarella, 1999; Dziech & Vilter, 1992)
- National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education
  - Report Card: Preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits, and learning
- The call for two- and four-year institutions to help improve K-12 education
  - Incongruence between college requirements and HS preparation

# The Stigma of Remediation & Institutional Resilience

- The bulk of four-year institutions of higher learning contend that their offerings should only include college-level coursework
- Arguably remedial courses impact institutional prestige/status, affect resource allocation to degree programs and are a duplication of what secondary schools offer
- Does the availability of remediation in college remove the incentive to do well in high school?
- To what degree is shifting full responsibility for remedial education to community colleges problematic for the two-year students and institutions?

# Trends in Community College Assessment and Placement

- Although remediation is considered a critical component of community college offerings, discrepancies exist regarding methods of student assessment, course placement and remedial content
- The assessments used and the means by remediation is determined necessary is too varied (i.e., definitive standards at the individual institution that may not be parallel to the cutoff for identifying remediation elsewhere); Hence, potentially problematic for transfer students
- Why is there such a lack of consistency among institutions on what constitutes college-level readiness (e.g., Transferability of College Algebra)?

# Who are the Remedial Students?

- Even though there has not been an increase in the percentage of remedial students over the last three decades, the number of students enrolling in higher education has grown by more than half a million; more than one million students enroll in remedial courses annually and over one-third eventually obtain degrees (Aldelman, 1996, 1998, 1999; McCabe, 2000)
- Challenging the Monolithic View (Aldelman, 1995; Boylan, 1999; Breneman & Haarlow, 1999; Ignash, 1997; Oudenhoven, 2002)
  - Divergent Learners: Patterns of Remediation by Age, Employment Status, ESL, First-generation, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Relationship Status & SES

# Current Research on the Remediation Problem

- Policy Analysis on altering government procedures designed to reduce remediation Major discrepancies between state and institutional policy for skills testing
  - For example, some institutions bypass their own stated assessment and placement protocols (Deil-Amen & Rosenbaum, 2002; Jenkins & Boswell, 2002; Lucy-Allen, Merisotis & Redmond, 2002)
- Previous national studies have shown that remedial students at two-year colleges receive lower grades and have higher attrition than students who are better prepared academically; however, remedial students at community colleges worked harder, visited their professors more often, and took greater advantage of college support services than did higher-achieving students (Community College Survey of Student Engagement, 2005)

# Current Research on the Remediation Problem

- Delivery Concerns - Segregating or embedding remedial efforts into regular college-level offerings (McGrath & Townsend, 1997)
- Attention/retention and online vs. campus-based remediation (Giar, 2004; Glass & Oakley, 2003; McCabe, 2000; Young, 2003)
- Augmenting Support – Use of Learning Assistance Centers to increase academic preparedness (Perin, 2004); utilizing student affairs units in offering remedial education (Burley & Butner, 2000)
- According to Swail and Perna (2002), less attention has been paid to enhancing academic preparation for traditionally underserved populations (e.g., delivery of academic preparatory courses, sequential course work extending from high school to college, and academic enrichment

# Educational Reforms and Strategies

## Facilitating Transition of HS graduates to College

- Secondary and Technical Education Excellence Program (OVAE, 2003)
- High Schools That Work (Bottoms et al., 1992)
- Career academies (Stern, Raby, & Dayton, 1992; Kemple & Snipes, 2000)
- Middle College High Schools (Sellitti, Ainsworth, Darling, & Booth, 1996)
- Achieving the Dream (Lumina Foundation, 2004)
- Tech prep programs (Bragg et al, 2003; Parnell, 1985) are visible examples of reforms that are dedicated to enhancing the pathway to college by blending college preparatory subjects with advanced career and technical studies

# Policy Implications of the Perkins Reauthorization

- Underlying purposes of the Perkins Act in relationship to College Readiness
- Career Pathways
- Academic and Technical Skill Development
- Aligning CTE and TP Curriculum
- Increasing the Learning-Centered Nature of Remediation (Perin, 2001)
- Legislative issues, performance indicators and accountability

# Addressing Academic Underpreparedness

- In their study for the U.S. Department of Education, Lewis, Farris, and Green (1996) estimate 30% of new entrants to community colleges require remedial education, but Grubb (1999) suggests this figure is far too conservative noting the remediation rate of new community college students ranges from 25 to 80% depending upon the local community.
- Tech Prep Benchmarks - Knowing that an increasing proportion of high school graduates are entering college without the requisite skills to engage in college credit-generating course work, the goal of tech prep to enhance student academic preparation is no easy feat.
- Specific to recent high school graduates, Kirst (1998) estimates 50% of high school seniors entering community colleges require remediation, suggesting a tremendous need for more students to have enhanced academic preparation at the secondary level.

# Tracking Michigan Community College Special Populations

- CCSU – [www.michigancc.net](http://www.michigancc.net)
  - Trends
    - Enrollments: Ten years overall and yearly for special populations by college
    - Awards Conferred: Ten years overall and yearly for special populations and non-traditional students by college
    - Awards Conferred: annual statewide special populations by program
  - Quick and Dirty Data

# Utilizing Data and Needs Analysis

## ■ Institutional Data

### ■ Framing Questions

- Narrow down what you want, be specific
- Who has the data? Registrar, Institutional Research, Financial Aid, Advisory Group(s), Service Providers

### ■ Tracking Special Populations

- Home grown using Excel, Lotus, Access, SPSS, SAS
- Commercial tracking: NCHEMS, TutorTrac

### ■ Advisory Groups

- "Soft" data

# Additional Sources of Data

## ■ External Sources

### ■ National

→ U.S. Census [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) for general information and for more sophisticated information

<http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?lang=en>

### ■ Regional

→ The COGs: South East Michigan Council of Government  
SEMCOG

### ■ County level

→ County Planning Commissions

# Institutional Data Sharing

Contact: Dr. Eboni Zamani-Gallaher

Educational Leadership and Counseling

Eastern Michigan University

Email: [ezamani@emich.edu](mailto:ezamani@emich.edu)

Phone: (734) 487-0255