

J

F

F

EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

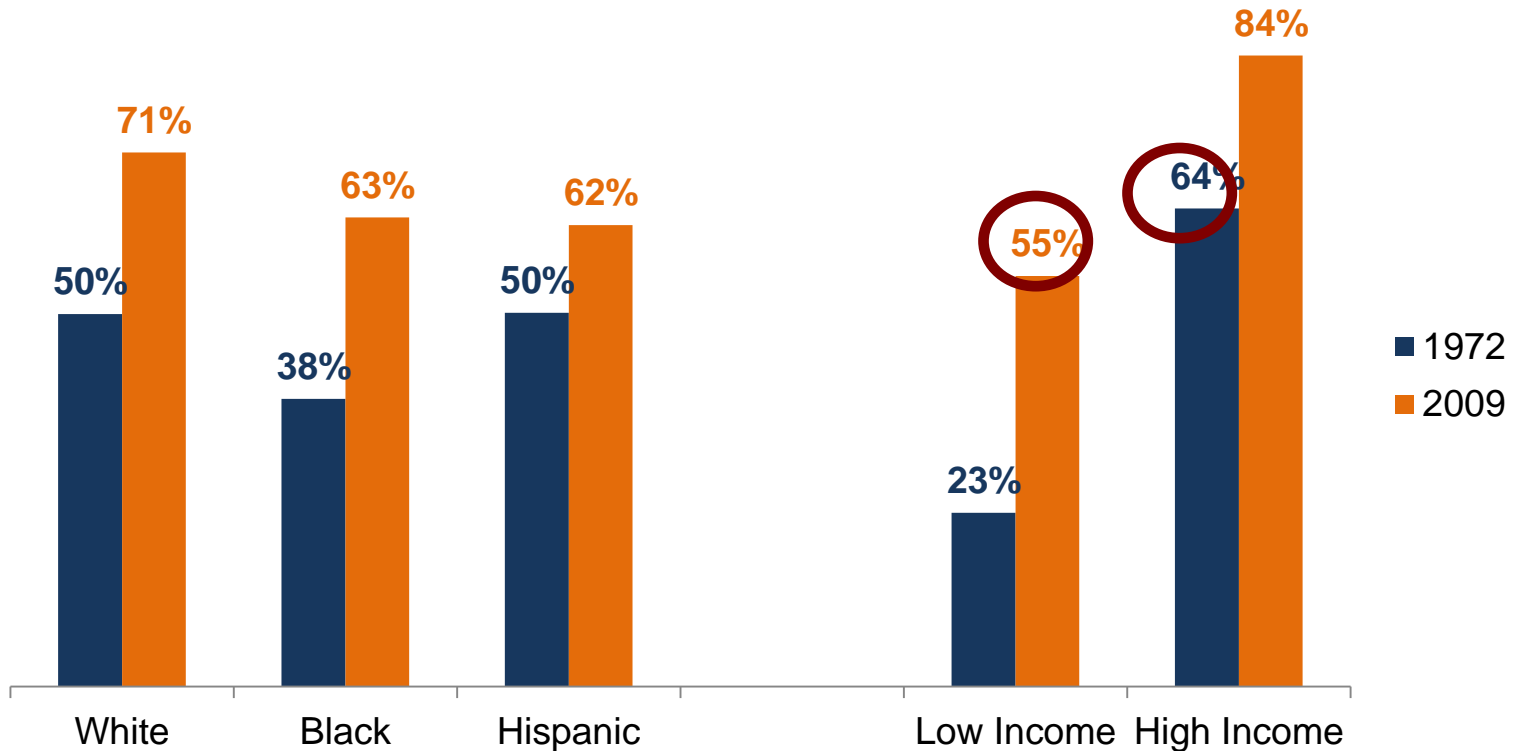
TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE NATIONAL COMPLETION MOVEMENT

Lara K. Couturier
January 10, 2014



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Percentage of high school graduates immediately enrolling in college, 1972-2009



Note: Data for black, Hispanic, and low-income represent two-year moving average because of small sample sizes.
 Source: NCES, Condition of Education (2010) and Condition of Education (2011).

BUT COMPLETION RATES REMAIN STUBBORNLY LOW

J

F

F



57 PERCENT of students who take no remedial courses graduate within 8 years



29 PERCENT of students who take 1-2 remedial courses graduate within 8 years



19 PERCENT of students who take 4 remedial courses graduate within 8 years

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, 2007

AN EMERGING CONSENSUS OF RESEARCH AND EXPERIENCE

J

F

F

Consensus



The front end of the college experience is a critical area for improved processes, new approaches, and innovation.

Boutique programs and pilot projects that reach a small segment of an institution's or a state's community college students will not generate large-scale improvement or dramatically different performance.

Getting students through developmental education and the first year is critical, but not enough. We must be more holistic and systemic.



We have learned the hard way.

“We’re piloting ourselves to death and not really thinking about how we do long-term shifts.”

—College administrator, *Inside Higher Ed*

“We have implemented a lot of these strategies, but isolated reforms do not add up to transformative change.”

—Engineering faculty member, site visit

We have learned the hard way.

Institutional Reform

State Activities

“For many students at community colleges, finding a path to degree completion is the equivalent of navigating a shapeless river on a dark night.” —Judith Scott-Clayton, 2011

STRATEGIES

- Help make better choices
- Improve the choices
- Frequent, improved advising
- Mandatory orientation, student success courses

We used to talk about first-year experiences...

Then first semester...

Then first six weeks...

Then first three weeks...

Now, some say first week, first day...

STRATEGIES

- No wrong door
- Early momentum and program declaration
- Comprehensive intake
- Mandatory orientation
- Integrating academic and career advising
- Reaching students in high school

“First you have to decide to do it. Then you have to decide what to stop doing.”

—Kay McClenney

STRATEGIES

- *Hard* conversations about cost, reallocation of resources
- Leveraging technology
- Not all students need the same level of services

LARA K. COUTURIER

lara@jff.org



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

TEL 617.728.4446 FAX 617.728.4857 info@jff.org

88 Broad Street, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02110

122 C Street, NW, Suite 650A, Washington, DC 20001

WWW.JFF.ORG