



The

African American

Transfer Tipping Point Study



THROUGH THE GATE SM

Presented to Crafton Hills College

April 2025



About The RP Group

Mission: The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (The RP Group) is a leader that supports equitable outcomes for minoritized and marginalized students through race-conscious, equity-minded research, planning, and professional development. We uplift student voices and empower researchers and planners to improve institutional effectiveness by dismantling systemic barriers and injustices.

Services: Research, evaluation, planning, professional development, and technical assistance—designed and conducted by CCC practitioners

Organization: 501(c)3 with roots as membership organization



Agenda

- Brief Overview of Original Study, Through the Gate
- African American Transfer Tipping Point
 - Phase 1: Quantitative Analysis
 - Phase 2: Focus Group/Interviews
 - Phase 3: Statewide Student Survey

Through the Gate

An Overview

Through the Gate

Mapped California's transfer landscape, identifying a continuum of milestones for the student transfer journey and quantifying how many students were "near" or "at" the transfer gate

When compared to White students, African American/Black students are **2.04 times more likely to transfer** than remain near the gate. The problem is that they are less likely to make it "near the transfer gate."



The Current Study



Study made possible with generous funding from:



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African American Transfer Tipping Point Study

Guiding Questions

- What factors (both academic and non-academic) contribute to students' likelihood of reaching the tipping point?
- Which programs and practices are associated with greater persistence to and through the tipping point, and ultimately, the transfer gate?

African American Transfer Tipping Point Study

Methodology

- Phase 1: Exploring **student course-taking patterns**
- Phase 2: **Interviews and focus groups** with college practitioners and transfer-motivated students at colleges having higher success with transfer among African American students
- Phase 3: A **survey** of African American/Black students across the CCC

Phase 1

African-American Transfer Tipping Point Study

Population

- Six first-time cohorts enrolled at a CCC between 2011 and 2016
- Tracked for six years
- Completed at least 12 transferable units with passing grades and had not yet enrolled in a university
- 69,242 African American/Black students and 778,977 non-African American/Black students

Results: Units Matter



Of the 42 predictors put into these models, 17 appeared at least once across all four unit completion models.

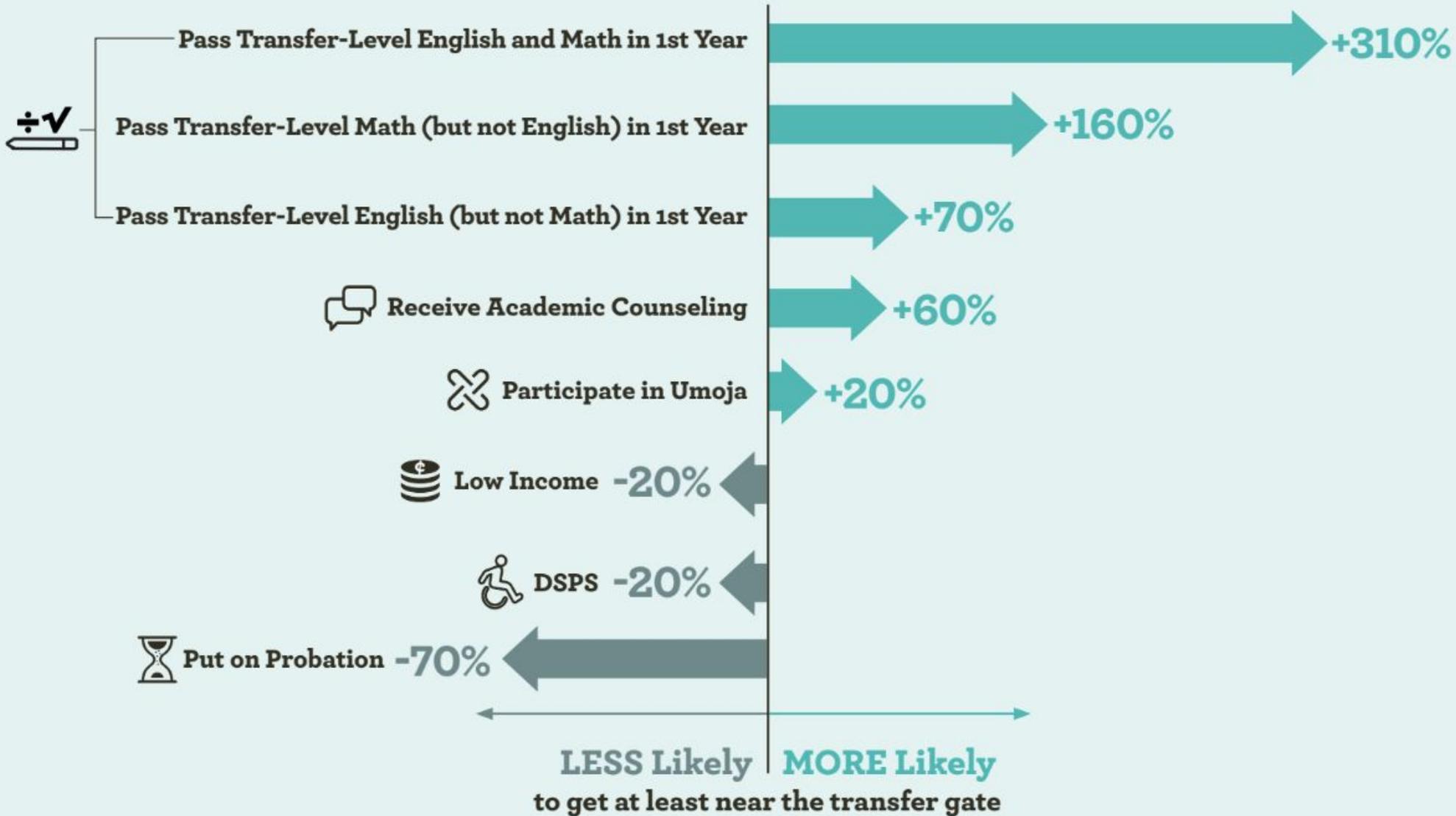
- ***Passing both TLE & TLM***
- ***Passing TLE only***
- ***Passing TLM only***
- ***Probation***
- ***Academic Counseling***
- ***Low income (negative relationship)***
- ***DSPS (negative relationship)***

- ***Age***
- ***Full-time in 1st year***
- ***% AA/B adjunct faculty***
- ***% AA/B students at the college***
- ***AA/B proportionality Index***
- ***Special admit status***
- ***Nearest university***
- ***College FTES***
- ***EOPS***
- ***Orientation***

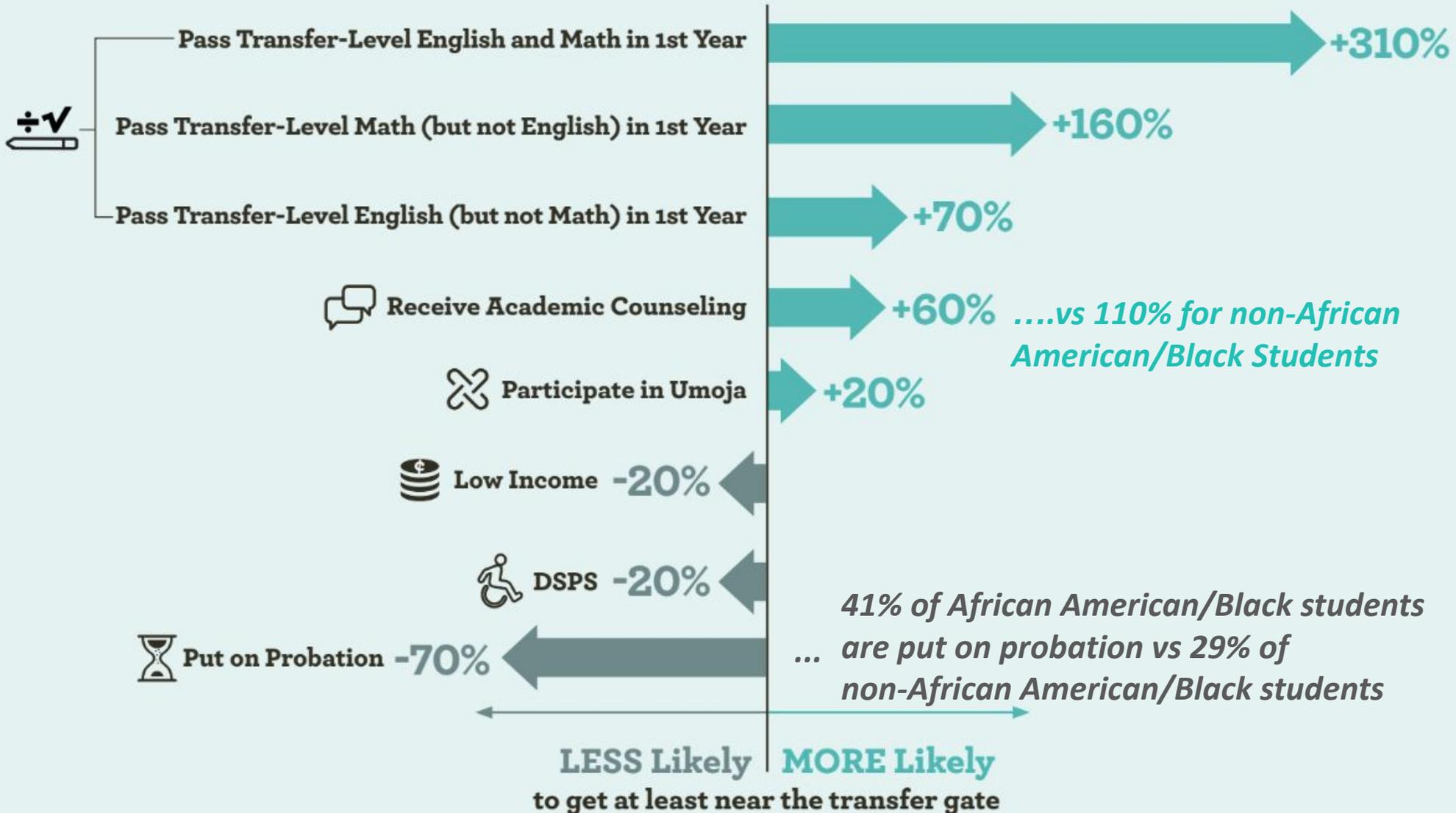


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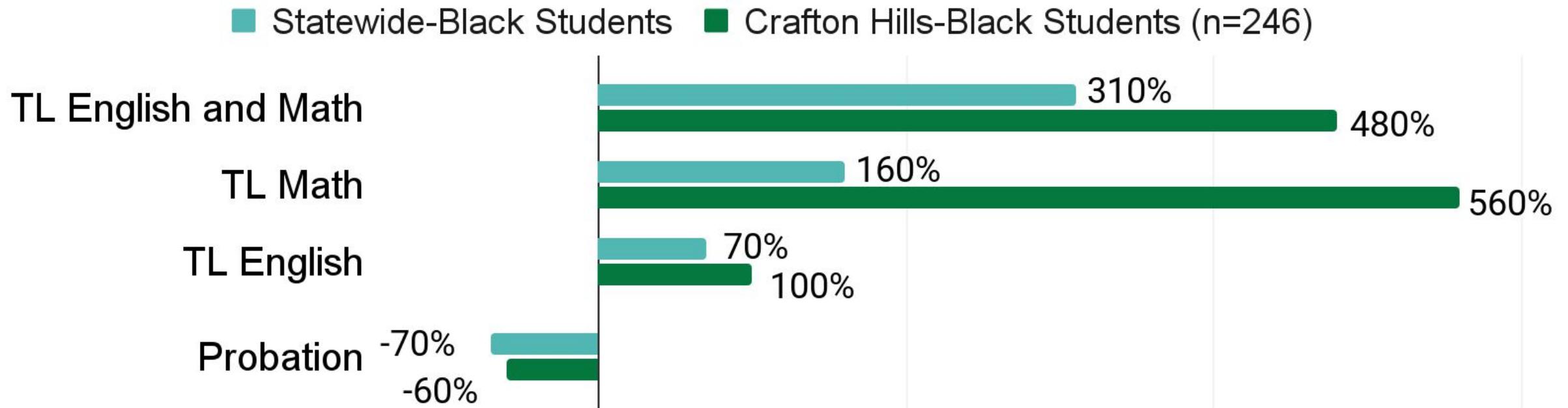
Results



Results

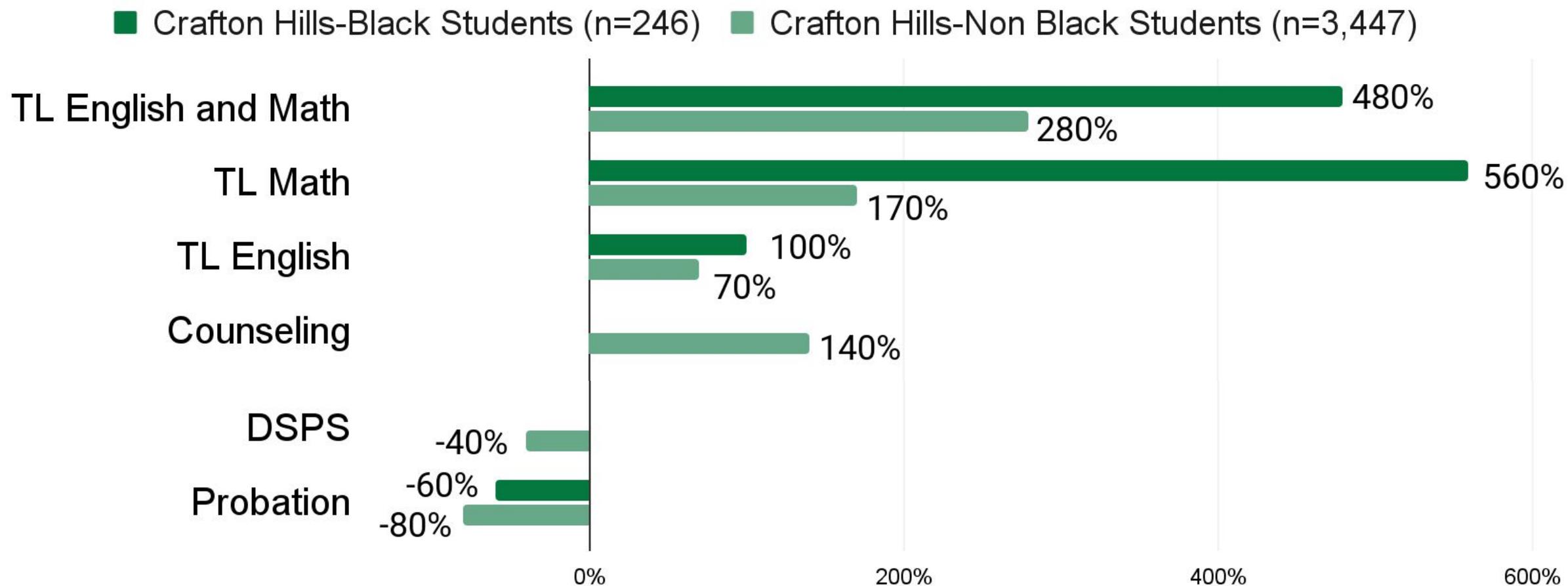


Results: Odds of Making It NTG+ CHC vs. Statewide



Note: No bar is present for variables that are not statistically significant among CHC students of a given racial group: Academic Counseling, Umoja, Low Income, DSPS

Results: Odds of Making It NTG+ Black vs. Non-Black Students at CHC



Note: No bar is present for Umoja or Low Income because the differences for both Black or Non-Black students are not statistically significant within those groups. Counseling and DSPS bars are only present for Non-Black students as there was no significant difference in those variables among Black students.

But Why?



Phase 2

Why Counseling Matters

Students avoided general and Transfer Center counseling, as they were not heard, seen, valued, or respected and did not see themselves reflected

More likely to indicate benefiting more from academic counseling support from special population programs such as EOPS or Umoja



For Black and African American students, they are starting at a different point than most students would be – and so it would be more difficult for Black students to gain something because their relationship with their counselor is starting at a different point. The student has to become more comfortable with a person digging into their life, and that can feel a little bit intrusive. And for a Black student, that can be possibly a little triggering. Having to open up to a stranger and divulge certain things about themselves can be a little bit off-putting for a Black student versus another student who has possibly been conditioned by society to believe that they are a bit safer in society and they have a place in society and that they are valued.



Why Probation Matters: Student Perspective

Receiving a notice that they are on probation can be devastating

Significant challenge of needing to meet additional requirements (e.g., seeing a counselor)

Negatively impacted their financial aid eligibility

“

When you get on academic probation, it's like the school said, "Now fend for yourself." Because you don't get financial aid. You don't get support programs, because nobody trusts you ...but then nobody wants to ask what happened. No one ever wants to ask the question of "What happened that semester? Did anything happen with the [student's] family?"

”

Why Umoja Matters

Mandatory, dedicated, and proactive counseling offered by Umoja allows the time and space for counselors who reflect students' backgrounds to build relationships with them where they feel heard, seen, and valued

“

I'm going to say that [the Umoja counselors] really care about you and have your best interest at heart. They're trying to provide resources to better help you through your process and they actually want to know more about you, about your life, and not just about school, but about just everything in general to better help you. I think it's very important that I can always shoot my counselor an email and she'll respond, even if it's not related to school, because it shows how much they care about us.

”



Why Instructional Faculty Matter

Faculty help students build their confidence as students, increase their mastery of key subjects (notably transfer-level math and English), and support their success

“

Luckily, the third time around, I had a better teacher for my English 1A class and I took... the critical thinking equivalent... and that teacher was very helpful. He happened to be an African American teacher... he was very nice... He was very accommodating, very understanding, and very helpful... And so, it was easy for me to approach him when I had a question for essays or if I was having trouble. And he would... write notes on all my papers so I knew what I was doing wrong or what I needed to correct. And so, that was really helpful with my transferring and being on track to transfer.

”

Phase 3

Phase 3 Survey Sample

Of the 7,148 respondents...

- 75% were currently enrolled at a CCC (n=5,348)
- 13% had transferred to a university (n=936)
- 13% had exited without transferring (n=864)
 - 57% had planned to at some point
- **15 Crafton Hills students completed the survey**

Phase 3 Survey Sample

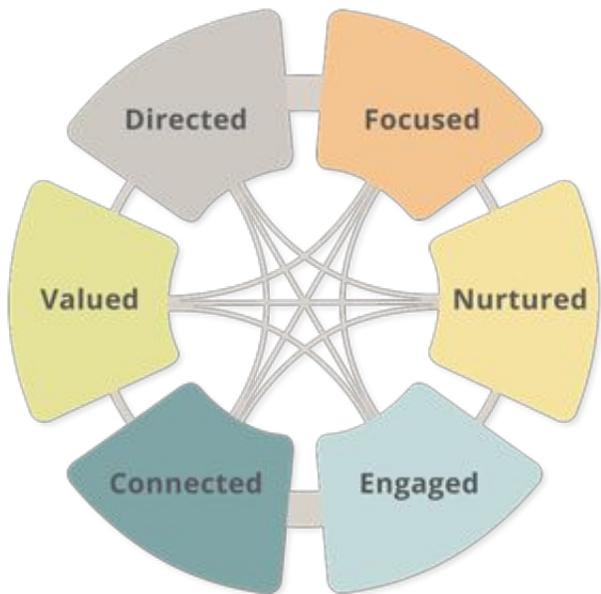
- 121 CCCs*
- 64% Female
- 48% Ages 18-25
- 47% Financial Aid Recipients
- 44% First Generation
- 22% with Physical or Cognitive Disabilities
- 14% LGBTQ
- 11% Student Athlete
- 10% with Mental Health Condition
- 7% Military
- 7% Former Foster Youth
- 4% Justice Involved

Participation in Groups

- 28% EOPS
- 18% Umoja
- 13% DSPS
- 10% Promise Program
- 10% Honors Programs
- 9% Black Scholars
- 8% MESA
- 8% Dual Enrollment
- 6% Aspire
- 4% Puente

*includes five non-credit colleges

Phase 3 Constructs Explored



Six Success Factors SM
theRPgroup

Six Success Factor Definitions

- **Directed:** students have a goal and know how to achieve it
- **Focused:** students stay on track – keeping their eyes on the prize
- **Nurtured:** students feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed
- **Engaged:** students actively participate in class and extracurricular activities
- **Connected;** students feel like they are a part of the college community
- **Valued:** students' skills, talents, abilities, and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus, and feel their contributions are appreciated.

Phase 3 Constructs Explored

Microaggressions

Ascription of Intelligence: Assigning a degree of intelligence to a person of color based on race

Assumption of Criminality: Assuming a person of color is dangerous, criminal, or deviant based on race

Second-Class Citizenizing: When a White person is given preferential treatment over a person of color

Pathologizing Culture: The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/White culture are ideal

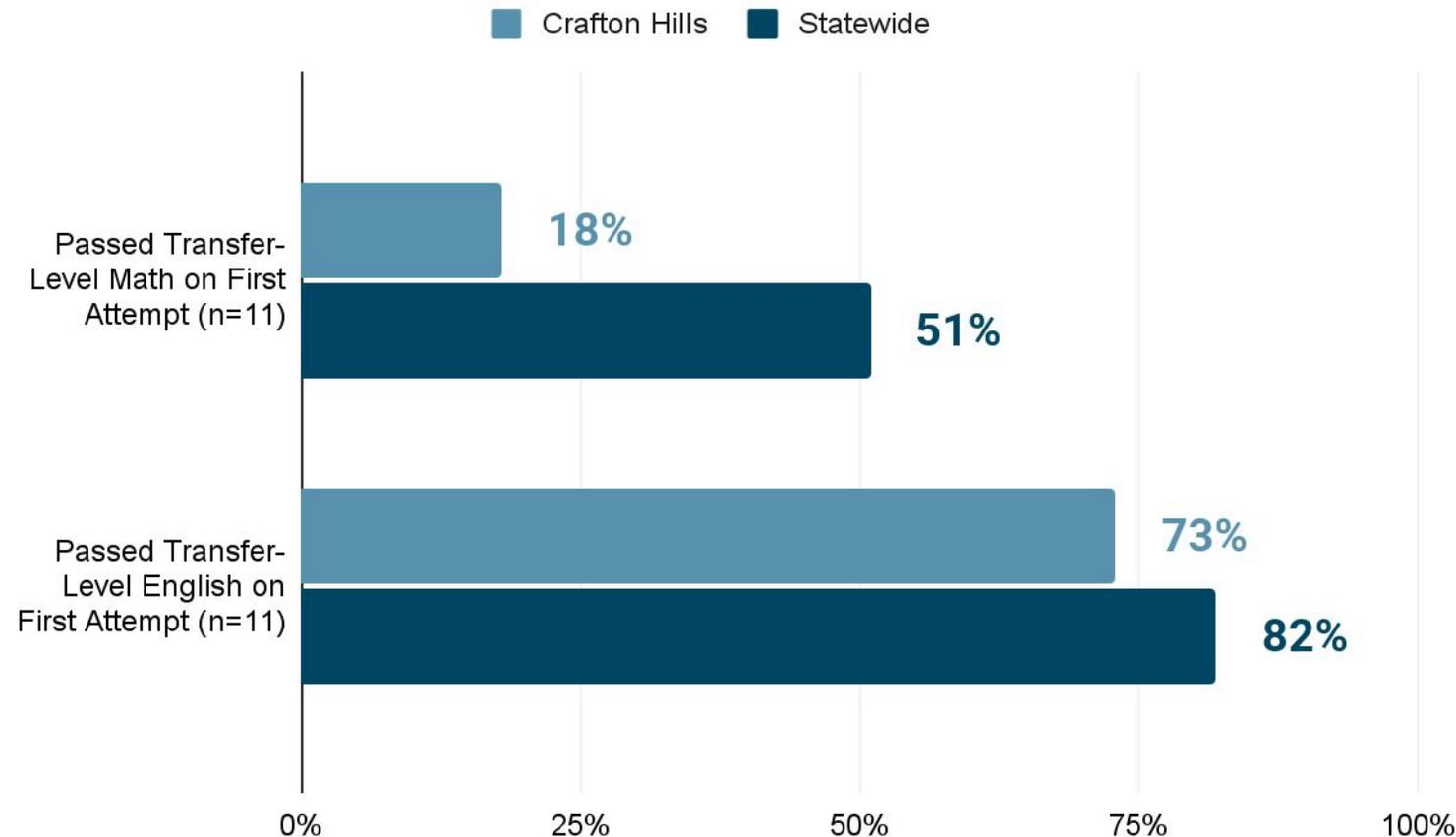
Phase 3: Four Core Student Experiences

- Passing Transfer-Level Math and English
- Academic Counseling
- Umoja
- Academic Probation

Passing Transfer-Level Math and English

Transfer-Level Course Passing at Crafton Hills

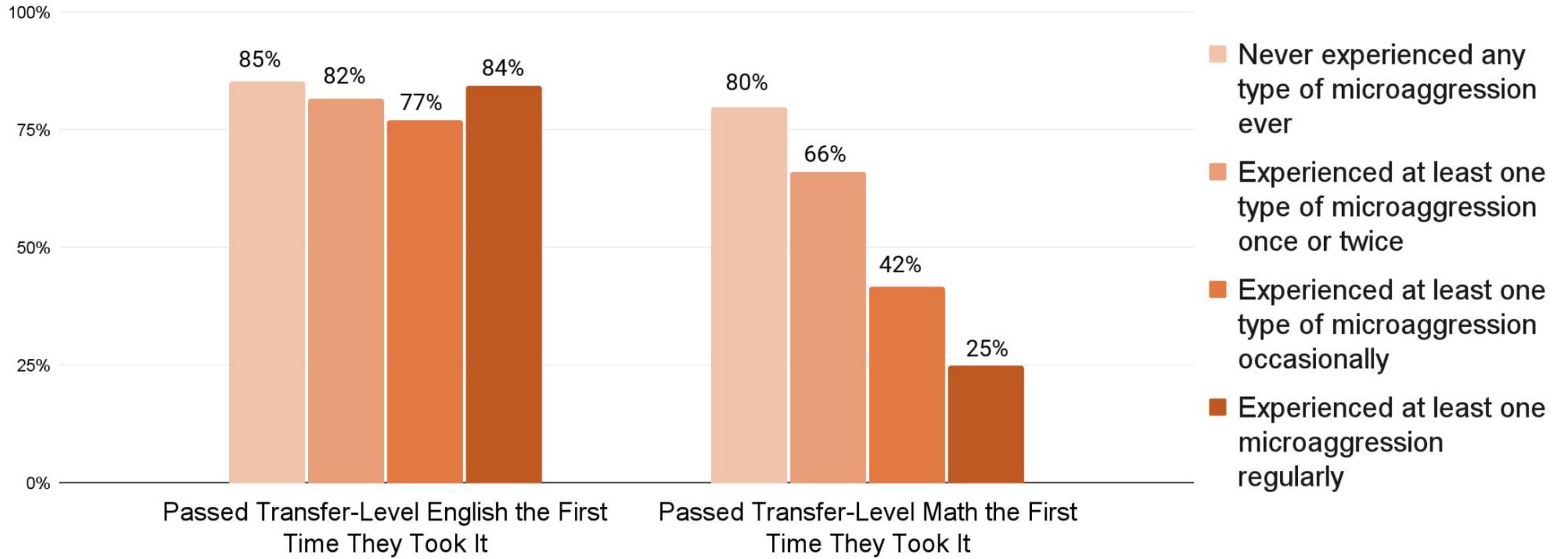
18% of CHC students passed transfer-level math on first attempt
73% of CHC students passed transfer-level English on first attempt



15 Crafton Hills students completed the survey

Transfer-Level Course Passing

African American/Black Students who did not pass math on the first try were much more likely to report having experienced microaggressions during their time at their college. No association was found when it came to passing transfer-level English.



Student Voice on Impact of Microaggressions

There was one time (and I don't remember it happening again), but ...this semester, it was my [redacted] professor, who was a White woman. [For this class], the lights are usually off, but she'll have us raise our hands for stuff and answer questions, and she'll make jokes or not (they're not really jokes because they're not funny) about how she won't call on darker complexion students because she can't see [us].

Question to Consider

- **Microaggressions are negatively associated with passing transfer-level math in a timely manner.**
 - How might the college support faculty to help students succeed in the face of experiencing microaggressions?

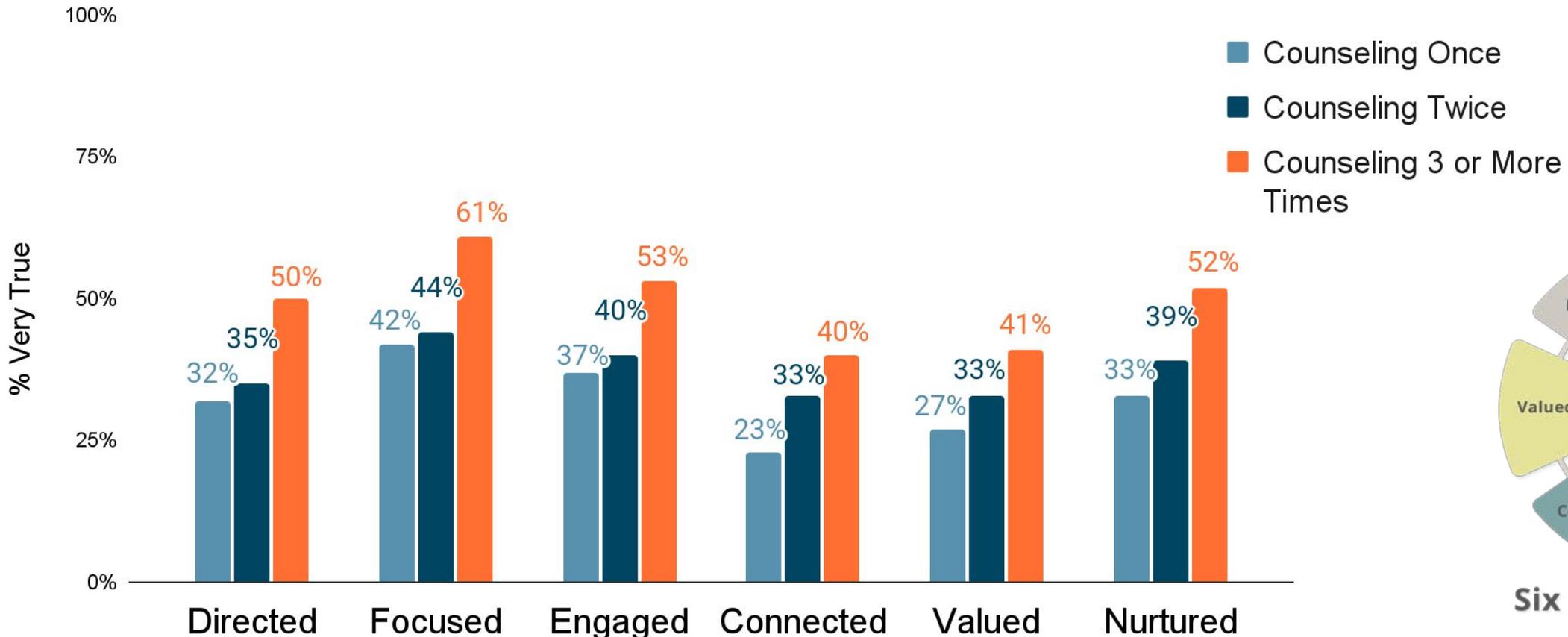
Academic Counseling

Academic Counseling: Crafton Hills

- Two-thirds of African American/Black survey respondents said they would prefer to see an African American/Black counselor, but only half saw an African American/Black counselor.
 - ***At Crafton Hills, 80% (8 in 10) of respondents indicated having seen an African American/Black counselor (and 100% said they would prefer to).***
- 42% of students who successfully transferred met with a African American/Black counselor compared to 33% among students who left without transferring.

Academic Counseling

The more frequently African American/Black students received academic counseling, the more likely they were to identify with each of the six student success factors, notably the degree to which they were focused.



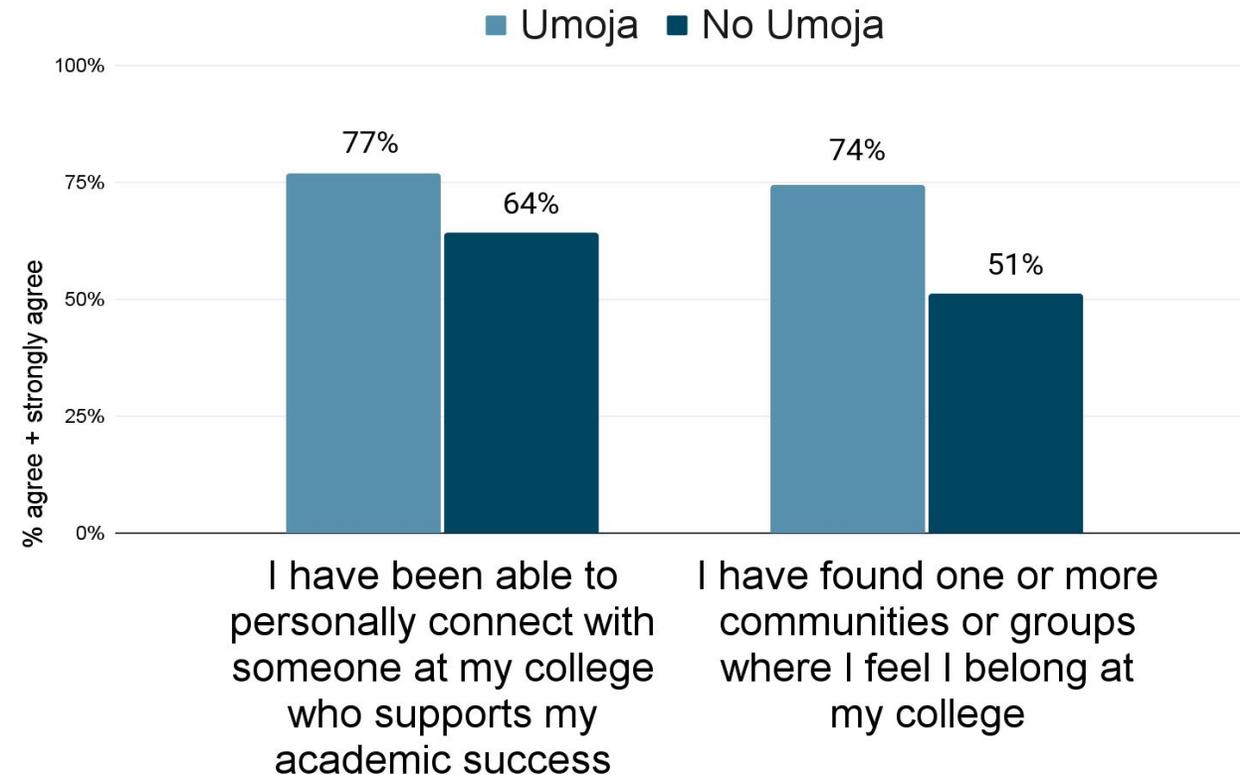
Question to Consider

- **African American/Black students say they would like to be able to see African American/Black counselors.**
 - Aside from hiring more African American/Black counselors, what else can the college can do to ensure African American/Black students have as positive, as worthwhile an experience as possible, regardless of the race/ethnicity of the counselor?

Umoja

Umoja

- 44% of Umoja participants received academic counseling at least 3 times vs. 31% among non-Umoja participants.
- 79% of Umoja participants had seen an African American/Black counselor vs. 45% of non-Umoja participants.
- Umoja participants are more likely to find a community where they belong and to personally connect with someone at their college who supports their academic success.
- Students who participated in Umoja were more likely to identify with each of the six student success factors than those who did not participate in Umoja.



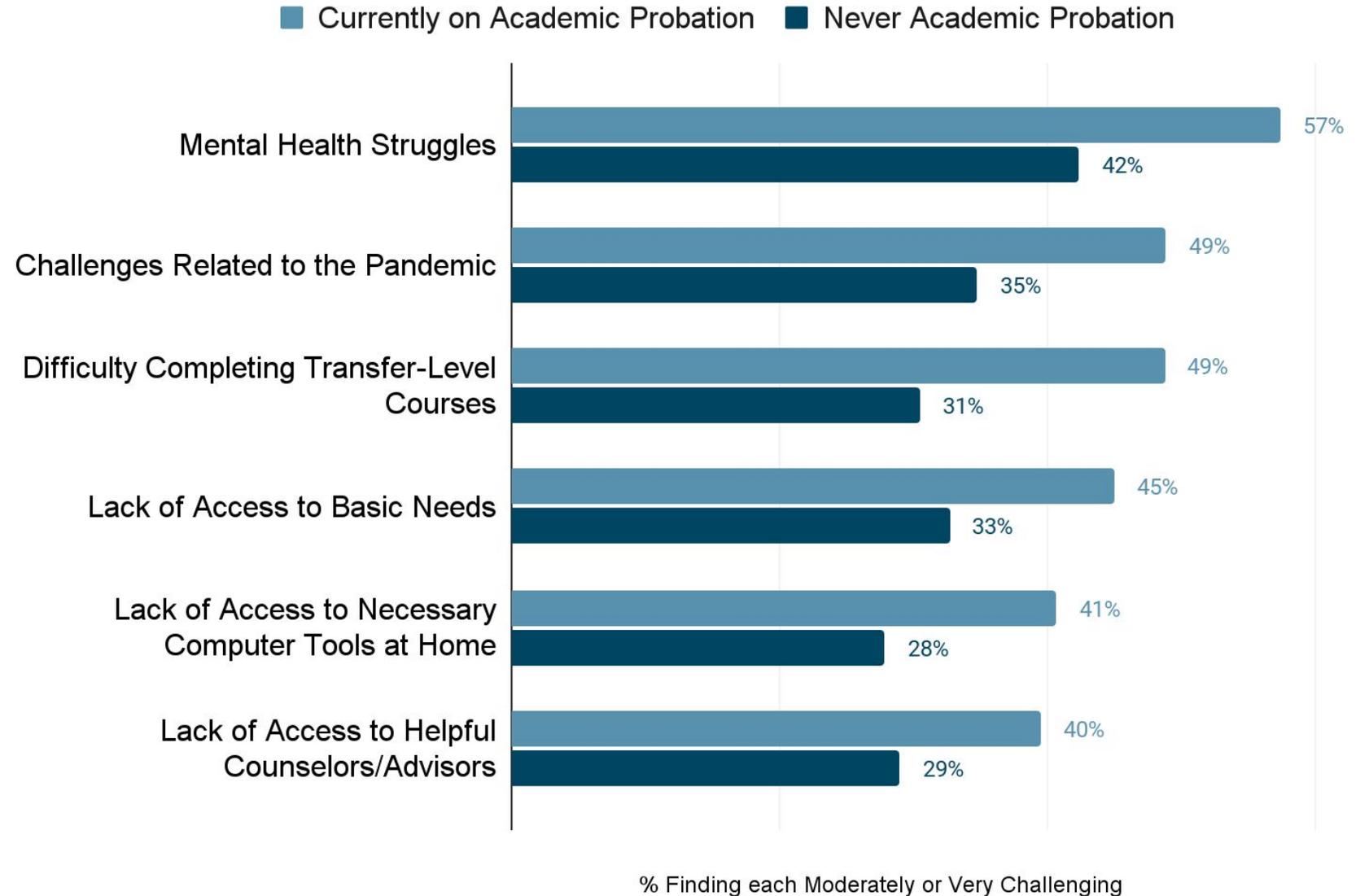
Question to Consider

- **Umoja participants are more likely to find community, experience belonging, and personally connect with someone at the college who supports their academic success.**
 - How can other student support programs help students feel the way Umoja students feel?

Academic Probation

Academic Probation

Students who were currently on probation were much more likely than students never on probation to report various challenges in their daily lives.



Question to Consider

- **Students on academic probation were much more likely than students never on probation to report a wide range of challenges in their daily lives.**
 - How can **Crafton Hills** better support students on academic probation, before, during, and after?

What Do Students Say Is Their Tipping Point?



**In Students' Own Words:
The African American
Transfer Tipping Point**

What Do Students Say Is Their Tipping Point?

When taking a holistic view of the open-ended responses, three core answers emerged with respect to when students knew they would be successful in their transfer journeys

What Do Students Say Is Their Tipping Point?

- (1) When they felt **supported** and **empowered** in their journey (24%)
- (2) When they had a **clear, navigable path** laid out for them (12%)
- (3) Upon reaching certain **academic milestones**, namely maintaining a high GPA and doing well in their courses—especially math (11%)

Authentic Support and Empowerment

Importance of counseling where they felt supported in a way that is personal, not performative or transactional.

Even among those with a well-defined educational plan, lack of self-confidence stood in their way.



Authentic Support and Empowerment

“

Having a counselor that I feel knows me and my situation and can offer advice and guidance.

”

“

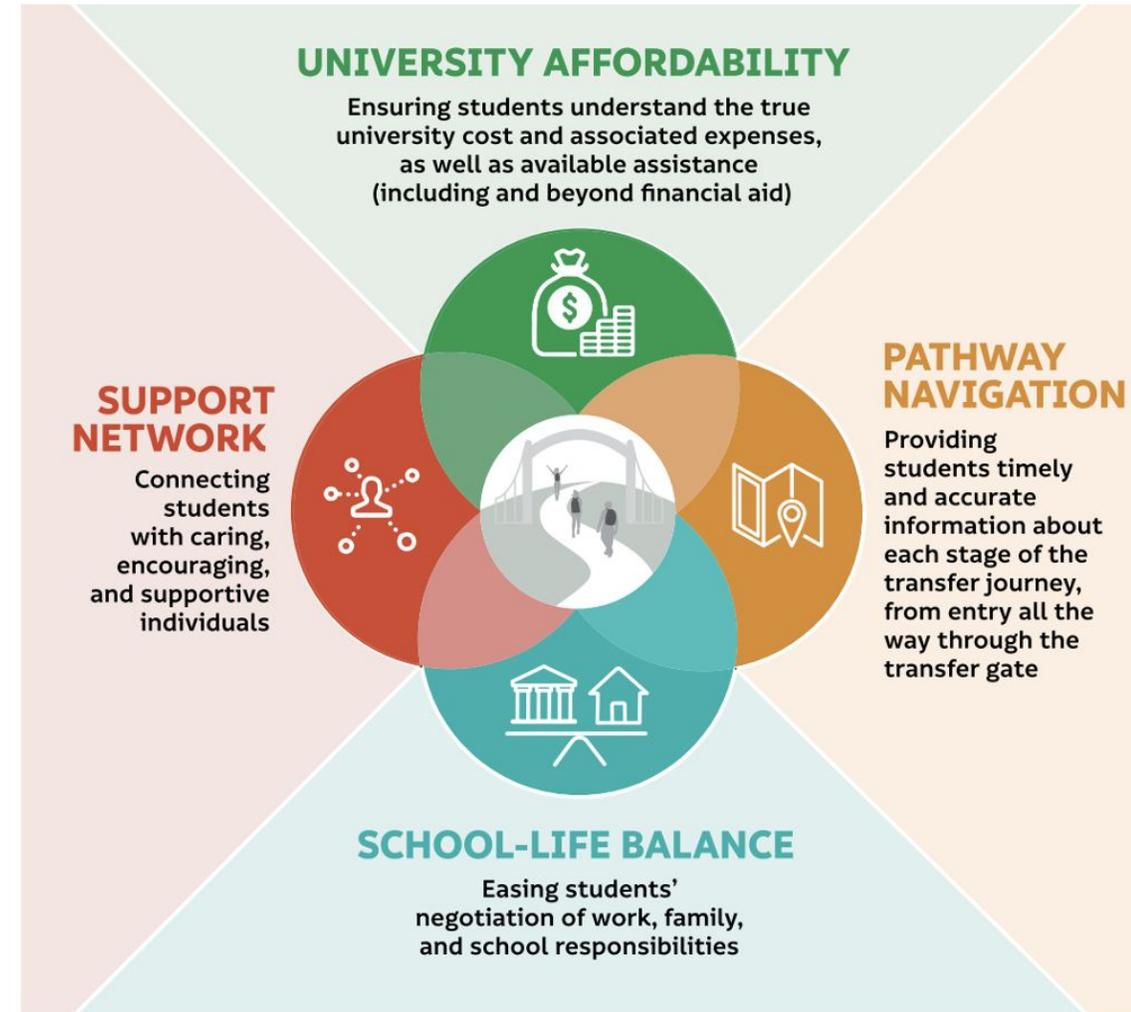
*(I need to) meet with an academic counselor who could **speak to not just my school life but consider my personal lifestyle as a Black mother in school.***

”

Clear Pathway Navigation

Having a clear, well-mapped-out path to transfer was critical in boosting students' confidence in the likelihood of being successful.

Some students who, due to not having a complete understanding of their transfer path, did not realize that they were able to transfer until they were near the end of their journey



Source: *Students Speak Their Truth about Transfer: What They Need to Get Through the Gate*

Clear Pathway Navigation

“

*When I received from my counselor a **clearly outlined path** listing colleges that best fit me financially and that had a strong leadership team that would support me emotionally through my journey.*

”

“

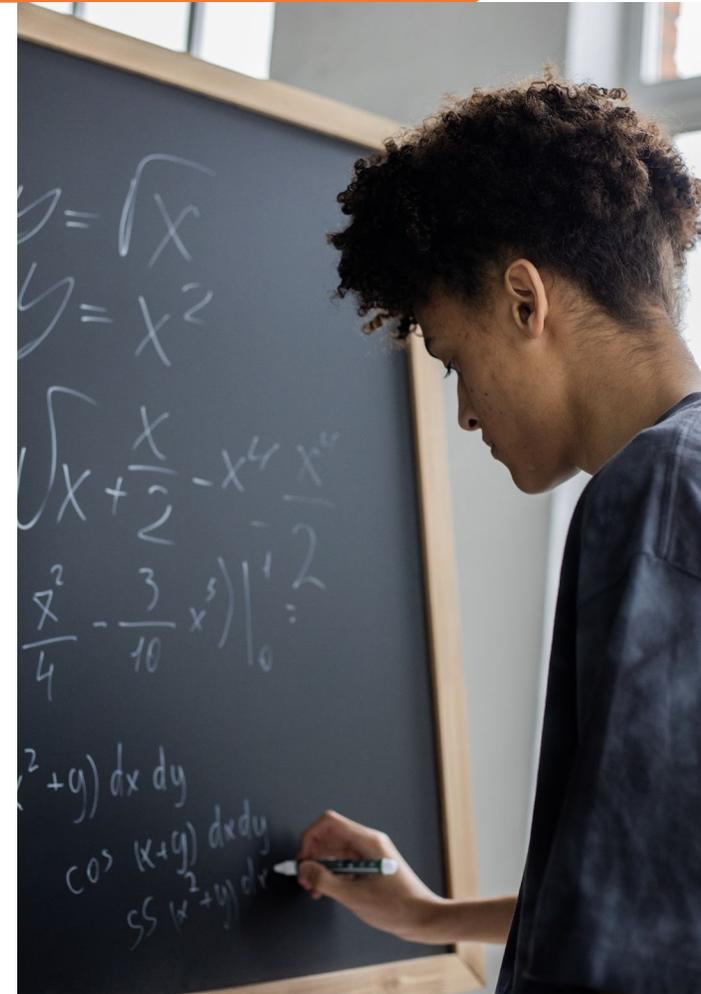
*The person that helped me most during my transfer journey was my counselor at Umoja, as she created a **step-by-step process on the courses I needed to transfer**. This helped as I knew I wanted to transfer within two years, and making sure I took all my courses within each quarter to ensure I would not delay my transfer process was key.*

”

Reaching Academic Milestones

Many students cited the successful accumulation of a certain number of units while maintaining a strong GPA

Other students highlighted the confidence-building associated with passing a certain class - most often math.



Reaching Academic Milestones

*I knew I would be successful when my professor really spent time to help me understand and **finally pass Math 227 with an A.***

*I need to **pass Math 259 with a C or better.** Unfortunately, I failed the class this past semester and did not feel that the professor did everything she could to teach the material.*

*I was confident in the very beginning years of when I first began going to my college but my confidence deteriorated when **I kept failing at math** and my GPA was dropping. Although I was trying my very best, life and school could never balance out for me.*

So What's The Tipping Point?

There is no singular “Tipping Point,” for African American/Black students upon which they switch from being less to more likely to transfer.

There are many milestones and experiences along the way that intersect with one another to cumulatively impact their ultimate success.

Recommendations

Recommendations

1. Strengthen Leadership and Partnerships

- Foster integrated, intentional collaborations between community colleges and universities to enhance transfer preparedness and support.
- Establish clear, structured transfer pathways with strong advising and institutional coordination.

Recommendations

2. Improve Counseling and Student Support

- Shift from transactional to relational counseling, ensuring students build trust with consistent advisors over time.
- Provide professional development for counselors on reducing bias, culturally sustaining counseling, and trauma-informed practices.
- Address academic probation holistically by tailoring support to students' needs rather than relying on punitive measures.

Recommendations

3. Support Faculty Development and Inclusive Pedagogy

- Offer faculty training on reducing microaggressions, recognizing bias, and employing culturally responsive teaching.
- Ensure curricula reflect African American/Black students' experiences, perspectives, and histories.
- Make it clear at all institutional levels that racism—micro or macro—has no place in college culture.

Recommendations

4. Foster a Sense of Belonging and Representation

- Actively work to increase African American/Black representation among faculty and staff.
- Expand community-building efforts for Black students by implementing best practices from Umoja and similar programs.

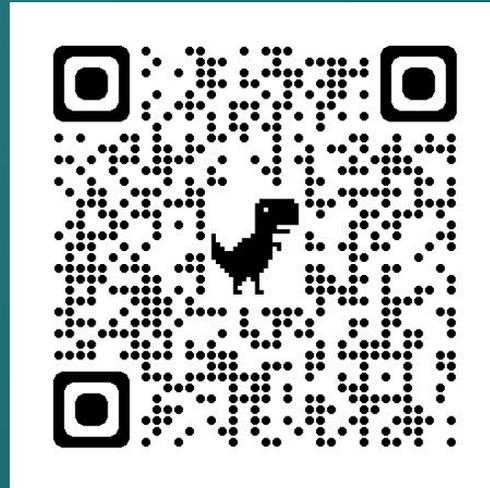
5. Recognize and Celebrate Student Success

- Acknowledge student achievements early and often to reinforce persistence and engagement.
- Enhance academic support services to ensure students receive holistic assistance in and out of the classroom.

THANK YOU!

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Click on the QR Code to access the project webpage. Click on Resources tab to access briefs.



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