

Task Force on the Progression and Success of African American Students University of Illinois at Chicago

Final Report July 26, 2016

“Obviously, data alone can’t tell you what to do about the problems ... (universities face regarding diversity and student success). Indeed, without the right kind of framing, it is easy for campus teams to see what they have always seen – students as the problems – instead of focusing on what the data may suggest about problems with campus policies or practices. Indeed, if anything is clear from the experiences of campuses that are on sustained improvement trajectories, it is that they have made the transition from seeing the demographics of their students as destiny to understanding that colleges really can, through sustained efforts, radically reshape their student success rates without becoming more selective.”¹

Overview and Background

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) is recognized as one of the most diverse urban research universities with a philosophical commitment to enhancing that diversity. Since 2010, UIC has been federally identified as a Minority Serving Institution -- a U.S. Department of Education designation given to universities that serves a disproportionately high number of racial and ethnic minority and low-income students. In terms of racial and ethnic demographics, we have a growing Latino (28%) and Asian American (22%) undergraduate student population. This has earned us the status of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). We have a growing number of international students from all over the world. These are our strengths. Progress, however, has been uneven. Enrollment for African American undergraduate students hovers at about 8%, and their six-year graduation rates are consistently below all other racial and ethnic groups in the student body. The six-year graduation rate for African American/ Black undergraduate first time freshmen entering in AY’09 was 41.5%, in contrast to the rate of 62.9% for their White counterparts.² This disparity is unacceptable and inconsistent with our values and our mission. In 2013 UIC established a *Student Success Initiative* to enable more students to overcome barriers to academic success and achieve parity in retention and graduation rates between historically underrepresented minority (URM) and non-underrepresented students. Our recommendations build upon this effort, as well as the principles of equity and inclusion that UIC re-affirmed in its 2012 Diversity Strategic Plan, “A Mosaic for UIC Transformation.”³ Our recommendations do not seek to fundamentally change the profile of our students, through more selective admissions, but rather to better serve the students that currently choose UIC and to increase their ranks.

¹ Joseph Yeado, Kati Haycock, Rob Johnstone, and Priyadarshini Chaplot, “Learning From High-Performing and Fast-Gaining Institutions,” The Education Trust, January 2014.

² See the UIC’s Office of Diversity website for further breakdowns: <http://diversity.uic.edu/diversity-data/>

³ <http://diversity.uic.edu/diversity-strategic-plan/>

We also appreciate that some of these recommendations are already in progress or under consideration, and we acknowledge that many Colleges and Departments may have their own initiatives that are already underway. We hope these recommendations will complement those efforts.

In early January 2016 UIC Chancellor Michael Amiridis established a 13-person Task Force, comprised of faculty, students and one community member, to come up with recommendations to address the problem of African American student recruitment, retention and success, with a focus on undergraduates. The Chancellor met with the Task Force on January 25 to explain their charge. Over the next several months the Task Force held five meetings, and heard presentations from key administrators and stakeholders. The first two meetings included Task Force members, and Ex Officio members (See appendix A for list of members). Subsequent meetings only included Task Force members and invited presenters. In addition to nine presentations from various university offices and units, the Task Force reviewed numerous internal documents, UIC data sets, as well as best practices from other Colleges and Universities. The Task Force also conducted focus groups, which included over 60 African American students in three separate sessions, who offered feedback on their UIC student experiences.

Executive Summary

After four months of research and deliberation, our Task Force submits the following report, including **30 recommendations** (in bold below) that we feel will improve the likelihood of success for African American students at UIC. Some of these recommendations are straightforward and can be implemented immediately. Others will require a more detailed implementation plan and timetable. The recommendations are grouped into four categories: academics, campus climate, student services, and financial needs and policies. Some of the highlights of our recommendations include: a special committee to address gateway courses that have a low rate of success for African American students; diversity in the classroom training for all instructional staff; a process to assess and better coordinate services geared toward African American students at UIC; create more visible public programs and community partnerships related to African American culture, history and concerns and inclusive of students and faculty; a more flexible housing policy; more extended tuition payment plans; and a special African American student scholarship initiative.

While the Task Force did not directly take up the issue of African American student enrollment, we agreed that recruitment, admission and enrollment numbers are incredibly important, and intimately related to African American student progress and success. Therefore, we applaud the ongoing efforts of the Office of Enrollment Management to recruit, admit and enroll larger numbers of African American students, and support the Faculty Senate endorsed ACCESS proposal (Appendix B). This program should be evaluated two years following implementation to ascertain if it is having the intended impact.

Task Force Findings and Recommendations

I. Academics

Academics are the core of a students' collegiate experience. We want to do everything we can to maximize a positive experience and a successful outcome for all of our students. We propose the following six sets of recommendations to address the myriad of academic challenges faced by our African American students in particular. Those challenges include: disparate outcomes in gateway courses; grading that does not leave room for academic forgiveness; low numbers of African American faculty to serve as mentors and role models; a sometimes alienating and hostile classroom and campus environment; not enough special programs for adult and returning students; and not enough attention paid to early intervention and bridge programs that could better prepare students before they arrive on campus. Inadequate funding is a constant challenge for our students. We want to note that while many of the problems outlined are not unique to African American students, they do disproportionately impact African American students and therefore remain relevant to our report. We are further convinced that the approach to simply do better for everyone without specific attention to sub-groups of students, such as African Americans, with distinct circumstances and experiences, will not address the disparities that we now face. The "lift all boats" generic approach is inadequate and research has demonstrated that such interventions, while improving the outcomes for many students, have often not closed the gaps between African American students and White students.⁴

A. Gateway courses

We have extensive data that show a gross disparity between African American student and non-African American student outcomes in terms of grades in certain key gateway courses (large foundational courses, or ones that are essential for certain majors). See Appendix C for a table that lists the courses that have the largest gaps in success rates. This disparity is not unique to UIC and may be the result of a number of factors: uneven high school preparation, inability to connect with an instructor, difficulty finding study partners, or inhibitions students might have in asking for help. Pedagogy, teaching style and cultural insensitivity on the part of the instructor might also be factors. Correcting this problem may require rethinking the syllabi, adjusting teaching styles, or creating new bridge courses. Faculty members need to play an integral role in this process. However, hiring outside teaching specialists to work with departments would also be important.

We recommend this process begin with a series of meetings with deans and department heads in all relevant units. The University would bring in an external URM success expert to advise and facilitate the process, out of which a small committee would be formed. The ad-hoc committee would explore how to address the problem of disparity in these courses, tailored to UIC's students and needs, and would be

⁴ See "Rising Tide II: Do Black Students Benefit as Grad Rates Increase?" by Andrew Nichols, Kimberlee Eberle-Sudre, and Meredith Welch, (The Education Trust: Washington, D.C., 2015) <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/TheRisingTide-Do-College-Grad-Rate-Gains-Benefit-All-Students-3.7-16.pdf>

responsible for making specific recommendations to the Chancellor before the end of fall 2016 semester.⁵

B. Create an Inclusive and Affirming Classroom Environment for All.

We recommend, in consultation with the Faculty union, the Faculty Senate, and the Graduate Employees Union, that we implement a required “diversity in the classroom” online training for all instructional staff (including TAs and adjuncts). Student members of our task force as well as students who participated in our focus groups reported insensitive and offensive remarks made by instructional staff in the classroom. While such comments might be made inadvertently or innocently, there is no place for them in our learning community. An oft-handed joke that reinforces a racial stereotype can have a strong and negative effect on an African American student’s ability to feel comfortable in the classroom and thus inhibit their academic performance. Some faculty may have received their educational training at institutions that had little or no African American representation, and/or may originate from countries where issues of race were not at all the same as they are at UIC and in the United States generally. Therefore, an effort to inform, sensitize, and familiarize all instructional staff to issues confronting African American students at a large diverse public urban research institution would be useful in improving the classroom climate. We are assuming that if our colleagues are simply made aware of how certain comments and gestures are commonly perceived that they will move to make behavioral and pedagogical changes. **We also recommend that the university establish an annual faculty seminar (at least one full day in duration) on teaching in a diverse setting and ask dean’s to identify departments and instructors that could benefit from participation.**⁶ Some added compensation or incentive should be provided to those instructional staff that are willing to participate.

⁵ Note the gateway courses redesign project that Dartmouth undertook to tackle the same problem with a very different student population. However, their methods and findings offer important insights. See: <https://www.dartmouth.edu/~dcal/gateway/>. Also, a 2011 proposal for a revised approach to gateway courses at Johns Hopkins provides useful overview and background information. See: <http://web.jhu.edu/administration/provost/initiatives/gsi/docs/GSI-White%20Paper.pdf>

⁶ Both the required training and the elective seminar should be designed with the following goal, borrowed from the Office of Equity and Diversity, Cultural Competency Certificate Program at Washington State University: “Being culturally competent means having a working knowledge of other cultural values, norms, behaviors, traditions, expectations and customs -- the ability to recognize and respond to personal perceptions that lend themselves to unintended bias mistakes and to make better decisions based on that understanding.”

C. Establish an Academic Forgiveness Policy

We recommend that UIC establish a reasonable academic forgiveness policy that will allow students to recover and continue to succeed after experiencing a difficult semester, or when returning to school after an extended absence. Some transfer students bring negative GPAs with them that prove to be obstacles to their success. Since many of our students are low-income city residents, and therefore navigate all the challenges, traumas and obligations of an intense urban environment, there are some semesters in which non-academic issues and problems make consistent academic performance especially difficult. Schools that currently have grade forgiveness policies include: Temple, Kent State, and University of North Carolina-Greensboro.

Given the life challenges that many of our students face, this type of policy would help them to overcome adversities and trauma, lessening the sense of hopelessness that sometimes leads students to drop out. While we have not had enough time to compare and evaluate existing models of this type of forgiveness policy, a number of examples are shared in Appendix D. Brief descriptions are offered below.

Academic Bankruptcy and Forgiveness policies allow students who are returning to college after an absence of two or more years to request adjustment of their records for one or more entire semesters of previous college work, provided certain criteria are met. *Fresh Start policies* allow an undergraduate student who re-enrolls in the university after an absence of two or more consecutive years without enrollment in higher education to request the university reset the cumulative grade point average and hours earned during the period of previous residency.

Other forgiveness policies allow students to drop one or two low grades or one poor performing semester over the course of their six-year undergraduate career. The rationale at many schools is not simply to give students a break but to encourage intellectual risk-taking with challenging courses or courses outside of the students' comfort zone without fear of penalty. Each of these policies requires that students meet federal guidelines, which may make them ineligible for aid but all that can be assessed on an individual basis.

D. Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Research indicates minority student success is linked to the presence of minority faculty and staff, who can and do serve as mentors and role models.⁷ Therefore, African American faculty hiring and retention is very important for African American student success. As Appendix E reveals, African American tenure-track faculty at UIC declined between the mid-1990s and 2009 (9.3% to 5.7%). However, since 2009 the proportion of African American tenure track faculty has dramatically risen (8.2% in 2014). In fact, UIC's proportion of black tenure-track faculty is at the 75th percentile when compared to peer institutions. The proportion of African American *tenured* faculty has steadily risen between the early 1990s and 2014 – reaching 3.3% in 2014. This growth places UIC somewhere between the 25th and 50th percentile when compared to peer institutions. These trends tell us that there is more work that needs to be done to increase the proportion of African American faculty at UIC.

While increasing the overall number of African American faculty is important, it is crucial that we make a targeted effort to recruit and retain tenured faculty. Tenured faculty are secure in their careers will be able to devote more time to student mentoring in a way that tenure-track faculty still working to achieve tenure may be less able to do. Colleges in consultation with the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs should determine the needs in terms of tenured vs. tenure track faculty and be given support to recruit African American faculty in the areas where they are most needed. Deans and department heads should be required to have an active role in recruiting more African American faculty and be held accountable if they are not making documented efforts toward this goal. UIC should aspire to the goal of at least 10% representation of African Americans among the ranks of its tenure track and tenured faculty. **We recommend that UIC begin with the target of recruiting 10 new African American faculty a year with a special (although not exclusive) emphasis on fields like STEM that have the fewest African American faculty, and where African American student majors and minors feel the most isolated** (see Student focus group Appendix F for students' comments on nature of experience).

We recommend examining the Underrepresented Faculty Recruitment Program (UFRP) as a funding source for more aggressive African American faculty recruitment and/or retention, in addition to the initiatives planned by Chancellor Amiridis once the state budget issues are resolved. There is a need to review the UFRP program to see if it is having the intended impact for which it was originally designed. Each Dean's annual report should include an explanation of how UFRP funds are used to recruit or retain URM faculty.

⁷ "Ethical Dilemmas in African American Faculty Representation," by J. Luke Wood, *Journal of Education Policy*, Spring 2008

We recommend the establishment or re-establishment in some cases,⁸ of postdoctoral fellowships geared toward creating a pipeline to recruit more tenure track African American faculty. This is another mechanism to recruit junior faculty, which is still consistent with our emphasis on recruiting tenured faculty to serve as mentors to students. Postdoctoral scholars add vibrancy to our intellectual community and their presence creates a more appealing scholarly environment for both students and prospective senior scholars.

We strongly recommend a revitalized and highly publicized re-implementation of the URM and interdisciplinary cluster hiring initiative, which would send a clear positive signal to would-be recruits, indicating that UIC continues to make URM hiring a priority. A high-profile re-launch of the program is needed because of the negative publicity that surrounded the suspension or failure of several searches over the past few years.

We recommend a flexible and creative target of opportunity hiring initiative as another way to increase the representation of African Americans on the faculty. Since this has been a cumbersome and difficult process in the past, we suggest that clear criteria be established and circulated widely, and the process for nominating target of opportunity candidates be streamlined. This should include a short orientation process to assist chairs, deans and associate deans in developing a recruitment protocol that is culturally sensitive and market appropriate.

We also recommend the creation of a faculty leadership program focused on enhancing the leadership pipeline for under-represented minority faculty interested in administration, and with demonstrated commitment to URM student success. According to UIC's Diversity at a Glance the university's top leadership has seen a sharp decline in the proportion of university leaders that are from historically underrepresented minority backgrounds. In 2010-11 URM represented approximately a third (32%) of campus leadership by 2015-16 it represented 13%⁹. Research indicates that more diverse work teams have more creativity and innovation.¹⁰ We need to diversify the leadership of the university.

⁸ Nearly a decade ago, African American Studies sponsored a postdoctoral fellowship (which included a modest teaching obligation) which brought junior scholars doing cutting edge scholarship in African American Studies to UIC. The overwhelming majority of those scholars were African American. This fellowship was "suspended" but never re-instated.

⁹ See the Diversity at a Glance on UIC's Office of Diversity website for further details:
<http://diversity.uic.edu/diversity-data/>

¹⁰ The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools and Societies by Scott E. Page (Princeton University Press, 2008)

E. Early Intervention for Success

We recommend expanding the options available for incoming students to participate in summer “bridge” programs. In addition to recommendations focused on students once they are students at UIC, early intervention programs can also contribute to their success. While some exist, it would be beneficial to offer this option more broadly to incoming students. Further, establishing relationships with feeder high schools would allow us to better prepare African American students before they apply. An option to consider is giving college credit for courses taken in high school as an incentive to enroll and continue to pursue a degree. **We also recommend exploring early admission policy focused on Chicago high schools with high URM representation in order to maximize the yield of accepted African American students who actually enroll.**

F. Non-traditional and adult students

We recommend that UIC explore the possibility of developing an adult education program or special college that is geared toward the needs of non-traditional adult and returning students. Many of our African American students are parents, veterans and adult students and could benefit from night classes and a more flexible curriculum, including more online learning opportunities and courses that could offer credit for past career and life experience.¹¹ Not only would such a program of study benefit existing students, it would make UIC appealing and accessible to new populations of working students eager to complete or begin work toward their undergraduate degrees. Given the racial make-up of Chicago, that population will likely include significant numbers of African American students, especially if it is marketed and advertised widely.

In addition, we recommend that existing undergraduate colleges explore undecided/undeclared options for students in high-demand majors like engineering, which may help students develop unique/personal paths to success. For example, students admitted via the ACCESS or other non-traditional admissions programs would have the opportunity to build the academic profile needed for competitive majors like engineering while learning more about the options available to them without having to commit to a major. We add that undecided/undeclared students should have the appropriate institutional supports to ensure success in their eventual major, which will require resources and dedicated personnel in each undergraduate college.

¹¹ Rachel Aviv, “Turning Life Experience into College Credit,” *New York Times*, October 30, 2008. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/02/education/edlife/strategy.html?_r=0

II. Campus Climate

African American students express feelings of invisibility on campus because of their small numbers. Negative comments and even hate speech at times has reinforced a sense of isolation and alienation (see focus groups responses in Appendix F). Results from the 2012 UIC Climate Survey corroborate these feelings. That is, compared to White, Latino, and Asian students, African American students report the lowest satisfaction with diversity in the classroom, dorms, and extracurricular student groups. African American students also report the lowest levels of perceiving that faculty and staff respect diversity (significantly lower than White and Latino students). African American students are less comfortable expressing their personal identity on campus than Latino students. African American students also perceive more unfair treatment of minority groups on campus than White, Latino, and Asian students (see Appendix G). Clearly, UIC needs to make a more concerted effort to make African American students feel welcome and at home on its campus and in its classrooms.

We recommend a required cultural competency/ diversity course for all incoming students.

Students in the focus groups as well as those on the Task Force spoke about experiencing a hostile atmosphere at times when other students casually used racial epithets or more subtle statements that were offensive and alienating. Some African American students have heard racist language casually thrown around in the Student Center food court and in other areas of campus. Training of some type is necessary to sensitize and educate the entire campus community about living and learning in a diverse environment and the fact that hate speech of any kind violates UIC's values and code of conduct. The students on the Task Force did not feel that Orientation for incoming students offered an adequate introduction to diversity issues. Therefore, it is recommended that the required course be taken during the student's first semester at UIC (for both freshmen and transfer students). The campus already teaches a Dialogue course which focuses on enhancing students' capacities to communicate across cultural differences. Perhaps the 1-credit course that is currently being taught can be expanded to a 3-credit course. The design of the course should involve existing faculty with expertise in diversity issues such as our interdisciplinary programs at UIC (e.g., African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Disability Studies, Latin American and Latino Studies, and Women and Gender Studies). It should also involve the Office of Diversity and the UIC Dialogue Initiative since they have pioneered a similar elective course. The course should have a carefully designed curriculum and be led by well-trained facilitators to make sure it has the intended outcome of increasing cultural competence, sensitivity and an understanding of the underlying bases of discriminatory practices. The course should address the history and persistence of anti-Black racism specifically, as well as other forms of discrimination and bigotry. Insensitive, hurtful and hateful comments have also been made in the classroom. See the Academic section of the report for recommendations to address this problem. This recommendation would involve a course proposal and approval through the Educational Policy Committee.

We recommend additional programming funds be allocated for educational, cultural and community-building events and projects that focus on connecting African American students and faculty, and making the African American presence on campus more visible.

Some students expressed isolation reinforced by the commuter campus environment. We need more ways for African American students to connect with Black faculty and staff, and with one another. More high profile social and cultural events and programs to engage students would help. Funds for this programming should be jointly managed by the Department of African American Studies, the African American Cultural Center and the Office of Diversity.

We recommend that the Chancellor host an annual MLK Day lecture and/ or symposium to which the community (grassroots community people not just dignitaries) would be invited. MLK Day on many campuses around the country is a day to visibly recommit to diversity and social justice and to reach out to non-campus Black and URM communities. UIC has been conspicuous in not being an annual site for a major campus-sponsored event. This would create a new face of UIC for members of the Chicago African American community, many of whom still view the UIC as an inhospitable place for African Americans. This is an event that should be planned with our distinguished African American faculty integrally involved and the Office of Diversity.

We recommend a new decentralized set of community partnership opportunities that forge greater ties with Chicago's African American communities (perhaps small grants such as those the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy currently gives out) and funneled through the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy, the Great Cities Institute, the Social Justice Initiative, and the Nathalie Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement. These small grants would encourage faculty and units to develop community partnerships that bridge the "us" / "them" divide, a community/ university breach that further fragments the experiences of our African American students who have to function in both 'worlds'. UIC faculty, staff and students have deep and abiding ties in many of Chicago's African American communities. They sit on boards of community groups, volunteer, reside and have family and friends in these communities. Yet, UIC's relationships to African American communities are still very siloed and there is not enough coordination to tap the vast network that exists. We need a new umbrella under which to better coordinate the breadth of our community engagement work.

Student Orientation

We recommend that a clear and central component of student (and faculty) orientation deal with issues of diversity and highlight not simply with the general principle of diversity, but the concrete issues facing African American students and the university's values and policies regarding diversity and inclusion. This has to be done in a sensitive way and the Office of Diversity, AAAN, UIC Dialogue Initiative, and the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change should be central to its development.

III. Services to African American Students

We recommend a semester-long process to come up with a specific plan to align and perhaps re-organize existing services, with an African American student focus, to maximize efficiency and foster greater collaboration. This realignment SHOULD NOT constitute a reduction of resources or services. In fact, more, not less resources are needed. All stakeholders have to be intimately involved in the process. This should include a thorough examination of the organization charts and delivery of service models at other institutions that have been successful in their diversity efforts. Students expressed confusion about overlap between various service units and sometimes received conflicting advice. This represents two problems. While there are high quality services being provided, they are not well coordinated. Units like AAAN, TRIO, UHP and CHANCE should set up mechanisms to work more collaboratively and articulate clear and distinct areas of support. The second problem is between the College advisors and the support unit academic advisors. The University needs to foster and increase the sharing of information and coordination between these entities as well. And all advisors need to be trained to help students that are experiencing financial difficulty. The African American Cultural Center provides a broad range of advising and services to African American students and should therefore also be included in this process.

We recommend increased staffing for AAAN after the coordination and re-alignment process occurs. AAAN appears to have an immediate need for at least two additional staff for specific peer mentoring programs. We recommend that the Chancellor's Office provide additional resources for this important program. A significant body of scholarship points to the effectiveness of peer mentoring for the success African American college students.¹²

We recommend that AAAN be given at least a satellite office closer to SCE to better access and serve African American students. Given the small numbers and sense of alienation, we feel this small logistical change could encourage students to avail themselves of much needed mentoring and tutorial services that AAAN offers. This is a change that a number of students have requested.

¹² "A Promising Prospect for Minority Retention: Students Becoming Peer Mentors," by Jennifer M. Good, Glennelle Halpin and Gerald Halpin, *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 69, No. 4, The School Reform Movement and the Education of African American Youth: A Retrospective Update (Autumn, 2000), pp. 375-383; and Herndon, Michael K., and Joan B. Hirt. "Black students and their families what leads to success in college." *Journal of Black Studies* 34, no. 4 (2004): 489-513.

IV. Finances and Funding

One of the key problems in retaining students is funding, including the fear and reality of mounting debt, or financial holds that block re-enrollment. Funding is a huge problem that African American students have expressed. While it is a problem for most of our students, data show that African American students are disproportionately impacted in a number of ways. According to data from the largest undergraduate college, Liberal Arts and Science (LAS), two-thirds of African American students (67%) come from low-income families, as evidenced by their receipt of Pell Grants (see Appendix H). This is not surprising since there is a close correlation between race and economic inequality in U.S. society at large. The average African American family has 16 times less wealth than the average White family.¹³ Closer to home, LAS data also indicate a correlation between financial difficulties and graduation rates. We must note that while LAS figures paint a clear and disturbing picture of the low graduation rate among African American students who receive financial holds at some point during their undergraduate career, the USFSCO (University Student Financial Services and Cashier Operations) and OIR paint a slightly different picture. They point out that 1) There are data that suggest financial holds do not impede retention on a semester to semester basis any more for African American students than for others (1.7% difference) when looking at the entire UIC undergraduate population and including holds that are removed and therefore do not impede registration; and 2) Financial holds, according to USFSCO, alert students to mounting financial problems. To eliminate holds entirely would only allow debt to accrue without the likelihood for early intervention. USFSCO has proposed to work more closely with students' advisors and to do targeted outreach to at-risk students to assist with financial planning and to clarify options. This will be helpful practice but will NOT solve the larger issue of funding and debt. The LAS data on 6-year graduation rates being impacted by financial challenges are consistent with our qualitative findings from student focus groups, and from research on African American students nationally. Other changes that are needed are outlined below.

We recommend a special scholarship be established for low-income African American students with the goal of raising at least \$1 million in the next three years. Unlike many colleges and universities, UIC apparently does not have scholarships designated for URM students, with one exception, as far as we could tell. **We further recommend that the Advancement Office develop a special plan to raise these targeted scholarship funds and report regularly on their progress. This should include the hiring of a full-time equivalent person dedicated to raising funds for this scholarship as well as other campus diversity efforts. They should work closely with the Office of Diversity and other relevant units to identify advancement opportunities.** Given the highly publicized problems facing African American youth in our city and national media attention on these problems, we envision that advancement could cultivate a donor group that would be willing to support scholarships that sought to give vulnerable students from hard hit Chicago communities educational opportunities, particularly if those opportunities were linked to some type of community service or 'give back,' that could benefit more than the individual.

¹³ "The Racial Wealth Gap: Why A Typical White Household Has 16 Times The Wealth Of A Black One?" by Laura Shin, *Forbes*, March 26, 2015.

We recommend that the Housing Office establish a grace period to break the contract and a **special fund to pay for housing** for students who suddenly are unable to pay all the costs. Housing costs, books and fees are high and frequently not fully anticipated by students with less financial savvy. Housing costs are especially onerous in that students who sign up for campus housing but then opt out often are required to pay 75% of the remaining housing contract balance for entire academic year, even if they are no longer living on campus. Current housing contracts pose challenges for many students. By the fall, for instance, when students finally figure out that they can't afford to pay for their on-campus housing, or early in the term when on-campus housing is not working out, it is too late to break the contact and they are stuck with paying the majority of the contract balance. This problem is compounded for African American students for two sets of reasons. One is financial. As a demographic with greater financial challenges overall, the housing costs hit African American students especially hard. Secondly, students who come from neighborhoods and high schools that are virtually all-Black may have difficulties in new living arrangements where they are an extreme minority, especially when the climate in the dorm may parallel an unwelcoming or alienating climate on campus. The best way for an African American student to cope with such a situation might be to return to a supportive home environment for a year. This option is sometimes cost prohibitive. Further, African American students (according the the UIC Entering Student Survey) plan to live in a UIC residence hall at a higher percentage than any other race / ethnicity. 64% of African American students (for LAS this number was even 69%) indicate that they plan to live in a UIC residence hall, as opposed to 40% of Asian students, 20% of Hispanic and 43% of White students. Considering the cost of student housing, this may add to the financial challenges many of these students face.

We recommend a designated “go to” person for confusing financial questions: a financial aid coach, troubleshooter or ombudsperson committed to diversity and sensitive to the special needs and challenges of URM students. African American students report being overwhelmed and confused by the financial bureaucracy, what their options are, and who can help them troubleshoot. Because some of them feel marginal to campus life, the flow of information about resources and policies that might assist them is not always readily available. Students report being unaware that decisions can be appealed, emergency funds are sometimes available, fees can be waived, and payment plans can be put in place to address seemingly insurmountable financial obstacles. An advocate/ombudsperson skilled at troubleshooting financial problems could make a difference for those students who simply “give up” because of finances and debt. This person would have to have a special commitment to and understanding of the challenges faced by URM students, including African Americans students.

We recommend additional resources be allocated for the LAS Finish Line funds to assist students who need only a small sum of money to complete their education in their final year when other resources have run out. We further recommend additional completion funds similar to the Finish Line fund be set up for students in other undergraduate colleges. We need to concentrate on two specific periods for students. Retention from the first to the second year and the final year or semester before graduation are crucial times. At least \$1 million should be set aside to strengthen existing Finish Line programs with a special emphasis on using funds in a way that will directly impact African American graduation and success rates.

We need also to address the high level of student debt among African American students. For 2014-2015, 91% of African American students who graduated had student loans and with an average debt of \$29,000. This is compared to 63% of non-African American graduates who had student loan debt (see Appendix I for additional financial data for African American vs. Non-African American students). **We recommend the exploration of a debt forgiveness program (with the understanding that many loans are federal and therefore inflexible).** We encourage the Chancellor to request a proposal for a debt forgiveness program at UIC from the Financial Aid and USFSCO Offices.

Finally, we recommend exploring a way to make the payment plans offered by OBFS be opt-out, rather than opt-in as they are currently structured. Students are billed for tuition and fees. They can request a payment plan at the outset. We propose OBFS consider having the payment plan as the default unless students opt to pay in a lump sum rather than the other way around. By the time many students realize they may not be able to pay their full balance, it is too late to enroll in a payment plan under the current structure. This results in additional fees and stresses that could be avoided with a different policy in place. Again, this kind of problem is more onerous for students and families with little or no financial management experience and less financial resources. **We further recommend a more extended payment plan be established allowing students in dire financial circumstances to enroll in a special payment plan that accepts smaller payments over a longer period of time. Students would be allowed to continue in school as long as the agreed upon amount was paid.** We also should be more generous in waiving burdensome cumulative fees with the understanding that many students are not withholding payment because they chose to but they simply do not have the ability to pay.

V. Implementation and Follow up

The primary objective of any report of this nature is to not simply recommend changes but to enact solutions. Therefore, implementation is key. We propose for **follow-up meetings in November 2016, February 2017, and May 2017** to monitor the status of implementation and discuss/solve any challenges to making these recommendations a reality. The taskforce also pledges its support and assistance to the Chancellor's Office in the implementation process. The next phase of this work requires a more detailed implementation plan and timetable, which we estimate could be completed by January 2017.

VI. Acknowledgements

The Task Force wishes to express its gratitude to Dr. Catherine Owney who provided excellent staff support for our work, and to all the presenters, student focus group participants, and ex-officio members who lent time and energy to this process. We especially wish to thank our student Task Force members who took the assignment very seriously, and took time away from their studies to help us arrive at a successful outcome. We appreciate data provided by OIR, LAS and the Office of Diversity. Finally, we wish to thank Chancellor Amiridis who had the foresight to convene this Task Force. We are confident that his leadership will insure a successful implementation of the Task Force recommendations.

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Appendix A: Task Force Membership and Participants

Task Force Members:

- Jeremiah Abiade, Assistant Professor, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, College of Engineering
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- Jauwan Hall, Student Trustee
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- Catherine Owney (Staff), Assistant to the Chancellor
- Barbara Ransby (Chair), Distinguished LAS Professor, Departments of African American Studies, Gender and Women's Studies and History, and Director, Social Justice Initiative
- Jane Rhodes, Professor and Head, Department of African American Studies, LAS
- Dick Simpson, Professor, Department of Political Science, LAS
- David Stovall, Professor, African American Studies in LAS, and Education Policy Studies in the College of Education
- Raven Temple, Senior, College of Business
- Joanna Thompson, President, Graduate Student Council
- William Walden, Professor and Associate Dean, College of Medicine
- Ronald Whitmore, Principal, John Smyth Elementary School (Community member)
- Travell Williams, Student, College of Education

Ex-Officio Members:

- Lori Barcliff Baptista, Director, African American Cultural Center
- Jeff Brown, Director, African American Academic Network
- Kevin Browne, Vice Provost for Academic and Enrollment Services
- Cecil Curtwright, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Enrollment Services
- Tyrone Forman, Associate Chancellor and Vice Provost for Diversity
- Barbara Henley, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
- Kendal Parker, Director, CHANCE Program

The following people/offices provided presentations and information to the Task Force:

- Astrida Tantillo, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Brian Rosessler, Executive Assistant Dean
- Cecil Curtwright, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Enrollment Services
- Deidre Rush, Financial Aid
- Jeff Brown, Director, African American Academic Network
- Jeff Nearhoof, Vice Chancellor for Advancement
- Joseph Shroyer and Erin Wheet, OBFS, University Student Financial Services and Cashier Operations
- Mannie Pollack, Interim Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs
- Stephanie Whitaker, Member, Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Blacks
- Tyrone Forman, Associate Chancellor and Vice Provost for Diversity

Appendix B: ACCESS Proposal endorsed by the UIC Faculty Senate

RESOLUTION OF THE UIC SENATE IN SUPPORT OF AUGMENTED COLLEGE CRITERIA and EVALUATION for STUDENT SUCCESS (ACCESS) PROPOSAL FOR AUGMENTED REVIEW OF SELECT FIRST YEAR ILLINOIS UNDERGRADUATE APPLICANTS

WHEREAS, major components of the UIC mission statement are to:

- provide a wide range of students with the educational opportunity only a leading research university can offer,
- address the challenges and opportunities facing not only Chicago but all Great Cities of the 21st century and
- foster scholarship and practices that reflect and respond to the increasing diversity of the U.S. in a rapidly globalizing world; and
-

WHEREAS, the evaluation of first year undergraduate applications and resultant admissions decisions rely heavily on quantitative measures of academic ability like high school grade point average (GPA) and performance on standardized tests; and

WHEREAS, the manner that each college uses metrics like GPA and standardized test scores in evaluation of undergraduate applications is different across the university.

WHEREAS, the over reliance on standardized tests for evaluation of undergraduate applications is problematic for several reasons.

WHEREAS, several UIC studies on the pre-matriculation factors that lead to student success have found that high school GPA is generally a better predictor of first term UIC GPA over ACT score; and

WHEREAS, we propose adoption of the ACCESS proposal that has been advanced by the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic and Enrollment Services;

WHEREAS, applicants eligible for ACCESS review would:

- not have been selected for admission after participating in the standard admissions process
- but would, be predicted to be in good standing in their first term based on selective index (SI)¹ ;
- evaluated for admission as Illinois resident;
- possess minimum SI² of 22 (depending on the college the SI might be higher) and minimum incoming GPA of 3.0;

¹ The SI is a combined, weighted measure of GPA and ACT for evaluation of undergraduate applications. The SI is a number between zero and 40 that is based on regression analysis of the performance of UIC undergraduates. The SI, when divided by 10, represents a predicted first-term GPA of 0.0 to 4.0.

² The SI would be based on the individual college calculation that is considering the applicant.

- participate in augmented review similar to that of the Honors College;
- have their application materials reviewed by admissions staff to assess non-quantitative factors important for college success;

WHEREAS, admissions staff would review faculty and staff evaluations of the additional application materials and make recommendations to the respective college deans for admission or denial of the application; and

WHEREAS, the recommendation would be presented to college deans ACT blind;

WHEREAS, the ACCESS program and other undergraduate admissions processes will be reviewed annually to determine their outcomes;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the UIC Senate calls upon the UIC administration to make available to all of the colleges an augmented review process for undergraduate applications as proposed in the ACCESS model.

ACCESS: a proposal for comprehensive review Augmented College Criteria and Evaluation for Student Success

Currently, UIC undergraduate colleges rely heavily on quantitative representations of students' academic ability in admissions. The different colleges maintain different selection criteria. Some colleges consider high school GPA and ACT scores separately at equal weight, while others use a combined weighted measure of GPA and ACT score called the selective index (SI). The SI is a number between zero and 40, which represents a predictive first-term GPA of 0.0 to 4.0.

Each of the colleges uses these quantitative indicators in various combinations. For example, LAS generally admits students with an SI of 24 or higher, which can be achieved with a number of combinations of GPA and ACT score. However, LAS typically does not admit students with an ACT score below 18, even if the SI is within the acceptable range. The College of Engineering generally does not admit student with ACT scores below 24 or high school GPAs (HSGPA) lower than 2.5, and makes limited use of alternative criteria. The College of Business does not use the SI, but takes into account ACT, high school percentile rank and HSGPA. They typically do not admit students with an ACT below 19, an HSPR below 30, or a HSGPA below 2.20. In contrast, The Colleges of Architecture and the Arts, Education, and Applied Health Sciences take a more holistic approach, considering ACT, HSGPA, and other positive attributes like strong essays, rigorous coursework, high school activities, and recommendation letters.

“The ACT[®] is a curriculum- and standards-based educational and career planning tool that assesses students' academic readiness for college.” The ACT is not developed primarily to be a predictive tool, but rather provides a snapshot of “what students have learned and what they are ready to learn next” at a given point in time (ACT, 2015).

Drawbacks to Traditional Measures

Unfortunately, quantitative measures of students' past academic performance are imperfect. Together, high school GPA and standardized test scores account for only 22% of the variance in first-year college GPA, and even less variance in college retention (Hoffman & Lowitzki, 2005; Bowen, Chingos, & Mcpherson, 2009; Zwick & Sklar, 2005). Furthermore, the relationship between standardized test scores and academic achievement was weaker for minority students than for White students (Hoffman & Lowitzki, 2005).

Standardized tests, like the ACT, inherently and systematically favor higher SES and ethnic majority students. First, there are well-documented practice effects on standardized tests like the ACT, yet practice tests and study materials are largely made available in expensive test booklets, and prep courses, which favors wealthier students. Furthermore, an extensive literature on “stereotype threat” indicates that the messages that students receive about the test can significantly impact test performance. When students are reminded of their group-identity in situations where their group stereotypically performs poorly, their scores drop. Studies have found, for example that female students who are reminded of gender differences in standardized math test performance will earn lower scores, on average, than those women who were not reminded of these expected differences (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). These reminders prime women to consider gender stereotypes in math performance while taking the test (e.g., “women are worse at math than men”) and thus influence performance (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). In the case of SAT and ACT tests, many minority group and low SES students have had these stereotypes practically drilled into them over the course of a lifetime; the negative effects of

stereotype threat have been demonstrated in children as young as five years old (Ambady, Shih, Kim & Pittinsky, 2001). Worse yet, high-pressure testing situations, like the ACT, are particularly detrimental to those *highest* in working memory ability, which means that those students highest in ability may be most hindered by stereotype threat (Beilock & Carr, 2005).

This means that standardized test scores very likely significantly underrepresent the abilities of minority and low socio-economic status (SES) students. Given all of the above, it is no surprise that there are significant differences in average standardized test scores by racial/ethnic group and SES (see Table 1, Figure 1, and Figure 2). Making admissions decisions using standardized tests scores as a primary criterion thus automatically disfavors minority and lower SES individuals.

	African American	Asian	Latino	Native American	White
ACT	17	24	19	18	22
SAT	1278	1645	1355	1427	1576

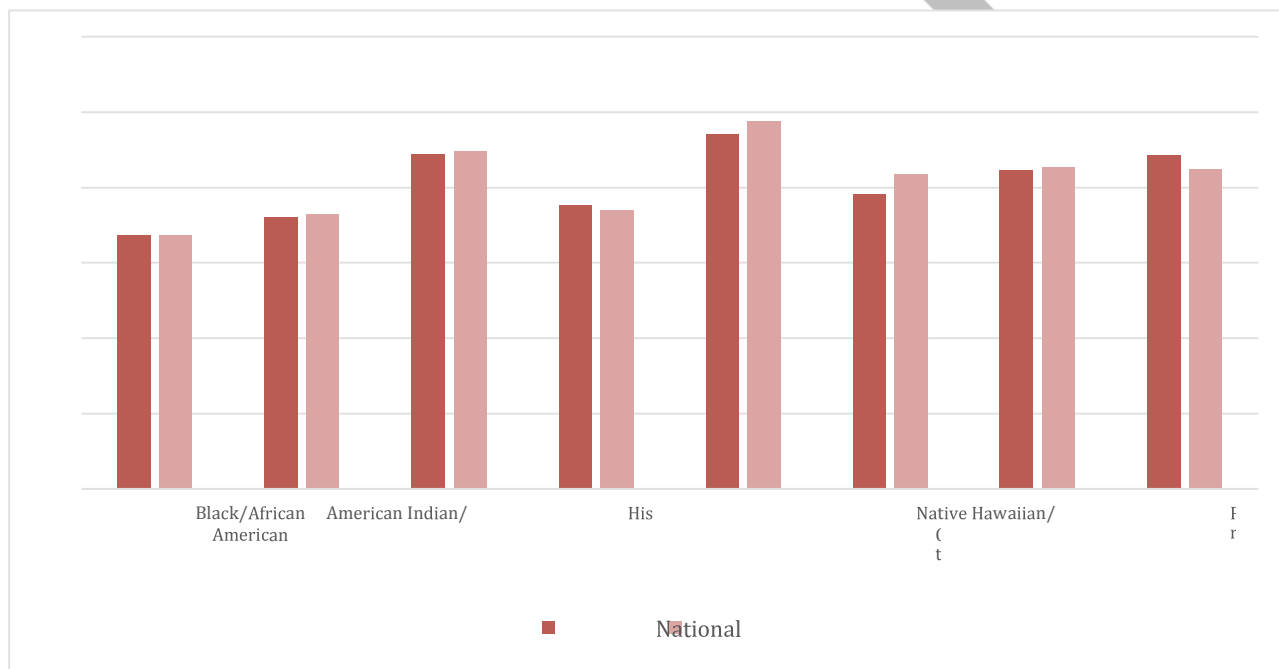


Figure 1. National and State ACT Data by Racial/Ethnic Group (ACT,

National Illinois

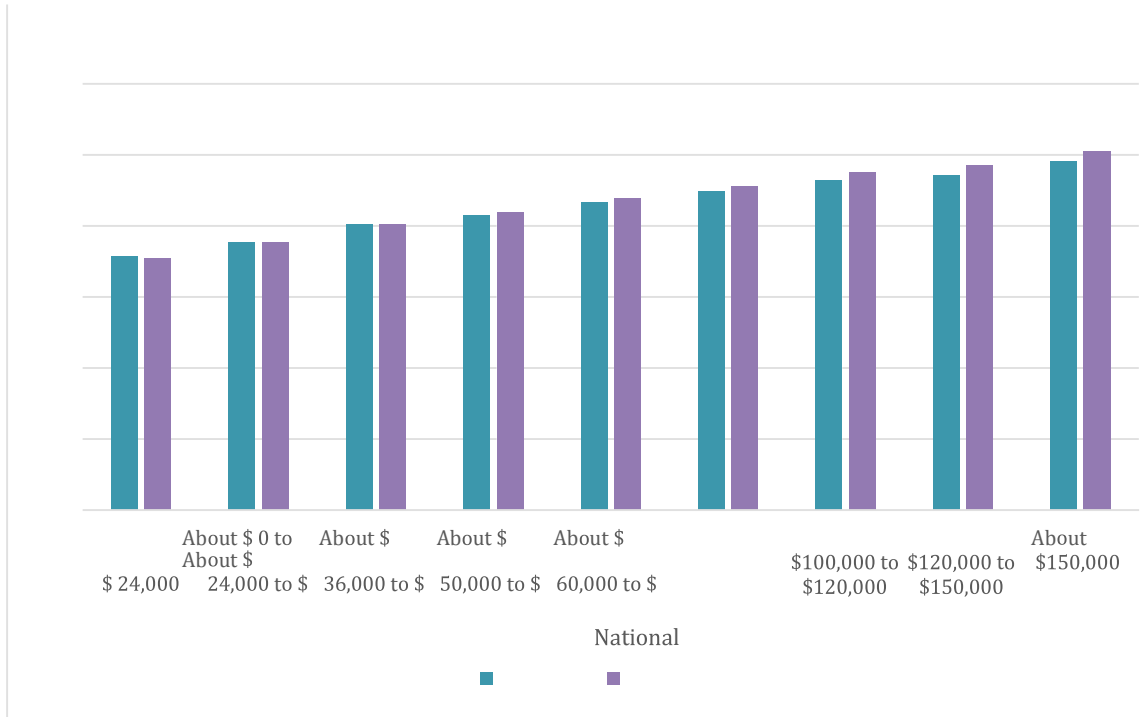


Figure 2. National and State ACT Score by Family Income (ACT, 2014).

Given that racial and SES differences exist in test performance, the use of strict ACT and HSGPA thresholds excludes students from university admission which *automatically* widens the racial and socioeconomic disparities in higher education. The stricter the threshold, the less diverse the resulting freshman class. For example, let us say that we are deciding on new admissions criteria for our incoming freshman class: we set our cutoff score at 24. The problem arises when we break down applicants' average ACT scores by racial demographic. See the graph below (Figure 3), created using simulated data based on national averages.

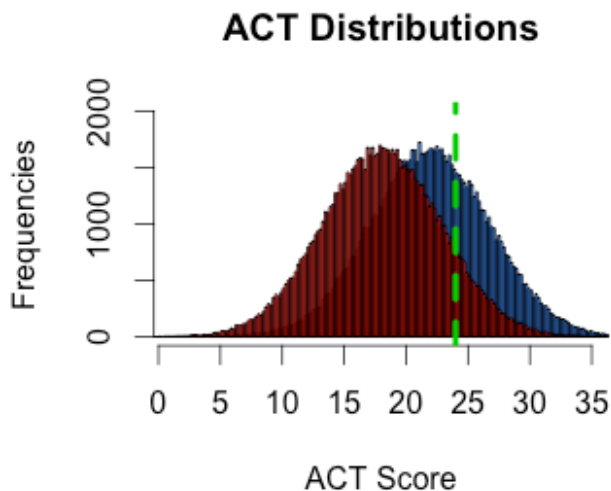


Figure 3. ACT Score Distributions for White Students (blue) and Underrepresented Minority Students (red) with Threshold Score Designated in Green.

In this diagram, the red plot represents the normal distribution of scores for underrepresented minority students, and the blue plot represents a normal distribution of scores for White students. This threshold that we have set, which is represented by the green line, may yield us a freshman class of top tier White students, but the same criteria set unfairly strict selection standards for underrepresented minority students, whose ACT scores are lower, on average. If underrepresented minority students, in this hypothetical example, were to have an average ACT score of 18, this same cutoff of 24 would mean that only the top 11% of minority students would be accepted, compared to 31% for White students. Put another way, nearly one in three White applicants will be admitted whereas only one in ten minority students will be admitted under the same criteria.

Only when the discrete number is a *meaningful* predictor of future performance can it be fairly used to make application decisions. For example, if every student scoring below 24 were *extremely likely* not to graduate, then the use of this score in admission decision-making would be both reasonable and fair; however, the cutoff score would have to be very low for this to be the case. While standardized tests provide us some information about students' knowledge of select academic subjects, there is likely little difference between a student who earns a 24 on the ACT and one who earns a 23 or 25. Work by Kahn and Nauta (2001) found that, when other pre-college academic variables (e.g., high school rank) were in the model, ACT was not a significant predictor of college persistence. For every unit increase in ACT score, students' odds of persistence did not significantly increase. The evidence suggests, then, that the current use of ACT thresholds by some colleges to make admissions decisions is not a particularly meaningful predictor of students' outcomes, and is therefore not a particularly fair use of this criteria.

Consideration of Combined Measures

Given the large racial/ethnic differences in scores, and its limited predictive utility for long-term student outcomes, it is problematic to rely so heavily on this one measure of student performance. Instead, it is best to consider multiple measures together. The ACT technical manual itself states that "it is advisable to supplement ACT scores with other academic information, such as courses taken and grades earned in high school, when making admissions decisions" (ACT, 2014, pg. 96). In order to determine which additional measures would be the most useful to consider together, UIC performed several analyses that tested the predictive validity of numerous pre-matriculation variables in assorted combinations. They found that the simplest model that accounted for the most variance in first-term GPA included both ACT scores and high school GPA. Together, these variables have stronger positive correlations to first-year GPA in college than either variable alone (ACT, 2014). Here at UIC, these two variables are weighted and combined into a single score called the selective index (SI). Because high school GPA is approximately four times better at predicting first-year than is ACT score (SSP Data Analysis and Assessment Task Force Recommendations, 2014) the SI places greater weight on high school GPA, making the SI a better predictor than either of its components alone. The weight of high school GPA and ACT score for the SI is calculated based on aggregated data from 5-year increments. The new 2016 SI table is currently under construction. While the SI is certainly a better predictor than test scores or GPA alone, there are other factors relevant to college success that we should consider when making admission decisions.

Consideration of Non-Cognitive Factors

“Success” in college is multi-faceted, and there are a number of characteristics and skills, beyond academic knowledge, that contribute to students’ persistence and graduation. College is a marathon, and graduation takes perseverance, confidence, and motivation. These strengths, called non-cognitive factors, have been found to predict success in college above and beyond standardized test scores and HSGPA, and also vary less by racial/ethnic group (Sedlacek, 2004). In other words, they provide meaningful additional information about students’ future performance in college, but are not currently being accounted for in the admissions process at UIC.

Many studies have linked five such non-cognitive factors, academic self-efficacy, academic motivation, thriving in the face of adversity, demonstrated commitment, and help-seeking behavior, to college outcomes. Academic self-efficacy is a student’s belief in his or her ability to succeed in a given academic context. Students’ academic self-efficacy has been found to predict first-year GPA (Krumrei-Mancuso, Newton, Kim, & Wilcox, 2013; DeFreitas, 2012; Robbins et al., 2004), the number of college credits earned (Zajacova, Lynch, & Espenshade, 2005), and retention (Robbins et al. 2004). Academic motivation refers to students’ enjoyment of and intrinsic motivation to learn. Academic motivation has also been linked to a number of academic outcomes in college students. For example, students who find learning intrinsically rewarding and valuable have higher first-term GPAs (Kaufman, Agars, & Lopez-Wagner, 2008; Turner, Chandler, & Heffer, 2009), and are more likely to be retained (Morrow & Ackermann, 2012; Allen, 1999) than peers. Both academic self-efficacy and academic motivation have also been linked to first-year GPA and the number of credits earned for UIC students (Han, Farruggia, & Moss, 2015). Thriving in the face of adversity refers to students’ abilities succeed and thrive in the face of difficult life circumstances or failure. This construct has been linked to numerous academic outcomes, including GPA (Strayhorn, 2014), and educational attainment (Duckworth et al., 2007). Recent research at UIC found that perseverance in the face of difficulty is positively related to retention at UIC via its relationship to GPA (Han, Farruggia, & Moss, 2015). Demonstrated commitment refers to students’ demonstration of long-standing commitment to an activity, community, or organization in the past. New evidence at UIC suggests that prior demonstrated commitment predicts students’ sense of belonging in and commitment to college (Internal Analyses, Farruggia & Han, 2016). Sense of belonging and commitment to college are important predictors of students’ academic performance (Battistich, Solomon, Kim, Watson, & Schaps, 1995; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997) and retention (Beil, Reisen, Zea, & Caplan, 2000; Milem & Berger, 1997). Finally, help-seeking behavior refers to students’ abilities to identify when they need help, students’ willingness to seek help in the face of difficulty, and their abilities to identify the best source of help for different types of problems. Help-seeking behavior is positively related to academic performance (Karabenick, 2004), and academic adjustment in college (Holt, 2014).

By taking these factors like academic self-efficacy, and academic motivation into account, university admissions officers can identify talented students who are emotionally prepared for college, but who otherwise might go unidentified using traditional admission criteria. Non-cognitive strengths can be identified qualitatively in supplementary application materials, like students’ essays, records of high school involvement, and letters of recommendation. Self-efficacy, for example, might be evident in the confidence that a student expresses in his/her interviews when asked how he/she believes he/she will adjust to college-level work. Academic motivation might be evident in a student’s demonstrated interest in scholarly pursuits and

independent learning outside of school. Students who have achieved success in the face of adversity will have worked with great determination to overcome past difficulties, and may see adversity as an opportunity for growth. Students high in demonstrated commitment will have spent years in the same extracurricular activity, community, or religious organization, and may have taken on a leadership role in that activity/community/organization. Students high in help-seeking behaviors will express a willingness and openness to seek help when they struggle, and will acknowledge the help that they have received in the past.

Holistic reviews processes are being used in college admissions offices around the country:

- **Oregon State** asks students to provide a supplementary “Insight Résumé” which gives admissions officers a better understanding of the students’ perspectives of their own accomplishments, experiences, and personal circumstances (Oregon State, 2015). According to an internal institutional report, students’ scores on the Insight Résumé positively predicted retention and graduation above and beyond gender, ethnicity, Pell-status, and high school GPA (Gitelman, 2009). Insight Résumé scores also positively predicted college grades, particularly for students with high school GPAs below 3.5 (Gitelman, 2009). Prior to the institution of the Insight Résumé, retention rates at OSU were at 63% (Gitelman, 2009). In the first year following the initiation of the holistic admission program the retention rate rose to 70% and rose again the next year to 85% (Gitelman, 2009).
- **DePaul University** added several short answer essay questions (modeled after Oregon State’s Insight Résumé – DIAMOND essays – to their admissions packet. Internal analyses found that students’ overall DIAMOND scores predicted first-year GPA, and retention over and above HSGPA (Cortes & Kalsbeek, 2012). Importantly, they also found that essay scores were not statistically related to race or socioeconomic status (Cortes & Kalsbeek, 2012).
- **Tufts University** instituted an augmented admission program, the Kaleidoscope Project in 2006 (Sternberg, 2010). Kaleidoscope added several short-answer questions to the common application and asked students to choose one of the questions to help illustrate their strengths. Students who were rated for Kaleidoscope had higher GPAs and more credits earned than the unrated students with comparable pre-matriculation credentials (Sternberg, 2010). Students with high Kaleidoscope scores reported being more satisfied at Tufts and became more involved at Tufts as compared to students with low Kaleidoscope scores (Sternberg, 2010). Like DIAMOND essays, Kaleidoscope scores did not vary by racial-ethnic group, and Kaleidoscope scores were equally likely to lead to university admission across groups (i.e., it did not work better for some groups than others) (Sternberg, 2010). Kaleidoscope resulted in a more diverse student body (with African American student enrollment increasing by 25%), and an applicant pool with higher SAT scores and HSGPAs (Sternberg et al., 2012).
- The Rainbow project at **Yale** created a standardized measure of non-cognitive strengths, including creativity, practical skills, and analytical skills. The Rainbow project was not an admissions program, but rather a program of research that would later serve as the basis for the admission program at **Tufts** and **Oklahoma State**, which is discussed below. The Rainbow assessments were administered to 1,000 late high school and early college students at eight four-year colleges, four community colleges, and two high schools. Longitudinal analyses revealed that Rainbow scores doubled the prediction of first-year GPA over standardized test scores alone

(Sternberg, 2010). When high school GPA was added into the model, Rainbow measures still augmented prediction of first-year grades by 50% (Sternberg, 2010).

- Holistic review programs are now being implemented at **Oklahoma State, UT Austin, Washington State University, University of Central Missouri, Colorado State University, UCLA, Harvard Law School, University of Kansas, University of Missouri, Purdue University, University of Minnesota, and University of Nevada – Las Vegas**, among others.

Non-cognitive factors are also used to augment decision-making in various scholarship programs. The National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME) also employs non-cognitive factors to aid in scholarship selections; their scholars graduated at a rate of 84% since the program's inception in 2003 (Sedlacek, 2004; National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, 2013). Perhaps most notably, the Gates Millennium Scholars Program, which provides funding for minority students entering STEM fields, trains staff members to rate students on the eight non-cognitive domains using the information provided in students' personal statements, letters of recommendation, and other application materials (Sedlacek, 2004). Using this selection process, the Gates Millennium Scholars Program has funded more than 16,000 students who have been retained at a rate of 98% and who boast a six-year graduation rate of 86% across 1,865 different colleges and universities (The Gates Millennium Scholars Program, 2014). The strong record of success of the Gates Millennium Scholars Program serves as support for the use of non-cognitive factors in the college admission process.

In addition, research indicates that when non-cognitive factors are incorporated into student admission decisions, the resulting freshman class is more diverse than when using standardized tests and high school GPA alone (Schmitt, 2012). For example, at highly selective institutions, the use of non-cognitive factors in conjunction with traditional academic decision-making criteria raised the proportion of African American students admitted from 1% (SAT/HSGPA alone) to 4% (Schmitt, 2012). At Oregon State, the percentage of the students of color on campus rose 9% in the two years following the institution of the "Insight Résumé" (Gitelman, 2009). The pilot study of Kaleidoscope at Tufts University resulted in a more diverse student body (with African American student enrollment increasing by 25%), and an applicant pool with higher SAT scores and HSGPAs (Sternberg et al., 2012).

Some may argue that students admitted using these criteria are somehow less qualified than students who fall above a given ACT threshold. However, this argument creates a false dichotomy between students admitted through traditional measures and those admitted via other indices of college preparation, like non-cognitive factors. As has been outlined above, these traditional measures have many flaws and biases, which make them particularly likely to underrepresent the abilities of low SES and underrepresented minority students. Non-cognitive variables are associated with success in college. Thus, students with these characteristics are more likely to do well in college, and are not "worse" or "less qualified" than their counterparts with higher standardized test scores. Non-cognitive variables thus represent a way to give students credit for more of the strengths that will help them succeed in college.

ACCESS: A Model for Augmented Review

ACCESS is a process by which students that are eligible for admission via the SI but who are not initially accepted may participate in an augmented review. Based on data from past years, this program would considerably expand access to college, particularly for underrepresented

minority students and women. Over the past three fall admission cycles nearly 2000 students who met the proposed criteria for ACCESS review were denied. In 2015, of the 500 qualified students who were denied admission, 67% were underrepresented minority students (49% Latino, 18% African American), and 67% were female. Under the proposed model, these students would all be eligible for augmented review.

ACCESS Eligibility:

- Students should be considered eligible for ACCESS review if they have applied to UIC through the standard admissions process, and while predicted to be in good academic standing their first term via the SI, were not selected for admission.
- In order to be eligible for ACCESS review, students meeting the above criteria must also have a minimum SI of 22 (but depending on the college the SI might be higher) and a 3.0 GPA or higher.
- Students will be notified of ACCESS eligibility via banner, and will also receive a copy of the letter via U.S. mail, and will receive a phone call to follow up. The letter will contain the web address to a scheduling system, and the deadline to sign up for an interview. Attendance to the interview in-and-of-itself will serve as an early indicator of the applicant's motivation and commitment.

The recommended process for ACCESS:

- a) ACCESS review candidates will have their materials, like high school activities and personal statements, reviewed by admissions staff.
- b) ACCESS candidates will complete an in-person interview. Interviews will take place at the Office of Admissions. Students will sign up for interviews using an online sign-up system. Students will be given the interview questions in advance, to prepare for the interviews. Interviews will be conducted by admissions staff who will be trained to identify constructs of interest prior to conducting the interviews.
- c) A scoring rubric will be developed to help guide and standardize scoring of the interviews. The rubric will define what constitutes a "high", "moderate", and "low" level of each construct. Training will be modeled off of the rater training from a similar holistic review process, Kaleidoscope Project, which is used at Tufts. Interviewers will work in small groups with "experts" – individuals in the field who are familiar with the identified constructs and surrounding literature. The small groups will go over numerous sample responses together, and will come to a consensus for how to score the student on the construct rubric. Interviewers will score applicants based on the applicants' entire application packet, and not just the answers to the interview questions. Once the interviewers are able to reach consensus about the sample essays in small groups, they will work individually to score several more sample packets, and will come together to discuss the results and resolve discrepancies in scoring until high inter-rater reliability is reached. It is important to note that interviews will only serve to help students. Once interviews are complete, the same small committee of trained admission staff will come together with an invited representative of each college to discuss each student and make a final decision.
- d) Students selected for admission will be funneled into programs like Summer College, Transition Coaching, and the various support programs for student advising services.
- e) The academic and retention outcomes of students admitted via ACCESS will be compared to the outcomes students admitted via regular admissions processes, and

to the outcomes of a group of students matched on pre-matriculation characteristics. The evaluation will be a joint effort of AES, VPUA, and OIR.

The following are the proposed interview questions for the ACCESS process. These questions are adapted from questions used in other holistic review processes at DePaul, Oregon State, Yale, and Tufts. These questions have been adapted to incorporate the evidence-based constructs that have been found to predict success of UIC students.

1. Tell us about a significant challenge that you have faced in your life, and the steps that you took to overcome that challenge. Who did you ask for help at that time, and what type of support were they able to provide? What lessons did you learn from the experience?
 - Tip: You don't need to go into a lot of detail about the challenge itself, particularly if it is very sensitive. We are more interested in your response to the challenge.
2. In college, you will have the opportunity to explore a range of new and interesting intellectual topics. Tell us about an intellectual passion of yours that you are interested in learning more about in college.
 - Tip: We want to see what you are excited to learn about. Think about topics that you like to read about in your free time, or causes that you volunteer/advocate for.
3. Why did you decide to come to college, and tell us about the process of applying to college. What do you think will be difficult about adjusting to/succeeding in college? How do you think you will manage these difficulties? What qualities/skills do you possess that will help you to be successful in college?
 - Tip: All incoming freshmen have something that worries them about transitioning to college. We want to know what you think will be most difficult part about college for you personally, and how you plan to overcome that difficulty.
4. Tell us about the goals that you have set for yourself and your efforts to accomplish them. Give at least one specific example of a setback that you have faced in your pursuit of that goal, and how you moved forward from that setback. Who, if anyone, has helped you to work toward your goal?
 - Tip: This question refers to long-term goals. You do not need to have already reached your goal. It can be an ongoing effort.
5. Tell us about the activities that you were very involved in growing up. Be sure to include how long you participated in each activity, and if you held any leadership roles in each activity.
 - Tip: You can talk about school activities, sports, extracurricular activities, religious studies, clubs, youth groups, camps, family responsibilities, etc. We are just looking to learn more about how you spent your time when you were growing up, and while you were in high school.

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Appendix C: Comparison of ABCs in courses for African American vs. Non-African American students

Note-Due to the length of the full report, only the courses where African Americans have lower ABC rates than non- African American students have been included. The full report is available from the Office of the Chancellor or Office of the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Affairs

Course	Total Enrollment	Rate of ABC Grades				Diff	Sig.
		All Undergraduates					
		Non-Af Am	Af Am				
		N	ABC	N	ABC		
KN361	98	97	0.99	1	0.00	-0.99	***
IDS312	51	50	0.98	1	0.00	-0.98	***
ED100	39	38	0.97	1	0.00	-0.97	***
ART130	34	33	0.97	1	0.00	-0.97	***
ME211	82	81	0.94	1	0.00	-0.94	**
MGMT481	26	25	0.92	1	0.00	-0.92	**
SPAN206	38	37	0.89	1	0.00	-0.89	ns
BPS390	21	20	0.89	1	0.00	-0.89	ns
ECON395	58	57	0.73	1	0.00	-0.73	ns
MATH170	49	48	0.71	1	0.00	-0.71	ns

ECON339	31	30	0.70	1	0.00	-0.70	ns
ACTG316	83	81	0.66	2	0.00	-0.66	*
BIOE101	70	67	0.97	3	0.33	-0.64	***
ED135	37	32	1.00	5	0.38	-0.63	***
STAT401	55	54	0.61	1	0.00	-0.61	ns
ME312	54	53	0.60	1	0.00	-0.60	ns
CHEM130	109	96	0.96	13	0.38	-0.58	*
SOC251	56	51	0.96	5	0.40	-0.56	***
MATH165	301	292	0.80	9	0.25	-0.55	*
CS301	68	66	0.55	2	0.00	-0.55	ns
PHYS107	154	145	0.72	9	0.19	-0.53	**
CS261	95	94	0.52	1	0.00	-0.52	*
ECE210	132	126	0.80	6	0.30	-0.50	ns
GEOG100	170	154	0.90	16	0.40	-0.50	ns
ARAB103	65	63	1.00	2	0.50	-0.50	*****

IE467	52	50	1.00	2	0.50	-0.50	***
BHIS460	51	49	1.00	2	0.50	-0.50	***
DES430	45	43	1.00	2	0.50	-0.50	***
MUS180	25	22	1.00	3	0.50	-0.50	**
PSCH313	19	17	1.00	2	0.50	-0.50	**
ENGL121	16	14	1.00	2	0.50	-0.50	**
MGMT452	88	86	0.98	2	0.50	-0.48	***
ME341	85	83	0.98	2	0.50	-0.48	***
BIOE339	71	69	0.97	2	0.50	-0.47	**
PHAR401	193	186	0.97	7	0.50	-0.47	ns
PHIL102	103	95	0.97	8	0.50	-0.47	ns
CS450	32	30	0.97	2	0.50	-0.47	*
ARCH205	48	44	0.97	4	0.50	-0.47	**
ACTG211	201	190	0.70	11	0.25	-0.45	**
KN261	69	67	0.95	2	0.50	-0.45	ns

SOC224	62	60	0.95	2	0.50	-0.45	*
ART140	18	16	0.94	2	0.50	-0.44	ns
ANTH200	16	14	0.93	2	0.50	-0.43	ns
MUS227	29	27	0.93	2	0.50	-0.43	ns
CHEM343	42	40	0.92	2	0.50	-0.42	ns
ENGL243	61	58	0.75	3	0.33	-0.42	*
ITAL101	79	77	0.91	2	0.50	-0.41	ns
MGMT460	39	37	0.89	2	0.50	-0.39	ns
MKTG461	81	79	0.38	2	0.00	-0.38	*
CHEM314	87	82	0.96	5	0.60	-0.36	*
STAT381	115	113	0.84	2	0.50	-0.34	ns
CHEM114	332	308	0.71	24	0.37	-0.34	ns
CHEM455	25	22	1.00	3	0.67	-0.33	**
POLS210	19	16	1.00	3	0.67	-0.33	*
ART212	14	11	1.00	3	0.67	-0.33	*

EAES101	146	138	0.96	8	0.63	-0.33	**
MATH215	87	85	0.83	2	0.50	-0.33	ns
RELS120	25	23	0.83	2	0.50	-0.33	ns
SPED410	61	58	0.82	3	0.50	-0.32	*
ARCH371	58	55	0.99	3	0.67	-0.32	**
HUM101	36	34	0.82	2	0.50	-0.32	ns
ACTG210	322	306	0.78	16	0.46	-0.32	**
CHEM234	340	330	0.65	10	0.33	-0.32	ns
IDS270	292	284	0.53	8	0.21	-0.32	*
EOHS400	59	56	0.98	3	0.67	-0.32	**
ENGL200	51	48	0.98	3	0.67	-0.31	*
HIST225	50	47	0.98	3	0.67	-0.31	**
NUEL250	65	59	0.97	6	0.67	-0.31	*
BIOS230	271	264	0.72	7	0.42	-0.31	ns
CHEM452	82	79	0.97	3	0.67	-0.30	ns

ENGL101	64	61	0.97	3	0.67	-0.30	ns
NATS105	61	58	0.97	3	0.67	-0.30	*
SOC385	57	54	0.96	3	0.67	-0.30	*
HIST101	178	175	0.96	3	0.67	-0.29	ns
IDS331	56	53	0.95	3	0.67	-0.28	ns
THTR209	23	20	0.95	3	0.67	-0.28	ns
GER125	23	20	0.95	3	0.67	-0.28	ns
EPID403	58	52	0.95	6	0.67	-0.28	ns
MATH118	206	189	0.73	17	0.47	-0.26	ns
ENGL107	45	42	0.93	3	0.67	-0.26	ns
MUS101	34	26	0.92	8	0.67	-0.25	ns
HPA494	26	23	1.00	3	0.75	-0.25	**
ME321	79	76	0.91	3	0.67	-0.24	ns
PHYS105	260	252	0.60	8	0.36	-0.24	ns
PSCH360	141	131	0.68	10	0.44	-0.23	ns

MGMT475	23	20	0.90	3	0.67	-0.23	ns
CHEM222	91	88	0.73	3	0.50	-0.23	ns
MKTG470	46	42	0.98	4	0.75	-0.23	*
ECE310	79	75	0.89	4	0.67	-0.23	**
AH235	24	22	0.73	2	0.50	-0.23	ns
GEOG151	126	117	0.89	9	0.67	-0.22	ns
COMM140	53	45	0.84	8	0.63	-0.22	ns
CS211	119	117	0.72	2	0.50	-0.22	*
CL103	37	34	0.88	3	0.67	-0.22	ns
CHEM112	954	905	0.72	49	0.50	-0.21	*
KN372	102	98	0.96	4	0.75	-0.21	ns
MATH181	303	287	0.71	16	0.50	-0.21	ns
DHD101	138	134	0.96	4	0.75	-0.21	ns
ARCH105	96	90	0.87	6	0.67	-0.20	ns
CS109	231	219	0.75	12	0.56	-0.20	ns

KN251	612	589	0.61	23	0.42	-0.19	*
ACTG470	90	86	0.94	4	0.75	-0.19	ns
CS385	83	80	0.86	3	0.67	-0.19	ns
BIOS220	364	352	0.69	12	0.50	-0.19	ns
SOC105	118	113	0.99	5	0.80	-0.19	*
MATH121	645	597	0.77	48	0.60	-0.17	ns
PSCH270	410	392	0.95	18	0.78	-0.17	ns
COMM102	91	83	0.67	8	0.50	-0.17	*
CHE205	40	38	0.67	2	0.50	-0.17	ns
CLJ311	47	41	1.00	6	0.83	-0.17	**
ENGL71	179	169	0.86	10	0.70	-0.16	ns
US101	59	54	0.96	5	0.80	-0.16	ns
SPAN203	32	29	0.83	3	0.67	-0.16	ns
CHEM101	863	787	0.87	76	0.71	-0.16	**
ENGL102	30	25	0.96	5	0.80	-0.16	ns

ENGL240	111	105	0.99	6	0.83	-0.15	ns
IDS371	199	191	0.40	8	0.25	-0.15	ns
POLS120	68	62	0.98	6	0.83	-0.15	*
SOC225	62	58	0.90	4	0.75	-0.15	ns
BIOS221	257	250	1.00	7	0.86	-0.14	***
AAST264	17	9	0.89	8	0.75	-0.14	ns
ARCH200	55	50	0.94	5	0.80	-0.14	ns
MATH310	367	358	0.81	9	0.68	-0.14	ns
POLS200	87	85	0.63	2	0.50	-0.13	ns
CLJ423	32	27	0.93	5	0.80	-0.13	ns
AH100	189	170	0.97	19	0.84	-0.13	ns
CLJ110	45	40	0.93	5	0.80	-0.13	ns
ART112	31	26	0.92	5	0.80	-0.12	ns
COMM201	43	39	0.87	4	0.75	-0.12	ns
COMM101	77	70	0.98	7	0.86	-0.12	ns

CLJ200	149	138	0.93	11	0.82	-0.12	ns
HIST104	229	214	0.98	15	0.87	-0.11	ns
PUBH110	106	91	0.98	15	0.87	-0.11	*
PHYS112	78	72	0.94	6	0.83	-0.11	ns
PSCH100	843	781	0.79	62	0.68	-0.11	ns
FIN301	387	370	0.99	17	0.88	-0.10	*
ANTH105	229	213	0.97	16	0.88	-0.10	ns
AAST110	23	10	0.94	13	0.85	-0.10	ns
HN196	384	362	0.87	22	0.77	-0.09	**
MATH90	582	519	0.53	63	0.44	-0.09	ns
FR104	54	47	0.95	7	0.86	-0.09	ns
PHYS108	144	135	0.84	9	0.75	-0.09	**
MUS114	252	229	0.95	23	0.87	-0.08	ns
CS401	87	84	0.83	3	0.75	-0.08	ns
GWS102	130	113	0.96	17	0.88	-0.07	ns

ENGL242	69	63	0.97	6	0.90	-0.07	ns
PHIL100	134	123	0.98	11	0.91	-0.07	ns
ANTH101	332	311	0.97	21	0.90	-0.06	ns
IE201	214	204	0.96	10	0.90	-0.06	ns
SOC100	378	353	0.98	25	0.92	-0.06	ns
MKTG360	327	316	0.87	11	0.82	-0.06	ns
CLJ350	53	46	0.91	7	0.86	-0.06	ns
MUS118	191	173	0.91	18	0.85	-0.05	*
IDS355	374	360	0.97	14	0.92	-0.05	ns
ENGL161	909	849	0.86	60	0.81	-0.05	ns
CLJ120	67	63	0.79	4	0.75	-0.04	ns
POLS101	178	158	0.96	20	0.92	-0.04	ns
CLJ101	422	409	0.97	13	0.92	-0.04	ns
MUS100	344	317	0.97	27	0.93	-0.04	ns
IDS200	321	308	0.96	13	0.92	-0.04	ns

ECON220	123	116	0.90	7	0.86	-0.04	ns
LAS103	79	68	0.94	11	0.91	-0.03	ns
BIOS104	93	86	0.88	7	0.86	-0.03	ns
COMM100	360	338	0.97	22	0.95	-0.02	ns
PSCH242	535	504	0.80	31	0.78	-0.02	ns
PSCH315	134	122	0.98	12	0.95	-0.02	ns
ARCH251	62	58	0.77	4	0.75	-0.02	ns
KN100	238	228	0.91	10	0.90	-0.01	ns

Appendix D: A Summary of Four Academic Forgiveness Policies at Other Institutions

1. Clemson University Academic Forgiveness Policy:

Citation: "Academic Forgiveness," Clemson University Registrar. Last Modified 2016. Accessed May 16, 2016. <https://www.registrar.clemson.edu/html/acadForgiveness.htm>

Summary: The Academic Forgiveness Policy (AFP) allows a student to eliminate from the GPA calculation up to three courses in which a D or F was earned. While D or F grades in required courses may be eliminated before the course is repeated, the required course must be repeated satisfactorily at Clemson University before graduation. Both grades will remain on the transcript, degree progress report, and other official documents. Courses for which forgiveness has been applied will remain on the transcript with a notation that the credit and grade have been excluded from the earned hours and the GPA. For financial aid purposes, courses repeated under this policy resulting in duplicate credit do not count for satisfactory academic progress. The AFP may not be applied to a course taken on a Pass-No Pass basis or to any course in which the student was previously found in violation of the academic integrity policy. The AFP shall apply only to courses taken at Clemson University. Course substitutions are not permitted.

2. Temple University Academic Forgiveness Policy:

Citation: "Academic Forgiveness," Temple University Bulletin. Last Modified 2014. Accessed May 16, 2016. <http://bulletin.temple.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/academic-forgiveness/>

Undergraduate, baccalaureate degree-seeking students who re-enroll or are reinstated following a four-year consecutive absence from the university may petition to have their cumulative GPA recalculated from the time of re-enrollment/reinstatement to the university. Students are afforded one opportunity for Academic Forgiveness.

Upon successful petition:

- Cumulative GPA will be reset to 0.00.
- All prior courses and grades will remain on the student's academic record and transcript.
- The notation of "Academic Forgiveness" will be recorded on the student's transcript.
- Courses previously earned at Temple University with grades of D+, D, D-, F and NC will not be used for credit. Credit will be considered for courses with grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C- and CR. The student's department has final approval of credits that will count towards graduation. Schools/Colleges may disallow credits towards graduation for some older courses.

Re-enrolled or reinstated students electing the forgiveness option may repeat a course one additional time if they previously exhausted their repeat options for that course under the policy on Repeating a Course ([policy # 02.10.12](#)).

Once enacted, the reset GPA cannot be reversed.

3. Kent State Academic Forgiveness Policy:

Citation: "Administrative Policy Regarding Academic Forgiveness," Kent State University Policy Register. Last Modified March 1, 2015. Accessed May 16, 2016.

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-academic-forgiveness>

Summary: The academic forgiveness policy is available to any Kent State University student who has not been enrolled for a period of at least one calendar year (twelve months). After returning to Kent State, a student must complete a minimum of twelve graded credit hours with a minimum GPA of 2.000 to be eligible for academic forgiveness. If the student meets these conditions, has completed the application for academic forgiveness form, and requests to have the policy applied, the following steps will be taken with regard to the student's academic record:

- All courses in which grades of C-, D+, D, F, NF, SF, M or U were received in the previous period of Kent state enrollment will be retained on the academic transcript with the notation of an "E" in the repeat column, which denotes courses excluded from GPA calculation, and the official grade will be changed to X* (e.g., XC-, XD, etc.), which denotes academic forgiveness.
- All calculations of hours earned and GPA will be adjusted.
- If the student fails to maintain a 2.000 GPA for the first twelve semester hours of graded coursework following return to the university, the eligibility period shall be extended through the term that encompasses the twenty-fourth semester hour of graded coursework. Students are permitted to use the provisions provided by the course repeat policy during the extension period. If after completing twenty-fourth graded semester hours, the returning student has not achieved a 2.000 GPA, eligibility for academic forgiveness will have expired.

Supplementary information:

The academic forgiveness policy is non-selective. It applies to any and all grades below C (2.000), with the exception of courses taken on a pass/fail basis that were earned in the previous period of Kent state university enrollment. In the event that a course for which the students previously had received a "passing" grade of C-, D+ or D is required for the degree program the students are pursuing, the students must retake this course unless the dean of the college in which the students are enrolled approves a suitable substitution. The original GPA (unadjusted by the application of the academic forgiveness policy) will be used in determining eligibility for university, collegial, departmental or professional honors or other recognition based upon the entirety of students' undergraduate academic career and record of academic performance. Former students returning to the university may request the application of the academic forgiveness policy to their record only once in their career at Kent state and within the eligibility standard.

The academic forgiveness policy applies only to coursework formerly taken at Kent state university and only to the students' Kent state transcripts. It is available only to undergraduate students.

4. University of North Carolina at Greensboro Academic Renewal Policy:

Citation: "Academic Renewal Policy," 2015-16 Undergraduate Bulletin. Last Modified March 4, 2015. Accessed May 16, 2016. <http://uncg.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2015-2016/Undergraduate-Bulletin/Academic-Regulations-Policies/Grading/Academic-Renewal>

Academic Renewal allows formerly enrolled students who have been readmitted the possibility of having grades earned during their previous attendance period to be forgiven (excluded from GPA calculations). Students initiate the request for Academic Renewal by filing a form with the University Registrar's Office.

Formerly enrolled students who have less than a 2.0 cumulative GPA may pre-qualify for academic renewal when:

- they have not been enrolled in any institution of higher education for a minimum of one year (one fall and one spring semester);

or, as an alternative:

- they have completed 24 hours of transferrable college credit with a 2.50 GPA since their last enrollment at UNCG.

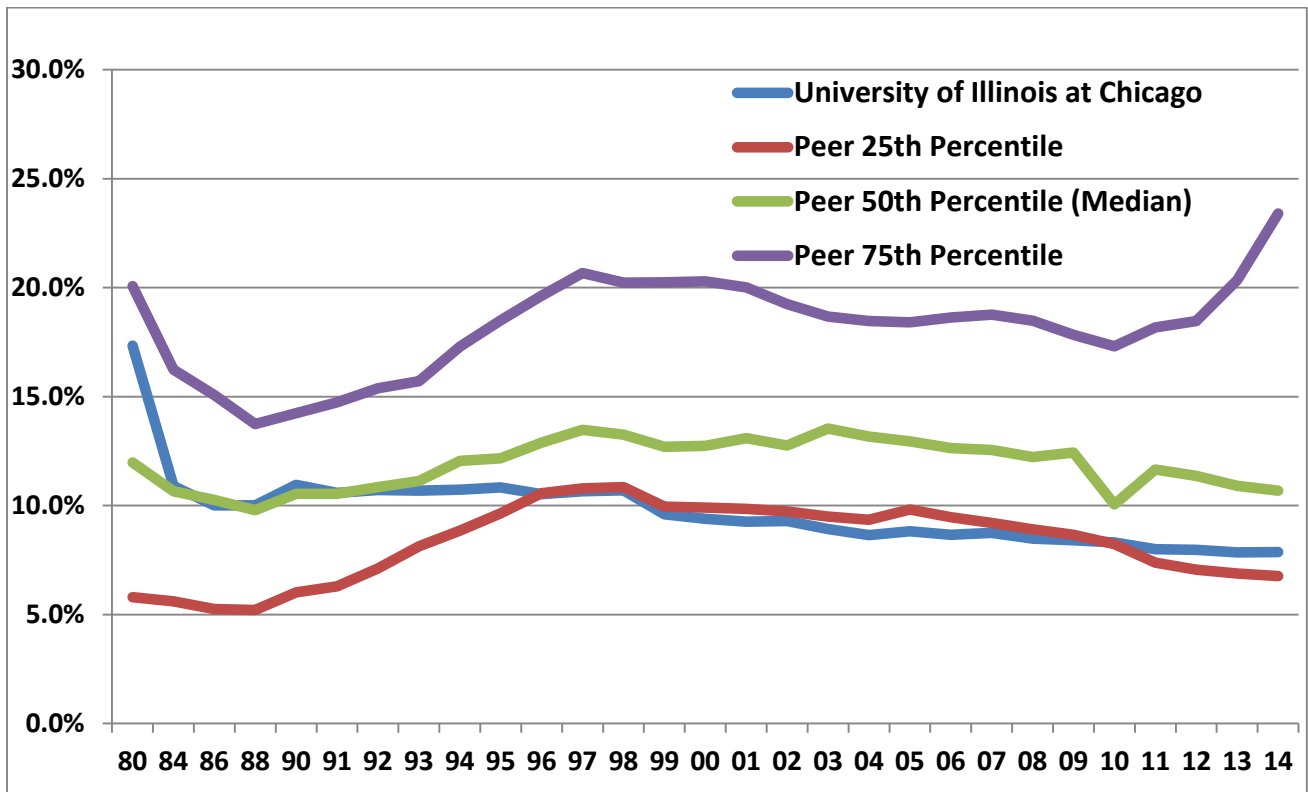
Upon being readmitted and/or reactivated under the provisions of this policy, pre-qualified students may apply for Academic Renewal after earning at least a 2.30 GPA on their first 12 hours following re-enrollment. Thereafter, the student must meet the standard for continuation in the university Academic Good Standing policy.

Upon meeting the Academic Renewal requirements, previously completed courses in which grades below a D+ or below were earned will be forgiven. The recomputed GPA will be calculated from the courses in which grades of C or higher were earned. All courses taken will appear on the academic record and count toward attempted hours. Grades will be forgiven only once during a student's career and cannot be reversed.

Students cannot combine the Academic Renewal Policy and the Grade Replacement Policy.

Appendix E-African American Student Faculty Data Compared to Peer Group

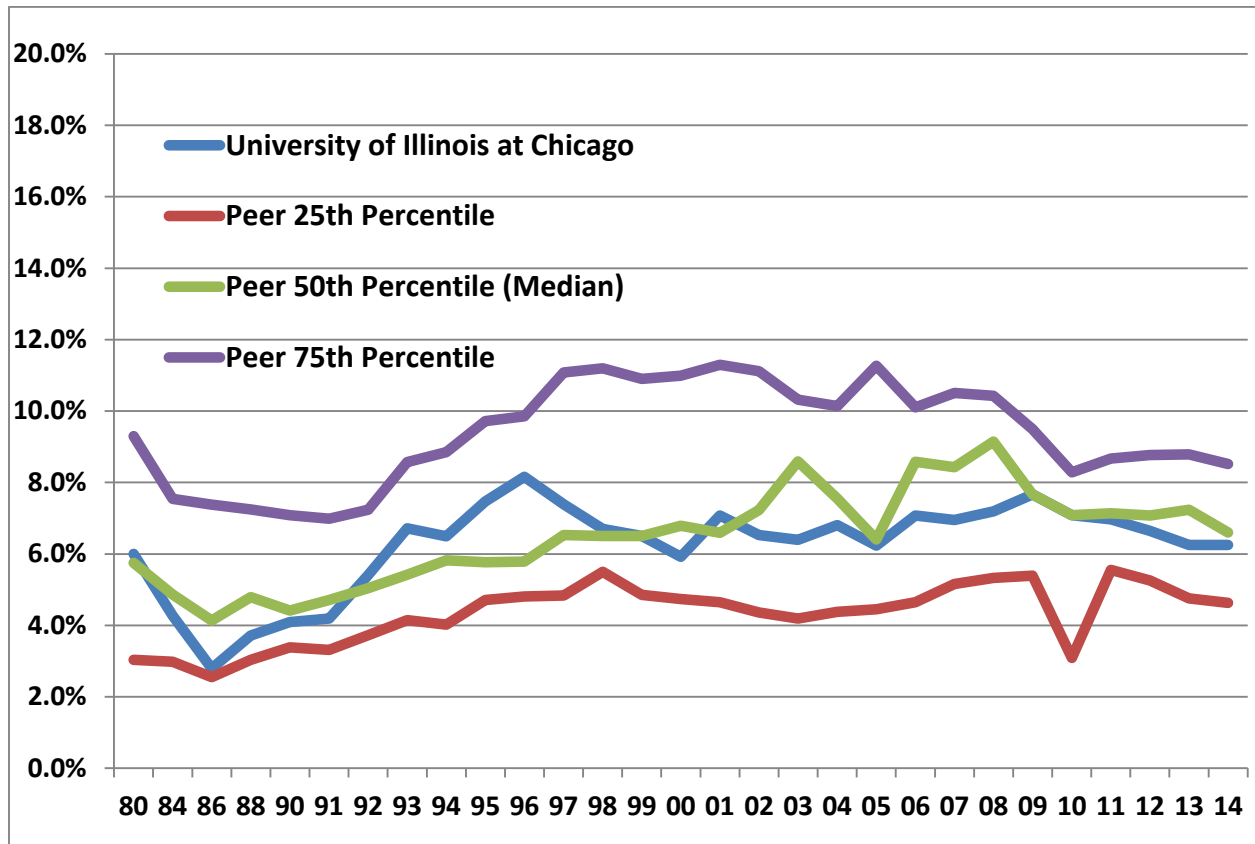
**UIC Black Undergraduate Student Comparison to Peer Group Institutions,
1980-2014**



List of UIC Peer Institutions

- SUNY, University at Buffalo
- U of Alabama at Birmingham
- U of Cincinnati
- U of Connecticut
- U of Louisville
- U of S Florida - Tampa
- U of Utah
- VCU

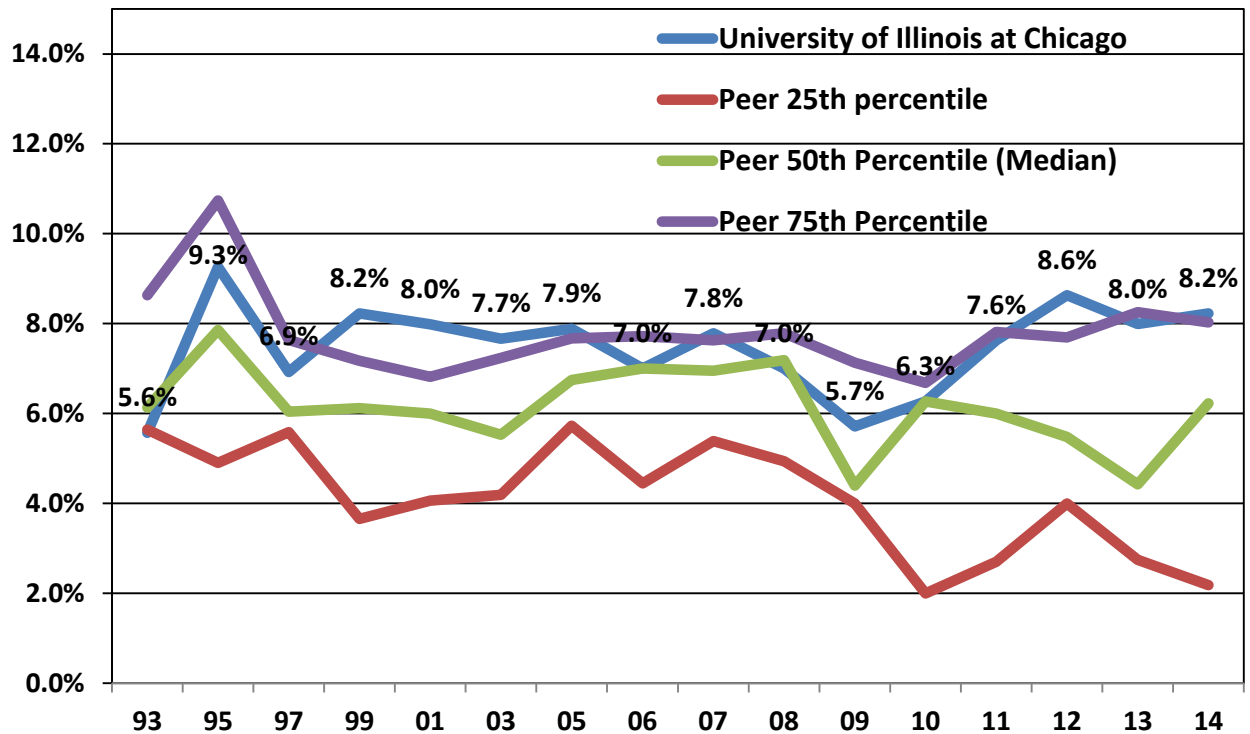
UIC Black Graduate Student Comparison to Peer Group Institutions, 1980-2014



List of UIC Peer Institutions

- SUNY, University at Buffalo
- U of Alabama at Birmingham
- U of Cincinnati
- U of Connecticut
- U of Louisville
- U of S Florida - Tampa
- U of Utah
- VCU

UIC Black Tenure-Track Faculty Comparison to Peer Institutions, 1993-2014

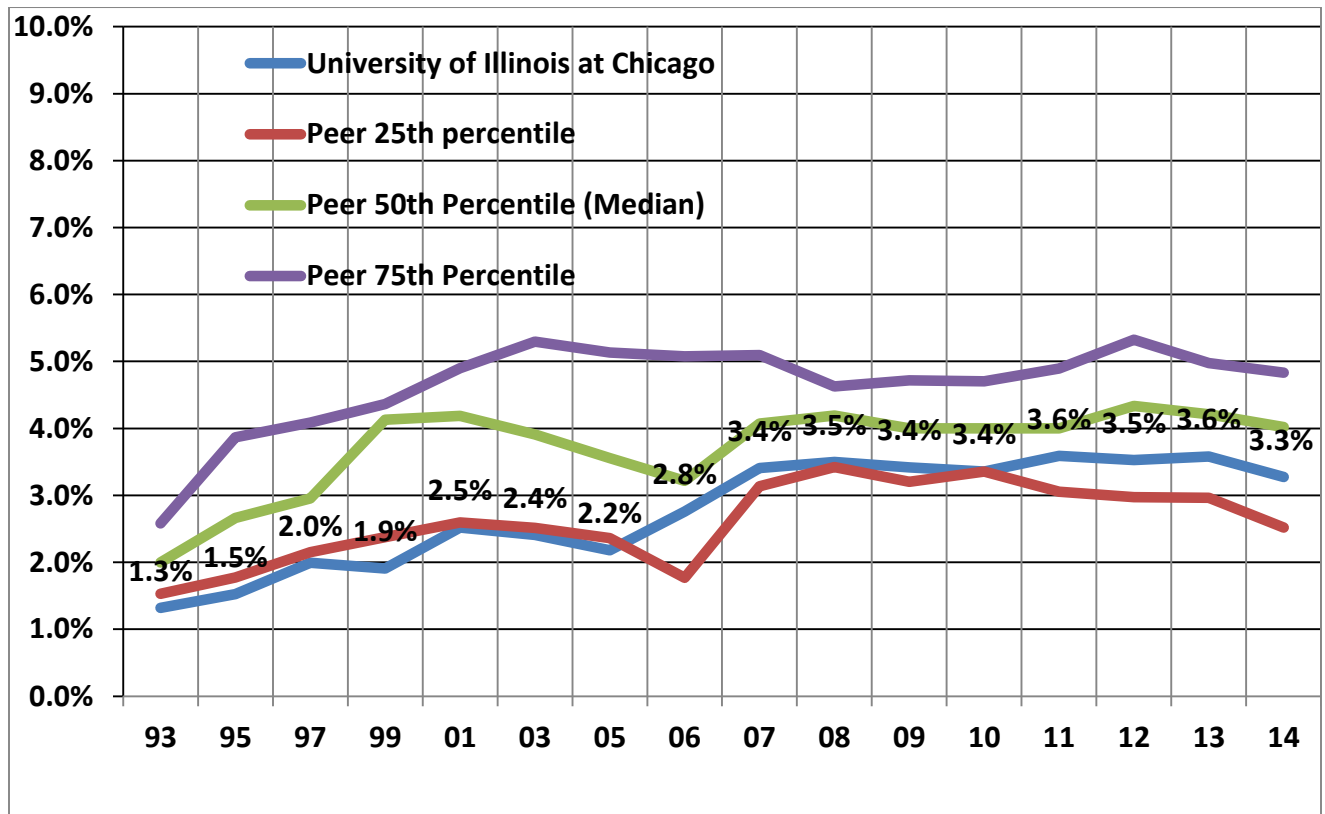


Note: Data from 1994, 1996, 2000, 2002, and 2004 were excluded from the analysis because too few institutions reported information. Source: IPEDS

List of UIC Peer Institutions

- SUNY, University at Buffalo
- U of Alabama at Birmingham
- U of Cincinnati
- U of Connecticut
- U of Louisville
- U of S Florida - Tampa
- U of Utah
- VCU

UIC Black Tenured Faculty Comparison to Peer Institutions, 1993-2014



Note: Data from 1994, 1996, 2000, 2002, and 2004 were excluded from the analysis because too few institutions reported information. Source: IPEDS

List of UIC Peer Institutions

- SUNY, University at Buffalo
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Appendix F-Focus Group Notes

Task Force on the Progression and Success of African American Students

Focus Group Notes

March 15, 2016 Focus Group Comments (Paraphrasing some comments)

- We don't see opportunities to hear our voices.
- Why don't we see more Black faces on a campus in Chicago!?
- People look down when they pass me on campus sometime (I assume) because they think I am going to rob them or something!
- I had trouble with writing and therefore the Writing Center was very supportive for me
- We have a lot of issues in life in addition to school. This complicates school life
- Calumet City school (predominately black) was sub-par school, so I was ill prepared when I arrived at UIC. Also, I had to balance problems at home with school.
- I didn't know about TRIO, AAAN. Things are not in plain sight. Just found out about the cultural centers after 2 years of being here.
- I feel I had no support as a transfer student. I just searched for AAAN on my own.
- Orientation leaders were weak links and glossed over a lot that we should have been told about.
- Why are helpful offices so far away in SSB, they should be on main campus.
- I have too many advisors-AAAN, LAS, and Honors. They need to work together more.
- I shifted from CHEM Major to African American History because I was shocked in terms of what was expected in CHEM. I was interested in forensic science, but could not do it. I was not prepared.
- I didn't try to utilize my professors in chemistry too much. There is so much you need to know and some students have better prep and know how to take the exams. I didn't have test-taking skills.
- Big issue is "inclusion." This campus is "eat or be eaten." My HS didn't teach CHEM so when I came here I just wasn't ready. We should have our UIC profs visit a CPS high school Chemistry class to see what it is like. Their approach and expectations might change.
- People don't want to leave campus late because it's not safe. Its too expensive to live on campus.
- There is no real community because its a commuter school.
- We're not being taught sciences before we come. UIC could invest in HS students who are likely to come here to help them improve and be better prepared.
- I was bio major, I switched because it was too hard and I was ill-prepared.
- Lots of African American students think "I want to be a doctor", but they change. They also don't know other options if they are first generation in their family or even on their block to come to college. They don't know other career options.
- Resources need to be more widely publicized, especially TRIO, very supportive

- In LAS Advising-there is professionalism, but not personalism. There is no caring relationship with a person. WE need someone who believes in students. That exists in TRIO, but not LAS
- Three of my friends left because they owed housing money and could not pay it.
- Student billing is a huge problem!
- Students are trying to find money. Someone dropped out because they owed \$9K.
- The school doesn't work with us as much as they should to help figure out finances
- I am working in summer and struggling. UIC doesn't know what our lives are like.
- Having the "U pass" for the CTA (public transportation) helps, it shows my school cares about us, and wants to give us a little help in surviving.
- Money is a big stress!
- When I go to financial aid office, I think why did I even come here. There is no help they just tell you to pay up.
- People don't have patience, an African American TA was the only person who helped me.
- Two themes: Care and Finance-we need to feel cared about, coming from a different place in life.
- Transfer students are at a disadvantage because they may not enough UIC credit hours to be eligible for certain scholarships.
- "I don't feel invested in UIC" - because as an older student I get no special attention.
- "No one cares that you are here" is how I feel.
- "I've been followed by security and people look at me like "why are you were?""
- Stumbled upon AAST and AAAN but they were good finds.
- Some African American students have to take responsibility because some don't use services that are offered.
- One student got sick and wanted to get out of her housing contract in order to go home and to be with her mom. She couldn't break contract, so she sank into debt.
- Many African American and other students can't go home and study because of younger siblings who would interfere with studying or gun violence in the neighborhood that would prevent commuting home late at night from UIC library.
- I have homeless friends who are couch surfing and trying to stay in school at the same time. When you know this is going on, there should be compassion from the Chancellor.
- 1st year I felt discouraged....(College of Education)...Counselor was good in advising her to take a range of courses so she didn't get discouraged.
- Living on campus is necessary for many black students because they cannot easily get back and forth to their family homes or there is no study area at home (and neighborhoods are not safe).
- Don't we have space unused? PSR-west campus-has a lot of empty rooms and there are students in need of housing.
- Support services need more funding to be able to really help us.
- Students with limited free hours- who are working and commuting long distances cannot make it over to SSB easily to seek out services from AAAN. A better location would help us use the services.

- More regular open houses and a job fair would let us know what services and opportunities are out there at UIC.
- Professors come from really good schools and don't always understand the high school experiences we come from.
- I like that my friends are here and we can study at night together but campus housing is expensive.
- Mr. Kwame in TRIO (and Alex in AAAN) care about us. We can talk with them about life and school. People are rooting for you in AAAN and this encourages you to continue on
- I met my friends through AAAN and they have been a great source of help and support.
- The Writing Center is a good support.
- Kwame and Todd Bird "were pulling for me"-1st role model-finding troubleshooting solutions and navigating the bureaucracy.

March 16 Focus Group

- There is a lack of Blacks in engineering, no role models.
- I was told "you're smart for" and the person seemed surprised because I was black.
- Engineering student-I shouldn't have to join a group or go to AAAN to see people like me.
- Professors sometimes treat Black students differently-coming to class late and more sympathetic to white students. If you are the only Black student in a class and you miss a class, it is obvious since you stand out anyway.
- No Black professors in Psychology and we are craving for one.
- Psychology (X 2) Advising "sucks"-assumption is that the student knows how to navigate. I also work full time and don't have extra time to figure out how everything works.
- Want Black role models in the faculty
- Its hard to go out and find extracurricular activities if you work and live far
- Advisors in Psych are unhelpful, unfriendly, inflexible. Students made to feel badly if they don't know something (and are afraid to ask a second time).
- I was asked are you sure you want that major (finance). It's so hard. I was offended.
- I have complaints about having transfer credits accepted from HBCU.
- In English class we talked about public housing and Professor assumed a black student was from public housing and looked at her for answers about racial profiling
- Pairing students with upper class person is a good idea
- Student was arrested in advising because he joked about not getting services. He is now on probation. Barred from housing. Claims he was roughed up by campus police for saying "White people act like I am going to blow up something." It was a joke.
- Cold environment for Black students.
- As theatre major, very little advising and low funding in theatre. Sometimes advisor doesn't seem to know or be interested in students
- Its confusing what your options are if you have a financial hold.

- Poor service is a student problem, not an African American problem.
- Are financial issues “Black” issues if they are not exclusive to Black students. Most concluded yes because impact is often compounded because of other variables, and there is a high correlation between economic inequality and racial inequality.
- I feel isolated. There were 9 black Engineering students in my cohort and 1/3 of them have fallen away.
- I have the perception that Latino students are doing better and Black students and I wonder why?
- Some students went two HBCUs because they were offered full scholarships and atmosphere was more affirming and welcoming.
- UIC should have another high school where it ‘grows its own’ African American students.
- Socially at Loyola I felt a warmer campus culture. Black and Asian students work together more at Loyola.
- Welcome at UIC was not at all warm
- UIC should try to get more Black professors in Engineering and Finance (This was a repeated request)

March 17 Focus Group

- Two thirds of the students expressed financial problems of various sorts. The following are some comments:

“there seem to be so many fees, my bill was higher than I thought it would be.”

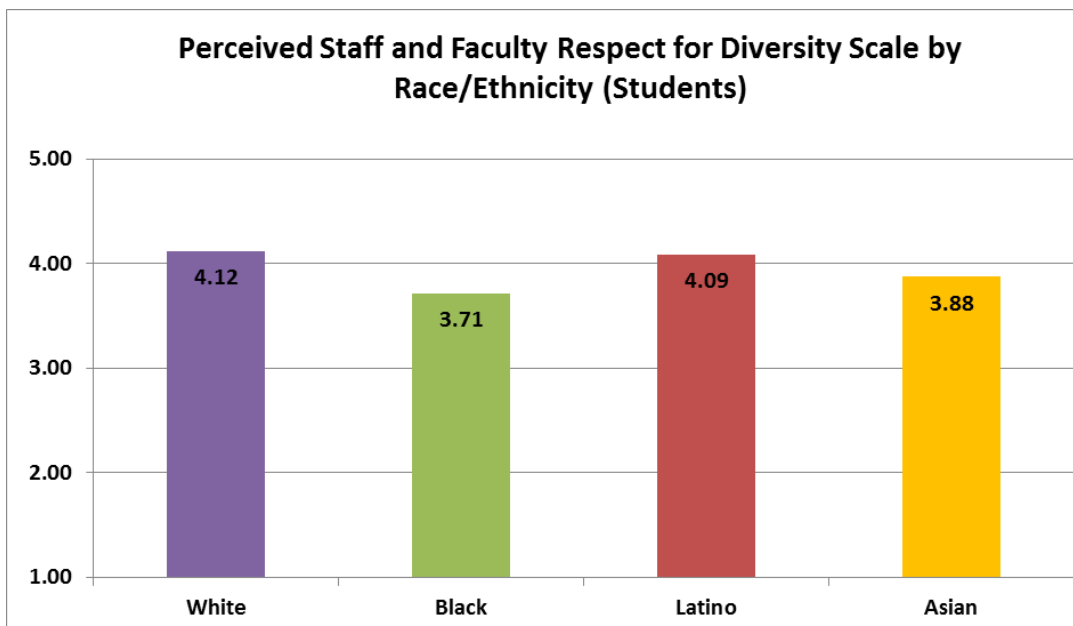
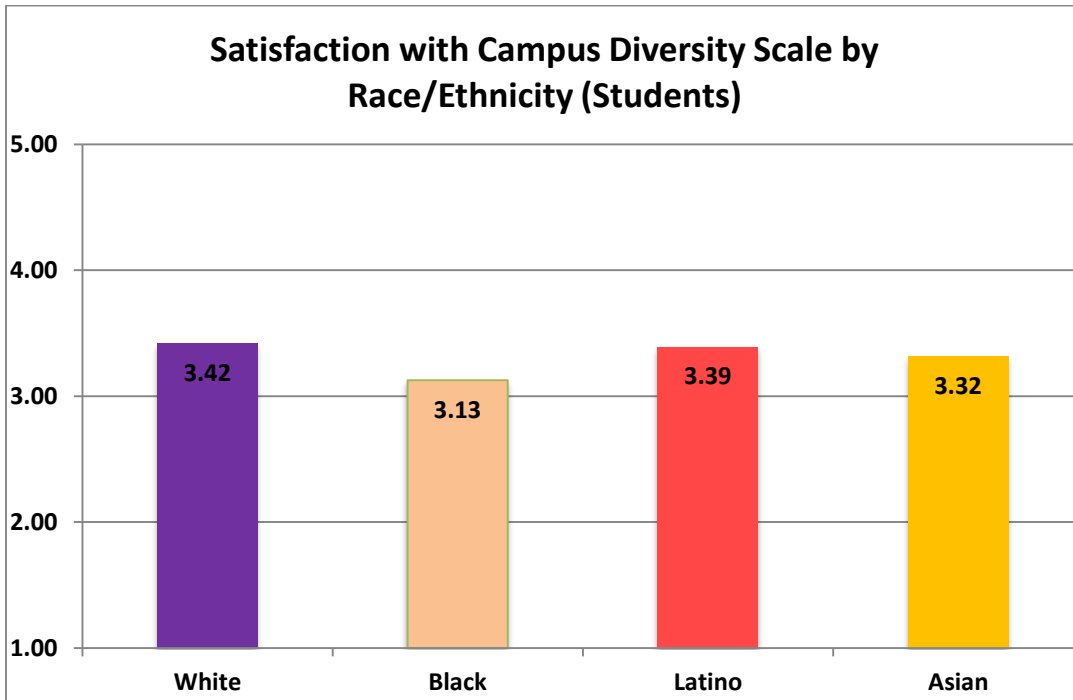
“students who come out of foster care system or whose parents did not go to college, don’t have anyone to guide them through financial aid process.”

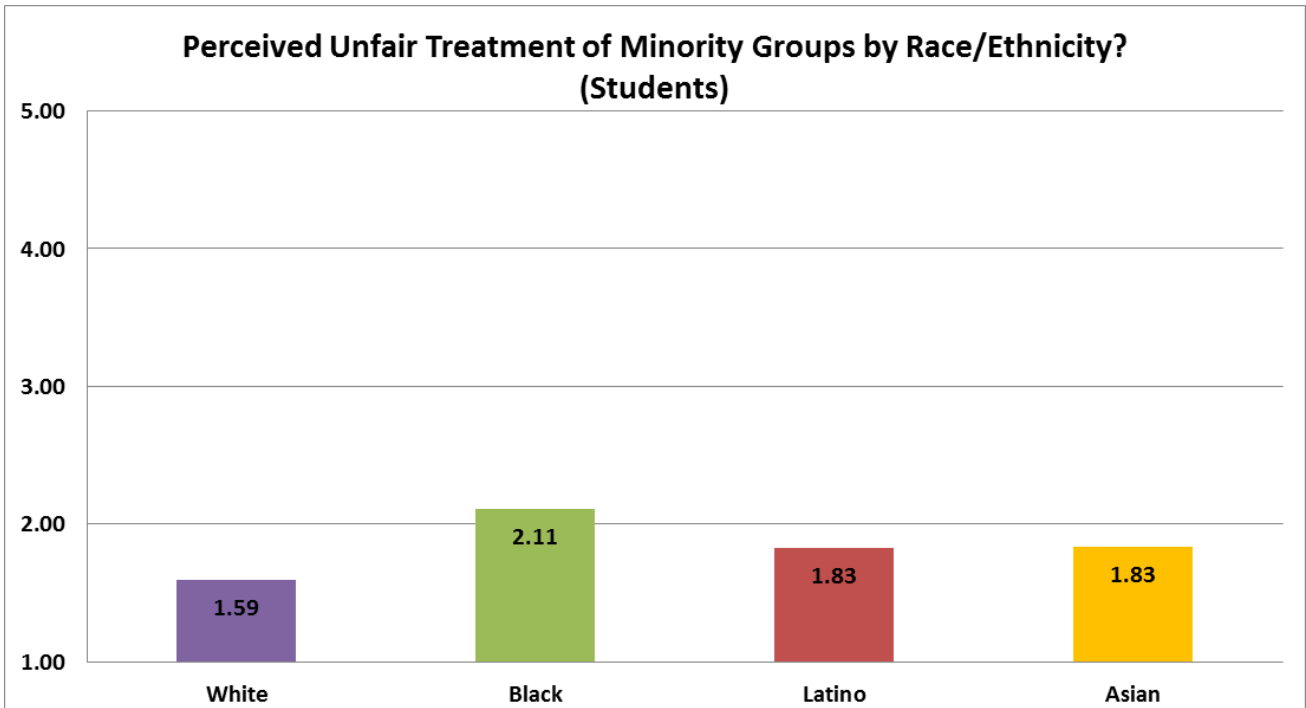
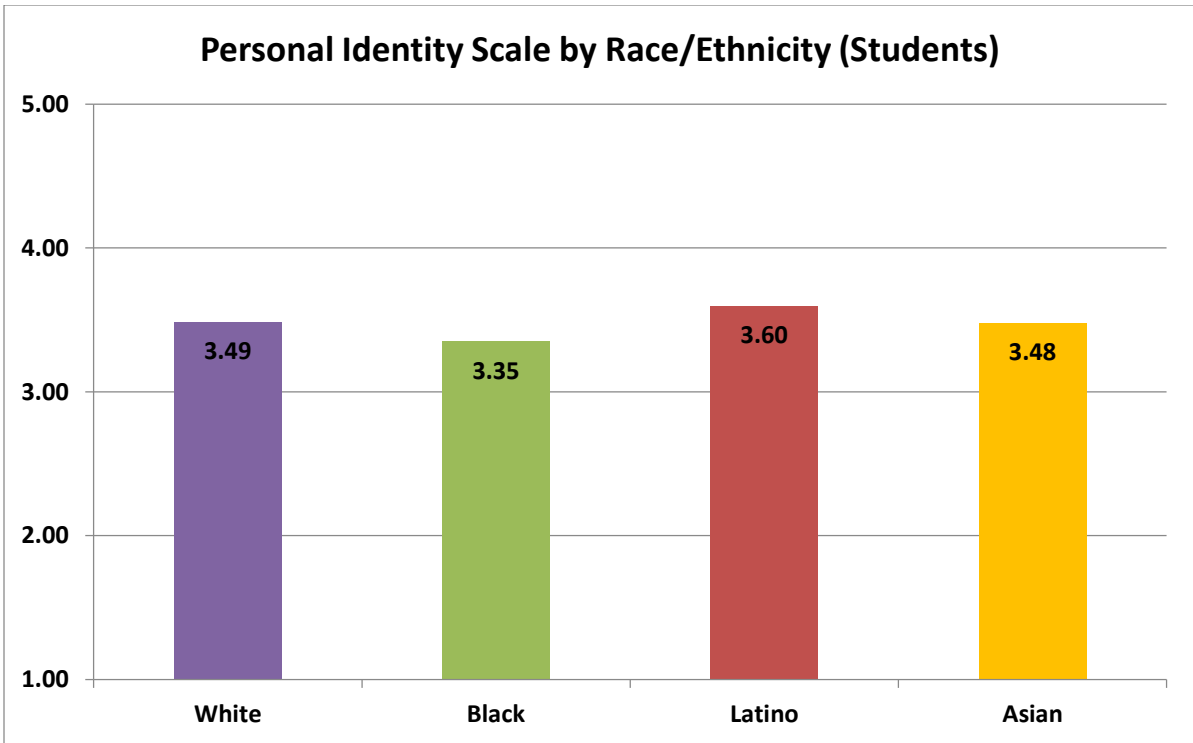
“housing is expensive but the commute makes it hard to stay on campus for study sessions and extracurricular activities.”

- Most of the students were transfer students. They felt this added to the burden of figuring out what credits were needed because all credits did not transfer with them so they felt “behind” and “discouraged”
- Students said they don’t feel a part of communities here. There are not enough black student groups or social activities to create community outside of the classroom.
- Some students admitted to having misconceptions about what certain majors entailed and having to change majors late in the game.
- “In LAS advising was horrible and I felt they just didn’t care. They give you advice but it is cold and they don’t think of how your finances will be effected.”
- One student was offended by LAS advisor telling her that maybe she should drop out and take a ‘break.’ The student said she could not afford to ‘take a break’ which would put her further behind in her goals.
- In contrast several students said AAAN advising was more personal and caring. “They care.” “AAAN was great.” “They follow up and ask why” “They make it personal.”
- One student was impressed that a white bio professor reached out to ask how could he be more supportive of AA students.
- “There are not enough black advisors that we can relate to.”

- Two students complained about orientation not being comprehensive enough in terms of services available to black students.
- One student applauded AAAN but said the location is inconvenient and the computers are old but even with these inconveniences it was an affirming space for African American students.
- “Even though some black staff can be insensitive, we do need more black faculty and staff.”
- “Some staff and programs seem to be in competition for recognition – CHANCE vs. TRIO vs. AAAN, even though they should be working together.”
- Some students felt they got conflicting or confusing advice from different advisors but another one gave example of a situation when all of his advisors were in communication with one another to help him solve a problem. “That is how it is supposed to work.”
- One student said she felt alienated and for the most part black students felt they had to “fend for themselves.”
- One student complained that in the College of Education she felt there were faculty teaching about black people who did not “know” black people. Felt a disconnect there.
- Two students expressed insecurities of being the “only” black student in a class and how that makes their success more difficult. “I cannot ‘blend in’ or be invisible when I want to like other students can.” The student sometimes felt she was expected to ‘represent’ her race. One professor in a large class said to the student, “I noticed you were not here last week.” The absence was ‘noticeable’ because the student was the only black face in the room. She felt self-conscious and conspicuous.
- One student who attended an HBCU said UIC was so big and impersonal she felt that others viewed her as “inferior.”
- Most students have not had a SINGLE African American professor in all of their time at UIC other than those who were African American Department majors or minors.
- Some professors are awkward when issues of race come up in class. One professor made a joke with a student that had to do with race but the student did not take offense, but it was the awkward professor trying to connect. Another African American student might well have taken offense as the reaction of the larger group suggested.
- One student took offense at Professors expressing opinions that could be interpreted by others as racist even if not intended that way. Although one professor was “making fun” of the eye shape of Asian students to make a point unrelated to race and a black student in the class was offended. There were apparently no Asian or Asian Americans in the class.
- *There is clearly lack of racial sensitivity on the part of some faculty. There is also a difficulty that some black students have in knowing how to fully and clearly articulate and respond to the negative feeling or impression they feel from a certain interaction.*
- One professor in SPH made a comment about two guest speakers who were black formerly incarcerated men working with a community engagement program in the school. The prof. jokingly remarked “I thought they were going to rob me” in the elevator. Student felt this was racist and fostered stereotypes about Black criminality. This statement compromised students trust and rapport with the professor.
- One student said she felt isolated in her biology classes where there were no other black students. She felt she had to go out and find “community” after class, whereas white students seemed to readily connect with others in the class.
- One student talked about how motivated she is when she sees “black excellence” on campus in the form of successful black faculty or administrators. It inspires her to work harder.
- The lack of a gathering place for black students on main campus was repeatedly expressed as a problem.

- Several students, when asked, had heard white students use racial 'epithets' including the "N" word. It was surprising that this seems so routine that they did not bring it up without being asked but once asked many had overheard such terms. It was not said "to" them per se and African American students speculated that the white students did not see themselves as necessarily expressing hostility.



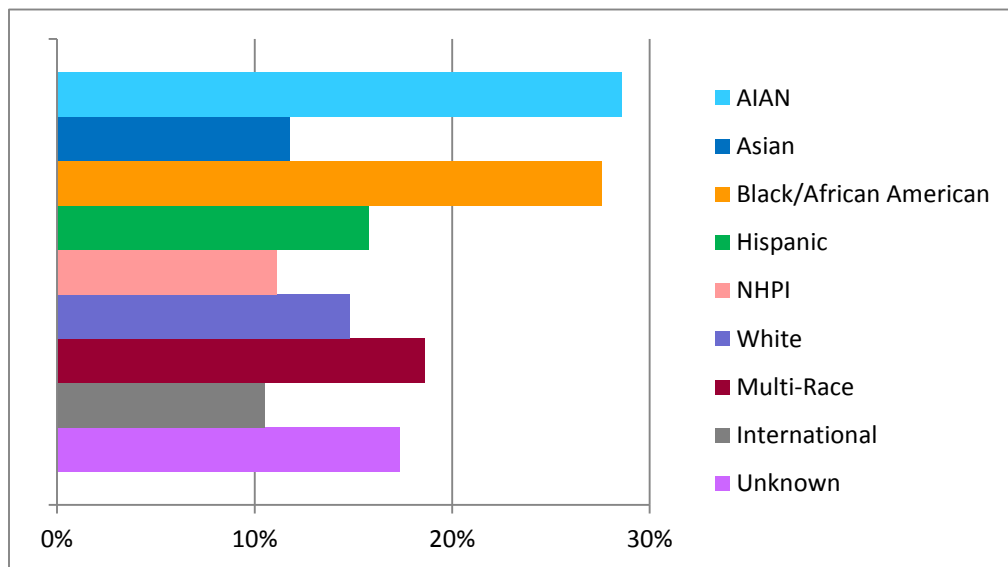


Appendix H College or Liberal Arts and Sciences Data

Fall 2015 LAS Undergraduates by Fin Aid Type

Fall 2015	Total	PELL (Fed. Grant)	UIC Grant	MAP (State Grant)	Loan (Any)
Amer. Indian or AK Native	7	71%	57%	71%	43%
Asian	2,136	54%	51%	49%	39%
Black/African American	831	67%	58%	58%	60%
Hispanic	2,927	67%	63%	62%	39%
Native HI or Pacific Islander	18	39%	22%	17%	39%
White	2,805	43%	40%	38%	43%
Two or More Races	242	45%	41%	38%	47%
International	151	1%	1%	1%	4%
Unknown	121	60%	59%	55%	44%
Total	9,238	55%	51%	49%	42%

LAS Undergraduates: % with Financial Hold as of 11/3/2015



**LAS First-Time, Full-Time Cohorts 6-Year
Graduation Rates
Race/Ethnicity by Financial Holds**

		<i>Cohorts</i>									Percentage with Hold for 2009
		2007			2008			2009			
		Total	Grad	%	Total	Grad	%	Total	Grad	%	
<i>Asian Pacific Isl.</i>	No Hold	636	426	67%	535	362	68%	537	370	69%	
	Hold	14	0	0%	11	1	9%	16	3	19%	3%
<i>Total Asian Pacific Isl.</i>	Total	650	426	66%	546	363	67%	553	373	68%	
<i>Black NonHispanic</i>	No Hold	196	104	53%	182	104	57%	137	75	55%	
	Hold	73	6	8%	48	3	6%	47	9	19%	26%
<i>Total Black NonHispanic</i>	Total	269	110	41%	230	107	47%	184	84	46%	
<i>Hispanic</i>	No Hold	405	212	52%	412	250	61%	422	246	58%	
	Hold	38	1	3%	29	2	7%	37	6	16%	8%
<i>Total Hispanic</i>	Total	443	213	48%	441	252	57%	459	252	55%	
<i>White</i>	No Hold	849	495	58%	728	468	64%	677	441	65%	
	Hold	23	2	9%	27	3	11%	18	1	6%	3%
<i>Total White</i>	Total	872	497	57%	755	471	62%	695	442	64%	
<i>AIAN</i>	No Hold	3	2	67%	3	2	67%	3	0	0%	
<i>Total AIAN</i>	Total	3	2	67%	3	2	67%	3	0	0%	
<i>International</i>	No Hold	19	13	68%	20	17	85%	19	11	58%	
	Hold	2	0	0%	3	0	0%	2	0	0%	10%
<i>Total International</i>	Total	21	13	62%	23	17	74%	21	11	52%	
<i>Unknown</i>	No Hold	112	67	60%	89	57	64%	75	53	71%	
	Hold	6	1	17%	7	0	0%	6	0	0%	7%
<i>Total Unknown</i>	Total	118	68	58%	96	57	59%	81	53	65%	
<i>Total</i>	No Hold	222	131					187			
	Hold	0	9	59%	1969	1260	64%	0	1196	64%	
<i>Total</i>	Total	156	10	6%	125	9	7%	126	19	15%	6%
<i>Grand Total</i>		237	132					199			
		6	9	56%	2094	1269	61%	6	1215	61%	

Note: All students are included above as the impact of financial holds on academic standing has not been investigated.

Financial holds are all current and active and include financial hold, collections hold and "account written off."

These types of holds prevent students from registering or receiving a transcript.

Graduation Rate for Black/African American Students Eligible to Return

Cohorts	2007	2008	2009
No Hold	72%	78%	71%
Hold	30%	13%	36%

Appendix I-Data from Office of Institutional Research (OIR)-Financial Aid Summary (Fall 2015)

Metric	All	African-American	Source	Notes
First-time Full-time Freshmen: Financial Aid				
# of students	3,448	363	Common Data Set (CDS)	Line H2a
# who applied for financial aid	3,150	355	CDS	Line H2b
% who applied for financial aid	91%	98%		Calculation
# who were awarded need-based financial aid	2,328	297	CDS	Line H2e
% who were awarded need-based financial aid	68%	82%		Calculation
# who received any need based self-help aid	1,823	264	CDS	Line H2f
% who received any need based self-help aid	53%	73%		Calculation
Average need based gift award	\$13,925	\$16,020	CDS	Line H2k
Average need-based self-help award	\$3,582	\$4,013	CDS	Line H2l
Average need-based loan	\$3,272	\$3,265	CDS	Line H2m
average % of need met for those who received need-based aid	62%	65%	CDS	Line H2i
First-time Full-time Freshmen: Family Income Distribution (Financial aid applicants only)				
\$0-30,000	38%	51%	OIR Office	
\$30,001-48,000	23%	21%	OIR Office	
\$48,001-75,000	18%	14%	OIR Office	
\$75,001-110,000	10%	7%	OIR Office	
\$110,00 and over	10%	7%	OIR Office	

Metric	All	African-American	Source	Notes
Degree Seeking Undergraduates: Financial Aid				
# of degree seeking undergraduates	15,982	1,477	CDS	Line H2a
# of degree seeking undergraduates who applied for financial aid (completed FAFSA)	13,542	1,403	CDS	Line H2b
% of degree seeking undergraduates who applied for financial aid	85%	95%		Calculation
# of degree seeking undergraduates who were awarded need-based financial aid	9,930	1,169	CDS	Line H2e
% of degree seeking undergraduates who were awarded need-based financial aid	62%	79%		Calculation
# who received any need based self-help aid	9,845	1,110	CDS	Line H2f
% who received any need based self-help aid	62%	75%		Calculation
Average need based gift award	\$13,132	\$14,671	CDS	Line H2k
Average need-based self-help award	\$4,534	\$4,839	CDS	Line H2l
Average need-based loan	\$4,276	\$4,134	CDS	Line H2m
Average Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	\$8,306	\$5,885	UIC Office of Student Financial Aid	
Average % of need met for those who received need-based aid	62%	65%	CDS	Line H2i
% Stafford loan recipients	57%	73%	UIC Office of Student Financial Aid	
% MAP recipients	57%	61%	UIC Office of Student Financial Aid	

Metric	All	African American	Source	Notes
% Pell recipients	65%	73%	UIC Office of Student Financial Aid	
% UI grant recipients	60%	68%	UIC Office of Student Financial Aid	

Metric	All	African-American	Source	Notes
Degree Seeking Undergraduates: Tuition and Fees Paid Directly by Students/Families Fall 2015 (Net Cost)				
\$0	20%	38%	OIR Office	
\$1-999	18%	16%	OIR Office	
\$1,000-1,999	7%	8%	OIR Office	
\$2,000-2,999	6%	7%	OIR Office	
\$3,000-3,999	3%	4%	OIR Office	
\$4,000-less than full	11%	12%	OIR Office	
Full tuition and fees	35%	17%	OIR Office	
Indebtedness (2014-15 Graduates)				
% of graduating class with student loan debt	63%	91%	OIR Office	
Average debt	\$24,606	\$29,377	OIR Office	

Retention and Graduation Rates				
One year retention for first-time full-time undergraduates (entering Fall 2014)	82%	82%	Common Data Set and IPEDS	
One year retention: on academic hold (FT/FT entering Fall 2014)	56%	65%	OIR Office	
One year retention: on financial hold (FT/FT entering Fall 2014)	77%	79%	OIR Office	
Six-year graduation rate (Fall 2009 entering cohort)	60%	42%	Common Data Set and IPEDS	
Degree Seeking Undergraduates: Age				
Mean age	21.2	21.7	OIR Office	
Median age	20.0	20.0	OIR Office	
2015-16 New Transfer Students				
# Fall 2015 new transfers	1,569	132	OIR Office	
# Spring 2015 new transfers	765	74	OIR Office	
# 2015-16 new transfers	2,334	206	OIR Office	
% of total transfers	100%	8.8%	OIR Office	