



Illinois Education Research Council

The Graduating Class of 2002

Developing an Analysis Framework for
Policy Relevance

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Overview

- Aligning Data Sources
- The Data Dictionary
- Pondering A New Tack



Aligning Data Sources

- Contributors to the Class of 2002
 - IBHE/ACT
 - Student information
 - ICCB & ISEG
 - Enrollment Semester & Credits (transfer credits 2006+)
 - NSC
 - Enrollment Date
 - Open to others...



The Data Dictionary

- How can we define variables for the longitudinal study that best depict the choices made by the state, institutions within the state, and the students?



The Data Dictionary

- Jumping in, let's define "Transfer"
- Variations in the level of analysis:
 - Credits
 - Requirements
 - Institution Type
 - 4 to 4, 2 to 4, 2 to 2



The Data Dictionary

- **Variations in defining Transfer**
 - ICCB:
 - The National Transfer Assembly Approach to determine Transfer Rate
 - Tracks entering students with no prior college who completed 12 + credits at the community college for four years.
 - Less than 12 credits (?)
 - Illinois Shared Enrollment and Graduation Database
 - Community College Transfer Cohort
 - Variable identifying if the student met criteria of the National Transfer Assembly Approach
 - Illinois Articulation Initiative
 - General Education Transfer package, plus institutional considerations
 - (12 Reasons to Stay in Illinois - state institutions)
 - NCES *Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS)*
 - Transfer: “A transfer occurred when the student left one institution and enrolled at another institution for four or more months” (Berkner, He, and Cataldi, 2003, p.247)
 - Dr. Linda Serra Hagedorn (2004)
 - Transfer: “The act of enrolling and attending a four-year college or university after first attending and earning college credits at a community college”
- **No firm definition, or variable, for transfer in Illinois and national dialogue**
- **Notice a Temporal Dimension (underlined), primarily linear**

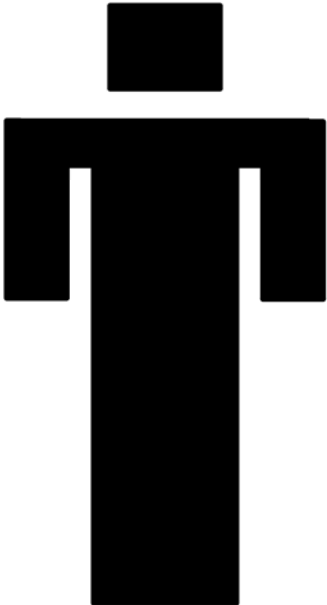


Pondering A New Tack

- “Transfer” conclusion:
 - Metaphorically, we are not talking about another branch on the tree, rather the leaves on the branch in Illinois.



Examining Student Options

| High School Graduate | Fall 2002 | Spring 2003 | ... |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----|
|  | 4-Year | 4 – Year | ... |
| | | 2 – Year | ... |
| | | Concurrent | ... |
| | | None | ... |
| | 2-Year | 4 – Year | ... |
| | | 2 – Year | ... |
| | | Concurrent | ... |
| | | None | ... |
| | Both | 4 – Year | ... |
| | | 2 – Year | ... |
| | | Concurrent | ... |
| | | None | ... |
| | None | 4 – Year | ... |
| | | 2 – Year | ... |
| | | Concurrent | ... |
| | | None | ... |

- Over four years, 12 Decision Points
- At the end of four years, 16,777,216 Different Paths to Pursue



Pondering A New Tack

- In developing a policy framework that most accurately reflects the postsecondary education dynamic in Illinois, we ask:
 - How do we best to depict the enrollment behaviors of the cohort within a decentralized context that allows for institutional autonomy while providing a guidance structure with respect to transfer decisions?



Pondering A New Tack

- One option:
 - Expand thinking from temporal/linear to align with how students use institutions
- Concurrent Enrollment
 - Enrolled in more than one institution
 - 4 & 4, 2 & 4, 2 & 2
 - Sheldon (1981) termed “Expediter”
 - Student who enroll in the community college to obtain extra credits.
- Pros
 - Captures the use of all institutions in the state/national dataset
 - Includes those with less than 12 hours at the community college
- Cons
 - Don’t know who “officially” changed institutions



Pondering A New Tack

- **Another Option:**
 - Depict institutional preferences
- **Number of Institutions Attended**
 - List the number of 4-year and 2-year institutions an individual received prior to earning a baccalaureate degree or at the end of a set period of time.
- **Pros:**
 - Captures the use of all institutions in the state/national dataset
 - Includes Dual Enrollment (potential)
 - Includes those with less than 12 hours at the community college
- **Cons:**
 - Don't know who "officially" changed institutions



Thank You

- Other options...

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