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Picturing inequity: An infographic report on persistence and completion for men in the California community college

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Picturing Inequity:
An Infographic Report on Persistence and Completion for Men in the California Community College

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Presented by
M²C³
Minority Male Community College Collaborative

A²MEND
African American Male Education Network & Development
"Every system is perfectly designed to achieve the results it gets"

(attributed to W. Edward Deming)
On July 14, 2009, President Obama announced the goal that community colleges would graduate five million more certificate and degree earners by the year 2020. Prior to and since then, there has been a flurry of initiatives to increase student success outcomes in postsecondary education. At the national level, a large focus of the completion agenda has prioritized the creation of logical measures of success and the disaggregation of data to understand how outcomes differ between student groups. Initiatives such as the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation), Complete College America, Skills for America’s Future, and the Complete to Compete initiative (lead by the National Governors Association) are examples of these efforts (Mullin, 2012; Wood & Harrison, 2014).

At the state level, policymakers in numerous states (e.g., Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Oregon, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin) have set graduation goals. Some states even set goals to double the total number of college graduates. Like these states, California has also responded to this movement by initiating the Student Success Task Force which identified best practices that could improve educational outcomes for community colleges. One of the recommendations derived from the task force was that the California Community College Chancellor’s Office “establish state and local student success goals…[and] post a score card highlighting a select number of metrics that show student progress” (Student Success Task Force, 2012, p. 2). Moreover, the Task Force noted that the score card should include disaggregated data to create more transparency about achievement gaps between groups. This is a particularly important recommendation given that community colleges struggle to facilitate success outcomes for Black, Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Southeast Asian students that are on par with White and some Asian American students (Community College League of California, 2010). The report began with a quote attributed to W. Edward Deming “every system is perfectly designed to achieve the results it gets”. Thus, the responsibility for these inequitable outcomes should be placed on the college system itself, not the students served by that system.
Purpose

While the main scorecard website disaggregates student outcomes by gender, age, and racial/ethnic affiliation, the intersection of these and other demographic characteristics (e.g., income, disability status) are not as readily available. However, these data are accessible via a separate source, the Chancellor’s Office Data Mart. In the spirit of transparency, we believe there is a need to highlight outcomes that explores finer differences between groups.

Coinciding with the student success movement, researchers and educators have become attuned to and concerned by deleterious outcomes for men, particularly men of color. This has resulted in a proliferation of conferences, symposia, programs, books, and journals dedicated to exploring and enhancing their outcomes (Harper, 2010). National trends have shown that on most measures of student success, Black, Latino, Native American, and Southeast Asian men experience dismal success. However, much of the focus on these men has addressed their outcomes in four-year colleges and universities (Harris & Wood, 2013; Wood, 2013). This is a particularly important point, given that the community college serves as the primary pathway into postsecondary education for men of color (Bush & Bush, 2010). For example, 83.4% of all Black and 81.5% of all Latino men enrolled in California public postsecondary education attend community colleges.

Given the ubiquitous focus on student outcomes and newly released scorecard data, this report presents persistence and completion outcomes for men in the California community colleges. In line with the heightened concern among educators about men of color, this report disaggregates these data by racial/ethnic affiliation to illustrate how different male groups fare in the system. This report highlights a number of distinctions between groups that should serve as a clarion call for an enhanced focus on student success for men of color.
Methods and Data Source

Data presented in this pictorial report are derived from the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, Management Information Systems Data Mart. Specifically, these data were derived from the Student Success Scorecard Metrics system. This system features intermediate progress and completion outcomes for both individual colleges and the entire state. Statewide persistence and completion rates are presented in this report. These outcomes are defined by Data Mart (2012) as follows:

- **Persistence rate:** The percentage of first-time students with a minimum of 6 units earned who attempted any Math or English in the first three years and enrolled in the first three consecutive primary semester terms (or four quarter terms) anywhere in the community college system.
- **Completion rate:** The percentage of first-time students with a minimum of 6 units earned who attempted any Math or English in the first three years and earned AA/AS or credit Certificate; transferred to four-year institution, or achieve transfer status (60 transferrable units with a GPA of 2.0 or greater)

For these outcomes, we present disaggregated data in four categories: preparation, economic status, disability, and age. Preparation is presented in two groups, students who are college prepared (those not needing remediation) and students who are college underprepared (those needing remediation). Economic status is also divided into two subgroups, economically disadvantaged and not economically disadvantaged. The system defined students as economically disadvantaged if they received the Board of Governors fee waiver, Pell Grant, participated in CalWorks, or received support from either the Department of Social Services or the Workforce Investment Act. Data are also presented for students who do and do not receive disability services from the college. Finally, information presented in this report are also disaggregated by age into four age bands: 19 and under, 20 to 24, 25 to 49, and 50 and above.
There are several limitations to the data presented in this infographic report that are worthy of note. First, Data Mart does not disaggregate Asian populations (other than breaking out data for Filipinos and Pacific Islanders). This is a particularly important limitation given the wide variation in success among Asian populations. Specifically, Southeast Asian (e.g., Hmong, Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese) tend to have lower outcomes than other Asian men (Museus, 2009). Yet, these outcome disparities often go unrecognized when the Asian American student group is not adequately disaggregated. Second, the data presented in this report focus specifically on the system context. Thus, any differences between community presented colleges are overshadowed given that this report highlights state-level outcomes. Third, the information presented in this infographic report are derived from a single cohort that began in 2006 with outcomes tracked over a six year timeframe (2012). As such, previous cohorts may have experienced slightly different outcomes than this cohort. However, data from this cohort are used as they represent the most recent data on men in the California community colleges.
Select Results: Persistence Rates

A number of insightful differences emerged from an analysis of the Data Mart information. Select findings from this examination are presented. We begin with persistence rates, the percentage of first-time men who persisted through three semesters. Black, American Indian, and Pacific Islander men had the lowest overall persistence rates, at 61.7%, 63.9%, and 64.9%, respectively. In contrast, Filipino men had the highest persistence rate, at 70.6%. Across the board, men who were college underprepared had higher persistence rates than those who were college prepared. Black men who were college underprepared had the lowest persistence rates among this group (62.6%) while Filipino men who were underprepared had the highest persistence rates (71.5%).

Another compelling finding from this analysis was that men who were economically disadvantaged had higher persistence rates than those who were not economically disadvantaged. For instance, White men who were economically disadvantaged persisted at a 68.9% rate in comparison to 65.1% of those men who were not economically disadvantaged. Similarly, Asian men who were economically disadvantaged persisted at a 73.7% rate in comparison to a 54.4% rate for those who were not economically disadvantaged.

An additional insight gleaned from this research was that men who received disability services persisted at higher rates than those who did not. For example, 73.7% of Black who received services persisted in comparison to only 60.7% without disabilities. In like manner, Pacific Islander men receiving disability services persisted at an 81.6% rate in comparison to those not receiving disability services (at 63.9%). Data across age bands did not indicate a clear pattern of success. For example, while 83.3% of American Indian men at 50 and above persisted only 50.0% of these men at ages 25 to 49 persisted (the lowest performing age band for these men). In contrast, for Asian men, the lowest performing group was 19 and under (at 64.7%) in comparison to 20 to 24 at 77.4%.
Select Results: Completion Rates

We continue with completion rates, the percentage of first-time men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years. The lowest overall completion rates were shared by Black (38.6%), American Indian (37.8%), Latino (38.1%), and Pacific Islander (37.8%) men. In contrast, White and Asian men had markedly higher rates at 51.9% and 65.1%, respectively.

Completion rates for college prepared and college underprepared illustrated that those who were prepared for college exceeded a greater rates than those who were not prepared. For example, 50.3% of Pacific Islander men who were college prepared completed in six years, as opposed to only 34.4% who were underprepared. Similarly, 61.1% of college prepared Latino men completed in six years, while only 33.1% of underprepared men did so as well. Among the men in this analysis, the highest completion rate was for college prepared Asian men (at 80.5%) while the lowest rate belonged to college underprepared American Indian men (at 30.6%).

In terms of economic status, completion patterns were not as clear as they were for college preparation. For example, while White, Black, American Indian, Asian, and Latino men who were not economically disadvantaged had higher completion rates, the opposite was true for Filipino and Pacific Islander men. Asian men had the highest completion for economically disadvantaged men, at 60.6%, while American Indian men had the lowest rate, at 34.8%. Differences by disability status illustrate more clear patterns than economic status. Undoubtedly, men without disabilities had higher completion rates. Pacific Islander men with disabilities had the lowest completion rates (at 24.5%), followed closely by American Indian and Black men at 26.0% and 27.9%, respectively. In contrast, White and Filipino men with disabilities had completion rates at 41.9% and 40.5%.
Select Results: Completion Rates (continued)

Data disaggregated by age presented some of the most compelling findings. Patterns across age varied between racial/ethnic groups. However, one stark difference was seen for Asian men. At 19 and under, these men completed at 67.8%; however, at 50 and above, their completion dropped to 27.7%. The lowest completion rate by age band belonged to Black men at 50 years and above (26.4%), the highest performing age band for Black men was 19 and under at 39.8%). Interestingly, Pacific Islander men at 25 to 49 years old had the highest completion rates among these men (at 41.9%) while those at 20 to 24 years old had the lowest rate at 30.8%. Clearly, age band data indicate striking dissimilarities both across and within racial/ethnic groups.
Persistence Rates for Men
Black Male Persistence

Overall: 61.7%
College Prepared: 56.1%
College Underprepared: 62.6%
Economically Disadvantaged: 63.3%
Not Economically Disadvantaged: 56.1%
Black Men w/Disability: 73.7%
Black Men w/o Disability: 60.7%

Black Men by Age:
- 19 and Under: 62.0%
- 20 to 24: 55.7%
- 25 to 49: 62.9%
- 50+: 68.2%

Data represent the percentage of first-time Black men who persisted through three semesters.
American Indian (AI) Male Persistence

- **Overall:** 63.9%
- **College Prepared:** 62.8%
- **College Underprepared:** 64.3%

**Economically Disadvantaged:**
- 65.9%

**Not Economically Disadvantaged:**
- 60.7%

**AI Men w/Disability:**
- 74.1%

**AI Men w/o Disability:**
- 62.6%

**AI Men by Age**
- 19 and Under: 83.3%
- 20 to 24: 67.3%
- 25 to 49: 54.6%
- 50+: 50.0%

Data represent the percentage of first-time AI men who persisted through three semesters.
Asian Male Persistence

Overall: 66.4%
College Prepared: 58.9%
College Underprepared: 70.8%
Economically Disadvantaged: 73.7%
Not Economically Disadvantaged: 54.4%
Asian Men w/ Disability: 78.4%
Asian Men w/o Disability: 66.2%

Asian Men by Age:
- 19 and Under: 77.4%
- 20 to 24: 72.4%
- 25 to 49: 72.3%
- 50 +: (data not shown)

Data represent the percentage of first-time Asian men who persisted through three semesters.
Filipino Male Persistence

Overall
70.6%

College Prepared
68.1%

College Underprepared
71.5%

Economically Disadvantaged
73.5%

Not Economically Disadvantaged
68.0%

Filipino Men w/Disability
77.5%

Filipino Men w/o Disability
70.5%

Filipino Men by Age

- 19 and Under: 72.4%
- 20 to 24: 57.2%
- 25 to 49: 62.9%
- 50+: 50.0%

Data represent the percentage of first-time Filipino men who persisted through three semesters.
Latino Male Persistence

Overall: 65.9%
College Prepared: 63.2%
College Underprepared: 66.4%

Economically Disadvantaged:
- 67.6%
Not Economically Disadvantaged:
- 61.7%
Latino Men w/Disability:
- 76.4%
Latino Men w/o Disability:
- 65.3%

Latino Men by Age:
- 19 and Under: 67.0%
- 20 to 24: 57.1%
- 25 to 49: 62.3%
- 50+: 73.1%

Data represent the percentage of first-time Latino men who persisted through three semesters.
Pacific Islander (PI) Male Persistence

- 64.9% Overall
- 63.1% College Prepared
- 65.4% College Underprepared

- 67.1% Economically Disadvantaged
- 61.6% Not Economically Disadvantaged
- 81.6% PI Men w/Disability
- 63.9% PI Men w/o Disability

Data represent the percentage of first-time Pacific Islander men who persisted through three semesters.
White Male Persistence

Overall: 66.6%

College Prepared: 65.1%

College Underprepared: 67.6%

Economically Disadvantaged: 68.9%

Not Economically Disadvantaged: 65.1%

White Men w/ Disability: 74.1%

White Men w/o Disability: 66.0%

White Men by Age:
- 19 and Under: 67.6%
- 20 to 24: 57.9%
- 25 to 49: 63.8%
- 50+: 75.1%

Data represent the percentage of first-time White men who persisted through three semesters.
Completion Rates for Men
Black Male Completion

Overall
- 38.6%

College Prepared
- 61.0%

College Underprepared
- 35.1%

Economically Disadvantaged
- 37.8%

Not Economically Disadvantaged
- 41.2%

Black Men w/Disability
- 27.9%

Black Men w/o Disability
- 39.5%

Black Men by Age
- 39.8% 19 and Under
- 34.2% 20 to 24
- 34.9% 25 to 49
- 26.4% 50 +

Data represent the percentage of first-time Black men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years.
American Indian (AI) Male Completion

Overall: 37.8%
College Prepared: 58.1%
College Underprepared: 30.6%

Data represent the percentage of first-time American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI) men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years.

- Economically Disadvantaged: 34.8%
- Not Economically Disadvantaged: 42.4%
- Al Men w/Disability: 26.0%
- Al Men w/o Disability: 39.3%

AI Men by Age:
- 19 and Under: 39.4%
- 20 to 24: 27.3%
- 25 to 49: 37.2%
- 50+: 50.0%
Asian Male Completion

Overall: 65.1%
- Economically Disadvantaged: 60.6%
- Not Economically Disadvantaged: 72.2%

Prepared: 80.5%
- Asian Men w/Disability: 39.6%
- Asian Men w/o Disability: 65.5%

Underprepared: 56.0%

Asian Men by Age:
- 19 and Under: 67.8%
- 20 to 24: 54.5%
- 25 to 49: 44.2%
- 50+: 27.7%

Data represent the percentage of first-time Asian men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years.
Filipino Male Completion

48.6% Overall

67.7% College Prepared

42.0% College Underprepared

Data represent the percentage of first-time Filipino men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years.

Filipino Men by Age

- 50.6% 19 and Under
- 36.7% 20 to 24
- 30.8% 25 to 49
- 31.3% 50 +

Economically Disadvantaged: 49.1%
Not Economically Disadvantaged: 48.2%
Filipino Men w/Disability: 40.5%
Filipino Men w/o Disability: 48.8%
Latino Male Completion

Overall: 38.1%

College Prepared: 61.1%
College Underprepared: 33.1%

Economically Disadvantaged: 37.8%
Not Economically Disadvantaged: 38.3%
Latino Men w/Disability: 30.0%
Latino Men w/o Disability: 38.3%

Latino Men by Age:
- 19 and Under: 39.7%
- 20 to 24: 28.5%
- 25 to 49: 27.3%
- 50+: 33.8%

Data represent the percentage of first-time Latino men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years.
Pacific Islander (PI) Male Completion

37.8% Overall

50.3% College Prepared

34.4% College Underprepared

39.1% Economically Disadvantaged

36.0% Not Economically Disadvantaged

24.5% PI Men w/Disability

38.6% PI Men w/o Disability

PI Men by Age

- 19 and Under: 38.3%
- 20 to 24: 30.8%
- 25 to 49: 41.9%
- 50+: 40.0%

Data represent the percentage of first-time Pacific Islander men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years.
White Male Completion

Overall
- Overall: 51.9%
- Pre-Economic Disadvantaged: 48.6%
- Not Economic Disadvantaged: 54.2%

College Prepared: 67.8%
- White Men w/Disability: 41.9%
- White Men w/o Disability: 52.7%

College Underprepared: 42.2%
- 19 and Under: 54.1%
- 20 to 24: 41.7%
- 25 to 49: 38.6%
- 50+: 33.8%

Data represent the percentage of first-time White men who completed a certificate, degree, became transfer prepared, or transferred in six years.
There are a number of salient findings that emerged for this examination of student outcomes data for men. In general, historically underrepresented and underserved men of color (particularly Black, Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islanders) had lower success rates (e.g., persistence, completion) than their Filipino, Asian, and White counterparts. Particularly concerning were outcome measures for Black men who had the lower overall persistence and completion rates among all racial/ethnic groups. In light of the completion agenda, extensive between group differences among males by racial/ethnic affiliation should serve to heighten the need to focus state and institutional efforts on improving outcomes for underserved men of color.

The fact that college prepared men completed at higher rates is another critical point, especially given that college underprepared men persisted at higher rates than those who were prepared for college. Moreover, while men receiving disability services had higher persistence rates, their completion rates were lower than men who did not receive disability services. In all, findings regarding higher persistence rates for men who were college underprepared and men receiving disability services but lower completion rates for these men are paradoxical. These differential outcomes invite questions as to why traditionally ‘at risk’ populations are more likely to persist but less likely to complete. Due to the completion agenda, we suggest that educators and researchers should prioritize the latter.

In contrast to findings for preparation and disability, economic status resulted in divergent outcomes. More specifically, men who were disadvantaged had higher persistence rates but experienced a mix of higher and lower completion rates, depending upon racial/ethnic affiliation. Age band also illustrated in mixed results, with no evidence of clear patterns of success. For some groups, men who were 19 and under tended to perform better, for other groups, men 50 and older did so. To advance the completion agenda, there is a need for educators and researchers to become more attuned to both large and nuanced outcomes among men. This recognition is imperative to advancing America’s 2020 graduation goal.
Recommendations

The results presented in this report have indicated that there are inequities in success outcomes for men of color. Given these disparate outcomes, we offer three recommendations for future inquiry.

• **Seek Information from Students:** The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office should engage in system-level needs assessment to better understand the experience and perceptions of the men of color it serves. Such inquiry should be used to inform interventions and strategies for these men.

• **Seek Information from College Professionals:** The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office may consider engaging in inquiry regarding the system’s capacity to serve men of color. Colleges in the state should assess their effectiveness and readiness to facilitate success for men of color.

• **Seek Information from Proven Leaders:** State leaders should seek out promising practices employed throughout the state to enhance outcomes for men of color. Specifically, there are a number of college leaders who possess intimate knowledge of how to best serve men of color. These leaders should be sought out for advice on strategies, programs, and practices that can be employed at the system level.
The Minority Male Community College Collaborative (M2C3) is a project of San Diego State University’s Interwork Institute that was established with a grant from the San Diego State University Presidential Leadership Fund. The goal of the project is to partner with community colleges across the United States to enhance access, achievement, and success among minority male community college students. M2C3’s research and practice agenda prioritizes men who have been traditionally underrepresented and underserved in postsecondary education.

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Our Vision
To promote research and discovery on the area of African American male academic achievement in the community colleges. Research will also include an examination of the African American male schooling experiences in both secondary and four-year postsecondary institutions.

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