THE ACTUATION OF COLLEGE PLANS: EXPLAINING WHY SOME SENIORS MAKE IT AND OTHERS DON'T*

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ABSTRACT

Longitudinal data from the University of Washington Beyond High School study is used to determine the factors that influence high school seniors' ability to actuate college plans. Special attention is devoted to racial and ethnic variation in the realization of college plans, and in the possible explanations for such variation. Multivariate analyses reveal an enrollment *advantage* for Vietnamese students and an enrollment *disadvantage* for African American and Hispanic students. Also, racial and ethnic variation exists in type of school attended: *two-year* or *four-year*. A possible explanation for the African American and Hispanic students' enrollment disadvantage is weaker academic performance and a contextual high school effect, respectively. Social integration and access to social capital within the Vietnamese community are acknowledged as a possible explanation for the Vietnamese students' enrollment advantage.

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INTRODUCTION

The educational requirements for socioeconomic success in the United States experienced a significant upward shift during the second half of the twentieth century. Over time, a high school diploma became an inadequate credential for successful competition in those sectors of the labor market that offered well-paying jobs and satisfying employment. Rather, a college degree became the educational threshold for those seeking better access to society's scarce resources of power, prestige, and wealth. And, even that higher level of educational achievement was no guarantee of success, as more and more college graduates found themselves toiling in positions that were unrelated to their collegiate training and that paid far less than they had hoped for and expected. Nonetheless, a college degree has increasingly become viewed as a key pre-requisite for access to the "good life" in American society. As stated by Brooks-Gunn and her colleagues (1993:272), "Whatever the process by which they are made, decisions about dropping out of or continuing beyond high school, in and of themselves, constitute some of the most important made by youth in Western society."

Evidence of this important transition can be drawn from a number of sources, but two will suffice. First, the percentage of adults who extend their educations beyond high school has increased sharply, as has the percentage receiving a college degree. For example, in 1950 these two percentages stood at 13.5% and 6.2%, respectively. By 2000 they had increased to 51.8% and 24.4%, respectively. Second, the gap between the earning power of those with high school diplomas and those with bachelor degrees has grown sharply during the same time period. In 1950 the difference in median annual wage income between those with only a high school

diploma and those with at least a bachelor's degree stood at $2,705. That difference grew to $18,410 by the close of the twentieth century.[1]

The vast literatures on educational attainment and status attainment in the U.S. have devoted a great deal of attention to identifying those factors that affect the length of schooling for Americans (e.g., Astone and McLanahan 1991; Biblarz and Raftery 1997; Blau and Duncan 1967; Portes and Wilson 1969; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Sewell, Haller, and Portes 1969; Sewell, Haller, and Ohlendorf 1970; Wojtkiewicz and Donato 1995). A separate, but also large, literature has examined the educational aspirations, expectations, and plans of American youth (e.g., Goyette and Xie 1999; Hanson 1994; Hauser and Anderson 1991; Hirschman, Lee, and Emeka 2004; Kerchoff and Campbell 1977; Mickelson 1990; Wong 1990, Kao and Tienda 1995, 1998; MacLeod 1987). Combined, these literatures have told us a great deal about social stratification in the U.S., as well as about the micro-level processes that shape the educational perceptions and objectives of young children and adolescents. However, relatively little research has considered the degree to which the specific educational plans of students are realized, or explored the factors affecting the likelihood that students will actuate their schooling objectives.

In this paper we use longitudinal data to examine the experiences of high school students who planned to enroll in college during the year immediately following their graduation. The central question to be examined is whether the students were actually successful in carrying out their stated college plans. Within that larger objective, we are especially interested in the extent to which students from different racial or ethnic groups varied in their ability to actuate their

[1] Information about educational attainment and wage income was obtained from the 1950 and 2000 Public Use Microdata files, as made available by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series Project at the Minnesota Population Center (Ruggles and Sobek 2001). The differences in wage income are expressed in constant, 2000 dollars.

college plans, as well as in the factors that might account for any racial/ethnic differences. These issues are explored using data from a survey of high school seniors in a metropolitan school district on the West Coast. The students reported their college plans in the original survey that was conducted near the end of their senior year. Their actual educational status following graduation was obtained from a follow-up survey that took place during the Spring of the subsequent year.[2]

BACKGROUND AND THEORY

Consistent with its central importance for status attainment and social mobility, educational achievement has been extensively researched by social scientists. This scholarship has focused largely on when people terminate their formal schooling and why. Increasingly, it is recognized that educational behavior is best viewed as a developmental process in which experiences at even very early stages in the life cycle can affect outcomes at much later stages. For example, some investigators have inferred significant effects of events during the first grade on the likelihood of students dropping out sometime before graduating from high school (Alexander, Entwistle, and Kabbani 2001; Alexander, Entwistle, and Horsey 1997; Ensminger and Slusarcick 1992). Extending even further back in time, a student's prospects for completing high school have been linked to the age of their mother when the student was born (Brooks-Gunn, Guo, and Furstenberg 1993). The availability of longitudinal data bases, some of them spanning most of the years of a student's life, has made it easier to study educational achievement from a developmental perspective. Whether viewed as part of a longer-term developmental process, or from a more restricted temporal perspective, two important

[2] The original survey of seniors took place in the Spring of 2000 and 2002, the follow-up survey was conducted in the Spring of 2001 and 2003.

educational milestones have dominated the attention of researchers – graduation from high school and progression to post-secondary schooling.

The successful completion of high school serves both as a credentialing event and as the springboard for the transition to college. As a result, the failure to reach this educational milestone has, reasonably, been viewed as a significant problem, with both individual and societal consequences (Rumberger 1987). For individual dropouts, the premature termination of schooling often means settling for an unskilled or semi-skilled job in the secondary labor market (Newburger and Curry 1999). The attendant low wages offer little economic security, and the likelihood of upward occupational mobility typically is low. For the larger society, a lower rate of high school completion implies a work force with less human capital, consumers with lower incomes, and a more poorly informed electorate (Alexander, Natriello, and Pallas 1985; Fine 1986; Newburger and Day 2002). However, the completion of high school and additional post-secondary education often leads to positive outcomes such as greater opportunity for economic, occupational, and social mobility (Duncan and Blau 1967; Sewell, Hauser, Ohlendorf 1970).

Extensive research on the correlates or predictors of high school completion and entry into post-secondary training has implicated a wide variety of demographic, economic, behavioral, and attitudinal risk factors. Although the operation of specific risk factors – and the inferred strength of their effects – vary somewhat across studies, it is possible to glean some general conclusions about the individual- and family-level influences on educational attainment.

Demographically, the likelihood of dropping out of high school and completed years of education are often found to vary by race/ethnicity, gender, and family structure. African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans tend to exhibit lower levels of educational attainment than non-Hispanic whites and Asians in high school and post- secondary settings

(Ekstrom, Goertz, and Pollack 1986; Glick and White 2003; Hirschman and Wong 1986; Jamieson, Curry, and Martinez, 2001; Kao and Thompson 2003; Kaufman, Alt, and Chapman 2001; Mare 1995; Massey et al. 2003; Young and Hoffman 2002; Warren, 1996). Females are more likely to complete high school than males (Brooks-Gun, Guo, and Furstenberg 1993; Hoffman and Young 2002; Rumberger 1987). Also, as of the past decade, females between the ages of 18 and 24 have a greater likelihood of enrolling in post-secondary education than their male counterparts (Snyder and Hoffman 2003). Children from intact families are more likely to complete high school than are those from disrupted families (Astone and McLanahan.1994; Sandefur, McLanahan, and Wojtkiewicz 1992).

Economically, one of the strongest predictors of educational attainment is socioeconomic status (SES) of family of origin, as measured by such parental characteristics as education, occupation, or home ownership (Rumberger 1983; Blau and Duncan; Sewell 1971; Adelman, Daniel, Berkovits 2003; Kaufman, Alt, and Chapman 2001).

A variety of *behavioral* factors have also been found to increase the chances of high school graduation and entry into post-secondary institutions, including: better grades, higher scores on standardized tests, behavioral conformity, and association with non-deviant peers who place a higher value on education (Ekstrom, Goertz, and Pollack 1986; Matute-Bianchi 1985; Rumberger 1987; Sewell 1971; Velez 1989).

Among the possible *attitudinal* predictors of educational attainment, self-esteem and locus of control have received the most attention. Students who believe that control over the events in one's life are internally, rather than externally, located tend to fare better educationally (Alexander, Entwistle, and Horsey 1997; Ekstrom, Goertz, and Pollack 1986; Rumberger 1987; Wehlage and Rutter 1986). The theoretical debates and evidence regarding the educational

benefits of positive self-esteem are more mixed and ambiguous (Bankstron and Zhou 2002; Hendrie 1998; Ekstrom, Goertz, and Pollack 1986; Filozof, Albertin, and Jones 1998; Portner 1998; Rumberger 1987; Wehlage and Rutter 1986; Wiest, Wong, and Kreil 1998).

Lastly, the influence of 'significant others', which is defined as encouragement from parents, teachers, and friends is an important predictor of educational attainment. Encouragement from these individuals, who play a central role in the life of the student, can significantly affect the student's educational aspirations and attainment (Haller and Portes, 1973; Sewell, Hauser, and Ohlendorf 1970). Encouragement from 'significant others' can also have a sizable positive impact on post-secondary educational attainment (Sewell 1971).

It is with regard to the pursuit of higher education that the distinction among educational *aspirations*, *expectations*, and *plans* has most relevance (Hanson 1994; Hauser and Anderson 1991). Although closely related, these three dimensions of the educational achievement process are actually distinct. They might be best viewed as concepts in a causal model in which a student's plans to continue or discontinue schooling are based on his or her educational aspirations and expectations (see Figure 1). Educational aspirations describe the level of schooling that a student would hope to achieve in the absence of internally or externally imposed constraints or obstacles. Because there usually are constraints or obstacles (e.g., academic ability, financial resources, inadequate information, etc.) a student's expectations for educational attainment may fall short of his or her aspirations. Based on a consideration of their educational aspirations and expectations, students make specific short- and long-term plans about school enrollment and continuation, for example, to complete high school, to enroll in college after high school, and to complete a college degree**.**

[Figure 1 About Here]

It is the final transition in this conceptual model that is the central concern of this paper – the degree of success that students have in accomplishing their educational plans. The likelihood that students are able to actuate their educational plans most likely varies inversely with the length of time between the point at which the plans are expressed and the specific goal occurs (e.g., high school graduation or college attendance). For example, plans to attend college that are expressed by 9th graders will probably be less predictive of subsequent behavior than will similar plans expressed by high school seniors. Our focus is on the ability of high school seniors to realize their plans for college attendance within a very narrow window of time – roughly one year from the end of their senior year. The primary objective is to identify factors that increase or decrease the likelihood that high school seniors who plan to enroll in college in the Fall following graduation actually do so. We consider a variety of possible determinants of the actuation of college plans that have been linked to educational attainment, in general, or to the continuation or discontinuation of schooling at earlier stages. These factors, which are described more fully in a later section of the paper, fall into one of the four broader categories of educational influences mentioned above: demographic, economic, behavioral, and attitudinal.

No prior research has examined the actualization of educational plans with the same methodological approach that is used in our study, that is, by comparing specific, stated plans and subsequent behavior within a relatively short period of time. However, the general topic of students' abilities to translate educational aspirations or expectations into later schooling outcomes has been broached by other investigators. Hauser and Anderson (1991) traced trends in the propensity for black and white high school seniors to enter college between 1976 and 1986, and linked those trends to concomitant changes in students' aspirations for higher education. They concluded that the downward swing in college enrollment for black students

from 1977 through the mid-1980s could not be accounted for by a simultaneous decline in their desire for a college education. Although pointing to the possibility that blocked educational opportunities (or the availability of alternative post-high school opportunities) were greater for black students than for white students, the evidence presented by Hauser and Anderson was not based on a matching of the aspirations and the actual subsequent college enrollment (or non-enrollment) for the same students. Rather, they described general trends in actual college "entry," using data from the Current Population Surveys for 1968 through 1985 and corresponding trends in college aspirations for 1976 to 1986 using data from the "Monitoring the Future" survey.[3]

In a study that employed a research design somewhat similar to ours, Hanson (1994) used data from the "High School and Beyond" longitudinal survey to investigate three dimensions of unrealized educational aspirations and expectations. The dimension that is most closely related to our analysis was labeled "unfulfilled educational expectations" and described those high school seniors who, in 1980, expected to receive a college degree sometime in the future but had not enrolled in college by 1986. Among the notable findings from Hanson's analyses was that "non-White" students were actually less likely than white students to experience unrealized educational expectations – after controlling for a wide variety of factors including test scores, high school GPA, family SES, and parental education. Only two variables, other than race, emerged as significant predictors of unfulfilled educational expectations in Hanson's full models: the student's occupational aspirations for age 30 and the educational values held by their

[3] Hauser and Anderson (1991:272-3) also used data from the Monitoring the Future survey to compare the college "aspirations" and college "plans" as expressed by the same students. The relationship between aspirations and plans did not change over time, which they inferred as further support for their conclusion that changing aspirations could not explain the decline in college entry for African Americans.

friends (both negatively associated with unfulfilled expectations).

Although Hanson's results offer interesting and intriguing insights into the ability of students to actuate their college plans, it is limited in important ways. First, the students were asked to describe their educational "expectations" rather than their "plans" for a specific educational outcome. Second, the expectations that they reported referred to an educational goal (college graduation) that was to occur, if at all, quite far in the future. Third, Hanson's analyses are limited in their ability to reveal racial or ethnic variation because of her use of a "non-White" versus "white" racial classification. For example, the "non-White" category lumps together Asians and African Americans, two groups with much different educational patterns (Hirschman and Wong 1986; Mare 1995; Newburger and Curry 2000; Wong 1990). Fourth, despite including a host of covariates there is a negative direct effect for 'non-white' students. Race, by definition, can not be the cause of 'unfulfilled educational expectations', so the cause must be a mechanism for which Hanson did not control. Fifth, the results from Hanson's mulitivariate logistic regression analysis of unfulfilled educational expectations are somewhat difficult to interpret given the inclusion of predictor variables (i.e., whether the student attended college by 1982 or 1984) that are also used in the construction of the binary dependent variable (expected to graduate from college but did not attend before 1986). The model specification that results from the inclusion of those variables on the right-hand-side of the equation changes the meaning of the dependent variable to become whether the student entered college sometime between 1984 and 1986.

In the analyses to follow we pursue many of the same general issues that concerned Hauser and Anderson (1991) and Hanson (1994) – that is, the success that students experience in achieving their educational objectives. We focus on a relatively brief interval of time in the

overall educational careers of students, but one that is quite critical to their ultimate progression to post-secondary education. We ask, "Did high school seniors who planned to attend college in the year following graduation actually do so?" And, to what extent can the likelihood of realizing one's educational plans be explained by key individual- and family-related characteristics? To be sure, some students who failed to attend college immediately after high school, as they had planned, will eventually go on to complete advanced degrees. Therefore, our investigation does not address the problem of *permanently unfulfilled* educational plans. Rather, it should be viewed as an examination of the short-term achievement of a very specific educational goal.

DATA, VARIABLES, AND METHOD

Data

The data used in our analyses were obtained from surveys of high school seniors in a metropolitan school district on the West Coast during the late Spring of 2000 and 2002. A total of 2,334 seniors[4] from five traditional high schools and numerous alternative site schools completed the original survey which was administered within the schools, either in separate classrooms or in an auditorium setting. The full questionnaire included a wide variety of items designed to measure the students' educational and occupational aspirations, expectations, and plans. In addition, information was gathered about student demographic characteristics, family background, extracurricular activities, support networks, attitudes, and beliefs. From the complete sample of students, we have selected those who expressed definite plans to attend college in the Fall immediately after their high school graduation. This was determined by the

[4]In the spring of 2000, 1,157 seniors completed the survey, and in 2002 1,177 seniors completed the survey. The response rate for both years was roughly 80%.

students' responses to the following question, "Do you plan to go to college or other additional schooling right after high school? That is, do you plan to be continuing your education?" and the students listing at least one school which they had plans to attend. A total of 1,621 students reported such plans.

A follow-up survey of the complete sample of students who participated in the in-school survey was conducted in the Spring of 2001 and 2003. The follow-up survey of students was very short and focused, asking students to report on: (1) their high school graduation, (2) their post-graduation employment, and (3) their post-graduation school enrollment. The students were contacted via a combination of phone calls, email exchanges, and a web-based response system. Most students were contacted directly for the follow-up survey, but the information for some students was obtained from "proxies" such as parents, friends, or siblings. Of the 1,621 students surveyed in the spring of 2000 and 2002 who reported plans to attend college in the following fall, follow-up surveys were obtained from 1,539[5]. The latter number represents the eligible sample for our study. However it is slightly reduced in the analysis presented below, as we had missing information for a small number of cases on the dependent variables. Thus the final eligible sample size is 1,476.

Variables

Dependent Variables. The dependent variables used in our analyses are based on the responses provided by the students in the follow-up survey, and are meant to measure whether or not the student successfully carried through with their stated plans to continue their education immediately after completing high school. Two strategies are used to measure the actuation of

[5]In the spring of 2001, 778 of the respondents were contacted and in 2003, 761 respondents were contacted. The response rate to the one year follow-up for the entire sample was roughly 90% for both years, while the response rate to the one year follow up for students in our sample is 97% in 2001 and 93% in 2003.

college plans, with each strategy lending itself to somewhat different analytic objectives. A simple binary measurement approach is used which distinguishes those who did realize their educational plans from those who did not. A more complex, trichotomous, classification scheme is used to further distinguish those who continued their educations in two-year institutions from those who proceeded to four-year institutions. In both of our analyses, those who did not immediately continue their educations serve as the reference category.

Independent Variables. A key predictor variable in our analysis classifies students by *race and ethnicity*. In light of the racial/ethnic diversity in our sample and the numerous questions on race/ethnicity, we are able to distinguish amongst seven racial/ethnic groups in our analyses: Non-Hispanic Whites, African Americans, Hispanics, Filipinos, Cambodians, Vietnamese, East Asians, and Native American/ Pacific Islanders. Membership in a racial/ethnic group was determined through self-reports to multiple questions about racial/ethnic identity. In all multivariate analyses reported in the following tables, Non-Hispanic Whites serve as the reference category. In supplementary analyses we change the reference category to Vietnamese in order to compare them to African Americans, Hispanics and the other racial/ethnic groups. A second demographic variable is gender, with males used as the reference category.

A second set of predictor variables is included to describe a student's family background, including *family structure* and *socioeconomic standing*. Students from "intact" families are compared to those who have experienced family disruption, with an intact family defined as one in which the student resides with his or her biological father and biological mother (coded "1"). Previous research has linked residence in an intact family with a lower probability of dropping out and higher levels of educational attainment. Family SES is represented by a variable that distinguishes *home owners* (coded "1") from *renters* (coded "0") and another that indicates

whether a student has at least one parent that has graduated from college.[6] Home ownership and parental education are useful for tapping the financial resources available to prospective college students. In addition, having a parent who graduated from college provides young adults with a relevant role model and an information source that might increase their chances of actuating their own college plans.

In order to tap a more "internal" emotional resource upon which students may draw as they strive to achieve their educational objectives, we include measures of *self-esteem* and *locus of control* in our analyses. Both concepts are represented by indices that have been constructed from a number of individual indicators. A "higher" value on the self-esteem index implies that the student holds a more positive view of his or her own competencies or worth;[7] while a higher value for locus of control indicates a belief by the student that he or she has a greater influence over the outcome of life events that affect them.[8] Students who express a more positive self-esteem and a more "internal" locus of control are hypothesized to be more effective in carrying out their short-term educational plans. However, the results from previous research suggest that locus of control has a more powerful influence on educational attainment than does self esteem.

The support and encouragement that students receive from others for their educational objectives has the potential to improve their chances of realizing college plans, over and above the financial support at their disposal. We consider the educational encouragement received by the high school seniors from three different sources: parents, teachers, and friends. We include

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[6] Separate analyses were also conducted in which mother's and father's education were measured separately. Both were found to be positively related to college attendance. In addition, we experimented with more detailed measures of parental education. None of those alternative model specifications appreciably changed the estimated effects of other covariates. In the interest of parsimony we have opted for this simpler measurement strategy.

[7] More information about the construction of the self-esteem index is contained in the Appendix.

[8] More information about the construction of the index measuring locus of control is presented in the Appendix.

three separate variables that indicate whether the student reported that each possible source of encouragement (parents, teachers, or friends) placed strongest emphasis on college attendance, versus other possible post-high school activities, when discussing post-high school plans with them.

An important distinction is between students who expressed plans to attend a two-year college from those who planned to enroll in four-year schools. Conflicting hypotheses may be proposed for this predictor. On the one hand, four-year students are required to take steps during their senior years, prior to enrolling, for example by formally applying and submitting examination scores. These requirements may reflect a stronger commitment to post-secondary schooling, and therefore mean that such students are more likely to realize their educational plans than are students who intend to enroll in two-year schools. On the other hand, students planning to attend two-year schools face fewer bureaucratic obstacles, and lower financial costs, which may increase their chances of actuating college plans. Our a priori hypothesis is that students intending to enroll in four-year schools were more likely to achieve their college plans. However, we recognize the possibility of counterbalancing influences.

An important component of actuating college plans is the academic performance of the student, which is often measured by the students' cumulative grade point average (GPA). However, the hypothesized effect of GPA on college plans is not entirely straightforward. The students included in our sample expressed their educational plans very near the completion of their senior years. Therefore, their responses regarding college plans were made with nearly complete knowledge of their high school grade point average. If a student's academic record posed a serious obstacle to post-secondary schooling, one might expect that fact to be reflected in their plans to attend college. Thus, we include a binary variable to note whether the students'

GPA was in the bottom quartile of their class. This will allow us to note if students are making college plans that are not congruent with their past academic performance. We expect that having a GPA in the bottom quartile will have a negative effect on the students' ability to actuate college plans[9].

Lastly, the *high school that the student attended* is an important independent contextual variable. The high school attended by the student may affect the students' decision to pursue further education. Each high school has a unique culture and organizational structure which will affect the student's educational experience and perceptions of educational institutions in various ways. Although a significant portion of the schools' effect may be due to the composition of the students, there is possibility of a contextual influence that transcends the individual-level characteristics (Rumberger 2003, Portes and Macleod 1996)**.** This contextual effect may influence student's ability to actuate their college plans. Thus, a series of five dummy variables are included in the analysis, representing the six different high school environments within which students were embedded[10]. In recognition of the possible effect of heteroskedastic disturbances across cases and school contexts, we use robust standard errors for conducting hypothesis tests.

Where necessary, we have imputed missing values for all independent variables. For categorical variables we have assigned the modal category. For continuous variables we have imputed the mean. Constructed indices (e.g., self-esteem and locus of control) were based only on the number of items for which we had valid responses. In addition, we have included as predictors a set of dummy variables that identify those cases for which values have been imputed

[9] In preliminary analyses, we experimented with alternate measurements of Grade Point Average, all of which yielded virtually identical results as the models discussed below.

[10] Due to sample size, the numerous alternative site schools were grouped together as one dummy variable: alternative site schools.

in order to determine whether the cases with missing values are significantly different from cases with reported values. The coefficients for those dummy variables are not reported in the tables in order to avoid clutter. However, they suggested that there were no problems associated with the imputation of information for missing data.

Methods

Our analysis is conducted in two stages. In the first stage we treat the dependent variable as a dichotomous outcome – students either realized their plans to attend college, or they did not. Binary logistic regression is used to assess the influence of the independent variables on the log-likelihood of college attendance. In the second stage of the analysis, we treat the dependent variable as polytymous, with three possible outcomes: (1) attended a four-year school, (2) attended a two-year school, and (3) did not attend college. Multinomial logistic regression is used to identify those variables that were most important for distinguishing the two types of college attendees from those who did not achieve their educational plans. Given our modest sample size, we are aware that estimating a multinomial logistic regression model with numerous covariates will result in slightly larger standard errors, making it more difficult to reject the null hypothesis. However, this should result in Type II errors. Therefore, the significant differences observed in the multinomial logistic regression are not likely conservative estimates of the relationship. In both the binary and multinomial logistic regression analyses, we begin by estimating models that describe basic racial/ethnic and gender differentials in the dependent variables. We then proceed to estimate a series of models that include different combinations of variables on the right-hand-side of the prediction equation. This strategy allows us to discern the most important predictors of the actuation of college plans, as well as to assess their impact, if any, on the basic racial/ethnic and gender variation.

Descriptive Patterns

Descriptive statistics for all variables included in our analyses, as reported in Table 1, provide an informative portrait of the sample of high school seniors represented in our sample. Means and standard deviations are presented for continuous variables; proportions are presented for dichotomous variables. Information is presented for the entire sample, and separately by race/ethnicity. Within the total sample, fully 82.3% of all students were able to realize their plans to attend college after high school. This overall percentage masks considerable variation by race/ethnicity, with Vietnamese students exhibiting the greatest likelihood of actuating their college plans (95.8%) and Hispanic students the smallest likelihood (72.2%). The sample also includes considerable racial/ethnic diversity. A slight majority of the students (51.6%) are non-Hispanic whites; roughly 1-in-6 is African American, 1-in-12 is Hispanic, while the remaining groups each account for 4 to 7% of the population. Females are slightly over-represented in our data, as they make up 59.2% of the sample.

Approximately three-fifths of all students (60.7%) resided with their biological mother and father, with the largest percentage of intact homes reported by Vietnamese students (85.4%) and the smallest percentage by African American students (32.9%). Home ownership, averaging 71.1% for the entire sample, was most common among whites (83.6%) and least common among Cambodians (36.6%). White students were also more likely than their peers to have a mother or father who finished college (46.4%), with nearly none of the Cambodian students (1.5%) reporting that at least one parent received a Bachelors degree. Roughly one-third of all students (35.3%) had at least one parent with a Bachelors degree. All groups enjoyed relatively strong encouragement to attend college from their parents, teachers, and friends, though the students of Asian decent reported the highest levels of all types of encouragement. The Native American and

Pacific Islander students received the least encouragement. A majority of white, African American, and East Asian students planned to attend four-year schools after graduation, while a majority of students from the other racial/ethnic groups planned to enroll in two-year institutions.

As one may expect, only 15.1% of the sample has a cumulative GPA that is in the bottom quartile of their class. Academic performance does vary a great deal by racial/ethnic group as only 2.4% of Vietnamese are in the bottom quartile while nearly a third of all African-Americans (30.7%) are in this quartile. With respect to school attended, High School #4 and #5 had the largest enrollment of the five high schools (24.8% and 25.6%). A small percentage of students attended alternative site schools (1.3%). In sum, Table 1 reveals ample racial and ethnic variation in the likelihood that students successfully achieved their college plans. And, there is corresponding variation in the predictor variables that we have identified to explain such variation.

[Table 1 About Here]

Actuating College Plans: Attending Versus Not Attending

The first stage of our multivariate analyses focuses on the dichotomous distinction between those students who carried through with their plans to attend college and those who did not. Table 2 presents the results, in the form of odds-ratios, from a series of logistic regression models that build incrementally upon Model 1 that describes basic racial/ethnic and gender differentials. We include a control for the type of school (two-year versus four-year) that the student planned to attend in light of its potential to influence the effects of other covariates in the models. Model 1 reveals statistically significant racial/ethnic differentials in the actuation of college plans, but no apparent difference between males and females. African American and Hispanic students were significantly *less likely* than white students to realize their college plans

in the year after high school graduation. Also, Native American and Pacific Islander students displayed a substantial *disadvantage* in relationship to whites in realizing their college plans, yet the value falls slightly below the conventional threshold for statistical significance ($p < .063$). In contrast, Vietnamese students were significantly *more likely* to attend college than were white students.

[Table 2 About Here]

These racial/ethnic differentials in the actuation of college plans are generally consistent with the findings of much previous research that considers more general patterns of educational attainment. An interesting deviation from the general trends in educational attainment is that the other Asian racial/ethnic groups, such as East Asian and Filipino, did not display an advantage in the actuation of their college plans (Kao, 2003). The odds ratios for these varying groups suggest sizeable differentials.[11] The odds that African American, Hispanic, Native American or Pacific Islander students attended college stand at roughly one-half the odds for whites (.557, .549, and .512, respectively), while the odds for Vietnamese students are nearly four and three-quarters times greater than for whites (4.708, respectively). The gap is even greater between African American, Hispanic, Native American, Pacific Islander and Vietnamese students, with the odds that Vietnamese students attended college roughly eight and a half times greater than the odds for the aforementioned racial/ethnic groups.[12] The results from Model 1 also indicate

[11] An odds-ratio that is greater than one indicates that the given group is more likely than the referent group to actuate plans, while an odds-ratio that is less than one indicates that the given group is less likely than the referent to actuate their plans. Odds ratios can be easily converted into logistic regression coefficients by taking the log (to the base e) of the odds ratio. For example, the logistic regression coefficient for African American students in Model 1 is $\log_e (.557) = -.558$ and the logistic regression coefficient for Vietnamese students is $\log_e (4.708) = 1.549$.

[12] The odds ratio comparing Vietnamese, African American, and Hispanic students were obtained by re-estimating Model 1 while using Vietnamese students as the reference group. A similar procedure is used to compare

that students planning to attend four-year schools were significantly more likely to carry through with their plans, which is consistent with our hypothesis.

Three measures of family socioeconomic status or family background are added to the right-hand-side of the equation in Model 2: parental education, home ownership, and family structure. Students with at least one parent who finished college, and who reside in intact families, were more likely to realize their plans for college attendance following graduation. In contrast, students from home owning families were no more likely to attend college than their counterparts from families that rented. Controlling for family SES and family background has an effect on some of the racial and ethnic differentials that were observed in Model 1. African American students continue to trail white students in their ability to carry through with their educational plans, though their disadvantage is reduced slightly in Model 2 (e.g., Odds Ratios of .557 and .630 in Model 1 and Model 2, respectively). The inclusion of the measures of socio-economic increases the odds-ratio for Native American/ Pacific Islander students, placing it well below the threshold for statistical significance. Also, the disadvantage for Hispanic students is decreased, but it is still on the brink of statistical significance ($p < .055$). The increase in the Hispanic odds-ratio provides evidence that their disadvantage, in comparison to whites, is partially due to lower levels of familial socioeconomic status and family structure (Warren 1996, Wojtkiewicz 1993). The relative *advantage* for Vietnamese students slightly increases in magnitude with the inclusion of the family SES and family background predictors in Model 2, allowing them to maintain their substantial advantage over whites. A substantial gap remains between Vietnamese and African American students. Net of other variables in the model, the odds of a Vietnamese student attending college are nearly eight times greater than the odds for

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Vietnamese students and African American students in subsequent models. The full results from these supplementary analyses are not reported in the text, but are available from the authors upon request.

African American students (odds ratio = .1258; $p < .000$).

The addition of student self-esteem and locus of control as predictor variables (Model 3) has a minor impact on the results. Students with a high inner locus of control are much more likely to realize their college plans than students with an external locus of control. Conversely, self-esteem does not have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of attending college. The weak performance of self-esteem is not surprising, given the findings from previous research which has raised questions about the relationship between self-esteem and educational attainment (Ekstrom, Goertz, and Pollack 1986; Hendrie 1998; Portner 1998). However, it should be noted that our analysis uses a global measure of self-esteem, rather than a measure that taps more directly *academic self-esteem* (e.g., Rosenberg et al. 1995). It is possible that the latter measure would perform more successfully in our models. The enrollment advantage for Vietnamese students is strengthened, in Model 3, with their odds ratio rising from 5.007 to 5.797. The magnitude of the enrollment disadvantage for African American and Hispanic students, which is statistically significant, remains relatively constant across models 2 and 3.

Encouragement from others proves to have an important influence on the ability of students to actuate their college plans (Model 4). Teachers, parents, and friends are able to increase the likelihood that students will attend college by placing the highest value on obtaining a college education after graduating from high school. Moreover, it appears that encouragement from others plays an important role in the college enrollment advantage for Vietnamese students and the college enrollment disadvantage for Hispanic students. Once the three sources of encouragement are taken into account, the odds-ratio for Vietnamese students is reduced by 17% (odds ratio of 5.797 versus 4.838 in Model 3 and Model 4, respectively), yet the variable is still highly significant ($p < .003$). The inclusion of the encouragement variables exacerbates the

Hispanic students' enrollment disadvantage. Controlling for encouragement minimally affects the disadvantage for African American students vis-a-vis white students (odds ratio = .620 and .641 in Model 3 and Model 4, respectively). Including the encouragement variables slightly reduces the enrollment differential between Vietnamese and African American students (odds ratio = .107 in Model 3 and .132 in Model 4); also, the disadvantage for Hispanic students, in comparison to Vietnamese students, remains relatively constant (odds ratio = .107 and .132 in Models 3 and 4).

In the fifth model we consider the role of poor academic performance in the students' ability to realize their post-graduation college plans. As mentioned, above, being in the bottom quartile of the class has a complex position in the underlying causal process, as students were well aware of their academic records when they described their college plans during the Spring of their senior years. Nonetheless, it appears that being in the bottom quartile of their class has a strong, negative, effect on the likelihood that students attended college (odds ratio = .317, $p <$ .001). Poor academic performance affects the Vietnamese advantage and Hispanic disadvantage as the odds ratios for both groups are substantially reduced. Furthermore, in comparison to whites, it reduces the disadvantage for African American students to non-significance. Once academic performance is taken into account the odds ratio for African Americans increases by roughly one-fifth (odds ratio = .641 in Model 4 and .814 in Model 5).

Therefore, through some mechanism(s) that deserve further exploration, the weaker academic records of black students prevented them from realizing their post-graduation educational plans. A variety of pathways is possible. Perhaps low GPAs prevented some black students from entering four-year colleges to which they had applied, but not, yet, been admitted. Alternatively, a disappointing academic record in high school may have reduced some black

students' enthusiasm for post-secondary education (even at a two-year school), at least in the short-run. Finally, it is possible that black students were more likely than others to make educational plans that were incongruent with their previous academic performance. Previous research has found that African American students have greater educational ambitions than their white peers, despite lower grades (Kao and Tienda 1998, MacLeod 1987, Hirschman, Lee, and Emeka 2004). In an attempt to explain this finding Mickelson has noted that an "Attitude-Achievement" paradox exists amongst African American students. Mickelson notes that African American students often state attitudes towards education that are reflective of the dominant cultural ideology, not their expected or desired educational outcome. Thus, their attitudes are not in-line with their previous achievement. This paradox is attenuated when African American students are asked concrete or specific questions, as they allow the students to give an answer based upon their lived experience and perception of the world. Our results, in the context of Mickelson's argument, are a bit puzzling, as selection into our sample requires that students explicitly state their college plans which are to be realized within a short time frame (roughly 6 months). Given the concrete nature of the question and outcome, it would be expected that African American students make college plans that are congruent with their educational record. Thus, it appears that many African American students are translating their heightened educational ambitions into educational plans which they are unable to realize given their poor academic record. Regarding this last possibility, we did find, from supplementary analyses, that there was a weaker relationship between cumulative grade point average and planning to attend college for black students than for Vietnamese or whites. Moreover, the correlation between *self-reported* GPA and *officially recorded* GPA was found to be somewhat weaker for African American students ($r = +.751$) than for either whites ($r = +.811$) or Vietnamese ($r = +.774$).

In the final model reported in Table 2 we examine how the high school attended by the student affects their ability to actuate their college plans. Each high school has a unique culture and organizational structure which will either facilitate or hinder the students in not only educational attainment but also in their perceptions of the institution of education. As we are using a fixed-effects approach, we are able to account for all possible sources of variation that exists between schools, yet we are unable to pinpoint the mechanism(s) operating at the various schools that create this variation. The odds ratios indicate that attending high school #3 or an alternative site school[13] has a strong negative effect on the actuation of college plans (odds ratios = .499 and .139, respectively). The large disadvantage for students at the alternative site schools is not too surprising as students often enter into alternative site programs after experiencing educational or social problems at a traditional high school. Thus, they may not be as well situated as their peers in traditional high school environments to make the immediate transition to post-secondary education. High school attended does not substantially affect the Vietnamese coefficient, as they maintain their enrollment advantage over the other the racial/ethnic groups. However, the inclusion of the high school context attenuates the Hispanic disadvantage to non-significance. Thus, it appears that some mechanism(s) operating at the high schools hinders the Hispanic students in their attempts to realize their college plans. Numerous cultural or structural explanations are possible. For example, the students' enthusiasm and perceived value of education may vary across schools which may influence the students' determination to actuate their college plans. Alternatively, access to college counselors, the experience of the college counselors, or the available information on post-secondary institutions may vary across schools. Therefore students with similar, personal, familial, and academic profiles that attend different

[13] Note that the number of students in the sample at alternative site schools is rather small (N=13), so this coefficient should be interpreted with caution.

schools may both be attempting to actuate their college plans, but with varying degrees of knowledge about and guidance through the process. Although we are unable to specify the exact mechanism(s), there is something unique about each high school context and it negatively affects Hispanic students' ability to actuate their college plans.

Actuating College Plans: Two-Year or Four-Year Schools

The results from the binary logistic regression analyses provide valuable evidence regarding the overall likelihood that students proceeded to enroll in college following high school. We now shift our focus to include a distinction between the types of schools that students attended – two-year versus four-year. In the following multinomial logistic regression analyses, students who did not enroll in college are used as the reference group. Therefore, one set of coefficients contrasts those who attended two-year schools versus non-attendees while the other set contrasts those who attended four-year schools with non-attendees. The results are presented, once again, in an incremental series of models, beginning with the basic equation that describes race/ethnic and gender differences, net of the type of school the student planned to attend and ending with the full model with all covariates. We are especially interested in determining parallels to, and differences from, the binary logistic regression analyses.

[Table 3 About Here]

The results described for Model 1 suggest that the overall enrollment advantage for Vietnamese, relative to whites, described in Table 2 resulted primarily from their greater propensity to enroll in two-year schools. Vietnamese students were more likely than their peers from any other racial/ethnic group to enroll in a two year school, while they held an enrollment advantage in four-year schools over all other racial/ethnic groups except for white and East

Asian students[14]. In contrast, the overall enrollment disadvantage experienced by African American students, relative to whites, was due to their lower probability of enrolling in either two or four-year schools. Hispanic students were less likely than whites to enroll in two-year schools, while Filipino, Native American, and Pacific Islander students are less likely than their white counterparts to enroll in four-year schools.

Similar race/ethnic differentials persist when the family background and family SES variables are added to the right-hand-side of the equation. That is: (1) Vietnamese students exhibit a greater propensity than white students to enroll in two-year and four-year schools, (2) African American students are less likely than white or Vietnamese students to enroll in two year or four-year schools, and (3) Filipino, Native American, and Pacific Islander students are less likely than white students to enroll in four-year schools. In addition, the family-related characteristics have more substantial effects on the likelihood of attending four-year schools than two-year schools. Students from intact families, and those with at least one parent who attended college, were significantly more likely to enroll in four-year schools following high school. These findings suggests that the influence of these two variables on overall college enrollment was at least partially due to the differential resources available to students with different family backgrounds.

The race/ethnic differentials continue to remain quite stable when student self-esteem and locus of control are added to the prediction equation (Model 3). One deviation from Model 2 is that Hispanic students, relative to whites, are less likely to attend two-year schools. The effects

[14] The contrasts between Vietnamese students and students from other racial/ethnic group are based on supplementary multinomial logistic regression models that used Vietnamese as the reference category for race/ethnicity, rather than whites. Again, the full results from these supplementary analyses are not reported in the text but are available from the authors upon request.

of family stability and parental college attendance remain statistically significant, positive, predictors of college attendance versus non-attendance, particularly in four-year schools. As in Table 2, locus of control is a statistically significant predictor of attendance at both two-year and four-year schools. Students who believe that they have greater control over the outcome of life events are more likely to attend a school than to be non-attendees following high school.

The addition of parental, friend, and teacher encouragement to the multinomial logistic regression models attenuates some of the racial/variation observed in the previous models. Specifically, encouragement to attend college reduces to non-significance the greater propensity for Vietnamese students (than whites) to attend four-year schools. Also, the lower likelihood that African American students (than whites) will attend a two-year school is no longer statistically significant when the three sources of encouragement are controlled. Thus, the differential levels of encouragement for college received by Vietnamese and African American students have divergent effects on the Vietnamese and African American students' enrollment at four-year and two-year schools, respectively. The enrollment disadvantage for Filipino, Hispanic, Native American, and Pacific Islander students from Model 3 are still apparent in this model. Interestingly, encouragement from teachers and friends emerge as statistically significant predictors of attendance in both two-year and four-year schools, while parental encouragement is significant in only two-year schools. This stands in contrast to the findings from the binary logistic regression analysis in which parental encouragement had a substantial and significant impact.

In the fifth multinomial logistic regression model we once again control for poor academic performance of students. Academic performance exerts a negative and statistically significant influence on the likelihood that students enrolled in either a two-year or four-year

school following graduation. As expected, the impact of poor academic performance is substantially stronger in predicting attendance at a four-year school than at a two-year school (odds ratios = .461 and .048, respectively). Furthermore, as was found in our earlier analysis, controlling for whether a student is in the bottom quartile of their class reduces the college enrollment disadvantage for African American students to non-significance. Once academic performance is included, black students are no longer less likely than white or Vietnamese students to attend four-year schools. These findings reinforce our earlier conclusions regarding the impact of poor academic performance on the observed enrollment differentials involving African American students. Since the inclusion of academic performance drastically reduces the African American coefficients for both two-year and four-year school attendance, it appears that low GPAs may have: (1) prevented black students from being admitted to four-year schools, and (2) reduced their enthusiasm for post-secondary schooling, possibly even at two-year institutions. And, it is also possible that African American students were more likely to make unrealistic college plans, in light of their academic records. The enrollment disadvantage for Native American and Pacific Islander students in four-year schools, relative to whites, is also attenuated to non-significance in this model. It is possible that the aforementioned mechanisms that hindered African-American students in their actuation of college plans are also affecting Native American and Pacific Islander students in the actuation of their four-year school plans.

In the final model we examine how the high school attended by the student affects the probability that a student attended a two-year or four-year school. As evidenced in the previous analysis, attending high school #3 or an alternative site school has a negative effect on the likelihood of attending either a two-year or a four-year school. Controlling for high school context attenuates to non-significance the Hispanic students' lower probability of attending a

two-year school, relative to their white counterparts. There is something unique within the high school context, which we are unable to specifically identify, that negatively affects Hispanic students' probability of enrolling in two-year schools. The enrollment advantage for Vietnamese in two-year school remains as does the enrollment disadvantage for Filipino students in four-year schools. We have no convincing explanation for the Filipino disadvantage in actuating four-year school plans, which is consistent across models in Table 3.

DISCUSSION

The large majority of seniors in our survey who reported plans to attend college following high school were successful in achieving their objective. Still, one-sixth of all aspiring college students failed to actuate their educational plans. The results yielded by our investigation describe racial variation in the likelihood of achieving college plans, and provide interesting and important clues about the explanations for such variation.

Two relatively persistent patterns emerge from our analyses. First, African American and Hispanic students were particularly disadvantaged in their efforts to realize their educational plans. African American students were disadvantaged especially in their ability to successfully enroll in four-year schools, while Hispanics were disadvantaged in their ability to enroll at two-year schools. Second, Vietnamese students were more likely than white or black students to actuate their college plans, often by enrolling in two-year schools following graduation. At the risk of simplifying what are really a rather complex set of findings, our results point to the primary explanations for some of these patterns. The educational disadvantage suffered by African American students in our sample is due largely to their weaker academic performance during high school. Additional research is needed to identify the precise mechanisms through which academic performance influences the ability of black students to realize their educational

objectives.

We were unable to explain the mechanism(s) responsible for the educational advantage enjoyed by the Vietnamese students. However, it is difficult to 'explain away' the Vietnamese advantage as an astonishing 95% of Vietnamese students actuated their college plans, despite disproportionately coming from families with low levels of human and financial capital. Min Zhou and Carl Bankston III (1998), in their analysis of a Vietnamese community in New Orleans, note a possible explanation for the Vietnamese advantage may be the high levels of social integration of the students and their families into the Vietnamese community. The Vietnamese community, Zhou and Bankston note, not only fosters and values activities that lead to educational attainment, but it also proscribes and limits the students' involvement in activities detrimental to their educational success. Thus, it may be that the highly integrated students are not only able to draw upon their academic profile and skills developed in high school, but they are also able to draw upon the support and social capital of the Vietnamese community in the actuation of their college plans.

In addition to the racial/ethnic variation documented by our findings, the results point to a variety of factors that have strong effects on the ability of students to carry through with their college plans. In addition to the role of academic performance and encouragement from teachers, parents, and friends, we found that the likelihood of attending college was enhanced by origin in an intact family, having at least one parent that finished college, and having an internal locus of control. In contrast, gender, self-esteem, and home ownership proved to be relatively unimportant, net of other variables, in predicting which students would be successful in actuating their college plans.

Although answering many questions about the factors that influence the realization of

college plans, our results also point to a number of issues that deserve additional attention. For example, via what mechanisms does poor high school academic performance account for the weaker likelihood that African American students will actuate their college plans – despite the fact that students should have been well-aware of their high school records when they reported their college plans in the Spring of their senior years? Second, what exactly in the high school context decreases the likelihood of the actuation of college plans for students? Particularly, how does the high school context hinder Hispanics in the ability to realize their post-secondary plans? Third, is the Vietnamese enrollment advantage due to high levels of social integration, as we have speculated? Fourth, what are the causes of the Filipino disadvantage in actuating four-year school plans? Does this Filipino disadvantage exist in nationally representative data sets? Finally, will those students who failed to realize their college plans immediately after high school eventually attend college? Or, is delaying a college education in the short run tantamount to foregoing a college education in the long run for most students? These, and other, questions represent an interesting agenda for future research into the actualization of educational plans by high school students.

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Appendix

Table A1. Questions Used in the Creation of the Self Esteem and Locus of Control Indices.

I. *Self Esteem* is the mean of an index based on the sum of the responses:

1. "I feel that I do not have much to be proud of." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
2. "I feel that I am a person of worth, the equal of other persons." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
3. "I feel useless at times." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
4. "On the whole I am satisfied with my self." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
5. "At times, I think that I am no good at all." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
6. "I feel good about myself." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
7. "I am able to do things as well as most other people." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)

II. *Locus of Control* is the mean of an index based on the sum of the responses:

1. "In my life, good luck is more important than hard work for success." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
2. "When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
3. "Every time I tried to get ahead, something or somebody stops me." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
4. "My plans hardly ever work out, so planning only makes me unhappy." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
5. "I don't have enough control over the direction that my life is taking." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
6. "Chance and luck are very important to what happens in my life." (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics: Means and Standard Deviations for all Variables

	Total	By Race/Ethnicity							
		White	Black	Hispanic	East Asian	Filipino	Cambodian	Vietnamese	Nat. Amer/ Pac Isl
Variables	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)	Mean (Std. Dev)
Actuated College Plans	.823	.849	.762	.723	.884	.758	.791	.951	.727
Went to 2 yr. college	.388	.360	.355	.370	.330	.466	.478	.622	.509
Went to 4 yr. college	.432	.485	.394	.353	.553	.293	.313	.329	.236
White	.516	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Black	.157	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hispanic	.081	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
East Asian	.070	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Filipino	.039	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cambodian	.045	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Vietnamese	.056	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nat. Amer./ Pac. Isl.	.037	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Female	.592	.607	.602	.622	.544	.500	.567	.537	.564
4 Year School Plans	.530	.561	.537	.412	.670	.483	.388	.402	.473
Family Intact	.607	.648	.329	.529	.748	.621	.776	.854	.527
A Parent Finished College	.354	.464	.281	.227	.311	.397	.015	.134	.182
Family Owns Home	.711	.836	.524	.698	.748	.724	.433	.366	.582
Locus of Control	.713 (.138)	.727 (.130)	.724 (.139)	.724 (.130)	.710 (.132)	.691 (.168)	.630 (.134)	.623 (.134)	0.703 (.159)
Self-Esteem	.738 (.170)	.747 (.160)	.770 (.166)	.749 (.169)	.680 (.165)	.753 (.179)	.608 (.169)	.622 (.168)	.736 (.178)
Parental Encouragement	.924	.929	.883	.924	.961	.966	.940	.951	.855
Friends' Encouragement	.799	.782	.762	.840	.874	.879	.881	.817	.746
Teacher Encouragement	.877	.857	.875	.924	.903	.948	.925	.915	.818
% in Btm Quartile of Class	.151	.103	.307	.235	.117	.121	.149	.024	.273

Table 1 (cont). Descriptive Statistics: Means and Standard Deviations for all Variables									
High School #1	.220	.084	.260	.177	.398	.241	.403	.354	.236
High School #2	.147	.095	.247	.244	.146	.190	.343	.085	.200
High School #3	.117	.343	.126	.177	.126	.241	.090	.122	.146
High School #4	.248	.311	.130	.143	.204	.172	.045	.195	.146
High School #5	.256	.011	.234	.235	.126	.155	.119	.244	.255
Alternative Site Schools	.009	.607	.004	.025	.000	.000	.000	.000	.018
N of Cases	1476	761	231	119	103	58	67	82	55

Table 2. Logistic Regression on college attendance with Odds-Ratios and robust standard errors (N=1,476)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	O-R	**SE**	**O-R**	**SE**	**O-R**	**SE**	**O-R**	**SE**	**O-R**	**SE**	**O-R**	**SE**
Female	1.168	.172	1.238	.188	1.153	.181	1.055	.170	.933	.157	.957	.163
Af. American	.557*	.108	.630*	.133	.620*	.132	.641*	.145	.814	.190	.750	.178
Cambodian	.867	.282	1.160	.404	1.344	.473	1.083	.370	1.053	.387	.935	.347
East Asian	1.144	.400	1.236	.449	1.260	.460	1.135	.425	1.219	.485	1.124	.453
Vietnamese	4.708**	2.527	5.007**	2.783	5.797**	3.197	4.838**	2.573	3.639*	1.924	3.301*	1.767
Filipino	.611	.216	.625	.233	.665	.257	.534	.210	.505	.209	.517	.217
Hispanic	.549*	.132	.616	.155	.598*	.151	.521**	.133	.584*	.149	.614	.166
Nat Am/PI	.512	.184	.571	.200	.591	.209	.622	.255	.753	.315	.744	.320
4yr School Plans	5.738**	.944	5.203**	.888	5.068**	.866	4.397**	.772	3.537**	.648	3.403**	.632
Intact Family			1.373*	.217	1.369*	.217	1.390*	.226	1.346*	.222	1.275	.214
Parent Fin Coll			2.516**	.473	2.546**	.481	2.542**	.498	2.651**	.534	2.525**	.521
Own Home			.790	.142	.768	.141	.774	.146	.705	.136	.695	.136
Locus of Control					6.503**	4.171	6.205**	4.083	4.676**	3.083	5.339	3.548
Self Esteem					.837	.431	.647	0.336	.544	.288	.489	.260
Enc: Parent							2.097**	.524	2.276**	.573	2.323**	.590
Enc: Friend							1.587**	.295	1.490*	.284	1.358	.266
Enc: Teach							1.640**	.347	1.677**	.366	1.839**	.410
Btm decile GP									.317**	.064	.298**	.062
High School #1											1.134	.308
High School #2											1.022	.291
High School #3											.499*	.140
High School #5											.784	.187
Alt. Site Schools											.139**	.099
Pseudo-R^2	.125		.151		.159		.188		.215		.227	

** significant at the .01 level, (one tailed test for gender, race/ethnicity, school attended, two tailed test for all other variables)

* significant at the .05 level, (one tailed test for gender, race/ethnicity, school attended, two tailed test for all other variables)

Table 3. Multinomial Logistic Regression on whether student attended at 2yr or 4yr school with Relative Risk Ratios and robust standard errors (N=1,476)

	Model 1				Model 2				Model 3			
	Two Year		Four Year		Two Year		Four Year		Two Year		Four Year	
	RRR	**SE**	**RRR**	**SE**	**RRR**	**SE**	**RRR**	**SE**	**RRR**	**SE**	**RRR**	**SE**
Female	1.140	.174	1.109	.221	1.184	.185	1.237	.255	1.099	.177	1.143	.242
Af. American	.617*	.127	.365**	.093	.633*	.140	.515*	.144	.627*	.140	.501*	.142
Cambodian	.978	.333	.648	.289	1.189	.441	1.272	.630	1.366	.513	1.458	.726
East Asian	1.267	.444	.971	.414	1.325	.479	1.173	.509	1.344	.488	1.208	.532
Vietnamese	5.474**	2.915	2.772	1.750	5.452**	3.021	3.657*	2.373	6.394**	3.557	4.122*	2.707
Filipino	.861	.301	.256**	.120	.863	.305	.250**	.128	.920	.337	.255*	.135
Hispanic	.564*	.145	.613	.266	*.608*	.160	.797	.359	.581*	.155	.796	.353
Nat Am/PI	.895	.312	.171*	.079	.942	.332	.268**	.124	.973	.336	.273**	.125
4yr school	.788	.150	151.493**	45.430	.794	.154	144.511**	45.253	.767	.152	142.202**	44.541
Intact Family					1.216	.197	1.517*	.334	1.218	.198	1.521*	.336
Parent Fin Coll					2.108**	.406	3.661**	.877	2.146**	.416	3.688**	.893
Own Home					.738	.133	.907	.221	.716	.133	.864	.214
Locus of Control									6.930**	4.637	5.348*	4.702
Self Esteem									.769	.401	.932	.653
Enc: Parent												
Enc: Friend												
Enc: Teach												
Btm decile GP												
High School #1												
High School #2												
High School #3												
High School #5												
Alt. Site												
Pseudo-R^2	.369				.386				.391			

** significant at the .01 level, (one tailed test for gender, race/ethnicity, school attended, two tailed test for all other variables)

* significant at the .05 level, (one tailed test for gender, race/ethnicity, school attended, two tailed test for all other variables)

Table 3 (cont). Multinomial Logistic Regression on whether attended at 2yr or 4yr school with Relative Risk Ratios and robust standard errors (N=1,476)

	Model 4				Model 5				Model 6			
	Two Year		Four Year		Two Year		Four Year		Two Year		Four Year	
	RRR.	SE	RRR.	SE	RRR.	SE	RRR.	SE	RRR.	SE	RRR.	SE
Female	1.009	.167	.965	.211	.908	.155	.789	.183	.937	.162	.810	.189
Af. American	.648	.153	.501*	.146	.793	.192	.873	.291	.726	.179	.771	.261
Cambodian	1.114	.411	1.117	.555	1.099	.417	1.000	.512	.990	.383	.800	.429
East Asian	1.236	.456	1.046	.469	1.307	.496	1.082	.509	1.239	.485	.986	.478
Vietnamese	5.445**	2.925	*3.331*	2.083	4.446**	2.390	2.477	1.554	4.173**	2.286	2.258	1.452
Filipino	.757	.287	.207**	.111	.724	.283	.205**	.109	.758	.302	.215	.114
Hispanic	.504*	.137	.705	.311	.555*	.150	.935	.437	*.585*	.165	.909**	.439
Nat Am/PI	1.020	.407	.283*	.142	1.162	.475	.404	.201	1.164	.496	.404	.213
4yr school	.685	.141	129.785**	41.467	.645*	.136	110.613**	36.202	.643*	.136	107.964**	35.719
Intact Family	1.244	.208	1.561*	.349	1.209	.203	1.357	.316	1.141	.195	1.274	.305
Parent Fin Coll	2.128**	.428	3.616**	.900	2.172**	.442	3.740**	.967	2.078**	.436	3.477	.913
Own Home	.724	.137	.875	.220	.681*	.130	.807	.214	.674	.130	.821	.219
Locus of Control	6.764**	4.652	4.508*	4.003	5.442*	3.752	3.458	3.213	6.278**	4.352	4.191**	3.926
Self Esteem	.597	.313	.606	.425	.517	.274	.437	.315	.437	.237	.371	.275
Enc: Parent	2.163**	.571	1.757	.762	2.298**	.609	1.828	.771	2.359**	.630	1.875	.829
Enc: Friend	1.437	.278	2.477*	.632	1.373	.270	2.148**	.582	1.265	.254	1.968**	.550
Enc: Teach	1.610*	.362	1.844**	.563	1.643*	.374	2.119**	.678	1.799**	.417	2.368**	.778
Btm decile GP					.461**	.089	.048**	.020	.438**	.086	.042**	.018
High School #1									1.169	.326	1.312	.475
High School #2									1.158	.343	1.400	.560
High School #3									.532*	.150	.344**	.136
High School #5									.951	.229	.726	.232
Alt. Site Schools									.184*	.134	.000**	.000
Pseudo-R^2	.407				.430				.439			

** significant at the .01 level, (one tailed test for gender, race/ethnicity, school attended, two tailed test for all other variables)

* significant at the .05 level, (one tailed test for gender, race/ethnicity, school attended, two tailed test for all other variables)

Figure 1. A Conceptual Model of the Formation and Actuation of College Plans.