

Effects of Exposure to Part-Time Faculty on Community College Transfer

Audrey Jaeger
North Carolina State University
Kevin Eagan
University of California, Los Angeles

Introduction

- U.S. higher education transitions to mass education
- Role of community colleges in increasing access (Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Quigley & Bailey, 2003)
- Economic efficiency and increased use of part-time faculty

Review of the Literature

- The Community College Context
 - Low tuition, flexible scheduling, comprehensive missions, convenient locations (Phillippe, 2000)
 - Open access
 - Complex missions



Review of the Literature

- Research on Part-Time Faculty
 - 67% of CC faculty are part-time (Cataldi et al., 2005)
 - Lower level of job satisfaction (Eagan, 2007; Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2006)
 - Lower level of accessibility for students and engagement in class (Umbach, 2007)
 - Provide substantial cost-savings for institutions (Bettinger & Long, 2005)



Review of the Literature

- Effect of Part-Time Faculty on Student Outcomes
 - Associate degree completion rates (Jacoby, 2006)
 - Persistence (Harrington & Schibik, 2004; Jaeger & Hinz, in press; Ronco & Cahill, 2006)
 - Interactions and other student outcomes
 - Cejda & Rhodes (2004)
 - Calcagno et al. (2005)



Review of the Literature

- Community College Transfer
 - Adelman (2005) – college-level math credits, continuous enrollment positively affect transfer
 - Dougherty & Kienzl (2006) – educational aspirations, working less than 40 hours per week positively affect transfer



Theoretical Frameworks

- Social Capital (Coleman, 1988)
 - Production function of social relationships
 - Information networks and institutional agents (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995)
- Human Capital (Becker, 1993; Douglass, 1997)
 - Invest in human capital when benefits outweigh costs (Becker, 1993)
 - Misguided expectations and poor information throughout community college population (Cohen & Brawer, 2003)



Research Question

- Controlling for background characteristics, prior achievement, external environmental factors, financial aid measures, and enrollment traits, does exposure to part-time faculty negatively affect students' likelihood of transferring to a four-year institution?
- Controlling for student-level characteristics, does the percent of part-time faculty employed by an institution negatively affect a community college's average transfer rate?



Methods

- Data & Sample
 - Initial sample of 1.4 million students in 107 institutions within a state system of community colleges
 - Identification of "transfer likely" students: 8 or more transferable units at a single institution
 - Final analytic sample: 24,865 "transfer ready" students in 107 community colleges
 - Data provided from state community college system office
 - Entering cohorts from 2000 and 2001 of first-time, credit-seeking students
 - Five-year longitudinal data



Methods

- Variables (student-level)
 - Demographic traits
 - Financial aid
 - Enrollment status
 - Transcript information – number and types of credits, grades
 - Faculty data – full-time vs. part-time



Methods

- Variables (institution-level)
 - Percentage of faculty who are part-time
 - Proportion of instruction offered by part-time faculty
 - Percentage of students who received financial aid
 - Urbanicity
 - Percentage of underrepresented racial minority students



Methods

- Analyses
 - Creation of key independent variable: percent exposure to part-time faculty
 - Hierarchical Generalized Linear Modeling



Methods

- Limitations
 - Possible lack of consistency in data reporting
 - Limited number of institutional variables to be included in model
 - Subjectivity associated with identification of “transfer likely” students
 - Behavioral vs. psychological data



Descriptive Statistics

- Students
 - 36% of sample transferred to four-year college or university
 - Average time spent with part-time faculty: 38%
 - 54% female
 - 44% White, 23% Latina/o, 19% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 5% Black, 2% other
 - 7% vocational studies majors, 38% undeclared
 - 3.14 – mean cumulative grade point average



Descriptive Statistics

- Institutions
 - Percent of faculty in part-time appointments: 65%
 - Proportion of instruction done by part-time faculty: 49%
 - 44% urban campuses, 31% suburban, 25% rural
 - Average proportion of students receiving financial aid: 51%
 - 44% urban, 31% suburban, 25% rural



Results – HGLM Analyses

	Delta-p
% Exposure to part-time faculty	-1.82%*
First-year GPA	7.16%***
Cumulative GPA	7.25%***
Vocational studies major	-16.00%***
Part-time student	-11.68%***
Earned an associate's degree	23.74%***
Received financial aid	-2.94%*



Results – HGLM Analyses

Variable	Delta-p
Urbanicity: rural	-4.03%*
Proportion of students receiving financial aid	-1.75%***
Proportion of instruction offered by part-time faculty	NS
Proportion of faculty in part-time appointments	NS
Proportion of students majoring in vocational studies	NS
Explained variance at level 2	30.00%



Implications for Practice

- Need to work with the current situation
 - Consider the courses taught by part-time faculty
 - Rethink advising decisions
 - Offer increased incentives to part-time faculty to improve satisfaction with job/work environment
 - Encourage connections between all faculty and needy and part-time students



Implications for Research

- Alternative definitions of transfer likely
- Cross-classified HGLM
- Disaggregate data by enrollment status
- More specific controls for major
- Cost-benefit analysis of part-time faculty use and student outcomes



Thank you and questions

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