The Role of Research in Promoting Access and Equity in Higher Education

Robert Teranishi

Professor of Social Science and Comparative Education
Morgan and Helen Chu Endowed Chair in Asian American Studies
Institute for Immigration, Globalization, and Education
University of California, Los Angeles
The Demographic Imperative

Demographic projections suggest the U.S. will be the first major advanced post-industrial society in history to become minority-majority.

Population estimates reveal that by 2020, more than half of children in the U.S. may be minorities.

The point at which the U.S. population becomes predominately non-white (regardless of age) is estimated to occur in the year 2044.
While the AAPI population was relatively small up to 1960, it has grown at an exponential rate since then.

Between 2000 and 2010, AAPIs were the fastest growing racial group and projected to continue to grow at a high rate.

In higher education, AAPI student enrollment grew five-fold between 1979 and 2009.
While the AAPI population grows, it is also changing in its composition. Between 1990 and 2010, some sub-groups grew at a faster rate than others. It is also important to note emerging AAPI populations, including sub-groups that were not reported on in past census data.
There are significant differences in degree attainment between AAPI sub-groups.

Southeast Asians are three to five times more likely to leave college without a degree than East Asians and South Asians.

East Asians and South Asians have greater likelihood of having completed college and an advanced degree.
Profile of AAPI Community College Students

Financial vulnerability, immigrant-origin backgrounds, and challenges associated with being first-generation college students were common themes for these AAPI community college students.

- Low median household income ($20,238)
- High proportion of students worked (67%) and were working long hours (40% worked full time)
- High proportion were of immigrant-origin backgrounds (81%) and first-generation college students (83%)
- High proportion of students report family responsibilities interfering with school (79%)
Utilizing Data and Inquiry

- Inform a deeper understanding of 21st century college students
- Create and track institutional progress toward specific outcomes
- Identify programs to scale or replicate
- Share ideas with the field about best practices
There is a need for research that can help define and measure student success, determine institutional priorities, and represent their role and function in higher education.

We conduct longitudinal research to examine the extent to which student success initiatives have a measurable impact on student outcomes.

Our analysis focuses on the “added-value” of programs relative to academic performance, credit accumulation, persistence, degree attainment, and transfer rates.
Partnership with De Anza College

Initiative to Maximize Positive Academic Achievement and Cultural Thriving among AAPI (IMPACT AAPI)

- Developmental English paired with AAPI literature
- Comprehensive wrap-around services
- Culturally relevant pedagogy

Institutional Profile

Year Founded: 1967
Location: Cupertino, CA
Total Enrollment: 37,760 students

Race

- Hispanic: 19.7%
- White: 25.1%
- AAPI: 39.2%
- Black: 3.6%
- American Indian: 0.4%
- Two or More Races: 4.1%
- Non-Resident: 5.7%
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At De Anza College, students enrolled in an AAPI-focused learning community were more likely to transition from developmental to college-level English.

Students originating from these courses were more likely to pass their college-level English course, and accomplish the transition in less time.

Students in these courses were also more likely to earn associate’s degrees.

Note: $X^2_{(1)} = 30.97, p < .01$

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It is important to learn from and build on interventions that exhibit successful student outcomes.

Establishing a culture of inquiry is critical to improve the capacity of institutions to utilize assessment most effectively.

Research can be a driving force for social justice and institutional change that is responsive to demographic realities.