

EL CAMINO COLLEGE



Project Success Outcomes

Office of Institutional Research
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Introduction

Project Success is a program designed to increase the retention rate and to improve the academic performance of its students. These goals are achieved by providing support services such as ongoing counseling, tutoring, early registration workshops, faculty, staff and peer mentoring, field trips to four-year universities, and learning communities. This program is open to all students but serves primarily African-American students who are full time and right out of high school.

The purpose of this study is to track Project Success participants from their initial participation term to compare successful progress through basic skills, enrollment persistence rates, and goal achievement over time. Students were tracked by cohort to determine numbers and rates of persistence from Fall 2001 through Fall 2004 cohorts.

Method

Students in Project Success were divided into four cohorts based on the academic year they started their participation in the program. The cohorts are as follows: Fall 2001 (n = 23), Fall 2002 (n = 25), Fall 2003 (n = 21) and Fall 2004 (n = 25) cohorts. Each cohort was compared to a control group of similar students (direct from high school, full-time, matriculated and tested African-American students).

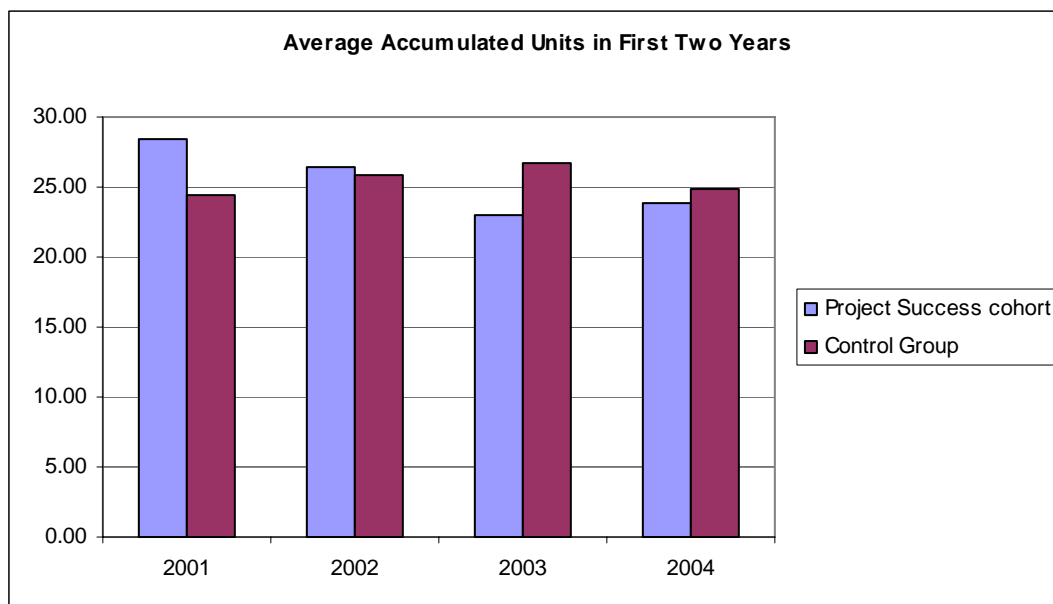
Demographic and enrollment data on these students were extracted from the college's data files. In addition, students' names were submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse who then provided transfer and degree attainment data. A comprehensive analysis was conducted on each of the four cohorts and control groups.

Results

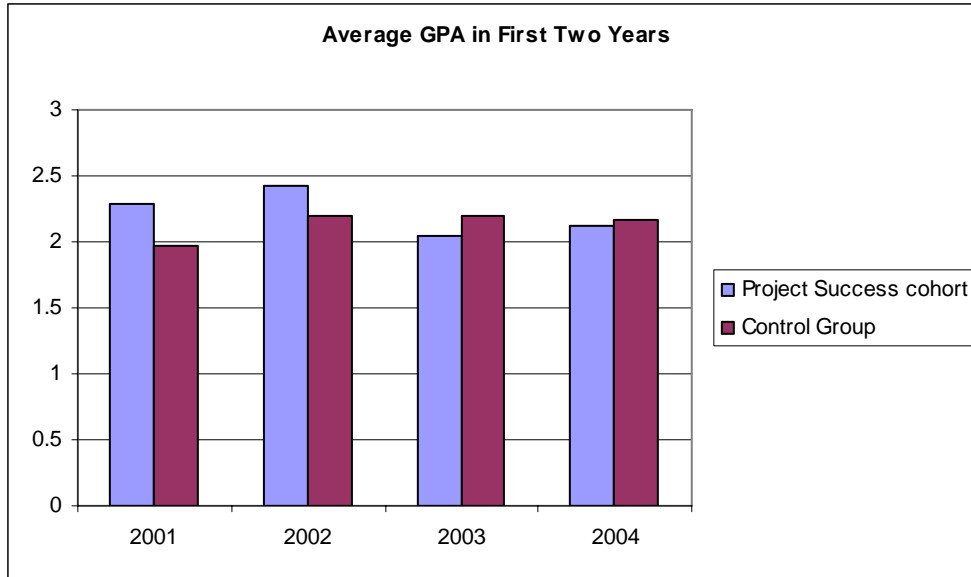
The following is a summary of the demographic and enrollment characteristics of Project Success students in each of the five cohorts. Pages 2 through 7 provide more detailed information and analysis by topic.

Enrollment and Persistence

When examining the accumulated units in the first two years in Project Success, the earlier cohorts averaged more units than their control group. The 2001 cohort averaged 28.36 units while its control group averaged 24.40 units in their first two years at ECC. The 2002 cohort average was slightly higher (26.41) than their respective control group (25.85). But the 2003 and 2004 cohorts' average accumulated units were lower in comparison to their control groups.

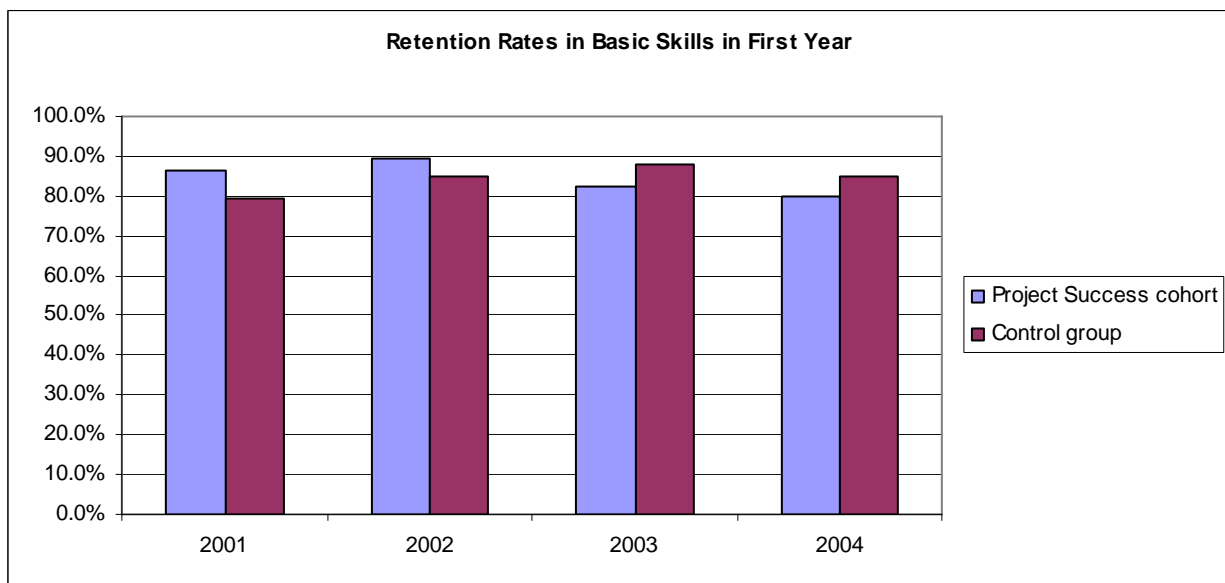


The pattern found in the accumulated units repeated itself when comparing college GPAs during their first two years in Project Success. The 2001 and 2002 cohorts GPAs were higher than their control groups. On the other hand, the 2003 cohort GPAs (2.05) was slightly lower than their control groups (2.19) while the 2004 cohort GPAs (2.12) was nearly the same as their comparison group (2.16).

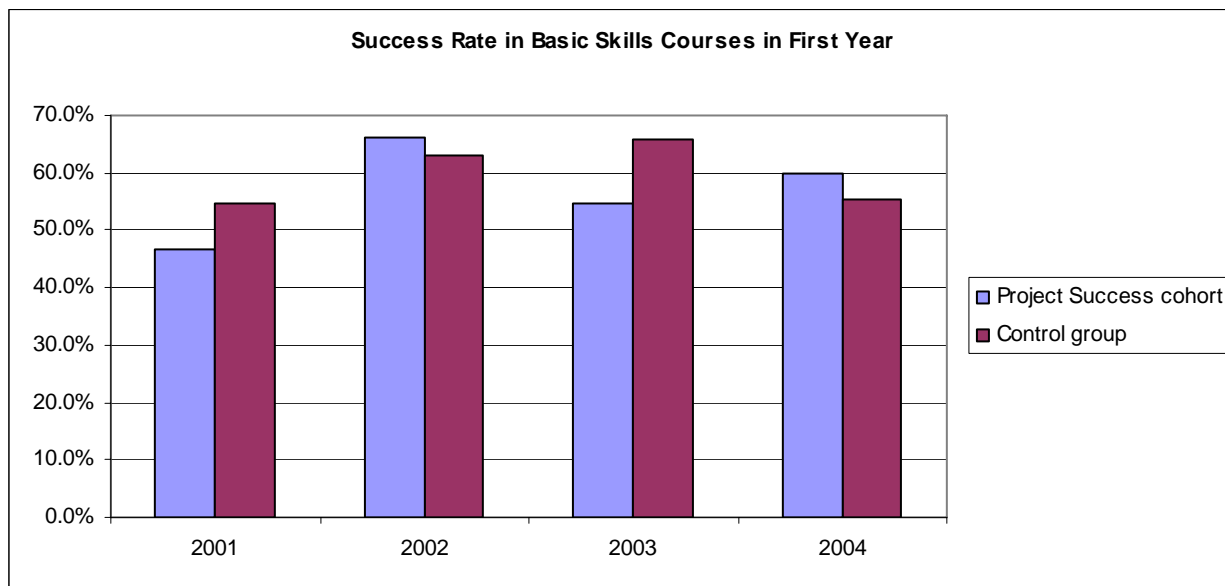


Student academic performance was measured in two ways: student *retention* (completing a course, regardless of final grade) and *success* (completing a course with a C/CR or better). Retention and success were measured for basic skills courses taken in the first year of program.

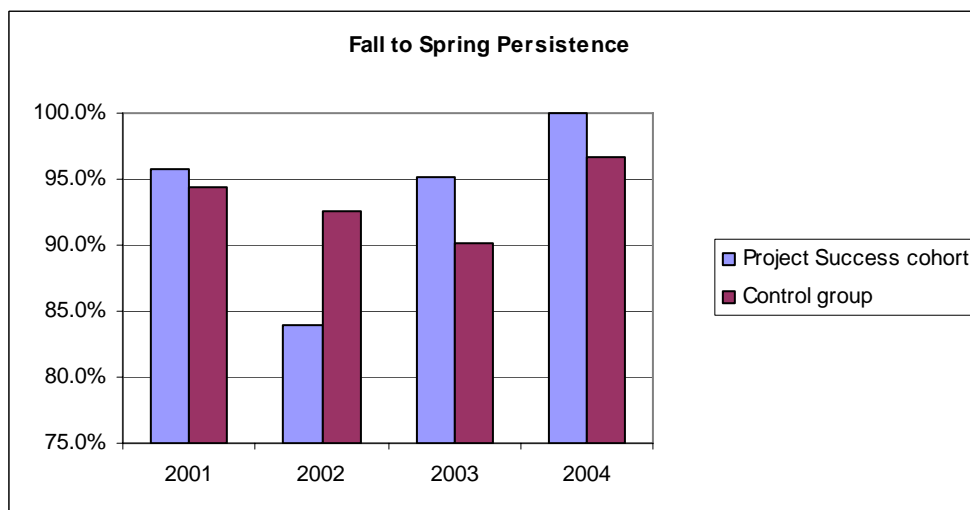
Project Success students in the 2001 and 2002 cohorts were retained at a rate of about 88%. Students in their comparison groups were retained at 82%. The retention rate slipped to 81% for the 2003 and 2004 cohorts and it was lower than their comparison groups which had an 87% retention rate.



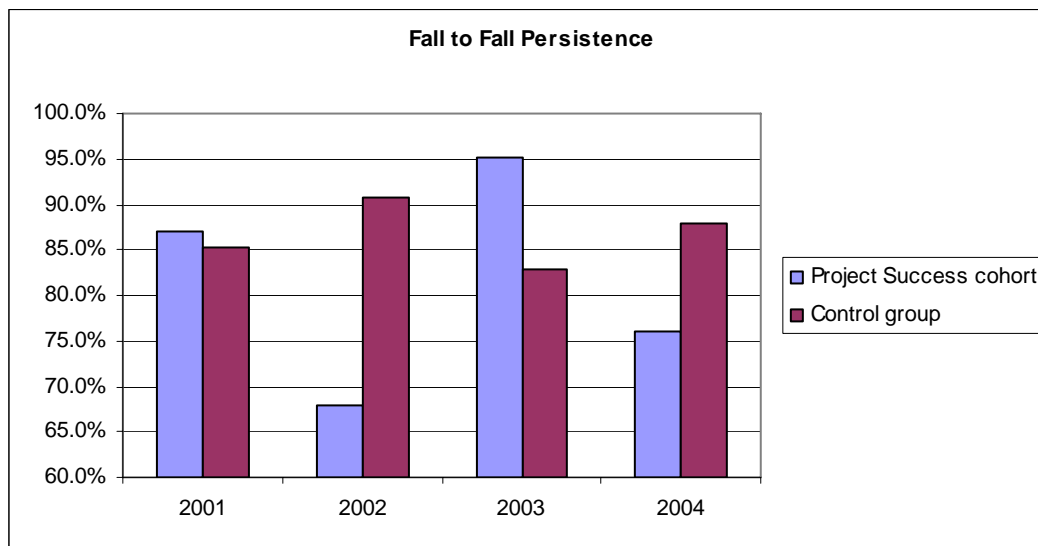
Success rates in basic skills courses fluctuated among the cohort groups. The 2002 and 2004 cohorts have a success rate of 66% and 60%, respectively and succeed at a higher rate than their comparison groups. On the other hand, the 2001 and 2003 cohorts succeed at a lower rate. The success rate for the 2001 cohort was 47% and the 2003 cohort rate was at 55%. Students in the 2001 and 2003 control groups succeed at a higher rate.



Overall, Project Success students demonstrate a high fall to spring persistence rate. With the exception of the 2002 cohort, the Project Success cohorts persisted to spring at a rate of over 96%. This is higher than the control groups' persistence rate of 93%.

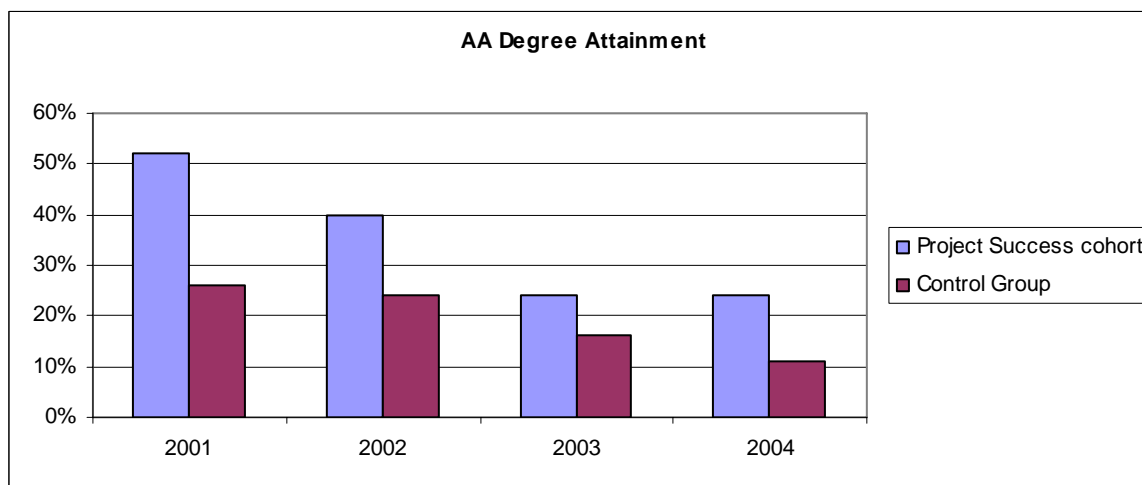


The fall to fall persistence rates for the Project Success cohorts fluctuated from year to year. The 2001 cohort had an 87% persistence rate but the rate dropped down to 68% for the 2002 cohort. The persistence rate came back up to 95% with the 2003 cohort but fell to 76% for the 2004 cohort. The control groups demonstrate a more stable persistence rate.

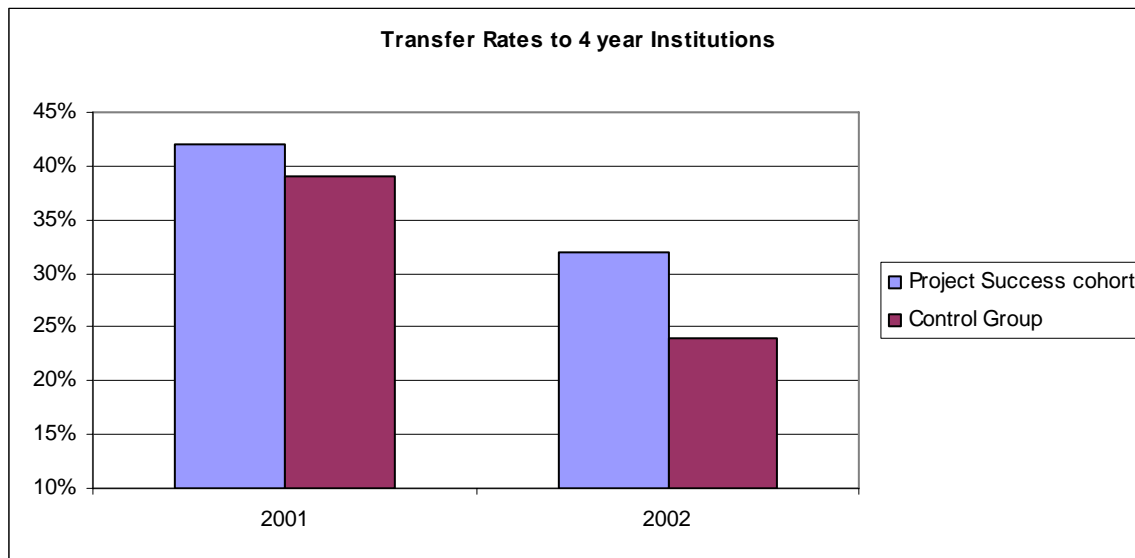


Transfer Rates and Degree Attainment

Project Success students attain their Associate’s degree at a higher rate than the control group. Thirty-five percent of Project Success students earn their Associate’s degrees in comparison to 19% of the control group. In recent years, there has been a decline in the number of Project Success students earning their degree. Forty-six percent of the 2001 and 2002 cohorts earned their degrees but the number dropped to 24% for the 2003 and 2004 cohorts. The control groups also exhibited a similar drop.



In order to examine degree attainment within 6 and 7 years, transfer rates and four year degree attainment were calculated only for the 2001 and 2002 cohorts. Looking at the early cohorts, transfer rates into 4 year universities have decreased. The 2001 cohort had a 42% transfer rate while 2002 cohort saw a lower rate of 32%. Both cohorts took an average of 3 years to transfer into a 4 year university. Below is a list of the institutions Project Success students attended.



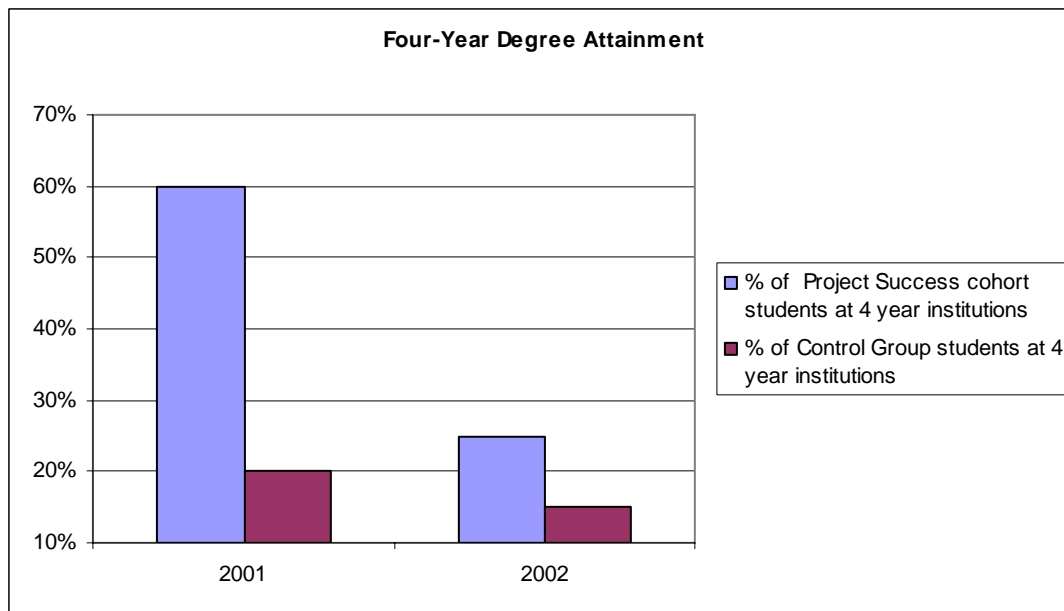
Destination Schools

CALIFORNIA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY -UNDERGRADS
CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - DOMINGUEZ HILLS
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - LONG BEACH
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - NORTHRIDGE
CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY*
HOWARD UNIVERSITY*
LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY
MILES COLLEGE*
NEVADA STATE COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-LOS ANGELES
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS
UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX -

*Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Looking at all participants in 2001 and 2002 cohorts, only 14% received a four-year degree. Forty-three percent of cohort students who did transfer to a university went on to attain their degree. The Project Success cohorts obtained their 4 year degree at a higher rate than their control groups.

Please note that degree attainment counts are very small. This is partially due to the fact that the data provided by the National Student Clearinghouse did not include information for all students. Given the small numbers in each cohort, percentages can vary widely on a handful of students.



Conclusion

The data on Project Success students shows some interesting trends. The cohorts demonstrate a high fall to spring persistence rate and A.A. degree attainment. The early cohorts have higher college GPAs and accumulated units. Also, Project Success students have a healthy retention rate while in the program.

The transfer rates for Project Success students are showing a slight decline. In future studies, it may be beneficial to look at the transfer rates of other Project Success cohorts. It would be helpful to see if the decline in transfer rates persists and examine what factors may be attributed to this trend.