

IRC Minutes**Friday, March 29th, 2013****AGENDA ITEMS:**

1. Using Propensity Score Matching to Evaluate the ASAP Program
 - Zineta Kolenovic (Assistant Director for Research and Evaluation at the CUNY Office of Student Affairs), Drew Allen (Director of Research and Evaluation for the CUNY Collaborative Programs Research and Evaluation Unit), and Aaron Horenstein (Research Analyst for the CUNY Collaborative Programs Research and Evaluation Unit) delivered a presentation on how Propensity Score Matching (PSM) was used to evaluate the CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) program.
 - ASAP is designed to assist community college students toward a goal of graduating within three years. Key ASAP program features include a consolidated block schedule, cohorts by major, small class size, required full-time study and comprehensive advisement and career development services. Financial incentives include tuition waivers for financial aid eligible students and free use of textbooks and monthly Metrocards for all students. The first cohort was Fall 2007.
 - Purpose of analysis: to compare the Fall 2007 pilot program participants to a comparable group of students who would have qualified for the program, but were unable to join because it was not available. (Fall 2006 students were the source of this comparison group).
 - PSM was selected as a way of minimizing the effects of extraneous variables in a quasi-experimental design.
 - Steps:
 - Identify variables that may have an effect on the outcome or on the likelihood to join ASAP.
 - Run logistic regression predicting treatment (ASAP) and find the propensity score of being assigned to the treatment based on matching variables.
 - Match students on the propensity scores. Many type of matching. You can force some matching in addition to this, such as matching first-time Freshmen to first-time Freshmen, and Transfers to Transfers. You can do one-to-one matching or one-to-many. You can set the limits of the caliber of the match.
 - Then conduct the analysis with the matched groups.
 - Propensity scores for both groups considered must have strongly overlapping variables.
 - Concerns were raised about the possibility of losing too many cases when students in either group do not have a clear match in the other group. In their first stringent matching, they lost 50% of the ASAP students. They then did optimal full matching. It will look for the most precise possible matching for the full group.
 - There were too many missing cases for income; and once removed from the

procedure, major changes to the outcome of the analysis were not observed. Income was dropped from the model. The only variable they used for skills assessment testing outcomes was Exempt or not.

- A professor at Columbia – Hank Levin – is doing a cost-benefit analysis and a benefit-cost analysis. Cost-benefit looks at the costs laid out by the student and the institution. The benefit-cost study looks at the long term benefits for the student and for society.

2. Early Alert

- Queensborough CC is starting an early alert system developed in house. It is based on faculty flags on a few issues, and the Council discussed how the propensity score matching might also be used to evaluate these programs

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Fall Final Data are being uploaded into CUNY IRDB and will be available May 1st.
2. A Middle States email will be sent out very soon.
3. The Council also discussed the progress on each campus with the Noel Levitz survey implementation. Colin Chelman invited the Council to give feedback from the faculty on the in-class administration.

Next IR Council Meeting: April 26, 2013