



**ACADEMIC SENATE**  
for California Community Colleges  
LEADERSHIP • EMPOWERMENT • VOICE

# **Affirming Academic Progress**

## **Changing the Way We Approach Academic Probation**

Strengthening Student Success Conference 2024  
Garden Grove, CA

# Welcome!

Follow along with us here.



# Presenters



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## Session Overview

- Words stick
- African American Transfer  
Tipping Point
- ASCCC Resolution and Action
- Changes in the Field
- Promising Practices
- Beyond Language Changes
- Q&A



# Discussion

You show up for work, ready for the day, and a colleague says something to you in passing that makes you feel

1. Good
2. Anxious
3. Hopeful
4. Sad
5. Happy

for the rest of the day.

What did they say to you?





PHOTO: HENRY MONROE



Words are things... They  
get on the walls. They get in  
your wallpaper. They get in  
your rugs, in your  
upholstery, and your  
clothes, and finally in to you.

~Dr. Maya Angelou

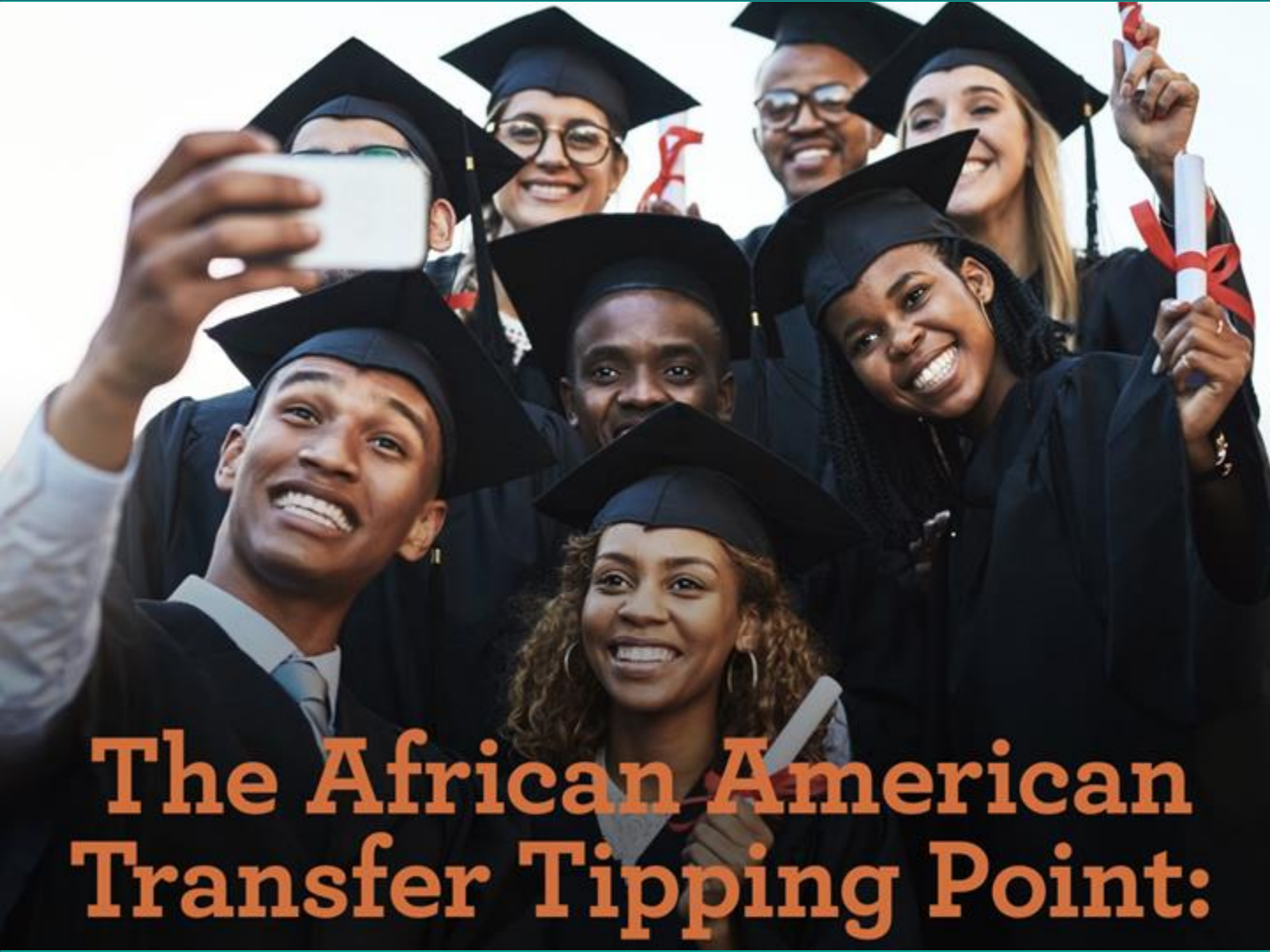
# Discussion

What do you think of when you hear the term “probation?”

What about “academic probation”?

What has been your experiences with academic probation?





# The African American Transfer Tipping Point:

The

African American

Transfer Tipping Point Study



THROUGH THE GATE<sup>SM</sup>  
theRPgroup



# About The RP Group

**Mission:** As the representative organization for Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (IRPE) professionals in the California Community Colleges (CCC) system, The RP Group strengthens the ability of CCC to discover and undertake high-quality research, planning, and assessments that improve evidence-based decision-making, institutional effectiveness, and success for all students.

**Services:** Research, evaluation, planning, professional development, and technical assistance—designed and conducted by CCC practitioners

**Organization:** 501(c)3 with roots as membership organization



# Through the Gate

Mapped California's transfer landscape, identifying a continuum of milestones for the student transfer journey and quantifying how many students were “near” or “at” the transfer gate

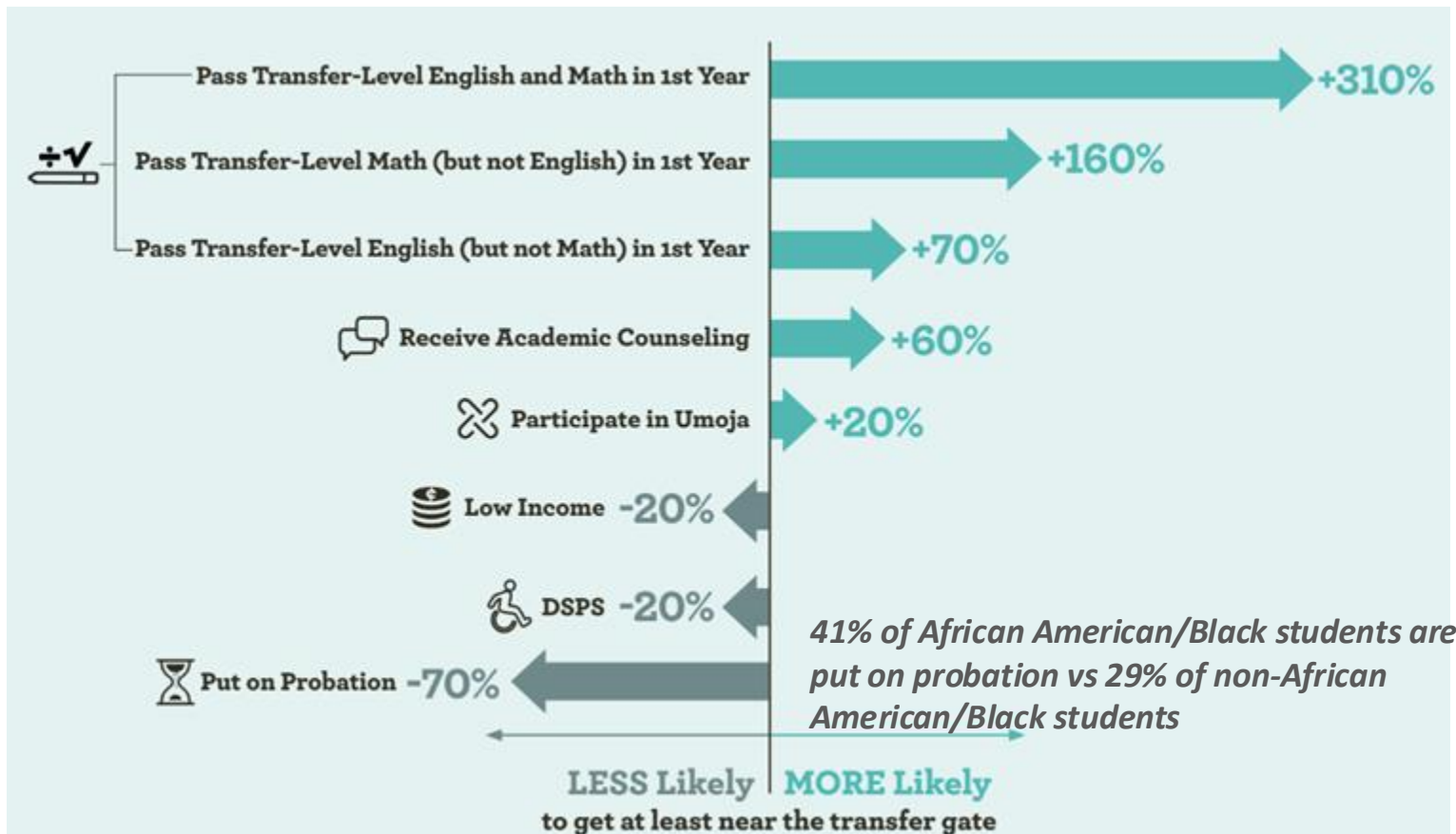
When compared to White students, African American/Black students are **2.04 times more likely to transfer** than remain near the gate. The problem is that they are less likely to make it “near” the transfer gate.”



# Guiding Questions

- What factors (both academic and non-academic) contribute to students' likelihood of reaching the tipping point?
- Which programs and practices are associated with greater persistence to and through the tipping point, and ultimately, the transfer gate?

# Phase 1 Results



# Phase 2: We don't see it the same...

## Administrators say...

“

It's almost like a fail safe, right?... The specialized programs have the ability to implement, “Hey, you have below a 2.0... come to meet with us once a semester if you want to stay in the program.” Then you have to come and meet with us maybe twice a month,... and now you have to do this many hours. You have to come to tutoring or at least explain to us why you can't come and do tutoring... So from a school standpoint, we have set failsafes in place where you have to come and see a counselor.

”

vs.

## Students say...

“

When we think of probation, half the time, we think of something bad. Usually in the African American community, a lot of that is “Oh, if someone is on probation, they just got out of jail and now they still have to keep being put through trials until they can be actually freed.” So when we do academic probation, in a Black student's mindset, that's the same thing – “I'm being held until I can be set free to continue on.” And a lot of times they reduce your financial aid if you're on academic probation so if that's what you're counting on to get classes, now that's another deterrent to staying in school.

”

# Phase 2: Nobody asked...

“

When you get on academic probation, it's like the school said, “Now fend for yourself.” Because you don't get financial aid. You don't get support programs, because nobody trusts you ...but then nobody wants to ask what happened. No one ever wants to ask the question of “What happened that semester? Did anything happen with the [student's] family?”

”



# From Research to Action



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## Destigmatize Academic Probation language and Processes

### Resolution Number 07.01 - Spring 2023

Whereas, Current California Code of Regulations Title 5 §55031 Standards for Probation [1] requires colleges to place students on academic or progress probation if they fall below grade point average or successful course completion standards;

Whereas, **The term “probation” is a deficit-minded principle** that is associated with criminal activity, and this term and current practices are perpetuating trauma for students who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color as well as justice-impacted students; [2]

Whereas, Studies such as the **Research and Planning Group's The African American Transfer Tipping Point: Identifying the Factors that Impact Transfer Among African American/Black Community College Students (2022)** show that being put on **academic probation “presents a significant barrier to making it near the transfer gate for students of all races/ethnicities”** [3]; and

Resolved, That the **Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to overhaul the Title 5 language on probation**, including a name change and updating the language and processes to be **asset-minded, not punitive**; and Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges support local academic senates with professional development and resources to encourage reviewing **local policies and practices with an aim of mitigating local processes that may negatively impact students who are on academic or progress probation while Title 5 changes are in progress.**

# ASCCC Resolution Progress: Title 5 Changes

Discussions are ongoing in the California Community College Curriculum Committee.





# While We Wait

We **can** change...

- Communications to students
- College webpages with academic standing information
- College catalogue language
- Administrative Procedures (that do not site Title 5 references)
- Counseling practices
- Classroom practices (that could impact how students get on probation in the first place)

We **can't** change...

Any paperwork or processes of the college directly linked to state and federal requirements tied to current Title 5:

- Financial Aid
- Board Policies
- Transfer Admissions Applications



# ASCCC Resolution Progress: Professional Development

- Rostrum Addressing the Stigmatization of Academic Probation, February 2023
- Rostrum Gift-Giving Discourse: Decriminalizing Academic, November 2023
- Webinar Destigmatizing Academic Probation, December 2023
- Webinar Affirming Academic Progress: Changing the Way We Talk About Academic Probation, May 2024
- **WHAT ELSE MIGHT BE IN THE WORKS? OFFICE HOURS? HOW CAN WE HELP COLLEGES CONNECT (WITH ASCCC OR WITH EACH OTHER)?**



# Current Title 5 Standards (§ 55031)

## Academic Probation

- At least 12 semester / 18 quarter units
- GPA average below 2.0

55025.

## Progress Probation

- At least 12 semester / 18 quarter units
- “W”, “I”, or “NP” in fifty percent or more of enrolled units



## What They're Doing

- Reframe language and improve communication surrounding academic probation – reframe, recontextualize, restructure
- Enhanced Outreach Efforts: notify, provide support, connect to resources
- Connect with colleagues, navigate participatory governance, create implementation process
- Collect and track data

## Who's Involved

- Research analyst
- Counseling department chair
- Public Information Officer
- Dean of Institutional Effectiveness



## What They're Doing

- Listening session for students and other interested parties
- Create new language
- Task Force gathering to draft a new version of the local Administrative Procedure for probation
- Redesign steps student must complete
- Identify additional student supports that are lacking
- Advocacy to Chancellor through shared governance groups
- Recruit more people to get involved



## Who's Involved

- formerly incarcerated and system impacted students from the Street Scholars program (Merritt College)
- Student Trustees
- Student government leaders
- campus presidents
- elected trustee
- Faculty (Counselors and Instructors)
- District Academic Senate
- Chancellor



# What They're Doing

- Changed AP 34250 to reframe “probation and dismissal”
- Reviewing communications sent to students to have a “reach out” tone instead of a disciplinary one.
- Discussing best practices to prevent students from being dismissed in the first place.
- Collecting data by demographics and student characteristics (e.g., academic load) to assess any disproportionately impacted students and the number of students on probation and/or disqualified (academic or probation).



SAN DIEGO  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
DISTRICT

# Who's Involved

- Members of the District Student Services Council (a participatory governance body)
- The Academic Advising Workgroup
  - Vice Chancellor
  - Educational Services
  - Dean of Student Services
  - Dean of Curriculum and Instructional Services
  - Vice President of Student Services
  - Counseling Department Chairs
  - Counseling Faculty
  - Students





# SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

## Administrative Procedure

### Chapter 4 – Instructional Services

Cabinet Review: 2/20/24  
Cabinet Action: 3/5/24  
DGC Review: 2/21/24  
DGC Action: 3/6/24

#### **AP ~~3000~~34250 – STUDENT ACADEMIC STANDING**

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In accordance with Title 5, sections 55031-55034, students are expected to maintain a level of academic performance or be subject to probation and/or dismissal.

##### 1. DEFINITIONS

- a. Good standing – Grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher; completion of at least ~~560~~50% of cumulative units attempted.
- b. Progress Probation\* – Percentage of cumulative units of "W," "I," and "NP" recorded, reaches or exceeds ~~5040~~50%; a completion rate of less than ~~5060~~50%.
- c. Academic Probation – Cumulative grade point average below 2.0.
- d. Progress ~~Disqualification~~Dismissal\* – Student on progress probation for two consecutive primary semesters who, in the subsequent semester, completes less than 60% of units attempted completes less than 50% of units attempted in the subsequent third primary semester.
- e. Academic ~~Disqualification~~Dismissal – Student on academic probation for two consecutive primary semesters whose grade point average, in the subsequent third primary semester, is below 2.0.

\*Executive Order 2020-02, suspended sections of Title 5, related to student academic standing. Colleges may not include a No Pass (NP) or Incomplete (I) from the Spring 2020 semester into academic standing calculations for progress probation or

## AP 34250 - Student Academic Standing



# What They're Doing

- Academic Senate initiated Task Force
- Poll students and make language change recommendation through shared governance
- Update letter to students, college catalog, online orientation, syllabus policies, student conduct, college webpages
- Inform the college community of changes
- [Task force workflow](#) designed for initial semester.



# Who's Involved

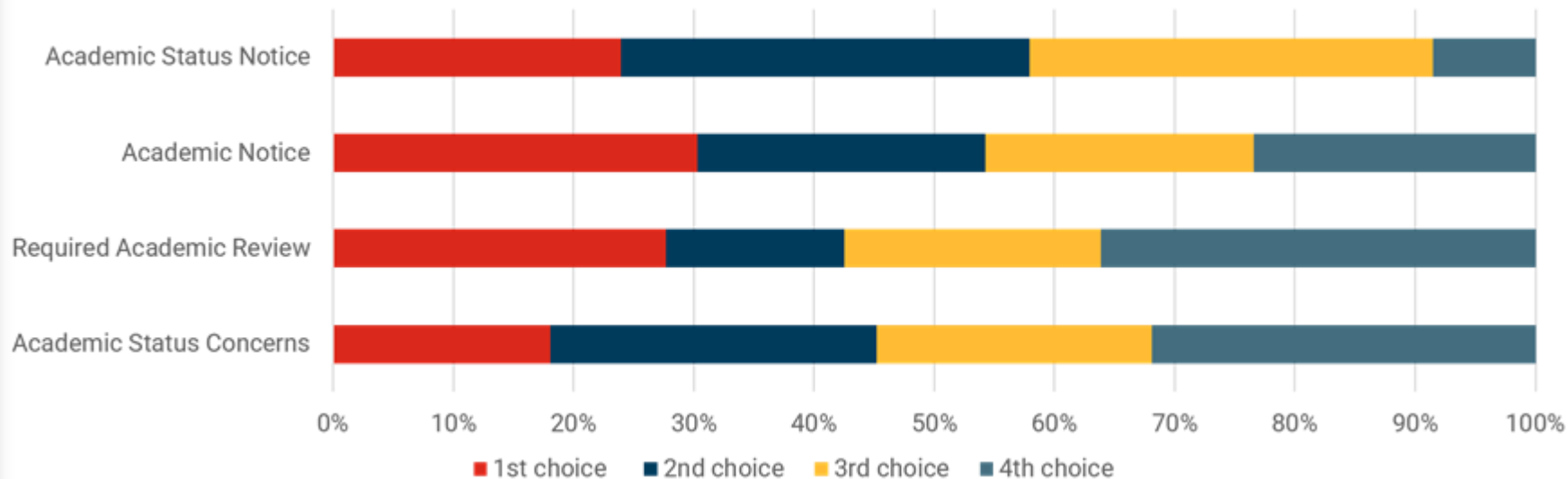
- Student Chancellor
- Student Trustee
- Counseling chair
- Counseling, English & Communication Studies faculty
- Student Equity Coordinator
- Senior Research Analyst
- Associate Dean of Student Equity
- Dean of Admissions & Records
- Dean of Financial Aid
- Dean of Student Success
- Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs





# CCSF Student Poll Results

Which of these options is the best replacement for "Academic Probation"?



# Student's other suggestions

- Academic Advice
- Academic Advisory
- Academic Areas for Improvement
- Academic Assist (AA)
- Academic check-in (Required?)
- Academic construction
- Academic Encouragement
- Academic Enhancement Notice
- Academic Evaluation Period
- Academic Guidance
- Academic Impasse
- Academic improvement
- Academic limbo
- Academic Notification
- Academic Pause
- Academic Performance Review
- Academic period for improvement
- Academic R&R (Revision & Recuperation)
- Academic Rehabilitation
- Academic rehabilitation recommended /required
- Academic Respite
- Academic Review (2)
- Academic Review Notice
- Academic Review Program
- Academic Review/Check-In
- Academic Standing Notice
- Academic Status Alert
- Academic Status Concerns
- Academic Status Development
- Academic Status Examination
- Academic status notice
- Academic studies
- Academic Support
- Academic Trial Period
- Academic warning
- Academically Vulnerable
- Attention needed academic status
- Attention request Academic status
- Educational Growth Opportunity
- Extended help
- GYST(get your shit together)
- How close are you to reaching your dreams?
- Progress Restoration Initiative
- Required
- Required academic revision
- Required Academic Status Review
- Review GPA
- RUOK (are you ok?)
- Scholastic Review
- Time out zone
- Warning



# Academic Standing Data

Where do you get the data?

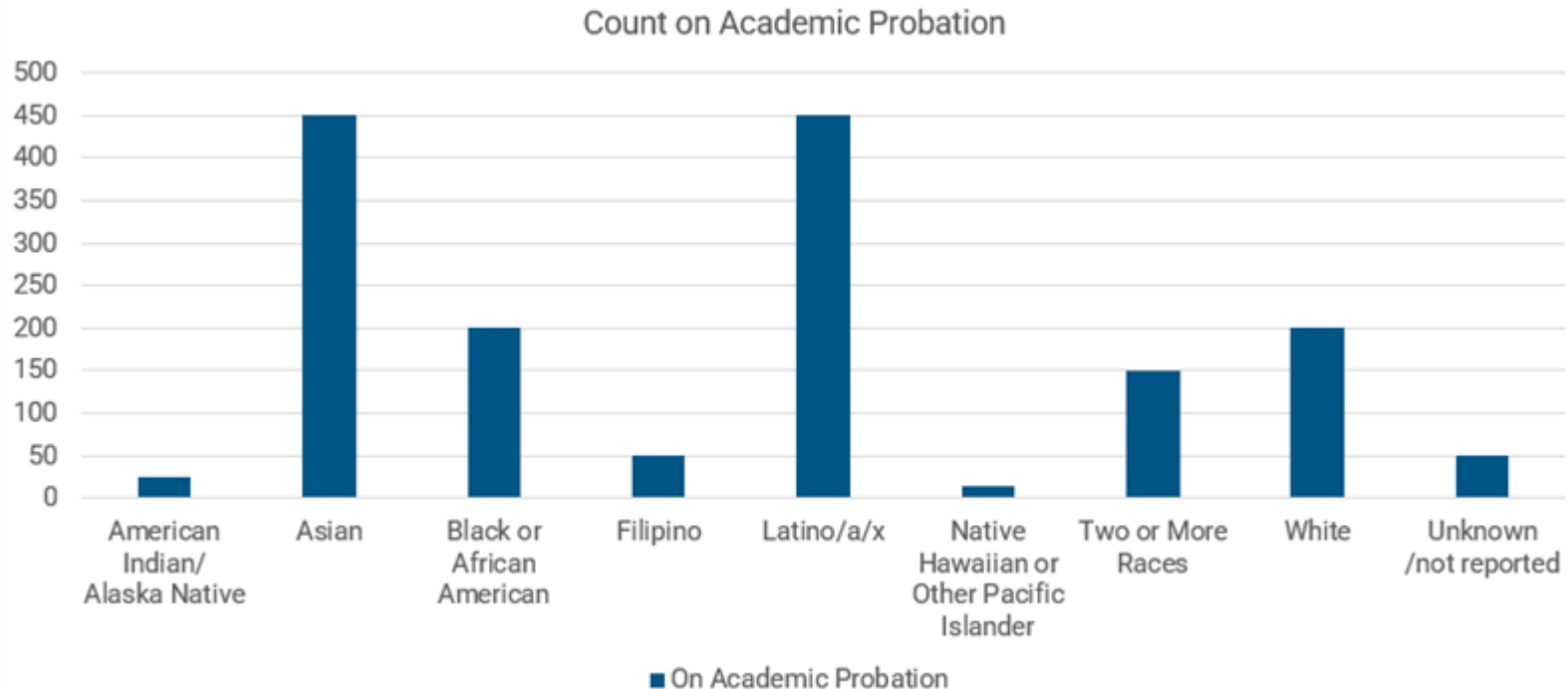
- Research Offices
- Data outside of your college
  - E.g. RP Group's African American Transfer Tipping Point Study

What do you ask for?

- Who is on probation
  - Counts vs. Percentages
- Who is getting off of probation



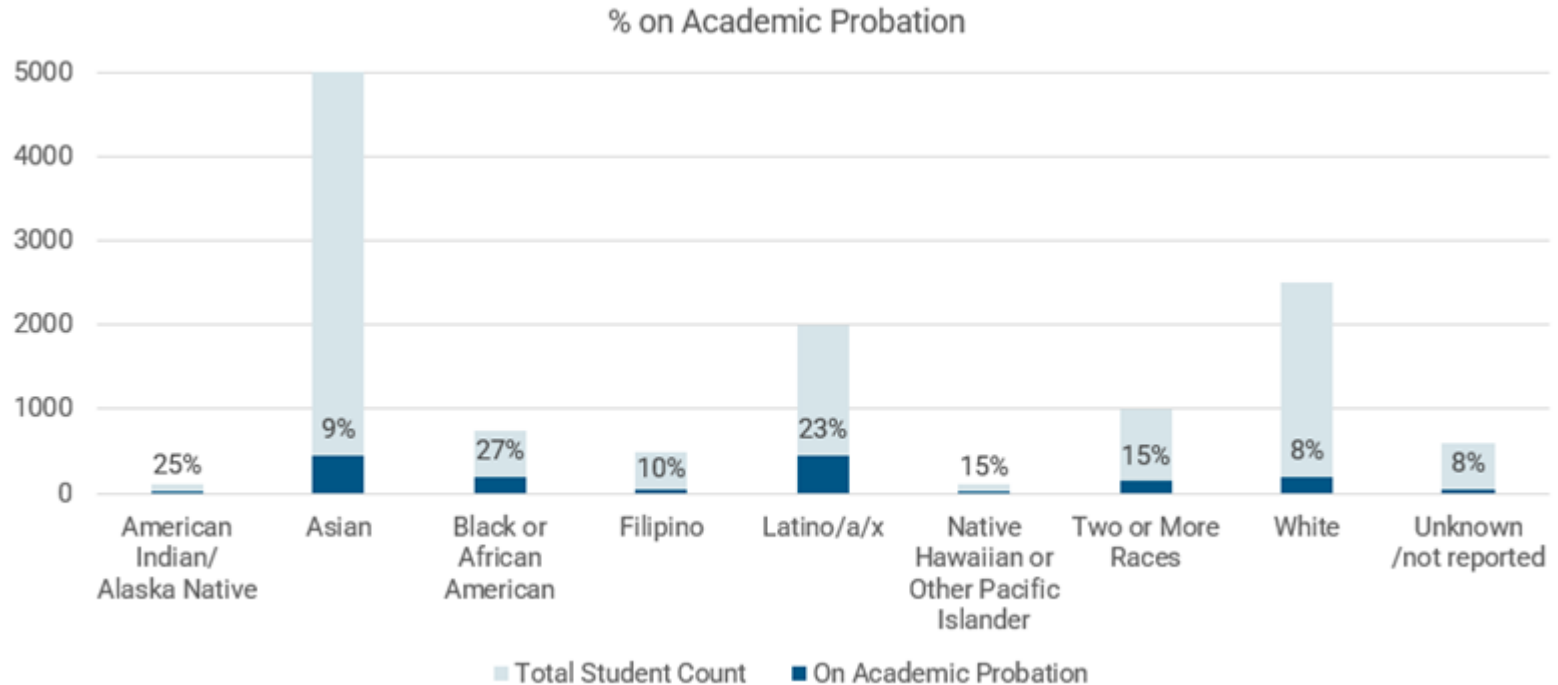
# Academic Standing Data: Counts



\* Fake College Data



# Academic Standing Data: Percents



\* Fake College Data



# Early Intervention Methods

- **Personalized and Holistic Counseling:** Implement counseling models that recognize and adapt to diverse backgrounds and individual needs of students.
- **Proactive Support Systems:** Implement systems that identify students who are having academic difficulties. Provide intrusive counseling and timely interventions. (Collaborative approach; Involve faculty, advisors and counselors).
- **Support Services:** Enhance support services like tutoring and writing centers. Do these support services accommodate diverse schedules, provide materials in multiple languages or are offered virtually?
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Provide and promote accessible mental and health services. Emphasize self-care.





## Things You Can Do on Monday

**W**hat are some things you can do on Monday to effect change?

(Turn to your neighbor and share some things you can do on Monday.)





## Things You Can Do on Monday

**1** Search how many times your institution uses the word “probation” on websites, forms, college policies

**2** Look at the letter that students get when put on notice

**3** Look at your data

**4** Engage your college leadership to convene or support a taskforce that includes students, counseling faculty, the registrar, and effected student affairs areas to recommend language changes

**5** Gather and review all the resources students on probation have access to and required processes in place to determine if they truly support students in returning to good standing





# Our Why

- ❖ Shifting our mindsets from deficit-minded to asset-based and saying what we mean
- ❖ Removing carceral terminology that does not reflect our intentions
- ❖ Holding ourselves accountable to reshape policies and practices intended to support students that actually do harm
- ❖ Keeping our students' mental health at the center of our practice



# Recommendations

- Not stopping with changing the name, but revamping the approach to truly focus on helping students return to good academic standing.
- Asking students why/how they got on academic probation and tailor the support accordingly.
- Understanding that for students to succeed academically, they must be supported holistically.

Words are things... They get on the walls. They get in your wallpaper. They get in your rugs, in your upholstery, and your clothes, and finally in to you.

~Dr. Maya Angelou

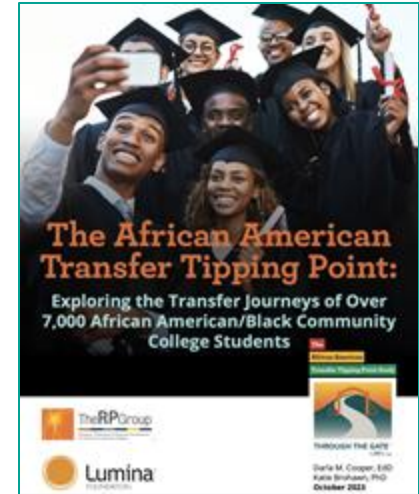
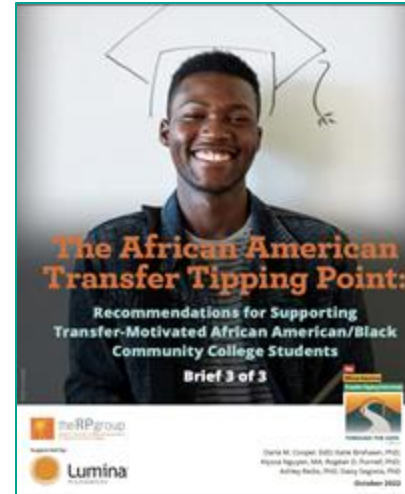
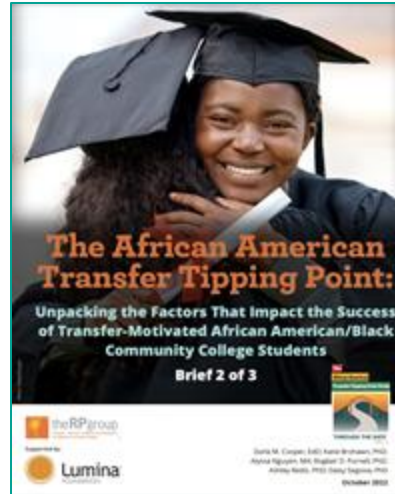
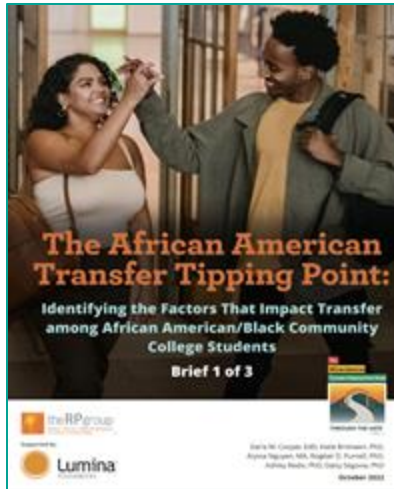


# Resources

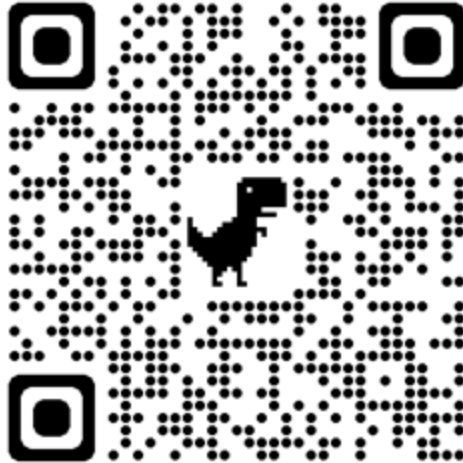
- [Destigmatize Academic Probation Language and Processes | ASCCC Resolution](#)
- [African American Transfer Tipping Point \(AATTP\) Study > The RP Group](#)
- [Gift-Giving Discourse: Decriminalizing Academic Progress Language | ASCCC Rostrum](#)
- [Addressing the Stigmatization of Academic Probation | ASCCC Rostrum](#)
- [Destigmatizing Academic Probation | ASCCC Webinar](#)
- [How to fix problems with academic probation \(opinion\) \(insidehighered.com\)](#)
- [Spotlight on... Moorpark College: Academic Probation Reimagined, November 2023 \(Recording\)](#)
- [How we did it: Progress Report 2021 on the implementation of Academic Notice at CSUF](#)
- [White Paper: Toward a Racially Sensitive Renaming of “Academic Probation” from CSU Fullerton 2021](#)
- [Research Brief: Academic Probation and the Role of Notification Letters](#)



# African American Transfer Tipping Point



# Research on Academic Probation



# Q&A



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# Thank You!



Presentation QR Code

