

Developmental Summer Bridges: Young Texas on the Road to College

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Developmental Summer Bridges

- DSBs in Texas:
 - Are for students who just completed high school
 - Are 4-6 week intensive summer programs
 - Include instruction in math, reading and/or writing
 - Include a “college knowledge” component
 - Offer multiple types of academic support.
- Emerging theoretical base for summer bridge programs, but little empirical research on outcomes or impacts (Garcia, 1991; Kezar, 2000).



Potential benefits

- DSBs are used to:
 - Strengthen student preparation for college
 - Reduce the need for developmental education
 - Expose students to college norms and expectations
 - Increase students' comfort with the college environment
 - Strengthen linkages between colleges and high schools.



NCPR Research on DSBs

- **The NCPR Team**



Purpose of the Research

To examine whether DSBs reduce the need for developmental education and improve other postsecondary outcomes.

To use a *random assignment methodology* to compare the outcomes of students who participate in DSBs with students who do not participate

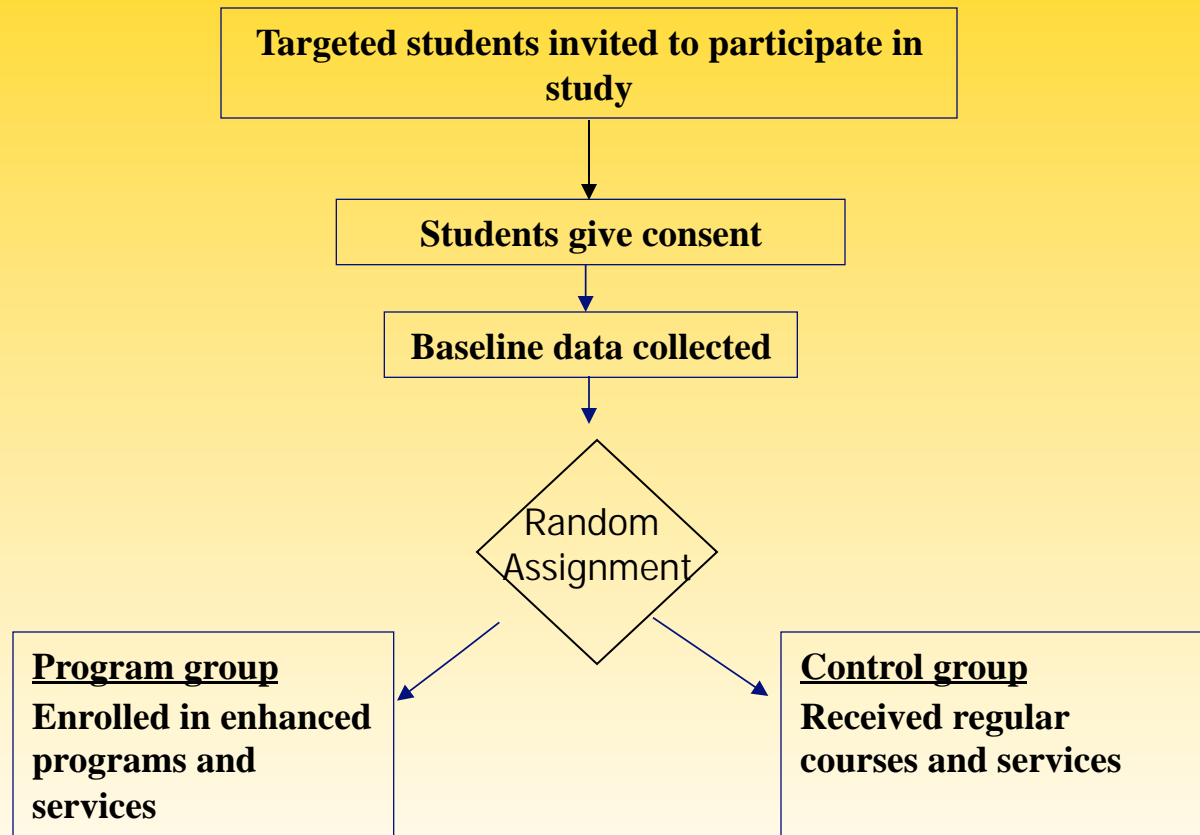


Overview of the Research

- Support for strong implementation
- Site visits to learn about program practices
- Gathering student data during DSB
- Gathering student follow-up data in college



Random Assignment Design



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Outcomes of Interest

- College enrollment rates
- Need for developmental coursework
- First-year GPA
- Persistence to second year
- Credit accumulation



Lessons from 2008 Research

- Site visits were conducted at:
 - Austin Community College
 - El Paso Community College
 - San Antonio College
 - St. Philips College
 - Texas A & M International University
 - Texas Southern University
 - University of Texas - El Paso



Recruitment

- Programs served 35 – 288 students
- They highlighted the benefits & incentives to participation rather than program features
- They worked with others to get the word out.
 - Testing center, advisers, high school counselors, churches, radio, parents
- They were creative and started early.



Accelerated & Contextualized Learning

- Occurred in a compressed time frame
 - 4 – 8 weeks; 4 days/week; 3-6 hours/day
- Instruction was tailored
 - Integrated content
 - Application of skills learned to other subjects
 - Real world examples
 - Culturally relevant readings
 - Module learning



College Knowledge

- The “social know-how” to navigate college
(Rosenbaum, Deil-Amen, & Person, 2006)
 - Expectations, resources available & comfortable with asking for help
- Orientation programs, fall class registration, financial aid forms
- Working closely with student services and providing trained peer mentors



Academic Support

- Providing students the “tools” they need to be successful
- Integration of support services with classroom instruction
 - Supplemental instructors & peer tutors
 - Math & writing labs
 - Computer based instruction



Cohort Model

- A deliberate attempt to foster a bond among students and between faculty & students
- Developing a support system as they transition into the fall semester
 - Meal gatherings
 - Group assignments



Evaluation Findings (2008)

Based on pre-post testing of students at 10 colleges (with THEA and LASSI)

- 2 programs were rated very effective
- 5 programs were rated effective
- 2 programs were rated ineffective
- 1 college submitted insufficient data.



Evaluation Findings (2008)

The THECB found that:

- DSBs can improve college readiness in reading and math.
- DSBs can improve student use of learning and study strategies.
- The use of tutors appears to be helpful.
- Using pre-developed curriculum was less effective.



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