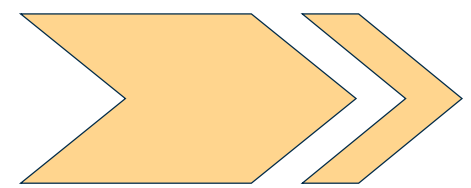


Strategies Proven to Promote Students' Postsecondary Education Success

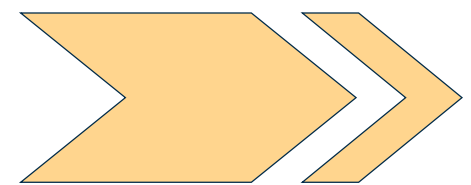
Appalachian Higher Education Network
June 21, 2018

Alyssa Ratledge & Andrea Vasquez

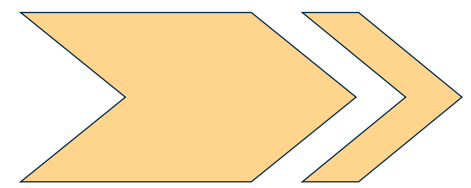
Today's Agenda



MDRC's work in postsecondary education



How to strengthen your programs



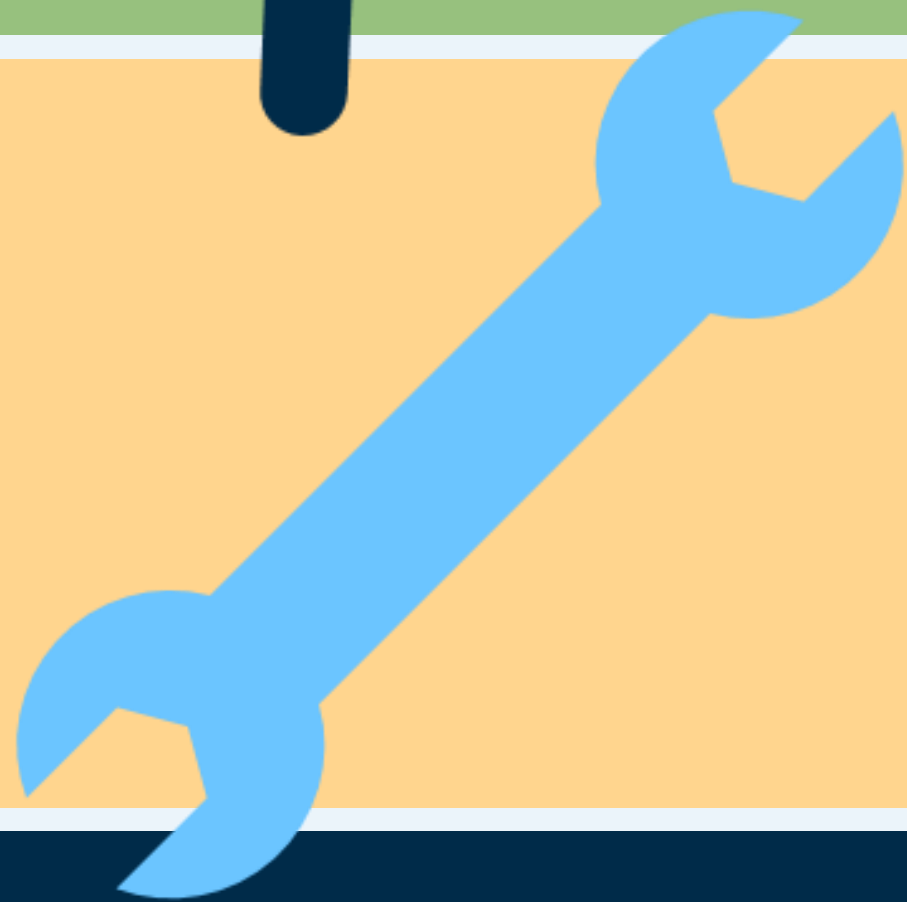
Q&A

Overview of MDRC's Postsecondary Work

Goals for Postsecondary Education



Increase graduation rates for low-income students



Improve strategies throughout the postsecondary pipeline



Reduce college achievement gaps




Getting students
enrolled and
accurately
placed,



through
developmental
education,



...and to
graduation.

- 
- **Text Ed**
 - **Multiple Measures for Assessment and Placement**

- **Acceleration**
- **CUNY Start**
- **Dana Center Math Pathways**

- **CUNY ASAP**
- **ASAP Demo in Ohio**
- **Detroit Promise Path**
- **Behavioral Approaches/EASE**

Lessons from 15 years of Postsecondary Education Research

1. **There is growing evidence on effective strategies** for improving student outcomes
2. **Comprehensive strategies** that combine opportunity with obligation have bigger effects (but cost more)
3. **Frequent advising and coaching** are vital
4. **Behavioral strategies** help drive success

Evidence-based Student
Success Strategies:

**How to Improve
Your Programs**



Comprehensive programs that integrate different strategies and are sustained over time are more likely to produce long-term impacts on student success.

Comprehensive Programs for First-Year Students

- Students face many barriers to success
- Programs that simultaneously address multiple barriers can help students succeed
 - Student support services
 - Financial aid
 - Expenses like books, transportation, child care
 - Academic underpreparedness
 - Summer support
 - Jobs programs on or off campus

Overview

- CUNY ASAP RCT
 - At the end of 3 years, CUNY ASAP **nearly doubled graduation rates**
 - At the end of 6 years, CUNY ASAP **increased graduation rates and helped some students graduate faster**
- ASAP Ohio RCT
 - CUNY provided TA to 3 colleges in Ohio
 - Early findings are **in-line with CUNY ASAP findings**

ASAP Ohio Demonstration

- **Colleges:** Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Cuyahoga Community College, and Lorain County Community College
- **Partners:** CUNY, ODHE, and MDRC
- **Student eligibility criteria:** Pell eligible, in a major that allowed student to graduate within 3 years, willing to attend school full-time
- **Model:** Very similar to CUNY ASAP with changes to reflect the local context

Ohio Program Model

Programs based on CUNY ASAP

Student Responsibility and Messaging

- Enroll Full-time
- Take Dev. Ed. Early
- Graduate in 3 Years

Financial Supports

- Tuition Waiver
- Gas/Grocery Card
- Textbooks

Student Services

- Triage Advising
- Tutoring
- Career Services

Course Enrollment

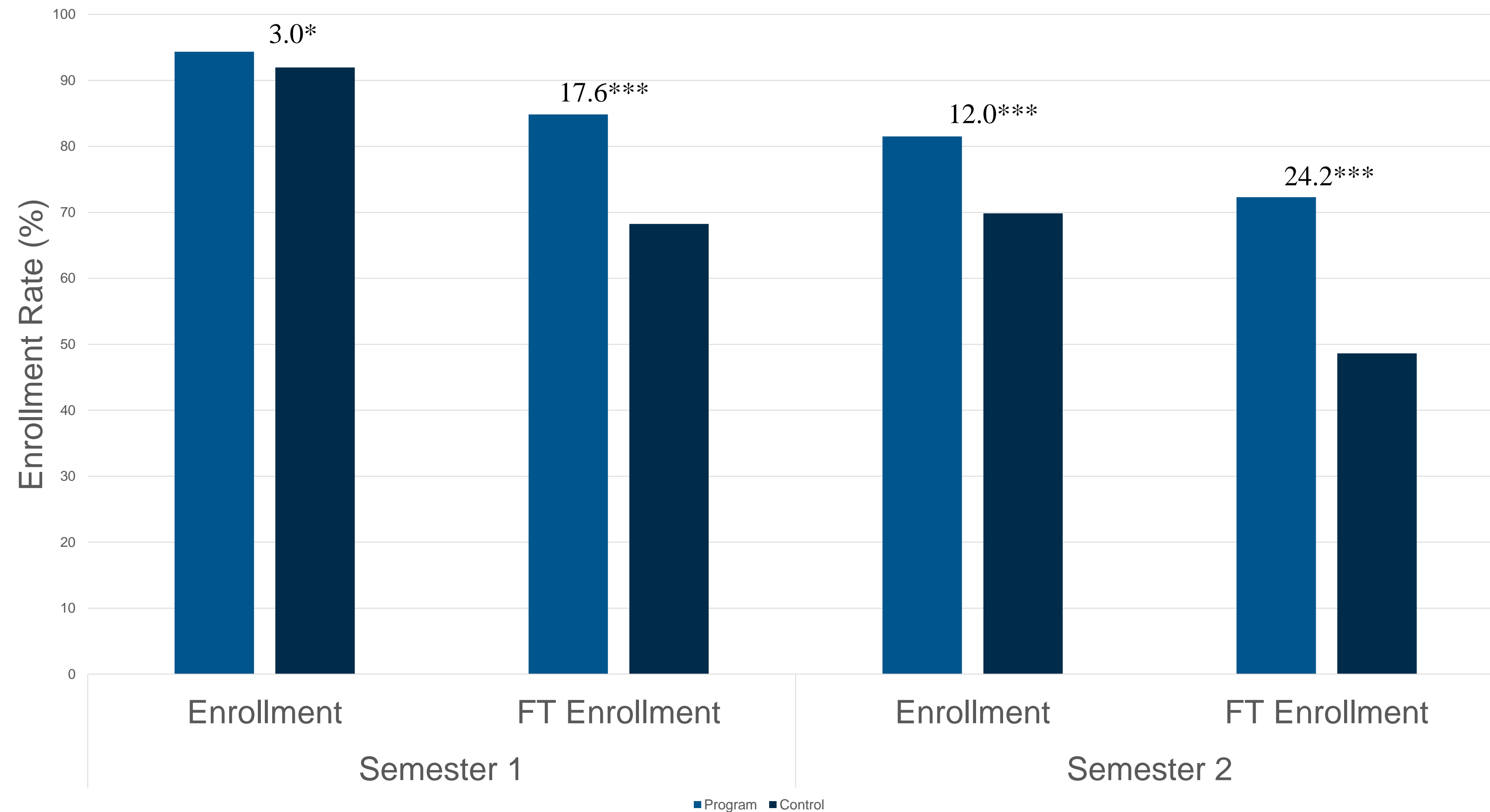
- ASAP Seminar
- Course Schedules
- Early Registration

Ohio Serving More Nontraditional Students

Characteristic	Evaluation Sample	
	CUNY	OHIO
Average age	21.5	23.1
Female (%)	62.1	63.9
Race other than white (%)	90.0	54.1
Has any children (%)	15.3	27.0
Employed (%)	31.3	60.0
Nontraditional student (%)	35.7	46.8

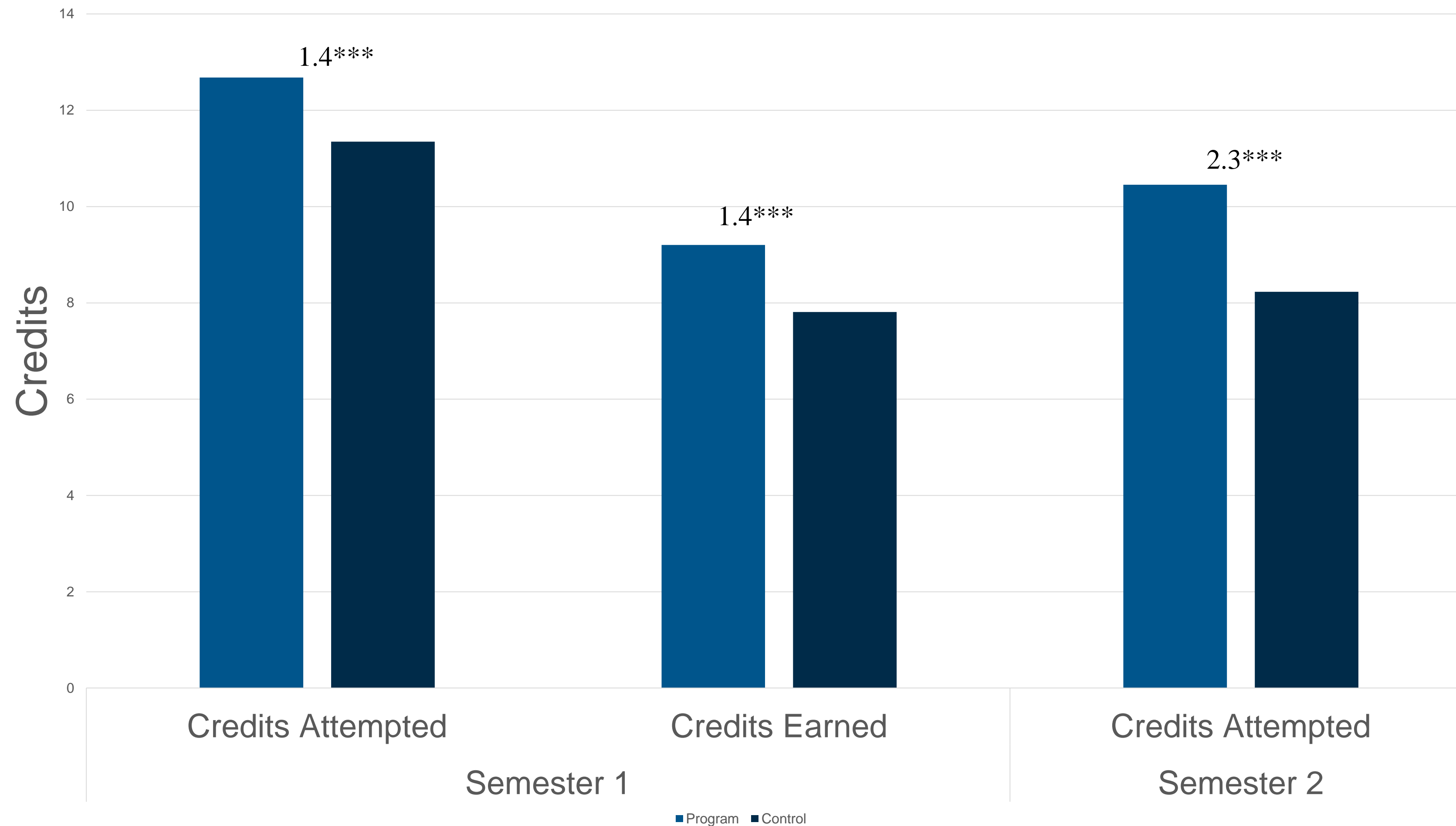
Nontraditional students are defined as those who are 24 or older, work 35 or more hours per week, have children, or did not receive a high school diploma and are not currently enrolled in high school.

More Students Enroll Full-Time



Statistical significance levels are indicated as *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

Students Attempt & Earn More Credits



Statistical significance levels are indicated as *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

How to strengthen programs

- Make your programs long-lasting
- Bring programming to students – don't wait for them to come to you
- Make your college a one-stop shop
- Use financial incentives to keep students on track

A large, bold, orange number '2' is positioned on the left side of the slide, serving as a visual element for the second point.

**Higher-touch advising
and guaranteed time
with advisors can
improve the
effectiveness and take-
up of advising and
improve student
outcomes**

Advising and coaching

Many successful programs have focused on enhanced student advising or coaching to help low-income and underrepresented students succeed.

Results:

- Improved academic outcomes during engaged semesters – staying enrolled, enrolling full-time, and completing credits
- Increased persistence during and immediately following intervention
- Completion of targeted milestones like academic plans

Detroit Promise Path: Challenges Students Face

- Motivation
- Transition from high school to college
- Financial aid
- Transportation

Students Value Detroit Promise Path

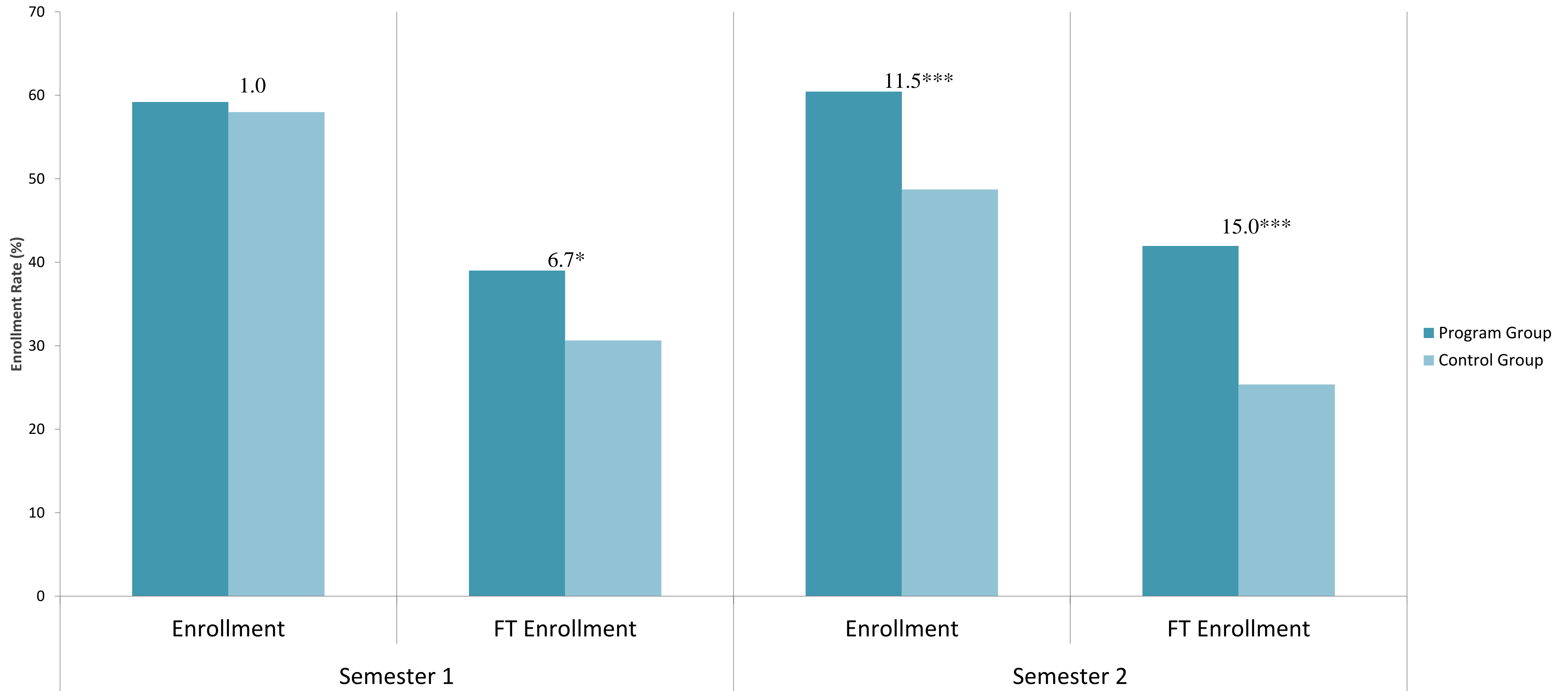
- **96** percent of surveyed students indicated that the Detroit Promise Path program was "valuable" or "very valuable" to them.

"[My coach] is my motivator because I don't motivate myself."

"[My coach] makes me feel like I've got someone in my corner."

"You need some kind of guidance or motivation...to keep you on track and remind you that you're trying to do something positive with your life."

Detroit Promise Path Boosts Enrollment



How to strengthen programs

- Programs can help students enroll in future semesters by staying connected
- Advising/coaching should be holistic and action-oriented
- Be prepared to talk about a range of topics (and provide referrals)
- Successful programs make advising/coaching mandatory or incentivize participation
- Provide clear action steps for students – help them complete the task

Poll Question

Your friend tells you she plans to vote in an upcoming election. What is one question you can ask her that will increase the likelihood she will vote?

- A) Who will you vote for?
- B) What can we do to get more people to vote?
- C) Where is your polling station?

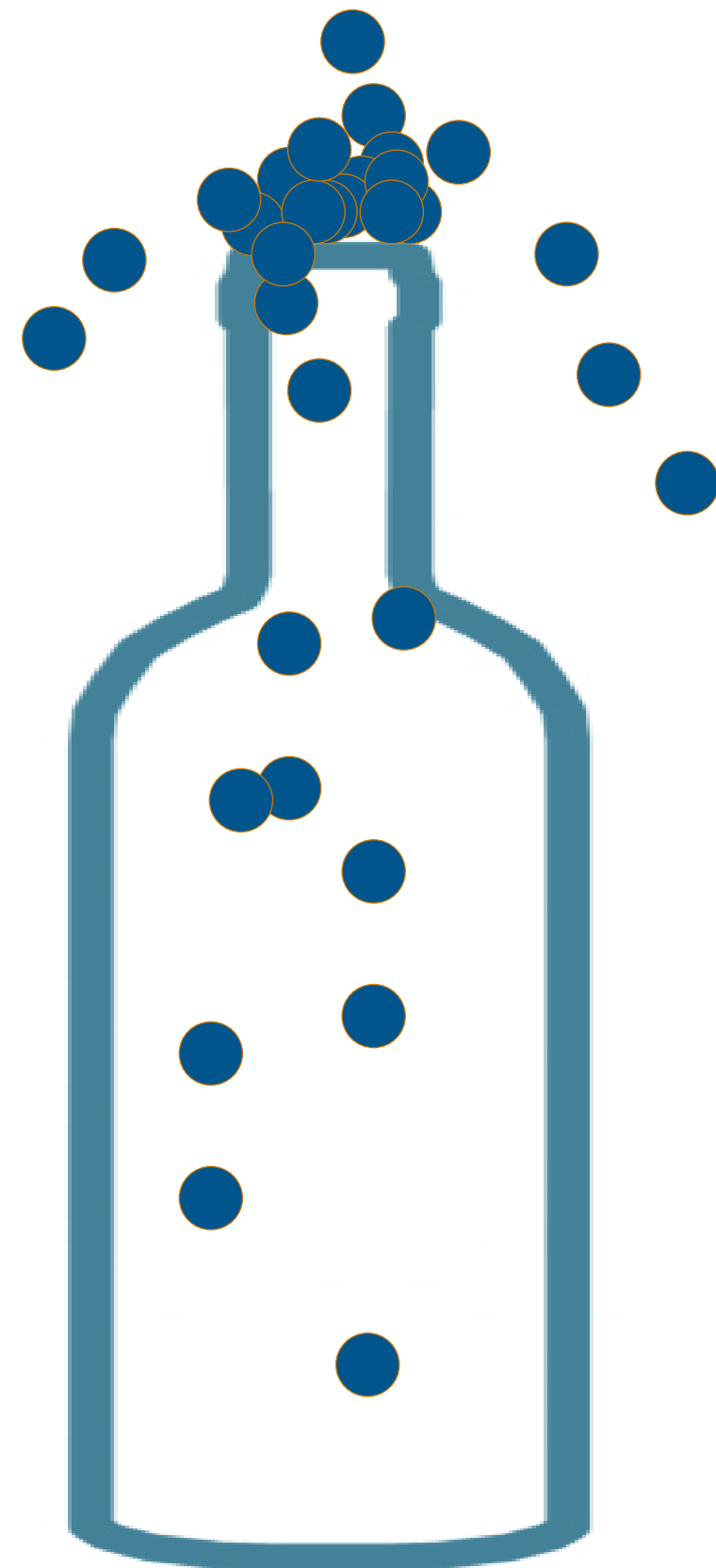
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Insights from behavioral science can be used to improve the effectiveness of programs

What is the behavioral insights field?

- Uses findings from psychology (cognitive, social), behavioral economics, and marketing to improve decision making
- Originally aimed to design “nudges”: low-cost, easy to implement changes to communications that have disproportionately large effects on what people do
- Nudges work because they appeal to human nature

Behavioral Bottlenecks



What are behavioral bottlenecks?

Behavioral bottlenecks are a point of congestion or blockage in a process that interferes with the goal you are trying to achieve

What causes behavioral bottlenecks?

One of the main causes behind bottlenecks is the intention-action gap, or the difference between what people intend to do and what people actually end up doing

Why do we care about behavioral bottlenecks?

Behavioral bottlenecks help us clarify the behavioral reasons behind the drop-off points identified through the process map. This will inform what interventions we want to design and test.

Building Empathy with Behavioral Insights



Knowledge
and
Awareness



Motivation
and
Identity



Planning
and Follow-
through

Improving student communications

The **SIMPLER** framework:

- **S**ocial Influence
- **I**mplementation Prompt
- **M**aking Deadlines
- **P**ersonalization
- **L**oss Aversion
- **E**ase
- **R**eminder

Improving student communications

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- **E**ase
- **R**eminder

Social Influence

Dear Sir/Madam

www.hmrc.gov.uk

Date of issue 4 August 2011

Reference REFERENCE NUMBER

Please pay £999999999999.99

Our records show that your Self Assessment tax payment is overdue.

Nine out of ten people pay their tax on time.

It is easy to pay. Please call the phone number above to pay by debit card, credit card, or Direct Debit.

You can also pay using internet and telephone banking. For more information on when and how to pay, go to **www.hmrc.gov.uk/payinghmrc**

If you don't believe that this payment is overdue, please contact us on the number above.

If you have already paid, thank you. If not, please act now.

Loss Aversion

By not attending your appointment, you may:

- ✗ Miss out on jobs available now or training and education for your career.
- ✗ LOSE up to \$2,508 a year in cash benefits.

compared with...

By attending your appointment, you may:

- ✓ Take advantage of jobs available now or training and education for your career.
- ✓ KEEP up to \$2,508 a year in cash benefits.

Publications

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INFOGRAPHIC

Developing SIMPLER Solutions

10/2017

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Developing **SIMPLER** Solutions

The SIMPLER framework describes the behavioral principles applied across the 15 tests in the Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self-Sufficiency (BIAS) project, which was the first major effort to apply behavioral insights to the human services programs that serve poor and vulnerable families in the United States. Each intervention was highly tailored to the particular site's problem and context using a systematic approach called "behavioral diagnosis and design." However, a retrospective look at the tests across BIAS program areas identified common bottlenecks that various human services settings may share and, as a result, commonalities across interventions, even though implementation varied at each site.

SIMPLER was developed to summarize several key behavioral concepts that may be relevant for a variety of programs. In the figure below, each behavioral term is followed by a definition and an example of how this concept was applied in a BIAS site. While SIMPLER is not meant to encompass the full range of available behavioral techniques, practitioners may find it useful as they think about how to apply behavioral insights to their program areas.

S	I	M	P	L	E	R
Social Influence	Implementation Prompt	Making Deadlines	Personalization	Loss Aversion	Ease	Reminder
▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
D E F I N I T I O N S						
The way	Bridges intention with	Frames a future action	Encouraging a particular	Preference for avoiding	Making processes	Prompts to encourage

Poll Question

You are trying to refer a student to a form on your website. Do you:

- A) Give the student the URL to your website's homepage and provide instructions on how to navigate to the form (for example, www.mdrc.org)
- B) Give them a longer URL that takes them directly to the form (for example, www.mdrc.org/forms/TA.pdf)

4

**Effective data
management can help
staff and program
coordinators monitor
and continuously
improve programs**

What we've learned

Successful programs:

Treat data as a tool rather than as a report card

Continually use data to identify problem areas and promote ongoing positive changes in the outcomes of students

Measure a program against its goals and history to show improvement

Program data examples

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH:

- Text messages
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Method and responsiveness

ENGAGEMENT AND KEY TASKS

- Orientation attendance
- In-person meetings
- Group meetings
- Early alert

ENROLLMENT AND MILESTONES:

- Enrollment in 12 credits
- Enrollment at add/drop date
- Specific class enrollment
- Class registration for upcoming semester
- FAFSA completion for upcoming year

Tracking tool example

	Enrolled in Math	Completed Math Req	Enrolled in English	Completed English Req
Student1	No	Yes	No	Yes
Student2	Yes	No	Yes	No
Student3	No	Yes	No	Yes
Student4	Yes	No	Yes	No
Student5	No	Yes	No	Yes
Student6	No	Yes	No	Yes
Student7	No	Yes	Yes	No
Student8	No	Yes	No	No
Student9	No	Yes	Yes	No
Student10	No	Yes	No	Yes

➤ Create a simple tracking sheet for important data that is difficult to report

➤ Connect it to a second sheet that summarizes the data in real-time as you update it

Student Enrollment and Completion (as of 2/10/2018)

	Students	Percentage
Total Students	30	
Enrolled in Math	11	37%
Completed Math	18	60%
Enrolled in English	7	23%
Completed English	13	43%

Questions?

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