

# Through the Gate

## Students Speak: How to Get Them Through the Transfer Gate

Community College League of California  
Annual Convention  
November 12, 2019

Dr. Darla Cooper  
Executive Director

# The RP Group

[www.rpgroup.org](http://www.rpgroup.org)

## **Mission**

- Strengthen CCCs' ability to gather, analyze, and act on information in order to enhance student equity and success

## **Services**

- Research, evaluation, planning, professional development, and technical assistance—designed and conducted by CCC practitioners

## **Organization**

- 501(c)3 with roots as membership organization

# College Futures Foundation

[www.collegefutures.org](http://www.collegefutures.org)

## Vision

- More graduates for a thriving California

## Mission

- Removing barriers so more low-income and underrepresented students attain bachelor's degrees

**Funder**

**Partner**

**Connector**

# Today's Presentation Outcomes

## *Participants will...*

- Understand the “transfer decision-making framework” - the factors that influence whether students transfer or stop at or near the transfer gate
- Understand what colleges can do to identify these students on their own campus and how to support their transfer journey.
- Know next steps in this research that will inform practitioners and policymakers on how to address practices and policies hindering students' transition to a university.

# Today's Presentation Outline

- Through the Gate Study: Phase 1 Recap
- Getting Better Directions: Phase 2 Early Findings
  - Group Discussion and Feedback
- Looking ahead and resources for colleges

# Through the Gate Transfer Study

A Fresh Take on the Transfer Challenge

Phase I Recap



# Through the Gate Aims to...

Identify individuals who have **completed all or most of their transfer requirements, but who do not make it “through the gate”** to university

Identify strategies for increasing transfer, boosting baccalaureate production, and enhancing students' social and economic mobility--especially for underrepresented populations

# Research Approach

## **Phase I:**

### **Mapping the Transfer Landscape**

Quantitative research to better understand the transfer landscape focusing on students who met all or most of their requirements but have not transferred

## **Phase II:**

### **Getting Better Directions**

Mixed-methods research to understand what factors impact these students' journeys and how policy and practice might change to propel them through the gate



# Phase 1: A Fresh Take on the Transfer Continuum



## Population:

- 875,630 CCC students
- Enrolled b/w 2010-2011 and 2014-2015
- Outcomes through spring 2016

## Three subgroups:

1. 67% Transfer Achievers (583,074)
2. 16% Students At the Gate (135,557)
3. 18% Students Near the Gate (156,999)

# Phase 1 Key Findings

- More than half of these students exit without credentials
- Math is a barrier
- Time is the enemy
- Once African Americans reach key milestones, they are most likely to transfer...but too few get this far
- Latinx students more likely to be At or Near the Gate than to have transferred

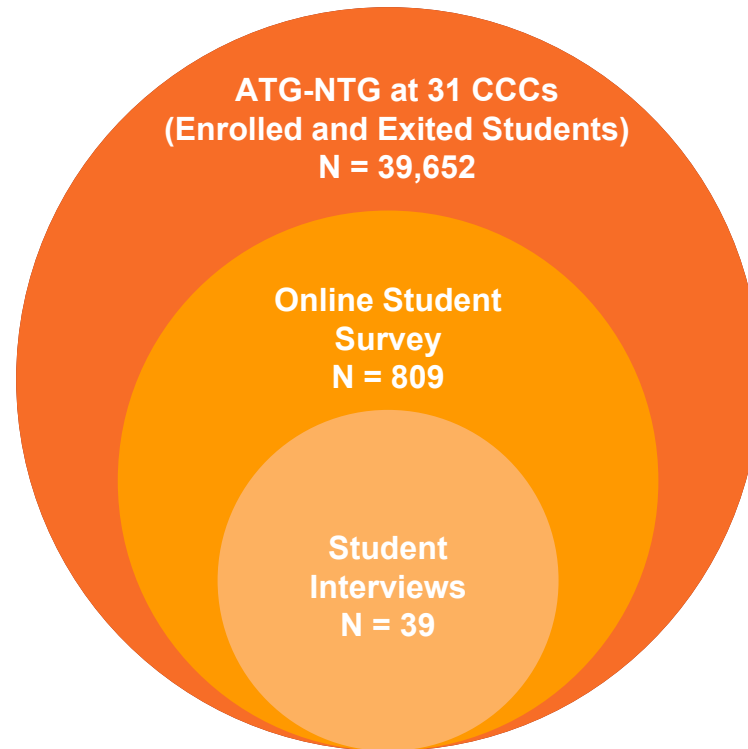
# Getting Better Directions

Phase II Research - Preliminary Findings

# Phase II Research Questions

- **Why** do so many students who are close to achieving their transfer goal stop short of making this transition?
- **What can we do** to help students who are at or near the gate transfer?
- **What is holding back different student groups, and how can we help** them continue their journey?
- **What is impacting IE and CV students' transfer progress, and what strategies can be pursued to increase their success?**

# Phase II Methodology



# Who Are the Students in Phase 2?

Characteristic	Survey N = 809	Interviews N = 39
Female	60%	49%
Asian/Filipino	18%	15%
African American/Black	4%	5%
Hispanic/Latinx	50%	46%
White	21%	15%
All Other Ethnic Groups	5%	18%
Average Age	26	27

# Early Findings from Phase 2

Key themes emerging

# Transfer Decision-Making Framework

## Student Factors

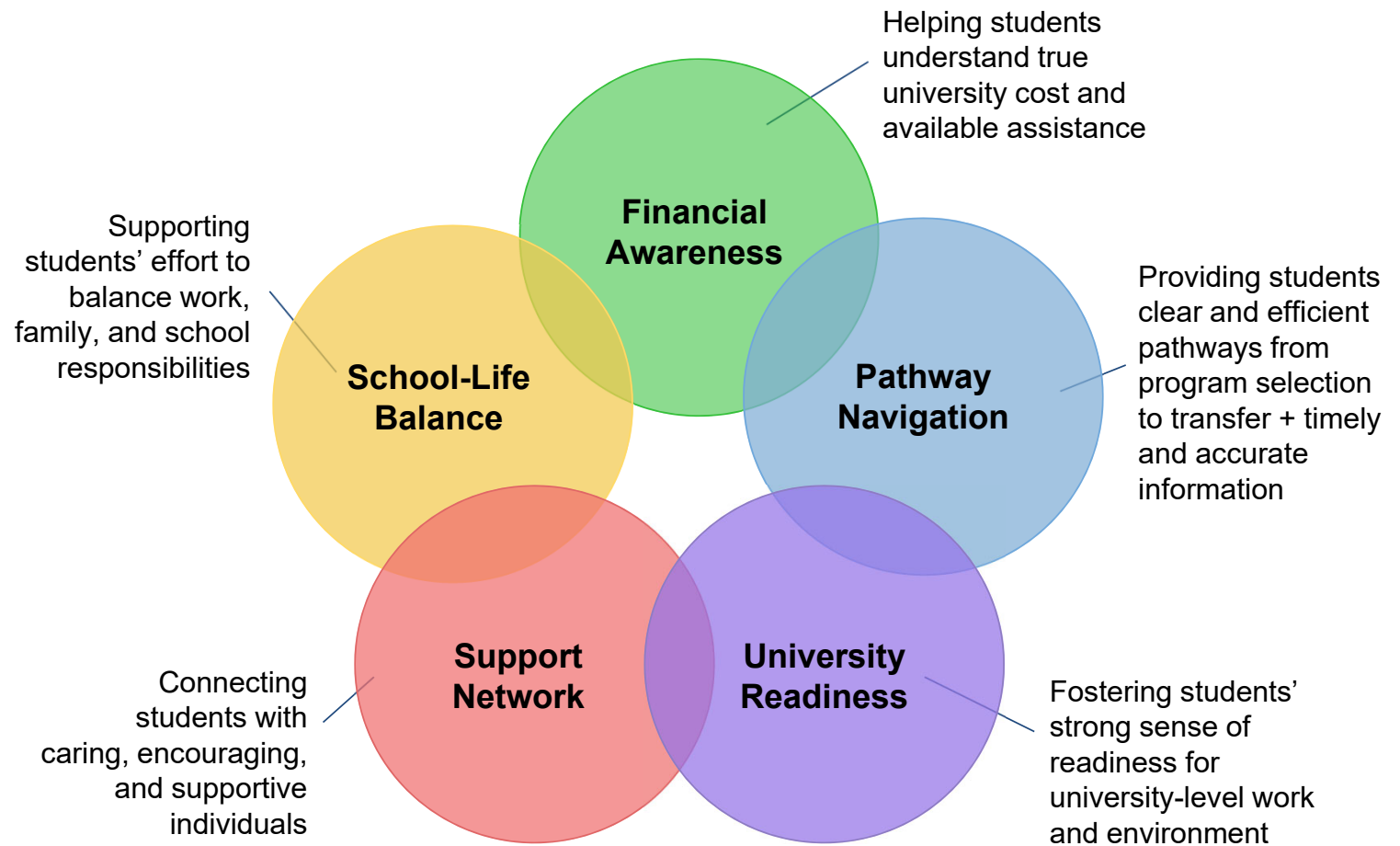
- ☐ Academic (e.g., GPA, transfer units completed)
- ☐ Demographics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity)
- ☐ Psychological (e.g., confidence, fear of unknown)
- ☐ Sociocultural (e.g., family expectations)
- ☐ Financial (e.g., college affordability)

## College Factors

- ☐ Transfer Support (e.g., robustness of Transfer Center)
- ☐ Culture (e.g., intersegmental alignment, messaging)
- ☐ Policy (e.g., # of AD-Ts available)
- ☐ Regional (e.g., proximity to university, population density)



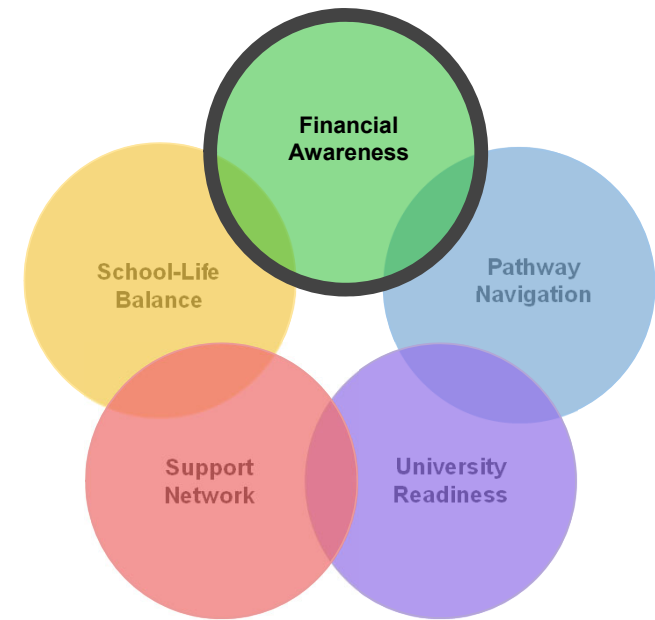
# Factors influencing students' decision to transfer



# Student Quote

*One really big thing that is scaring me about this one is the money. [For] the [community college] nursing program was about \$8,000, and that's pretty well doable. When I started looking at [a California State University] bachelor program, I want to say that one was in the \$20 - \$25,000 range. When I went to talk to [contact] from [University of California campus], he was telling me that there is some like \$80,000 for the first year and like \$70,000 for each year after... that is a phenomenal amount of money. I mean, it's almost unimaginable that I have to spend the amount that one would pay for a very big house in California simply on education.*

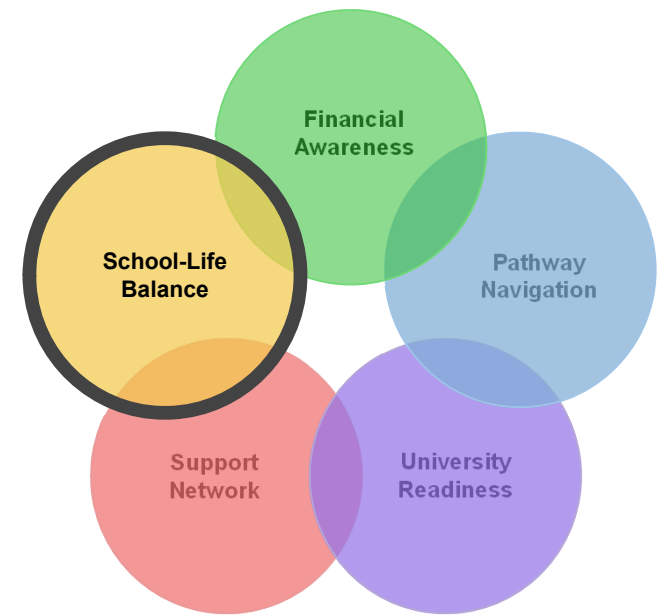
- ATG male student actively planning to transfer



# Student Quote

*And so I have to take calculus for business and I have to take business law part B. The problem with that is that [community college] does not offer calculus for business at night or on the weekends. It is a morning class at [other community college] from 7:30-9:40am and that may work for a millennial, but that does not work for someone with a full-time job.*

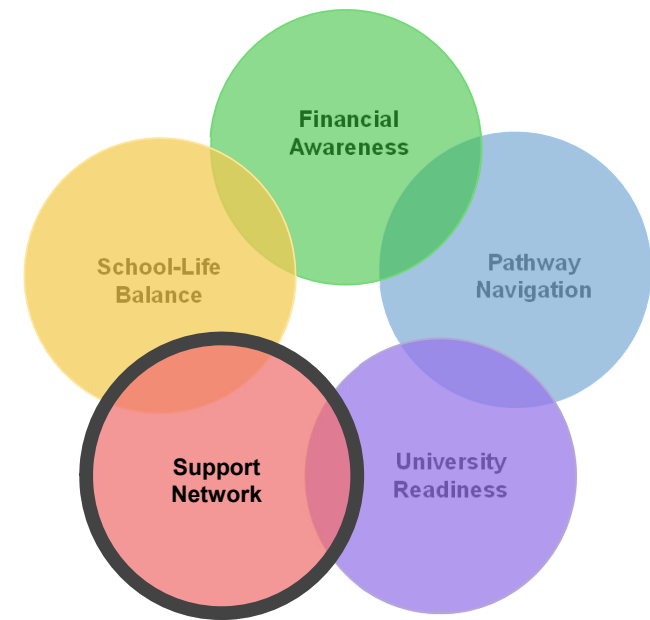
- ATG male student actively planning to transfer with one more class left



# Student Quote

*Every time I met with [the counselor], she remembered me. She remembered that I was a commuter. She remembered everything. She went over every inch of my journey ... She got in the trenches with me as though this was her getting her degree and it took three counselors for me to find one like that because that's what you need... if you don't have the right information, you're going to fall on your face.*

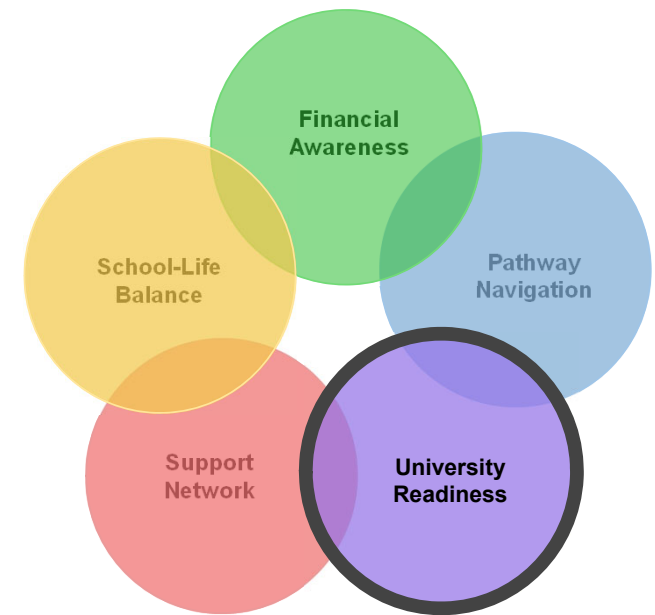
- ATG male student actively planning to transfer



# Student Quote

*Just because I did well in junior college... isn't necessarily going to translate to the upper-division courses [where] the rigor is going to be higher. So I have a little bit of fear in the back of my mind that maybe I won't be as successful a student as I was previously.*

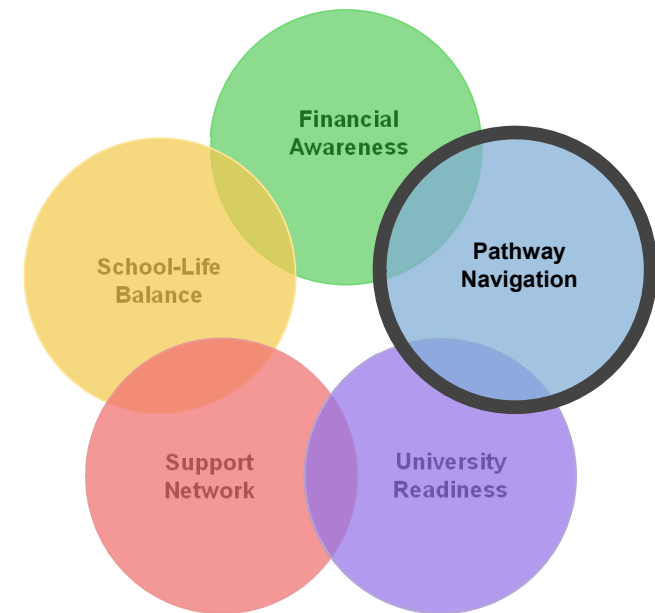
- Older ATG male student



# Student Quote

*So when I first started...through the orientation process... I grabbed the forms that IGETC....I was like, 'Finish all these classes and then from there you get your transfer units and you get to transfer out.' Right. And so I did, I spent...probably 6 or 7 semesters... And so once I talked to my counselor, [I said], 'Okay, so I already finished this IGETC.' And then she's like, 'Well, where are your prereqs?' And I was like, 'What do you mean?' And she's like, 'Well, you had to choose your major.' And so honestly, long story short, I was just very misinformed. I was not educated on the fact of the transferring process.*

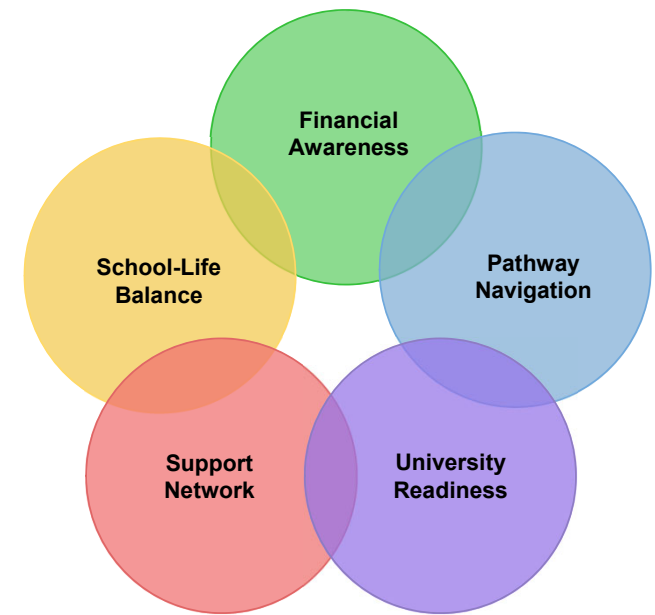
- First generation ATG female student



# Group Discussion

Given what you're hearing so far...

- How do these factors resonate with your own experience/understanding of the existing research base?
- What more do you want to know about these factors?
- How would you position these factors?
- What would you call this framework?
- What implications do you see (if any) from these initial results?



# In the Meantime, Colleges Can...

- Figure out who these students are at your college
  - Identify how many students are at or near the gate
  - Analyze to see if certain student groups are more likely to be at or near the gate
- Reach out to these students to explore barriers and identify needs
- Develop plans to help address emerging barriers and needs



## Through the Gate Transfer Study

OUR PROJECTS / THROUGH THE GATE TRANSFER STUDY

Through the Gate Transfer Study

Overview

Resources for Students

Resources for Educators

Participating Colleges

Project Team and Advisors



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

Through the Gate Transfer Study

### Details

**Focus Populations:**

Transfer-bound students

**Status:** Current

**Contact:** Alyssa Nguyen,  
Project Director,  
anguyen@rpgroup.org

### Areas of Impact

Completion And  
Transfer, Equity

### Tags

Current projects, Transfer students, High-leverage learners, Transfer-ready students, Transfer-prepared students, At the gate, Near the gate, Transfer achievers, Transfer continuum, Inland Empire, Central Valley, Associate Degree for Transfer, ADT

**Timeline:** 2016-2019

Research aimed at identifying strategies for increasing transfer among “high-leverage learners” in California Community Colleges — individuals who have completed all or most of their transfer requirements, but who do not make it “through the gate” to a university.

View this [short video](#) to hear more about the project’s purpose and goals.

Read the [Through the Gate Transfer Study Project Description](#) to learn more about the research purpose and approach.



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Research • Planning • Professional Development  
for California Community Colleges

## Resources for Educators

🏠 OUR PROJECTS / THROUGH THE GATE TRANSFER STUDY / RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

Through the Gate Transfer Study

Overview

Resources for Students

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### Tell us your story!

Is your campus using Through the Gate to improve transfer outcomes? Send an email to [Darla M. Cooper, EdD](#) or [Alyssa Nguyen, MA](#).

### Resources for Educators

[Expand All](#)



#### REPORTS AND BRIEFS

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#### TOOLS

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- [Identifying High-Leverage Transfer Students on Your Campus, Through the Gate Transfer Study Methodology, March 2019](#)  
*Tool 1*  
Guide for adapting the study's methodology on your campus; includes data sources and elements, instructions on file preparation, and steps for generating the study population
- [Determining Students' Transfer Odds on Your Campus, Through the Gate Transfer Study Methodology, March 2019](#)  
*Tool 2*  
Guide for adapting study's statistical model for identifying students' transfer odds on your campus, including data sources and instructions for implementing and interpreting the model.



#### INFOGRAPHICS AND POSTERS

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#### ARTICLES

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## Looking ahead....

- Full analyses coming soon!
- Research brief and technical report in early 2020
- Strategic Encouragement with the field in 2020 around how to act on these data
  - What is the best way to reach you to share our findings?
  - How can we help you take action on the findings?

# Questions?

# For more information on the Through the Gate Study

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#StudentsThroughtheGate



**THROUGH THE GATE**

# Thank you!