

AN ANALYSIS OF TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS UTILIZING  
AN INITIAL COLLEGE CHOICE-PERSISTENCE NEXUS MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Research on transfer student success is important to institutions interested in retaining transfer students and well as transfer students interested in attaining a baccalaureate. This study on transfer student success is grounded in a student-centered initial college choice-persistence nexus model that asserts there is a nexus between the factors that determine whether a student initially enters higher education through a community college or four-year institution and the factors that affect persistence to a baccalaureate. Utilizing two-group path analysis, this study found that transfer GPA, transfer hours, completion of college algebra, completion of freshmen English, and first-semester GPA had a positive effect on baccalaureate attainment for community college transfer students to a Midwestern, public research university. In contrast, only first-semester GPA and transfer hours had a positive effect on baccalaureate attainment for four-year transfer students to the same institution. Additionally, it was found that the effects of entering academic history on first-semester GPA and degree attainment differed for community college and four-year transfer students. This difference is attributed to the nexus of factors that affect initial college choice and persistence.