

Public Abstract

First Name:Donna

Middle Name:Lynne

Last Name:Pavlick

Adviser's First Name:Dr. Vicki J. Rosser

Adviser's Last Name:Dr. Vicki J. Rosser

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

Graduation Term:SP 2008

Department:Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis

Degree:PhD

Title:A STUDY OF WHY A SELECT GROUP OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS PERSISTED TO BACCALAUREATE ATTAINMENT

Based on Tinto's (1993) theory of student departure, this dissertation presents the findings of original research into the factors that influenced the baccalaureate degree attainment of a group of African American Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO) students. Participants were surveyed and interviewed to determine why they, unlike many other traditional-aged African American students at predominantly white colleges and universities, persisted to baccalaureate degree attainment.

The research results indicated that these participants attributed their enrollment and persistence to degree attainment primarily to the encouragement and support of their parents. The influence provided by faculty, as parental surrogates, was a secondary source of encouragement.

The results of this study support the prior research regarding the important role parents and faculty play in academic engagement and degree attainment but draw into question the benefits of peer interaction and institutional behaviors on baccalaureate degree attainment for these African American students.