

# The African American Transfer Tipping Point:

Exploring the Transfer Journeys of Over 7,000 African American/Black Community College Students

The

African American

Transfer Tipping Point Study



THROUGH THE GATE<sup>SM</sup>  
TheRPGroup



TheRPGroup  
Research, Planning & Professional Development  
for California Community Colleges



Lumina<sup>TM</sup>  
FOUNDATION

Darla M. Cooper, EdD  
Katie Brohawn, PhD  
October 2023

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	3
In This Report	3
<b>Background</b>	4
<b>Student Survey Participants</b>	6
<b>African American/Black Student Insights on the Four Core Experiences Impacting Their Transfer Journeys</b>	7
Passing Gateway English and Math	7
Receiving Academic Counseling	8
Participating in Umoja	9
Being Placed on Academic Probation	11
<b>Conclusion</b>	12
Recommendations	13
Looking Forward	15
<b>References</b>	16
<b>Appendix A: Survey Respondents by College</b>	17
<b>Appendix B: Participant Demographics</b>	18
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	19
<b>The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges</b>	19
Project Team	19
<b>Endnotes</b>	20

# Introduction

Nearly two-thirds of African American/Black students who attend college in California begin their postsecondary journey at a community college. Yet, evidence indicates that systems, structures, policies, and practices are not currently designed to support their success. Only 3% successfully transfer from the California Community Colleges (CCC) to a university in two years, and just 35% make it within six years, compared with 45% of their White peers (Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021).

Findings from the first two phases of The RP Group's *African American Transfer Tipping Point Study* (see sidebar) indicate that four core student experiences significantly impact the transfer experiences of this student population: (1) completing transfer-level English and math in a timely way, (2) receiving academic counseling, (3) participating in an Umoja program designed to enhance the cultural and educational experiences of African American and other students,<sup>1</sup> and (4) avoiding academic probation.

**In 2022-2023, we surveyed over 7,000 African American/Black students across the CCC system to further explore their transfer experiences.** Through this survey, we gained a more nuanced understanding of these four core experiences from the students' perspective that helped us identify related opportunities for strengthening African American/Black students' transfer success.

## In This Report

This report offers a selection of highlights from this comprehensive, statewide survey of transfer-intending African American/Black students. It specifically elevates findings related to the four core student experiences: gateway English and math completion, academic counseling, Umoja participation, and academic probation.

### African American Transfer Tipping Point Study Overview

As part of The RP Group's *Through the Gate Research Initiative*, the *African American Transfer Tipping Point Study* seeks to identify factors impacting African American/Black students' transfer journeys and concretize ways colleges, districts, and systems can maximize African American/Black student success. The three phases of the study are:

- **Phase 1:** Analysis of students' course-taking patterns and unit completion thresholds to identify key transition points in their transfer journey
- **Phase 2:** Identification of programs and practices that impact transfer outcomes through focus groups with students and interviews with administrators at colleges with higher-than-average African American/Black student transfer rates
- **Phase 3:** Systemwide survey of African American/Black students at key points in their academic journey to develop a comprehensive understanding of the variables influencing their transfer experiences and success



We offer these results and recommendations to individuals working within the CCC system and beyond to decrease opportunity gaps for transfer-motivated African American/Black students and ensure they make progress toward their educational goal: a bachelor's degree.

For background, we start by reviewing our prior research that informs this current effort. Then, we describe the survey participants and summarize new insights from the students themselves on the four core student experiences our research shows uniquely impact their transfer journey. Student quotes from the open-ended questions in the survey appear throughout in callout boxes. We conclude with recommendations for how colleges, districts, and other constituents can act on this information to better support transfer-motivated African American/Black students. We also suggest future opportunities to mine this robust dataset and identify other points of leverage for improving transfer pathways for African American/Black students.

## Background

Prior research from The RP Group informed both the development of our student survey and the analysis of findings on the four core experiences impacting African American/Black students' transfer success that have emerged from the *African American Transfer Tipping Point Study*.

***Through the Gate Transfer Continuum:*** Viewing transfer as a journey helps us dispel myths and identify opportunities for increasing the success of different student groups at key points on the “transfer continuum.” The RP Group identified this continuum as a foundational concept for the *Through the Gate* Research Initiative, which specifically focused on a “high-leverage” group of learners: those who were close to transfer but who had not yet made it “through the gate” to university (Figure 1).

***Framework for Building Students' Transfer Capacity:*** In looking across existing research and speaking directly to students who were close to or had made it through the transfer gate, The RP Group's *Through the Gate* Research Initiative

Figure 1. *Through the Gate's* Transfer Continuum

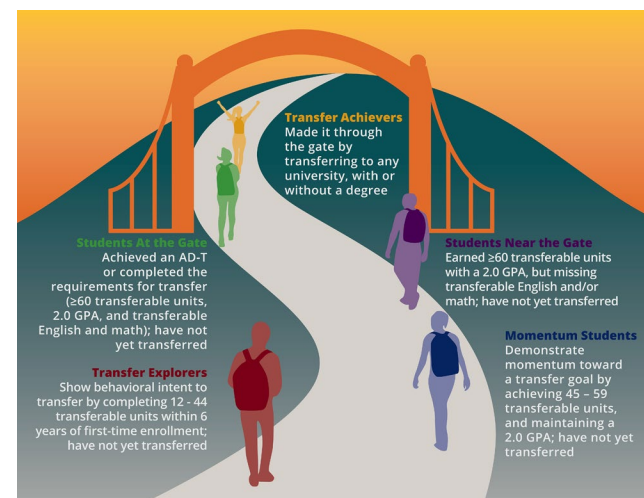
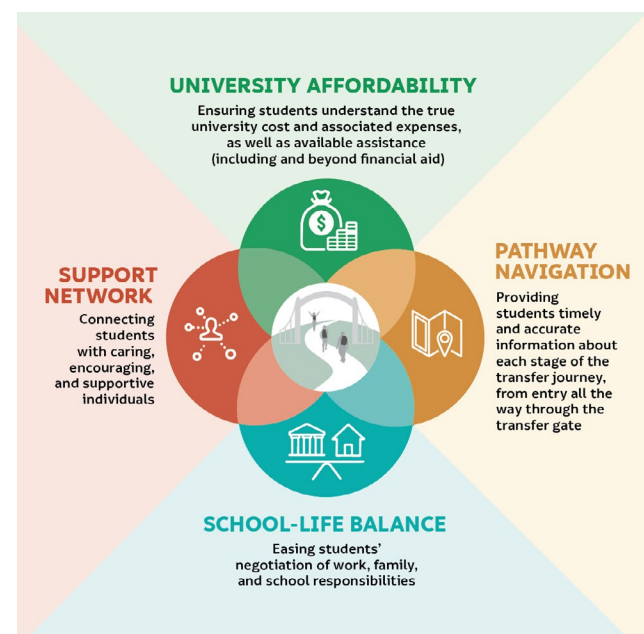


Figure 2. *Through the Gate's* Framework for Building Students' Transfer Capacity



identified four essential factors that impact students' transfer capacity: university affordability, school-life balance, pathway navigation, and access to a support network (Figure 2). We contextualized these factors in the student survey to further examine their relevance to African American/Black students intending to transfer.

### Six Student Success Factors:

Prior to the *Through the Gate* study, The RP Group's *Student Support (Re)defined* landmark research found that students are more likely to achieve their academic goals – transfer or otherwise – when “six success factors” are present (Figure 3). These factors include being directed and focused, feeling nurtured and valued, and being connected and engaged. This study additionally determined that colleges need to provide comprehensive support to historically underserved groups – including African American/Black students – to prevent equity gaps from growing (including transfer outcomes).

Figure 3. Student Support (Re)defined's Six Student Success Factors

- ▶ **Directed** — students have a goal and know how to achieve it
- ▶ **Focused** — students stay on track, keeping their eyes on the prize
- ▶ **Nurtured** — students feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed
- ▶ **Engaged** — students actively participate in class and extracurriculars
- ▶ **Connected** — students feel like they are part of the college community
- ▶ **Valued** — students' skills, talents, abilities and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus, and feel their contributions are appreciated



**Racial Microaggressions:** Research has clearly documented the negative impacts of microaggressions on systemically marginalized college students' academic experiences (e.g., Nadal et al., 2014; Salami et al., 2021). As such, the *African American Transfer Tipping Point Study* explored the impact of discrimination, and specifically microaggressions (Figure 4) on students' transfer journeys, using research-based definitions to guide this exploration (Sue, 2010). We asked about

Figure 4. Definitions of Microaggressions (Sue, 2010)

#### Microaggressions

**Ascription of Intelligence:** Assigning a degree of intelligence to a person of color based on race

**Assumption of Criminality:** Assuming a person of color is dangerous, criminal, or deviant based on race

**Second-Class Citizenizing:** When a White person is given preferential treatment over a person of color

**Pathologizing Culture:** The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant/White culture are ideal

students' experiences with different types of microaggressions and examined the intersection of their experiences with the four core experiences known to uniquely impact the transfer experiences of African American/Black students.

# Student Survey Participants

Our survey reached over 7,000<sup>2</sup> current and former California community college students from all 116 institutions who self-identified as African American/Black.<sup>3</sup>

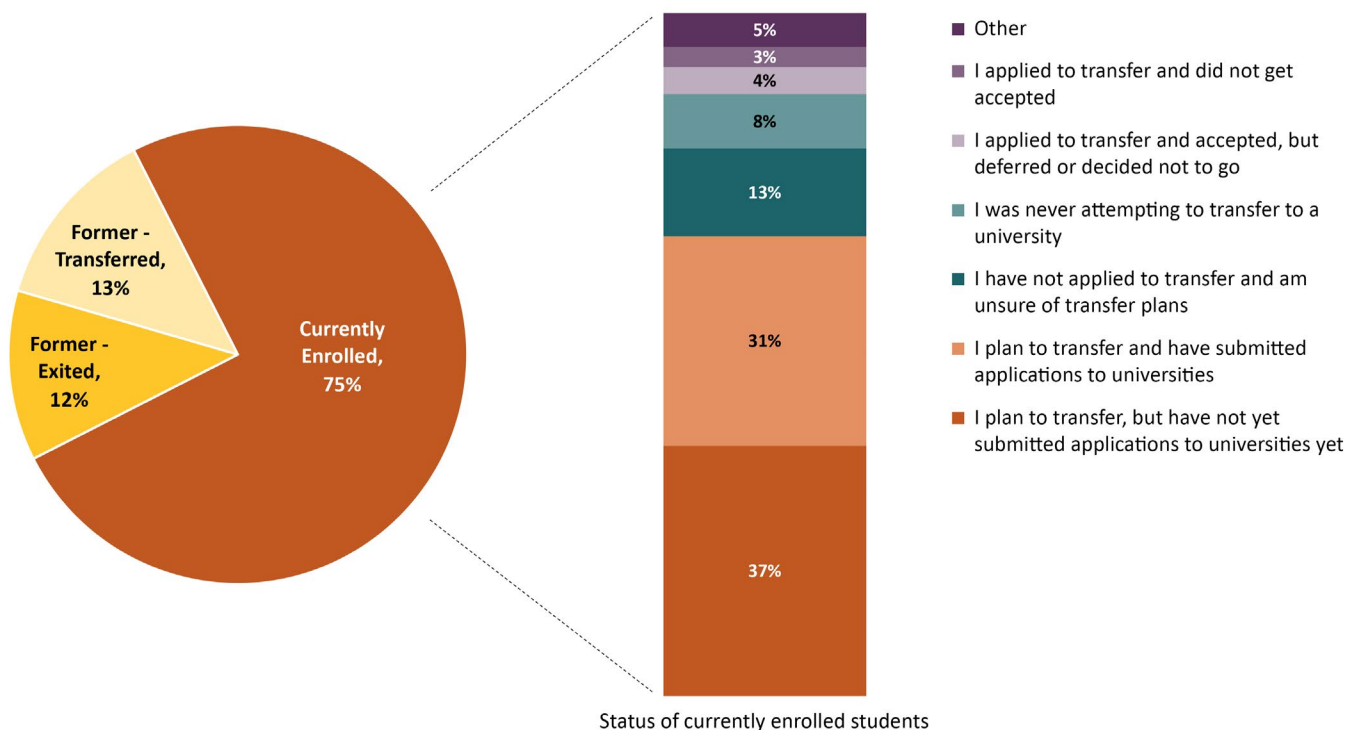
When examining the survey sample demographically (Figure 5), of particular note is: that nearly half (48%) were between the ages of 18 and 25; a significant proportion reported receiving financial aid (47%); and almost half are the first in their families to participate in higher education (44%).

In terms of transfer status, three-quarters of survey respondents were currently enrolled in the CCC, while the other 25% had left their college – either achieving transfer (13%) or exiting higher education (12%). Currently enrolled students reported they were at different stages of their transfer journey, with the largest proportion planning to transfer but not yet submitting applications to universities (Figure 6).

Figure 5. Demographics of 7,148 African American/Black CCC Survey Respondents

- 64% Female
- 18% Ages 18–25
- 47% Financial Aid Recipients
- 44% First Generation
- 28% EOPS
- 22% with Disabilities
- 18% Umoja
- 14% LGBTQ+
- 13% DSPS
- 11% Student Athlete
- 10% w/ Mental Health Condition
- 7% Military
- 7% Former Foster Youth
- 4% Justice Involved

Figure 6. Enrollment Status of Survey Participants



Find the number of respondents by college in Appendix A and a complete description of survey respondents' demographics and transfer plans in Appendix B.

# African American/Black Student Insights on the Four Core Experiences Impacting Their Transfer Journeys

Survey participants shared their experiences with and perspectives on the four core experiences identified in the initial stages of this research as having a particular impact on the transfer journeys of African American/Black students in the CCC. We explore those results below.

## Passing Gateway English and Math

In Phase 1 of this study, we learned that passing transfer-level math in the first year increases the likelihood that an African American/Black student will make it close to, if not through, the transfer gate by 160%. These odds increase to 310% if they pass both gateway math and English in their first year (Cooper et al, 2022a). **Student survey results supported the catalyzing effect of passing gateway math and English in a timely way on students' transfer success.** For example, 74% of African American/Black students who transferred had passed gateway English the first time they took it, while 56% of African American/Black students who transferred had passed gateway math on their first attempt.

“After passing statistics with a B, I was on my way! Math was my greatest hurdle!!”



Given prior research on the negative impacts of microaggressions on students' academic performance (e.g., Nadal et al., 2014; Salami et al., 2021), we also cross-walked gateway course completion with students' experiences of microaggressions on campus. **Results revealed that those who did not pass math on the first try were much more likely to report having experienced microaggressions at their college.** Specifically, 80% of African American/Black students who reported no experience with microaggressions on campus passed gateway math on the first try compared to 25% of students who experienced at least one type of microaggression regularly.

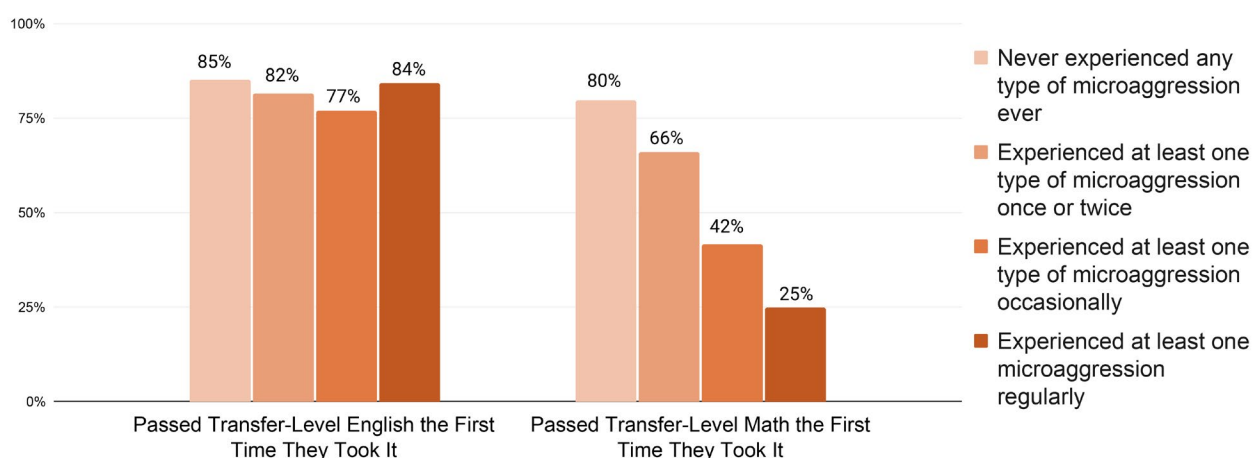
“I was confident in the very beginning when I first began going to college, but my confidence deteriorated when I kept failing at math.”



**African American/Black students who regularly experienced microaggressions on campus were far less likely to pass gateway math on the first try relative to those who experienced microaggressions less frequently or not at all.**

Conversely, we did not find a similar relationship between microaggression frequency and the likelihood of passing gateway English (Figure 7). **It is important to note that the students were not asked on the survey *where* on campus they experienced microaggressions, making it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about *what* these findings may represent or indicate.** Additional research is warranted to further understand this finding.

Figure 7. Frequency of Experiencing Microaggressions and Likelihood of Passing Transfer-Level Math and English Among Currently Enrolled Students



## Receiving Academic Counseling

In our prior *Through the Gate* research, The RP Group found that counseling can support students' progress toward the transfer gate (Cooper et al., 2022a; 2022b). At the same time, it appears to have less impact on African American/Black students than those who identify with other racial/ethnic groups. Further, in focus groups, this student population also reported a lack of connection to their counselors, which they attributed in part to not being able to see counselors who share their racial/ethnic identity and cultural background (ibid).

**Nearly two out of three African American/Black survey respondents (64%) indicated that they would prefer to meet with an African American/Black counselor, but only 53% of all African American/Black respondents reported seeing one.** Notably, students participating in Umoja were significantly more likely to meet with an African American/Black counselor (79%) than students who were not part of the program (46%).

“ (To feel confident that I will transfer) I need to meet with an academic counselor who could speak to not just my school life but consider my personal lifestyle as a Black mother in school. ”

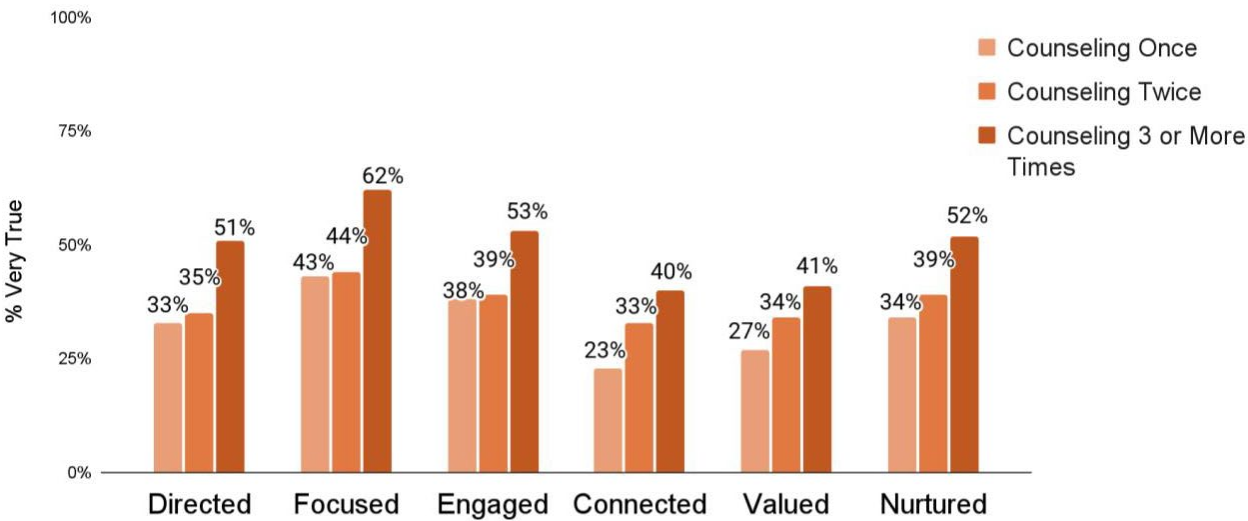


The more frequently African American/Black students received academic counseling, the more likely they were to identify with each of the six student success factors.

These findings warrant further exploration as a larger proportion of students who transferred met with an African American/Black counselor (42%) compared to those who exited (33%).

Additional analyses to better understand the mechanisms by which counseling supports students revealed that **students who received more frequent counseling were more likely to associate with the *Student Support (Re)defined Six Success Factors*** (Figure 8). For example, 62% of African American/Black students who met with a counselor three or more times felt focused – or on a path and motivated toward their educational goal – compared to 43% of students who met with a counselor only one time. Similarly, over half of African American/Black students who met with a counselor three or more times felt nurtured – like someone wanted them to succeed and helped them get there – compared to about one-third who met with a counselor just once.

Figure 8. Frequency of Receiving Academic Counseling and Identification with the Six Student Success Factors among Currently Enrolled Students



## Participating in Umoja

Research shows that participation in Umoja confers many positive benefits for African American/Black students, including increased unit attainment, persistence, math and English completion, transfer readiness, and degree completion (Purnell et al., 2019) and an increased likelihood of making it close to, if not through, the transfer gate (Cooper et al., 2022a). Umoja students tout the benefits of mandatory, dedicated, and proactive counseling.

**Umoja participants were more likely to find a community where they belong and to personally connect with someone at their college who supports their academic success.**



They specifically underscore the positive impact of having the opportunity to access counselors who reflect their backgrounds, and the time and space to build relationships with counselors who make them feel heard, seen, and valued (Cooper et al., 2022b).

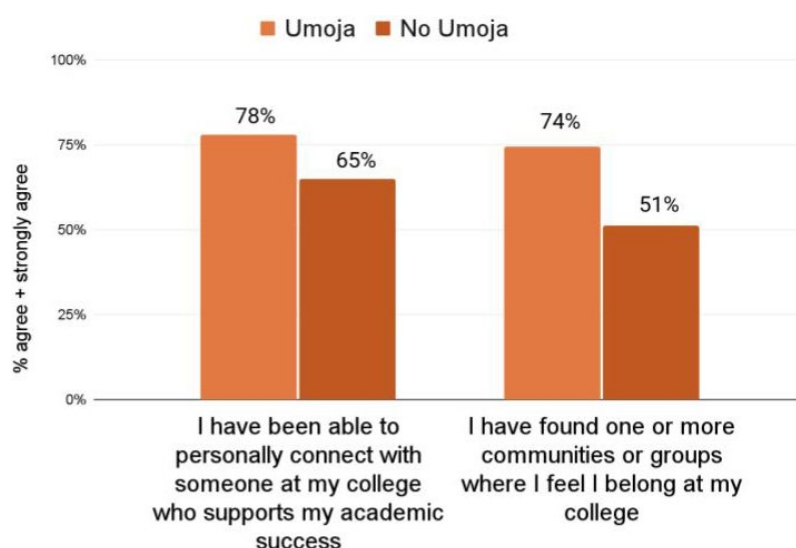
Paralleling these findings, survey results revealed that **93% of Umoja students who transferred to university indicated that the program helped them transfer successfully.** Relative to students who were not involved in the program, **Umoja participants were significantly more likely to have the counseling experiences that this research indicates support transfer success among African American/Black students:** more frequent engagement

with counseling and connections to counselors who reflect their racial/ethnic identity. Across current and former students, 47% of Umoja participants received academic counseling at least three times compared to 33% of those not in the program, and 79% of Umoja participants met with an African American/Black counselor compared to 45% of those not in the program.

**“My counselor in my Umoja program created a step-by-step process on the courses I needed to transfer. This helped, as I knew I wanted to transfer within two years. Making sure I took all my courses within each quarter to ensure I would not delay my transfer process was key.”**

**Further, students who participated in Umoja were far more likely to indicate they experienced a sense of connection and community at their college** (Figure 9). For example, roughly three-quarters of program participants (both current enrollees and former students) reported a personal connection with someone at their college who supports their academic success, and involvement with at least one community or group on campus where they felt they belonged.

Figure 9. Sense of Connection and Community by Umoja Participation Status



## Being Placed on Academic Probation

Research shows that experiencing academic probation significantly harms a student's chance of getting close to or through the transfer gate (Cooper et al., 2022a). However, African American/Black students are more likely to be placed on academic probation, making probation an even more relevant negative factor for African American/Black students than students from other racial and ethnic groups (Cooper et al., 2022).

Overall, 28% of survey participants reported their college had placed them on academic probation at some point. Survey results revealed that students who were on probation at the time they were taking the survey were much more likely to report struggles completing transfer-level coursework (by 18 percentage points) relative to current students who had never been put on academic probation. However, the challenges they described went far beyond academic performance.

**Students who were currently on probation were much more likely than currently enrolled students who were never on probation to report a wide range of challenges in their daily lives.**

Compared to their currently enrolled peers who had not experienced academic probation, students who were currently on probation were at least 10 percentage points more likely to report challenges<sup>4</sup> with two of the four factors in our *Through the Gate Framework for Building Students' Transfer Capacity*:

- **School-life balance**, including negotiating employment, education, and family responsibilities
- **Accessing a support network**, including connecting with caring, encouraging, and supporting individuals on campus

Further, students currently on academic probation were also at least 10 percentage points more likely to describe:

- Challenges meeting their **basic needs**
- Insufficient access to **technology at home**
- **Mental health** struggles
- **Pandemic**-related issues
- Insufficient access to helpful **academic counselors and advisors**

**“I have a child, was divorcing an abuser, the pandemic hit, and I became unemployed. Because I was on academic probation, I couldn't afford to pay for classes, and although I appealed several times, I kept getting denied for financial aid although I was in desperate need. So instead of failing again, I decided to put my dream of transferring on hold until I received a peaceful home again, which I was hoping would happen after gaining employment.”**

These findings speak to the **need to take a more holistic view of how to support African American/Black student success, particularly for those on academic probation.** Academic support alone is not enough. In fact, few students who experienced academic probation reported that the support they received from the college intended to help them get off probation had actually helped address their educational challenges.

For example, among the 772 current students who had previously been on and had gotten off academic probation, only 31% indicated that the support provided by their institution to help them get off was “very helpful.” Similarly, only about one third of students who had once been on probation and then successfully transferred reported that the support provided by their college to improve their academic standing was “very helpful.”

## Conclusion

More than 7,000 African American/Black students provided essential insights into their transfer experiences through this latest round of research, and we are grateful. Their input adds depth to the findings from the first two phases of the *African American Transfer Tipping Point Study* and calls out specific aspects of our *Student Support (Re)defined* and *Through the Gate* Research Initiative research that are particularly relevant to boosting these students’ transfer success.

Combined, these survey results add large-scale validity to prior *African American Transfer Tipping Point Study* recommendations (see sidebar). Moreover, they provide additional direction on **how to make good on the California Community Colleges’ commitment to eliminating barriers for African American/Black students** pursuing transfer and ensuring dramatically more of these learners reach their goal: a bachelor’s degree.

### Initial AATTP Recommendations for Supporting Transfer-Motivated African American/Black Community College Students

Interviews and focus groups conducted with students and college practitioners at five colleges during Phase 2 of the *African American Transfer Tipping Point Study* generated several suggestions for increasing transfer for this student group, which included...

**Counseling Is Critical, Yet Colleges Need to Consider the Unique Perspectives and Experiences of African American/Black Students.**

**Academic Probation Needs to be Re-Envisioned from the Students’ Perspective (and Renamed).**

**Instructional Faculty Must Recognize the Critical Role They Play in Students’ Transfer Journeys.**

**Consider the Framework for Building Students’ Transfer Capacity When Developing Supports.**

Find additional details in [\*The African American Transfer Tipping Point: Recommendations for Supporting Transfer-Motivated African American/Black Community College Students\*](#).



This research quantifies the specific **importance of helping African American/Black students develop personal relationships with counselors** who not only provide information on the “mechanics” of transferring, but also demonstrate they care about who students are and aspire to be. The students in this study show the impact that feeling connected to a broader community and a sense of belonging on campus uniquely matters to African American/Black students’ transfer experience.

This research punctuates the **need for improving cultural competency across the entire institution**, creating an environment inside and outside the classroom that is free of bias and microaggressions so African American/Black students can meet key milestones supportive of transfer success. Furthermore, these findings underscore the urgent need to take a **more holistic approach to African American/Black students who are struggling academically**, supporting their financial stability and mental health, and accounting for the responsibilities to work and family students have outside of school along their transfer journey.

**Umoja clearly exemplifies these findings**, and participants in this study reinforce the positive impact this approach has on their progress toward achieving a baccalaureate. The program’s specific centering of African American/Black students’ cultural and lived experiences and the integration of academic, social, and personal support **offer a model for promoting transfer success among African American/Black students**. Scaling this approach to reach more African American/Black students who aspire to transfer will require a stated commitment and an active investment at the system and college levels.

## Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations from the first phase of this study, we offer the following specific actions for colleges and the larger CCC system to consider in their efforts to support transfer success for African American/Black students.

### College Recommendations

- Leadership across the institution **articulates and demonstrates to all campus constituents – faculty, staff, administrators, and students alike – that there is no place for racism at any level**, be it micro or macro, by having clear reporting processes and consequences
- **Provide all college personnel with professional development focused on eliminating microaggressions and reducing bias**; specifically expect instructional and counseling faculty to implement culturally relevant, trauma-informed approaches in their practice

- **Increase African American/Black representation in all employee groups,** most notably instructors and counselors
- **Create intentional opportunities for African American/Black students pursuing transfer to build community on campus;** consider curricular and cocurricular/extracurricular opportunities along with campus events and activities that allow for meaningful student engagement and community-building
- **Design an advising process that ensures regular connection between African American/Black students and counseling throughout the term;** specifically explore the feasibility of a case management model where students are able to see the same counselor over time in the attempt to establish trust and build relationships
- **Establish a more holistic approach to supporting African American/Black students who are struggling academically;** specifically ask about the challenges students are experiencing outside the classroom that may be negatively impacting their in-class performance and actively connect them to relevant resources and supports (i.e., ask what led to them getting on probation and help them formulate a plan to get off probation that addresses these specific issues)

## System Recommendations

We would be remiss not to highlight the recent efforts by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) across the system, from embedding DEIA competencies and criteria into employee evaluations and tenure review processes to providing professional learning resources focused on institutional bias, structural racism, and their impact on campus culture and student success. Further, the state continues to see the value in programs like Umoja through the provision of financial support. While these are all critical efforts, we see room for additional systemwide efforts that can specifically support the success of African American/Black students with a goal of on transfer.

- **Rename “academic probation”** statewide to signal not only a recognition of the harmful connotation of this term for the African American/Black student community, but to recognize a shift to a more supportive and holistic approach
- **Ensure the colleges that have Umoja programs are truly supporting these programs** in deeds and not just words (e.g., matching college funds, increased visibility on campus)
- **Focus systemwide professional development for instructional and counseling faculty** on the importance and impact of culturally relevant and trauma-informed practice on African American/Black student success

- **Reward colleges that achieve greater representation among African American/Black professionals;** including incentives for colleges that more successfully attract, hire, retain, and advance African American/Black employees
- Expand on efforts to message that **African American/Black student success is a priority in the CCC system**

## Looking Forward

This research reveals opportunities for additional investigation in service of improving African American/Black students' transfer outcomes. **Further examining the intersection between African American/Black students' experiences with microaggressions and gateway math completion** is one key area. Since students were not asked to indicate where they experienced the microaggressions and who the aggressor was, crystalizing how and where they occur will also be important to inform efforts to shift campus culture and practice. We need to hear directly from students about their experiences with microaggressions on campus and how they perceive the impact on their academic success overall and in particular subjects.

Our findings align directly with those from a recent study by Ed Equity Solutions (Dadgar et al., 2023) that **math faculty are the most important factor in determining a student's successful completion of transfer-level math**, specifically for Black/African American students. Regardless of whether the microaggressions experienced by students in our study were happening in the math classroom itself or elsewhere, given the impacts microaggressions can have on students' math achievement, math faculty will hopefully be especially compelled to implement strategies to support their students' success. See Dadgar et al. (2023) for their specific recommendations for instructional practices that support equity in the classroom.

# References

- Cooper D. M., Brohawn, K., Nguyen, A., Purnell, R. D., Redix, A., & Segovia, D. (2002a). The African American Transfer Tipping Point: Identifying the Factors That Impact Transfer among African American/Black Community College Students. Brief 1 of 3. The RP Group. San Rafael, CA.
- Cooper D. M., Brohawn, K., Nguyen, A., Purnell, R. D., Redix, A., & Segovia, D. (2002b). The African American Transfer Tipping Point: Unpacking the Factors That Impact the Success of Transfer-Motivated African American/Black Community College Students. Brief 2 of 3. The RP Group. San Rafael, CA.
- Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation*. John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Nadal, K. L., Wong, Y., Griffin, K. E., Davidoff, K., & Striken, J. (2014). The Adverse Impact of Racial Microaggressions on College Students' Self-Esteem. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55(5) 461-474.
- Salami, T., Lawson, E., & Metzger, I. W. (2021). The impact of microaggressions on Black college students' worry about their future employment: The moderating role of social support and academic achievement. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 27(2), 245–255.



# Appendix A: Survey Respondents by College

College	N	College	N	College	N
Allan Hancock College	56	Feather River College	15	Norco College	40
American River College	155	Folsom Lake College	22	North Orange Adult Continuing Education	6
Antelope Valley College	51	Foothill College	116	Ohlone College	13
Bakersfield College	149	Fresno City College	272	Orange Coast College	67
Barstow Community College	41	Fullerton College	43	Oxnard College	9
Berkeley City College	61	Gavilan College	12	Palo Verde College	6
Butte College	32	Glendale Community College	32	Palomar College	46
Cabrillo College	61	Golden West College	12	Pasadena City College	75
Calbright College	37	Grossmont College	58	Porterville College	6
Cañada College	30	Hartnell College	12	Rancho Santiago Continuing Education	2
Cerritos College	369	Imperial Valley College	24	Reedley College	33
Cerro Coso Community College	48	Irvine Valley College	10	Rio Hondo College	34
Chabot College	67	Los Angeles Instructional Television (ITV)	2	Riverside City College	102
Chaffey College	557	Lake Tahoe Community College	14	Sacramento City College	100
Citrus College	93	Laney College	37	Saddleback College	15
City College of San Francisco	286	Las Positas College	28	San Bernardino Valley College	27
Clovis Community College	72	Lassen College	10	San Diego City College	254
Coastline Community	71	Long Beach City College	40	San Diego College of Continuing Education	106
College of Alameda	35	Los Angeles City College	48	San Diego Mesa College	196
College of Marin	25	Los Angeles Harbor College	14	San Diego Miramar College	88
College of San Mateo	8	Los Angeles Mission College	17	San Joaquin Delta College	117
College of the Canyons	9	Los Angeles Pierce College	121	San Jose City College	84
College of the Desert	10	Los Angeles Southwest College	69	Santa Ana College	129
College of the Redwoods	3	Los Angeles Trade-Tech College	69	Santa Barbara City College	11
College of the Sequoias	47	Los Angeles Valley College	128	Santa Monica College	100
College of the Siskiyous	5	Los Medanos College	21	Santa Rosa Junior College	9
Columbia College	11	Madera Community College	23	Santiago Canyon College	55
Compton College	125	Marin Continuing Education	1	Shasta College	15
Contra Costa College	21	Mendocino College	8	Sierra College	5
Copper Mountain College	3	Merced College	5	Skyline College	9
Cosumnes River College	58	Merritt College	5	Solano Community College	9
Crafton Hills College	15	Miracosta College	14	Southwestern College	24
Cuesta College	71	Mission College	30	Taft College	5
Cuyamaca College	71	Modesto Junior College	29	Ventura College	13
Cypress College	19	Monterey Peninsula College	37	Victor Valley College	14
DeAnza College	77	Moorpark College	5	West Hills College Coalinga	16
Diablo Valley College	12	Moreno Valley College	16	West Hills College Lemoore	5
East Los Angeles College	24	Mt. San Antonio College	116	West Los Angeles College	36
El Camino College	685	Mt. San Jacinto College	15	West Valley College	25
Evergreen Valley College	58	Napa Valley College	14	Woodland Community College	25
				Yuba College	44

# Appendix B: Participant Demographics

Table B1. Demographics of survey participants

	All		Current		Former	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	3,266	63.7%	2,387	62.5%	879	67.4%
Male	1,728	33.7%	1,335	34.9%	393	30.1%
Nonbinary	111	2.2%	87	2.3%	24	1.8%
Other	20	0.4%	12	0.4%	5	0.4%
<b>Age</b>						
18-20	713	14.1%	623	16.5%	90	7.0%
21-25	1,722	34.0%	1,425	37.7%	297	18.8%
26-30	763	15.1%	522	13.8%	241	18.8%
31-35	587	11.6%	399	10.6%	188	14.7%
36-40	385	7.6%	253	6.7%	132	10.3%
41-45	284	5.6%	186	4.9%	98	7.7%
46-50	209	4.1%	139	3.7%	70	5.5%
Older than 50	399	7.9%	234	6.2%	165	12.9%
<b>Demographic Group</b>						
LGBTQ+ Community	743	14.5%	572	15.0%	171	13.5%
Veteran/Military Personnel	339	6.6%	257	6.7%	82	6.3%
Former Foster Youth	364	7.1%	290	7.6%	74	5.7%
First Generation	2,244	43.8%	1,796	47.0%	448	34.3%
Student Athlete	554	10.8%	402	10.5%	152	1.6%
Formerly Incarcerated or Justice Involved/Impacted	200	3.9%	152	4.0%	48	3.7%
Financial Aid Recipient	2,412	47.1%	1,608	42.1%	804	61.6%

Table B2. Transfer status of survey participants

	Current Students	
	N	%
I plan to transfer and have submitted applications to universities	1,632	30.6%
I plan to transfer, but have not submitted applications to universities	1,963	36.8%
I applied to transfer and got accepted, but deferred	143	2.7%
I applied to transfer and got accepted, but decided not to go	91	1.7%
I applied to transfer and did not get accepted, but I am planning to apply again	109	2.0%
I applied to transfer and did not get accepted and I am not planning to apply again	43	0.8%
I have not applied to transfer and am unsure of transfer plans <sup>5</sup>	664	12.5%
I was never attempting to transfer to a university	430	8.1%
Other - Write In	254	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,329</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

# Acknowledgments

This research was generously funded by [Lumina Foundation](#). We thank our program officer, Dr. Wendy Sedlak, for being a true thought partner in and supporter of this work. This research also benefits tremendously from the collective wisdom and guidance of our esteemed [Advisory Committee](#), to whom we are so incredibly grateful. This committee consists of a range of transfer leaders working at the campus and system levels, individuals with expertise overseeing African American/Black student programs, and researchers with a focus on racial inequities in postsecondary outcomes. Finally, and most importantly, we extend a wealth of gratitude to the students who participated in the qualitative portion of this research. The value of your insights and candor goes far beyond what we could ever find in a dataset.

## The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges

As the representative organization for Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (IRPE) professionals in the California Community Colleges (CCC) system, The RP Group strengthens the ability of CCC to discover and undertake high-quality research, planning, and assessments that improve evidence-based decision-making, institutional effectiveness, and success for all students.

### Project Team

Katie Brohawn, PhD

Darla M. Cooper, EdD

Kelley Karandjeff, EdM

Alyssa Nguyen, MA

Rogéair D. Purnell, PhD

Ashley Redix, PhD

Daisy Segovia, PhD

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

# Endnotes

1. <https://umojacommunity.org/mission-and-vision-statements>
2. The original data file contained 9,166 rows of data. The following respondents were removed from the sample: 819 respondents did not answer any questions beyond whether or not they consented to participate; 267 respondents only answered the consent question and indicated their race; 42 respondents only answered the consent question, indicated their race, and indicated which degrees they had received to date; 615 respondents did not identify as African American/Black; 275 respondents were identified as duplicate responses based on either the email address given or responses to open-ended questions.
3. Students were classified as African American/Black for this study if they identified as African American/Black even if they also identified as another race/ethnicity. Across the full sample, 80.6% of students identified only as African American/Black, while 19.4% identified as multi-racial including African American/Black.
4. Based on the percentage of survey respondents who indicated that the variable was very or moderately challenging.
5. These students did not receive the majority of the rest of the questions as this survey was primarily focused on transfer-intending students.