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Thank you for your request to our REL Reference Desk regarding evidence-based information about predictors of success for minority high school students entering college. Ask A REL is a collaborative reference desk service provided by the ten regional educational laboratories (REL) that, by design, functions much in the same way as a technical reference library. It provides references, referrals, and brief responses in the form of citations on research based education questions.

The information below represents the most rigorous research available. Researchers consider the type of methodology and give priority to research reports that employ well described and thorough methods. The resources were also selected based on the date of the publication with a preference for research from the last ten years. Additional criteria for inclusion include the source and funder of the resource.

**Question:** *What does the research say about predictors of success for minority high school students entering college?*

### **Search Process**

**Key words and search strings used in the search:** *minority AND success AND college; minority AND high school to college transition AND success.* These terms were sometimes combined with *predict*.

### **Search databases and websites:**

1. ERIC: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/>
2. JSTOR: <http://www.jstor.org/action/showAdvancedSearch>
3. Google Scholar: [www.google.com/scholar](http://www.google.com/scholar)
4. Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Resources: <http://ies.ed.gov>
5. What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

**Sample Citations Retrieved** (NOTE: Abstracts and executive summaries are copied directly from the reports when possible to ensure accuracy):

Dennis, J. M., Phinney, J. S., & Chuateco, L. I. (2005). The role of motivation, parental support, and peer support in the academic success of ethnic minority first-generation college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(3), 223-236. doi: .1353/csd.2005.0023

**Abstract/Summary:** The role of personal motivational characteristics and environmental social supports in college outcomes was examined in a longitudinal study of 100 ethnic minority first-generation college students. Personal/career-related motivation to attend college in the fall was a positive predictor and lack of peer support was a negative predictor of college adjustment the following spring. Lack of peer support also predicted lower spring GPA.

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Flores, S. M., & Park, T. J. (2013). Race, ethnicity, and college success: Examining the continued significance of the minority-serving institution. *Educational Researcher*, 42(3), 115-128. doi: 10.3102/0013189X13478978

**Abstract/Summary:** The minority-serving institution (MSI) sector has grown considerably since the 1980s, yet we have less empirical information about what currently influences students to enroll in and complete college at these institutions in comparison to their non-MSI counterparts. We evaluate student postsecondary outcomes by race and ethnicity in Texas's large MSI sector utilizing state administrative data from 1997 to 2008. At the enrollment stage, we find that race is an important predictor of college enrollment, despite controlling for detailed precollege characteristics. At the college-completion stage, however, the effect of race is largely no longer present after accounting for institutional characteristics, including attending an MSI. That is, in most of the cohorts examined, Hispanic and Black students who initially enroll in a four-year institution showed no difference from their White peers in six-year graduation outcomes. In sum, Hispanic-serving institutions are particularly critical locations for Hispanics while the non-MSI community colleges emerge as key institutions for Black students, signaling important implications for how historically Black colleges and universities might address recruitment and transfer strategies. Implications for practitioners and researchers are offered. (Contains 5 tables, 2 figures, and 5 notes.)

Hoffman, J. L., & Lowitzki, K. E. (2005). Predicting college success with high school grades and test scores: Limitations for minority students. *The Review of Higher Education*, 28(4), 455-474. doi: 10.1353/rhe.2005.0042

**Abstract/Summary:** Using a sample of 522 students at a Lutheran university in the Southwestern United States, researchers examined differences in the predictive strength of high school grades and standardized test scores for student involvement, academic achievement, retention, and satisfaction. Findings indicate that high school grades are stronger predictors of success than standardized test scores for both racial and religious minority students. The authors also discuss implications for affirmative action practice and the use of standardized test scores in comprehensive review admissions decisions.

Huang, G., Taddese, N., & Walter, E. (2000). Entry and persistence of women and minorities in college science and engineering education. *Education Statistics Quarterly*, 2(3), 59-60.

**Abstract/Summary:** Examined the gaps related to gender and race/ethnicity in entry, persistence, and attainment of post-secondary science and engineering (S&E) education. Data suggest that much of the racial/ethnic and gender differences in entry into S&E can be explained by examining certain student, family, and school characteristics.

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Kirby, E., White, S., & Aruguete, M. (2007). Predictors of white and minority student success at a private women's college. *College Student Journal*, 41(2), 460-465.

**Abstract/Summary:** This study examines predictors of academic success in a private women's college. We investigated academic factors (e.g., high school grade point average, standardized test scores) and socioeconomic status (e.g., parents' occupation, need for financial aid) as possible predictors of academic success among White and non-White students. Data was collected archivally from 299 former students at a small, Midwestern private women's college. We found that academic factors were good predictors of college success in general but especially for White students. Among non-White students, only high school grade point average (G.P.A.) and class rank predicted college success. Students who indicated a need for financial aid tended to have higher G.P.A.s than those who did not indicate such as need. Our results indicate that women's institutions should carefully consider the use of standardized test scores when evaluating non-White applicants.

White, C. B., Dey, E. L., & Fantone, J. C. (2009). Analysis of factors that predict clinical performance in medical school. *Advances in Health Sciences Education*, 14(4), 455-464. doi: 10.1007/s10459-009-9189-8

**Abstract/Summary:** Academic achievement indices including GPAs and MCAT scores are used to predict the spectrum of medical student academic performance types. However, use of these measures ignores two changes influencing medical school admissions: student diversity and affirmative action, and an increased focus on communication skills. To determine if GPA and MCAT predict performance in medical school consistently across students, and whether either predicts clinical performance in clerkships. A path model was developed to examine relationships among indices of medical student performance during the first three years of medical school for five cohorts of medical students. A structural equation approach was used to calculate the coefficients hypothesized in the model for majority and minority students. Significant differences between majority and minority students were observed. MCAT scores, for example, did not predict performance of minority students in the first year of medical school but did predict performance of majority students. This information may be of use to medical school admissions and resident selection committees.

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## Referrals

### **Organizations:**

- National High School Center: <http://www.betterhighschools.org/>
- College Readiness Project: [http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/\\_e-assesscollegereadiness.aspx](http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/_e-assesscollegereadiness.aspx)
- Center for Social Organization of Schools (CSOS) at Johns Hopkins University: <http://www.jhucsos.com/>
- Educational Policy Improvement Center: College and Career Readiness: <http://www.epiconline.org/readiness/>

### **Federally Funded Resources:**

- Institute of Education Sciences (IES), public search engine available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/pubsearch/>
- What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
- The Center on Innovation and Improvement: <http://www.centerii.org/>

### ***Disclaimer:***

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