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Abstract

For the United States to maintain national and global economic stability, colleges must graduate more students. Four-year completion rates have declined and less than one-third of full-time, degree-seeking students graduate in 4 years. Some researchers and policymakers have suggested 'leading indicators' to track postsecondary educational achievement. This study examined the relationship between pre-college factors (e.g., socio-economic status, college readiness, race/ethnicity, etc.), leading indicators (e.g., earning 30 credits at the end of year one, continuous enrolment, summer course credit, etc.) and degree completion at Kentucky's 4-year public institutions. The results showed that the effects of some leading indicators varied based on pre-college factors. Overall, factors related to credit accumulation had the most impact on the likelihood of increasing graduation rates. Policy and practice should consider the impact of pre-college factors on the effectiveness of leading indicators to most efficiently increase degree completion rates. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)