



National Center for Postsecondary Research  
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## PRESS RELEASE

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### *Summer Program Gives Texas High School Students a Boost in College*

**NEW YORK, NY (Oct. 13, 2011)** - A new study of “developmental summer bridge” programs in Texas - designed to help underprepared high school students transition successfully to college - has found that students who attend the summer programs are more likely to pass college-level classes in math and writing than those who do not attend the program.

The three-year study, from the National Center for Postsecondary Research and in collaboration with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, is tracking over 1,300 mostly Hispanic students who participated in developmental summer bridge programs in 2009 at one four-year and seven community colleges in Texas. The intensive summer programs range in length from four to five weeks and provide three to six hours a day of instruction in math, reading and/or writing, academic tutoring and advising, and guidance on the sometimes bewildering procedures associated with attending college, such as applying for financial aid, developing an academic plan and transferring to a four-year college.

Results from the 2009-2010 school year reveal that students in the program – who tested below college-level at the start of the summer - were more likely to take and pass college-level math and writing courses and were less likely to need remediation than students who did not participate. Thirty two percent of summer bridge students passed college-level writing during their first semester of college compared with twenty seven percent of control group students; nine percent of program participants passed college-level math as opposed to four percent in the control group.

The findings - though modest - provide hopeful news to the state of Texas, which in 2000 announced an ambitious plan to increase the number of students earning postsecondary credentials to 210,000 by 2015, an increase of more than 80%. Improving success rates for underprepared students is critical if the state wants to meet its goals: nationally, six out of ten students entering community college need at least one remedial class and only 25% of these students ever go on to earn a college degree or credential.

Colleges in Texas and across the country have been seeking ways to help students move more quickly out of remediation and into college-level classes. Developmental summer bridge programs have become an increasingly popular way to address the problem but - until now - no studies existed on the effectiveness of these programs. The NCPR study uses a random assignment design to provide the first rigorous evidence that these programs can contribute to improved student outcomes. Student outcomes for the 2010-2011 school year will be presented in the study’s final report to be released in summer, 2012.

For a copy of the report, visit: <http://bit.ly/pHkTst>

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**The National Center for Postsecondary Research (NCP)** is housed at the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, and is operated in collaboration with partners MDRC and the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, and with a professor at Harvard University. Established in 2006, with a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education, NCP measures the effectiveness of programs designed to help students make the transition to college and master the basic skills needed to advance to a degree. NCP is currently pursuing research in dual enrollment; postsecondary remediation; and financial aid.