

“Waiving” Goodbye to Placement Testing:

Broadening the Benefits of Dual Enrollment Through Statewide Policy

Motivation

- Dual enrollment (DE) programs—through which high school students take college courses and earn college credit—have great potential to increase college access and success for all students
- However, Black, Hispanic, low-income and other underserved groups are underrepresented in DE (Taylor et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2021)
- Factors contributing to underrepresentation include:
 - Unequal awareness of DE opportunities
 - Unequal opportunities to receive college advising
 - Educator bias in referrals to advanced coursework such as DE
 - High-stakes standardized tests to determine eligibility for DE
 - Insufficient financial assistance for books, fees, and transportation

Policy Background and Timeline

- 2015: Ohio passed legislation to enact College Credit Plus (CCP), a DE initiative designed to increase high school student college and career readiness
- 2017: Ohio revised code to create Innovative Programs (IP) that allows approved high schools and colleges to waive the testing-based eligibility requirement
 - Requires that school-college partnerships:
 - Intentionally design and implement “innovative” supports for students to specifically meet the needs of underrepresented students
 - Develop an outreach plan in order to recruit students from underrepresented groups
 - 26 IPs have been approved between 15 college partners and over 100 high schools

Research Questions

We study one of the only equity-focused statewide DE policies in the country to better understand:

1. How were Innovative Programs implemented, and what did the programs do to broaden access and support underrepresented students in CCP?
2. Did Innovative Programs increase access to dual enrollment courses for Black and Hispanic students?
3. Did implementation of Innovative Programs result in any changes to Black and Hispanic students' dual enrollment course outcomes and post-high school college attendance rates?

Data & Methods

RQ 1 (Implementation)

- Interviews with IP leaders documented 10 IPs
 - 15 IP leaders (13 from community colleges and 2 from four-year colleges)
 - Used semi-structured interview protocol
 - Data summarized after each interview to document major features of IPs

RQ 2 & 3 (Access & Outcomes)

- We use administrative data from ODHE and high-school level data from NCES to run a difference-in-difference analysis comparing outcomes before and after policy implementation for IP partner high schools and other CCP high schools

RQ 1 Results: *How were the Innovative Programs implemented?*



Student Groups. Innovative Programs were designed for students from various underrepresented subgroups. Racially minoritized students, low-income students, and first generation students were most frequently targeted.



Program Design and Implementation. The design and implementation of Innovative Programs varied substantially: programs had different academic foci, outreach strategies, and supports for students.

Program	Programmatic Focus				College outreach	High School Outreach	Alignment of DE offerings to degrees and careers	Career Exploration and College Advising	Academic Supports and Instruction
	English / Math	CTE	STEM	Other					
1			X		X	X	X	X	X
2	X (E)								
3	X (E)				X	X		X	X
4		X	X					X (CE)	X
5		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
6		X			X	X	X	X	
7		X			X	X	X		X
8	X (E & M)				X	X			X
9				X	X	X		X	
10				X	X	X			X

RQ 1 Results: *How were the Innovative Programs implemented?*



Outreach Efforts. For nearly every program, IP leaders described outreach efforts by both colleges and high schools intended to broaden access to dual enrollment to identified underrepresented student groups.



Alignment of DE offerings to Degrees and Careers. Four programs made efforts to align program courses to degrees and credentials and educate students and families about these options.

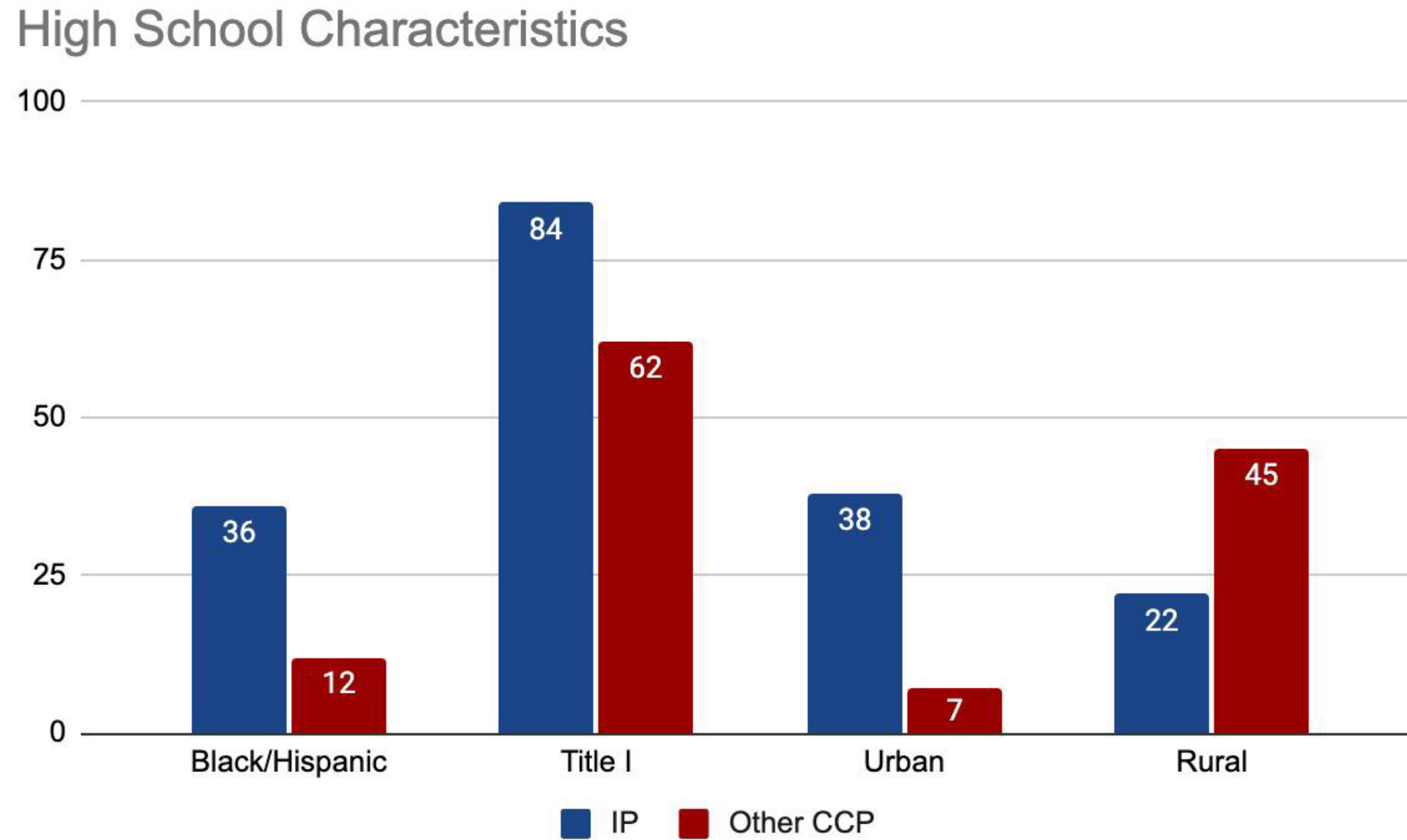


Career Exploration & College Advising. Five programs included advising from a college academic advisor and one program included career exploration activities.



Academic Support and Instruction. Seven programs included strategies to provide academic support with DE coursework and/or used curricula and instructional practices to support DE students.

RQ 2 & 3 Results: *What impacts did Innovative Programs have on access and outcomes for Black and Hispanic students?*



Takeaway – IP partner high schools serve a higher proportion of Black, Hispanic, and Title I eligible students and are more likely to be located in urban areas

Identification Strategy

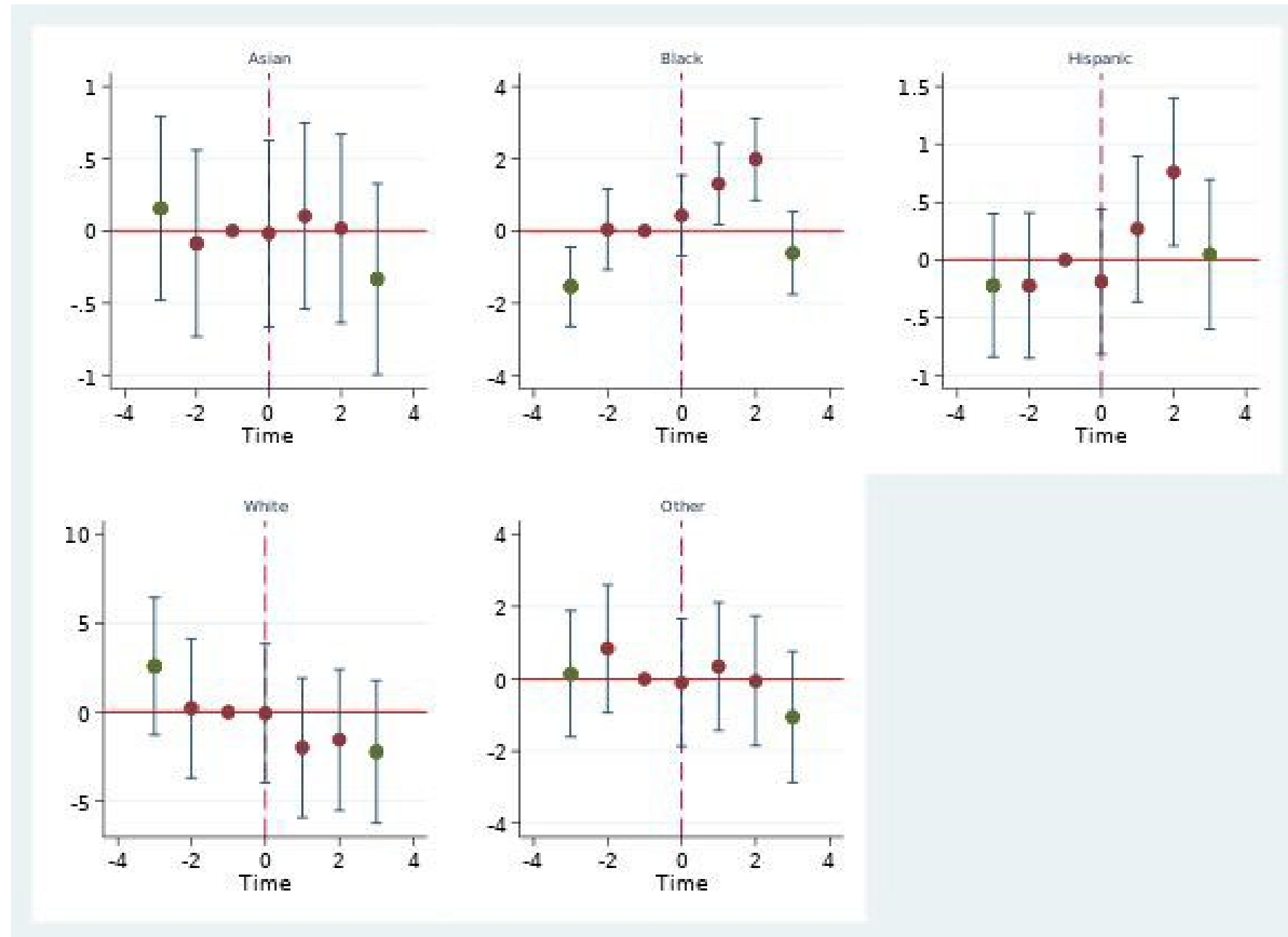
We employ a two-way fixed effects model (TWFE) that accounts for staggered treatment take-up at the high school level:

$$Y_{st} = \tau_t + \gamma_s + \beta IP_{st} + \chi_{st} + \epsilon_{st}$$

where Y represents a series of outcome variables for students at school s in year t , and τ and γ are year and high school fixed effects.

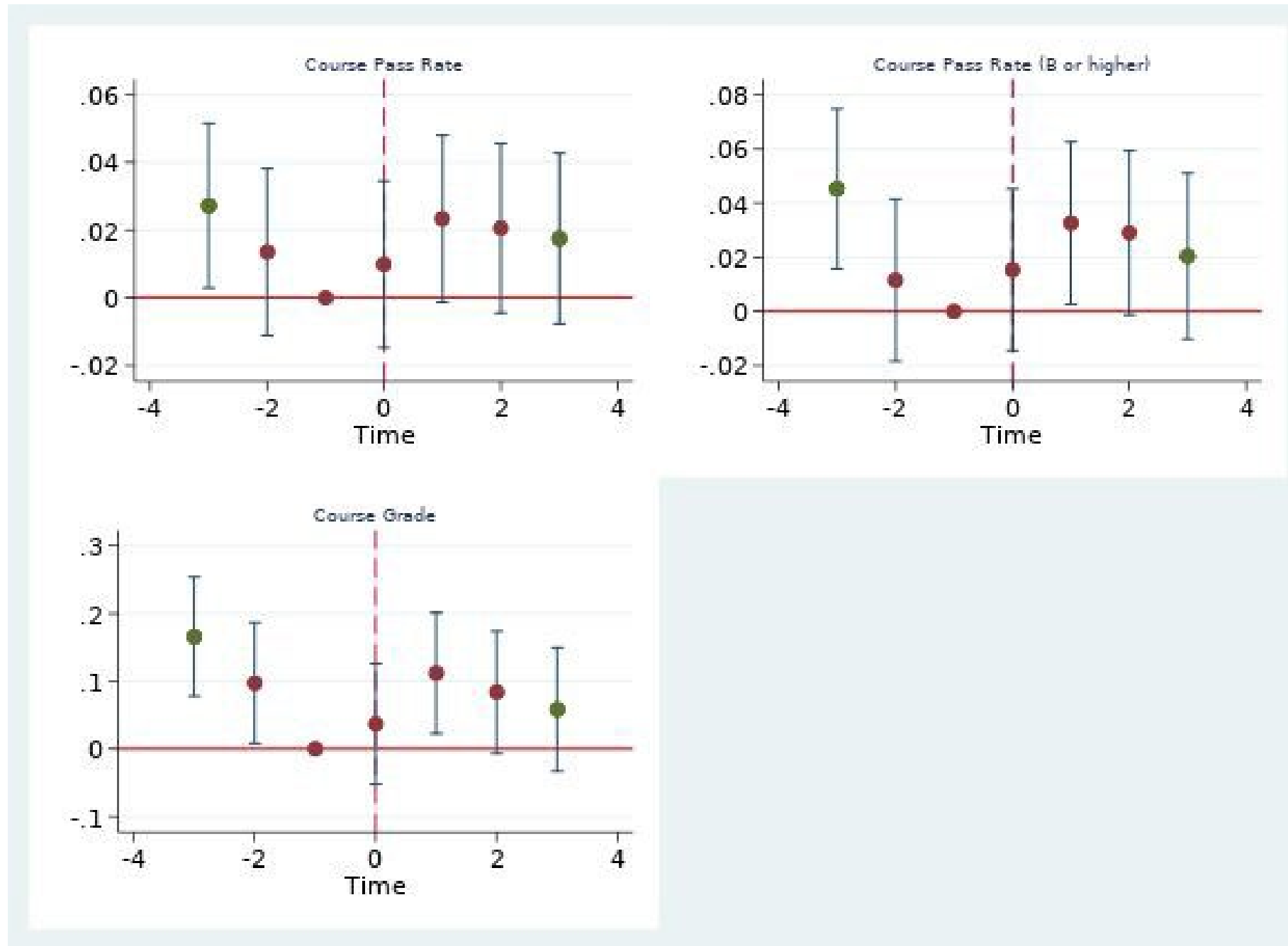
- Event study plots to follow show values for β , which corresponds to the difference in outcomes across cohorts that were exposed to IP waivers for DE participation versus not

RQ 2 & 3 Results: *What impacts did Innovative Programs have on access and outcomes for Black and Hispanic students?*



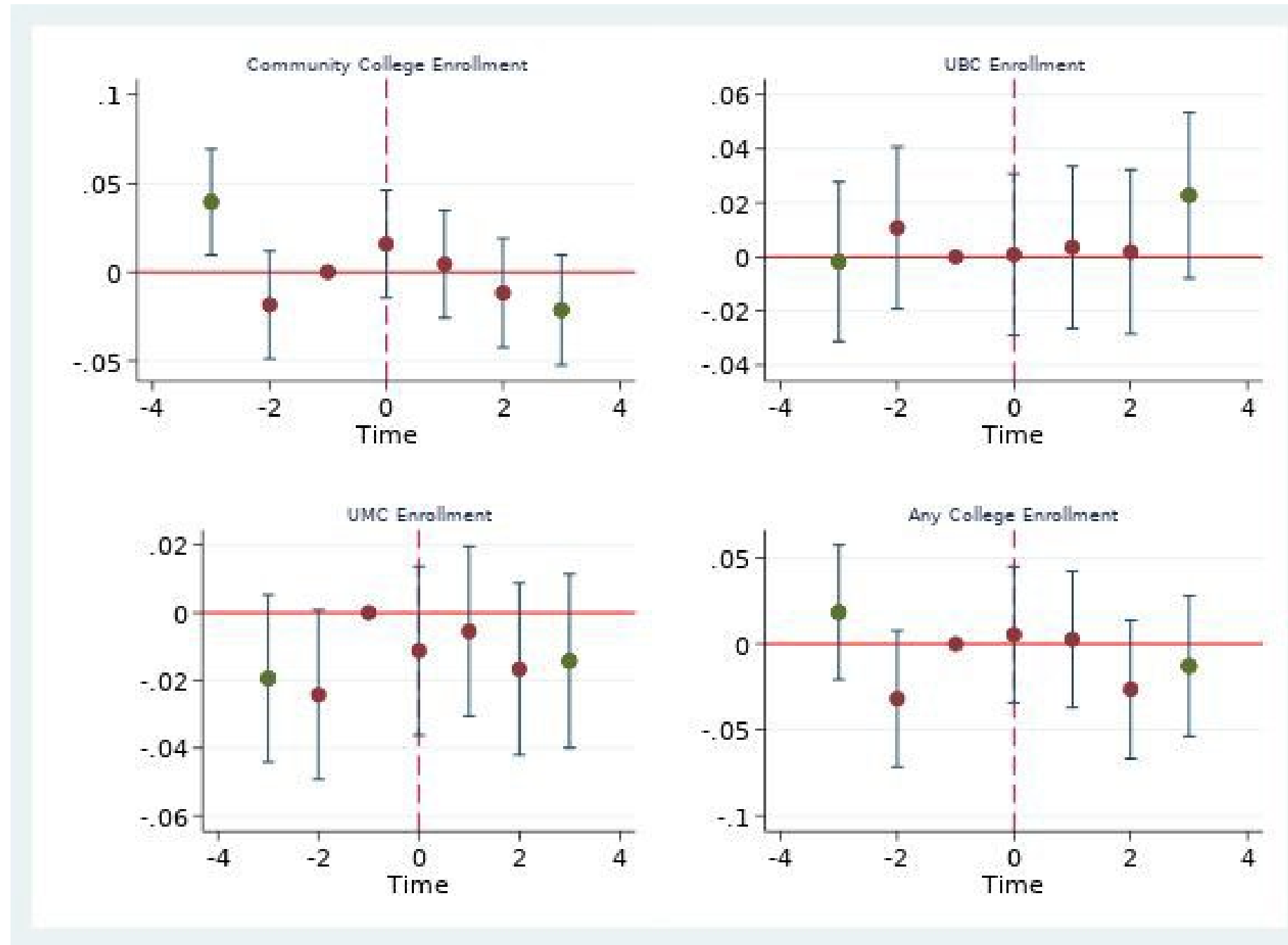
Takeaway – IP increased the number of Black and Hispanic students who participate in DE by 15-30 percent

RQ 2 & 3 Results: *What impacts did Innovative Programs have on access and outcomes for Black and Hispanic students?*



Takeaway – IP implementation is associated with an improvements in course outcomes, but these results should be interpreted with caution given pretrends.

RQ 2 & 3 Results: *What impacts did Innovative Programs have on access and outcomes for Black and Hispanic students?*



Takeaway – We cannot rule out null effects of IP on college enrollment outcomes within 1 year of high school graduation

Takeaways

- IPs and the elimination of eligibility requirements for dual enrollment helped increase access to dual enrollment for underserved student groups
- Despite positive effects on enrollment, we cannot rule out null effects on course and college enrollment outcomes
- **Policy Implications:** Waiving goodbye to placement tests can work if additional supports are provided to ensure student success in and beyond dual enrollment coursework
 - ◆ This includes access to adequate financial, advising, and academic resources


Thank you!

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