

English as a Second Language in California's Community Colleges

April 30, 2019

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Supported with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the College Futures Foundation, and the Sutton Family Fund



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ESL programs can facilitate economic and social mobility for non-native speakers

- Every year, thousands of new students enroll in ESL coursework at California's community colleges
 - Some simply want to improve their English
 - Others are pursuing career credentials or a college degree
- Given statewide reforms to “credit ESL,” we need to know more about ESL programs and outcomes for degree-seeking students



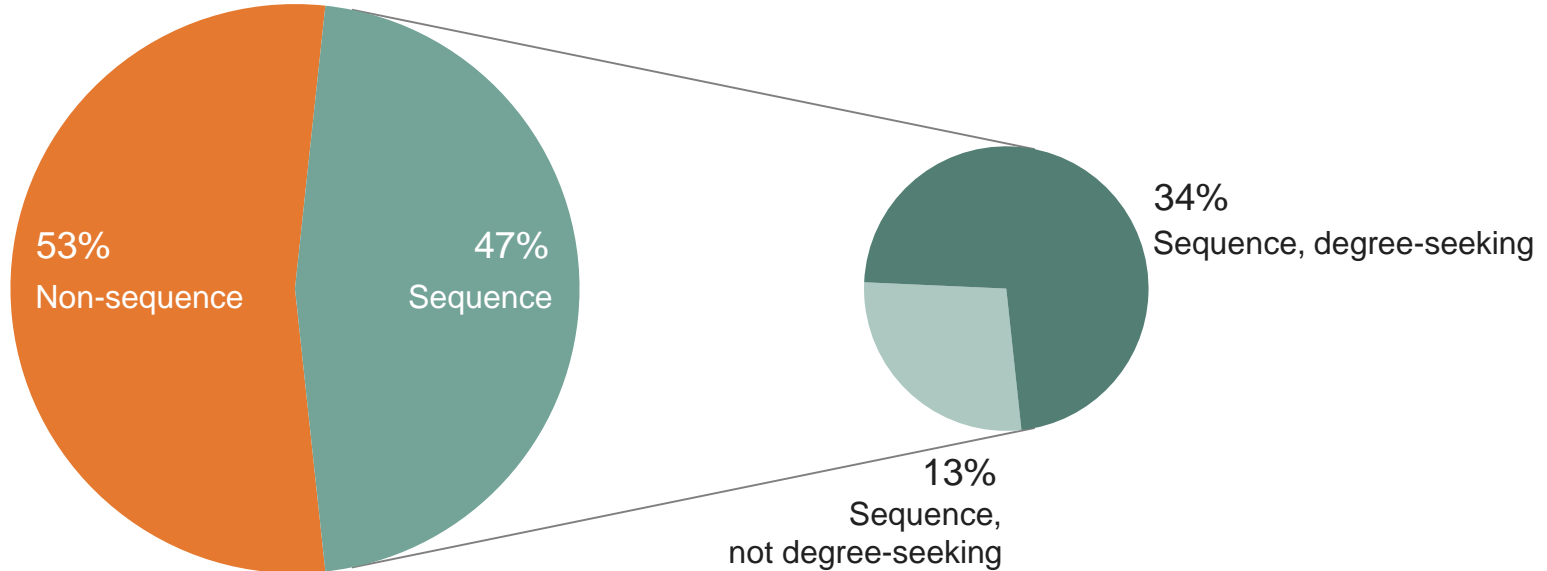
Reforms to ESL programs are well under way

- Assembly Bill (AB) 705 requires colleges to reform credit ESL programs so that they do not deter or delay educational progress
 - Colleges must maximize the probability that a student in credit ESL will enter and complete transfer-level English within three years
 - Utilize assessment and placement policies that are in line with maximizing probability
 - Achieve full implementation by Fall 2020
- Students affected:
 - Those with goals to seek a degree or transfer
 - Those who are enrolled in courses that will lead to transfer-level English

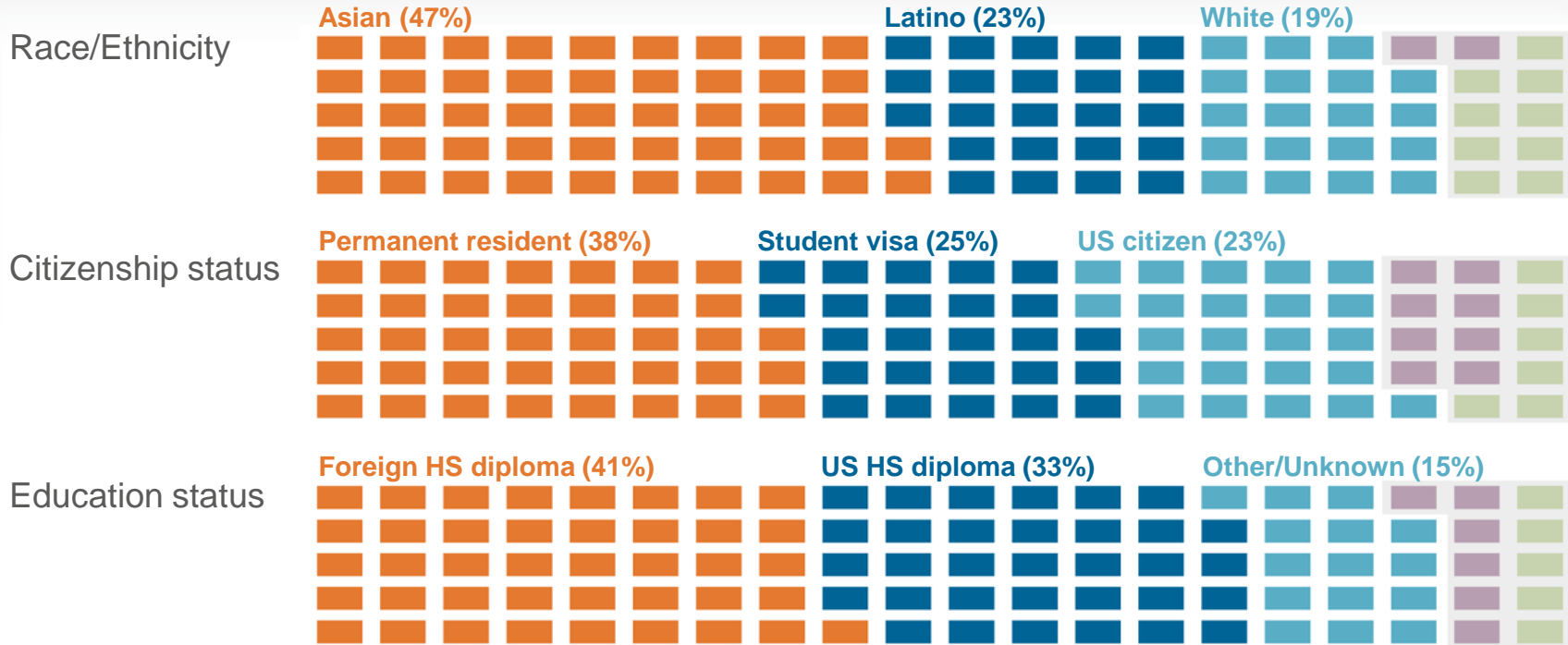


One-third of ESL students are degree-seeking

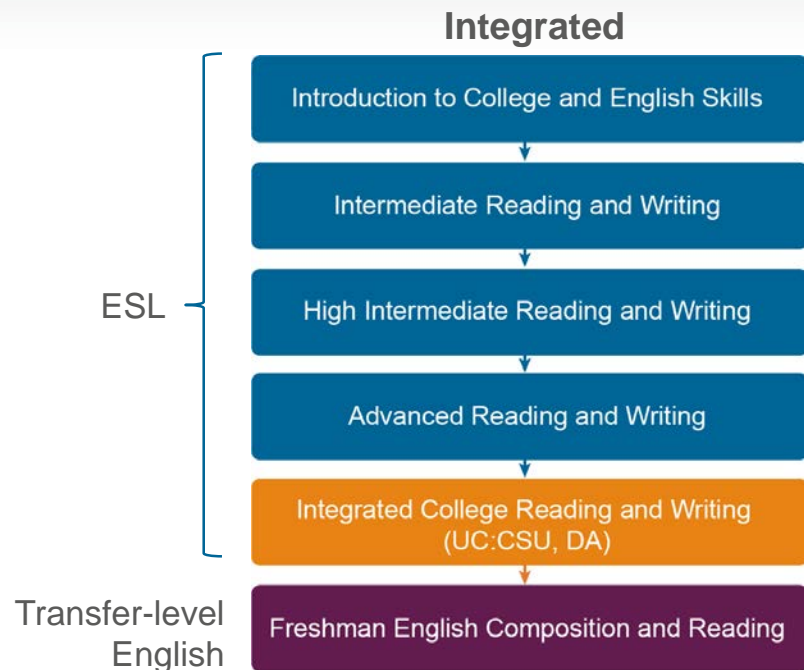
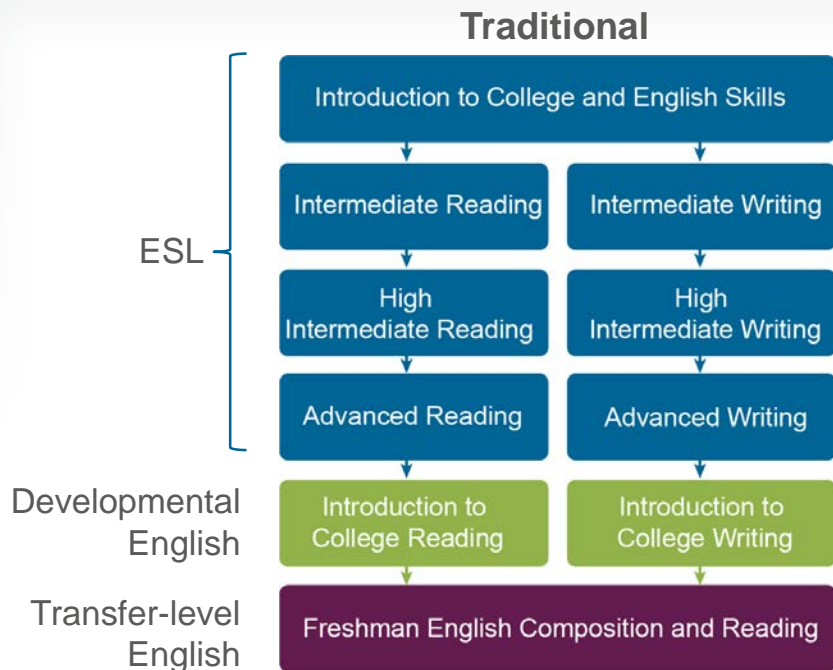
General ESL population



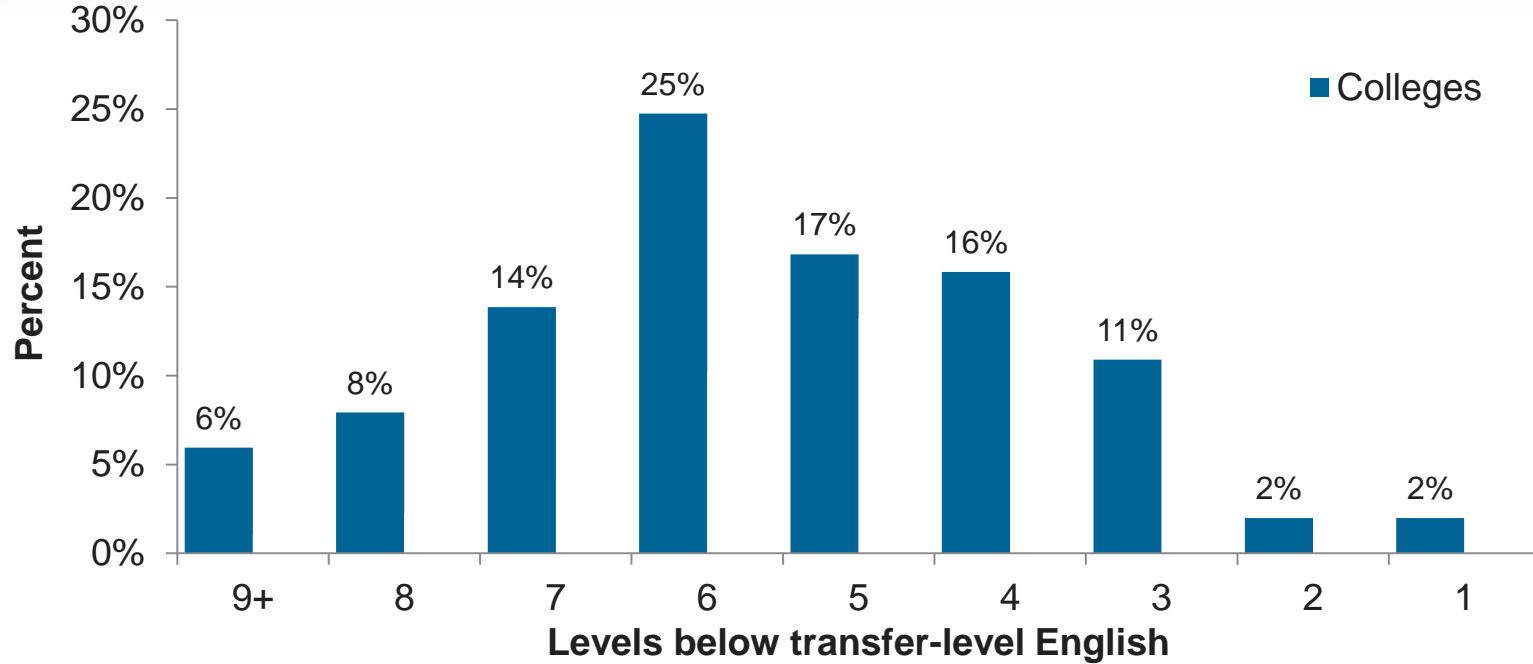
Degree-seeking students are demographically diverse



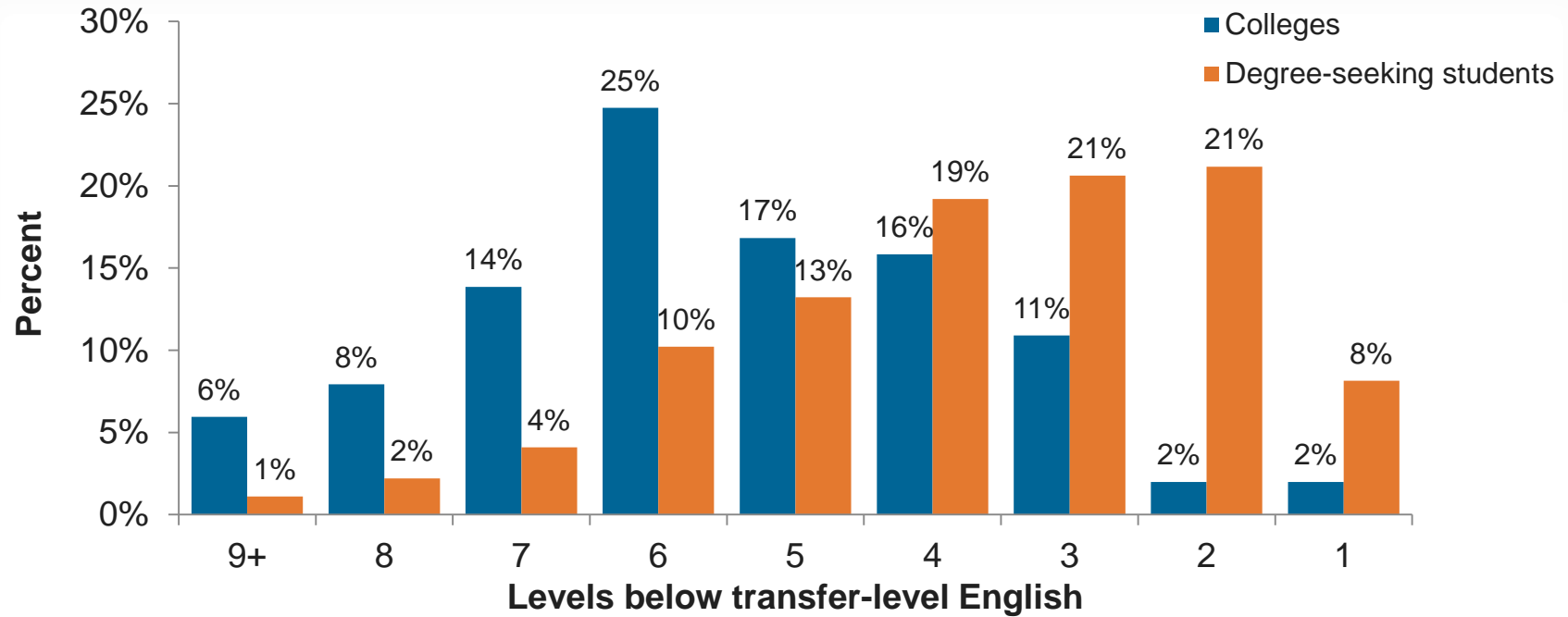
Many colleges are moving away from traditional sequences



Some ESL sequences are lengthy...

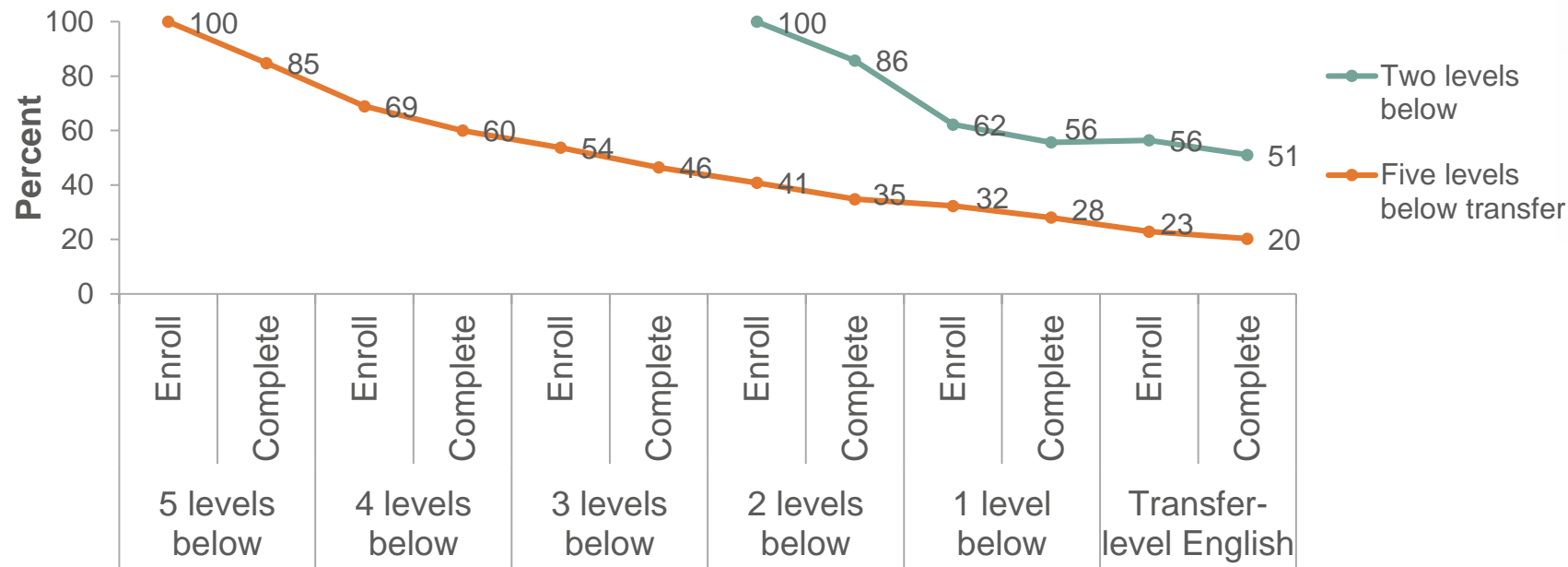


...but most students start only a few levels below transfer-level English

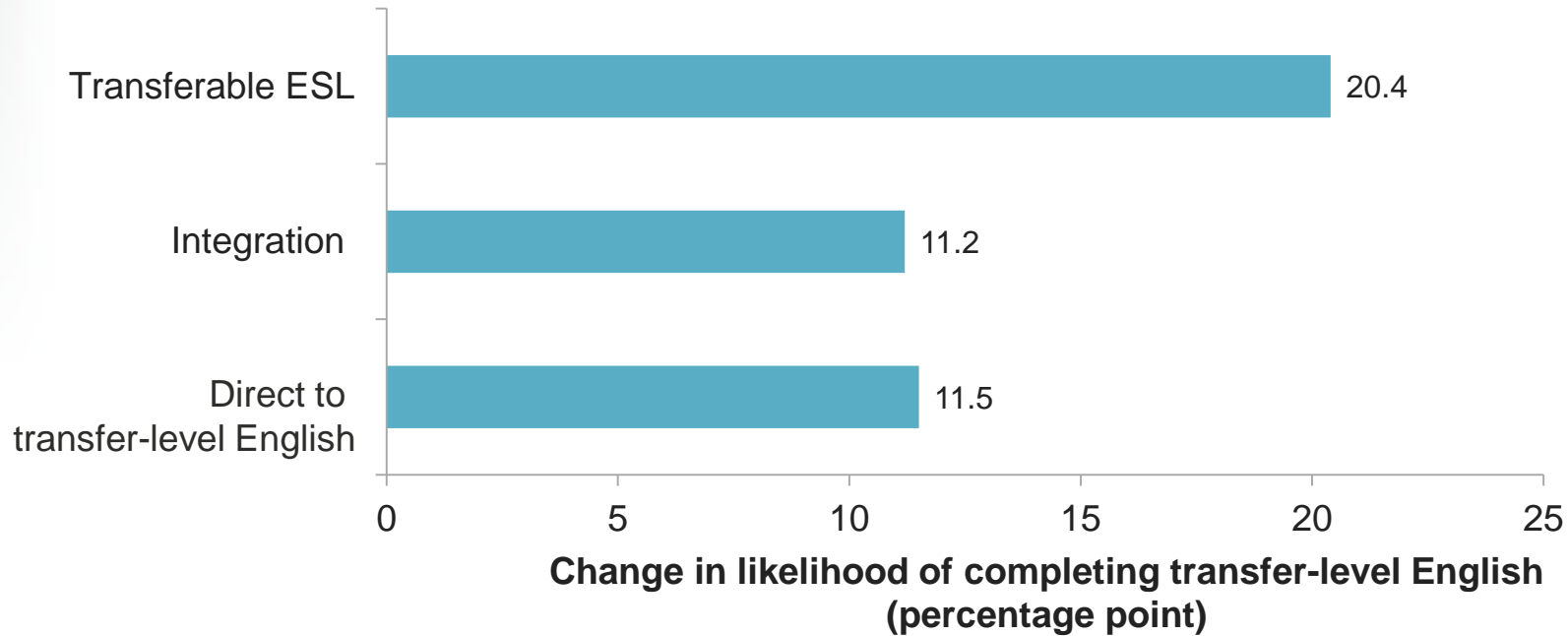


Students who start ESL sequences at higher levels are more likely to complete transfer-level English

Six-year progression in ESL sequence



Three key ESL features increase the likelihood of students completing transfer-level English



Recommendations

- Several ESL reforms seem especially promising
 - Shorter ESL sequences
 - Transferable ESL courses
 - Integrated approaches to teaching English skills
 - Direct pathways from ESL to transfer-level English
- Connections between non-credit and credit ESL should be seamless
- Monitoring assessment and placement policies will ensure accuracy, effectiveness, and equity
- All ESL students should be encouraged to pursue a degree or transfer



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Thank you!

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.