

An Examination of Non-Cognitive Predictors of Six-Year Graduation Rates for African
American Students at a Predominately White Institution

Using the Annual Freshman Survey

By

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify questions from the Annual Freshman Survey (AFS) that may predict academic success, in the form of six-year graduation, for African American students at a predominately White institution. Previous research has reported the relevance of non-cognitive variables in predicting college grades, persistence, and graduation. This study extends that literature by focusing on variables from the AFS that may be used as non-cognitive predictors, specifically related to eight variables established in previous literature. The study used existing data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program AFS. The Academic Assessment Office at the selected institution provided data for the sample consisting of 249 African American students, who enrolled in the fall of 1992, 1993, and 1994. Out of the variables analyzed, only one proved statistically significant. Contrary to expectation, students who indicated a high intellectual self-confidence at matriculation were less likely to graduate within six years than those who did not. No other variables were significant predictors of graduation. The results of this study suggest that the AFS items are not good predictors for African American graduation.

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