

UNDERMINING THE MASTER PLAN: DIVESTMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION & STUDENT DEGREE PROGRESS

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Graduation Rates

- Only 57% of undergraduates earn a B.A./B.S. in six years
- 41% of African Americans
- 48% of Latinos
- 39% of Native Americans





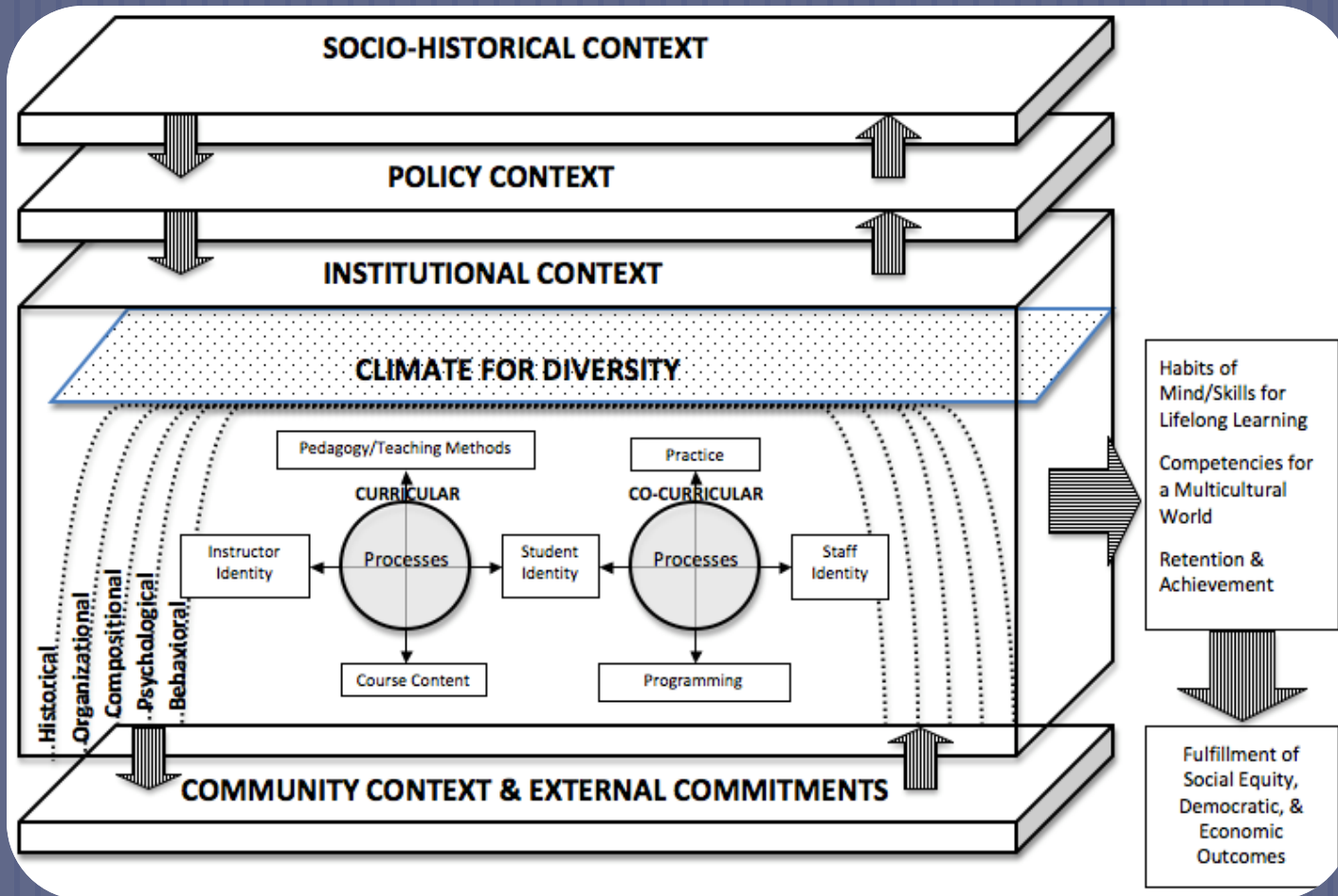
2011-2012 Fiscal Year

University of California	California State University	California Community Colleges
- \$500 Million	- \$500 Million	- \$400 Million

CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC

Divestment in Public Higher Education

Multi-contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (Hurtado et. al., in press)



Research Question

Diverse Learning Environments Project



Present Study

- Two California Community Colleges and two California State Universities
- 94 undergraduates, 16 focus groups
- **“From your experiences what have been the biggest barriers to your academic achievement?”**

Methodology

- Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1965)
- Cross-case Analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

Themes:

Decrease in Support Services & Resources

Furloughs Result in Less Instruction Time

Decreased Course Availability Prolongs Degree Progress

Fee Increases Result in Increased Student Sacrifice

Decrease in Support Services & Resources

- ...And if [you don't have a fee waiver], the books are very, very expensive...last semester [the waiver] was \$200, this semester it went down to \$100. It affects everybody. I'm gonna get my books the best way I can, to do what I have to do, **but some people just can't afford it, and that's why they drop out.** (CCC1, White student)

Furloughs Result in Less Instruction Time

- ...Seriously one of my classes **out of the 15 weeks of school, 9 of the weeks are furlough days**. And we have to cover 27 chapters... (CSU2, White student)
- Furloughs [have] thrown me off as well ...once [you've missed] a week of classes [due to furloughs]...you're [still] expected to have learned [the material during the time off] ... and **I feel like I'm being thrown for a loop sometimes for every single class that I've had...on furlough days...I feel more confused when I come back.** (CSU2, Latino student).

Decreased Course Availability Prolongs Degree Progress

- ... I'm gonna get my certificate in photo pretty soon, in black and white. I need one more class, one more class, and now they're not teaching the class because of the budget. So they fired, they laid off professors, so they don't have that class any more. What am I gonna do? How am I gonna get my certificate? Students, they don't want to come to school 'cause they don't know what to do. They want to come back, but they're not offering the classes they need to become a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, it doesn't matter. So it's like, I think they should work on that, give us more classes, offer more classes that students will need... (CCC1, White)

Fee Increases Result in Increased Student Sacrifice

- I actually tried to get into the child psychopathology class but...it's only offered by one professor at one time and [unfortunately] I had to work. I've already cut down my bills to the point where it's like I'm only eating two meals a day. Like I can't afford...to pay [for] three meals a day... so I had to give up taking that class ... because I had to work. (CSU2, White)

Conclusion



- Divestment in higher education has tangible consequences for students
- Legislators must determine if the long-term costs of education divestment are worth the temporary benefits of annual savings