

Increasing Access to Higher Education

BENEFITS, COSTS AND THE BIG ISSUES

DON E. DAILEY, PH.D.

DAILEY RESEARCH CONSULTING

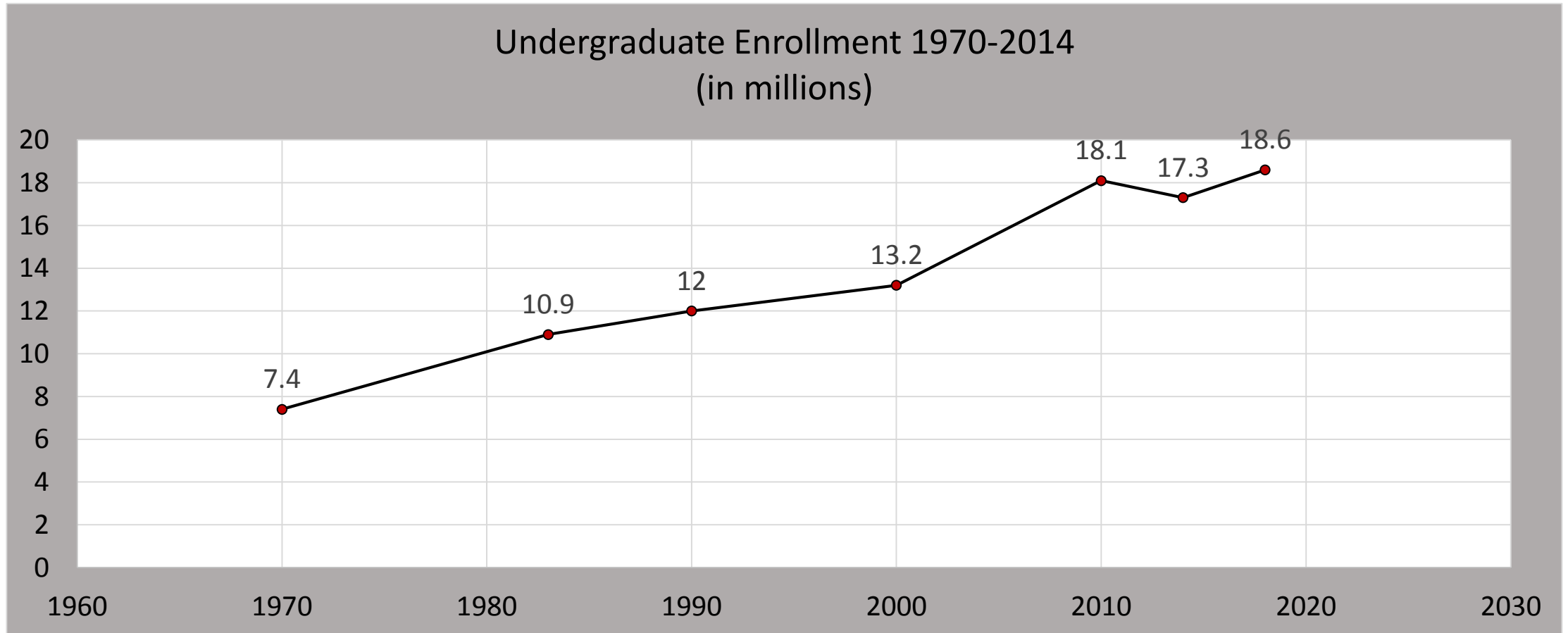
Objectives

Complexity of increasing access to higher education

Explore what is promising in supporting student progress on campus

Discuss larger issues

US Total Undergraduate Enrollment



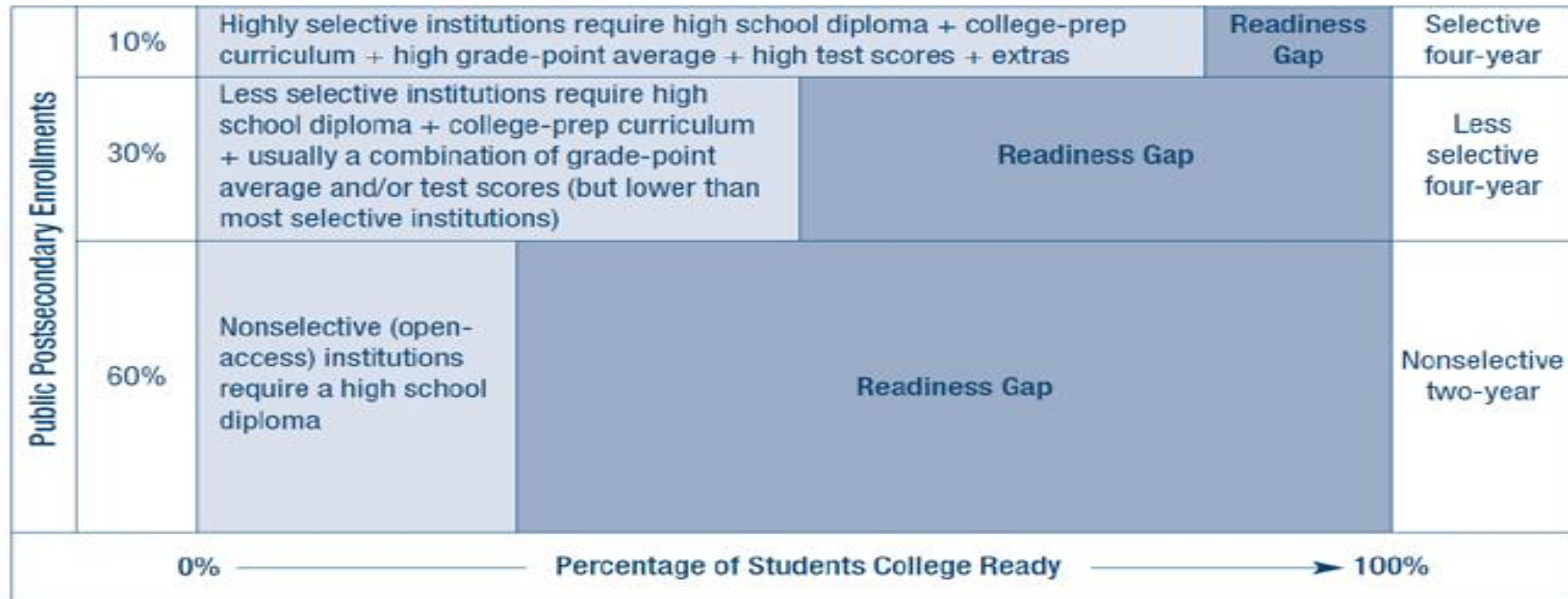
Increase in Underprepared College Students

The American Association of College and Universities (AAC&U) reports that ' 53% of students entering our colleges and universities are academically underprepared.

This is a 33% increase in the number of academically underprepared students since 1996 (National Center for Educational Statistics).

Readiness Gap

Figure 1: The Readiness Gap by Institutional Sector



Elements of College Readiness

Content knowledge

Core academic skills

Study skills

Non-cognitive skills

College cultural capital

Rosemary College

Small private non-sectarian liberal arts college

Economic pressures

Decreasing retention and graduation rates

Concerns about underpreparation - conflict

Challenge teaching students representing a wide spectrum of preparation

Summer Transition Program

- 109 incoming freshmen at-risk of challenges
- 43 randomly selected and accepted for Summer Program
- Average SAT of 761
- Remaining 66 students transition in fall
- Average SAT of 808

Interventions

Program Interventions	Summer Transition Cohort	Fall Transition Cohort
Remedial courses in math, writing, and reading	X	X
Learning Strategies: Training in study skills, note-taking, active reading, time-management	X	X
Common housing, social-cultural and campus activities	X	
Tutoring and exposure to helpful resources	X	(X)
Learning community: Summer and Academic Year	X	
Success Advisors: Summer and Academic Year	X	

Evaluation

Study implementation and impact on student confidence and academic performance

Summer: survey, focus group, interviews and observations

Academic year: survey, focus group, interviews with summer cohort

Academic year: Overall GPA, course grades, course taking, retention data for both cohorts

Findings from 4-Week Summer Session

Marginal increase in confidence

Mutual shock

Heightened awareness of expectations, norms, values

Contextual knowledge

Awareness of helpful resources

Relationships, sense of belonging and support

Opportunity to begin earning credits

Year-End Findings

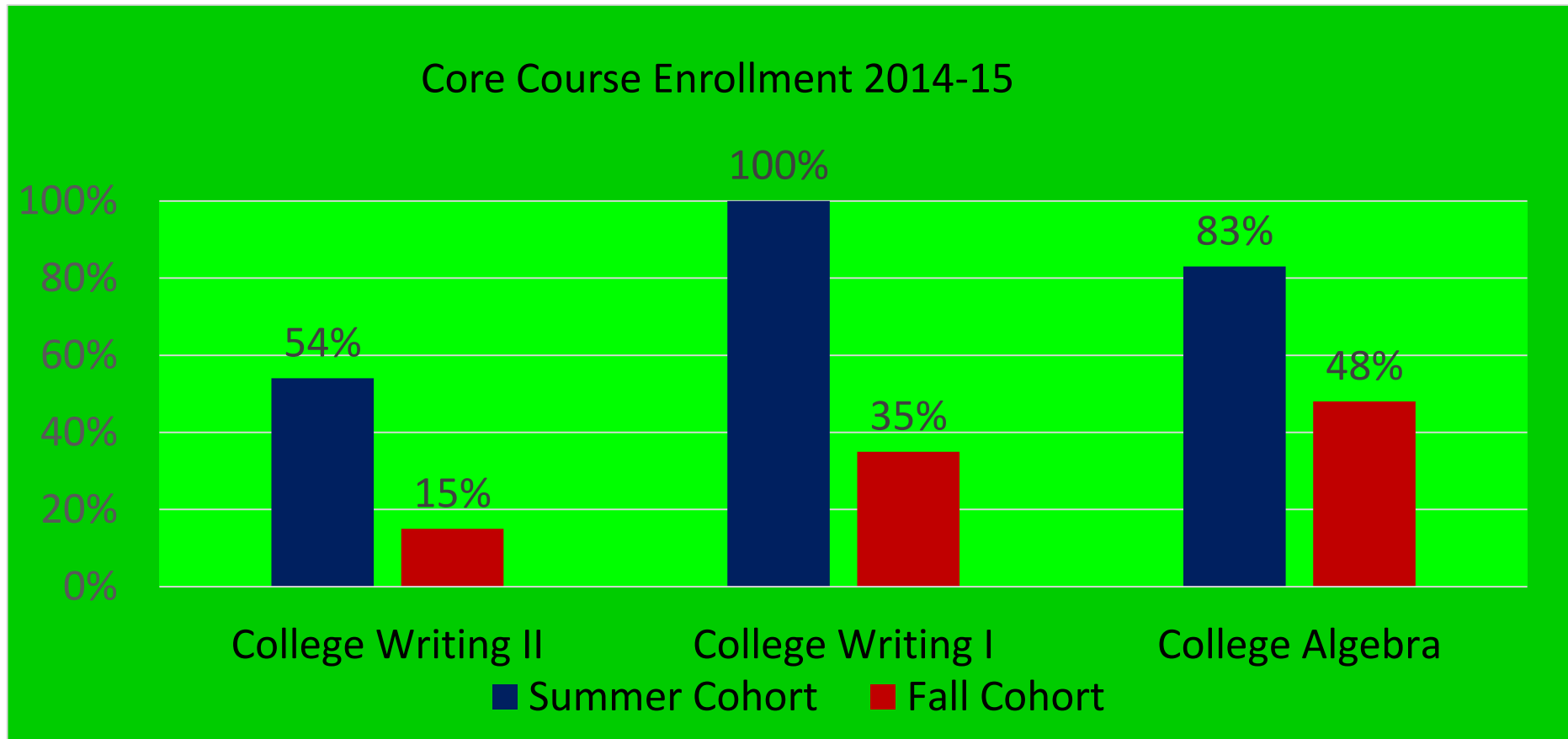
Generally the fall cohort performed slightly better academically

Very challenging transition

Summer cohort course enrollment and persistence was higher

Returning next fall: Summer Cohort 60%, Fall Cohort 35%

Course Enrollment Pattern



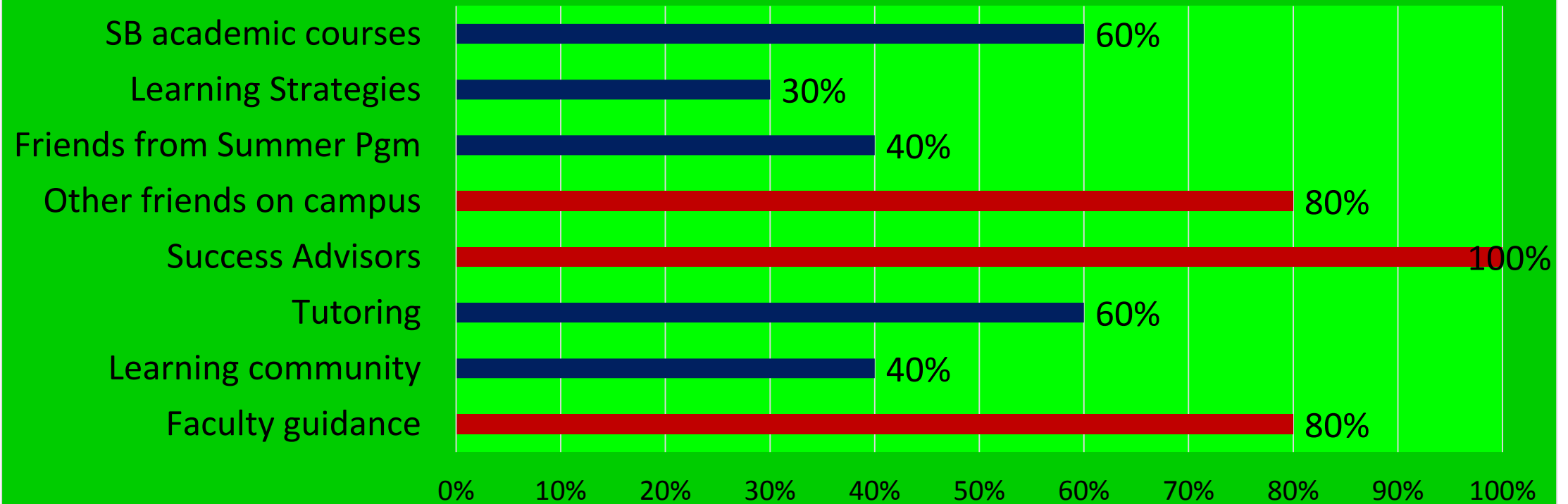
Emerging Questions

Given their academic struggles and very low GPAs, what influenced the decision of Summer Cohort students to return?

Does the Summer Transition Program create conditions that strengthen student hope and persistence in light of low grades?

Resources Supporting Transition

Summer Cohort Cites Advisors and Relationships Supporting Transition



Success Advisors

Monitoring performance and communicating with support network

Intrusive advising

Guiding students to other helpful resources on campus

Resiliency

Staying on track

Overcoming challenges

Interaction of internal motivation and external support

Greater student self-awareness, self-monitoring, help-seeking behavior, problem-solving skills, coping skills.

Reflections

Assist students in connecting to goal oriented motivation

Developed integrated support network

Focused attention on developing resiliency

Learned from results and experience

Research Issues - Resiliency

Impact of varying formal interventions

To what degree informally embedded in academic and social culture

Individual versus external support

Larger Issues

Increasing access is complex

Values, beliefs, economics, and building capacity

Community colleges and four-year institutions

K-12 and higher education