

Welcome, you are listening to a UC Davis Center for Poverty Research conference podcast. I am the center's director Ann Stevens. In March 2015 the center hosted the conference Increasing College Access and Success for Low-Income Students. This conference brought together a unique mix of researchers, policy professionals, and education leaders to discuss new research and opportunities for low-income students.

In this presentation, Eric Bettinger presents his research on the impact of pre-college advising for high school students. Bettinger is an associate professor in the Stanford University School of Education.

>> Kind of fee college advising and then it talked kind of changed it a little bit in terms of going to a program that is really try to turn a specific student.

Really trying to that target a set of students who are much kind of less prepared in process and I'll talk more about it you know I just kind of also this is a very marathon at some point because two kids,

>> We really kind of started the project kids.

>> But it feels like it not that long and this project we're almost four to five years in it. And I'll talk a little bit about some of the reasons for that. So I'm going to skip a little bit, some of this I think is going to be theme.

One thing kind of going off the as you start to think about these models of trying to outreach to students. The models are going to be very different. And one of the things that I think we're lacking is getting together the various models and trying to think a little bit about how we piece together some of the lessons.

The models that we're gonna look at here is a near pier type model. A model Intervention. It's much more the lines of these kinds of large trio type programs, upper bound type programs that are really trying to come in and have kind of this large impact as kind of the premier program in that high school in terms of the literature, And I haven't done justice to the literature here.

Probably the most, the simpler ones are probably the upward bounds is probably the one that's been cited the most. And in the RCT, I mean, part of the reason why, kind of comment earlier that there's a lot of these. It's not just the texting programs. On these kind of old school, holistic programs is we found nothing at the end of the day, no impacts.

And so in some sense, it sets us all up to where all of us want to find the project that perhaps actually suggests where these things are effective, but it also. Kind of tells us at least where we think the evidence is right now. I think that what we might be able to do at the end of this, a preview of upcoming attractions here, we are going to find some small positive impacts.

Particularly on a set of population that we are worried about the most, in terms of higher education. One of the things that is going to be interesting is to try and think about the dynamics, and I only have one bullet point on it but it's going to be a bullet point that I think is gonna take a good part of our discussion and try to think a little bit about how this program interacted and whether it was a compliment or a substitute for pre-existing efforts of the school.

And I think that that's going to be something we come back to in the discussion. So the, in terms of it as you start to think about how you would design if you were out there designing your best program. And I think the first talk did a nice job of kind of thinking a little bit about some of the contrast between some of these different programs.

I'm just trying to present it in a slightly different way, there's a number of different ways where you can create differences, thinking about something that was really targeted. Said okay, these are the here's our. We're gonna program, where the counselors were actually told, you should be focusing on a particular population.

When anybody who knocks on your door, you should actually open the door for them. The second one is in school versus out of school. How do we want to try to time this? This is an in school model, and over here is this near peer. And this is I think the most unique part that we're going to be looking at here.

And we're just going to call it the just a part of the. And the way we.

>> So they try to find this kind of dynamic students they try to target students who have graduated from some of the high schools that they have been to or who have been to similar high schools and had similar kind of disadvantage experiences.

The advisors come in they're there for a one or a two year period, and during that one or two year period, depending on the advisor. After that period they leave and a new advisor comes in, and we might be able to talk a little bit more about that.

The hardest part here is also trying to figure out the mechanisms. And it's gonna be one of the, I'm gonna try to show you these kind of, I'm gonna use the same strategy as a firewall to try to think about, what are some of the like but I think as well in part because of the land line where you have competitor and like the environment going there in schools have this kind of model that you know anything goes to have success.

And if you look across the different advisors and we look at the logs that they have of the different types of meetings we have some and try to just talk as much as possible. And then, of course, I'm gonna make the argument that these RTC's are really where we wanna go.

I don't know that I totally believe that. Feel like there's some limitations on that, and I'll talk a little bit about how, especially when you're in a marathon, an RCT starts to lose some of its saliency. So I've already mentioned this advising report and the goal, their standing initiative scores and that's their hope.

When essentially part of the reason we call this kind beyond triage is this full the school model, and what we really wanna and it really changes the culture of the school over, and over, and over again, it feels like. You walk in and it's basically a line of students who are behind the deadline or procrastinate the deadline and one of the things that the college advice board tries to do is try to say how do we actually find more time than your other classmates.

And I'm not gonna show you any results on the other classmates. I'll show you some results kinda two years out of this program. So, now we got Juniors and Seniors who have been part of the program. And then, in terms of what do they do I've already mentioned the delivery mechanism, but.

If you think about I'm gonna try to show you some results on those. In terms of the marathon, this is what I mean by a marathon, so basically we started having discussions in 2010 and really in 2009 and we We convinced them to do a 15 school pilot, but they wouldn't even randomize the pilot.

They just wanted to see if the proof of concept worked. Well if you try your proof of concept, that already puts you a year into the project. But then what happened in 2011, they said, okay well we're gonna expand 120 schools. Now I'll come back and I'll show you, that, that's not what our randomized experiment's going to be.

I'd love it if it was. And then one of the other problems we have is we have had to wait for students to grow up. So it started in 2011, 2012. A year later we're in good shape, but the problem is as they started talking about our data, our data's not available because it's almost 2014 before we actually had any of the data and then the fact that also we have to go to Texas every we want to use data.

It makes it a little more difficult. I really tried to get my co-author, Bret Evans, on this, to accept a job in Texas, just so that he could. But he didn't comply, so what we're able to do application contests. We convinced them that they had so many slots and they had so many schools who wanted to be a part of it.

And this was a, I mean I think I spent about four months of my life, and I gained about at least five of these pounds from this process by itself. Cuz it was really painstaking to try to help them understand. And in the end what we found, we had about 240 applications for these 120 spots, but at the end we had to come up with this hybrid.

So literally, the first 84 schools, they selected based on how disadvantaged they were. So our criteria to just even get in the pool was you had to have a high this much, 35% is not high in my, or is not as high as a lot of the most

disadvantaged.

Less than 70% graduates. Now the average is really around 45% in our sample. In the sample that's actually in the experiment, the sample is much lower in these 84 schools. And then unless they tax us just like California had this kind of curriculum, we have some metric of what percentage of students were actually following that curriculum.

There was also this quality that fit. That one of the things And one of the things that was really, really hard to get through to the staff was the staff had the structures of school and altogether. So they made us have a quality to think about based on their perception of how easy it would be to work with these individuals.

Now we tried to give it away, we tried everything we could but in the end we couldn't. So in the end these 84 schools largely were the ones they thought had the greatest fit and had the greatest. So what was left, we threw out about 50 of the schools, because the 50 schools were so far above.

There was, at least one of the criteria, they actually hadn't applied with. When a school has a 90% enrollment rate in college. It's hard to think that they have a strong need, that this program's gonna need, especially for generation. At the end of the day, we were able to basically have 111 schools that we ran the lottery through and we chose 36 of the schools.

Now, that all sounds so great I'm going to show you because and so for example one of the Lobsten said we love this program. We'll fund all your advisors, but only if you put in all different.

>> It was like, no! But from their perspective, wow, we were just able to become more sustainable.

And so, we're gonna see that there's some real non compliance issues that are gonna come up, especially after the first year, because of things like that, donors getting involved and exerting things. Now, what we tried to do to improve our power a little bit, we tried to block the schools, and we wanted to block them by a of characteristics, certain socioeconomic characteristics.

But in the end racial composition we're going to end up a little bit unbalanced here. Part of the reason we wanted to reach it is because well, when did the works because. What would happen to these 30. Exhibition, Affinity, Youth in Austin are all the schools that are basically overseeing that.

And in on the media instead of the tools. And part of the reason they wanted, by region is, they didn't want a situation where the Texan was at capacity was driving all the way across Texas for various things. So they wanted to in a way to really get some synergy's between the regions in the.

Now our data I've already kind of cursed it once. On the one hand, it's wonderful data. It's the best possible data you could have, but it's hard use the because you have to show up to Texas. Paco actually know this all too well. There is nothing like going to Texas in July

>> and More of the building that have a positive converting to radians. So I would have my luck of the building outfit, and a pair of sweats, and a t-shirt for delivering health. I lost weight there, and I project. So what I'm gonna show you, so with the data basically text.

Coordinate for a nice cooperative relationship can actually link data to other sources of data that we have. But at the same time administrative records and some of those are the best we can do. Now, the one problem you get in that administrative data is we're only tracking public school enrollments in the state of Texas.

And, the best schools, and it varies. I mean, that's ten percentage point difference between the and so that's probably the best number that I have there in terms of what our mistake is going to be. There's no reason that to think it should be asymmetric across the control group.

Although the suggests they are much more open to sending students out of state so they say so they claim there might

be something there. In terms of the numbers I'm going to show you two graduating classes. The 2014 graduating class their data is available to me on April 25th.

So if somehow I get another invitation before this marathon's over then I can show you that as well. And then the other thing that we were able to do is we tried to do these treatment surveys at treatment control schools, and it's been very hard to get compliance with the control schools since we have no leverage with them.

This last year we just put all the money that IES could give us behind this, went down there, pushed really hard, and wound up with something like 50 control schools in our entire population. So I'll show you some of those at least for the 2000 14 year where we have the best coverage.

Okay, lots of little numbers. These are the two numbers I want you to focus on. These are just trying to demonstrate the balance. And the numbers I wanna show you, as I mentioned inspirational unfortunately different from representative. And. We have a couple Hispanic population. The other thing I just wanted to show you down here, if you look at the size of the average Texas school.

The average senior class is about 160. 370 It's about 420 students. Now, part of the reason I mention that is I want you to start thinking. The hard part for the advisor is college and and so they're trying to the ones who really need the help. And so at least expectation wise this is one of the things that we thought We weren't sure what to expect in terms of what their may be.

Okay, what else do I wanna say here. This is more of a summary of what I just showed you so let's just skip it and go on to the next step. So, here's the compliance issue. We've had five who've left the program. Three of them left because and they felt like there was a problems there.

The other two I can't say. I think it's actually kind of fit issues, whereas the school and the administration they started working together, they've realized that they're just incompatible with each other. The problem is that of our 75 control schools, 9 of them have actually joined the program.

Now, some of those are the City of Austin coming in. One of them was a donor in those of the female do you know the star? What's the there? It's like this truck stop. It's like the size of a. Or an institution but during an this is a similar environment where we actually kind of force.

>> Which I am so appreciative.

>> So our guess is that the treatment I've treated would our estimates would be about higher based on our compliance rates. I'm not gonna show you those. I'm gonna show you the intent to treat, but that's what we think would happen. Okay, so let me walk through and show you some of the main events.

In the very first one here. Module 1 here is where I want to focus your attention to. In 2012, the very first year But by the next year it actually got. If you average it out it somewhere around percentage points. And it loses its significance. It kind of flirts with different models.

But the number we do this around 2%, but it's fragile. And it disappears. And one of the one and half percentage points. In particular the two year cycle, you actually see more and more of this happening there than the four years. And so, in terms of overall impact, what, is it somewhere around but it's fragile.

When you pull the data in, it's, it almost looks like there's something going on in between here, not much else going on here. Now, that's in the overall population, but as I mentioned, these are large schools. So when you look at the schools, that's where some of the action actually comes up a little bit more.

So for example, the populations that we do hear from, we want to actually have a significant impact there. 2 1/2 to 3% increase. Population as well we actually didn't find anything your country looks like it's positive so that the interaction with America could go either way. And then, in terms of our population, once you've actually we don't find much.

What we do find is that basically for males, we're actually seeing somebody that looks like a program actually works. I'll come back and we can talk to you a little bit more about what we think is happening. And this bottom panel, I mean, it I would go back to the original exposition.

If you look at the Hispanic one, the hispanic one sticks around no matter what we do. The low income one sticks around, but it's really located in the four year sector. So we see it's kind of. That interaction kind of negates it altogether.. If there is any action, it's happening in the two year sector there, but that's all we have.

So just a summary of the results, more likely to enroll Impact on Hispanic students. Those are kind of our big two subgroups we're seeing. The African American students, maybe less likely, but there's not a very big story here. And also, we're not getting much in terms of the female students.

Relative to those, the kind of differential effect here, that we have in a slide. And what I think is most interesting are the points here. So let me go ahead and talk about the survey. So we did the survey I mentioned. We had I think it was 42 control schools who actually did the practice.

50 schools said they would do it. 42 complied with it. And then basically in our treatment schools, we have 36. One of the things that happened was to do additional lottery. So our lottery table is 36 in our first year. But if you have five more schools through additional lotteries.

Now in those schools, I'm gonna only show you the results for the seniors. It looks pretty good, except for, just like we said, the kind of balance between Hispanics and African-Americans. We replicate that in our survey data. In terms of the numbers, why do I have the same bullet points over and over?

That's smart. Here's kind of I'm just gonna give you the kind of appearance of our numbers. So the first is the first one's kind of a saga. And NASA, what they want to do, they said, oh, the students were and education, the less likely. To me they're actually very similar.

But then when you get into the harder applications. Or the harder outcomes like how many applications that you submit. You just take these exams, did you file the FAFSA or are you about to finish it. And those, Those are self reported. One thing I found was interesting, was more like in there do this.

Did this last one which I mentioned in the very beginning I said it's a single bullet point but it's actually a very important one. One of the things when you really pass that and really talk about they seem to have trouble talking to the neighbors but when you see it as a significant drop in the likelihood that the cop is appearing in time there and it would especially for high school counselors have you know go in there and here it was really interesting that terminated every time work instance was how time for school.

But then was also about the schools sort to say the significant shift and they were advising our schools any other schools and when it at least identify some of the but at least from the school's perspective, in terms of programming as a complement and if you think about the combination of those types the fact that less use of the high school counselors as a resource, so the kinda business as usual.

This isn't even becoming an add on, it's becoming a replacement. So, this is my last slide. I don't think given the size some of the concerns I had about defiant and the substitutability. It's not surprising there's not big enough x but at least on the marginal suits it looks like something's happening there and we do have these kinds of consistent results across the and the Hispanic population in Texas.

This Really complimentary, I think it becomes part of the story in terms of as we start to think of these holistic programs. How do these holistic programs really interface in a meaningful way at school and are we just basically subsidizing the school to divert attention? Now I want to be sensitive to high school counselors, I mean.

To cover that. Whereas in the treatment schools, we don't know how the counselors are spending the time that they

now have free. If they're spending their time in some productive way. It could be that it's generating impacts, but we don't have the metrics on those, to see exactly what those are doing now that we have extra time.

In the worst case scenario, you can imagine that if we're subsidizing just taking on less work, and their satisfaction goes up but, I'm not sure that that's why they we're clogged up in the first place. So, other stuff we have to do, we have some work to do on the cost benefit analysis, we've got good information in terms of all of the costs.

As we're trying to think through it exactly what those benefits are and get a metric. The I think the one here I would put here as future work is just the hardest thing in this entire research I need to understand this and then you say, oh well I can't go back to because this time and I can't do that variable until this time and so basically this is why the ultimate like six month project.

And they again, and summer you know. So

>> I am Ann Stevens the director of the Center for Poverty Research at UC Davis and I want to thank you for listening. The center is one of three federally designated poverty research centers in the United States. Our mission is to facilitate non partisan academic on domestic poverty.

To disseminate this research and to train the next generation of poverty scholars. Core funding comes from the US Department of Health and Human Services. For more information about the center, visit us online at poverty.usdavis.edu.