Hitting the Ground Running? Strengthening the Initial Experiences of Community College Students

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Panelists:
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Abstract: Most entering community college students struggle academically and are often unprepared for the challenges of higher education. These students enter a system that assesses their abilities and then determines placements into services designed to raise their academic skills. The assessments often do a poor job of: (a) identifying students in need of assistance and (b) determining the specific support required. Research suggests that the standard remediation program is not effective in raising skills to an appropriate college level. The members of this panel, drawing on research carried out by the IES funded National Center for Postsecondary Research, will share their experience with:
(1) The validity of current widely used assessments and analysis of the use of more comprehensive assessment systems that also use high school GPA,
(2) How RCTs of learning communities for remedial students in community colleges may inform the process of reforming the structure and delivery of remediation, and
(3) How RCTs of Summer Bridge programs for recent high school graduates can develop policies and practices to reduce the need for remediation in college.
The discussion will draw on the current knowledge base and explore directions for further research and practice.