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Articulation, transfer, and student choice in a binary post-secondary system

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**Abstract**

This paper investigates the intersection of system articulation, transfer, and the choices that secondary school students make when they apply to college and university. The investigation is based on the results of a study that was undertaken to determine factors that influence choices that secondary school students make between enrolling in community college or university, and in particular whether or not those choices are affected by the degree of 'articulation' within a public system of post-secondary education. There are several studies that have emerged recently in the United States and Canada that examine factors that influence the choice of university and 4-year college. There are a few studies that examine the choice of community and 2-year college. None, however, either in Canada or in the United States, has sought to examine 'college choice' comparatively among students who apply to baccalaureate (4-year colleges and universities) and sub-baccalaureate (community colleges) programs. This study examines college choice on the basis of two series of longitudinal surveys conducted in the province of Ontario since the late 1980s, and on a series of surveys and interviews of students, parents and guidance counselors in six secondary schools, each with a different

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student population, since 2004. The third study?called the ?college choice? project?tracked secondary school students as they made decisions about attending college or university, and as they finally selected the institutions that they would attend. The study concludes that greater conventional articulation will not significantly affect rates of transfer, that for most students plans to transfer develop after they enter college and are not a major factor in their initial ?choice,? that the rate of transfer is highly dependent on the corresponding arrays of programs at colleges and universities, and that articulation might better be thought of as a subset of other basic forms of inter-institutional cooperation. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Lang, Daniel W., E-Mail: [dan.lang@utoronto.ca](mailto:dan.lang@utoronto.ca)