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The immigrant's university : a study of academic performance and the experiences of recent immigrant groups at the University of California / John Aubrey Douglass and Gregg Thomson

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Abstract

One of the major characteristics of globalization is the large influx of immigrant groups moving largely from underdeveloped regions to developed economies. California offers one of the most robust examples of a large-scale, postmodern demographic transition that includes a great racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of immigrant groups, many of which place a high value on education. As a window into a larger global phenomenon, this study looks at immigrant student participation in the University of California (UC) ? one of the largest research universities systems in the world, chartered and subsidized by a state with the largest immigrant population in the US. We provide an initial exploration of the dynamics of race and ethnicity, major, and the differing socioeconomic backgrounds of immigrant students, and in comparison to ?native? students. Utilizing data from the Student Experience in the Research University Survey of the UC's students, we show that more than half the undergraduate students in the UC system have at least one parent that is an immigrant. The

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ratio is even higher at UC Berkeley. Among the major conclusions offered in this study: there are a complex set of differences between various 'generations' of immigrant students that fit earlier historical waves of immigrant groups to the United States; the startling number and range of students from different ethnic, racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds points to the need for an expanded notion of diversity beyond older racial and ethnic paradigms; and while there are growing numbers of immigrant students at Berkeley from different parts of the world, and often from lower-income families, there is a high correlation with their socioeconomic capital, described as a variety of factors, but most prominently the education level of their parents and family. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)