



Bridging the Higher Education Divide

The Century Foundation Task Force on Preventing Community Colleges from Becoming Separate and Unequal

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Education has always been a key driver in our nation's struggle to promote social mobility and widen the circle of people who can enjoy the American Dream. No set of educational institutions better embodies the promise of equal

opportunity than community colleges. Two-year colleges have opened the doors of higher education for low-income and working-class students as never before, and yet, community colleges often lack the resources to provide the conditions for student success. Furthermore, there is a growing racial and economic stratification between two- and four-year colleges, producing harmful consequences.

Bridging the Higher Education Divide faces those grave realities in unblinking fashion. Led by co-chairs Anthony Marx, the president of the New York Public Library and former president of Amherst College, and Eduardo Padron, the president of Miami Dade College, the task force recommends ways to reduce the racial and economic stratification and create new outcomes-based funding in higher education, with a much greater emphasis on providing additional public supports based on student needs.

The report also contains three background papers:

- "Community Colleges in Context: Exploring Financing of Two- and Four-Year Institutions" by Sandy Baum of George Washington University and Charles Kurose, an independent consultant for the College Board
- "School Integration and the Open Door Philosophy: Rethinking the Economic and Racial Composition of Community Colleges" by Sara Goldrick-Rab and Peter Kinsley of the University of Wisconsin–Madison
- "The Role of the Race, Income, and Funding on Student Success: An Institutional-Level Analysis of California Community Colleges" by Tatiana Melguizo and Holly Kosiewicz of the University of Southern California.

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