RESULTS THUS FAR AND THE ROAD AHEAD

A FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON CUNY ACCELERATED STUDY IN ASSOCIATE PROGRAMS (ASAP)

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ASAP
ACCELERATED STUDY IN ASSOCIATE PROGRAMS

NYC
Center for Economic Opportunity

Front Cover (left to right):

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current Baruch College student.

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current Baruch College student.

Stephanie Jerome
Queensborough Community College, class of 2012,
current Baruch College student.

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Hostos Community College, class of 2010,
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, class of 2012.

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ACCELERATED STUDY IN ASSOCIATE PROGRAMS

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THE CENTER FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

When the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) issued its call to City agencies for new initiatives to fight poverty, Chancellor Goldstein and his team offered ASAP. In developing ASAP, CUNY took on the critical issue of increasing community college graduation and ASAP represents the best thinking about how to remove the barriers students face.

CUNY ASAP embodies many of the goals we at CEO hold most dear: it is a pilot that addresses a serious national issue, it has been implemented with creativity and rigor, staff and University leadership are deeply committed to evaluating and learning from the program, and when it showed strong results, CUNY made a serious financial and institutional commitment to its expansion.

CEO is honored to support CUNY ASAP and proud of its success. A college degree is all but a pre-requisite for sustained employment and economic stability, and CUNY ASAP has profoundly increased college graduation for participating students.

This report presents the accomplishments of CUNY ASAP students since 2007. It is rare that regression tables can compete with the smiles and personal stories of students, but with this work CUNY has done just that. The impacts of CUNY ASAP are remarkable.

Veronica M. White
Executive Director
New York City Center for Economic Opportunity

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) was established by Mayor Bloomberg on December 18, 2006 to implement innovative ways to reduce poverty in New York City. CEO works with City agencies to design and implement evidence-based initiatives aimed at poverty reduction, and manages an Innovation Fund through which it provides City agencies annual funding to implement such initiatives.

CEO oversees a rigorous evaluation of each program to determine which are successful in demonstrating results towards reducing poverty and increasing self-sufficiency among New Yorkers.

In 2010, CEO received a Social Innovation Fund grant to replicate several of its promising programs in eight localities across the nation. In addition, in 2011 CEO was charged with overseeing the implementation and evaluation of the majority of programs within the Young Men's Initiative.

The Center is led by Executive Director Veronica White and reports directly to Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs. Along with its partner agencies, the Center will continue to put into action the recommendations that have been made by the Commission for Economic Opportunity. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/ceo.

ASAP: A CUNY SUCCESS STORY

Four years ago, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein developed a bold idea to significantly increase community college graduation rates. Community colleges are at the center of an ongoing national dialogue concerning ways to help more Americans earn a college degree in a timely manner in order to improve their economic prospects.

With generous funding from the Office of the Mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity, Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) was launched in fall 2007 with 1,132 students. The program was to be held to a high standard, with a goal of graduating 50% of the students within three years of entry, a figure far beyond what any individual college or system, either here at CUNY or nationally, had ever achieved.

The results of the program to date are nothing less than extraordinary. After three years, ASAP has exceeded its target. Actual graduation rates have been more than double those of similar CUNY students, and three times higher than the national average for urban community colleges. ASAP has now become a model of success within CUNY, and increasingly also at the national level, and has garnered significant foundation support to expand both program and evaluation capacity.

The success of ASAP is due to exceptional leadership at our community colleges, from our presidents to our provosts to our dedicated staff to our faculty. It is the staff members who administer ASAP direct services, and it is the talented faculty who teach our students. The program also receives outstanding support from the members of our Central Office of Academic Affairs ASAP team, who provide strong program leadership and administer a rigorous evaluation agenda. Most critical to ASAP success, however, is our students, who, with their intelligence, commitment, and spirit, have demonstrated that they can succeed far beyond what has been considered possible at the community college level.

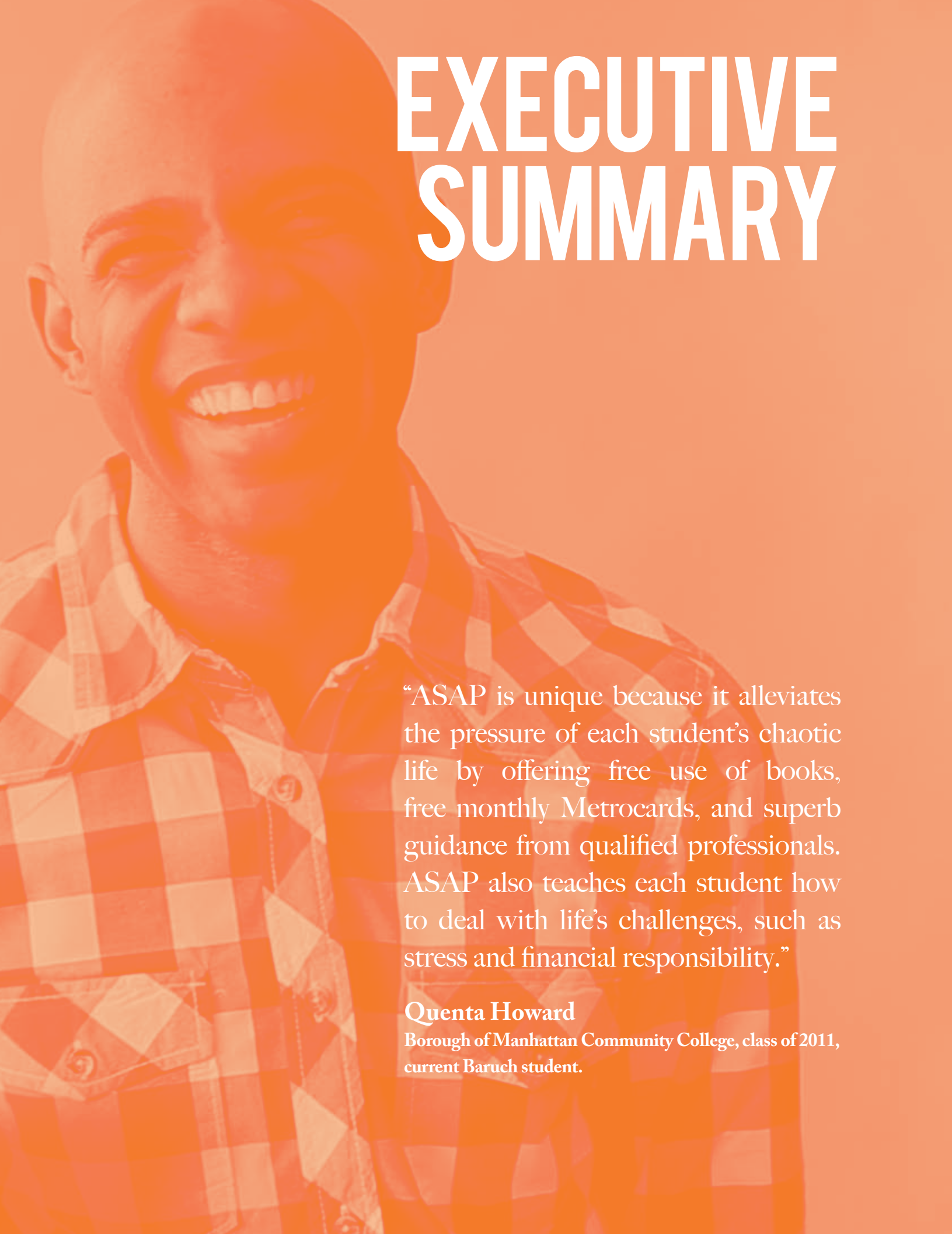
ASAP is now at the forefront of the University's efforts to improve graduation rates. Because of ASAP's outstanding success, Chancellor Goldstein recently announced a plan to scale up the program to over 4,000 students--three times its current size--by 2014. ASAP's expansion will ensure that more students who come to our community colleges will actually realize their dreams, earning a degree in order to move on to future education opportunities and/or to enter the workforce with increased earning potential.

We are delighted to share in this comprehensive report the details about ASAP program design, student experience, and our evaluation outcomes. We extend our deepest thanks to our partners at the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity. Their support of ASAP has been steadfast and strong, and they have never waivered in their belief that ASAP would improve the degree attainment rates of our community college students.

Alexandra W. Logue
Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost
City University of New York

John Mogulescu
Senior University Dean for Academic Affairs and Dean of the School of Professional Studies
City University of New York

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



"ASAP is unique because it alleviates the pressure of each student's chaotic life by offering free use of books, free monthly Metrocards, and superb guidance from qualified professionals. ASAP also teaches each student how to deal with life's challenges, such as stress and financial responsibility."

Quenta Howard
Borough of Manhattan Community College, class of 2011, current Baruch student.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a follow-up to the Early Outcomes Report for City University of New York (CUNY) Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) released in November 2009 by CUNY and the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO). The 2009 report provided two-year outcomes for the original fall 2007 cohort, descriptions of the ASAP program design, financial incentives, services, staffing structure, a description of adjustments to ASAP in 2009 to target low-income students with developmental needs, and a comprehensive overview of the ASAP evaluation agenda with a peer review by Metis Associates. This fall 2011 follow-up overview provides final three- and four-year outcomes for the fall 2007 ASAP cohort, two-year outcomes for the fall 2009 cohort, results from a regression analysis that examines predictors of two-year graduation rates, major program accomplishments, a technical appendix from Metis Associates, and updates on new ASAP developments since 2009.

Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) has proven to be one of the most successful community college programs in City University of New York's history. Created in fall 2007 with funding from the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), ASAP is designed to improve the degree attainment and future economic prospects of its participants. Nationally, community college graduation rates are shockingly low. According to data from the Institutional Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS), only 16% of urban community college students earn a degree within three years. Operating at six CUNY community colleges[1], ASAP is committed to graduating at least 50% of students within three years through provision of comprehensive support services and financial resources that remove barriers to full-time study, build student resiliency, and support degree completion.

ASAP began in fall 2007 with a cohort of 1,132 students who were deemed fully skills proficient in reading, writing, and math by program start. Approximately one third of the fall 2007 cohort were required to complete developmental coursework in the summer in order to join the program. As of September 2010, CUNY ASAP surpassed its graduation target and helped 623 students, or 55% of the fall 2007 cohort, earn an associate's degree within three years. A comparison group of similar students had a three-year graduation rate of 24.7%.

Since fall 2009, ASAP has broadened its eligibility criteria in order to see if the program can be similarly effective for less academically prepared students. New ASAP cohorts are primarily made up of low income students who require some remedial course work in the areas of reading, writing, and math. An analysis of the fall 2009 cohort (N=429) demonstrates that ASAP students are graduating at significantly higher rates than a comparison group of similar students. The two-year graduation rate for the fall 2009 ASAP cohort is 27.5%, vs. 7.2% for comparison group students.

ASAP provides several financial incentives to ensure that students can attend college full time and move towards degree completion in a timely manner. Any gap between financial aid award and tuition and fees is waived so

[1] Borough of Manhattan, Bronx, Hostos, Kingsborough, LaGuardia, and Queensborough; additionally, the ASAP program design informed the development of CUNY's New Community College (NCC), scheduled to open in fall 2012.

that there is no cost of attendance for financial aid-eligible students. All students receive free monthly New York City Transit Metrocards and free use of textbooks. Students take most of their classes in a consolidated morning, afternoon, evening, or weekend schedule to help them balance school, work, and domestic responsibilities. ASAP students take at least 12 credits each semester, making them eligible for full financial aid and positioning them for graduation within three years.

ASAP students are grouped in cohorts based on their majors (see Appendix A for list of majors). During the first year of the program, students take three to five of their classes in cohort blocks with fellow ASAP students and two to four out-of-block courses with the general college population. Students with developmental needs are required to take remedial classes immediately and continuously until fully skills proficient. Class sizes usually do not exceed 25 students, allowing for more regular interaction between students and faculty. Students also participate in the ASAP Seminar, a mandatory weekly non-credit group advisement offering. In year two, students take required classes with small groups of 5-7 ASAP students and the general college population and continue to attend the ASAP Seminar.

ASAP students meet with an advisor at least twice a month. Advisors provide comprehensive academic, social, and interpersonal support and are considered one of the most valued elements of the ASAP program by students and college leadership. Frequent contact between faculty and advisors also ensures that students requiring support are referred to tutoring or counseling in a timely manner. Describing his experience in Bronx ASAP, student Miguel Mendez says, "I will never be able to repay my debt to ASAP. It offers a priceless opportunity to put your life on course and guide you on the path to accomplishing your dreams." Miguel is on the dean's list, hopes to go on to study either business or education at the baccalaureate level, and was chosen for a highly selective 2011 New York Needs You fellowship.

ASAP career and employment specialists on each campus meet with students individually, conduct career assessments, and deliver workshops on interviewing, job skills, and career planning. Students who require employment are placed in a job situation that allows them to balance school and work responsibilities. ASAP advisors and career and employment specialists work together to support students transferring to four-year colleges and/or entering the workforce as they near graduation. Steven Atkins, career specialist at Queensborough, describes ASAP staff members' commitment to students: "It is my belief that every student who enrolls in college has a unique gift and a desire to reach their goals. Students just often need help in recognizing and using their gifts, and help in figuring out how to reach their goals."

The program also provides dedicated tutoring at all colleges that includes individual and group sessions for developmental courses and college-credit courses. Students with developmental need or students identified as struggling (by faculty or course outcomes) are mandated to attend weekly tutoring. Fall 2010 Hostos ASAP student Gretcher Hernandez describes the support she received: "I really appreciate what ASAP has done for me . . . I have found extraordinary friends thanks to the ASAP classes and the tutoring time that we have shared, where, at the same time, I have obtained the necessary help to successfully deal with my classes."

Other program elements include arts and cultural programs, a student leadership program, an internship program through the Hunter College School of Social Work with graduate social work students placed at select ASAP locations, a transfer scholarship, social events, and celebrations of student success, among others. ASAP staff members also conduct targeted recruitment and help students apply for competitive opportunity programs such as Kaplan Scholars and New York Needs You.

The ASAP evaluation agenda consists of internal and external components. Internal evaluation efforts, which are ongoing and the focus of this report, include quantitative and qualitative data analysis conducted by dedicated ASAP research and evaluation staff within the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs. Surveys, focus groups, and student-advisor meeting data are also collected and used to evaluate student satisfaction and program implementation. ASAP internal evaluation includes a constructed comparison group methodology using administrative data from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) as well as data collected from all ASAP college programs. Data is regularly reviewed by ASAP staff within CUNY Academic Affairs and from participating colleges to consider any needed adjustments to program services to improve student success. Data is also examined by CUNY OIRA, the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), and CEO's external evaluator, Metis Associates, to help refine approaches.

ASAP is currently involved in a random assignment study led by MDRC that commenced in spring 2010. A total of 900 low-income students with developmental education needs were recruited to participate in the study at three colleges: Borough of Manhattan, Kingsborough, and LaGuardia. Students were randomly assigned into either the program group that receives all ASAP services or the control group of regularly admitted community college students who do not receive program services. Early findings from the study reviewed internally are promising and a first report from MDRC is expected in spring 2012.

KEY ASAP INTERNAL EVALUATION FINDINGS: FALL 2007 COHORT

After Propensity Score Matching, ASAP cohort one students had an average 28.4 percentage-point higher three-year graduation rate than comparison group students. In the final matched sample, the ASAP students' three-year graduation rate was two times higher than the comparison group. In other words, for every one comparison-group student who graduated within three years, two ASAP students graduated. ASAP students were also found to have earned an average of 6.6 more credits than comparison group students by their last semester.

Aggregate three-year "successful outcomes" (defined as graduation or transfer to a four-year college), were measured using CUNY OIRA and National Student Clearinghouse data to track students at CUNY and non-CUNY institutions. The results indicate that 63.1% of ASAP students vs. 44.4% of comparison group students earned a degree or transferred to a four-year college within the first three years. When comparing graduates to non-graduates, 72.4% of ASAP graduates vs. 62.2% of comparison group graduates transferred to a four-year institution.

Of the entire ASAP fall 2007 cohort, 61.1% of ASAP students re-enrolled full-time throughout the first two years vs. 28.8% of comparison group students. Of those who re-enrolled full-time, 42.9% of ASAP students graduated within two years compared to 29.8% of comparison group students. This analysis indicates that full-time study, although a key player in increasing graduation, is not an equalizer between the two groups and suggests that other program components are contributing to the higher outcomes of ASAP students.

To explore variables that lead to two-year graduation within ASAP, a logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine the impact of various predictor variables. Predictor variables were cumulative second-year GPA, cumulative first-semester credits earned, and number of second-year ASAP advisement sessions attended. Control variables included gender, ethnicity, age, household income, college attended, admission type, high school average, and English and Math Regents scores. All three variables of interest had a positive significant impact on two-year graduation. These results suggest that as a student's GPA, credits, and number of advisement meetings increase, so does a student's probability of graduating in two years.

KEY ASAP INTERNAL EVALUATION FINDINGS: FALL 2009 COHORT

For the fall 2009 cohort, ASAP students continue to outperform fall 2008 comparison group students on all outcome variables. The fall-to-fall retention difference between these two groups is 27.6 percentage points, with 84.4% of ASAP students re-enrolling at their college of entry after one year vs. 56.9% of comparison students. Of the entire entering cohort, 76% of ASAP cohort two students and 75.1% of comparison group students entered with one or two developmental course needs based on their scores on the CUNY Assessment Test. Going into the second semester, of the re-enrolled cohort, 43.5% of ASAP students vs. 59.9% of comparison group students had outstanding developmental need. In the third semester, of the re-enrolled cohort, only 16.9% of ASAP students had remaining developmental need vs. 39.7% of comparison group students.

Analysis of two-year graduation rates by developmental need at time of entry into the program was conducted to examine differences between developmental and non-developmental students. For students who had developmental needs, 21.9% of fall 2009 ASAP students graduated within two-years vs. 5.5% of comparison group students. Of ASAP students who entered fully skills proficient, 46% graduated within two-years vs. 12.3% in the comparison group.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND NEXT STEPS

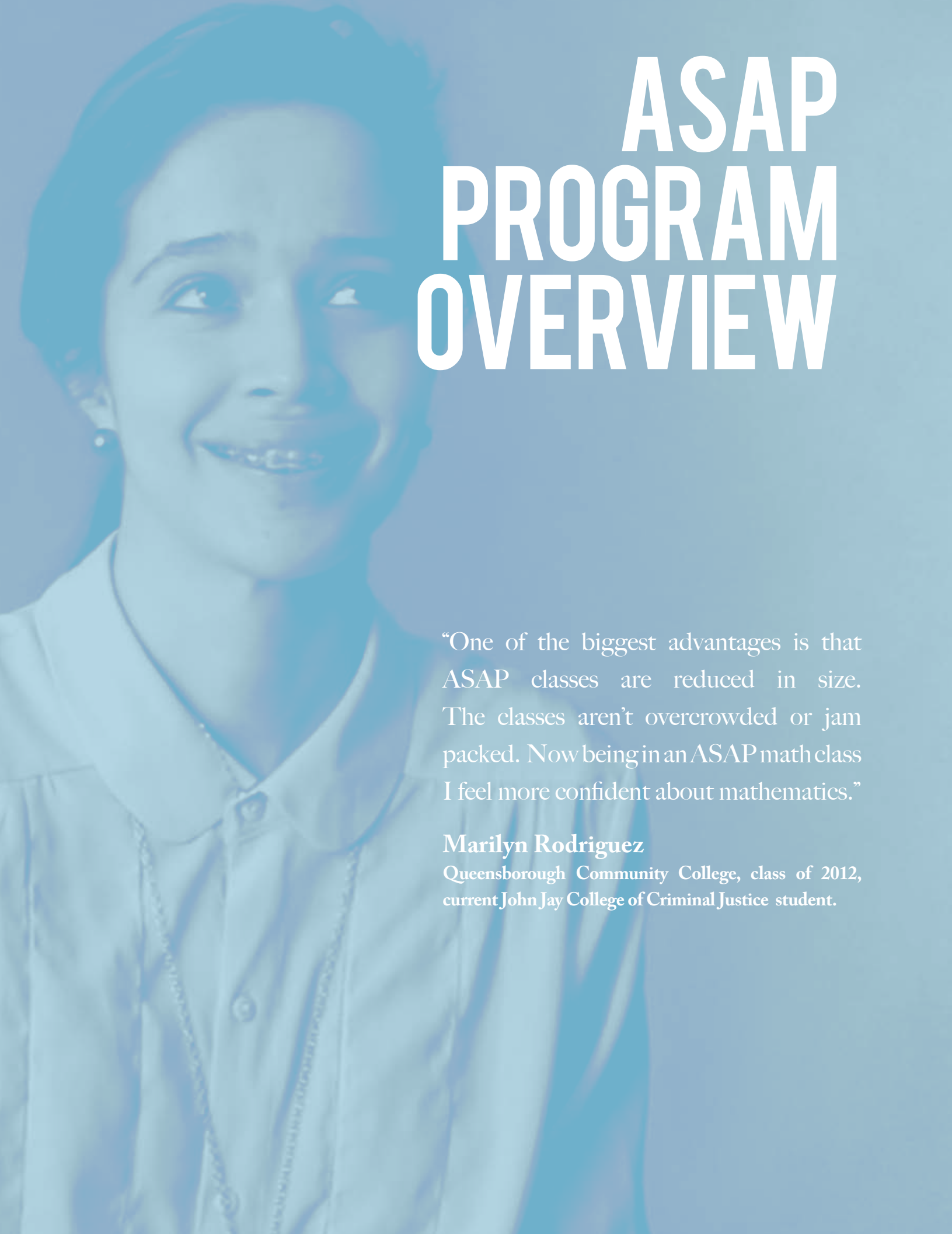
The CUNY Office of Academic Affairs (CUNY Central) raised additional funds to expand the ASAP program and evaluation capacity. In fall 2009 funding from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust and the Robin Hood Foundation supported expansion of ASAP cohorts and the launch of the random assignment study led by MDRC at three colleges. Additional funding from the Helmsley Trust and the Jewish Foundation for the Education of Women permitted creation of the ASAP Transfer Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships

and advisement support to ASAP graduates who matriculate to select CUNY senior colleges for baccalaureate study. City, Baruch, Brooklyn, Hunter, Lehman, and Queens were selected for the transfer scholarship based on transfer patterns of graduating ASAP students.

In fall 2010, based on impressive graduation outcomes, commitment to rigorous evaluation, and strong program leadership, ASAP funding was "baselined" by the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity as an ongoing allocation to CUNY's operating budget at its current annual funding level of $6.5 million. An additional award of $300,000 was also provided to pilot an evening/weekend ASAP program for working adults at Borough of Manhattan Community College.

In fall 2011, Chancellor Matthew Goldstein announced the intention to expand ASAP over the next three years with the goal of enrolling more than 4,000 students by fall 2014. The expanded ASAP program will be supported with a combination of existing ASAP city tax levy funding, university resources, and private funding to be raised by CUNY Central. Planning teams from each college and CUNY Central have formed and are engaged in a structured planning process focused on fall 2012 recruitment, summer programming, and the expansion of ASAP at each college.

CUNY Central is preparing to launch a citywide ASAP outreach campaign targeting low-income community college-bound students. Outreach efforts will include ASAP graduates who will promote the benefits of the program and support for timely completion of college enrollment steps such as skills testing and financial aid application to students. This will ensure that all prospective students, especially those with a developmental need, are well positioned to take advantage of summer course-taking opportunities. ASAP expansion efforts are supported with additional funding from the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity.



ASAP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

"One of the biggest advantages is that ASAP classes are reduced in size. The classes aren't overcrowded or jam packed. Now being in an ASAP math class I feel more confident about mathematics."

Marilyn Rodriguez
Queensborough Community College, class of 2012, current John Jay College of Criminal Justice student.

ASAP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

ASAP was created in 2007 with support from the New York City Office of the Mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), and is designed to help students earn an associate's degree as quickly as possible, with a goal of graduating 50% of students within three years. Key ASAP elements include required full-time study in cohorts in a limited number of majors[2], consolidated course schedules, small class size, comprehensive advisement, academic and career development services, and special programs to support student growth and success. ASAP provides financial incentives to remove the barriers to full-time study, including tuition waivers for financial-aid eligible students, free monthly Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Metrocards, and use of textbooks for all students.

ASAP began in 2007 with a cohort of 1,132 fully skills proficient students across CUNY's six existing community colleges: Borough of Manhattan, Bronx, Hostos, Kingsborough, LaGuardia, and Queensborough. A total of 28% of the fall 2007 cohort (N=319) were students conditionally accepted as they completed developmental course work in summer 2007 in order to join the program.

After three years, ASAP students have realized impressive outcomes that have made the program one of CUNY's great success stories and demonstrated what is possible at the community college level. As of fall 2010, three years after entry, the 2007 ASAP cohort realized a graduation rate of 55%, vs. 24.7% for a comparison group of similar students. At the national level, urban community colleges had a three-year graduation rate of 16%.[3] When transfers to four-year colleges are considered in addition to graduation rates as successful outcomes, ASAP students continue to outperform their comparison group peers, realizing a 63.1% three-year graduation or transfer rate vs. 44.4% for the comparison group.

ASAP provides a structured pathway from entry to graduation. Describing her appreciation for ASAP, Aliza Koszuk, 2011 graduate from Bronx ASAP, says, "From my first day in the program, ASAP has expanded my college experience. Though I had been away from school for many years, the program staff has assisted me in navigating my way through college." Aliza graduated from ASAP in two years and is now studying Sociology at Hunter College.

Bolstered by these success rates, in 2009 ASAP began to target low-income students in receipt of Pell or within 200% of the federal poverty guidelines who had some developmental needs based on CUNY Assessment Test scores. After two years in the program, the fall 2009 cohort, who entered with one to two developmental needs, realized a two-year graduation rate of 27.5% as of September 2011. A comparison group of similar students had a 7.2% graduation rate.

ASAP has a current enrollment of 1,300 students whose demographics mirror the population at any CUNY community college. The fall 2009 cohort demographics show that: 76% of students began the program with

[2] See Appendix A for list of ASAP majors.

[3] Source: Institutional Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS).

developmental needs; 73% are Black and Hispanic; 60% are female and 40% male; students have a mean age of 22; 56% are the first in their immediate family to graduate from college; 84% received a Pell grant with a mean family income of $26,103[4].

"They provided me with the confidence to achieve what I thought I couldn't and to challenge myself in a way I normally wouldn't."

Geizel Amadour,
LaGuardia Community College, class of 2009,
Queens College, class of 2011.

ASAP students are recruited after they have been admitted to a CUNY community college and taken the CUNY Assessment Test. ASAP staff meet with all prospective students to explain program benefits and expectations. Students with developmental needs are strongly encouraged to enroll in free summer immersion courses so that they can improve their basic skills proficiency before regular fall programming begins. Additionally, all incoming students participate in a three- to four-day summer institute designed to build rapport between students and program staff through interactive workshops led by ASAP staff and affiliated arts education partners.

Once the semester begins, students take their classes in a consolidated morning, afternoon, evening, or weekend block schedule to help them balance school, work, and domestic responsibilities. ASAP students take at least 12 credits each semester, which positions them to receive maximum financial aid benefits. Over the course of their first two semesters in the program, students take three to five classes in cohort blocks with other ASAP students. ASAP classes usually do not exceed 25 students, allowing for more frequent interaction with classmates and faculty. Students with developmental needs take their remedial courses immediately and continuously and attend tutoring until fully skills proficient. Speaking of her experience as a student in Queensborough ASAP, Marilyn Rodriquez says, "ASAP has had an enormous impact on my education. I really struggled with math; it was never a subject that I liked. But once I was placed into an ASAP mathematics class I actually began to understand the material. One of the biggest advantages is that ASAP classes are reduced in size. The classes aren't overcrowded or jam packed. Now being in an ASAP math class I feel more confident about mathematics."

ASAP's comprehensive and personalized support services foster a strong sense of community among students and staff. ASAP advisors meet twice a month with assigned students in both individual and group sessions and carry a caseload of 60-80 students. Advisors also follow up regularly with faculty about student progress to ensure that students who need additional support such as tutoring or counseling are referred in a timely manner. ASAP students overwhelmingly give strong ratings for ASAP advisement on annual surveys, in focus groups, interviews, and end-of year testimonials. The relationships that form between students and advisors extend well beyond academic support and for many students provide the encouragement they need to succeed. Geizel Amadour from LaGuardia Community College, who earned her associate's degree in two years and also just

[4] Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research.

completed her bachelor's at Queens College, calls ASAP "my family away from home. They provided me with the confidence to achieve what I thought I couldn't and to challenge myself in a way I normally wouldn't."

ASAP career and employment specialists (CES) on each campus also meet with students to discuss long-term career goals and address immediate employment needs. ASAP CES facilitate workshops, administer career assessments, and support development of interviewing, resume writing, and networking skills. Students who require employment are placed in an appropriate job situation to allow them to continue to take a full-time course load. Advisors and career and employment specialists work together to provide all students with support in transferring to a four-year college and/or entering the work force as they near graduation. Nathaniel Wheeler, an ASAP graduate from Borough of Manhattan, single father and a veteran, took immediate advantage of ASAP career services. "Through ASAP I not only have the opportunity to advance scholastically, but I also gained personally. It was at an ASAP-sponsored career fair that I acquired my current position (at Macy's in the accounting department), which now allows me to work in my field of study." Nathaniel earned his associate's degree in two years and is currently majoring in Business Administration at Brooklyn College, with an expected spring 2012 graduation.

ASAP also offers weekly seminars on common issues faced by students as they enter into and move through college. The seminars are interactive, fostering students' communication skills and confidence and addressing career, four-year college transfer and other topics. Originally developed by Kingsborough ASAP in 2007, the ASAP Seminar was adopted by all colleges in 2009. In summer 2011, the seminar was redeveloped by a professional curriculum consultant for use across ASAP colleges, and is currently completing its first semester of implementation. Seminars are led by ASAP advisors, career specialists, and guest facilitators and, like blocked courses, foster a network of peers that can support one another in their personal growth. Describing his experience at Kingsborough ASAP, 2011 graduate Jamel James says, "Everyone in ASAP helped me grow as a person, staff and students alike. Everyone played a part in my development." Jamel graduated in two years, mentored high school students, and was chosen as a 2010 New York Needs You fellow. Jamel is currently studying Public Affairs at Baruch College and hopes to go to law school.

> "Through ASAP I not only have the opportunity to advance scholastically, but I also gained personally. It was at an ASAP-sponsored career fair that I acquired my current position which now allows me to work in my field of study."
>
> **Nathaniel Wheeler,**
> Borough of Manhattan Community College, class of 2009,
> Brooklyn College, class of 2012.

ASAP also provides dedicated tutoring at all sites by qualified undergraduate or graduate students. ASAP tutors provide general subject area support and conduct regular review sessions for developmental courses and college-credit courses such as statistics or advanced chemistry. Students with developmental need or students identified

as struggling are mandated to attend weekly tutoring to help them improve their skills and their grades.

Additional special program elements include an ASAP-wide student leadership program, which involves teams of ASAP students nominated from each college who participate in a series of leadership-building workshops led by the Creative Arts Team. Leadership teams are charged with identifying an issue of importance to their ASAP and college community and creating an event or activity that addresses this issue at their home campuses. Leadership projects have included creation of an on-campus community garden, film screenings, creation of an ASAP recruitment video, and cultural events to raise awareness and resources for local charities.

Other special program features include: an internship program through the Hunter College School of Social Work with graduate social work students placed at select ASAP locations; cultural and social events; targeted recruitment and support for application to special fellowship programs such as New York Needs You and Kaplan Scholars, and a transfer scholarship for graduates who matriculate to select CUNY senior colleges, among others. Kingsborough ASAP 2011 graduate Mame Sourang says, "I believe being an ASAP student was one of the best things that has happened to me at Kingsborough Community College not only because of the resources we receive as ASAP students but also with the close relationships we have with our counselors, mentors, professors, and advisors." Mame was chosen as a Kaplan Leadership Scholar and is now pursuing her Bachelor's degree at Smith College in Anthropology.

ASAP STAFFING STRUCTURE

ASAP is administered through a coordinated effort between the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs (CUNY Central) and the six participating community colleges. CUNY Central and the College ASAP directors meet monthly and are in almost daily contact

2011 ASAP LEADERSHIP PROGRAM STUDENT TAKEAWAYS

93%–PARTICIPATING IN THE ASAP LEADERSHIP PROGRAM WAS VERY TO EXTREMELY ENJOYABLE.

97%–IMPLEMENTING AN EVENT/ACTIVITY FOR THEIR ASAP COMMUNITY WAS THEIR FAVORITE PART OF THE PROGRAM.

69%– INCREASING AWARENESS ABOUT PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND VALUES WAS TOP TAKEAWAY.

58%– BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE WAS 2ND HIGHEST TOP TAKEAWAY.

– RESPONSES FROM THE 2011 ASAP LEADERSHIP PROGRAM SURVEY

about program and evaluation matters. CUNY Central ASAP staff members visit campuses on a regular basis. The CUNY Central ASAP staff is led by a University Executive Director, who reports to the Senior University Dean for Academic Affairs. College ASAP programs are led by directors who report to Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and receive day-to-day support from college Deans of Academic Affairs. ASAP staff at each college consists of two to five advisors with an average caseload of 70 students, one career and employment specialist, one to three clerical staff members, and part-time tutors.

ADDITIONAL FUNDS RAISED

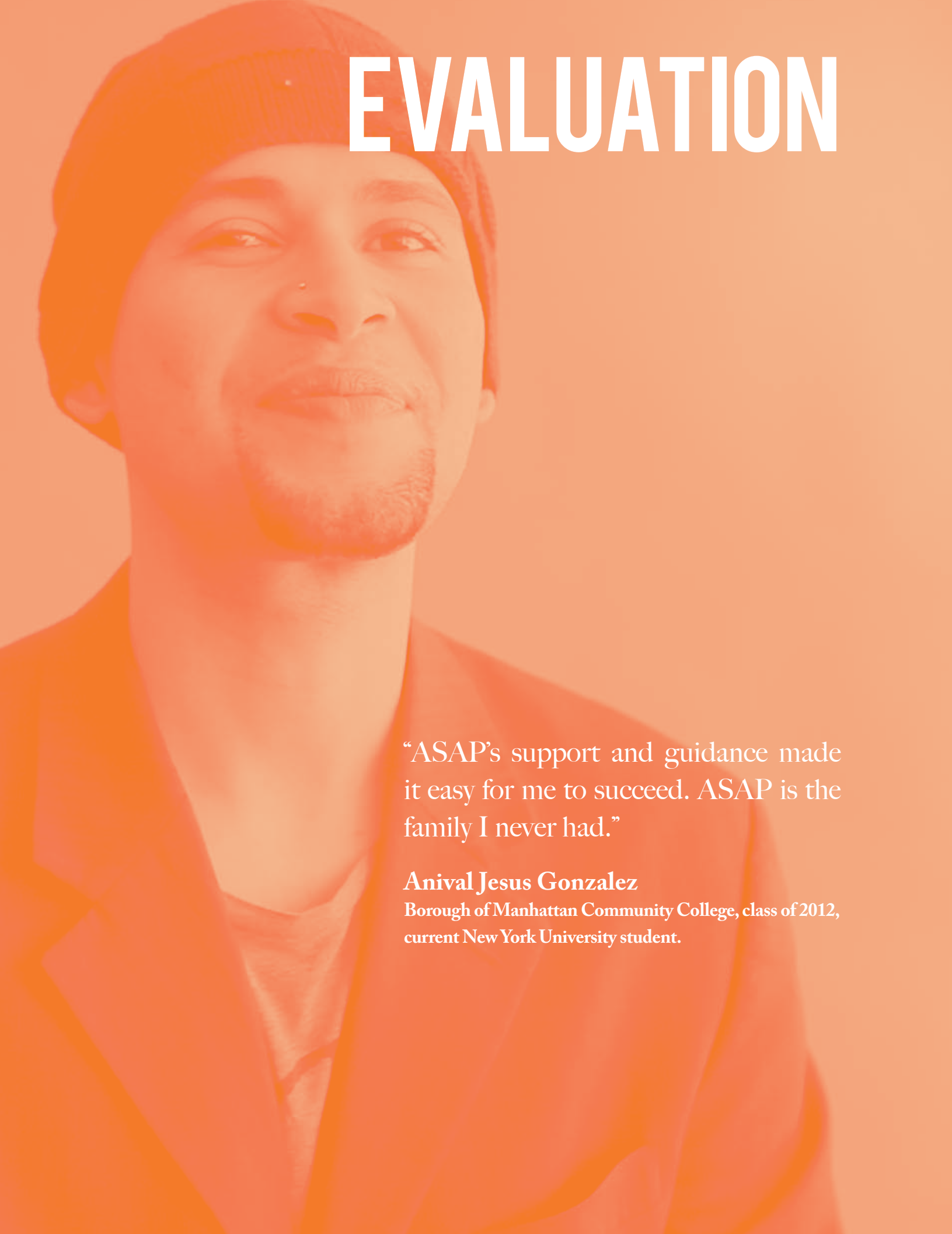
CUNY Central ASAP and the Office of Academic Affairs have raised more than $5 million since 2009 to expand the ASAP program and evaluation capacity. In June 2009, ASAP received a two-year grant for $190,000 from the Jewish Foundation for the Education of Women (JFEW) to launch the ASAP Transfer Scholarship Program. The program provides scholarships and targeted advisement for ASAP graduates with financial need who matriculate to select CUNY senior colleges: Baruch, Hunter, Queens, Brooklyn, Lehman, and City College

In August 2009 ASAP also received a three-year grant for $3.7 million from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. Helmsley Trust funds supported expansion of the program at Borough of Manhattan and Kingsborough in spring 2010, launch of the random assignment study led by MDRC, and expansion of the ASAP Transfer Scholarship Program.

In spring 2010, ASAP and MDRC received a grant for $1.1 million from the Robin Hood Foundation to support the ASAP random assignment study and to include LaGuardia Community College in the study.

In fall 2010, based on impressive outcomes to date and rigorous evaluation, ASAP funding was "baselined" as an ongoing city tax levy allocation to the University's operating budget by the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity at its current annual funding level of $6.5 million. An additional award of $300,000 was also provided to pilot an evening/weekend ASAP program for working adults at Borough of Manhattan Community College.

EVALUATION



"ASAP's support and guidance made it easy for me to succeed. ASAP is the family I never had."

Anival Jesus Gonzalez
Borough of Manhattan Community College, class of 2012, current New York University student.

ASAP EVALUATION

Since the program's inception in fall 2007, ASAP has been conducting a rigorous internal program evaluation to investigate the effects of the ASAP program on graduation, retention, academic performance, and other outcomes. The current evaluation consists of a constructed comparison group design and uses both administrative data from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA), and data collected from ASAP college staff. Additionally, surveys, focus groups, and student-advisor meeting data are collected and used to evaluate student satisfaction and program implementation. The ASAP evaluation is conducted by ASAP research and evaluation staff and all analyses are reviewed on a regular basis by CUNY OIRA leadership and the Center for Economic Opportunity's (CEO) external evaluator, Metis Associates.

To date, the ASAP program exceeded its initial target of graduating 50% of its cohort one students within three years and realized a three-year graduation rate of 55% by September 2010 compared to a 24.7% three-year graduation rate for comparison group students. The program also exceeded its expectation with the second cohort of students with 27.5% two-year graduates compared to 7.2% for comparison group students. In addition, other analyses show that ASAP cohort two students are retained at a higher rate, accumulate more credits, and earn a higher GPA than comparison group students.

ASAP is also involved in a random assignment research study led by MDRC that involves 900 students across three colleges. The preliminary results of this study, which began in spring 2010, are very promising. A first report is expected in spring 2012.

FALL 2007 ORIGINAL ASAP COHORT THREE-YEAR OUTCOMES

The evaluation of cohort one students began by creating a constructed comparison group using student-level CUNY OIRA data. The comparison group consists of students who entered CUNY in fall 2006, one year prior to the ASAP program, to attempt to control for selection bias (because the program did not exist in 2006 and students could therefore not opt out of ASAP like those who intentionally chose not to join ASAP in 2007). The 2006 identified comparison group students met the same admissions criteria that ASAP students were required to meet at the beginning of the program: enroll full-time, begin the fall semester with 12 or fewer credits, be proficient in reading, writing and math, not enroll in developmental courses, be residents of NYC, enroll in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2007, and not enroll in College Discovery.[5] This constructed comparison group was not limited to students who continued to re-enroll full-time, but was only limited to students who enrolled full-time in their first semester. There are two reasons why the comparison group could not be limited this way when it was initially constructed. Firstly, because the comparison group consists of students who entered CUNY one year prior to the ASAP program, at the time of comparison group construction, data for these students were

[5] College Discovery is an opportunity program providing similar services to ASAP for very low-income students who are also academically disadvantaged.

only available for their first year which wasn't a large enough timeframe to retroactively identify students who re-enrolled full-time for the first two years. Secondly, the current comparison group could also not be limited to only those who re-enrolled full-time because a large number of students would drop out and the retention results would be even more favorable for the ASAP group. As a result, a final comparison group of 1,791 students who were full-time in their first semester, and not necessarily thereafter, was constructed (see Appendix B for ASAP selection criteria for cohorts one and two).

Table 1 presents profiles of cohort one ASAP and fall 2006 comparison group students. The data show that both groups are fairly similar in terms of the gender breakdown. As far as race, ASAP cohort one students have slightly more minority students than the comparison group, 69% vs. 56%. Using high school data for students for whom data was available, the average SAT math and verbal scores as well as the high school GPA are almost identical for both groups. However, there are some noticeable differences between the ASAP and comparison group students, specifically on income, Pell receipt, and age, which is problematic when conducting group comparisons. As a result, propensity score matching was employed to try to mitigate these group differences in an attempt towards more reliable results.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY PROFILE OF COHORT ONE ASAP & COMPARISON GROUP STUDENTS

		FALL 2007 ASAP COHORT	FALL 2006 COMPARISON GROUP[1]
Total Enrollment	**N**	**1,132**	**1,791**
College			
Borough of Manhattan (BMCC)	%	22.0	27.7
Bronx	%	10.4	3.5
Hostos	%	7.2	2.3
Kingsborough (KBCC)	%	21.8	22.6
LaGuardia	%	18.4	16.1
QCC	%	20.1	27.8
Gender			
Male	%	45.6	46.8
Female	%	54.4	53.2
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian/Native Alaskan	%	0.2	0.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	%	10.2	15.6
Black	%	31.5	26.8
Hispanic	%	37.2	29.2
White	%	20.8	28.2
Age Group			
18 or younger	%	58.3	35.1
19 or 20	%	22.2	36.1
21 to 23	%	8.5	16.5
24 or older	%	11.0	12.3
Median Age	median	19	20
Mean Age	mean	20	21
Receiving a Pell Grant[2]	%	57.9	67.1
Admission Type			
First-Time Freshmen	%	75.3	36.9
Transfer Students	%	9.5	22.3
Continuing Students	%	15.3	40.8
SAT Score			
SAT Math	mean	447	455
SAT Verbal	mean	441	441
College Admissions Average	mean	75.4	75.2
GED Recipients	%	7.4	8.5
Household Income[3]	mean	$38,725	$26,266
1-Year Retention (college of entry)	%	80.3	59.7

[1] Fall 2006 full-time associate students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, are proficient in reading, writing and math, are not enrolled in developmental courses, are not enrolled in College Discovery, are residents of NYC, and are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2007.

[2] Based on dependent students.

[3] To calculate household income, parent income was used for dependent students, and student income for independent students.

Date: May 20, 2009

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

PROPENSITY SCORE MATCHING: GRADUATION, CREDIT ACCUMULATION, GPA, AND TRANSFER OUTCOMES

Propensity score matching is a methodology that attempts to match the most similar students from two groups, based on observable variables, to one another in order to obtain less biased group difference outcomes. This methodology is used to limit bias that is encountered when studying two groups that are not randomly assigned and therefore could have substantial group differences that could bias the outcomes of interest. The matching procedure is accomplished by calculating a predicted probability score for each subject, regardless of group participation, which indicates how likely the subject is to be in the treatment group based on demographic and previous achievement variables included in the model. This predicted probability, or propensity, value is calculated for both groups of students simultaneously and subjects with the most similar probability scores are matched and their outcomes compared. It is expected that some subjects will be dropped from the matching procedure if a suitable match is not found.

The propensity score matching method used for the ASAP three-year outcomes analysis was optimal full matching. In the initial stages of the evaluation, "greedy" matching, a one-to-one matching procedure where each ASAP student was attempted to be matched with a very similar comparison group student, was performed. This stringent procedure resulted in a 45% sample loss due to unsuitable matches. Optimal full matching, a clustering matching procedure, yielded much better results and led to a very small and acceptable 2.5% sample loss and was therefore used as the final matching method.

Table 2 summarizes the three-year cohort one outcomes using optimal full matching. Statistically significant differences between the ASAP and fall 2006 comparison group students were found on two of the three outcomes that were measured: three-year graduation and cumulative credits earned. No statistical significance was detected between the two groups on the cumulative GPA outcome, suggesting that the two groups of students performed similarly in their courses.

The results in Table 2 indicate that overall the ASAP students had an average 28.4 percentage point higher three-year graduation rate than their comparison counterparts. In the final matched sample the ASAP students' three-year graduation rate was two times higher than that of the comparison group. In other words, for every one comparison-group student who graduated within three years, two ASAP students graduated.

Another significant outcome between the two groups was cumulative credits earned through students' last semester enrolled at the college of entry. ASAP students were found to have earned an average of 6.6 more credits than comparison group students by the time they enrolled in their last semester. Both of these outcomes are very promising, as they show that ASAP students earn more credits and therefore also graduate at higher rates.

TABLE 2: THREE-YEAR OUTCOMES OF COHORT ONE ASAP AND COMPARISON GROUP STUDENTS AFTER OPTIMAL FULL MATCHING

		FALL 2007 ASAP COHORT		FALL 2006 COMPARISON GROUP		STATISTICAL MEAN DIFFERENCE
		OBSERVED MEANS				
		N*		N*		
3-year Graduation	%	1,104	54.6	1,242	26.9	28.4**
Cumulative Credits	mean	1,100	47.3	1,247	40.7	6.6**
Cumulative GPA	mean	1,092	2.50	1,225	2.46	0.03

*Sample size is based on students who are included in the analysis after optimal full matching procedure.

**Significant at .05 level

Date: May 10, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES ANALYSIS

In addition to the optimal full matching analysis, data was also analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as means and percentages, for both ASAP and comparison group students on three-year graduation and transfer outcomes. Table 3 summarizes the results. This analysis was conducted using OIRA and National Student Clearinghouse data to track student transfer rates to both CUNY and non-CUNY institutions. Results indicate that of the entire sample, 55% of ASAP students vs. 24.7% of comparison group students graduated within three years with an associate's or baccalaureate degree. Of the entire sample, 47.9% of ASAP students vs. 35.1% of comparison group students transferred to a four-year institution at some point within the first three years, with or without earning an associate's degree first. Combining these two results, an analysis is now possible to determine 'successful outcomes', which is defined as students having graduated and/or transferred within their first three years. The results indicate that 63.1% of ASAP students vs. 44.4% of comparison group students have obtained a successful outcome within the first three years.

When comparing graduates to non-graduates, 72.4% of ASAP graduates vs. 62.2% of comparison group graduates transferred to a four-year institution. However, as expected, the transfer rate for non-graduates is much lower: 17.9% for ASAP vs. 26.2% for comparison group students. All of these results suggest that ASAP students have superior three-year outcomes than comparison group students; they graduate at higher rates, have a higher three-year successful outcome rate, the graduates transfer at a higher rate, and the non-graduates transfer at a lower rate because the majority complete their associate's degree prior to transferring.

TABLE 3: THREE-YEAR SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME ANALYSIS OF ASAP COHORT ONE STUDENTS: GRADUATES AND FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE TRANSFERS

(Using CUNY and National Clearinghouse Data)

COLLEGE	COHORT	TOTAL 3-YR GRADUATES[1]		TOTAL 4-YR COLLEGE TRANSFERS[2] (GRADS AND NON-GRADS)		TOTAL 3-YR SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES[3] (TRANSFERRED OR GRADUATED)	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fall 2007 Original ASAP Cohort							
BMCC	249	135	54.2	114	45.8	154	61.8
Bronx	118	59	50.0	47	39.8	72	61.0
Hostos	82	39	47.6	27	32.9	42	51.2
KBCC	247	151	61.1	152	61.5	178	72.1
LaGuardia	208	105	50.5	88	42.3	126	60.6
Queensborough	228	134	58.8	114	50.0	142	62.3
TOTAL	1,132	623	55.0	542	47.9	714	63.1
Fall 2006 Comparison Group[4]							
BMCC	496	117	23.6	162	32.7	215	43.3
Bronx	63	11	17.5	14	22.2	21	33.3
Hostos	41	17	41.5	17	41.5	24	58.5
KBCC	404	125	30.9	163	40.3	207	51.2
LaGuardia	289	64	22.1	93	32.2	116	40.1
Queensborough	498	108	21.7	179	35.9	212	42.6
TOTAL	1,791	442	24.7	628	35.1	795	44.4

[1] Includes graduates who obtained an associate's or baccalaureate degree through the summer of their third year. Excludes six ASAP students who completed all graduation requirements except the CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) by the summer of their third year. These students were granted their associate's degree in fall 2010/winter 2011 due to the November 2010 CUNY policy change that removed the CPE as a graduation requirement.

[2] Includes all students who have attended at least one semester at a four-year institution through fall of their fourth year.

[3] Unduplicated student counts; includes students who have obtained a degree or have transferred to a four-year institution.

[4] Fall 2006 full-time associate students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, are proficient in reading, writing and math, are not enrolled in developmental courses, are residents of NYC, and are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2007.

Date: April 13, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research

GRADUATES SUBGROUP ANALYSIS

Table 4 shows graduation rates of ASAP and comparison group students by subgroups. The data indicate that ASAP students outperform comparison group students in every subgroup because ASAP students have a much higher overall graduation rate that carries over into the subgroups. However, when analyzing graduation rates within subgroups, some differences are visible between ASAP and comparison group students. The analysis indicates that although female ASAP and comparison group students both have a higher graduation rate than male students, the proportion of female to male comparison group graduates is higher than it is for ASAP students. Looking at race, a difference was found in the proportion of Black to White graduates across the ASAP and comparison group students. As was the case with gender, the graduation gap between Black and White students is larger for the comparison group.

Data also indicate that there is a difference in graduation rates by age. ASAP students who are 18 years or younger as well as those 30 years or older have an almost identical three-year graduation rate of approximately 58%. Older comparison group students, however, tend to graduate at a higher rate than comparison group students who are 18 or younger at time of enrollment, 35% vs. 27%. Pell receipt also seems to drive differential graduation rates. The graduation rate of ASAP Pell recipients vs. non-Pell recipients is very similar at approximately 55%. Comparison group Pell recipients, however, graduate at a higher rate than non-Pell recipients, 28% vs. 20%.

The final finding in subgroup analysis reveals that ASAP continuing students graduate at a slightly higher rate than ASAP first-time freshmen, 62% vs. 55%. This, however, is not the case for comparison group students where continuing students graduate at a slightly lower rate than first-time freshmen, 24% vs. 27%.

TABLE 4: THREE-YEAR GRADUATION RATE OF ASAP COHORT ONE AND COMPARISON GROUP STUDENTS BY SUBGROUPS

(Graduation Rates based on Original Cohort at College of Entry)

	ASAP (FALL 2007)[1]			COMPARISON GROUP (FALL 2006)[2]		
	ORIGINAL COHORT	ASAP 3-YR GRADUATES		ORIGINAL COHORT	COMPARISON GROUP 3-YR GRADUATES	
	N	N	%	N	N	%
Headcount	1,132	621		1,791	432	
3-Year Graduation Rate	~~	~~	54.9	~~	~~	24.1
College						
BMCC	249	131	52.6	496	114	23.0
Bronx	118	58	49.2	63	10	15.9
Hostos	82	41	50.0	41	16	39.0
KBCC	247	150	60.7	404	120	29.7
LaGuardia	208	106	51.0	289	66	22.8
Queensborough	228	135	59.2	498	106	21.3
Gender						
Male	516	249	48.3	838	156	18.6
Female	616	372	60.4	953	276	29.0
Race/Ethnicity[3]						
American Indian/Native	2	2	100.0	3	0	0.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	116	76	65.5	279	78	28.0
Black	357	171	47.9	481	86	17.9
Hispanic	421	233	55.3	523	127	24.3
White	236	139	58.9	505	141	27.9
AgeGill Sans						
18 or younger	660	377	57.1	628	172	27.4
19 to 22	315	154	48.9	878	183	20.8
23 to 29	104	59	56.7	211	51	24.2
30 or older	53	31	58.5	74	26	35.1
Pell[4]						
Receiving a Pell Grant	633	338	53.4	983	274	27.9
Not Receiving a Pell Grant	499	283	56.7	808	158	19.6
Admission Type						
First-Time Freshmen	852	472	55.4	660	176	26.7
Transfer Students	107	42	39.3	400	80	20.0
Continuing Students	173	107	61.8	731	176	24.1

[1] Excludes ASAP shadow students (students who were permitted to join ASAP in spring 2008 after shadowing the ASAP cohort in fall 2007: 11 students at Hostos, six students at Bronx, six students at Kingsborough, and 14 students at LaGuardia).

[2] Fall 2006 full-time associate students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, are proficient in reading, writing and math, are not enrolled in developmental courses, are not in College Discovery, are residents of NYC, and are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2007.

[3] Ethnicity imputed by the CUNY Office of Institutional Research for students who did not select an ethnicity or selected "other" on their CUNY application.

[4] Based on data at time of entry. For ASAP students based on fall 2007 semester and for comparison group students based on fall 2006 semester.

Date: October 4, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION OUTCOMES

Table 5 summarizes four-year CUNY-wide graduation outcomes for cohort one and comparison group students. Data indicate that 58.2% of ASAP students earn an associate's degree within four years compared to 29.7% of comparison group students. In terms of baccalaureate degrees, 4.2% of ASAP students versus 2.8% of comparison group students obtain one within four years. When looking at students who have obtained both an associate's and a baccalaureate degree data indicate that more ASAP students, 4.1% vs. 1.9% obtain both degrees. This suggests that more ASAP students obtain an associate's degree prior to moving on to their baccalaureate pursuit, whereas comparison group students are more likely to pursue their baccalaureate degree without having first obtained an associate's degree[6]. Finally, data in table 5 shows that overall 58.2% of ASAP students earn either an associate's degree or a baccalaureate degree within four years, compared to 29.7% of comparison group students.

TABLE 5: FOUR-YEAR CUNY-WIDE GRADUATION OUTCOMES[1] OF ASAP COHORT ONE STUDENTS

COLLEGE	COHORT	ASSOCIATE DEGREE RECIPIENTS		BACCALAUREATE DEGREE RECIPIENTS		ASSOCIATE AND BACCALAUREATE DEGREE RECIPIENTS		ASSOCIATE AND/OR BACCALAUREATE DEGREE RECIPIENTS[2]	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fall 2007 Original ASAP Cohort									
BMCC	249	132	53.0	7	2.8	7	2.8	132	53.0
Bronx	118	66	55.9	2	1.7	2	1.7	66	55.9
Hostos	82	43	52.4	3	3.7	3	3.7	43	52.4
KBCC	247	159	64.4	15	6.1	13	5.3	161	65.2
LaGuardia	208	119	57.2	9	4.3	9	4.3	119	57.2
Queensborough	228	140	61.4	12	5.3	12	5.3	140	61.4
TOTAL	1,132	659	58.2	48	4.2	46	4.1	661	58.4
Fall 2006 Comparison Group[3]									
BMCC	496	150	30.2	15	3.0	8	1.6	157	31.7
Bronx	63	12	19.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	19.0
Hostos	41	17	41.5	1	2.4	1	2.4	17	41.5
KBCC	404	141	34.9	13	3.2	11	2.7	143	35.4
LaGuardia	289	77	26.6	5	1.7	4	1.4	78	27.0
Queensborough	498	135	27.1	17	3.4	10	2.0	142	28.5
TOTAL	1,791	532	29.7	51	2.8	34	1.9	549	30.7

[1] Includes graduates who obtained an associate's or baccalaureate degree at a CUNY institution through the summer of their fourth year.

[2] Unduplicated count of students who have obtained any undergraduate degree (associate's or baccalaureate) within four years.

[3] Fall 2006 full-time associate students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, are proficient in reading, writing and math, are not enrolled in developmental courses, are residents of NYC, and are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2007.

Date: April 1, 2012 (Table 5 was updated to reflect final data that became available after the initial release of this report.)

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research

[6] ASAP students are advised and strongly encouraged to obtain their associate's degree prior to transferring to a four year institution.

TWO-YEAR GRADUATION OUTCOMES OF FULL-TIME RE-ENROLLED STUDENTS

ASAP requires its students to study full-time and only allows part-time study in students' last semester if they are on track to graduate or in exceptional circumstances such as medical or significant personal challenges. The comparison group was constructed using students who enrolled full-time in their first semester, but was not limited to students who continued to re-enroll full-time. Because full-time students accumulate credits more quickly, and are more likely to graduate in a shorter period of time, this analysis compared full-time ASAP students' two-year graduation rates to those of full-time comparison group students. The analysis of full-time two-year graduation rates includes students who either enrolled full-time each semester until they graduated, or who enrolled full-time for four consecutive semesters regardless of whether they graduated.

The data in Table 6 show that of the entire ASAP cohort, 61.1% re-enrolled full-time throughout the first two years vs. 28.8% of comparison group students. Of those who re-enrolled full-time, 42.5% of ASAP students graduated within two years compared to 29.8% of comparison group students. This analysis indicates that full-time study alone, although a key player in increasing graduation, is not an equalizer between the two groups and therefore suggests that other ASAP components, not only full-time study, are contributing to the higher graduation rate of ASAP students.

TABLE 6: TWO-YEAR GRADUATION RATE OF ASAP COHORT ONE STUDENTS (RE-ENROLLED FULL-TIME*)

COLLEGE	TOTAL	RE-ENROLLED FULL-TIME		2-YR GRADUATION OF FULL-TIME RE-ENROLLEES	
	N	N	%	N	%
Fall 2007 Original ASAP Cohort					
BMCC	249	152	61.0	46	30.3
Bronx	118	59	50.0	16	27.1
Hostos	82	45	54.9	18	40.0
KBCC	247	161	65.2	94	58.4
LaGuardia	208	114	54.8	54	47.4
Queensborough	228	161	70.6	66	41.0
TOTAL	1,132	692	61.1	294	42.5
Fall 2006 Comparison Group[1]					
BMCC	496	137	27.6	31	22.6
Bronx	63	10	15.9	2	20.0
Hostos	41	19	46.3	7	36.8
KBCC	404	125	30.9	53	42.4
LaGuardia	289	70	24.2	26	37.1
Queensborough	498	155	31.1	35	22.6
TOTAL	1,791	516	28.8	154	29.8

*Students who enrolled full-time (minimum of 12 equated credits) during fall and spring semesters either for four consecutive semesters, equaling two years, or through graduation.

[1] Fall 2006 full-time associate students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, are proficient in reading, writing and math, are not enrolled in developmental courses, are residents of NYC, and are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2007.

Date: October 27, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

STUDY OF TWO-YEAR GRADUATION PREDICTORS

Having learned about the successful outcomes of ASAP cohort one students, a study was designed to further explore predictors that lead to two-year graduation with the goal of learning whether any specific variables have a high(er) likelihood of predicting if an ASAP student will graduate within the first two years of entering the program. To accomplish this task, a logistic regression analysis was conducted in an attempt to determine the impact of various predictor variables on two year graduation.

Participants included in this analysis are fall 2007 ASAP cohort one students who were enrolled at the college of entry each spring and fall semester for four semesters. A sample of 761 students who met this criterion was identified. The aim of this study was to compare ASAP graduates vs. non-graduates within the identified sample to gain a better perspective of whether certain predictor variables influence the likelihood of an ASAP student graduating within two years.

The following predictor variables were included in the model: cumulative GPA at end of second year (standardized score), cumulative credits earned by end of first semester in the program, and number of ASAP advisement sessions attended during the second year (standardized score). To control for student demographic and prior academic achievement differences, the model also included the following control variables: gender, ethnicity, age, household income, college attended, admission type (whether student entered as first-time freshmen, transfer, or continuing student), high school average, and English and Math Regents scores.

Of the entire sample, 469 students had a complete record without any missing data. The remaining students had missing data on the following variables: Math Regents scores (25.5%), English Regents scores (24.3%), high school average (10.3%), and income (13.7%). Missing data for high school variables could be due to a student applying late to CUNY where transcript data did not make it into the central IRDB. Additionally, high school data may be missing for transfer students who were only required to provide a college transcript when they applied to CUNY. As far as income data, missing data is usually the result of a student not filing a FAFSA application or not completing the FAFSA verification process.

To address the issue of missing data, multiple imputation was conducted utilizing the SPSS Missing Data Package. The multiple imputation procedure in this study used all other variables that are part of the model to calculate a predicted value for each missing data point. This process was completed five separate times and five different values were obtained for every missing data point. SPSS then analyzed the complete dataset by pooling all of the results from the five separate calculations, and calculated a pooled estimate given the five separate iterations. Multiple imputation analysis allowed for the entire sample of 761 students to remain in the study.

Table 7 shows the study sample's descriptive data: 41.3% of the sample graduated within two years. 58% of the sample is female, the average age is 21, and the racial breakdown is 38% Hispanic, 29% Black, 21% White, and 12% Asian.

TABLE 7: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR LOGISTIC REGRESSION STUDY SAMPLE

	N=761	
VARIABLE	MEAN	SD
2-Year Graduation Rate	0.413	0.493
Advisement Meetings	16.3	6.9
College		
BMCC	0.213	0.410
Bronx	0.096	0.295
Hostos	0.071	0.257
KBCC	0.219	0.414
LaGuardia	0.181	0.386
QCC	0.219	0.414
Gender		
Female	0.580	0.494
Age	21	4.603
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.118	0.323
Black	0.293	0.455
Hispanic	0.380	0.486
White	0.206	0.405
Admission Type		
First-Time Freshmen	0.790	0.408
Transfer Students	0.076	0.266
Continuing Students	0.134	0.341
College Admissions Average	75.7	6.393
First-Semester Credits Earned	13.5	3.393
Cumulative GPA in last Semester	2.79	0.627
Household Income[1]	$43,732	$36,987

[1] To calculate household income, parent income was used for dependent students, and student income for independent students.

Date: October 19, 2011
Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

As seen in Table 8, the results of the logistic regression indicate that all three predictors, first semester cumulative credits, cumulative GPA, and advisor meetings during second year are significant predictors of two-year graduation. Each predictor has a positive coefficient, indicating that as each predictor's value increases (for example, as the number of first-semester credits earned increases from 10 to 14), so does the probability of graduating within two years.

TABLE 8: RESULTS OF LOGISTIC REGRESSION ON TWO-YEAR GRADUATION

	MODEL 1	MODEL 2	MODEL 3
	COEFF (STDERR)	COEFF (STDERR)	COEFF (STDERR)
Female	**0.744*** **	**0.685*** **	**0.427* **
	(0.162)	(0.165)	(0.195)
Black Student	-0.066	-0.015	0.311
	(0.237)	(0.241)	(0.294)
Hispanic Student	-0.050	-0.077	-0.009
	(0.232)	(0.235)	(0.284)
Asian Student	**0.608* **	**0.616* **	0.210
	(0.290)	(0.303)	(0.356)
Age (Centered)	-0.009	-0.012	**-0.203*** **
	(0.043)	(0.044)	(0.054)
Age (Centered Squared)	0.001	0.002	**0.008** **
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Transfer Student	0.145	0.139	0.674
	(0.322)	(0.329)	(0.397)
Continuing Student	**0.887** **	**0.993** **	**1.371*** **
	(0.267)	(0.294)	(0.357)
Father Any College Education	0.004	0.009	0.138
	(0.226)	(0.229)	(0.271)
Father Education Unknown	-0.049	-0.005	0.150
	(0.214)	(0.218)	(0.264)
Mother Any College Education	-0.153	-0.133	0.054
	(0.193)	(0.195)	(0.234)
Mother Education Unknown	0.168	0.117	-0.030
	(0.241)	(0.244)	(0.293)
Household Income (Log)	0.010	0.017	0.009
	(0.110)	(0.113)	(0.137)
Regents' English		0.000	-0.015
		(0.012)	(0.013)
Regents' Math		0.000	-0.017
		(0.012)	(0.014)
College Admissions Average		**0.037** **	-0.007
		(0.014)	(0.018)
Cumulative GPA (z)			**1.568*** **
			(0.146)
Credits Earned, Semester 1			**0.158*** **
			(0.043)
Total Advisor Meetings (z)			**0.427** **
			(0.138)
Observations	761	761	761
Pseudo R Squared	0.127	0.141	0.451

***p<0.001, ** p<0.01, *p<0.05.

Models include college fixed effects for which results are not shown above.

Omitted categories: male, white, first-time freshmen, father no college, mother no college.

Date: October 19, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

All of the significant findings are what one would expect to see, especially GPA and credit accumulation, because both indicate that students are making progress toward their degree and are performing well. The most interesting finding, however, is that there is a significant and large effect of the advisement meeting predictor on two-year graduation. Results indicate that for every standard deviation increase in advisement meetings during the second year, approximately 7 meetings above the mean of 16.3 meetings, the probability of graduating increases by 10 percentage points. In other words, students who meet with their advisors at a higher rate than the average student have a greater likelihood of graduating in two years. This finding indicates that the number of advisement meetings improves a student's likelihood of graduating within two years and therefore supports the ASAP requirement that students meet regularly with their advisor. Further testing was conducted to ensure that selection into advisement was not causing this effect. For example, were better-performing students seeking out more advisement and therefore skewing the results? If so, then it would suggest that it is not the advisement itself that is causing higher two-year graduation rates, but the type of student who selects to attend more than the minimum number of required advisement meetings.

To test whether advisement selection is contributing to this significant finding, study participants were broken down into four groups of students based on the number of meetings they have attended throughout the 2008-2009 academic year: 1-students who attended less than 10 meetings, 2-students who attended 11 to 20 meetings, 3-students who attended 21 to 30 meetings, and 4-students who attended more than 30 meetings. These four groups were then compared on demographic variables and academic performance variables to see whether there were any noticeable differences among the four groups that could be contributing to selection bias.

Table 9 demonstrates that for the most part the proportion of students in each meeting group category does not seem to differ substantially from the proportion of students in each subgroup. However, some significant group differences are noticeable in the age, household income, and credits earned in first-semester subgroups. In terms of age, it appears that older students tend to attend fewer advisor meetings than younger students. The average age of students who saw their advisor less than ten times is 22, and the average age of those who saw their advisor more than 30 times is 20.

Household income and credits earned in the first semester have a significant negative correlation with number of meetings attended. For both income and credits earned variables, the data unexpectedly indicate that as family income and number of credits increase, the number of advisor meetings decrease. This is an unanticipated finding, as one would expect higher-income and better-performing students to seek out their advisors more frequently. Instead, the data reveals that students who are at a higher risk of failure based on family income and academic performance actually see their advisor more often. Therefore, the concern that higher-performing students with more resources might select into more advisement sessions was alleviated.

TABLE 9: NUMBER OF ADVISEMENT MEETINGS ATTENDED IN SECOND YEAR BY SUBGROUPS

	LESS THAN 10 MEETINGS	11 TO 20 MEETINGS	21 TO 30 MEETING	MORE THAN 30 MEETINGS
SAMPLE AVERAGE	***20.6%***	***55.2%***	***20.5%***	***3.7%***
Female	17.0%	58.3%	21.3%	3.4%
Male	25.6%	50.9%	19.4%	4.1%
Asian	21.1%	61.1%	15.6%	2.2%
Black	17.0%	48.0%	27.8%	7.2%
Hispanic	19.7%	57.4%	19.7%	3.1%
White	27.4%	57.3%	14.6%	0.6%
Age*	22	21	21	20
First-time Freshmen	20.5%	55.7%	19.6%	4.2%
Transfer Students	29.3%	50.0%	19.0%	1.7%
Continuing Students	16.7%	54.9%	26.5%	2.0%
Father No College	21.4%	55.8%	19.2%	3.6%
Father Any College Education	23.2%	52.9%	22.5%	1.4%
Father Education Unknown	18.1%	55.6%	21.2%	5.0%
Mother No College	21.9%	51.6%	22.8%	3.7%
Mother Any College Education	19.7%	56.0%	20.9%	3.4%
Mother Education Unknown	19.3%	61.4%	15.3%	4.0%
Household Income*	47,028	44,004	41,597	32,779
Regents' English Score	79.2	77.7	77.1	78.9
Regents' Math Score	74.8	75.9	76.1	74.7
College Admissions Average	75.9	75.8	75.3	74.6
Cumulative GPA	2.86	2.78	2.73	2.75
Credits Earned, Semester 1*	15.1	13.6	11.9	12.3

*p<.05

Date: October 19, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

FALL 2009 ASAP COHORT TWO: TWO-YEAR OUTCOMES

The evaluation of cohort two ASAP students began very similarly to that of cohort one. A group of students who entered CUNY community colleges one year prior to ASAP cohort two students in fall 2008, and who met the same criteria as ASAP students, were identified as comparison group students. Identifying a group of students who entered one year prior to the cohort two ASAP group was done to attempt to control for selection bias, just as with cohort one students. ASAP cohort two students differed slightly from cohort one students in that they had to meet the following income and developmental need criteria: receipt of Pell or adjusted gross family income within 200% of the federal poverty guidelines, and have at least one but no more than two developmental course needs based on scores on the CUNY Assessment Test (see Appendix B for ASAP selection criteria for cohorts one and two). A comparison group of 1,510 students was obtained using the same criteria that ASAP cohort two students had to meet. Table 10 summarizes the demographic profile of cohort two and fall 2008 comparison group students.

TABLE 10: SUMMARY PROFILE OF COHORT TWO ASAP AND COMPARISON GROUP STUDENTS

		FALL 2009 ASAP COHORT	FALL 2008 COMPARISON GROUP *
Total Enrollment	N	429	1,510
Gender			
Male	%	40.1	38.1
Female	%	59.9	61.9
Ethnicity			
American Indian/Native Alaskan	%	0.2	0.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	%	9.8	16.8
Black	%	35.4	27.6
Hispanic	%	37.5	41.2
White	%	17.0	13.9
Age Group			
18 or younger	%	41.0	33.2
19	%	18.2	17.8
20 to 22	%	18.4	25.8
23 to 29	%	13.1	15.7
30 or older	%	9.3	7.5
MEAN AGE	MEAN	22	21
Admission Type			
First-time Freshmen	%	69.5	50.5
Transfer Students	%	7.0	17.5
Continuing Students	%	23.5	32.0
Developmental Students[1]	%	76.7	75.8
Pell Receipt	%	84.6	90.5
Household Income			
Dependent Students[2]	mean	26,103	26,042
Independent Students	mean	13,050	11,832

*Fall 2008 associate degree seeking full-time students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits requiring remediation in at least one subject area but no more than two, who are residents of NYC, are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2009, and are not enrolled in College Discovery.

[1] Students who required developmental coursework at time of entry.

[2] Dependent students, in most cases, are students who are less than 24 years of age on or before December 31st of the award year, are undergraduate students, are not married, do not have children or dependents other than a spouse for whom the student provides more than half support , are not orphans (i.e. both parents are deceased) or are not ward/dependent of the court, or a ward/dependent of the court until age 18, are not serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for other than training purposes, are not veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.
Source: http://www.nasfaa.org

Date: July 22, 2010

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

The majority of ASAP cohort two students are female and mostly traditional students who entered the program at 19 years of age or younger. The cohort consists of 38% Hispanic, 35% Black, 17% White, and 10% Asian students. When comparing the two groups' profiles, they are fairly similar to one another. A few small differences are noticeable in the admission type variable, where ASAP cohort two has more first-time freshmen and fewer transfer and continuing students than the comparison group. ASAP students also have a slightly lower Pell receipt rate, 84.6% vs. 90.5% for the comparison group, and a slightly higher household income for independent students.

RETENTION ANALYSIS

Table 11 represents retention data for four semesters for ASAP cohort two and comparison group students. The table shows that the fall-to-spring retention of ASAP students is eight percentage points higher than it is for the fall 2008 comparison group. The difference in fall-to-fall retention between these two groups increases to 17.5 percentage points, with 84.4% of ASAP students who re-enrolled at the college of entry being retained vs. 66.9% of comparison students. Fourth-semester retention between the two groups differs by 18.5 percentage points for a fourth-semester retention rate of 77.6% for ASAP and 59.1% for comparison group students.

TABLE 11: RETENTION OF COHORT TWO ASAP STUDENTS: RE-ENROLLED IN COLLEGE OF ENTRY*

ASAP COHORT 2 (FALL 2009)							
COLLEGE	TOTAL	RE-ENROLLED IN SPRING 2010		RE-ENROLLED IN FALL 2010		RE-ENROLLED IN SPRING 2011	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fall 2009 ASAP Cohort 2 Group							
BMCC	59	58	98.3	49	83.1	44	74.6
Bronx	52	47	90.4	43	82.7	38	73.1
Hostos	58	52	89.7	47	81.0	46	79.3
KBCC	108	104	96.3	89	82.4	81	75.0
LaGuardia	100	91	91.0	88	88.0	84	84.0
Queensborough	52	51	98.1	46	88.5	40	76.9
Total	429	403	93.9	362	84.4	333	77.6
Fall 2008 Comparison Group**							
BMCC	426	377	88.5	271	63.6	244	57.3
Bronx	76	67	88.2	54	71.1	43	56.6
Hostos	140	119	85.0	90	64.3	86	61.4
KBCC	302	258	85.4	203	67.2	180	59.6
LaGuardia	348	303	87.1	248	71.3	225	64.7
Queensborough	218	172	78.9	144	66.1	115	52.8
Total	1,510	1,296	85.8	1,010	66.9	893	59.1

*Original ASAP cohort students who enrolled in ASAP in fall 2009 and re-enrolled in college of entry and not necessarily ASAP.

**Fall 2008 associate degree seeking full-time students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, who are residents of NYC, are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2009, and are not enrolled in College Discovery. Similar to ASAP cohort two students, 76% of the comparison group students entered fall 2008 requiring remediation in at least one subject area but in no more than two.

Date: September 12, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Table 12 summarizes third-semester academic performance, credits earned, and GPA of ASAP cohort two and comparison group students. The data show that ASAP students on average attempted two more credits, and have on average completed and earned one and a half more credits in their third semester than comparison group students. This is the case when all students are included in the analysis as well as when students who did not complete any course with a grade that contributes to GPA are excluded from the analysis. ASAP students' third-semester GPA is only slightly higher than that of comparison group students, 2.47 vs. 2.43. When looking at cumulative outcomes, ASAP students earned three more cumulative credits than comparison group students, and their cumulative GPA is slightly higher, 2.66 vs. 2.60.

TABLE 12: FALL 2010 SEMESTER PERFORMANCE OF ASAP COHORT TWO STUDENTS: RE-ENROLLED IN COLLEGE OF ENTRY*

COLLEGE	TOTAL	CREDITS ATTEMPTED		CREDITS EARNED (ALL)		CREDITS EARNED (COMPLETERS)**		SEMESTER GPA		CUM. CREDITS EARNED	CUM GPA
	N	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	Mean	Mean
Fall 2009 ASAP Cohort Two											
BMCC	49	49	13.9	49	9.2	46	9.8	46	2.48	31	2.59
Bronx	43	43	13.3	43	10.7	41	11.2	41	2.48	33	2.68
Hostos	47	47	13.1	47	10.7	45	11.1	45	2.46	42	2.57
KBCC	89	89	18.3	89	14.1	87	14.5	87	2.46	41	2.75
LaGuardia	88	88	16.2	88	12.8	87	12.9	87	2.65	34	2.74
Queensborough	46	46	14.1	46	9.8	45	10.1	45	2.15	31	2.78
Total	362	362	15.4	362	11.7	351	12.1	351	2.47	36	2.66
Fall 2008 Comparison Group* **											
BMCC	271	271	12.8	271	9.2	264	9.5	264	2.47	30	2.62
Bronx	54	54	12.2	54	8.3	53	8.3	53	2.08	27	2.25
Hostos	90	90	12.2	90	8.7	87	9.0	87	2.21	33	2.55
KBCC	203	203	15.0	203	11.7	200	11.8	200	2.61	39	2.69
LaGuardia	248	248	14.5	248	11.1	243	11.3	243	2.48	36	2.68
Queensborough	144	144	12.7	144	9.5	142	9.6	142	2.29	30	2.42
Total	1,010	1,010	13.6	1,010	10.1	989	10.3	989	2.43	33	2.60

*Original ASAP cohort students who enrolled in ASAP in fall 2009 and re-enrolled in college of entry and not necessarily ASAP in spring 2010.

**Students who officially withdrew from all courses or did not complete any courses with a grade that contributes to the GPA are excluded from the base.

***Fall 2008 associate degree seeking full-time students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, who are residents of NYC, are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2009, and are not enrolled in College Discovery. Similar to ASAP cohort 2 students, 76% of the comparison group students entered fall 2008 requiring no more than two levels of remediation in one subject area.

Date: July 12, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES

Table 13 is a summary of student re-enrollment and skills proficiency by semester. Of the entire entering cohort, 76% of ASAP students and 75.1% of comparison group students entered with at least one but no more than two developmental course needs based on their scores on the CUNY Assessment Test. Going into the second semester, of the re-enrolled cohort, 43.5% of ASAP students vs. 59.9% of comparison group students re-enrolled with developmental need. In the third semester, of the re-enrolled cohort, only 16.4% of ASAP students had remaining developmental need vs. 39.7% of comparison group students. These data demonstrate that ASAP cohort two students are completing their developmental education coursework more quickly than comparison group students.

TABLE 13: ONE-YEAR BASIC SKILLS PROFICIENCY CHANGE OF ASAP COHORT TWO AND COMPARISON GROUP STUDENTS

	FALL 2009			SPRING 2010			FALL 2010		
	ENTERING COHORT	ENTERED WITH DEVELOPMENTAL NEED(S)		RE-ENROLLED COHORT	RE-ENROLLED WITH DEVELOPMENTAL NEED(S)		RE-ENROLLED COHORT	RE-ENROLLED WITH DEVELOPMENTAL NEED(S)	
		N	%	N	N	%	N	N	%
Fall 2009 ASAP Cohort Two									
BMCC	59	53	89.8	54	28	51.9	49	10	20.4
Bronx	52	43	82.7	45	31	68.9	37	0	0.0
Hostos	58	42	72.4	52	19	36.5	45	8	17.8
KBCC	108	77	74.3	103	43	41.7	88	22	25.0
LGCC	100	73	73.0	89	29	32.6	88	14	15.9
QCC	52	38	73.1	50	21	42.0	46	4	8.7
TOTAL	429	326	76.0	393	171	43.5	353	58	16.4
Fall 2008 Comparison Group[2]									
BMCC	426	369	86.6	377	277	73.5	271	120	44.3
Bronx	76	55	72.4	67	54	80.6	54	31	57.4
Hostos	140	96	68.6	119	64	53.8	90	35	38.9
KBCC	302	217	71.9	258	150	58.1	203	95	46.8
LGCC	348	246	70.7	303	133	43.9	248	65	26.2
QCC	218	151	69.3	172	98	57.0	144	55	38.2
TOTAL	1,510	1,134	75.1	1,296	776	59.9	1,010	401	39.7

[1] Data for the ASAP group was obtained from ASAP directors at the individual colleges. Comparison group data at BMCC, Bronx, and LGCC was obtained directly from the college due to unavailable developmental workshop and test data in the Institutional Research Database.

[2] Fall 2008 associate degree seeking full-time students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits, who are residents of NYC, are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2009, and are not enrolled in College Discovery and required no more than two developmental courses.

Date: January 5, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

TWO-YEAR GRADUATION OUTCOMES

Graduation data for ASAP cohort two students demonstrate that this cohort is also graduating at an impressive rate. As seen in Table 14, 27.5% of ASAP students vs. 7.2% of comparison group students graduated with an associate's degree from the college of entry within two years. These findings are especially impressive, as they represent a group of low-income students where the majority entered the program with some developmental need. To put the graduation rate differences into a clearer perspective, the data show that for every one comparison group student who graduates, approximately four ASAP students will graduate. It is also important to point out that the two-year graduation rate of the fall 2007 ASAP cohort students who began the program fully skills proficient is only 2.5 percentage points higher than that of cohort two students who largely began the program with some developmental course need, 30%[7] vs. 27.5%.

TABLE 14: TWO-YEAR GRADUATION RATE OF ASAP COHORT TWO STUDENTS

COLLEGE	TOTAL	FALL 2010 GRADUATES1	SPRING 2011 GRADUATES		SUMMER 2011 GRADUATES		TOTAL 2-YR GRADUATES	
	N	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fall 2009 ASAP Cohort Two[1]								
BMCC	59	1	9	15.3	9	15.3	19	32.2
Bronx	52	~~	8	15.4	3	5.8	11	21.2
Hostos	58	0	16	27.6	3	5.2	19	32.8
KBCC	108	~~	16	14.8	23	21.3	39	36.1
LaGuardia	100	1	6	6.0	17	17.0	24	24.0
Queensborough	52	~~	5	9.6	1	1.9	6	11.5
TOTAL	429	2	60	14.0	56	13.1	118	27.5
COLLEGE	TOTAL	FALL 2009 GRADUATES	SPRING 2010 GRADUATES		SUMMER 2010 GRADUATES		TOTAL 2-YR GRADUATES	
	N	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fall 2008 Comparison Group[2]								
BMCC	426	2	11	2.6	10	2.3	23	5.4
Bronx	76	~~	2	2.6	~~	~~	2	2.6
Hostos	140	~~	5	3.6	1	0.7	6	4.3
KBCC	302	4	17	5.6	10	3.3	31	10.3
LaGuardia	348	9	14	4.0	14	4.0	37	10.6
Queensborough	218	2	6	2.8	1	0.5	9	4.1
TOTAL	1,510	17	55	3.6	36	2.4	108	7.2

[1]Includes graduates through winter 2011.

[2]Fall 2008 associate degree seeking full-time students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits requiring remediation in at least one subject area but no more than two, who are residents of NYC, are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2009, and are not enrolled in College Discovery.

Date: October 27, 2011
Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and CUNY ASAP participating colleges.

[7] Fall 2007 ASAP two-year graduation rate as reported in Fall 2009 ASAP Early Outcomes Report.

As seen in Table 15, when analyzing two-year graduation rates of ASAP and comparison group students by subgroups, ASAP students outperform comparison group students within each subgroup. When analyzing graduation rates for ASAP vs. comparison group separately, there are some differences between subgroups. Graduation data show that ASAP female students graduate at nearly twice the rate of male students, 34% vs. 17%. Comparison group male and female students graduate at the same rate, approximately 7%. When analyzing graduation rates by race within ASAP, we find that Black, Hispanic, and White students have roughly the same two-year graduation rate of 25% - 27.4%. Within the comparison group, however, two-year graduation rates of White students are twice that of Black and Hispanic, approximately 10% vs. 5%, leading to a wider racial gap in the comparison group. This suggests that participation in ASAP narrows the graduation gap between white and minority students.

Another difference between the two groups is the graduation rate by admission type. Although continuing students in both groups have the highest graduation rate, comparison group continuing students graduate at three times the rate of first-time freshmen, 13% vs. 4%. ASAP continuing students graduate slightly less than twice the rate of first-time freshmen, 41% vs. 23%.

TABLE 15: TWO-YEAR GRADUATION RATE OF ASAP COHORT TWO STUDENTS BY SUBGROUPS

(Graduation Rates based on Original Cohort)

	ASAP (FALL 2009)			COMPARISON GROUP (FALL 2008)[1]		
	ORIGINAL COHORT	ASAP 2-YR GRADUATES		ORIGINAL COHORT	COMPARISON GROUP 2-YR GRADUATES	
	N	N	%	N	N	%
Headcount	429	118		1,510	108	
2-Year Graduation Rate	~~	~~	27.5	~~	~~	7.2
College						
BMCC	59	19	32.2	426	23	5.4
Bronx	52	11	21.2	76	2	2.6
Hostos	58	19	32.8	140	6	4.3
KBCC	108	39	36.1	302	31	10.3
LaGuardia	100	24	24.0	348	37	10.6
Queensborough	52	6	11.5	218	9	4.1
Gender						
Male	172	30	17.4	575	41	7.1
Female	257	88	34.2	935	67	7.2
Race/Ethnicity[2]						
American Indian/Native	1	0	0.0	8	0	0.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	42	19	45.2	253	38	15.0
Black	152	38	25.0	417	21	5.0
Hispanic	161	41	25.5	622	27	4.3
White	73	20	27.4	210	22	10.5
Age[3]						
18 or younger	174	36	20.7	501	20	4.0
19 to 22	159	42	26.4	658	55	8.4
23 to 29	56	19	33.9	237	21	8.9
30 or older	40	21	52.5	114	12	10.5
Pell[3]						
Receiving a Pell Grant	365	97	26.6	1,366	105	7.7
Not Receiving a Pell Grant	64	21	32.8	144	3	2.1
Admission Type						
First-Time Freshmen	298	69	23.2	762	30	3.9
Transfer Students	30	8	26.7	264	16	6.1
Continuing Students	101	41	40.6	484	62	12.8

[1] Fall 2008 associate degree seeking full-time students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits requiring remediation in at least one subject area but no more than two, who are residents of NYC, are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2009, and are not enrolled in College Discovery.

[2] Ethnicity imputed by the CUNY Office of Institutional Research for students who did not select an ethnicity or selected "other" on their CUNY application.

[3] Based on data at time of entry. For ASAP students based on fall 2007 semester and for comparison group students based on fall 2006 semester.

Date: October 11, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

Analysis of two-year graduation rates by developmental need at time of entry into the program was conducted to examine differences between developmental and non-developmental students in ASAP and the comparison group. Table 16 shows that of the students who had developmental needs, 21.9% of ASAP students graduated within two years compared to 5.5% of comparison group students. Of ASAP students who entered fully skills proficient, 46% graduated within two years vs. 12.3% in the comparison group. This analysis indicates that the two-year graduation rate for ASAP vs. comparison group is approximately four times higher for students with developmental need, as well as for students who are fully skills proficient.

TABLE 16: TWO-YEAR GRADUATION RATE OF ASAP COHORT TWO STUDENTS BY DEVELOPMENTAL NEED AT TIME OF ENTRY

	ENTIRE ENTERING COHORT			ENTERED WITH DEVELOPMENTAL NEED			ENTERED WITHOUT DEVELOPMENTAL NEED		
COLLEGE	COHORT	TOTAL 2-YR GRADUATION		COHORT	2-YR GRADUATION		COHORT	2-YR GRADUATION	
	N	N	%	N	N	%	N	N	%
Fall 2009 ASAP Cohort Two									
BMCC	59	19	32.2	53	16	30.2	6	3	50.0
Bronx	52	11	21.2	43	8	18.6	9	3	33.3
Hostos	58	19	32.8	42	9	21.4	16	10	62.5
Kingsborough	108	39	36.1	80	25	31.3	28	14	50.0
LaGuardia	100	24	24.0	73	10	13.7	27	14	51.9
Queensborough	52	6	11.5	38	4	10.5	14	2	14.3
TOTAL	429	118	27.5	329	72	21.9	100	46	46.0
	N	N	%	N	N	%	N	N	%
Fall 2008 Comparison Group[1]									
BMCC	426	23	5.4	373	19	5.1	53	4	7.5
Bronx	76	2	2.6	55	2	3.6	21	0	0.0
Hostos	140	6	4.3	99	4	4.0	41	2	4.9
Kingsborough	302	31	10.3	220	15	6.8	82	16	19.5
LaGuardia	348	37	10.6	247	20	8.1	101	17	16.8
Queensborough	218	9	4.1	151	3	2.0	67	6	9.0
TOTAL	1,510	108	7.2	1,145	63	5.5	365	45	12.3

[1]Fall 2008 associate degree seeking full-time students who started the term with 12 or fewer credits requiring remediation in at least one subject area but no more than two, who are residents of NYC, are enrolled in majors offered to ASAP students in fall 2009, and are not enrolled in College Discovery.

Date: November 17, 2011

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF TWO-YEAR OUTCOMES

The positive findings discussed above are a good first step in demonstrating the effectiveness of the ASAP program. However, since all of the findings are based on descriptive means and percentages, a more rigorous analysis method was required to demonstrate that the results would hold after controlling for variables that might have an impact on outcomes of interest.

To that end, regression analysis was used to study whether ASAP students significantly outperform comparison group students on four measures: one-year retention, third-semester cumulative credits, third-semester cumulative GPA, and two-year graduation. Four separate regression models were run: two logistic regression models for retention and graduation outcomes, and ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models for cumulative credits and cumulative GPA outcomes. All four models contain the same main independent variable, namely whether a student is an ASAP or comparison group student, and contain the same control variables including gender, race, age, college enrollment, household income, high school average, and parental education.

Two variables out of the entire model contained missing data. Eighteen percent of all cases were missing high school data and 4% were missing income data. As was the case for cohort one, multiple imputation using the SPSS Missing Data Package was used to estimate values for the missing data points for ASAP and comparison group students. After multiple imputation, four separate regression models were run and analyzed. The results of the regression models indicate that all of the measures being studied are significant.

Regression analysis results in Table 17 show that ASAP students are retained at significantly higher rates, accumulate significantly more credits by the end of the semester, earn a significantly higher GPA, and graduate at a significantly higher rate than comparison group students. For the retention analysis, the model indicates that ASAP students have an estimated .84 probability of being retained in the third semester, compared to a .66 probability for comparison group students. Therefore, ASAP students' probability of being retained in the third semester is 17.9 percentage points higher than that of comparison group students. Similarly, in terms of two-year graduation, ASAP students have an estimated probability of .37 of obtaining an associate's degree within two years, compared to a .08 probability for comparison group students, leaving ASAP student's probability of graduating within two years as 29.3 percentage points higher than that of the comparison group students. In terms of cumulative credits earned, the regression model reveals that ASAP students earn an average of 4.4 more credits and have a .14 points higher cumulative GPA at the end of the third semester than comparison group students.[8]

These results indicate that ASAP students outperform comparison group students on all measures, with a fairly large differential on retention and graduation outcomes. The ASAP cohort two evaluation will continue for the next two years to measure three-year outcomes. Based on very promising two-year results, it is predicted that three-year outcomes for ASAP cohort two will most likely be consistent with those of the fall 2007 cohort.

[8] Probability change was calculated using the Delta-p statistic.

TABLE 17: ASAP COHORT TWO RESULTS OF REGRESSION MODELS

	MODEL 1	MODEL 2	MODEL 3	MODEL 4
	3RD SEMESTER RETENTION	3RD SEMESTER CUMULATIVE CREDITS	3RD SEMESTER CUMULATIVE GPA	TWO-YEAR GRADUATION
	COEFF (STD ERR)	COEFF (STD ERR)	COEFF (STD ERR)	COEFF (STD ERR)
Female	**0.221***	0.398	**.159*****	0.321
	(0.107)	(0.639)	(.037)	(0.167)
Black Student	-0.013	-1.612	**-0.280*****	-0.249
	(0.166)	(1.008)	(0.059)	(0.242)
Hispanic Student	0.122	-1.793	**-0.245*****	-0.291
	(0.166)	(0.999)	(0.058)	(0.250)
Asian Student	**0.751*****	**2.720***	0.106	**0.798****
	(0.207)	(1.114)	(0.065)	(0.258)
Age	0.016	0.058	**0.029*****	0.025
	(0.011)	(0.059)	(0.003)	(0.013)
First-time Freshmen	-0.122	**-8.997*****	**-0.109***	**-1.084*****
	(0.128)	(0.751)	(0.044)	(0.190)
Transfer Student	-0.461	**-4.767*****	-0.095	**-0.771****
	(0.159)	(1.020)	(0.060)	(0.260)
Father Any College Education	0.027	0.969	0.075	0.346
	(0.158)	(0.926)	(0.054)	(0.230)
Father Education Unknown	-0.199	1.125	0.019	0.154
	(0.130)	(0.809)	(0.048)	(0.211)
Mother Any College Education	0.004	-0.433	0.017	**-0.520***
	(0.132)	(0.809)	(0.047)	(0.226)
Mother Education Unknown	**0.441****	1.576	0.100	0.178
	(0.154)	(0.889)	(0.052)	(0.220)
Household Income (log)	0.040	0.504	0.019	0.138
	(0.047)	(0.284)	(0.016)	(0.079)
College Admissions Average	0.025**	**0.314*****	**0.025*****	**0.030***
	(0.009)	(0.048)	(0.003)	(0.012)
Treatment (ASAP)	**0.990*****	**4.398*****	**0.136****	**1.929*****
	(0.149)	(0.724)	(0.042)	(0.172)
Observations	1,939	1,372	1,368	1,939
R2 / Pseudo R2	0.089	0.255	.231	.238

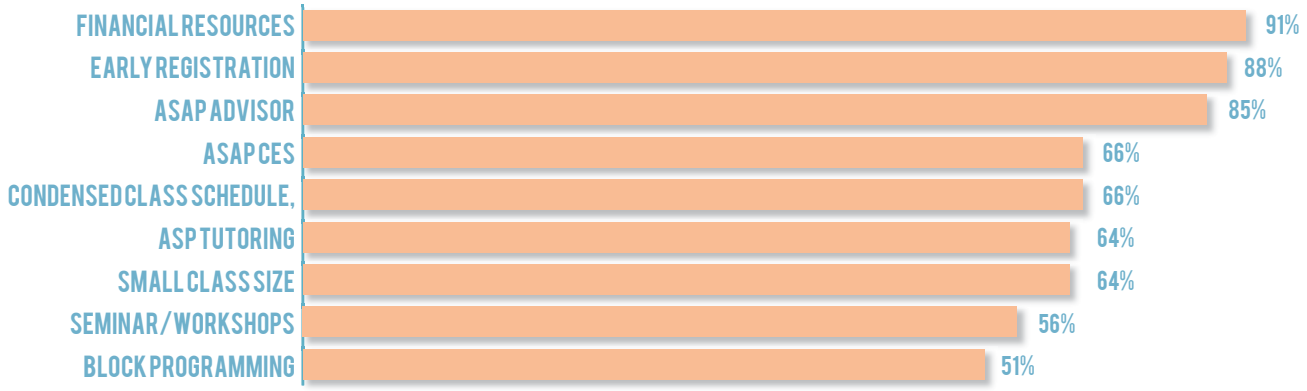
***p<0.001, ** p<0.01, *p<0.05.
Models include college fixed effects for which results are not shown above.
Omitted categories: male, white, continuing students, father no college, mother no college.

OTHER ANALYSIS:

ANNUAL SURVEY FINDINGS

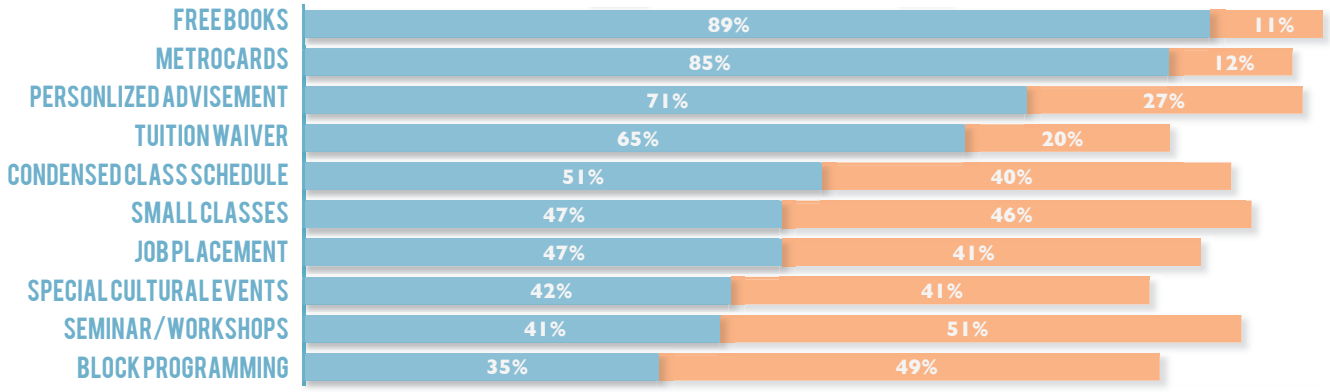
ASAP cohort two students were surveyed in their first semester and third semester to gather information about the usefulness and satisfaction with program services, student employment, and demographic information. Both surveys had a very high response rate, with approximately 90% of students completing surveys. The most recent student survey, administered in December 2010, had an 89% response rate. Key findings of the fall 2010 annual survey indicate that the top three items that students found to be 'very helpful' to their success in college were financial resources, early registration, and the ASAP advisor (see Chart 1).

CHART 1: RESOURCES "VERY HELPFUL" TO STUDENT SUCCESS IN COLLEGE



In terms of satisfaction with ASAP services, the top three selected items with which students were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' were free books, MetroCards, and personalized advisement (see Chart 2). Of all survey respondents, 83% indicated that it would have been difficult for them to attend college full-time without the ASAP program. In terms of employment, 50% specified that they work for pay. Of those working for pay, 67% indicated that they work to earn spending money, followed by 45% who work to obtain career skills, and followed by 44% who said that they work to support their family.

CHART 2: STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH ASAP SERVICES



Annual survey results were also analyzed by gender and race. In terms of gender, results indicate that more males work for pay and tend to work more hours per week. In terms of future plans and educational aspirations, slightly more female than male students plan to enroll at a four-year institution full-time after graduating and plan to obtain a higher degree within the next ten years.

When looking at racial differences, survey responses indicate that on average more Asian students work for pay than any other group. However, of those who do work for pay, Black and Hispanic students work the most hours, with 25% of the students working more than 30 hours per week. In terms of post-graduation plans, results show that Asian and White students anticipate attending college full-time at higher rates than Black and Hispanic students. Survey data also indicate that the percentage of Asian students who plan to attain a graduate or professional degree within the next ten years is the highest among all ethnicity groups, followed by Black, White, and then Hispanic students. An overview of key cohort two fall 2010 annual student survey findings and response rates can be found in Appendix D.

EXIT SURVEY FINDINGS

ASAP administered an exit survey to 164 cohort two students who were on track to graduate by September 2011. The survey was designed to gather information about students' experiences, satisfaction with the ASAP program, and to learn about their future plans. Of all students on track to graduate, 92.7% completed the survey. Key findings show that the majority of ASAP students, 93.5%, plan to enroll at a four-year institution after graduating from ASAP, and 81.3% of all students plan to work.

When asked about ASAP program services/resources that have supported their college success, the majority, 72%, chose financial resources to be the most important, followed by 19% who chose the ASAP advisor as the most important resource for their success. The vast majority of ASAP students had high praise for the program, with 98.6% of the students agreeing that they would definitely recommend ASAP to their friends and family. A summary of key cohort two spring 2011 exit survey findings can be found in Appendix E.

FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

ASAP conducted focus groups with cohort two students in spring 2010 with representation from four of the six ASAP college programs. Findings, which were similar to cohort one focus group results, reveal that cohort two students found ASAP financial resources and advisement services to be the most beneficial to their success in college. There was general consensus that not having tuition waivers, free use of textbooks, and Metrocards would have made going to college very difficult for most students and for some students, impossible. ASAP advisors were highly regarded and deemed to be essential to keep students focused and help them navigate college life. A summary of the ASAP cohort two spring 2010 focus group findings can be found in Appendix F.

TRACKING DATA ANALYSIS

ASAP also collects tracking data that documents individual advisor and career and employment specialist contact with students. All types of contact with students are documented and coded by meeting nature and action taken as a result of the meeting using a standardized data management system. Colleges submit data to CUNY Central monthly and service data reports are generated each month and aggregated each semester. Tracking data are examined closely by CUNY Central and college ASAP staff to determine whether there is sufficient intensity of service. Subgroup analysis of advisor tracking data is also conducted each semester to determine possible relationships between frequency of meetings and race, gender, and student performance.

Key findings from the fall 2010 semester tracking data indicate that 73% of ASAP students met individually with their advisors at least six times during the semester in addition to any required seminars and workshops.[9] As was the case with cohort one students, "academic issues" is the most common reason why cohort two students were seen by their advisor. There were no significant differences across the program regarding frequency of meetings based on gender, but some significant racial differences were found. Using a chi-square test, a significant difference was found at Borough of Manhattan, where White students met with their advisors at a lower rate than Asian, Black, and Hispanic students. There was also a significant difference at Kingsborough, where Black students met with their advisors far more than Hispanic students.

In terms of GPA, when looking across all six colleges, a significant positive but fairly weak relationship exists ($r = .172$, $p = .001$, $n = 342$), suggesting that the more meetings students attended, the higher their GPAs were, and vice versa. When looking at individual colleges, significant results were found at Bronx with a positive and moderate relationship ($r = .478$, $p=.003$, $n = 37$), and at LaGuardia with a positive weaker relationship ($r = .290$, $p = .006$, $n = 87$). Both findings indicate that the more meetings students attended, the higher their GPAs were, and vice versa. A summary of ASAP fall 2010 tracking data analysis can be found in Appendix G.

ASAP DATABASE

ASAP has developed a central database to warehouse all evaluation data collected from ASAP college programs. Data items collected include re-enrollment in the program, advisement, developmental course enrollment and outcomes, projected and official graduation, etc. The ASAP database was developed to standardize data input and collection for college and Central Office ASAP staff. ASAP research and evaluation staff members worked with each college program to ensure compatibility between local and central systems and to make adjustments to streamline data collection. The ASAP database will continue to be updated on an as-needed basis to meet college data needs, address unforeseen problems, and improve data collection. The long-term goal is to develop a web-based system for all ASAP college data needs.

[9] Over the 2008/09 academic year, Kingsborough ASAP advisors and career and employment specialists delivered a mandatory weekly ASAP Seminar, which was permitted to count as one monthly contact. LaGuardia piloted this model in spring 2009, and all colleges adopted the ASAP Seminar in fall 2009.

NEXT STEPS

ASAP has become a model program both in and out of CUNY based on its impressive graduation rates and rigorous evaluation. Last year, CEO designated ASAP funding, at its current level, as an ongoing allocation to CUNY's operating budget. ASAP has secured private funding from several foundations to support an ASAP random assignment study and a transfer scholarship program for graduates who matriculate to select CUNY four-year colleges.

The program is regularly cited in major publications on community colleges such as the New York Times and the Chronicle of Higher Education, at national higher education forums, and by respected funding and policy makers as a successful evidence-based program that should be considered for scaling. Most recently, Complete College America's September 2011 Time is the Enemy report cited ASAP as one of only two national models that significantly improves time to degree through a structured pathway. The Center for an Urban Future's November 2011 Mobility Makers report listed ASAP as one of CUNY's "bold reforms" addressing the issue of community college graduation rates.

In his opening remarks at the fall 2011 Re-Imagining Community Colleges National Colloquium at the CUNY Graduate Center, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein shared that "There is no better investment in our collective future than an investment in education. As we found out with the ASAP initiative, investing in innovation pays off." In October of this year, Chancellor Goldstein announced the University's intent to expand ASAP over the next three years, with the goal of enrolling approximately 4,000 students by fall 2014, beginning with a cohort of 1,500 students in fall 2012. The expanded program will operate at a lower per-student cost than did the original cohort, but will require additional funding in order to serve three times as many students. CUNY has pledged to contribute University resources or raise needed funds to realize program expansion.

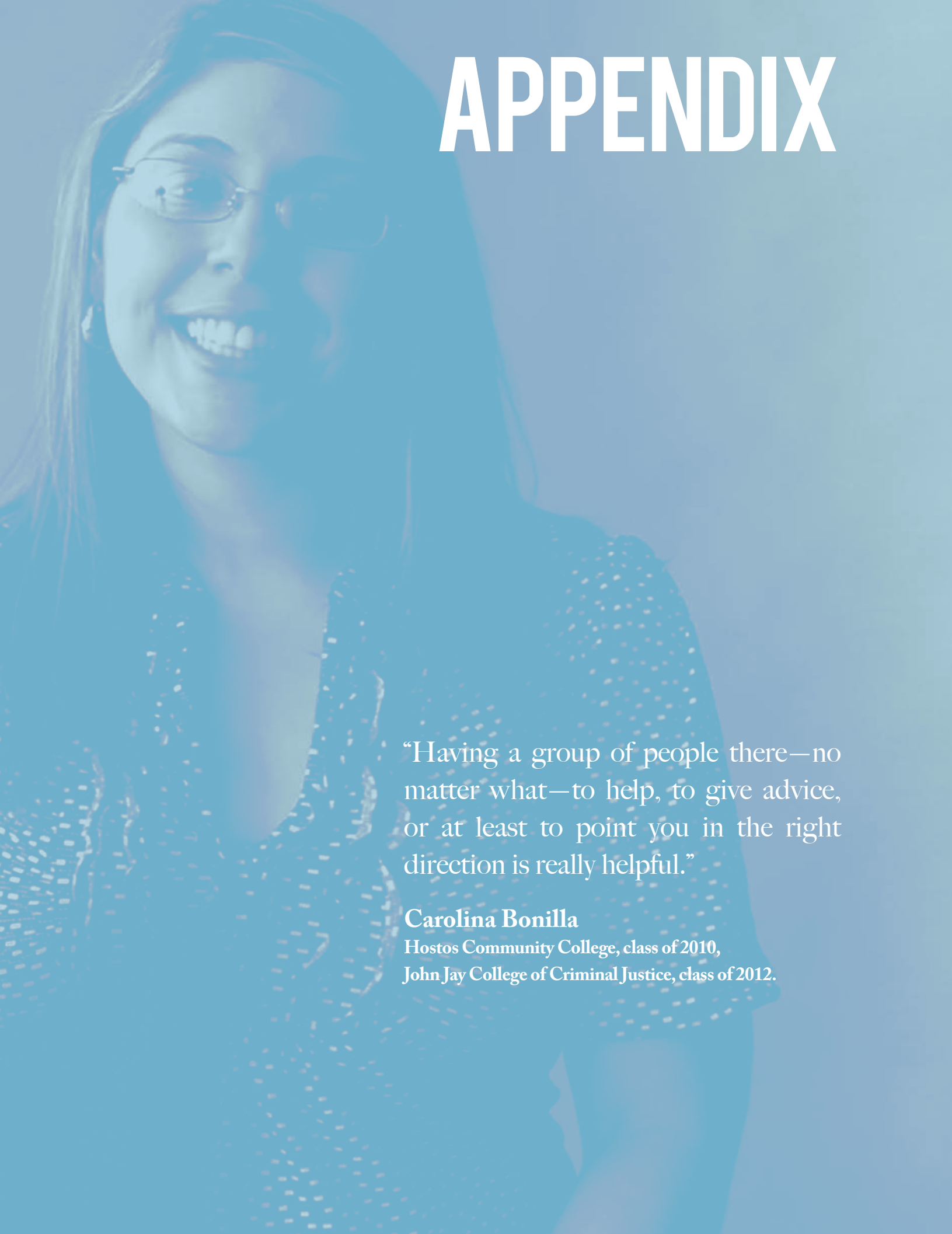
In order to serve significantly larger cohorts and maintain current levels of program quality, program planning teams consisting of ASAP central staff, ASAP college staff, and key college staff and faculty are currently at work developing spring action plans to address key priority areas, fall 2012 recruitment targets, college needs assessments, and delivery methods for core program services.

The Central Office ASAP team is poised to launch a citywide outreach campaign in January 2012 targeting low-income community college-bound students in high schools, GED programs, and community-based organizations and the counselors who support them. The outreach campaign will include workshops for students to promote ASAP and encourage early completion of all college enrollment steps, including skills testing and financial aid application. This will ensure that incoming students have the option of participating in free ASAP summer programming, which will include both credit and developmental courses and early engagement activities at all colleges. Current and former ASAP students are incorporated into outreach efforts to provide direct peer support and are also integrated into print, video, and social media marketing materials. ASAP outreach will also

include a strong focus on counselor relationship-building to help the adults working most directly with students better understand pathways into CUNY community colleges, the benefits of the program, and the supports needed to help students understand their college options and complete all necessary steps to enrollment. ASAP expansion planning, fall 2012 recruitment and outreach, and summer program development for incoming ASAP cohorts is supported with additional funding from CEO.

CUNY and the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity are also in dialogue to develop a cost-benefit analysis of ASAP. The analysis will include consideration of costs associated with key program elements, costs per graduate for ASAP and comparison group students, and projected labor market returns for graduates. Because CUNY community college graduates continue to reside and work in the metropolitan New York area in large numbers, analysis will also include projected benefits to the local economy and public sector savings. This would include projections of increased tax revenues and reduced cost of public service such as public assistance, health, and criminal justice based on higher educational attainment levels.

APPENDIX



"Having a group of people there—no matter what—to help, to give advice, or at least to point you in the right direction is really helpful."

Carolina Bonilla
Hostos Community College, class of 2010,
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, class of 2012.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF ASAP MAJORS: 2007 AND 2009

2007 COHORT

Borough of Manhattan Community
Business / Accounting (A.A.S.)
Business Management (A.A.S.)
Early Childhood Education (A.S.)
Human Services (A.S.)
Liberal Arts (A.A.)

Bronx
Business Administration (A.S.)
Liberal Arts (A.A.)
Radiologic Technology (A.A.S.)

Hostos
Business Management (A.S.)
Community Health (A.S.)
Early Childhood Education (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts (A.A.)

Kingsborough
Business Administration (A.A.S.)
Accounting (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts (A.A.)
Mental Health and Human Services (A.S.)
Tourism and Hospitality (A.A.S.)

LaGuardia
Business Administration (A.S.)
Business Management (A.A.S.)
Emergency Medical Technician / Paramedic (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts (A.A.)
Paralegal Studies (A.A.S.)

Queensborough
Accounting (A.A.S.)
Business Management (A.A.S.)
Computer Engineering Technology (A.A.S.)
Electronic Engineering Technology (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts and Sciences (A.A.)
Liberal Arts (A.A.)

2009 COHORT

Borough of Manhattan Community
Business / Accounting (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts (A.A./A.S.)

Bronx
Business Administration (A.S.)
Criminal Justice (A.A.)
Community/School Health Education (A.S.)
Dietetics and Nutrition Science (A.S.)
Education Associate (A.A.S.)
Human Services (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts and Sciences (A.A.)
Therapeutic Recreation (A.A.S.)

Hostos
Early Childhood Education (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts (A.A.)
Community Health Education (A.S.)
Business Management (A.S.)

Kingsborough
Kingsborough ASAP serves most majors that can be completed within three years. Students planning on transferring to a CUNY senior college are strongly encouraged to consider Liberal Arts (A.A.), which satisfies the core curriculum requirements of all CUNY senior colleges.

LaGuardia
Business Administration (A.S.)
Business Management (A.A.S.)
Emergency Medical Technician / Paramedic (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts and Sciences (A.A.)
Paralegal Studies (A.A.)

Queensborough
Accounting (A.A.S.)
Business Administration (A.S.)
Business Management (A.A.S.)
Liberal Arts and Sciences (A.A.)
Office Administration & Technology (A.A.S.)

APPENDIX B: ASAP 2007 AND 2009 SELECTION CRITERIA

FALL 2007 ASAP SELECTION CRITERIA

Be fully proficient in basic skills areas of reading, writing and math by the start of the fall 2007 semester*.

Be a New York City resident.

Enroll in and maintain full-time status in an ASAP-approved major.

If a continuing or transfer student, have 12 or fewer college credits at the time of entry and be in good academic standing (GPA of 2.0 or above).

Cannot be enrolled in College Discovery.

To receive the ASAP tuition waiver, must receive at least some financial aid and have a gap between tuition and fees, and award.

FALL 2009 ASAP SELECTION CRITERIA

NEW: Be Pell eligible or have a family income within 200% of the federal poverty guidelines, as established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

NEW: Need at least one but no more than two developmental courses based on scores on the CUNY Skills Assessment Test.

Be a New York City resident.
Enroll in and maintain full-time status in an ASAP-approved major.

If a continuing or transfer student, have 12 or fewer college credits at the time of entry and be in good academic standing (GPA of 2.0 or above).

Cannot be enrolled in College Discovery.

To receive the ASAP tuition waiver, must receive at least some financial aid and have a gap between tuition and fees, and award.

*Students can demonstrate basic skills proficiency at CUNY based on their SAT, ACT, or New York State (NYS) Regents exam scores or by taking the CUNY Skills Assessment Test.

APPENDIX C: OPTIMAL FULL MATCHING TECHNICAL APPENDIX BY METIS ASSOCIATES

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making a meaningful difference

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Technical Appendix: Optimal Matching for CUNY ASAP

Jing Zhu, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate

May 10, 2011

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of using optimal matching for the CUNY ASAP program impact evaluation. The reasons for employing optimal matching are discussed first, followed by a brief description of the technique and the corresponding outcome analysis. The main results for the evaluation of CUNY ASAP using optimal matching are presented at the conclusion of this paper.

REASONS FOR USING OPTIMAL MATCHING

In a previous analysis using the nearest neighbor matching within a caliper size of 0.01 (i.e., a hundredth of a standard deviation of the sample estimated propensity scores), a matched sample of 625 ASAP students and 625 comparison students was obtained from a total of 1,132 ASAP students and 1,791 comparison students. Although the student profile after matching indicated that differences in various covariates between ASAP students and the comparison students were greatly reduced, the matching led to an unacceptably high reduction of 44.79% of the ASAP students. The loss of so many ASAP students made the matched sample less representative of the original population of students on several major covariates (e.g., students receiving a Pell Grant, admission type, and household income). This raised serious concerns about whether the results of the outcome analyses based on this initial matched sample could be generalized to the ASAP population as a whole.

The nearest neighbor matching within caliper (also known as greedy matching) pairs treated subjects with their closest comparison counterparts one at a time without reconsidering early matches as later matches are made. Users of greedy matching usually face the dilemma[10] of choosing between incomplete matching and inaccurate matching (Guo & Fraser, 2009). In this case, using a less stringent caliper size of 0.25, as typically recommended in the literature, did not greatly increase the size of the matched ASAP sample – only 37 additional ASAP students were retained after matching. Further investigation of the data indicated that the large sample loss in greedy matching happened because the distributions of the estimated propensity scores between the ASAP and comparison groups did not overlap sufficiently. In fact, one major limitation of greedy matching is its requirement for a sizable common support region (i.e., sufficient overlap of distributions of estimated propensity scores between two groups). Not surprisingly, greedy matching did not work well in this case. The technique of stratification based on estimated propensity scores was also attempted, but with little success in producing comparable groups within each stratum.

The recently developed method of optimal matching does not require a sizable common support region, and therefore is likely to address the limitation associated with greedy-matching. In sharp contrast to greedy matching, this efficient and robust technique identifies matched sets in such a way that the process aims to minimize the total distance of estimated propensity scores between treated subjects and comparisons, and decisions (i.e., matches) made later take into consideration those made earlier.

[10] More specifically, the dilemma is: while trying to maximize exact matches using a stringent caliper size, cases may be excluded due to incomplete matching; or while trying to maximize cases with a wider caliper size, more inexact matching typically results. Neither of the above choices is optimal.

Optimal matching employs a network flow theory for matching. Rosenbaum (2002) provides a comprehensive review of the approach and its applications. This approach has been more and more widely used in recent years due to the methodological advantages. Hansen (2007) developed an optmatch package that performs optimal matching in the open source program R. The main ideas of optimal matching are summarized below.

MATCHING ALGORITHM

Let treated participants be in a set A and the comparisons be in a set B, with $A \cap B = \varnothing$.The initial number of treated subjects is $|A|$ and the number of comparisons is $|B|$, where | . | denotes the number of elements of a set.

For each $a \in A$ and each $b \in B$, there is a distance, δ_{ab} with $0 \leq \delta_{ab} \leq \infty$. The distance measures the difference between a and b in terms of their observed covariates (e.g., their difference on estimated propensity scores). Matching is a process to create S strata ($A_1, \ldots A_s; B_1, \ldots B_s$) consisting of S nonempty, disjoint participants of A and S nonempty, disjoint subsets of B, so that $|A_s| \geq 1$, $|B_s| \geq 1$, $A_s \cap A_t = \varnothing$ for $s \neq t$, $B_s \cap B_t = \varnothing$ for $s \neq t$, $A_1 \cup A_2 \cup \ldots \cup A_s \subseteq A_S$ and $B_1 \cup B_2 \cup \ldots \cup B_s \subseteq B_S$.

By this definition, a matching process produces S matched sets, each of which contains $|A_1|$ and $|B_1|$, $|A_2|$ and $|B_2|$, ..., and $|A_s|$ and $|B_s|$. Note that, by definition, within a stratum or matched set, treated subjects are similar to comparisons in terms of estimated propensity scores. In optimal full matching, each treated subject is matched to one or more comparisons, and similarly each comparison is matched to one or more treated subjects. One may also impose ratio bounds on matching so that the standard error of the treatment effect is not inflated.

Optimal matching is the process of developing matched sets with the aim to minimize the total sample distance of propensity scores (i.e., Δ). Formally, Δ is defined as follows:

$$\Delta = \sum_{s=1}^{S} \omega(|A_s|, |B_s|) \delta(A_s, B_s) \qquad (1)$$

where $\omega(|A_s|, |B_s|)$ is a weight function. Optimal matching accomplishes its goal of minimizing Δ by using a network flow approach (i.e., a topic in operations research) to matching. A primary feature of network flow is that it concerns the cost of using b for a as a match, where a *cost* is defined as the effect of having the pair of (a, b) on the total distance defined by equation (1). As aforementioned, decisions made later may alter earlier decisions in the process of optimal matching.

COVARIATE IMBALANCE INDEX

Haviland et al. (2007) provides equations to check covariate imbalance before and after optimal matching. The statistic to check imbalance is called *absolute standardized difference in covariate means*, d_X for use before matching, and $d_{X,match}$ for use after matching.

Before matching, one calculates d_X to check imbalance on covariate X using the following:

$$d_X = \frac{|\overline{X}_{\mathrm{T}} - \overline{X}_{\mathrm{P}}|}{s_X} \qquad (2)$$

where $\overline{X}_{\mathrm{T}}$ and $\overline{X}_{\mathrm{P}}$ are the means of X for the treatment and potential comparison groups respectively. The overall standard deviation of X is calculated by

$$s_X = \sqrt{\frac{s_{X,\mathrm{T}}^{\ 2} + s_{X,\mathrm{P}}^{\ 2}}{2}} \qquad (3)$$

where $s_{X,\mathrm{T}}$ and $s_{X,\mathrm{P}}$ are the standard deviations of X for the treatment and potential comparison groups respectively.

After matching, the level of imbalance on covariate X is calculated by

$$d_{X,\mathrm{match}} = \frac{\left|\overline{X}_{\mathrm{T}} - \widetilde{X}_{\mathrm{C}}\right|}{s_X} \qquad (4)$$

The covariate X can be evaluated by the following method: after matching, each treated subject i in stratum s is matched to m_{si} comparisons, $j = 1, \ldots m_{si}$. The number of treated subjects in stratum s is n_s, and the total number of treated subjects in the whole sample is n_+. $X_{sij,C}$ denotes the value of X for the jth comparison who is matched to treated subject i, $j = 1, \ldots, m_{si}$. Denoting $X_{si\bullet,C}$ the mean of the m_{si} values of the covariate X for the comparisons matched to treated subject i, and $\widetilde{X}_{\mathrm{C}}$ the unweighted mean of these means, we have:

$$X_{si\bullet,\mathrm{C}} = \frac{1}{m_{si}} \sum_{j=1}^{m_{si}} X_{sij,\mathrm{C}} \quad \text{AND} \quad \widetilde{X}_{\mathrm{C}} = \frac{1}{n_+} \sum_{s=1}^{S} \sum_{i=1}^{n_s} X_{si\bullet,\mathrm{C}}$$

d_X and $d_{X,match}$ can be interpreted as the difference between the treatment and comparison groups on X in terms of standard-deviation unit of X. d_X and $d_{X,match}$ are standardized measures that can be compared with each other. Typically, one expects to have $d_X > d_{X,match}$, because of the need to correct for imbalance before matching, and to improve the sample balance after matching.

OUTCOME ANALYSIS AFTER OPTIMAL MATCHING

After optimal matching, one usually wants to estimate the average treatment effect and perform a significance test. Different propensity score matching methods require different postmatching outcome analyses. Rosenbaum (1987, 2002) and Helmreich et al. (2009) provide an adjusted estimator for evaluating treatment effectiveness for a matched sample by optimal matching.

In general, S matched sets are produced after optimal matching. The treatment effect within each set between treated and comparison subjects can be calculated by $\delta_s = \overline{y}_{s,\mathrm{T}} - \overline{y}_{s,\mathrm{C}}$ where δ_s is the treatment effect of set s $(s = 1, \ldots, S)$, $\overline{y}_{s,\mathrm{T}}$ and $\overline{y}_{s,\mathrm{C}}$ are mean outcomes of treated and comparison subjects in the matched set.

A direct adjustment estimator (DAE) across all sets is used as a summary measure of the treatment effect. DAE can be calculated as the mean treatment effect across all sets weighted by their sizes.

$$\delta_{\mathrm{DAE}} = \frac{\sum_{s=1}^{S} n_s \delta_s}{\sum_{i=1}^{s} n_s} \qquad (5)$$

where δ_{DAE} is the direct adjustment estimator of the treatment effect, S is the number of matched sets, and n_s is the size of matched set s. The standard error of the DAE can be calculated by

$$\mathrm{S.E.} = \frac{1}{S} \frac{\sum_{s=1}^{S} n_s}{\left(\sum_{s=1}^{S} n_s\right)^2 - \sum_{s=1}^{S} n_s^{\,2}} \sum_{s=1}^{S} n_s (\delta_s - \delta_{\mathrm{DAE}})^2 \qquad (6)$$

The t-statistic of a hypothesis test is calculated by $t = \frac{|\delta_{DAE}|}{S.E.}$, and the p-value is given by $p = 1.0 - F_{t(df=S-1)}(t)$ where $F_{t(df=S-1)}(t)$ is the cumulative density function of the t-distribution with degrees of freedom of S-1.

RESULTS FOR CUNY ASAP EVALUATION BY OPTIMAL MATCHING

The optimal matching was conducted based on the total of 1,132 ASAP students and 1,791 comparison students, and the corresponding matching results can be found in Table 1. The structure of the matched sample is shown as a count of matched sets in terms of the ratio of the number of treated subjects to the number of comparisons. Note that the matching ratio was bounded by 1:10 and 10:1 in the actual optimal matching to control for potential inflation of the standard error. According to Table 1, only 28 ASAP students were not matched (i.e., for 1:0), although 549 comparison students were lost after matching (i.e., for 0:1). Among the matched sets, 13 sets had 10 treated subjects and 1 comparison, 4 sets had 9 treated subjects and 1 comparison, and so forth. Thus optimal matching turned out to greatly improve the matching results over greedy matching – now the matched evaluation samples included 1,104 ASAP students (97.5% of the cohort) and 1,242 comparison students.

With matched samples, one wants to know how well matching has reduced bias. The level of bias reduction can be shown by a comparison between *absolute standardized differences in covariate means* before and after matching (i.e., a comparison between d_X and $d_{X,\text{match}}$ as defined in equations (2) and (4)). Table 2 presents this information. Taking the covariate "individuals who did not apply for financial aid" as an example, before matching, the treated and comparison groups differed on this variable by 80.6% of a standard deviation; whereas after optimal matching, the standard bias was only 3.3% of a standard deviation. Therefore, optimal matching reduced sample imbalance on this variable to a great extent. Table 2 shows that any substantial initial differences in covariates between the two groups were successfully removed after optimal matching. Thus outcome analyses based on the matched sample were free of overt selection bias.

Table 3 presents the results for the postmatching outcome analyses of the three-year graduation. It can be seen that overall the ASAP students had an average 28.39 percentage points (i.e., adjusted mean difference, p = 0.000) higher three-year graduation rate than the comparison students. Note that the statistically adjusted mean difference was not equal to the raw difference in the observed means between the two groups retained in the matched sample. In addition, the effect size measured by Cohen's d (0.604) indicated that the ASAP program had demonstrated a remarkable impact on students' three-year graduation outcome (Cohen, 1988).[11]

The analyses of cumulative GPA and cumulative credits were based on separate optimal matching due to the patterns of missing data; whereas cumulative GPA was only available for 1,100 ASAP students and 1,707 comparison students, credit accumulation[12] was available for 1,129 of the ASAP students and 1,785 of the comparison students[13]. The originally matched samples for the graduation and retention analyses based on all 2,923 students were not used for the outcome analyses of cumulative GPA and cumulative credits because the balance in various covariates between the ASAP students and their comparisons might no longer exist with the loss of subjects in some of the original matches. Therefore, new optimal full matching was conducted separately for the respective student groups with available cumulative GPA or cumulative credits. The matching results are presented in Tables 4 - 5 and 7 - 8, and the results for the outcome analyses are shown in Tables 6 and 9. In general, optimal matching substantially removed sample imbalances on many of the observed covariates. For cumulative GPA, a total of 1,092 ASAP students and 1,225 comparisons were retained after optimal matching, and the outcome analysis showed no statistically significant mean difference between the two groups (adjusted mean difference = 0.029, p = 0.258). For cumulative credits, a total of 1,100 ASAP students and 1,247 comparisons were matched successfully, and the outcome analysis indicated that the ASAP students on average gained 6.591 more credits by the last semester of enrollment in college than their comparison counterparts. This mean difference was statistically significant (p = 0.000), with a moderate effect size (Cohen's d = 0.288)

[11] Cohen has loosely defined effect sizes of d = .20, .50, and .80 as small, medium, and large, respectively.

[12] Credit accumulation is defined as the number of credits earned through a student's last semester attended at the college of entry.

[13] Since a very small number of students were missing cumulative credits, it was expected that a separate matching would not lead to substantially different matched sets obtained by the original optimal matching.

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TABLE 1. RESULTS OF OPTIMAL MATCHING FOR THREE-YEAR GRADUATION (MATCHING RATIO BOUNDED BY 1:10 AND 10:1)

STRUCTURE OF MATCHED SAMPLE								
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	1:0	10:1	9:1	8:1	7:1	6:1	5:1	4:1
Number of Matched Sets	28	13	4	7	7	12	11	14
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	3:1	2:1	1:1	1:2	1:3	1:4	1:5	1:6
Number of Matched Sets	18	26	432	17	12	16	8	5
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	1:7	1:8	1:9	1:10	0:1			
Number of Matched Sets	10	5	6	33	549			

TABLE 2. COVARIATE IMBALANCE BEFORE AND AFTER OPTIMAL MATCHING FOR THREE-YEAR GRADUATION

COVARIATE	ABSOLUTE STANDARDIZED DIFFERENCE	
	D_X (BEFORE MATCHING)	$D_{X,MATCH}$ (AFTER MATCHING)
Age	0.100	0.092
Gender (Female)	0.019	0.001
PELL	0.044	0.038
TAP	0.234	0.007
COLLEGE		
BMCC	0.126	0.004
QCC	0.159	0.019
LAGUARDIA	0.047	0.037
HOSTOS	0.236	0.008
BRONX	0.270	0.038
RACE/ETHNICITY		
Black	0.095	0.073
Hispanic	0.157	0.020
Other	0.140	0.049
READING EXEMPT	0.016	0.038
MATH EXEMPT	0.003	0.041
FINANCIAL AID		
Independent	0.011	0.033
Individuals who did not apply for financial aid	0.806	0.033
ADMISSION TYPE		
Transfer	0.332	0.004
Continuing	0.554	0.007

TABLE 3. RESULTS FOR OUTCOME ANALYSES OF THREE-YEAR GRADUATION AFTER OPTIMAL MATCHING

OUTCOMES	OBSERVED MEANS		ADJUSTED MEAN DIFFERENCE			
	ASAP (N=1,104)	**Comparison (N=1,242)**	**Estimate**	***t***	***p***	**Cohen's *d***
Three-Year Graduation	54.62%	26.89%	28.39%	12.105	0.000	0.604

TABLE 4. RESULTS OF OPTIMAL MATCHING FOR CUMULATIVE GPA (MATCHING RATIO BOUNDED BY 1:10 AND 10:1)

STRUCTURE OF MATCHED SAMPLE								
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	1:0	10:1	9:1	8:1	7:1	6:1	5:1	4:1
Number of Matched Sets	8	3	1	5	7	5	27	36
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	3:1	2:1	1:1	1:2	1:3	1:4	1:5	1:6
Number of Matched Sets	42	58	240	55	28	25	12	12
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	1:7	1:8	1:9	1:10	0:1			
Number of Matched Sets	7	6	2	26	482			

TABLE 5. COVARIATE IMBALANCE BEFORE AND AFTER OPTIMAL MATCHING FOR CUMULATIVE GPA

COVARIATE	ABSOLUTE STANDARDIZED DIFFERENCE	
	D_X (BEFORE MATCHING)	$D_{X,MATCH}$ (AFTER MATCHING)
Age	0.108	0.022
Gender (Female)	0.005	0.042
PELL	0.020	0.050
TAP	0.232	0.073
COLLEGE		
BMCC	0.137	0.065
QCC	0.152	0.016
LAGUARDIA	0.064	0.031
HOSTOS	0.215	0.026
BRONX	0.259	0.064
RACE/ETHNICITY		
Black	0.093	0.027
Hispanic	0.151	0.020
Other	0.133	0.053
READING EXEMPT	0.034	0.029
MATH EXEMPT	0.010	0.077
FINANCIAL AID		
Independent	0.042	0.058
Individuals who did not apply for financial aid	0.756	0.037
ADMISSION TYPE		
Transfer	0.330	0.005
Continuing	0.565	0.015

TABLE 6. RESULTS FOR OUTCOME ANALYSIS OF CUMULATIVE GPA AFTER OPTIMAL MATCHING

OUTCOMES	OBSERVED MEANS		ADJUSTED MEAN DIFFERENCE			
	ASAP (N=1,104)	**Comparison (N=1,242)**	**Estimate**	***t***	***p***	**Cohen's *d***
Cumulative GPA	2.504	2.458	0.029	0.649	0.258	0.032

TABLE 7. RESULTS OF OPTIMAL MATCHING FOR CUMULATIVE CREDITS (MATCHING RATIO BOUNDED BY 1:10 AND 10:1)

STRUCTURE OF MATCHED SAMPLE								
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	1:0	10:1	9:1	8:1	7:1	6:1	5:1	4:1
Number of Matched Sets	29	11	7	7	9	11	6	18
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	3:1	2:1	1:1	1:2	1:3	1:4	1:5	1:6
Number of Matched Sets	15	24	430	21	15	9	14	6
Ratio of "Treated:Control"	1:7	1:8	1:9	1:10	0:1			
Number of Matched Sets	8	6	4	34	538			

TABLE 8. COVARIATE IMBALANCE BEFORE AND AFTER OPTIMAL MATCHING FOR CUMULATIVE CREDITS

COVARIATE	ABSOLUTE STANDARDIZED DIFFERENCE	
	D_X (BEFORE MATCHING)	$D_{X,MATCH}$ (AFTER MATCHING)
Age	0.099	0.097
Gender (Female)	0.022	0.015
PELL	0.043	0.029
TAP	0.235	0.007
COLLEGE		
BMCC	0.124	0.006
QCC	0.162	0.011
LAGUARDIA	0.047	0.036
HOSTOS	0.236	0.049
BRONX	0.271	0.011
RACE/ETHNICITY		
Black	0.095	0.058
Hispanic	0.159	0.012
Other	0.140	0.043
READING EXEMPT	0.016	0.025
MATH EXEMPT	0.005	0.045
FINANCIAL AID		
Independent	0.011	0.044
Individuals who did not apply for financial	0.805	0.041
ADMISSION TYPE		
Transfer	0.331	0.007
Continuing	0.553	0.008

TABLE 9. RESULTS FOR OUTCOME ANALYSIS OF CUMULATIVE CREDITS AFTER OPTIMAL MATCHING

OUTCOMES	OBSERVED MEANS		ADJUSTED MEAN DIFFERENCE			
	ASAP (N=1,104)	**Comparison (N=1,242)**	**Estimate**	***t***	***p***	**Cohen's *d***
Cumulative Credits	47.32	40.66	6.591	6.004	0.000	0.288

APPENDIX D: ASAP COHORT TWO FALL 2010 ANNUAL STUDENT SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS

- Overall, cohort 2 denoted a high level of satisfaction with the ASAP program and ASAP services, and satisfaction with ASAP services have increased from fall 2009 survey responses. "Very Satisfied" responses were examined as a way to determine keen levels of satisfaction with ASAP components.
- Students expressed that the most helpful resources to their success in college were financial resources (Metro cards, free books), early registration, and the ASAP advisor. Students also expressed the most satisfaction with these ASAP services. 83% of cohort 2 students noted that it would be difficult to attend college full-time without ASAP and about 63% plan to attain a graduate degree.
- Virtually all cohort 2 students (99.7%) indicated that they met with their advisor and were satisfied with the services they received. Overall, "Very Satisfied" levels increased from fall 2009. Of the general advisor services provided, more than 95% of students strongly agreed or agreed that their advisor emphasized the importance of time management, informed them of their performance in specific courses throughout the semester, and made sure they were attending class regularly.
- Approximately 93% of cohort 2 students indicated that they met with their CES, 22% more than in fall 2009. Most students denoted that they were satisfied with CES services, and overall, "very satisfied" levels increased from fall 2009. When asked what services they would have liked to receive from their CES in fall 2010, students answered that they would have liked to receive more information about scholarship opportunities, internship opportunities, and job search resources.
- Roughly 59% of cohort 2 students indicated that they received some form of ASAP tutoring in fall 2010. There is variation in the level of tutoring utilization at the individual colleges. However, it should be noted that tutoring models vary widely across individual colleges. Of those who did not attend tutoring, nearly four out of ten reported that they were not required to attend. Of students who received ASAP tutoring, the stated main purpose for their visit was to obtain assistance with exam preparation.
- About 87% of cohort 2 students mentioned that they attended the ASAP Seminar and most answered that they were satisfied with the services provided. Overall, "Very satisfied" levels increased from fall 2009. Of those who did not attend, two-thirds indicated the seminar was scheduled at an inconvenient time. Of students who attended at least one ASAP Seminar/ workshop, they most agreed that it helped them to take advantaw of campus resources and feel better prepared to face and overcome obstacles.
- Approximately 82% of cohort 2 students mentioned that they have approached and interacted with a faculty member outside of class. Of those who met with a professor, most reported that this interaction was helpful. Half of cohort 2 students indicated working for pay during the fall 2010 semester and approximately two-thirds indicated that they do so to earn spending money.
- More than half of cohort 2 students plan to graduate within two years, and nearly all plan to graduate within 3 years. 87% of students plan to attend a 4-year college full-time and 69% plan to work part-time after graduation. The majority of students stated that they live with their parents/guardians.

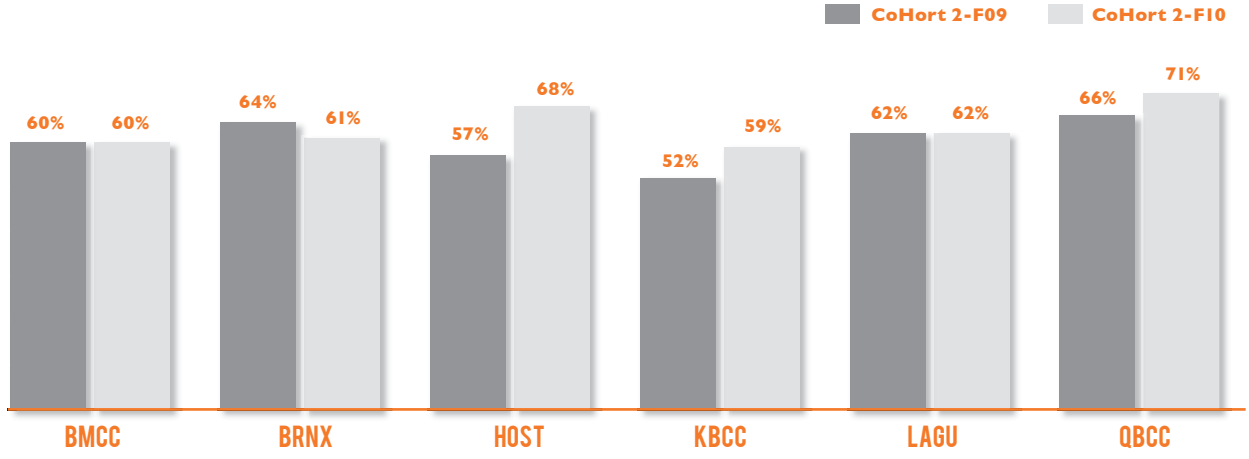
SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

- 89% of 354 enrolled continuing cohort 2 ASAP students have responded to the survey.

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND ASAP SERVICES

- Most students (83% of all respondents) indicated that it would have been difficult for them to attend college full-time without the ASAP program. (Q37)
- In response to the highest level of education they plan to attain in the next 10 years, 63% of students responded to aspiring to a graduate or professional degree, 34% to a 4-year degree, and the remaining 2% to a 2-year degree. Educational plans remained similar across survey administration periods; with the exception of Hostos, where a noticeably higher rate of fall 2010 cohort 2 students planned to attain a graduate/professional degree. (Q40) (Chart 1)

CHART 1: STUDENTS PLANNING TO ATTAIN A GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL DEGREE IN NEXT 10 YEARS



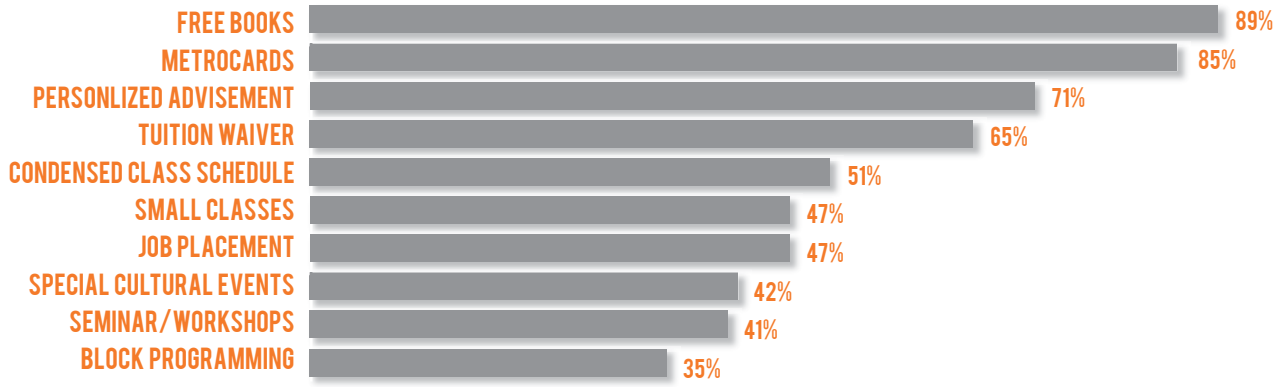
- When asked about the helpfulness of each ASAP resource to their success in college, greater than 95% of students indicated that they found the services of the ASAP advisor, financial resources, early registration, and services provided by the ASAP Career and Employment Specialist (CES) to be very or somewhat helpful, followed by the condensed class schedule and small class sizes (both 90% of all respondents), ASAP tutoring (88%), and block programming (83%) to be very or somewhat helpful resources that contributed to their success in college. Chart 2 indicates resources that students responded as being "Very Helpful" to their success in college. (Q3) (Chart 2)

CHART 2: RESOURCES "VERY HELPFUL" TO STUDENT SUCCESS IN COLLEGE

IMPORTANCE OF AND SATISFACTION WITH ASAP SERVICES

- Greater than 95% of students indicated that they are very satisfied or satisfied with the free books and MetroCards. Chart 3 highlights the rate of student that were "Very Satisfied" with ASAP services. (Q1) (Chart 3)

CHART 3: RESOURCES "VERY HELPFUL" TO STUDENT SUCCESS IN COLLEGE

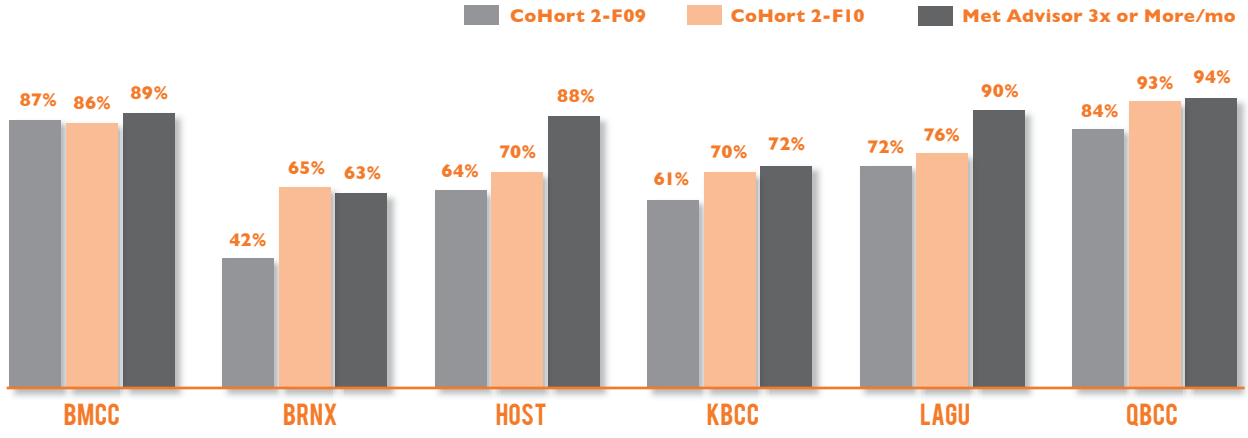


- Greater than 95% of students strongly agreed or agreed that participating in the ASAP program has helped them to: understand what they have to do to be successful in college, do their best academic work, feel comfortable communicating with their instructor, and feel like they belong at this college, Between 90% - 95% of students strongly agreed that participation in the ASAP program has helped them to: make new friends, feel like they belong at this college, balance their non-academic responsibilities with school work, meet other students who share their interests, and work with others on assignments outside of class. (Q2)

ASAP ADVISOR SERVICES

- Virtually all students, 99.7%, indicated that they have met with their ASAP advisor at least once during the Fall 2010 semester, and of those at least 98% indicated that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the services provided by their advisor and that they found those services to be very or somewhat useful. Overall students who met with their advisor 3 or more times per month, indicted higher levels of satisfaction with their advisor, compared to students that saw their advisor less (81% vs. 75% respectively). "Very Satisfied" levels increased at most colleges, most especially at Bronx, when compared to fall 2009 response rates. (Q4, Q5, Q7) (Chart 4)

CHART 4: "VERY SATISFIED" WITH SERVICES PROVIDED BY ASAP ADVISOR



- Among the services provided by the ASAP advisors, students strongly agreed or agreed that their advisor emphasized the importance of time management (98%), made sure they were attending class regularly (96%), informed them of their performance in specific courses throughout the semester (96%), provided strategies to help students deal with academic problems (94%), and encouraged students to participate in class (89%). Below highlights top responses for colleges across cohorts (Q6) (Table 1)

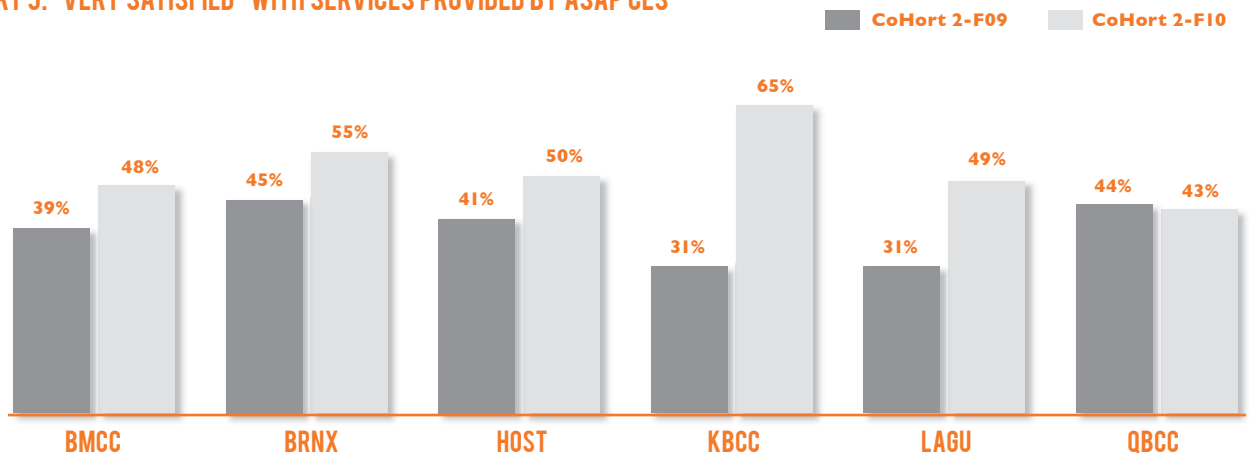
TABLE 1: SERVICE THAT STUDENTS MOST "STRONGLY AGREE" THEIR ADVISOR HAS PROVIDED – BY COLLEGE

COLLEGE	COHORT 2 'F09	COHORT 2 'F10
BMCC	Emphasized the importance of time management 70.4%	Made sure I am attending class regularly 81.8%
BRONX	Emphasized the importance of time management 88.6%	Emphasized the importance of time management 88.2%
HOSTOS	Made sure I am attending class regularly 54.7%	Informed me of my performance in specific courses throughout the semester 67.5%
KBCC	Emphasized the importance of time management 58.6%	Emphasized the importance of time management 56.3%
LGCC	Made sure I am attending class regularly 64.7%	Made sure I am attending class regularly 74.7%
QCC	Emphasized the importance of time management 62%	Informed me of my performance in specific courses throughout the semester 75.6%

ASAP CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST SERVICES

- 93% of students indicated that they met with the ASAP CES at least once during the fall 2010 semester, compared to 71% who indicated that they met with their CES during the fall 2009 semester. Of those who met with the CES, at least 95% were either very satisfied or satisfied with the services provided by the CES and found the services to be very or somewhat useful. "Very Satisfied" levels increased at most colleges, most especially at KBCC, where it more than doubled. (Q8, Q9, Q12) (Chart 5)

CHART 5: "VERY SATISFIED" WITH SERVICES PROVIDED BY ASAP CES



- When asked what services they would have liked to receive from their CES in fall 2010, 50% responded that they would have liked to receive more information about 'Scholarship Opportunities', followed by 47% that would have liked to receive more 'Internship Opportunities', and 43% that would have liked to receive more 'Job Search' resources. Recommendations varied at each college. The table below looks at the top three recommendations at each college. (Q10) (Table 2)

TABLE 2: TOP THREE SERVICES STUDENTS WOULD LIKE TO HAVE RECEIVED IN FALL 2010 (MULTIPLE RESPONSES) – BY COLLEGE

COLLEGE	1ST	2ND	3RD
BMCC	Internship Opportunities 52.3%	Scholarship Opportunities 38.6%	Job Search Resources 29.5%
BRONX	Internship Opportunities 66.7%	Scholarship Opportunities 48.1%	Job Search Resources 40.7%
HOSTOS	Career Counseling 50%	Scholarship Opportunities 47.7%	Internship Opportunities 40.9%
KBCC	Career Counseling 56.3%	Internship Opportunities 50%	Job Search Resources 48.4%
LGCC	Scholarship Opportunities 54.8%	Internship Opportunities 53.4%	Job Search Resources 47.9%
QCC	Career Counseling/ Scholarship Opportunities 55%		Internship Opportunities 52.5%

- Of all students, 78% have spoken to their ASAP CES about their current and/or future career plans, and 45% have attended a career workshop. 40% have spoken to the ASAP CES about their progress at their current job/internship. College responses varied for those who have gone on a job interview on a referral from the ASAP CES, ranging from 4% (LAGU) to 33% (KBCC). (Q11)

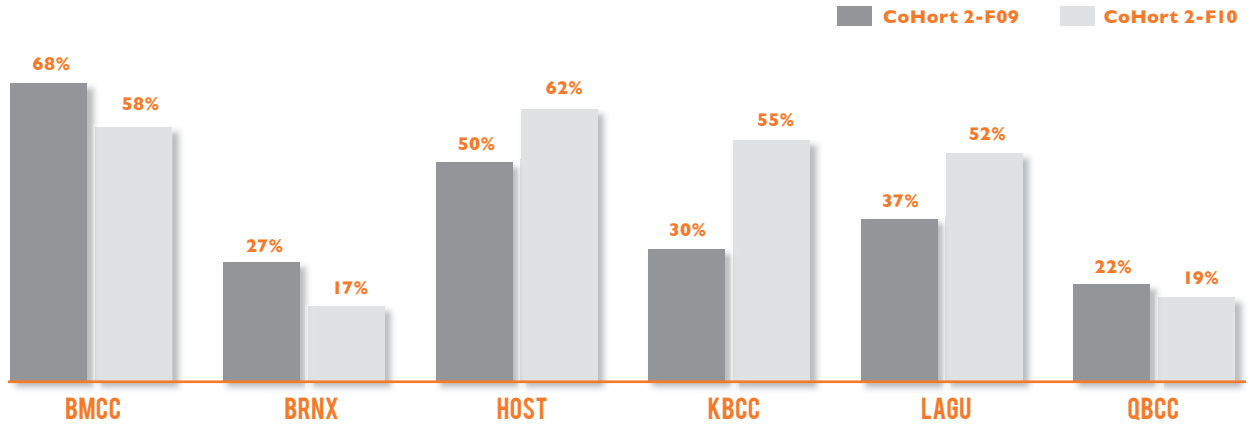
ASAP TUTORING SERVICES

- Approximately 59% of Cohort 2 students indicated that they received some form of ASAP tutoring during the fall 2010 semester; similar to the rate of those enrolled in fall 2009 (57%). There is wide variation in tutoring utilization across individual colleges.[1] For example, more than two-thirds of KBCC students (69%) indicated that they did not receive tutoring. Conversely, nearly two-thirds of Hostos students reported attended tutoring 3 or more times per month. Of those students who did not attend tutoring during the spring 2010 semester, 39% indicated that they were not required to attend, 32% felt that they did not feel they needed tutoring and 17% attended tutoring outside of ASAP. (Q13A, Q13B)
- Of students who responded that they received some form of ASAP tutoring, 45% indicated that the main purpose for their visit was to obtain assistance with exam preparation, followed by 42% that indicated they received tutoring to obtain assistance with homework assignments, and also review class material. Of those that received tutoring, 23% were requested by their ASAP advisor to receive tutoring. (Q14)
- Approximately 86% of those who received tutoring indicated that they are very satisfied or satisfied with the tutoring services, and 90% found the services to be very or somewhat useful. There are differences in "Very Satisfied" levels at colleges and enrollment periods. KBCC, LAGU and Hostos "Very Satisfied" levels have noticeably increased with each

[1] Tutoring models vary across colleges and may include ASAP tutors, in-class tutoring, or tutoring at learning centers.

cohort, while BMCC, QBCC and Bronx levels have decreased. One-fourth (25%) of Bronx students were very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with ASAP tutoring services. However, the low number of students at the Bronx that responded to the question (N=12) may skew the results. (Q15, Q17) (Chart 6)

CHART 6: "VERY SATISFIED" WITH ASAP TUTORING SERVICES

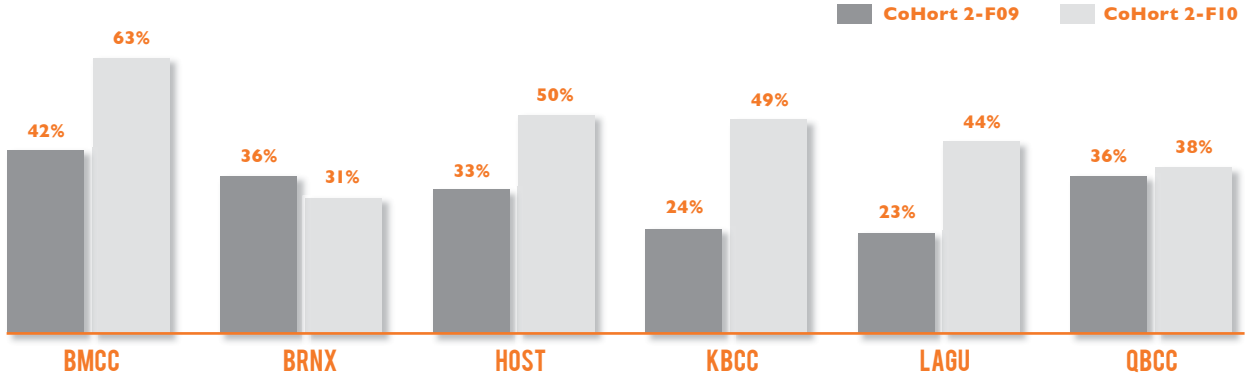


- Of students who received tutoring services, approximately 88% strongly agreed or agreed that it helped them to better understand their course material, followed by increased ability to retain and apply the course material (85%), provide strategies to better approach their course (84%), and provide strategies to help deal with academic problems (79%). (Q16)

ASAP SEMINAR / WORKSHOPS

- Approximately 87% of students responded that they have attended at least one ASAP Seminar/workshop during fall 2010; slightly higher than the 80% who attended in fall 2009. (Q18A)
- Of those who have attended an ASAP Seminar/workshop, 95% are very satisfied or satisfied, and 96% have found them to be very or somewhat useful. "Very Satisfied" levels increased noticeably at BMCC, Hostos, KBCC, and LAGU, compared to fall 2009 responses[2]. (Q19, Q20) (Chart 7)

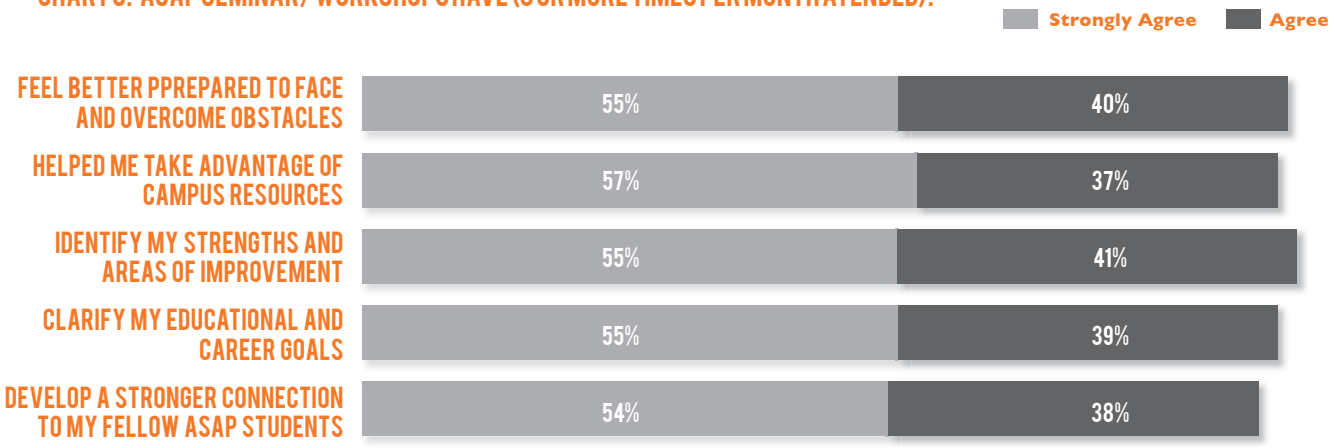
CHART 7: "VERY SATISFIED" WITH ASAP SEMINAR / WORKSHOPS



[2] At KBCC, LGCC, and QBCC, students in their first semester are required to attend a college student development course.

• Of those who have not attended an ASAP Seminar/workshop, approximately two-thirds (66%) indicated that they didn't attend because it was scheduled at an inconvenient time. Of students who attended at least one ASAP Seminar/workshop, more than 90% strongly agreed or agreed that it helped them to identify strengths and areas of improvement, clarify their education and career goals, feel better prepared to face and overcome obstacles, take advantage of campus

CHART 8: ASAP SEMINAR/WORKSHOPS HAVE (3 OR MORE TIMES PER MONTH ATENDED):



resources and develop a stronger connection to fellow ASAP students. Chart 8 looks at responses from students who attended 3 or more times per month during the fall 2010 semester. (Q18B, Q21) (Chart 8)

ASAP FIELD TRIPS / SPECIAL PROGRAMS

• Approximately one-fifth (21%) of students mentioned that they have attended an ASAP field trip or special program. 94% of those who attended indicated that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the field trip or special program, and 88% indicated that they found the field trip or special program to be very or somewhat useful. (Q22A, Q23, Q24)

• Of those who did not attend, 45% indicated that they could not attend the field trip or special program because it was scheduled at an inconvenient time, and 30% responded that none were offered. (Q22B)

COLLEGE STAFF / FACULTY INTERACTIONS

• Approximately 82% of students indicated that they approach their professor if they have questions about the class material, and 84% responded that they have interacted with a faculty member outside of class during the fall 2010 semester; 42% indicating meeting 1-2 times during the semester. (Q25, Q26)

• Of students who indicated that they have met with a faculty member outside of class, 90% said that the interaction helped them perform better in class. (Q27)

• When asked whether students know which campus office to visit and which questions to ask when they have a campus issue to resolve, 82% indicated that they do know, while only 3% responded that they know what to do only after speaking to an ASAP staff member. (Q28)

EMPLOYMENT

• Approximately half (50%) of ASAP cohort 2 students indicated that they have been working for pay during the fall 2010 semester, with 60% working more than 20 hours per week and 23% working more than 30 hours per week. (Q29, Q33)

• About two-thirds (67%) of those who are working for pay indicated that they do so to earn spending money, followed by 45% who work to gain career skills , 44% who work to support their family, and 35% who work to pay for housing. (Q31)

• Of those who work for pay, two-thirds (67%) indicated that their employment has some impact on the time they have to complete their work, but are still able to get their school work done. (Q32)

- Of those who work for pay, 84% said that not working at all would affect their ability to support themselves, while 76% felt the same way about reducing their workload at work. 37% of all students indicated that they plan on increasing the number of hours they work for pay. (Q35, Q34, Q36)
- 54% of students currently working for pay indicated that they had their job before enrolling in college this semester, and 13% said that they found their job through the ASAP CES. One-third of KBCC students (33%) found their job through the ASAP CES. (Q30)

FUTURE PLANS

- Approximately 56% of students plan to graduate within two years (by summer 2011); 28%, indicated that they will graduate within 2.5years (Winter 2011); 11% said that they will graduate in three years (by summer 2013); 5% indicated taking longer than three years to graduate. (Q38)
- Approximately 87% of students indicated that after graduation they will attend a 4-year college full-time, 10% part-time, and 3% will not attend college after graduation. (Q39A)
- Approximately one fourth (25%) of students indicated that after graduation they will work full-time, 69% part-time, and 4% will not work after graduation. (Q39B)

HIGH SCHOOL, FAMILY, AND PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- The majority, 71%, of students reported that they live with their parents/guardians. One-fourth (25%) of students revealed that they that they rent with others and contribute to the rent, and the same percentage said that they rent with others and do not contribute to the rent. Another 24% said that they live with their family/relatives who own and the student does not help with the mortgage. (Q41A,Q41B)

APPENDIX E: ASAP COHORT TWO SPRING 2011 EXIT SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS

- 2-yr graduates (2009, 2011) demonstrated substantial differences when compared to 3-yr graduates (2010) both in post-graduation plans and in 4-yr college planning.
- Roughly 94% of 2011 graduates planned to attend a 4-year college and 27% plan to work full-time after graduation.
- About three-fourths of 2011 graduates indicated that the unstable economy did not have an impact on their post-graduation plans.
- Of those who indicated that they will attend a 4-year college, 89% of 2011 graduates started the process of identifying and applying to a 4-year college.
- Of 2011 graduates who indicated that they will work after graduation, more than half (54%) have not yet started looking for post-graduation employment.
- Approximately 80% of 2011 graduates indicated that their advisors assisted them with the 4-year college application process. Of those, a large majority found the services provided by their advisor to be helpful.
- A clear majority of nearly three-fourths (72%) of spring 2011 graduates chose financial resources followed by 19% who chose the ASAP advisor, as the most important resources toward their success in college.
- Nearly one-third (31%) of 2011 graduates indicated Block Programming followed by 26% of students who selected "None" (meaning all services were important) as the least important service/resource toward their success in college.
- Most 2011 graduates (81%) felt it would have been difficult to graduate in 3 years without the ASAP program.
- The vast majority of 2011 graduates (over 95%) agreed that as a result of being in the ASAP program, they have: come closer to achieving their goals; discovered new interests through their coursework; been inspired by at least one professor; and have learned to ask for help.
- Over half of the 2011 graduates (56%) indicated that they are the first person in their immediate family to graduate from college.

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

- 93% of the projected May 2011 and August 2011 graduates (N=152) have completed a survey. The projected graduates were identified by the colleges throughout the spring 2011 semester based on students' academic progress. Surveys were prepared based on the projected number of graduates.

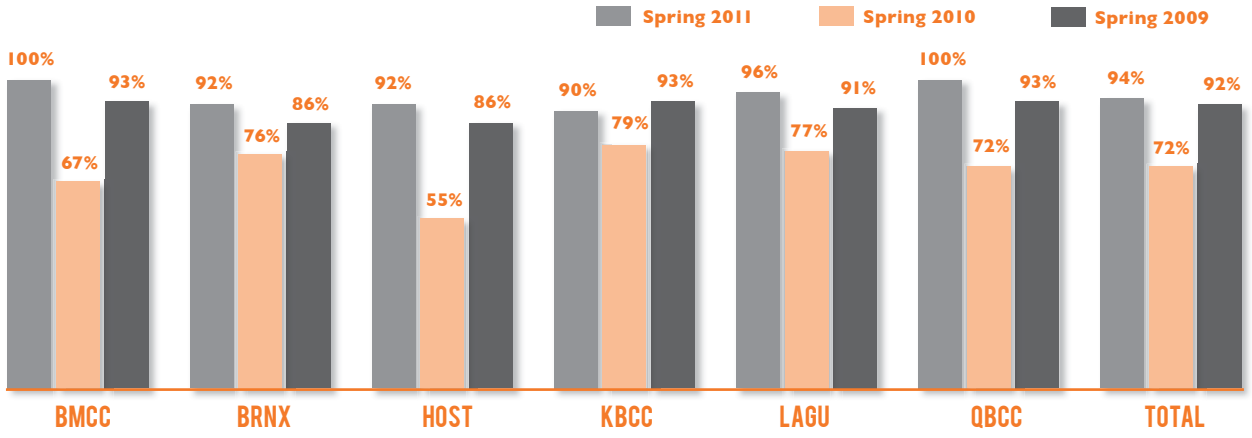
POST GRADUATION PLANS

- Approximately two-thirds of 2011 graduates (76%) indicated that the unstable economy did not have an impact on their post-graduation plans and that they have the same plans as they did when they first joined the ASAP program, compared to 67% of 2010 graduates, and 77% of 2009 graduates. (Q18)

FOUR YEAR COLLEGE

- Overall, more than 90% of students (94%) indicated that they will be attending a 4-year college after graduating from ASAP, compared to 72% of 2010 graduates. (Q1) (Chart 1)

CHART 1: POST GRADUATION PLANS – ATTEND A 4-YR COLLEGE



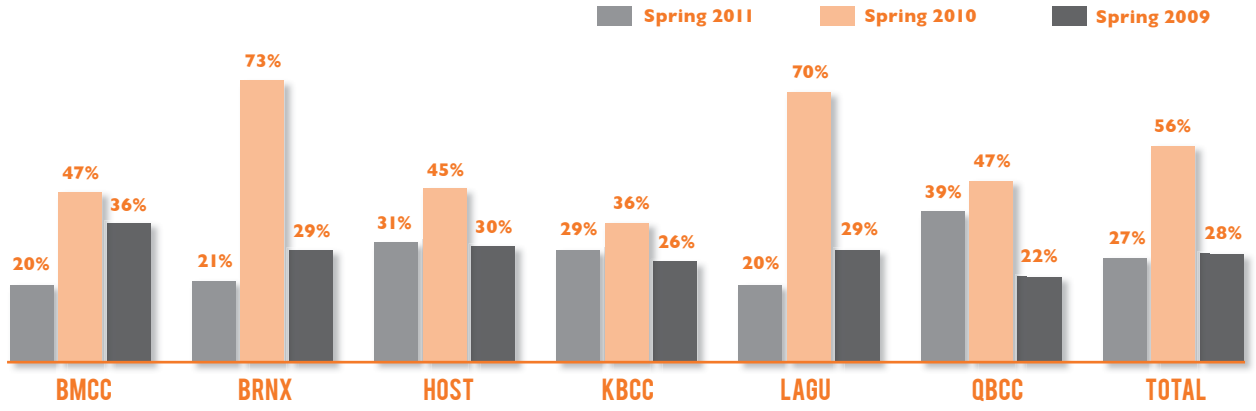
- Of those indicating that they will be attending a 4-year college after graduating, 89% responded that they have started the process of identifying and applying to 4-year colleges, compared to 53% of 2010 graduates and 84% of 2009 graduates. Of those indicating that they will be attending a 4-year college after graduating, approximately one-fourth (26%) applied to four or more CUNY colleges. (Q2 & Q3)
- Of those students who have started the process of identifying and applying to 4-year colleges, 76% indicated that they will attend a 4-year CUNY college, 5% will attend a 4-year SUNY college, 5% will attend a public or private university other than CUNY or SUNY, and 13% were still unsure of which college/university they will attend. (Q6)
- Of the students who indicated that they will attend a 4-year college after graduation, 30% said that they will major in Business followed by 15% who will major in Health Sciences, and 14% who will major in Education. (Q8)
- Approximately 80% of 2011 graduates indicated that their ASAP advisor has assisted them with the 4-year college application process. Of those, 88% found the advisor's services to be very helpful, and 12% found the services to be somewhat helpful. (Q9 & Q10)
- For those who indicated that the ASAP Advisor did not assist them with the 4-year college application process (N=22), 68% indicated that they received assistance from no one, and 14% were assisted by family members. (Q11)

[1] Spring 2010 graduates were mostly three-year graduates, and spring 2009 and spring 2011 were mostly 2-year graduates.

EMPLOYMENT

- After graduation, a little over one-fourth (27%) of 2011 graduates responded that they will work full-time, compared to 56% of 2010 graduates, and 28% of 2009 graduates. Forty-eight percent will work 15-34 hours per week, 6% will work less than 15 hours per week, and 18% will not work at all. (Q12B) (Chart 2)

CHART 2: PLAN TO WORK FULL-TIME AGTER GRADUATION



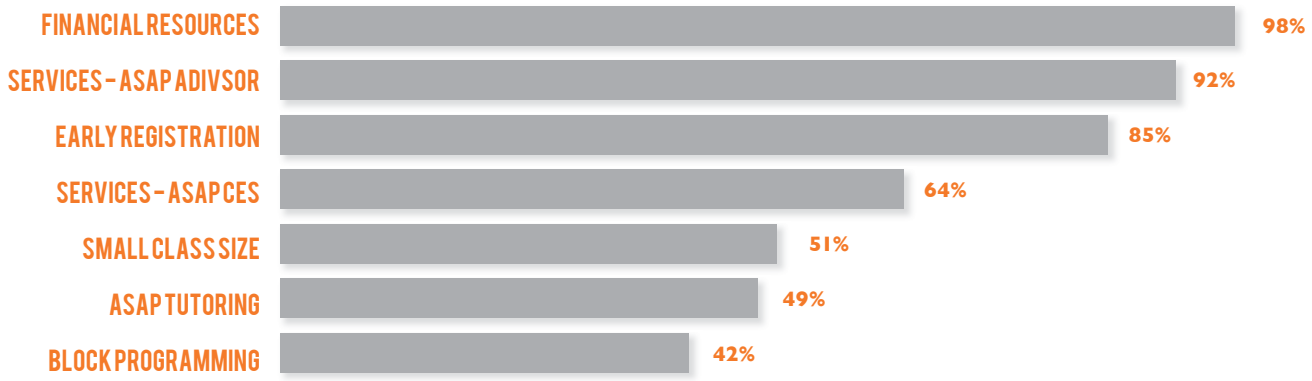
- During the spring 2011 semester 9% of students worked full-time, 43% worked 15-34 hours per week, 9% worked less than 15 hours per week, and the remaining 38% did not work. (Q12A)
- Of those who were employed during the spring 2011 semester, 47% will continue working in their position after graduation; 41% will continue working on a part-time basis, and 6% on a full-time basis. (Q13)
- Of students that indicated that they will work full- or part-time after graduation (n=46), approximately 17% have secured post-graduation employment, 28% are currently looking, and 54% have not yet started looking for post-graduation employment. (Q14)
- Of the students who have secured post-graduation employment (N=13), over half (54%) determined that they will be employed in a private business, company or organization, followed by 31% indicating they will be employed in a public sector organization, and 8% stating they will be self-employed. (Q15c)
- Of students that have secured post-graduation employment (N=13), 54% will earn less than $20,000 annually, and 8% will earn $50,000 or higher. Students indicating an hourly rate will earn an average of $11.65 per hour. (Q15f)
- Forty percent of 2011 graduates (N=15) who identified that they have secured post-graduation employment indicated that their post-graduation position is related or somewhat related to their field of study, compared to 60% that indicated that their post-graduation position is not related to their field of study. (Q15g)
- Of the students who were searching for post-graduation employment, the overwhelming majority found the meetings with the ASAP CES (100%) to be very or somewhat helpful in that process, followed by ASAP advisor (96%) career fairs offered by the ASAP CES (94%), workshops offered by the ASAP CES (91%), and visits to the college career center (87%). (Q17)

IMPORTANCE OF AND SATISFACTION WITH ASAP SERVICES

- When asked to choose only one ASAP program service/resource that has led to the student's success, 72% of 2011 graduates chose financial resources to be the most important to their success in college, followed by 19% who chose the ASAP advisor as the most important resource to their success. (Q20)

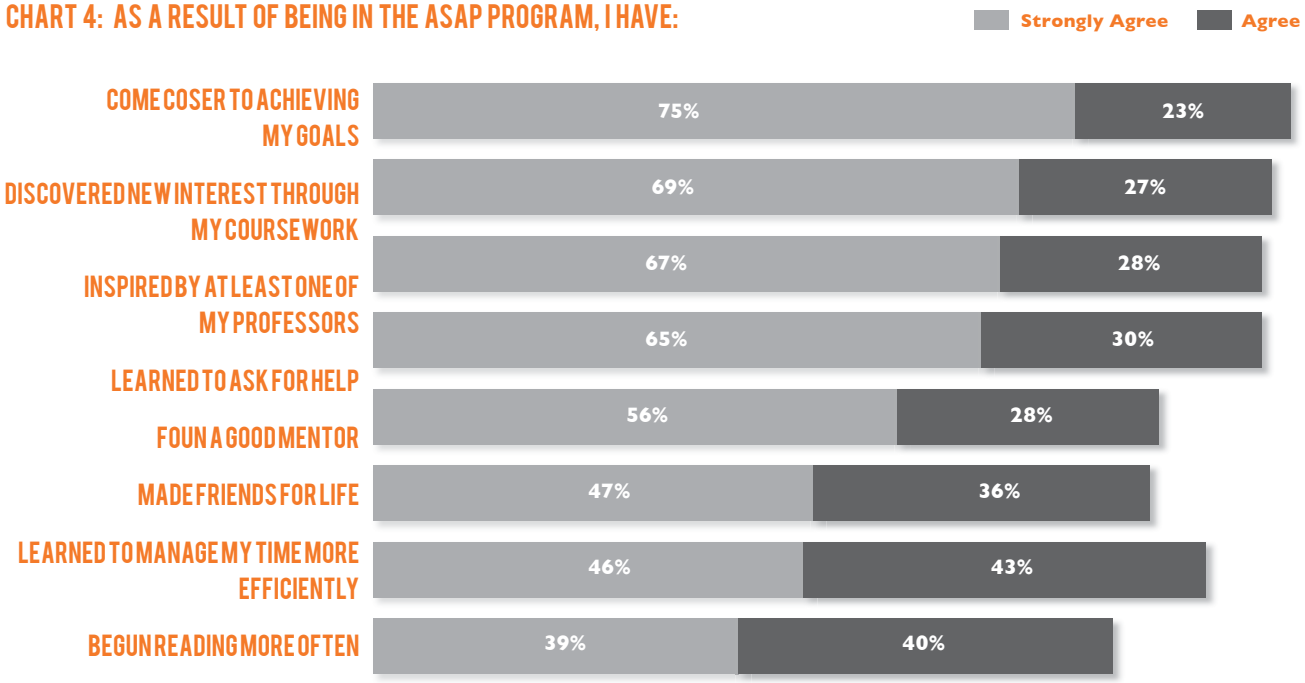
- When asked about the least important service/resource, nearly one-third of 2011 graduates (31%) indicated block programming to be least important to their success, followed by 26% of the students who selected "None", indicating that all the services/resources were important to their success. (Q21)
- A large majority of 2011 graduates (98%) indicated that financial resources were Very Helpful toward their success in college, followed by services offered by their advisor (92%) and early registration (85%). (Q22) (Chart 3)

CHART 3: OVERALL – ASAP RESOURCES "VERY HELPFUL" TO STUDENT SUCCESS IN COLLEGE



- A majority of 2011 graduates (81%) felt it would have been difficult to graduate in three years without the ASAP Program. Of those students, 57% indicated that they would have managed to graduate in three years without the ASAP program and 24% felt that they would not have managed to complete their degree requirements in three years without the ASAP program. (Q23)
- Nearly all students (98.6%) agreed that they would definitely recommend the ASAP Program to their friends and family. (Q24)
- On average, at least 95% of 2011 graduates have strongly agreed or agreed that as a result of having been in the ASAP Program they have come closer to achieving their goals (98%), discovered new interests through their coursework (97%), have been inspired by at least one professor (95%), and have learned to ask for help (95%). (Q26g, Q26a, Q26b, & Q26f) (Chart 4)
- At least four-fifths of 2011 graduates have strongly agreed or agreed that they have learned to manage their time more efficiently (88%), have found a good mentor (83%), and have made friends for life (82%), as a result of being in the ASAP Program. (Q26e, Q26c, & Q26h) (Chart 4)

CHART 4: AS A RESULT OF BEING IN THE ASAP PROGRAM, I HAVE:



- Over half (56%) of 2011 graduates indicated that they are the first person in their immediate family to graduate from college, compared to 52% of spring/summer 2010 graduates, and 45% of spring/summer 2009 graduates. (Q25)

APPENDIX F: ASAP COHORT TWO SPRING 2010 STUDENT FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION:

Three student focus groups were facilitated with Cohort 2 students in late April 2010 to learn about ASAP students' perspectives and experiences within the ASAP program. The information gathered gives ASAP staff a unique and in-depth view from students on various aspects of the program. The results of the focus group help supplement the responses on the annual satisfaction survey and help ASAP staff to continually improve the program. The focus groups were held on three separate days at three convenient locations: one at Kingsborough Community College, one at Hostos Community College and the other at CUNY Office of Academic Affairs West 31st Street location in midtown Manhattan.

METHODOLOGY:

All Cohort 2 ASAP students who enrolled in the ASAP program beginning in Fall 2009 were invited to participate in the focus groups. An announcement email was sent out to all Cohort 2 students by each college approximately three weeks in advance of the focus groups. As an incentive to increase student involvement, a $25 Barnes and Noble gift certificate was awarded to each student for their participation in a focus group.

All of the focus groups were moderated by Alex Tavares, ASAP Research Associate. Note takers for the focus groups were: Daniela Boykin, ASAP Program Coordinator, Lori Slater, ASAP Program Coordinator, and Rosanne Proga, CUNY Academic Affairs Data Manager. The questions asked during the focus group were presented in a similar order, based on the nature and flow of the discussion and time constraints.

The moderator discussed the purpose of the focus group with students. Ground rules were established: encouraged honest responses – good, bad, and otherwise; students could choose not to answer any questions they didn't feel comfortable answering; only one student should speak at a time; and everything that was discussed during the session would be kept confidential. All students agreed.

PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS:

A total of 21 students representing four of the six ASAP community colleges participated in the three focus groups. Fifteen of the focus group participants were female and six were male.

Eight students attended the Kingsborough Community College focus group, of which all were students of Kingsborough. Nine students attended the Hostos Community College focus group; five representing Hostos Community College, and four representing Bronx Community College. Four students attended the 31st street CUNY location focus group; three representing Bronx Community College and one representing LaGuardia Community College. Students from Queensborough Community College and Borough of Manhattan Community College were not represented in the focus groups.

Most students' stated major was Liberal Arts (10) followed by Business (3), Criminal Justice, and Nursing (2). One student each selected majors in Education, Math, Mental health, and Speech Pathology.

RESULTS:

The following summary is an aggregate of all the focus group responses and the results are presented by the specific questions asked during the focus groups. Responses were coded and tallied to identify the concentration of student responses and the extent that an issue was discussed by students.

1. WHAT HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE BEEN IN THE ASAP PROGRAM THUS FAR?

Overall student feedback regarding their experiences in the ASAP program were mostly positive. A number of students described themselves as *"lost"* in their transition into community college and felt that ASAP helped them in that transition, as shared by a student, *"Coming to college was confusing at first, but advisors are helpful." Another student said, "ASAP has done so many things to change my life…I am overwhelmed by the experience in a good way."*

Three recurring themes were discussed by students regarding their positive experiences in the ASAP program. The first is their connectivity to the program and their classmates. A number of students commented about the personalized nature and the *"family feel"* of the program. Students mentioned that they felt supported by the staff. Most students mentioned that they made a lot of friends in the ASAP program. One student conveyed, *"(I) met many new people. I feel comfortable in ASAP because it is like a family. My friends in college are long term friends".* A number of students felt the support and personalized nature of the program helped them to grow individually. As one student put it, *"ASAP has helped me to learn how to speak and interact with people. It has opened doors for me to be free".*

The second theme is that students felt the program encouraged them to succeed. A number of students felt the program gives them direction and helps to keep them on track: *"ASAP provides a roadmap for what you should focus on."* Another student articulated, *"ASAP has helped me find my strengths and weaknesses."* Students appreciated the help in registering for classes. Students mentioned that the program gave them the push they needed to excel by motivating them and checking on their progress with their professors. *"You don't want to let them down",* a student noted.

A third theme mentioned by students, is that the ASAP program gives them the skills they need to navigate the college experience and utilize resources. A majority of students mentioned that they were given tools on how to address and communicate with their professors, as stated by a student: *"Talking to your professor is an important part of class participation; ASAP ads extra help with that."* Students mentioned that due to ASAP; they had an increased awareness of college resources and activities, and a stronger ability to navigate college institutions, *"ASAP tells you where to go, how to contact them and who you need to talk to."* Some students took advantage and became more involved in college activities: *"I'm involved more in college because of ASAP activities. It's been a great experience."*

In discussing their ASAP experience, many students referred directly to their advisor, highlighting the central importance of the advisement process for students. Many discussed the advisors role in helping them to succeed in their academics by providing direction and helping them navigate college. However, some students were disappointed in the advisement they were receiving.

In one focus group, several students felt a lack of personal connection with their advisor, a feeling that the advisor was only doing the minimum, and a lack of trust in the academic advice they were receiving, as one student put it, *"When I have questions, he/she doesn't try to hear all of my concerns. I tried to get to know them personally but he/she wasn't receptive."*

Some students expressed unfavorable views in other areas. A few students mentioned problems registering for courses outside of the block schedule. One student complained, *"(I) wanted to join the ____ program, but couldn't because the major had its own special classes that didn't fit with ASAP block."* Another student expressed that they wanted a different type of relationship with their CES, one less personal and more professional. Additionally, outside the scope of the ASAP program, one student talked about issues with tuition re-imbursement because of their immigration status and how it affected other immigrant students as well.

2. IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE ONE ASPECT OF THE ASAP PROGRAM, WHICH ASPECT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE? WHICH IS THE LEAST IMPORTANT?

Overall, students agreed that the financial resources, namely the tuition waiver, book vouchers and Metrocards were the most important aspect of the ASAP program. There was a general consensus that not having these resources available would have made going to college very difficult for some students, as one student mentions, *"Tuition and books being paid for really helps because there is less to worry about."*

According to students, the advisors are an extremely important aspect of the ASAP program, because they are there to help keep students focused and help them navigate through their college careers. Other aspects of the program that students mentioned are important to their college success included: tutoring, the ability to network, and the seminar (tutoring and the seminar will be discussed further in question 4 and 5 respectively).

In terms of the least important aspect of the ASAP program, most students felt that all aspects of the ASAP program were important. Students generally felt that all aspects of the program were designed with a purpose and for their benefit.

3. WHAT ROLE DO THE ASAP ADVISORS PLAY IN YOUR EDUCATION?

Most students agreed that the advisors are helpful, a great resource, and that having their support is an absolute benefit. However, a number expressed issues with their advisor as well. Student's feedback suggests that the advisement process is the key focal point for them in their ASAP experience. According to students, the advisor is the *"go to"* person for all of their academic needs; as one student put it, *"They know where to find everything. Somebody is always in your corner. They can help with any questions."*

The discussion focused on both the nature of the student-advisor relationship and the advisor support in navigating college. Most students described a close personal relationship with their advisor, highlighted by a student stating, *"I never thought I'd be so close to my advisor."* Many student responses included *"feeling connected", "friend" and "like family"* when describing their advisor. A number of students felt comfortable enough to talk about personal problems with their advisor: *"I speak to my advisor like a friend, a family member. I can talk to my advisor about anything."*

At one focus group, several students voiced concerns with the quality of the relationship with their advisor. Some of their concerns about their advisor included: not feeling a close personal connection; feeling there was a lack of understanding in relation to their issues; and the feeling that the advisor just *"did the minimum"* during advisement meetings. One student shared, *"(My advisor) does not tend to get personal…does not get in-depth such as with personal issues, as well as with an issue of conflict I had with my professor."*

With regard to navigating college, many students found the advisors to be very helpful and acknowledged the importance of having someone at the college who knows them well and can keep them on track and progressing in their academic career: *"(My advisor) has helped me with my classes. They are helpful to give you a kick and a push. When you don't show up to class, they call you to see what is going on. I need that extra push."* Some students mentioned that through the advisement process, their advisor helped to give them direction in selecting their career path: *"Working with my advisor helped me to consider being a civil engineer."*

At one focus group, several students stated they did not always trust the academic advice they were receiving. Some of their complaints included: getting inaccurate information about registering and the courses they should take, and the advisor being unsure about academic polices. One student said,

"I would like an advisor that knew more about scheduling (classes) and willing to understand what would benefit me, as opposed to such a cookie-cutter way of advisement." One student complained that they were discouraged from taking specific classes because the

advisor told the student they couldn't and thought the classes were too difficult: *"I found out I can in fact take those other classes. When I transfer the courses I am in, they may not count at a four year college. I felt like he/she ignored my request."* However, the same student also expressed a close relationship with their advisor and believed the advice they received was instrumental in giving them direction: *"I have a strong connection to my advisor and would be completely lost without him/her. I have a friend (that is) not in ASAP and that friend doesn't know their advisor. I would not know what to register for or how to take classes sequentially."*

Most students indicated that without their advisors navigating the college and staying on track to graduate would have been more difficult. A number of students mentioned that they would feel *"lost"* without their advisor and that the program would feel different and less personal, typified by a student stating, *"It would be dramatically different without advisors. They know what you need. Without an advisor, the load would be on you to get that you need. It would not feel as personal. Advisors make a big difference."*

4. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TUTORING SERVICES AVAILABLE AT YOUR COLLEGE AND WHAT ROLE HAS TUTORING PLAYED IN YOUR ACADEMICS?

The majority of students in the focus groups received tutoring. All of the students who utilized tutoring services mentioned that it was helpful for them. Most attributed the tutoring they received as helping to increase their grades in their classes, exemplified by a student claiming, *"Tutors helped me to pass Math with over an 80 percent. Tutoring has made a difference, before I was failing tests."* Students who have not yet utilized tutoring services were glad that the service was available to them and would use it if they needed it: *"Haven't gone yet, but math is giving me problems, so I'm glad its there."*

The majority of students who received tutoring attributed their utilizing tutoring services to their advisors pushing them to do so. They were thankful for the recommendation and for the advisor helping to de-stigmatize tutoring. One student admitted, *"I don't like to ask for help. I thought only dumb people need tutoring. My advisor said smart people go to tutoring. I wrote essays in English and my grade went from a D to B."* Another student shared, *"I'm a proud person, but I let my advisor know I was struggling. She told me to go to tutoring and it helped. Now my grades are better."*

5. HOW HELPFUL HAS THE ASAP SEMINAR BEEN FOR YOU

Students held a positive view about the ASAP Seminars. Students commented that the seminars help them to increase their personal growth/self awareness and to navigate the college system.

With regard to gaining self awareness and personal growth, sessions that students found most helpful included: interdependence/independence; reducing stress; goal setting; and time management, among others. Students also indicated that they enjoyed the interactive arts education workshops delivered as part of the Seminar by affiliated arts education organizations the CUNY Creative Arts Team and EKO arts. One student expressed, *"I like seminars a lot. EKO arts happen every week. How to get over stress. Includes acting and dancing, etc. I think acting is the best way to learn something."*

With regard to helping to navigate the college system, sessions that students found most useful included: transferring to colleges; financial aid; leadership; and learning about student life and clubs on campus, among others. One student noted, *"A representative from student life talked about clubs and scholarships. (I) joined the Anime, debate and drama club."*

When asked about the On Course: Strategies for Success in College and in Life student development textbook, which all students received as part of the ASAP Seminar, students agreed to its usefulness in providing personal insight. Some students initially felt the book was extra work. As one student put it:

"At first I did not want to read the book, but the chapters were helpful."

There seemed to be a variation in the structured use of the On Course book by the Seminar facilitators. Students seemed to prefer inter-active activities related to the topics in the book, as opposed to a lecture. One student suggested, *"It's more useful for advisors or Seminar leaders to conduct group activities to see how you can use the ideas on the book."*

Students mentioned that they like to share stories and listen to other student's experiences and issues they were dealing with. As one student noted, *"We went around the room to ask if people had problems with professors or classes. Anyone can learn from issues that other students had."* Numerous students felt that hearing the personal challenges other students are facing helped to inspire them. A student noted, *"I got perspective from hearing all the things other people had to deal with. It inspired me to do better."*

6. HOW HELPFUL HAS THE CAREER EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST BEEN FOR YOU?

Students agreed that the services provided by their Career Employment Specialist (CES) were helpful and found the CES to be a great resource in supporting their job search and in their career development. The most noted benefit that students mentioned receiving from their CES was in working on their resume:

"I had a job in my last year of HS, but I had no resume. I first tried using a website, but it was not personal enough. My advisor helped me with the resume and showed ne how to construct it."

Students discussed receiving help in finding a job, and getting information about job opportunities/internships and job fairs. Students also discussed help they received in their career development, including: assessments; goal setting; scholarships; and making career networks. A student expressed, *"He/she did assessments that were very helpful. Before I was not sure what I wanted to do."*

A handful of students discussed the ASAP seminars put together by the CES and the benefit of guest speakers in creating networks: *"They invited a business and accounting person, and I learned what I want to do."*

At one focus group, a student suggested that they would like more discussion about future planning with their CES. Another student felt that their CES asked too many questions and believes the role of the CES role should be more professional: *"I don't talk to him/her anymore. I would like someone who isn't into all of my business. I feel there are different roles between the CES and the advisor."*

7. WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS? WHAT ROLE DO YOU THINK ASAP WILL HAVE PLAYED IN GETTING YOU THERE?

All of the students in the focus group had a positive outlook when asked where they see themselves in 10 years. Out of the 21 students interviewed, five see themselves owning a business, three each see themselves as teachers and generally *"established",* two each see themselves as directors of their fields and nurses. One student each see themselves as an engineer, certified social worker, M.D., media, Ph.D., and in theater.

All students strongly attributed the ASAP program as an important component in helping them realize their education and career goals. As one student put it, *"ASAP will play a major role by helping me stay focused. It's been a great start."* A few students mentioned that after they graduate, they would like to come back and work for the ASAP program at their college.

Without ASAP where would you be today?

When asked where they would be today without the ASAP program, the majority stated that they probably would not be in school right now. Of those students, many expressed that they would be working instead. One student shared, *"I wouldn't be in school (without ASAP), would be searching for a job or working for minimum wage because of the job crises, or accept a job below standard."*

Another student expressed, *"I wouldn't be going to school without ASAP. ASAP has helped a lot, (I) learned the sky is the limit."* Those students mentioning that they would still be in school, felt that they would be struggling in their academics. One student felt that if they were not in the ASAP program, they might be *"locked up"* right now.

SUMMARY:

Most of the feedback received from students about their experiences in the ASAP program was positive. Students expressed connectivity to the program and their classmates. They felt the program encouraged them to succeed, and helped to keep them on track academically. ASAP students also shared that the program gives them the skills they need to navigate the college experience and utilize resources. A number of students expressed dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the program, namely the block scheduling and their advisor.

The financial resources and the advisement process were considered to be the most important aspects of the program for most students. Students agreed that the advisors are very helpful, a great resource, and that having their support is an absolute benefit. Many students spoke of their close relationship to their advisor and their helpfulness in navigating college and staying on track academically, which would be difficult to do if the advisors were not a part of the program. Several students in one focus group shared concerns about the quality of advisement they were receiving, including a lack of personal connection with their advisor and a lack of trust in the academic advice they were receiving.

The majority of students utilized tutoring services and held a positive view of tutoring. Students who received tutoring expressed that it helped them improve their grades, and many were grateful that their advisor recommended they receive tutoring. Students held a positive view about the seminars and felt the Seminar helped them increase their personal/self awareness and navigate the college system. Students agreed that the services provided by their Career Employment Specialist were helpful and a great resource in supporting their job search and in their career development.

All of the students in the focus group had a positive outlook when asked where they see themselves in 10 years and strongly attributed the ASAP program in helping them attain their career vision. Without ASAP, the majority of students expressed they would not be in college. Those that mentioned being in school expressed that they would be struggling without the ASAP program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on student feedback, the students are generally happy with the program and appreciative of the opportunity that ASAP provides for them in helping to shape their professional careers. Suggestions for program improvement include:

1.) Identifying ways to create more flexibility in registering for classes outside of block scheduling.

2.) Professional development for advisors to improve their ability to accommodate student needs, establish trust, and ensure their educational experience fits their needs, goals, and plans.

3.) Integrate interactive facilitation methods in the Seminars in lieu of lectures to foster student's ability to listen reflectively, think critically and share ideas.

4.) Increase focus on career planning and goal setting that help to establish the connection, from where students are currently, to their future educational and career plans.

5.) More interface between advisor and CES on long-term goal setting for educational and career planning for students.

APPENDIX G: FALL 2010 ADVISOR TRACKING DATA ANALYSIS SUMMARY

(Includes analysis of cohorts two, three, and four)

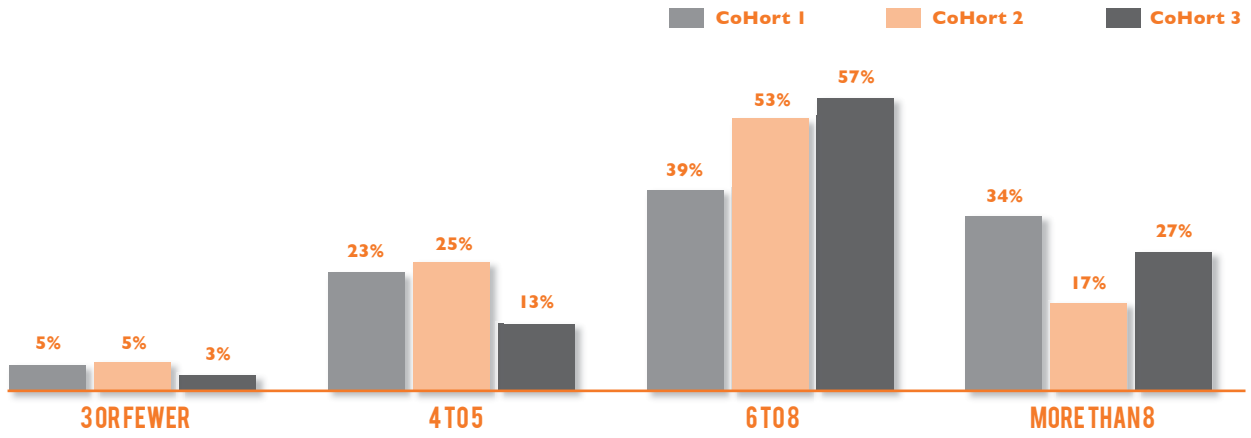
ADVISOR TRACKING DATA – ANALYSIS SUMMARY

At least 99.7% of ASAP students in all three cohorts enrolled in fall 2010 met with their academic advisor at least once throughout the semester. Of 1250 enrolled cohort 2, 3 and 4 students, only four students had not seen an advisor in the fall 2010 semester. Cohort 1 students (n=18) were withheld from the analysis, due to small cohort size.

TOTAL MEETINGS: (CHART 1)

Data indicate that over the course of the fall 2010 semester approximately 72% of Cohort 2 students, 70% of Cohort 3 students, and 84% of cohort 4 students met with their advisor in person at least six times. Approximately 5% of Cohort 2 student, 5% of Cohort 3 students, and 3% of Cohort 4 students met with their advisor three or fewer times.

CHART 1: TOTAL FALL 2012 STUDENT – ADVISOR MEETINGS BY COHORT



FOCUS CODES: (CHART 2 & CHART 3)

Chart 2 summarizes the number of advisor-student contacts by meeting type. When advisor-faculty contact is removed, in Chart 2, "Academic Issues" is the most frequent meeting type between advisor and student in the fall 2010 semester for all cohorts. The second most frequent meeting type for all cohorts is "ASAP Requirements". Chart 3 summarizes the average number of meetings per college by cohort.

CHART 2: ADVISOR-STUDENT MEETINGS BY FOCUS CODE EXCLUDING ADV-FAC CONTACTS

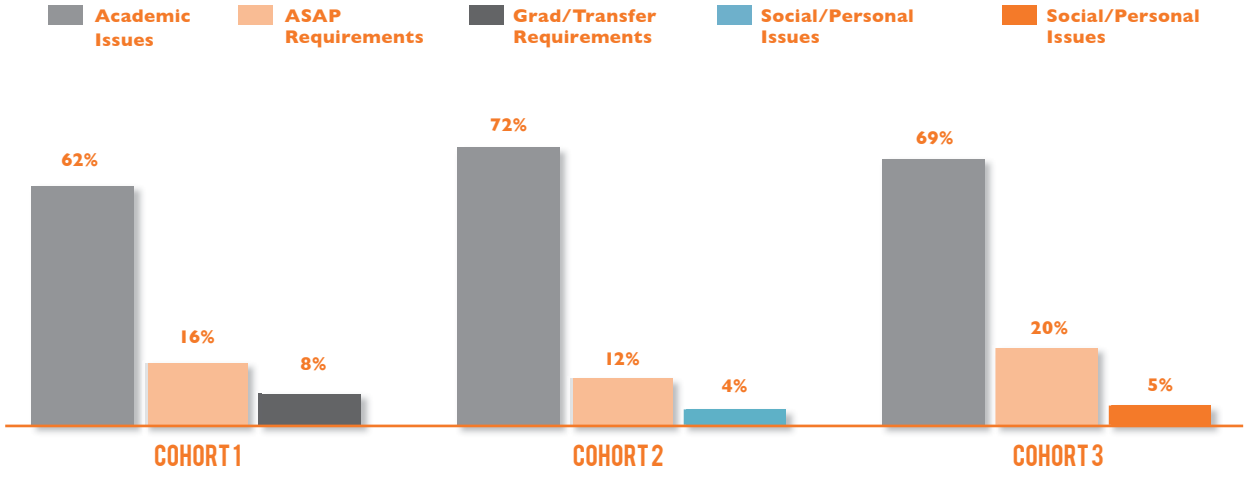
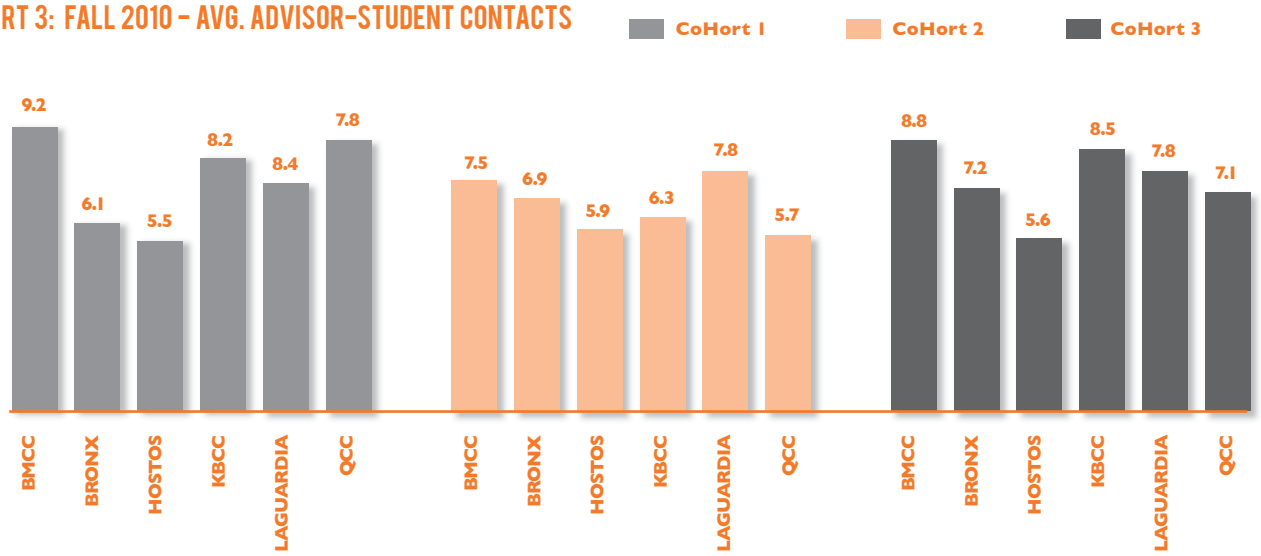


CHART 3: FALL 2010 – AVG. ADVISOR-STUDENT CONTACTS



GENDER ANALYSIS: TABLE 4A

Table 4a represents a breakdown of advisor/student meeting frequency by gender throughout the fall 2010 semester for each college. Using a Chi-square test, we found no significant difference in meeting pattern between male and female students and the number of meetings with advisors across the six colleges, and both female and male students saw their advisor at similar rates.

Some small, not statistically significant, differences are visible for cohort 2 QBCC students, where males (20%) met with their advisor 8 or more times, at a much higher rate than females (3%). Females (58%) also met with their advisor 5 times or less in fall 2010 compared to 33% of males. Some additional small, not statistically significant, differences are visible for cohort 2 Bronx students, where 62% of male students saw their advisor 5 times or less, compared to 29% of female students.

TABLE 4A: FALL 2010 STUDENT-ADVISOR MEETINGS BY GENDER (EXCLUDING ADVISOR-FACULTY CONTACTS) – COHORT 2

	BMCC		BRONX		HOSTOS		KBCC		LAGUARDIA		QCC		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
	N= 23	N=26	N=13	N=24	N=19	N=25	N=26	N=62	N=40	N=48	N=15	N=31	N=136	N=216
Number of Meetings														
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Attended 5 or fewer meetings	4.3	7.7	61.5	29.2	52.6	56.0	26.9	29.0	15.0	2.1	33.3	58.1	27.2	27.8
Attended 6 to 8 meetings	21.7	30.8	30.8	62.5	47.4	32.0	38.5	32.3	40.0	47.9	46.7	38.7	37.5	39.8
Attended more than 8 meetings	73.9	61.5	7.7	8.3	0.0	12.0	34.6	38.7	45.0	50.0	20.0	3.2	35.3	32.4

*Significant at the .05 level,
**Significant at .01 level

ETHNICITY ANALYSIS: TABLE 5A

Table 5a reflects the pattern of meetings across the colleges by ethnicity. A Chi-square test was used to test the differences between ethnic groups' meeting patterns at the different colleges as well as program wide. When looking at the program as a whole across the six colleges, we found a significant difference in meeting patterns across the racial groups for cohort 4, X2 (8, N=557) = 15.96, $p < .05$. White students met with their advisors less compared to Asian, Black, and Hispanic students, with nearly one-fourth (24%) meeting with their advisor five times or less in fall 2010. Black students met with their advisors more compared to Asians, Hispanics and White students, with more than one-third (34%) meeting with their advisors more than eight times in fall 2010.

For cohort 2, when we tested each college individually, we found a significant difference at BMCC, X2 (6, N=49) = 13.04, $p < .05$, where White students met with their advisors at lower rate than Asian, Black, and Hispanic students. There was also a significant difference at Kingsborough Community College, X2 (6, N=88) = 12.79, $p < .05$. Half of Black students (50%) met with their advisors more than 8 times, compared to only 8% of Hispanic students that met with their advisor more than 8 times during fall 2010. In reviewing table 5a for cohort 2, some additional small, not statistically significant, differences are visible for Bronx students, where Hispanic students have met with their advisor fewer times than Black students.

TABLE 5A: FALL 2010 STUDENT-ADVISOR MEETINGS BY ETHNICITY (EXCLUDING ADVISOR-FACULTY CONTACTS) - COHORT 2

	ASIAN				BLACK				HISPANIC				WHITE			
Number of Meetings		1-5	6-8	>8		1-5	6-8	>8		1-5	6-8	>8		1-5	6-8	>8
	N	%	%	%	N	%	%	%	N	%	%	%	N	%	%	%
BMCC *	4	0.0	25.0	75.0	26	3.8	23.1	73.1	14	0.0	28.6	71.4	5	40.0	40.0	20.0
Bronx	1	0.0	100.0	0.0	13	15.4	61.5	23.1	21	57.1	42.9	0.0	2	50.0	50.0	0.0
Hostos	1	100.0	0.0	0.0	14	50.0	50.0	0.0	26	53.8	38.5	7.7	3	66.7	0.0	33.3
KBCC*	5	40.0	40.0	20.0	46	28.3	21.7	50.0	13	23.1	69.2	7.7	24	29.2	37.5	33.3
LaGuardia	15	0.0	60.0	40.0	16	18.8	31.3	50.0	44	4.5	45.5	50.0	13	15.4	38.5	46.2
Queensborough	11	45.5	45.5	9.1	15	33.3	53.3	13.3	13	61.5	30.8	7.7	7	71.4	28.6	0.0
TOTAL	37	21.6	48.6	29.7	130	23.8	33.8	42.3	131	29.8	42.7	27.5	54	35.2	35.2	29.6

*Significant at the .05 level,
**Significant at .01 level

GPA ANALYSIS: TABLE 6A

Table 6a looks at number of meetings attended by students broken down into GPA ranges from 0.00 to 4.00 across the colleges. Using a Pearson Correlation we investigated the relationship between the number of student-advisor contacts throughout the fall 2010 semester and the students' fall 2010 semester GPA. It is important to note that this finding does not suggest that one variable causes the other.

COHORT 2

When looking at the program across all six colleges we found a significant positive but fairly weak relationship ($r = .172$, $p = .001$, $n = 342$) suggesting that the more meetings students attended, the higher their GPAs were and vice versa.

When we looked at colleges individually, we found significant results at both Bronx Community College and LaGuardia. At Bronx Community College we found a significant positive and moderate relationship ($r = .478$, $p=.003$, $n = 37$), and a significant positive and weaker relationship at LaGuardia ($r = .290$, $p = .006$, $n = 87$), indicating that the more meetings students attended, the higher their GPAs were and vice versa. We did not find any significant results at Borough of Manhattan Community College, Hostos, Kingsborough, and Queensborough.

TABLE 6A: FALL 2010 STUDENT-ADVISOR MEETINGS BY GPA (EXCLUDING ADVISOR-FACULTY CONTACTS) - COHORT 2

	0.00-1.99 GPA					2.00-2.50 GPA					2.51-3.00 GPA					3.01-4.00 GPA				
Number of Meetings		1-3	4-5	6-8	>8		1-3	4-5	6-8	>8		1-3	4-5	6-8	>8		1-3	4-5	6-8	>8
	N	%	%	%	%	**N**	%	%	%	%	**N**	%	%	%	%	**N**	%	%	%	%
BMCC	16	1.4	15.5	52.1	31.0	5	0.0	7.9	55.3	36.8	8	2.1	6.3	64.6	27.1	17	0.0	3.8	60.0	36.3
Bronx**	6	14.8	40.7	37.0	7.4	11	8.3	25.0	41.7	25.0	7	0.0	10.7	60.7	28.6	13	0.0	11.3	69.8	18.9
Hostos	8	9.1	51.5	33.3	6.1	13	0.0	44.0	56.0	0.0	7	4.5	36.4	54.5	4.5	14	2.4	35.7	54.8	7.1
KBCC	21	15.7	25.5	21.6	37.3	13	2.9	14.3	37.1	45.7	26	3.2	30.6	33.9	32.3	25	0.0	25.9	42.4	31.8
LaGuardia**	20	12.0	24.0	36.0	28.0	11	5.1	7.7	43.6	43.6	9	0.0	3.4	62.1	34.5	47	1.0	2.1	41.2	55.7
Queensborough	17	13.6	34.8	37.9	13.6	9	0.0	25.0	65.0	10.0	10	0.0	13.6	75.0	11.4	9	0.0	22.7	61.3	16.0
TOTAL**	88	10.4	29.2	37.6	22.8	62	2.5	18.9	50.2	28.4	67	1.7	17.2	56.7	24.5	125	0.5	15.0	53.2	31.3

*Significant at .05 level,
**Significant at .01 level

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