

Improving College Readiness for Low-Income and First-Generation Students

A Capstone Action Project

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Abstract

Although college enrollment is now a reachable goal, the proportion of students who complete a college degree has barely changed for low-income and first-generation students (LI/FG). These students continue to lag in both four-year college enrollment and degree completion rates. Because I value education, I want to study how lacking “college readiness” skills amongst low-income and first-generation high school students affects their academic success and prevents them from reaching their educational goals. For that reason, I want to delve into ways that will prepare students academically, socially, and mentally to become college ready which will increase high school graduation, college enrollment, and completion rates. From the research that I explored, I will work in collaboration with a nonprofit organization, TRIO staff, and Alumni to create an online blog discussing how lack of “college readiness” skills affects college enrollment and completion rates amongst low-income and first-generation students. The research discovered will aid in determining ways to address the college readiness barrier, provide strategies to improve college readiness, and build collaborative relationships between high schools, community organizations, and colleges/universities.

Keywords: education; socio-economic; low-income and first-generation students; college; university; college readiness; trio programs; non-cognitive skills.

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CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

Purpose of Scope

Higher education in the United States has gone through many transformative changes over the centuries, and the pace of innovation is accelerating rapidly. Even as a college education becomes increasingly imperative for social and economic success, access to college is problematic for Low-income and First-generation (LI/FG) high school students. This is due to a lack of academic, social, and economic readiness. Working to better align curricula and strengthen links between K–12 and higher education could improve the likelihood that students are academically prepared for college (Long, 2014). In addition, there needs to be innovations put into place to solidify this process.

The core question is how to determine whether these innovations are well designed to prepare low-income and first-generation high schools students for college enrollment and completion. LI/FG students are a diverse group of students who enter college with unique challenges and varying abilities. These students enter post-secondary institutions already academically behind their peers because schools and programs are not preparing them for the college level. Unfortunately, graduating from high school is not a guarantee that students are prepared for college or careers. Of the students who enroll in postsecondary education, approximately 28% from public 4-year institutions and 41% of students from public 2-year institutions enroll in remedial coursework (Griffin, 2018). This indicates that they are not ready for the rigor of postsecondary education. Understanding the college experience for this group of students involves an examination of their background characteristics as well as the barriers and supports that impact their college success.

Transitioning from high school to college can be difficult. That is why providing low-income and first-generation students with guidance and resources is a significant investment an education community can make. Creating a college-going culture even as early as elementary school helps engage students in their education and link their strengths and day-to-day activities with their future goals and ambitions (Thompson, 2016). As a matter of fact, former principal, Damen Lopez, of No Excuses University at Los Pen, believes that by creating a college-going culture in elementary school, students will aspire to a lifelong path toward higher education and deeper learning that ends with a college degree (Adams, 2010).

Providing students of any socioeconomic status with hope and inspiration combined with practical guidance on how to approach the college-going process can provide a lifelong value (Thompson, 2016). According to Thompson, giving LI/FG students access to such resources and relationships provide advantages for navigating the many stages of the college experience from learning about college options to selecting the right-fit programs and classes. Also, when students attend colleges and universities, they must provide the tools and resources to deliver the ongoing coaching and skill-building to help low-income students develop success networks to help them overcome obstacles and foster positive, informed decision-making about programs of study, course sequencing, and college-life balance.

For my ten-week micro project, I will use the PAR methodology working together, with stakeholders, to influence each others' habits of thought which is critically important for working together in research to build on important underlying structures for neutrality, analytical cohesive team interaction, and a positive outcome (James et al., 2012). This mehtod will show how stakeholders and I created a blog coupled with resources, strategies, and implementation of new ideas that will enhance "college readiness" skills for LI/FG students.

The blog will be discussing how lacking “college readiness” skills affects college enrollment and completion for low-income and first-generation students. The blog will be used as a resource tool and guide to inform and educate students, parents, and blog visitors about ways to improve college readiness skills in LI/FG high school students to increase college enrollment and completion rates.

Visitors to the blog site will have the opportunity to read and learn about the barriers that low-income and first-generation high school students experience that prevents them from attaining a college degree. Visitors will also have the opportunity to comment, share, subscribe, and like the blog. The blog will consist of articles, videos, and data that will aid in improving college readiness skills for LI/FG high school students. Data researched will provide strategies that will improve college readiness skills for LI/FG students. Collaboration with four TRIO staff members from a nonprofit organization located in South Holland, Illinois will assist with this micro project. One is the Director of Online Curriculum, and the other three are Program Coordinators. All who have experience working with low-income and first-generation students.

I will contact stakeholders individually, via face to face, by phone, and email to inform them of my project and what role they will play in helping me achieve my goal. I will discuss with each of them the “Informed Consent” document that each will sign agreeing to participate in the ten-week micro project voluntarily (See Appendix A: Informed Consent). Also, I will create a survey with the online Survey Monkey tool. The questions from the survey will allow stakeholders to provide their opinions on the barriers they see as contributing factors that are preventing LI/FG high school students from acquiring the college readiness skills needed to enroll into and complete a program of postsecondary education successfully (See Appendix C: Stakeholder Survey). Each stakeholder will then have the opportunity to meet with me and share

their thoughts about the survey questions and provide examples and research that validates their beliefs. They will also provide me with additional resources that I can include on my blog page. From their interviews, survey results, and research findings, we will design the blog page to provide data, strategies, and resources that will improve college readiness skills for LI/FG students.

Guiding Values and Project Significance

Because I value education, I want to study ways to increase college readiness skills in low-income and first-generation high school students. College readiness can be defined as the essential skills and knowledge students need to become ready for college and career, giving clear meaning to test scores and serving as a link between what students have learned and what they are ready to learn next (ACT, n.d.). To better understand and find solutions to help address this issue, I will work with a nonprofit organization and TRIO staff, who are familiar with working with LI/FG students, to help bring awareness, develop strategies, and implement processes that will improve college readiness skills for LI/FG students.

According to the Muraskin, et al., poor academic preparation is a significant factor in preventing students from being college ready. Students must have the essential reading, writing, and math skills necessary to persist through more challenging coursework and to graduate. There is considerable evidence that shows students who enter college with poorer high school records measured by GPA, and lower SAT or ACT scores are more likely to leave before completing college (Muraskin, Lee, Wilner, and Swail, 2004). Therefore, it is vital for low-income and first-generation students to complete a core curriculum in high school to be academically ready for college. Without the requisite academic foundation, most low-income and first-generation

students will have limited postsecondary education opportunities, struggle academically, and will complete college at lower rates than their peers.

Currently, I work for a nonprofit organization and its goal is to “create a nation of educated families” through providing holistic services to low-income and first-generation students, families, and communities. I know the hard work and dedication that is required to make a positive impact on the lives of LI/FG students and families. Over the years of working with this organization’s TRIO Upward Bound Program (UB), I have provided support to hundreds of LI/FG high school students in their preparation for college entrance.

Some of the services included: academic tutoring, academic advising, college/career awareness, goal setting, college admissions, guidance counseling, financial literacy, and academic instruction in core curriculum courses (math, language arts, reading, and science). The support increased their opportunities at succeeding in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits.

Limitations

As for limitations, I pondered about the time I will need to set aside to work on my capstone project within a ten-week timeframe. This was a concern because I am enrolled in another class here at CLU this semester in addition to work, home, and other responsibilities. Also, allotment of time to meet with stakeholders individually for interviews can pose an issue due to conflicting schedules. This will be my first time creating a blog page. I will need to make sure I chose an online platform that stakeholders and I will be comfortable working with. I will also be creating an online survey. The issue that I am concerned with is if stakeholders are going to complete the survey in a reasonable timeframe. Their responses are essential to me because they will be apart of the project measurements.

Definitions of Terms

College Readiness. College readiness can be defined as the essential skills and knowledge students need to become ready for college and career, giving clear meaning to test scores and serving as a link between what students have learned and what they are ready to learn next (ACT, n.d.).

Low-Income and First-Generation Students (LI/FG). Students from low-income families; and high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree.

TRIO Programs. TRIO (originally three, now eight): Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Service, which existed within the reauthorization of The Higher Education Act, and was designed to identify and increase access to higher education for economically disadvantaged students.

Family Centered Educational Agency (FCEA). A nonprofit organization that has served thousands of low-income and first-generation high school students through TRIO Programs and community residents annually. This organization is funded by the US Department of Education.

ACT.org. Is 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization primarily known for the ACT, a standardized test designed to assess high school students' academic achievement and college readiness.

Socioeconomic Status (SES). Socioeconomic status is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation.

Participatory Action Research (PAR). A team-based approach used in Action Research and the stakeholders involved all share equally in the democratic research process. The aim of supporting actions that lead to satisfactory results for all those involved.

CHAPTER 2 – Literature Review and Initial Stakeholder Dialogue

Introduction to Literature Review

The evidence on the effectiveness of college readiness programs needs to be strengthened. A handful of studies provide some insight into how college readiness programs can affect students' successful matriculation, early persistence in college, and eventual degree completion. Many low-income high school graduates are not adequately prepared for the transition to college. Many incoming community college students grapple with the “readiness gap,” the difference between students' academic skills upon enrolling in college and the skills they need for college-level studies. Nearly 60 percent enroll in at least one developmental reading, writing, or math course; often these students fail to progress towards a certificate or degree or transfer to a four-year school (Corrin, 2013). There is a growing consensus that America's students need to be prepared to compete in a world that demands more than just basic skills. Today, about a third of American students require remedial education when they enter college, and current college attainment rates are not keeping pace with our country's projected workforce needs (US Department of Education, n.d.).

In this literature review, I will explore processes, programs, and strategies that can help improve college readiness skills in low-income and first-generation students. To do that, I will answer the following questions: How can improving Socioeconomic Status (SES) have a positive affect LI/FG students? How can the development of cognitive skills improve college readiness skills in LI/FG students? How can TRIO programs impact college readiness skills in LI/FG students?

Through this research process, this literature was researched for approximately three months. The type of literature searched were professional journals, blog posts, websites, past

assignments, peer-reviewed literature, and books. Some of the key terms I searched were: “low-income and first-generation students,” “U.S. Department of Education,” “college readiness,” “college barriers,” and “academic readiness.” Ever since I started CLU, my goal was to discover ways to eliminate barriers that interfere with LI/FG students reaching their educational goals. I found that I will need to develop collaborative efforts, implement new processes and programs that will aid in increasing college enrollment and completion rates for these students. One of the barriers is the lack of college readiness skills. Addressing this barrier will succor students to become better prepared during high school which will have a positive impact on their college readiness skills. This literature discloses three areas that will play a significant role in improving college readiness skills in low-income first-generation students to increase college enrollment and completion rates. Those three areas are socioeconomic status, TRIO Programs, and cognitive skills.

Perspectives on Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Research indicates that children from low-socioeconomic status (SES) households and communities develop academic skills slower than children from higher SES groups (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, & Maczuga, 2009). Literacy gaps in children from different socioeconomic backgrounds exist before formal schooling begins. For instance, low SES in childhood is related to poor cognitive development, language, memory, socioemotional processing, and consequently poor income and health in adulthood. The school systems in low-SES communities are often under-resourced, negatively affecting students’ academic progress and outcomes (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008).

According to Hudley, high percentages of LI/FG college students are from low-income families and attended low-performing PreK-12 schools (Hudley et al., 2009). Many low-

performing schools did not have enough highly qualified teachers and were often underfunded; this, in turn, affected the quality of education many LI/FG college students received. Research indicates that low-income and first-generation SAT and ACT test-takers tend to have less core academic preparation and score lower than later-generation test-takers (Balemian & Feng, 2013). SAT/ACT scores, along with high school GPA, serve as predictors of college persistence and academic success in college (Falcon, 2015). According to Pitre and Pitre (2009), "Over several decades in the United States, African American, Hispanic, Native American, and low-income students have completed high school and attended college at consistently lower rates than their white and higher income student counterparts" (p. 98).

Inadequate education and increased dropout rates affect children's academic achievement, perpetuating the low-SES status of the community. Children from low-SES families are less likely to have experiences that encourage the development of fundamental skills of reading acquisition, such as phonological awareness, vocabulary, and oral language (Buckingham, Wheldall, & Beaman-Wheldall, 2013). However, poor households have less access to learning materials and experiences, including books, computers, stimulating toys, skill-building lessons, or tutors to create a positive literacy environment (Bradley, Corwyn, McAdoo, & García Coll, 2001; Orr, 2003). Prospective college students from low-SES backgrounds are less likely to have access to informational resources about college (Brown, Wohn, & Ellison, 2016). Additionally, compared to high-SES counterparts, young adults from low-SES backgrounds are at a higher risk of accruing student loan debt burdens that exceed the national average (Houle, 2014). Improving school systems and early intervention programs will help to reduce some of these risk factors; as well as provide more jobs for low-income communities will allow parents to explore and introduce their children to better opportunities.

Perspectives on TRIO Programs

Since 1997, four national studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education have been completed on the Federal TRIO programs. Data from these studies demonstrate that participation in a TRIO program has a significant impact on the educational outcomes of low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities. The Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) are federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (U.S. Department of Education).

The program's goal is to increase the rates at which the targeted student enroll in and graduate from postsecondary institutions by providing fundamental support such as help with the core curriculum instruction, academic advising, college admissions process, and assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations. TRIO programs engage participants in an extensive, multi-year program designed to provide academic counseling, and tutoring services along with a cultural enrichment component, all of which enhance their regular school program before entering college. The TRIO program was found to have an impact on educational aspirations, postsecondary education progress, and persistence (McElroy, Edward, & Armesto, 1998).

The impact appears to be related to participation patterns of former participants: those with typical participation patterns generally exhibited more positive outcomes than those with a standard pattern. The higher overall progress of participants is attributable to their higher rates of entry to postsecondary education and to their propensity to attend four-year institutions. It can be concluded that the Upward Bound program is effectively meeting its mandated objective to provide participants with the skills and motivation necessary for entry and success in education beyond high school (McElroy, Edward, & Armesto, 1998). Therefore, the research answers the question, "How can TRIO programs impact college readiness for LI/FG students?" By

advocating for these programs to be in underperforming schools will allow students to become a participant and receive program services that will increase their chances at improving academic and college readiness skills while in high school.

Perspectives on Cognitive Skills

At the heart of college readiness is the development of the cognitive and metacognitive capabilities of incoming students (Coonley, 2008). Coonley believes that the critical problem in preparing LI/FG students “is that the current measures of college preparation are limited in their ability to communicate to students and to educators the true range of what students must do to be fully ready to succeed in college” (Coonley, 2008, p. 24).

These include analysis, interpretation, precision, and accuracy, problem-solving, and reasoning. Student facility with these strategies has been consistently and emphatically identified by those who teach entry-level college courses as being centrally essential to college success. Also contributing to student success is a set of academic self-management behaviors. Among these are time management, strategic study skills, and awareness of one’s true performance, persistence and the ability to utilize study groups. All require students to demonstrate high degrees of self-awareness, self-control, and intentionality (Coonley, 2008).

Like Cooney, author Julia Duncheon of “The Problem of Collee Readiness,” also believes cognitive and metacognitive skills affect LI/FG students college readiness. Cognitive academic factors include the content knowledge and cognitive skills required for success in entry-level college coursework (Barnett et al., 2012; Porter & Poliko, 2012). Students need to master the basics in main academic subjects and develop proficiency in math, reading, and writing (Byrd & Macdonald, 2005; Long, Iatarola, & Conger, 2008). Second, college readiness entails cognitive skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, metacognition, communication

skills, research skills, and systems thinking, which facilitate learning across disciplines (ConnectEd, 2012; NRC, 2012). Given these points, cognitive skills are the core skills students brain uses to think, learn, read, reason and pay attention. Addressing cognitive and metacognitive skills now in LI/FG students will help improve college readiness and enhance educational attainment.

Stakeholder Perspectives on College Readiness

During an earlier interview segment that I conducted with two stakeholders while enrolled in the Collaboration course here at CLU prior to my ten-week micro project, I interviewed them to receive feedback on what they believe is needed to increase success at the postsecondary level for low-income and first-generation students. A few of the questions asked were: Did you feel like you were academically prepared for college? What are some barriers you faced while preparing for college? What do you believe can be done to improve college enrollment rates for LI/FG students? And, In what ways did the TRIO program assist you in preparing for college?

I felt confident that the interviewees would provide some excellent feedback to the questions since they are LI/FG college alums who successfully enrolled into and graduated from a postsecondary institution. Therefore, both know firsthand the barriers that LI/FG students face while trying to reach their educational goals. The information gathered from these stakeholders helped me to discover processes and strategies that can be implemented to improve LI/FG students' academic preparedness and college readiness.

Both stakeholders, who happen to be African American males, were interviewed separately. Each stated he knew that he wanted to attend college at an early age to make sure he would be able to provide for himself and family members. Neither of them had a specific person

that inspired them to go to college because neither of their parents attended college. When asked if either of them was academically prepared, both provided the same answer, which was they were not. One stated that although he was in the top 10% of his class, he didn't feel that he was prepared for college rigor. The other one said he knew he was not prepared because he struggled in many of his core academic classes during high school. When I asked both about what barriers they encounter during preparation for college, both stated the same things which included:

1. Academically unpreparedness
2. Low GPA's, test scores, no family support, unmotivated
3. Lack of academic advisement/guidance
4. Affordability (will they be able to afford college?)

Another question I asked the alums was what are their beliefs on what can be done to improve college enrollment rates for LI/FG students. Each stated preparing students early before they enter high school. One alum said he believes college readiness skills should be started as early as the fifth grade. By preparing students early will have a more significant impact on their test scores which will improve their academic rigor by the time they enter high school. The last question I asked since both participated in a TRIO program, was how did this program help assist you with preparing for college? Both agreed that because they were a member of the TRIO program, they received that one on one academic advisement from their counselor, tutoring in subject areas they were struggling with, mentoring, encouragement, college visits, information on different careers, guidance counseling/support, etc. Both stated that if they had not been introduced to this program, they don't know if attending and graduating college would have been possible.

From these initial stakeholders interviews, while enrolled in the Collaboration course here at CLU, I concluded that the research that I am conducting now for my ten-week micro project, which is required for my Capstone course, is in agreeance with their responses. Similarly, that brings me to my current stakeholder interviews that I conducted for my ten-week micro project. I interviewed four TRIO staff members. Three males and one female. Upon questioning these stakeholders, individually, by phone, and email, all believe change is necessary to improve how LI/FG students are prepared to increase college readiness skills which will ultimately enhance their chances at successfully earning a postsecondary education. Similar to, but not exact, I asked them these questions for the micro-project were:

1. What are some issues that impact college readiness for LI/FG students?
2. How can we improve college readiness for LI/FG students?
3. How does college readiness effect college enrollment and completion rates?
4. What processes can we implement to increase college readiness?

Responses from these questions correlated with previous stakeholder interviews and current research I conducted while enrolled in the Collaboration course. The first two stakeholders that I interviewed were male Program Coordinators/TRIO alum who also experienced firsthand the barriers that impact college readiness skills. Their answers pointed to socioeconomic status. Both interviewees expressed how difficult it is growing up in a low-income community infested with drugs, gangs, limited resources, and a single family home. Each stated how he desired to attend college to get out of the toxic environment. One said, he once considered dropping out of high school because it was challenging to stay focused and the coursework was challenging in the beginning. The other interviewee stated he didn't feel that the teachers were providing the support he needed to help him learn at a productive level. They both

agreed that lacking key resources, diversity and cultural experiences impacted their ability to be college ready. Both also agreed that becoming a participant of the TRIO Upward Bound program provided them with cultural experiences, diversity, and exposure to college and career information that motivated them to want to attend college.

The third interviewee, Director of Online Curriculum/TRIO alum, stated he believe the issues affecting college readiness for LI/FG students are the lack of growth mindset, resources, mentors, and proper study skills preparation. This coincides with the what the first two interviewees said, underlying issues of socioeconomic status. He also stated being the second child of three boys living in a single-family home with his mother, who did not finish school, that he was going to be the first one out his family to attend college. He goes on to say, lacking cognitive skills, resources, and support is vital to achieving academic success. He also stated what helped him a lot was becoming a participant of the UB program. Having a mentor to guide and encourage him was essential to his success. Living in the low-income community was also a contributing factor he stated. Being surrounded by people who had no desire to want positive change for their lives fueled his determination to succeed at his educational goals.

My last interviewee, a female Program Coordinator, was also in agreeance with the other interviewees. She believes that socioeconomic status affects students college readiness ability along with lacking proper guidance in high school. She thinks students who are LI/FG needs supportive programs to increase their ability to improve fundamental learning skills that they require because of inequality. She also believes preparing students for college as early as the fifth grade will improve college readiness. By preparing students early can have a more significant impact on test scores which will enhance their academic rigor by the time they enter high school.

She stated if students are prepared academically at the high school level when they enter college their chances of completing is increased.

Comparatively, all interviewees named the same trends that are affecting LI/FG students from reaching their educational goals. The three issues addressed, socioeconomic status, cognitive skills, and TRIO programs along with limited academic support, are contributing factors that affect college readiness in low-income and first-generation students which alter their ability to learn, function, and reach their full potential.

Conclusion

The world is changing at a rapid pace. Therefore, a college education becomes increasingly imperative for social and economic success. To attend college and earn a college degree, students must have strong college readiness skills to be successful. College knowledge and development can enhance the relevance of the high school experience. Besides, students must have the academic skills, and experiences associated with engagement in core academics, as well as essential nonacademic competencies such as growth mindsets, problem-solving, and interpersonal engagement. To improve college readiness skills in low-income and first-generation students, there needs to be a combination of targeted academic instruction, social and financial support, integrated faculty-driven and classroom-based practices, and strong commitment from institutional leaders to increase success at the high school and college level. Research confirms that by addressing socioeconomic status, cognitive skills, and placing students in TRIO programs will improve the student's college readiness skills which will increase LI/FG students chances at achieving their educational goals. From this literature review, I found from all interviews conducted with stakeholders during my Collaboration course as well as my current Capstone course to be a vital component of this ten-week micro project. Stakeholders feedback correlated with the research that provided statistics on the trends that are interfering with LI/FG students from becoming college ready and ultimately reaching their educational goals.

CHAPTER 3 - Methods Determined with Participants

Currently, students are graduating from high school at record levels, meeting a key milestone or prerequisite for postsecondary enrollment. Unfortunately, graduating from high school is not a guarantee that students are prepared for college or careers. Of the students who enroll in postsecondary education, approximately 28% from public 4-year institutions and 41% of students from public 2-year institutions enroll in remedial coursework. This indicates that they are not ready for the rigor of postsecondary education. Also, students are not completing programs or degrees. The 6-year graduation rate for students seeking a bachelor's degree at a 4-year institution is 59%, and it is 39% for students who start at a 2-year institution. Disparities of race and ethnicity, economic status, and gender are significant. Black and Hispanic males and students from low-income backgrounds are far less likely to graduate from high school, enroll in postsecondary education, or complete a postsecondary certificate or degree (Griffin, 2018).

Project Goal Determined by Researcher and Stakeholders

Knowing that lacking college readiness skills prevents LI/FG students from enrolling into and graduating from college, I decided to interview four TRIO staff members to increase the potential for compelling data since they are familiar with working with low-income and first-generation students. The interviews are a method used in PAR which “enable participants to describe their situation” (Stringer, 1999). Interviewees shared their thoughts on the barriers they see are affecting LI/FG students from being college ready and attaining a post-secondary education. Afterward, we concluded many factors affect college readiness for low-income and first-generation students that causes them to be unsuccessful at the college level. Some of the elements included a lack of family support, college exposure, prep classes, knowledge of college opportunities, money, and resources. To determine the scope of the micro project stakeholders

were engaged with a survey created to receive feedback to help with research. The questions were:

1. What are some issues that impact college readiness for LI/FG students?
2. How can we improve college readiness for LI/FG students?
3. How does college readiness effect college enrollment and completion rates?
4. What processes can we implement to increase college readiness?

The questions were designed to get a clearer understanding of what issues and measures are needed to improve college readiness for LI/FG students. The collaboration log is located in Appendix B which shows a record of the conversations and methods of contact. With that in mind, the goal for my ten-week micro project is to create a blog page that will be used as a resource tool and guide to inform and educate visitors about ways to improve college readiness skills in LI/FG high school students to increase college enrollment and completion rates.

Project Methods Determined by Researcher and Participants

To accomplish the goal of improving college readiness for low-income and first-generation students, stakeholders and I followed a ten-week plan created to explain each week what action will take place to assure that we meet our project goal.

Week 1:

- Meet with TRIO staff and informing them about the project and allow them to sign the informed consent form
- Conduct individual interviews with TRIO Staff
- Revisit the capstone e-book for guidance

Week 2:

- Review TRIO staff interviews
- Conduct research on project issues (college readiness)
- Develop open-ended questions for the online survey
- Create the online survey (surveymonkey.com)

- Email TRIO Staff the online survey

Week 3:

- Collect responses from the counselors
- Analyze responses
- Begin working on chapters one and two of the paper

Week 4:

- Meet with TRIO staff and share/discuss results
- Incorporate feedback from staff to assist with interpreting results
- Research and select the best website to create the blog
- Begin working on chapters three of the paper

Week 5:

- Reflect on the results from surveys and begin researching additional solutions for the project
- Communicate with TRIO staff about research findings to receive feedback
- Submit chapter three paper and receive feedback and make changes

Week 6 & 7:

- Create blog that address findings and issues for college readiness
- Revisit the research question and answer it based on the survey & research findings
- Reflect on the research question and report on changes for all parties involved
- Begin working on chapters four and five of the paper

Week 8 & 9:

- Complete measurement from blog feedback
- Share results with TRIO staff
- Make changes to the final document for submission

Week 10:

- Complete my capstone paper with findings and submit my signed consent for CLU to place my project report in the archives

We practiced planning, composing, and revision of the content created for the blog page to make sure information was current, relevant and actionable. The blog consisted of knowledge on socioeconomic status, non-cognitive skills, and TRIO programs as well as provided unlimited

college readiness resources. Stakeholders and I met on several occasions and discussed the blog content to make sure it provides visitors with a wealth of information and tips on how to apply the knowledge and materials we provided. We also decided to make sure we provide links to quality websites so visitors will know that they can trust the information on the blog site. Also, we added a question to the blog page for visitors to answer which will reinforce learning. By helping them reflect on the blog content, and provide feedback in the comment box, will give us a better understanding of what they found helpful or what additional information they are interested in learning about. Equally important, we decided to use pictures and videos to help illustrate the points we were trying to make when it comes to improving college readiness. We determined that since people learn differently, using pictures and videos will enhance and reinforce the learning of blog content.

Project Measurements Determined by Researcher and Participants

To improve college readiness for LI/FG students, stakeholders and I discussed what information would be imperative to measure throughout this ten-week micro project. The measurement process will be split into three parts. The first part will capture discussions during the initial interviews. The second part will be the survey for stakeholders that will capture their feedback on issues they view as college readiness barriers for LI/FG students. The survey was created using a free online survey tool (SurveyMonkey.com). The third part will be the blog data which consists of visitors, comments, and likes. This data will give us an idea of understanding the success of the “college readiness” blog. The blog will be developed using a free online blog platform (Wix.com) that will allow us to share articles, videos, pictures, and resources addressing issues/solutions about college readiness. The evaluation of the micro project’s evaluation plan will be as transparent as possible by providing data on project outcomes.

Therefore, stakeholders and I will have several follow-up meetings to discuss action that is taking place on the blog page. During this time, we will also consider if changes should be made to the blog. Information gathered through this method will be utilized to identify the core barriers of college readiness.

We will monitor the blog site daily. To determine viewers satisfaction with the blog, we will develop data that address these key areas: college readiness, socioeconomic status, non-cognitive skills, financial literacy, and TRIO Programs. If there is a significant amount of visitors, comments, and likes to the blog page, that is how we will measure the effectiveness. The feedback from the college readiness blog will help us in determining if the information is viewed as being useful or not. We will also measure a question on the blog page that will ask visitors, “What information about college readiness did you find useful?” This will let us know what college readiness content and resources we should create more of (i.e., noncognitive skills). We will then focus on developing a long-term plan that will consist of collecting visitors contact information to email them monthly newsletters about improving college readiness for LI/FG students.

CHAPTER 4 - Results: Evidence of Change through Project Implementation

Actions Taken by Researcher and Participants

Upon interviewing the four TRIO staff members, I was able to meet with them individually to discuss the ten-week micro project. I also shared my thoughts about the college readiness issues that low-income and first-generation students are encountering while striving to earn a college education. I also informed them that I wanted each one to complete a survey and answer the questions about college readiness to help with my research.

As of today, only two of the four stakeholders that I interviewed completed the survey. Although I have met with each stakeholder several times and reminded them to complete the survey, they have not thus far. Of the two that completed the survey, I asked the following questions:

1. What are some issues that impact college readiness for LI/FG students?
2. How can we improve college readiness for LI/FG students?
3. List how college readiness effect college enrollment and completion rates for LI/FG students?
4. What processes can we implement to increase college readiness in LI/FG students?

Listed below in Table 1. shows the responses to the questions collected from the two stakeholders who completed the survey.

TABLE 1. Stakeholders responses to survey	
Stakeholder 1 Answers	Stakeholder 2 Answers
Question 1: A lack of support from family because they have not attended college, lack of exposure to colleges and college readiness prep classes, and a lack of knowledge on college opportunities.	Question 1: Money and lack of resources.
Question 2: Provide students with information early in their high school career to help prepare them as they move towards graduation. Expose the students to colleges and information about financial aid, graduation rates, etc.	Question 2: Helping parents understand the process of college readiness, and help students figure out why they want to attend college.
Question 3: Students may enroll in a college but not finish because they are not prepared to complete the entire 4 years.	Question 3: 1. Because Students don't know about all of the help available, it affects their ability to enroll in college. 2. Sometimes the parents don't understand the process, so the students become discouraged and that discouragement affects their ability to complete college. 3. Students become products.
Question 4: Exposing students to colleges early in their high school years, meeting with students one on one to prepare them for a college that will best meet their academic and social needs. Collaboration with families to help walk them through the process as well.	Question 4: Parent workshops. Growth Mindset. Academic Mindset.

Although I initially anticipated that all four TRIO staff members would complete the survey and provide some excellent feedback since they are all familiar with college readiness issues that affect LI/FG students, it was unfortunate that two did not follow through on their commitment to the project. I am not sure what caused them not to complete the survey, but I am thankful for their continual collaborative efforts throughout the remainder of the ten-week micro project.

Fortunately, we were able to meet as a group on six occasions which I really found productive. During those meetings, everyone shared their insights about the college readiness issues at hand, and from that information, we were able to discuss and develop content for the

blog. Below listed in Table 2. shows the date, participants involved, and actions taken during our follow-up meetings (See Appendix B: Stakeholder Collaboration Log).

TABLE 2. Action taken by researcher and stakeholders		
Date	Participants Involved	Actions Taken
10/19/18	All involved in project	Met with stakeholders to inform them about the project and provide them copies of the CLU consent form. Received signed consent forms. Set up appointment for the following Friday to discuss college readiness issues as a group.
10/26/18	All involved in project	Received signed consent forms. Set up appointment for the following Friday to discuss college readiness issues as a group.
11/2/18	Three Stakeholders and I	Via text, I asked stakeholders to give me their opinions on “How can we improve college readiness in LI/FG students? 1. One replied back stating to teach students growth mindset, provide students with resources, mentors, direct students to college prep or study skills courses, and encourage students to get involved organizations, etc. 2. Another one said introduce them to experimental learning 3. Another one said introduce students to goal setting, etc.
11/9/18	All involved with project	Conducted a follow-up meeting to discuss blog page content. Worked on the page and added more pictures, a video, etc.

TABLE 2. Action taken by researcher and stakeholders (cont).		
Date	Participants Involved	Actions Taken
11/9/18	All involved with project	Conducted a follow-up meeting to discuss blog page content. Worked on the page and added more pictures, a video, etc.
11/16/18	Two stakeholders and I	Met to discuss results of the completed surveys. Discussed several college readiness barriers. We decided to develop/include a Theory of Change Model to show provides the steps that will be taken to measure overall success. Unfortunately, we didn't complete this task.
11/23/18	All involved with project	Met with stakeholders to discuss blog site content and chose a video to add explaining college readiness statistics.
11/29/18	All involved with project	We discussed that one of the blog pages was viewed more often than the others. We also discussed the comments sections, etc. Continued to monitor traffic to the site.

Also, listed below in Table 3. shows descriptions of the blog posts, title of blog post, and content that stakeholders and I created to improve college readiness skills for LI/FG students.

TABLE 3. Blog Posts	
Title	Content
“Let’s Improve College Readiness for Low-income and First Generation Students”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tighter partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions at the local level would complement the goals of the Common Core State Standards. 2. Are High School Graduates Ready For College Classes? (Video). 3. Tighter partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions at the local level would complement the goals of the Common Core State Standards. 4. Focusing on students non-cognitive skills. 5. Helping college-eligible low-income and first-generation students attend schools that are the best fit for them.
“Non-Cognitive Skills”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-cognitive skills and why they matter for economic development. 2. Academic Perseverance. 3. Learning Strategies. 4. Academic Mindset. 5. Non-Cognitive Video
“Collaboration Is Key”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instructor on peer-to-peer learning. 2. Build in many opportunities for group discussions. 3. Prepare students to be a part of a team. 4. Collaboration Video
“TRIO Works	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are TRIO Programs? 2. TRIO Video
Resource Page	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. College Readiness Literature

Measurements of Results

The college readiness blog's goal was to introduce visitors to a college readiness resource tool and guide that inform and educate people about barriers that are preventing low-income and first-generation students from enrolling into and completing college. Equally, the blog contains data and resources that can be used to eliminate those barriers and improve college readiness for students. Included with the blog content are videos, pictures, and a resource page with hyperlinks enabling visitors to share this content with others.

The blog results measure six weeks thus far. In the beginning stage, visits to the blog were minimal. During our follow-up meeting, we decided to allow staff within the organization to visit the blog and provide feedback. After that, blog views increased. We are monitoring the blog daily to update project data. Below in Table 4. is a description of data collected thus far.

The data in the table consists of comments, likes, and views of the blog posts.

Blog Post Name	Visits	Likes	Comments
Let's Improve College Readiness for LI/FG Students	48	8	6
Non-Cognitive Skills	15	4	1
Collaboration Is Key	10	4	0
TRIO Programs	6	1	0
Total	79	17	7

The blog posts together have been viewed a total of seventy-nine times, “seventeen likes,” and seven comments. The comments that visitors left are all positive. One of the viewer's that viewed the *Let's Improve College Readiness for Low-income and First-generations*

Students' blog comment read, "I agree completely! Those non-cognitive skills are very important. A kid can be very smart, but if they are not determined enough to succeed and if they are not taught to persevere and push through life's challenges, they will fall short." This comment derived from the content in the blog that explained how non-cognitive skills cover a range of abilities such as conscientiousness, perseverance, and teamwork. These skills are critically important to student achievement, both in and beyond the classroom (Gabrieli, Ansel, & Krachman, 2015).

Some may view this data as unsuccessful because of the minimal amount of comments. While there were not many comments, we see the project as making progress. According to the article, "5 Realistic Benchmarks for Your First Year of Blogging," the time frame that a blog has been active plays a significant role in its success (BlogTyrant, n.d.). Being that the college readiness blog has only been active for about six weeks, and has seventy-nine views, means each of the viewers read content on ways to improve college readiness skills in LI/FG students, which is what stakeholders and I hoped to achieve from the blog.

Communication of Results to Stakeholders

In an open dialogue, stakeholders were informed of the college readiness blog results. There were only three of the four participants present. I will meet with the other participant at a later date and share results. During our discussion, we checked the blog and noticed that more visitors had viewed the site. I asked the participants if they had any questions. One participant asked if I saw this as a success since only seven visitors left a comment. I replied, "absolutely" Although we only received seven comments, there were over seventy-nine people who viewed the blog. Another participant asked If I was going to continue working on this project. I replied,

“Yes” Because I actually enjoyed creating the blog with the help of everyone. Participants agreed that they would keep working on the project and was glad to be a part of my team.

Assessment of Goal Achievement

Stakeholders and I agreed that lacking college readiness skills is a barrier that prevents low-income and first-generation students from reaching their educational goals. Our collaborative efforts during meetings and creating the blog was achieved (See Appendix D: College Readiness Infographic). We believe that the blog content created awareness to the college readiness barriers affecting low-income and first-generation students. By providing resources to aid with this issue can improve the way we prepare LI/FG students for college. Also, I was able to ask some of my co-workers who visited the blog their insights and all were satisfied with the information. One of my co-workers stated she thought the resource page was fantastic. I am optimistic that the college readiness blog is a valuable resource to those who visited the site and hope that they will share the information with others.

CHAPTER 5 – Final Reflection and Recommendation

Overall Project Summary

The results collected from the college readiness blog, caused me to realize there need to be more people involved in bringing awareness to the college readiness issues that affect our low-income and first-generation students. Creating the blog allowed me to see that there are people interested in learning how we can improve college readiness skills in LI/FG students.

Because I value education, I believe that teachers, educators, counselors, community organizations, and nonprofit organizations need to work together to change the way LI/FG students are being taught in school compared to their peers. The research throughout this ten-week micro project has confirmed that LI/FG students are affected by many barriers that prevent them from reaching their educational goals. We need to address students needs academically, socially, and mentally to improve college readiness skills which will increase high school graduation, college enrollment, and completion rates.

Consistency of Guiding Values

Educating our youth is vital to the success of our future. Equipping low-income and first-generation students with the college readiness skills needed to excel in their education is essential to students developing the knowledge that is necessary to excel in today's society. Stakeholders and I believe that students should have a combination of targeted academic instruction, social and financial support, integrated faculty-driven and classroom-based practices, and strong commitment from institutional leaders to increase enrollment and graduation rates for low-income and first-generation students success at the high school and college level.

Throughout this ten-week micro project, I was guided by knowing the importance of bringing awareness to the college readiness barriers that are affecting LI/FG students. Being a

low-income and first-generation student, I know the barriers that prevent students from reaching their educational goals. Some of the obstacles I encountered were lack of academic support, guidance, social/financial support, and college and awareness information which was imperative for me to enroll in successfully and complete college on time. I want to work with others to create practices that will address and eliminate these barriers so low-income and first-generation students can begin to feel like they belong and can reach their educational goals. All they need is the proper guidance, support, and motivation to succeed.

According to the article, “Student Empowerment: Helping first-generation and low-income students succeed,” these students feel rejected from past experiences, some may lack confidence in their abilities, feel out of place or struggle with guilt. To empower low-income and first-generation students, they need to feel included, valued and have opportunities to share their personal experiences and learn from others who have overcome adversity (Clency, 2018).

Project Impact on the Researcher

Because I am passionate about educating our youth, I know that collaborative efforts are needed to aid in improving the way we educate and prepare our low-income and first-generation students for success at reaching their educational goal. That is why I will be partnering with other community outreach programs, school districts, nonprofit organizations, and TRIO personnel to advocate, implement programs and processes that will change the way low-income and first-generation students are learning in schools. Hopefully, this will improve the college-going and graduation rates for students.

The Claremont Core curriculum was crucial in molding how I approached my ten-week micro project and worked with stakeholders. The Mindfulness course introduced me to several mindfulness techniques that I was able to use in a group setting. This learning was vital while

working with stakeholders. During our meetings, of course, we all had different viewpoints and time schedules which could have caused conflict, but because of my mindfulness teachings, I gained the ability to identify and deal appropriately with my emotions by practicing non-judging and patience techniques. Another example is when two of the stakeholders failed to complete the survey that I emailed to them. Instead of getting upset or stressing, after asking several times, I was content. I gained the ability to control my thoughts and continued working with them despite their failure to keep their commitment. I did not allow their inability to affect the long-term goal of the project.

The Dialogue course was also crucial in helping me to communicate with stakeholders. This course was critical because it helped me to realize that feelings of uncertainty are just different emotions and unwanted thoughts. These behaviors lead to assumptions. Without communication, assumptions lead to missing information which leads to confusion that can result in decreased trust, and diminished credibility which effects relationships. Knowing this enabled me to trust my stakeholders and eliminate any uncertainties thoughts while working on the project.

The Collaboration course helped me to realize my self-actualization and intrapersonal communication abilities. There was a time during the ten-week micro project I found myself feeling down and doing negative self-talk. I realized that was happening because I was concerned about people not visiting the blog page. This class helped me understand my personal potential that I always knew existed as well as look at situations from a positive aspect oppose to allowing fear and doubt to take control of my thoughts. By doing this, I must say that I am at a more positive place in my life and in full control of my thoughts and feelings. Also, the blog page traffic did increase.

The Change course taught me to not just focus on the negatives when it comes to change, but to focus on the positives and outcomes that I seek to achieve. By doing this helped me embrace change. While working on this ten-week micro project with stakeholders, we made several changes to the blog page. I felt that by embracing change made it much easier for me to accept the adjustments.

Project Impact on the Participants

I met with stakeholders and shared with them my goals for the ten-week micro project. Everyone was on board and was ready to do whatever is needed to help improve learning for low-income and first-generation students. Through discussions, they were able to discover new teaching approaches that can enhance learning for students. One stakeholder suggested introducing “experimental learning” to students. He explained how he works with the organization, Pass With Flying Colors. This organization supports underserved Chicago Public Schools high school students to be successful in college. He stated that the organization provides students with learning opportunities outside of the classrooms like field trips, field research, and service learning projects and more. Stakeholders were able to share this information with other staff members within the organization. They agreed this is a great learning opportunity for students and is planning on developing a curriculum.

Stakeholders are really adamant about continuing to work with me on the blog. They believe we can actually add more content to it and begin sharing it with schools, community, and nonprofit organizations. One of the stakeholders even suggested that we add a link to the college readiness blog to our organization’s website. This will allow the blog page to be shared with the organization's partnerships, parents, students, etc. Of course, I will have to get this cleared with my boss first.

Overall Project Assessment

Overall I believe the project was successful. As for strengths, working with stakeholders was key to helping me reach my ten-week goal. I like how they were able to make time to meet with me to discuss college readiness issues. I know they have other responsibilities and duties to tend to. Another strength I see is the creation of the blog page. This was my first time, and I also believe for two of my stakeholders as well. We worked together and created an excellent blog page that provided valuable information that can be accessed by anyone who wants to improve college readiness for students. We even added a resource page that contains a substantial amount of content that can be shared with others. To view the blog you can visit <https://mztashajohnson07.wixsite.com/collegereadiness/blog>.

As for weaknesses, I would have liked it if the other two stakeholders could have completed the surveys. That way I could have included their feedback to assist with the measurements of the project's success. Although they both were available during the follow-up meetings and I reminded them, they still failed to complete the survey. For future references, a way to avoid this from happening again is to set a time and date for them to complete and return the survey to me.

Another weakness was those who viewed the blog did not leave many comments. This was important for the micro project because the comments were included in the measurements. The measurements of the blog posts consisted of seventy-nine views, "seventeen likes," and seven comments. Out of the seven comments, all were positive. To avoid this from happening again, I believe adding a short survey with an incentive for completing the survey will increase comments. This way I can get suggestions/feedback from the visitors on ways to improve the blog and include their ideas to strengthen measuring the success of the project. The results of the

ten-week project are very similar to the conversations with stakeholders and the literature in chapter two that provides research data on cognitive skills and socioeconomic status. The ten-week micro project confirms the literature through the blog. Stakeholders and I created four blog posts which consisted of literature that coincides with the trends that research confirms are barriers that affect college readiness skills in low-income and first-generation students.

Recommendations for Future Projects

The future of this project is bright. I definitely see ongoing collaborative efforts working to bring awareness to improving college readiness skills in low-income and first-generation students. Stakeholders and I will continue monitoring and updating the blog to keep visitors educated about ways to develop college readiness skills in LI/FG students. For others who are interested in creating an online blog, I suggest that you know the targeted community or group of people you are aiming to reach. This will help with measuring of the project. Also, make sure stakeholders are committed to helping with the project. Make it clear to them if they are not going to be fully committed, to let you know so there will not be any challenges during the project. Lastly, build long-lasting collaborative relationships with educators, nonprofit organizations, community organizations, and colleges/universities to share ideas, implement programs, and processes that will improve college readiness skills in low-income and first-generation students that will increase college enrollment and graduations rates.

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APPENDIX A: Informed Consent

October 8, 2018

Participant Information and Consent**Invitation**

You are being asked to take part in a research/dialogue project. It will explore how the lacking college readiness skills is a barrier that low-income and first-generation students encounter on their quest to attain a college degree. It is being conducted by Tasha Hughes who is studying towards a Masters in Social Impact degree at Claremont Lincoln University.

What Will Happen

The method of this project that will be used to facilitate the change to improve college readiness skills amongst LI/FG students will consist of me, Tasha Hughes, doing the following:

1. Interviewing TRIO staff to discuss college readiness issues that are preventing low-income and first-generation students from reaching their educational goals.
2. Create a blog based on research and responses received from TRIO staff.
3. Survey those who read the blog to find out how the information increased their college readiness knowledge
4. Final measurements will include blog visits, comments, and likes.

All records, including surveys, statistics, and other data will be deleted after three months. No participants will be identified by name.

Potential Risks/Benefits

I anticipate minimal risk. Anonymous survey data will be collected by me, Tasha Hughes, in a one on one setting. Also, any responses posted on the web will be voluntary and anonymous. As for benefits, visitors to the blog will receive a better understanding of the services LI/FG students need to improve college readiness skills that will ultimately increase college enrollment and graduation rates.

Time Commitment

I anticipate the time commitment will take approximately 8 weeks to complete. This includes meeting with TRIO staff, creating the survey, creating blog, measuring data, etc...

Participants' Rights/Confidentiality

I will give priority to your interests at all times. To protect your interests in my final report, I promise the following:

- Your identity will be protected at all times in my final report unless you give me specific permission to use your name.
- You are free at any time to withdraw from the research project, whereupon I will destroy all data relating to you. I will report that a participant decided to leave the project, and reflect on ways the project might have been more conducive to all participants.

Individuals are over the age of 18 years of age who will participate.

Cost, Reimbursement, and Compensation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You will NOT receive any compensation nor will you be asked to pay fees of any kind.

Informed Consent Signature Line

By signing below, you agree that: (1) you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet, (2) questions about your participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily, and (3) you are taking part in this research study voluntarily (without coercion).

Researcher's Name _____ Date _____

Participants Name (Printed) _____

APPENDIX B: Stakeholder Collaboration Log

(Date)When the engagement took place?	(Purpose) The purpose of the engagement	Description of what happend	Actions taken & Outcomes
10/3/2017	Initial contact with stakeholders	Met in person to describe project and to see if TRIO staff is interested in participating in this project and to obtain permission.	Staff agreed and provided feedback to questions asked pertaining to students.
5/28/18	To discuss possible strategies that will help increase academic readiness.	Met with TRIO staff members who agreed to be a part of my project (3)	Stated students should receive continual Core Curriculum Instruction. Students should work with tutors to complete class assignments, study for tests in groups, receive assistance with basic skills, and to discuss study strategies.
10/19/18	To discuss strategies that will prepare students for college	Met with stakeholders to inform them about the project and provide them copies of the CLU consent form	Received signed consent forms. Set up appointment for the following Friday to discuss college readiness issues as a group.
10/26/18	Via text, I asked stakeholders to give me their opinions on "How can we improve college readiness in LI?FG students?"	1. One replied back stating to teach students growth mindset, provide students with resources, mentors, direct students to college prep or study skills courses, and encourage students to get involved organizations, etc. 2. Another one said introduce them to experimental learning 3. Another one said introduce students to goal setting, etc.	N/A
11/2/18	Conducted a follow-up meeting to discuss blog page content.	N/A	Worked on the page and added more pictures, a video, etc.

APPENDIX B: Stakeholder Collaboration Log (cont).

(Date)When the engagement took place?	(Purpose) The purpose of the engagement	Description of what happend	Actions taken & Outcomes
11/9/18	Met with two stakeholders to discuss results of the completed surveys.	N/A	Discussed several barriers they see as issues affecting college readiness skills in LI/FG students. We decided to develop/include a Theory of Change Model to show provides the steps that will be taken to measure overall success.
11/16/18	Met with stakeholders to discuss blog site information	We decided that videos need to be added to blog and a resource page.	Added video explaining college readiness statistics.
11/23/18	Met with stakholders to discuss traffic to the blog site	We decided to add more content for visitors.	N/A
11/29/18	Met with stakeholders to discuss blog results	We discovered that one of the blog pages was visited way more than the others. We also discussed the comments sections, etc.	Continue to monitor traffic to the site.

APPENDIX C: Stakeholder Interview Questions

1. What are some issues that impact college readiness for LI/FG students?

2. How can we improve college readiness for LI/FG students?

3. List how college readiness effect college enrollment and completion rates for LI/FG students?

4. What processes can we implement to increase college readiness in LI/FG students?

APPENDIX D: College Readiness Infographic

Improving College Readiness for Low-Income and First-Generation Students

What is college readiness?

College Readiness can be defined as the essential skills, and knowledge students need to become ready for college and meaning to test scores and serving as a link between what students have learned and what they are ready to learn next (ACT, n.d.)



Steps designed to improve college readiness issues in low-income and first-generation students



#1

Conducted College Readiness Research



#2

Met and collaborated with TRIO staff to address college readiness issue



#3

Created an online survey to email to stakeholders to get their views on college readiness issues



#4

Created college readiness blog

Let's Improve College Readiness for LI/FG students

- 48 views
- 6 comments
- 8 likes

Non-Cognitive Skills

- 15 views
- 1 comments
- 4 likes

10-week Capstone Project Findings



- TRIO Programs
- 6 views
- 0 comments
- 1 likes

Collaboration is key

- 10 views
- 4 comments
- 1 likes

Source : <https://mztashajohnson07.wixsite.com/collegereadiness>
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