

ing gotten what they wanted" aren't included in the denominator of the retention and graduation rate calculations, and so community colleges are not penalized when they fail to graduate.

In fact, the truly restrictive graduation rate metric is the one Chancellor Harris prefers—the measure allegedly showing that “70 percent of college-prepared students” graduate or transfer. This so-called “college-prepared” definition excludes tens of thousands of students who enter college needing to take remedial courses in reading and math—the majority of all new California community college students. It is further limited to students who have earned a certain number of credits. It also counts as successful students who have neither graduated nor transferred but are so-called “transfer prepared.”

In other words, it is the chancellor's graduation rate definition, not the official U.S. Department of Education graduation rate definition used by the *Monthly*, that excludes large numbers of students, and as such produces dubious results.

On All Things Being Unequal

I would like to add another example to Paul Glastri's list of inequities that higher education institutions can do

something about. For decades, the SAT has been critiqued because of the inherent advantage that affluent students have in taking the test. In recent years, however, the inequities have compounded as children from affluent families take intensive private tutoring for the SAT, which go well beyond the SAT cram course their parents' generation took and which can cost many thousands of dollars. Intensive tutoring frequently raises SAT scores by 200 to 300 points, a gain that provides a substantial advantage in competing for college admission and for academic scholarships.

Eliminating the SAT clearly would not solve the basic societal problems—increasing poverty rates, growing gaps in income and wealth, and the rising costs of higher education—that lead to the widening socioeconomic divide in higher education. But it would be an easy fix to eliminate at least one significant factor, the SAT. And colleges and universities would lose nothing of value. They now gain little information from the test scores because the comparisons between students have become virtually meaningless.

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