MAKING THE CASE FOR COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

Webinar 1 of 4

Getting Started with Evaluation

THE "MAKING THE CASE" WEBINAR SERIES

This is the first of four webinars in a series about *Making the Case for Competency-Based Education*, designed to help institutions use data to demonstrate the value of CBE programs for their students and continuously improve program quality.

Produced by American Institutes for Research and Public Agenda, in partnership with C-BEN (Competency-Based Education Network), *Making the Case* is made possible by the generous support of Lumina Foundation and other partners.

C-BEN

- Quality Principles and Standards

- National Survey of Competency-Based Education (NSCBE)

THE "MAKING THE CASE" WEBINAR SERIES

1	Getting Started with Evaluation
2	Evaluation for Improvement (December 19th)
3	Using Learning Assessment in Evaluation (February 8th)
4	Communicating Evaluation Findings (March 29th)

YOUR HOSTS

Erin Knepler
Public Agenda

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for Research

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HOUSEKEEPING

- We're glad you – and more than 70 of your closest friends – have joined today!

- Your telephone lines are muted by default.

- So: Have a question? Just type it in the "Questions" box.

- Materials should be available tomorrow at http://bit.ly/cbe-at-air

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- How to identify your program's core value propositions as a precursor to evaluation

- Who to engage in the evaluation process

- Results from a research collaborative hosted by AIR that provide early insight into CBE programs' efficacy

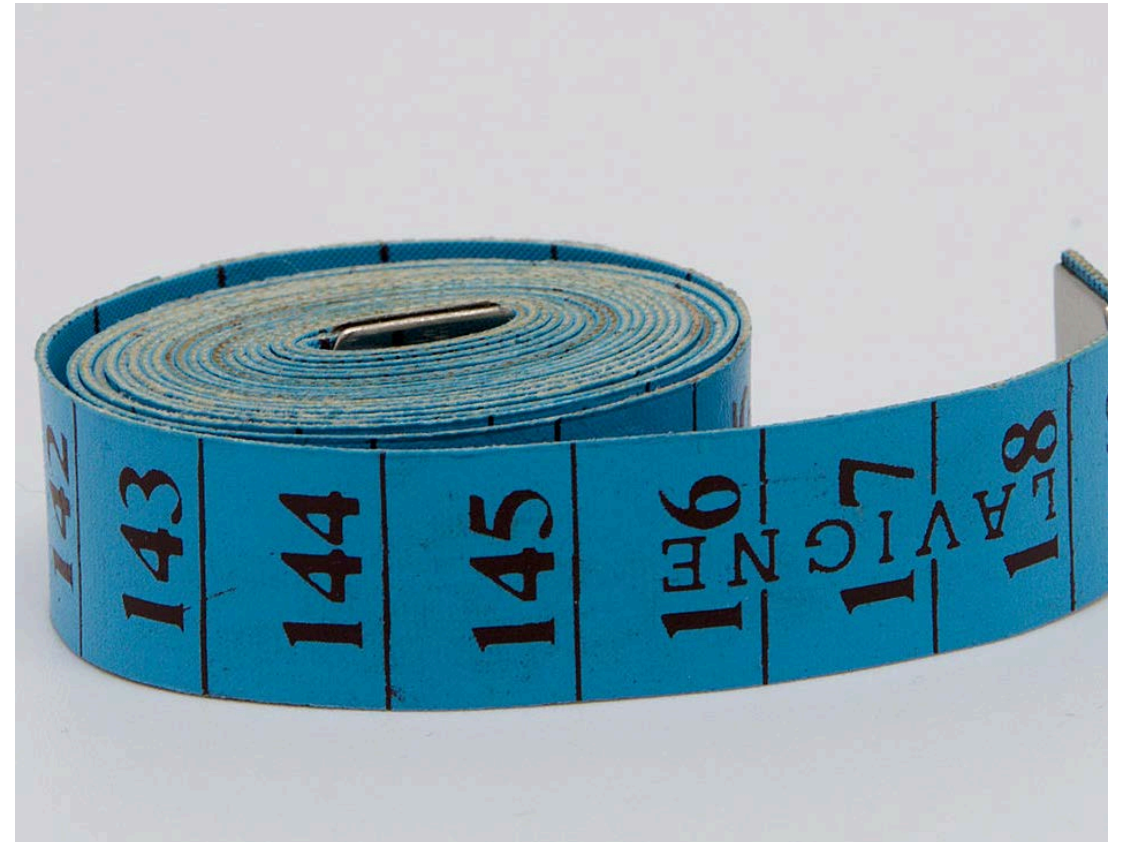# Let's jump in!

YOU'VE WORKED HARD DESIGNING YOUR PROGRAM

Credit: U.S. Archives, available at http://research.archives.gov/description/535413

AND YOU HAVE STUDENTS TO SERVE

Credit: Texas A&M Commerce, available at https://www.flickr.com/photos/tamuc/14120891628

So how do **you** keep learning?

EVALUATION!

Formative, *to shape improvement.*

Summative, *to measure outcomes.*

Credit: G. Bridgman, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Overhead-View-Potter-at-her-wheel.JPG
Credit C. Bucco-Lechat, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Blue_tape_measure.jpg

EVALUATION HELPS MAKE SURE THIS DOESN'T GO TO WASTE

Credit: U.S. Archives, available at http://research.archives.gov/description/535413

AND THAT YOU'RE DOING ALL THAT YOU CAN FOR THEM

Credit: Texas A&M Commerce, available at https://www.flickr.com/photos/tamuc/14120891628

We do not do evaluation for evaluation's sake; it is our obligation as educators.

WHY EVALUATE?

- To **drive improvement**, in service of the student learning experience.

- To ensure we can **make the case** for our program's value, so that there's something to improve!

WHY EVALUATE?

Formative Evaluation
(primarily)

▪ To **drive improvement,** in service of the student learning experience.

Summative Evaluation
(primarily)

▪ To ensure we can **make the case** for our program's value, so that there's something to improve!

★KEY CONCEPT

Formative evaluation versus summative evaluation, and what they are good for.

Any questions? If so, use the Questions Box!

We will address **using formative evaluation to drive improvement** in our next episode.

Let's talk **summative evaluation for case-making** next!

TODAY'S BIG IDEAS

Describing your program's value

Building important partnerships

Early evidence about CBE programs

Questions and answers

Credit: Pexels.com, for unsplash. Available at https://www.pexels.com/photo/light-bulbs-light-order-26943/

You are your program's biggest and most knowledgeable supporter.

You can **make the case to others** for your program using well-designed summative evaluation.

GETTING STARTED

The first step in designing a generic evaluation is identifying the problem it is meant to help you understand.

When you are evaluating for the specific purpose of making the case for CBE programs, the problem is simple: **building evidence for your program's key value propositions.**

Credit: M. Strozler, available at https://www.flickr.com/photos/r80o/1583522

Value proposition:

The specific benefit that your program creates for students and other key stakeholders.

IDENTIFYING YOUR PROGRAM'S VALUE PROPOSITION

Step 1.

What situation were we trying to improve, or what problem were we trying to address, when we designed this program?

Step 2.

How does addressing those issues help my institution meet its mission with integrity?

A WORKED EXAMPLE

Step 1.

What situation were we trying to improve, or what problem were we trying to address, when we designed this program?

"Our program was designed to help working Registered Nurses complete a BA."

Step 2.

How does addressing those issues help my institution meet its mission with integrity?

"My college is committed to meeting the workforce needs in the central region of our state, and a lack of highly-trained nurses has been identified as a specific need by state policymakers."

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

"Our RN to BSN CBE program provides associate's degree-level nurses a pathway to the bachelor's degree that is flexible and leverages their existing expertise. As a result, State College can continue its long history of supporting workforce needs in the central region of our state, meeting the Governor's goal of ensuring state residents have access to highly-trained health care providers."

(You could probably do better, writing about your own program.)

"What, So What"

This approach is powerful because it helps you define not just the focus of your evaluation, but it **forces** you to begin to think about what will make your evaluation compelling to others.

CHOOSING A POWERFUL SO-WHAT

Only a powerful so-what motivates institutional action.

In addition to consistency with mission, a powerful so-what often arises from **an urgent need** to:

- Bolster campus financial sustainability;

- Respond to state or local policy priorities;

- Strengthen and maintain eminence; and

- Pre-empt adverse action.

✓ PRO-TIP

Evaluation should be linked to clear value propositions to garner initial support, sustain momentum, and yield impactful results.

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Evaluation is a team sport.

ROLES IN AN EVALUATION EFFORT

1. Champion
2. Sponsor
3. Project Manager
4. Subject Matter Expert
5. Institutional Researcher
6. Data/Information Technology Expert
7. Data Analyst
8. Communications Lead

CHAMPIONS AND SPONSORS

Champions are typically positional leaders on campus who:

- are **invested** in your program's value proposition;

- **value data-driven decision-making** and support evidence generation and use;

- have the ability to **dedicate human and financial resources** to initiate an evaluation effort.

Sponsors, which often report to champions, are charged by them to:

- ensure that the evaluation effort is **resourced** once initiated;

- **clear administrative roadblocks** that may hinder the evaluation's progress;

- **monitor the evaluation's** progress on his or her behalf.

PROJECT MANAGER

Project managers help the team **design and monitor**:

- project charters,

- roles and responsibilities documents;

- budgets; and

- schedules.

They may also **perform other administrative functions** as needed.

Credit: Pixabay.com. Available at https://pixabay.com/en/mark-marker-hand-leave-516278/
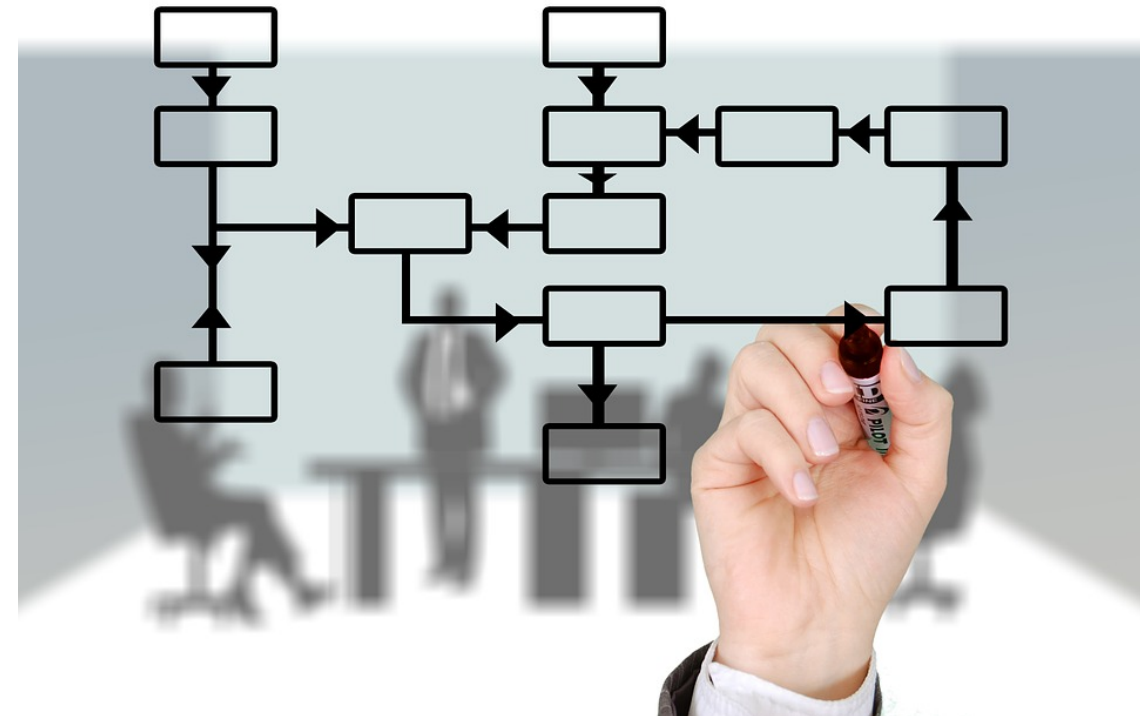
TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Expertise in four domains:

- The **specific program** being evaluated, including its value proposition and how the program is meant to achieve it;

- **Applied research** for improving institutional effectiveness;

- Campus data **systems**; and

- Quantitative, and perhaps qualitative **data analysis.**

Credit: Pixabay.com. Available at https://pixabay.com/en/digital-marketing-new-technologies-1433427/

TECHNICAL EXPERTS

Expertise in four domains:

- The **specific program** being evaluated, including its value proposition and how the program is meant to achieve it; ⬅ Program director and faculty

- **Applied research** for improving institutional effectiveness; ⬅ Institutional research

- Campus data **systems**; and ⬅ *Varies,* and can include staff in academic information systems, registrar, financial aid

- Quantitative, and perhaps qualitative **data analysis.** ⬅ *Varies,* can include staff from any of the above, including faculty in other departments in campus
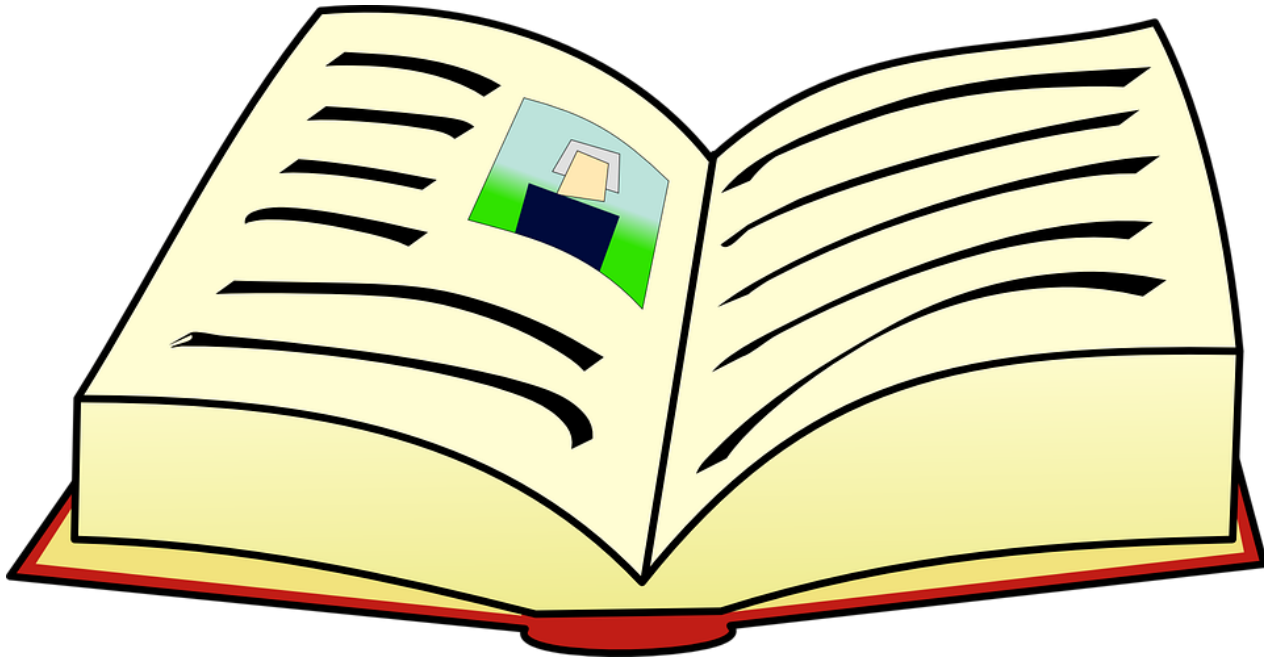
COMMUNICATIONS LEAD

One of the most overlooked members of the evaluation team is someone with expertise in:

- **internal** communication, including the types of messages and presentations that "resonate" with institutional leadership;

- **external** communication, including the institution's marketing resources, strategies, and channels.

TELLING THE DATA STORY

Crafting the story of your evaluation takes the skills of the entire team, including:

- *Analysts* who can help with data collection and exploration;

- *Experts* with deep knowledge of the program who can put those data in context;

- *Communications professionals* who can help translate key findings into messages that can be widely shared; and

- *Champions* who can help spread the word of your success!

Your ability to leverage these campus resources is directly proportional to the **power** and **urgency** of your value proposition.

Any questions? If so, use the Questions Box!

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"ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS?"

- Six institutions, six programs

- "What data have you already collected for your CBE students that, if you compared it to similar students in non-CBE programs, we might get some early evidence of CBE programs' effectiveness?"

- Early findings appear positive!

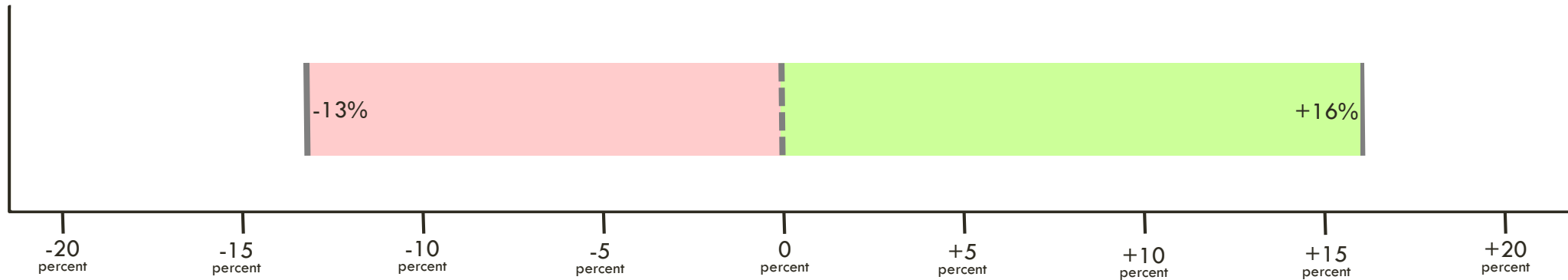# EARLY EVIDENCE OF IMPROVED COMPLETION AMONG CBE PARTICIPANTS

Completion Rate Gains of Between 2 and 10 Percentage Points Seen Among CBE Students,
Compared to Similar Students in Traditional Programs

| 2 percent | 4 percent | 6 percent | 8 percent | 10 percent | 12 percent |
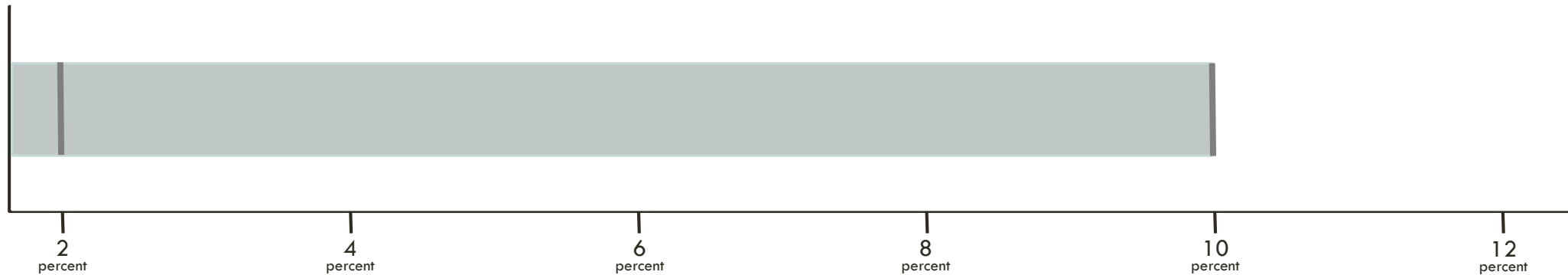
SOURCE: Parsons, K., Mason, J., & Soldner, M. (2016)
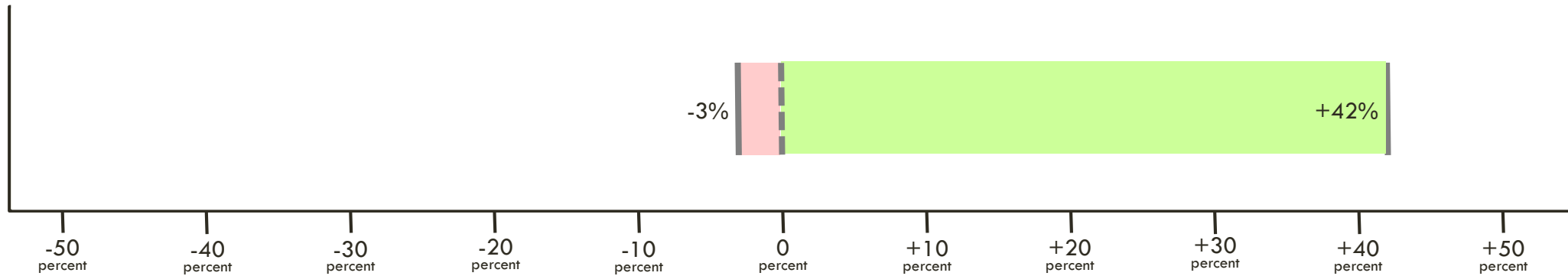
MIXED FINDINGS ON "TERM-TO-TERM" RETENTION IN CBE PROGRAMS

No Consistent Finding of Improved Term-to-Term Retention Rates for CBE Participants,
Compared to Similar Students in Traditional Programs

-13%   +16%

| -20 percent | -15 percent | -10 percent | -5 percent | 0 percent | +5 percent | +10 percent | +15 percent | +20 percent |

SOURCE: Parsons, K., Mason, J., & Soldner, M. (2016)

OPTIONS FOR ACCELERATION CAN YIELD SUBSTANTIAL GAINS

Evidence CBE Students Accelerate By Completing More Units Per Term,

Compared to Similar Students in Traditional Programs

-3%   +42%

-50 percent   -40 percent   -30 percent   -20 percent   -10 percent   0 percent   +10 percent   +20 percent   +30 percent   +40 percent   +50 percent

SOURCE: Parsons, K., Mason, J., & Soldner, M. (2016)

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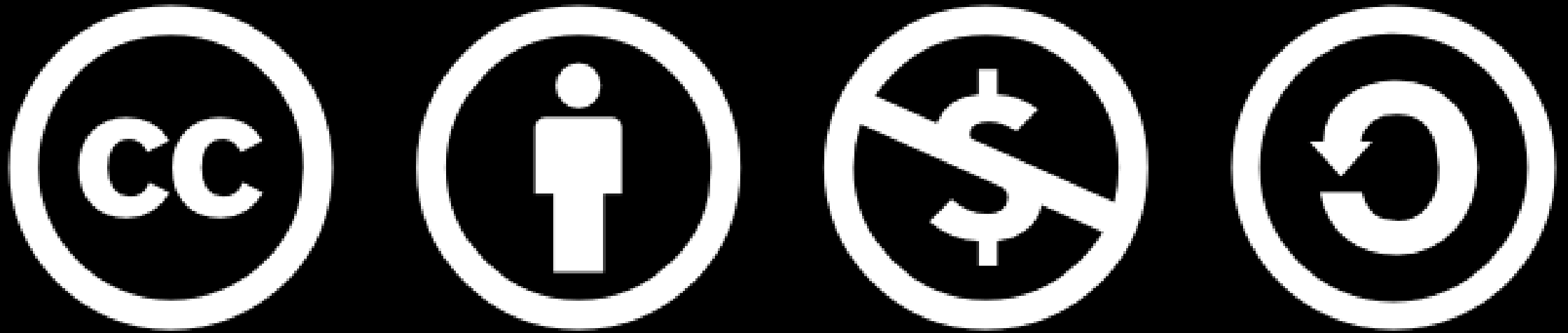Early evidence about CBE programs

Questions and answers

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Q&A

Erin Knepler

Kelle Parsons

Matt Soldner

Questions after today?
Email us at PostSecCBE@air.org