

Center for Urban Education  
Rossier School of Education,  
University of Southern California

## California Benchmarking Project

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Enhancing Institutional Effectiveness and Equity

# Moving from Access to Success by Becoming “Best Practitioners”

*presented at*

*Are We Still Democracy’s Colleges?*

*Institute for Community College Development*

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Alicia C. Dowd

Assistant Professor and Principal Investigator,  
California Benchmarking Project

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**CUE**



Washington

Wisconsin

New York

CUE

Colorado

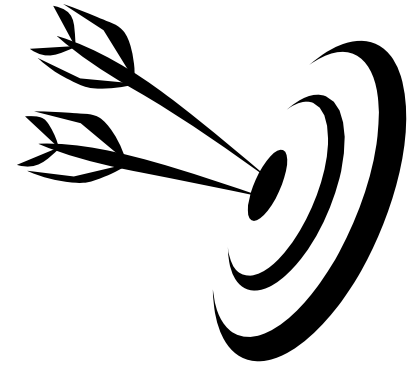
# California Benchmarking Project

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A community of practice to develop an equity-based culture of inquiry.



# Benchmarking Project Objectives



- ▶ Demonstrate strategies to embed **equity** perspectives in institutional **assessment** to promote equal student outcomes among racial-ethnic groups.
- ▶ Support development of **equity advocates** who have **expertise** in the areas of assessment and evaluation.

# Misconceptions of Equity

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Equity  $\neq$  Diversity

Equity  $\neq$  Equal Opportunity

# Redefining Equity

## Equity = Equal Outcomes

- Transfer to four-year institutions
- Graduation
- Program completion across the full range of certificates/degrees
- Participation in scholarship and special programs
- Successful course completion rates

# Prioritizing Equity

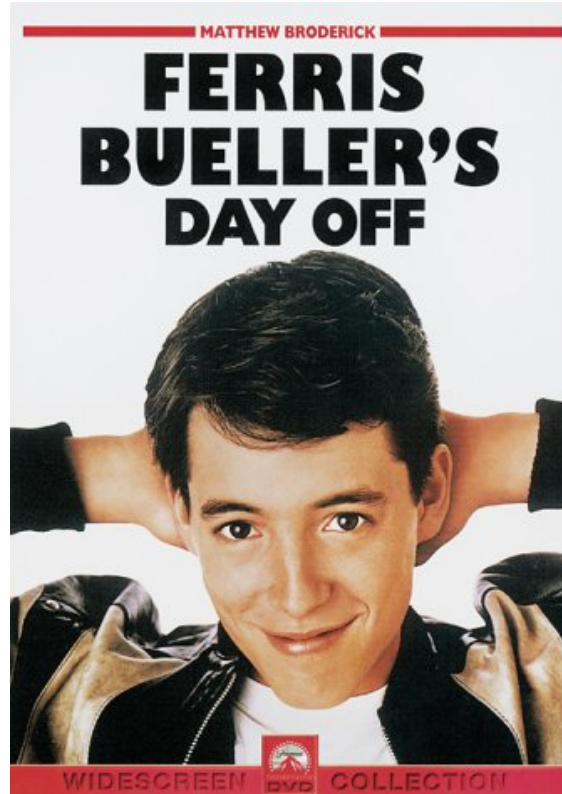
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**1<sup>st</sup> step**-Understand how practitioners make sense of factors that support or hinder student success.

- ▶ In what ways can we improve the education outcomes of students of color and other historically underrepresented students?
- ▶ In what ways can we be more accountable for the outcomes of historically underrepresented students?

Do you remember Ferris Bueller?



Do you remember Ferris Bueller's history teacher?

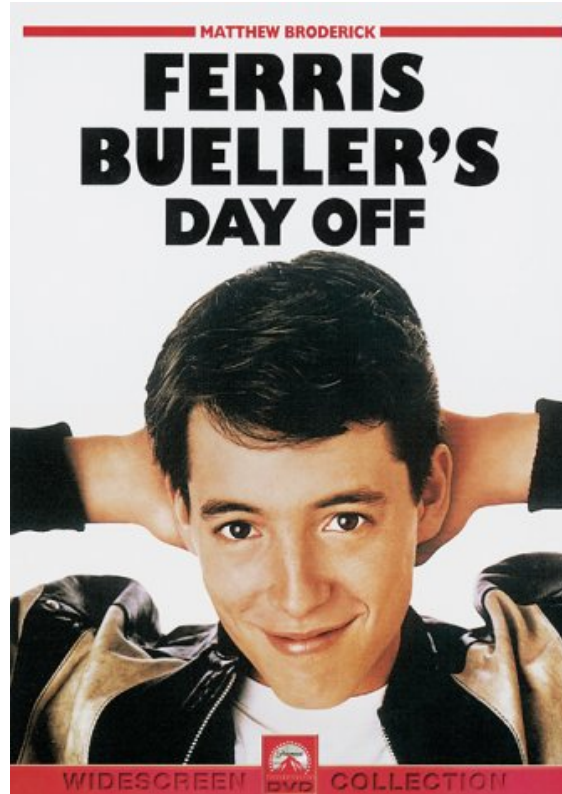


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Do you remember Ferris Bueller?



Do you remember Ferris Bueller's dean of students?



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**Theories of Student Success**

**Professional Identity and Sense of Self Efficacy**

**Disciplinary and Departmental Culture**

**Implicit Theories of Change**

**Institutional Culture**

**Conceptions of Race**



# **Sources of Practitioner Knowledge**

# Deficit-Minded Knowledge

## Lack of...

Motivation

Direction

Engagement

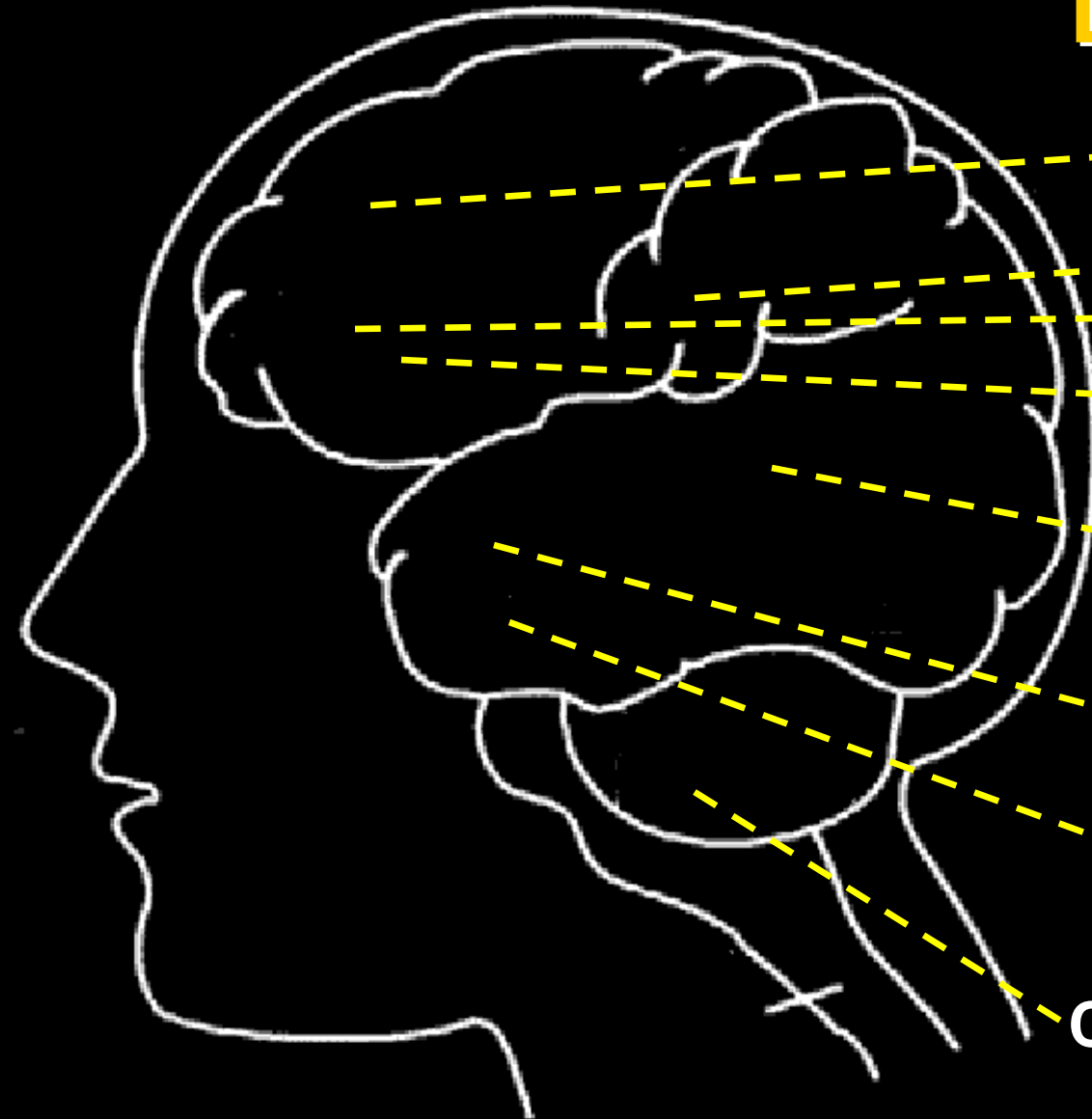
Discipline

Interaction  
with Faculty

Time

Study Skills

Commitment



# Equity-Minded Knowledge

**Race Conscious**

**Minding Equity Gaps**

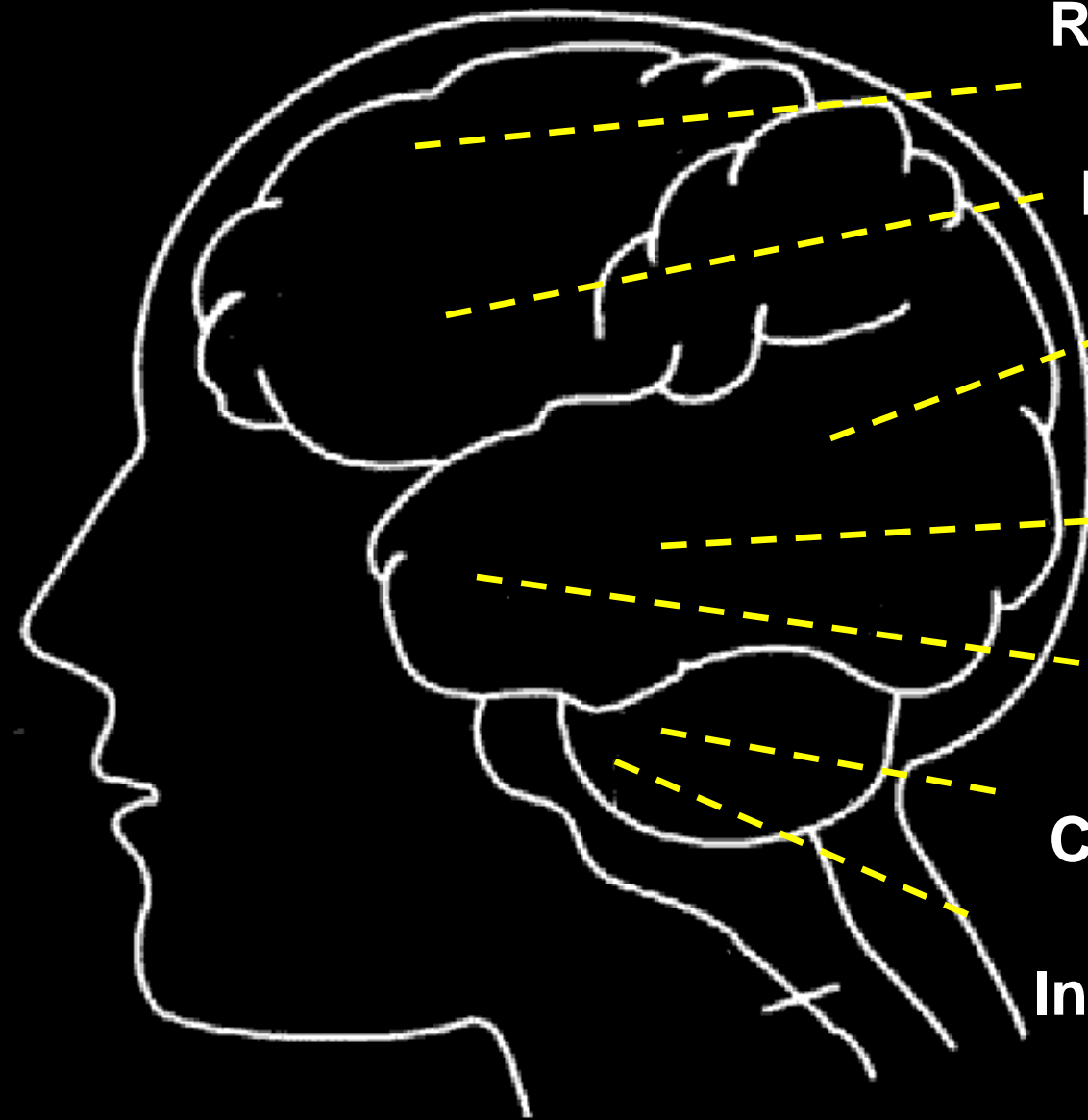
**Validation**

**Counter-Normative  
Narratives**

**Institutional Effort**

**Cultural Effort**

**Institutional Responsibility**



# Developing Hunches

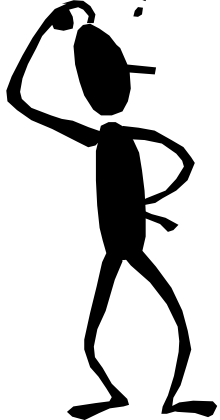
290 Latina/os  
enrolled in  
the lowest level  
remedial math  
course



45 of those  
Latina/os  
successfully  
completed the  
transfer level math  
course

? “Why only 15.5%?”

“Because Latina/os are not  
*culturally prepared* for college”



# Interrogating Hunches

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***“Because Latina/os are not culturally prepared for college”***

- Where is the problem situated?
- What is the problem attributed to?

# Unpacking

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- What does it mean to be “culturally prepared”?
- What are the characteristics of students who are not “culturally prepared”?
- Why might Latinas not be “culturally prepared”?
- In what ways could we help Latinas become “culturally prepared”?

# Rewriting the Hunch

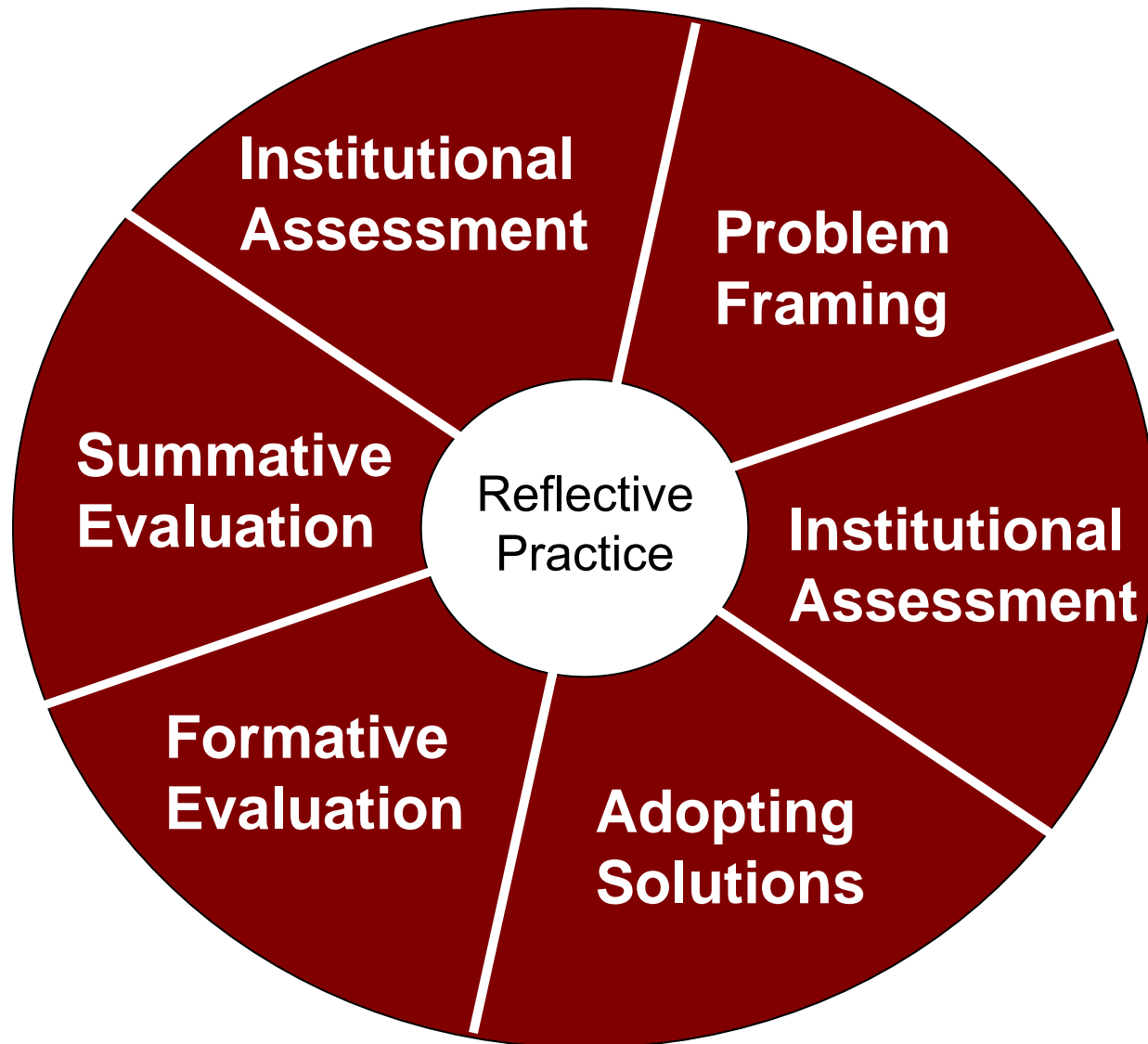
<b>Initial Hunch</b> (points to the student)	<b>Rewritten Hunch</b> (points to practices)
<b>Deficit-Minded</b>	<b>Equity-Minded</b>
<b><i>“Latina/os are not culturally prepared for college.”</i></b>	<b><i>“The habits, values, and practices of being an academically prepared student are not being taught.”</i></b>

# Tapping our “Funds of Knowledge”



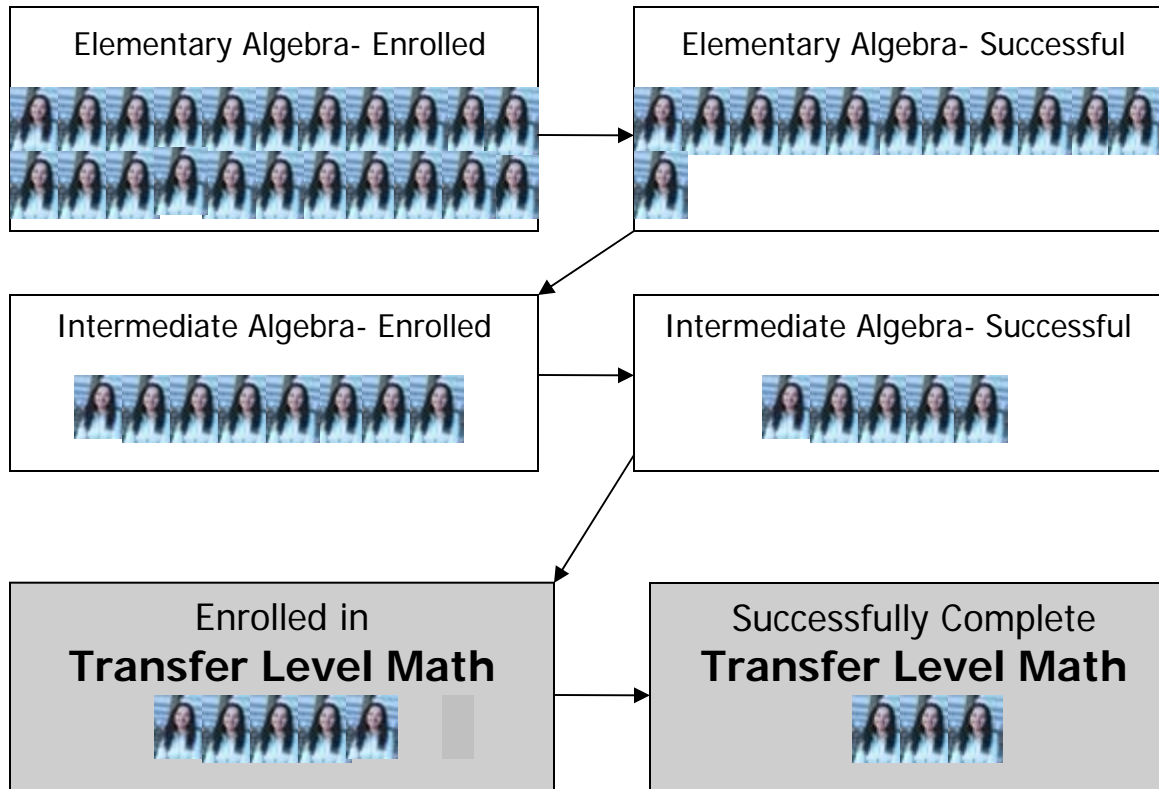
Consider how we teach a child to ride a bike.

# Practitioner-Driven Cycle of Inquiry



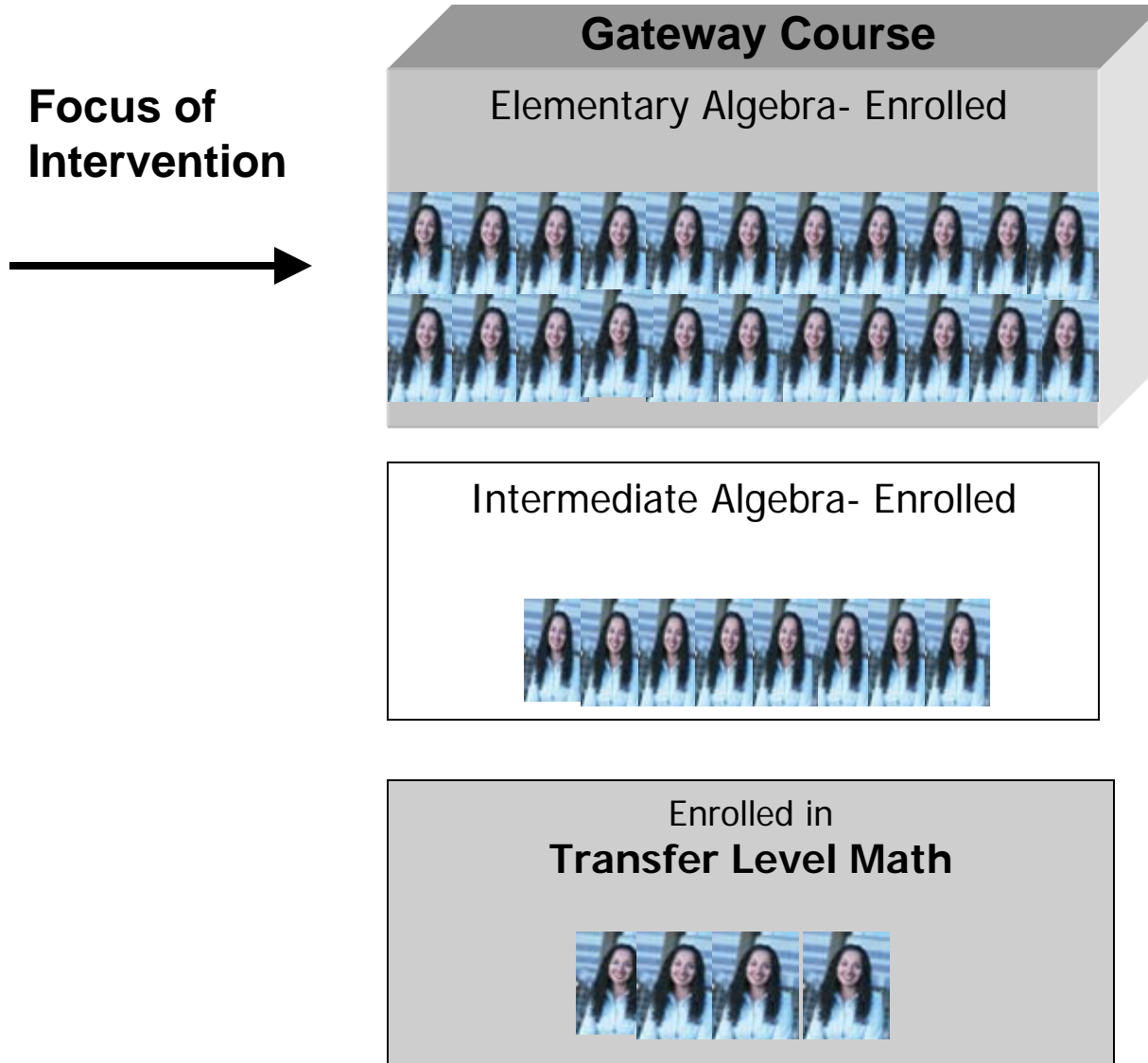
# The Disappearing Latinas

Successful Course Completion in the Basic Skills through Transfer-Level Math Curriculum

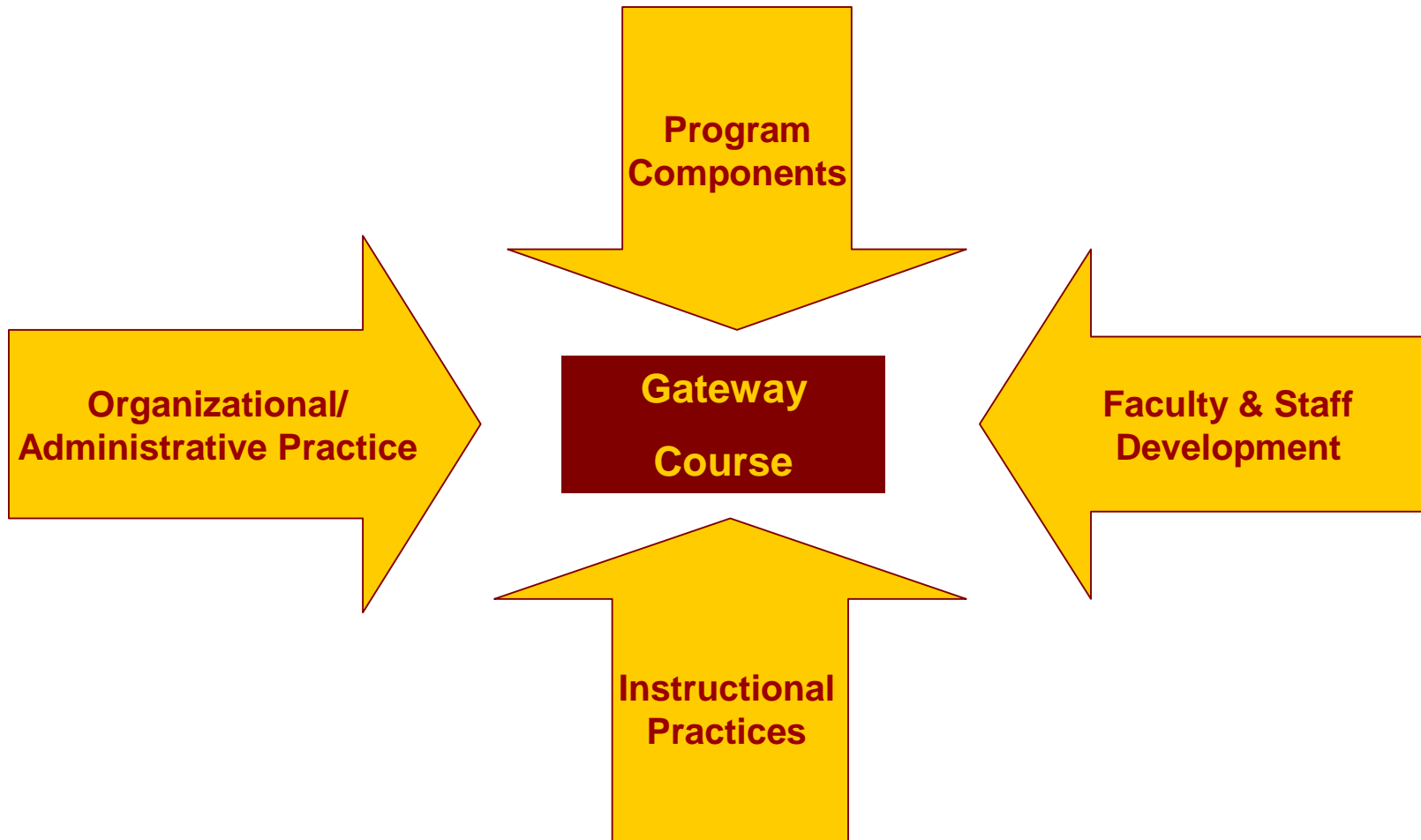


 = 38 students

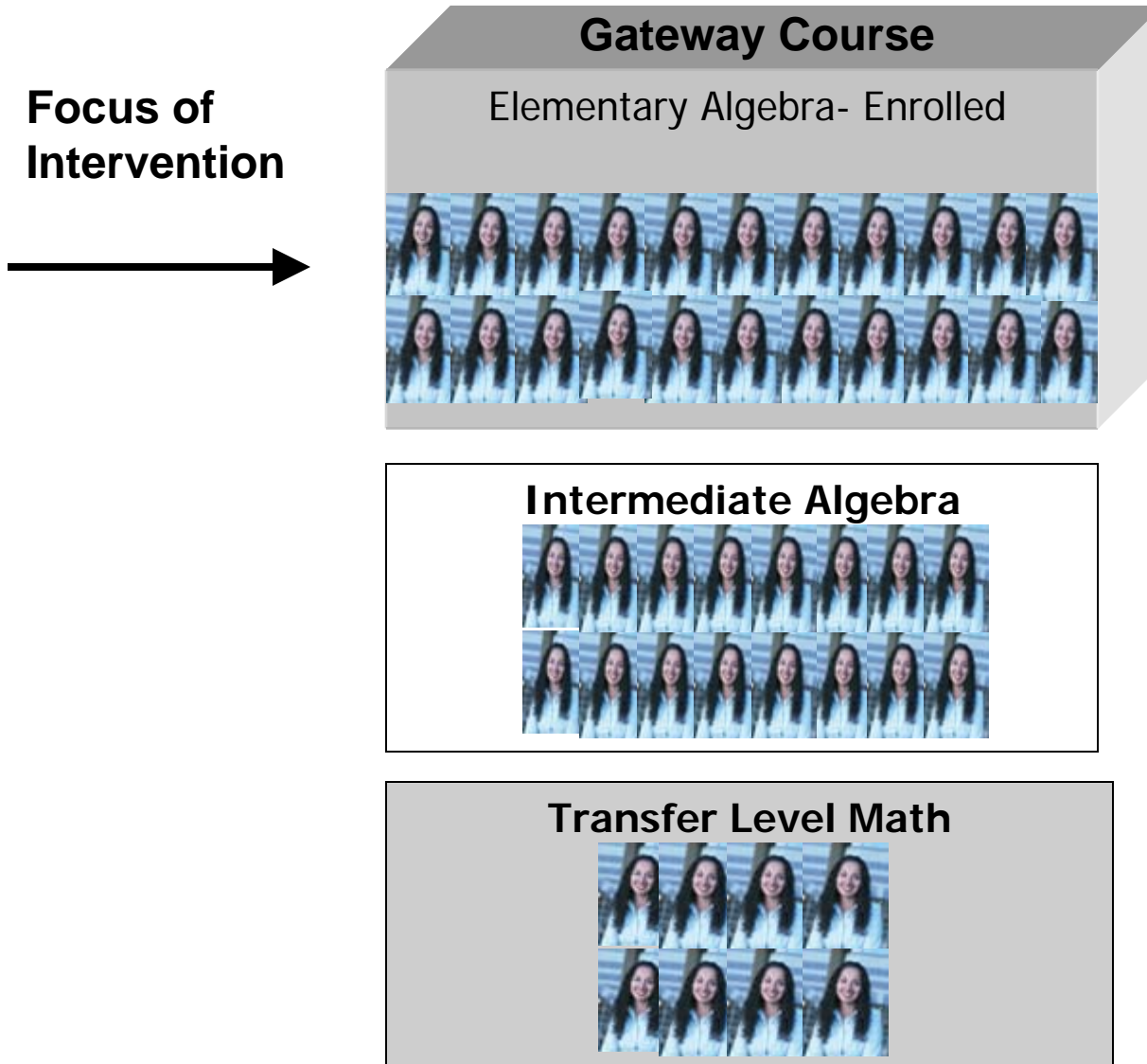
# Select a Point of Intervention



# Tap into Existing Resources



# Set Benchmark Goals for Success



# Four Principles of Equity-Based Assessment

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1. Notice the workings of deficit-minded knowledge and collaborate with colleagues to incorporate **equity-based knowledge** into your campus culture.
2. Focus on a **critical intervention** (a “gateway course”) as part of a larger plan of action, setting short- and long-term goals.
3. Develop expertise in an **equity-based theory** of action.
4. Use institutional assessment and evaluation in an **ongoing cycle of inquiry** to become “best practitioners.”