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Degree ladder maps: Helping students make earlier, more informed decisions about educational goals

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ABSTRACT

Community college students who arrive on campus knowing exactly what they want to do and how to do it are more likely to succeed. However, many students need help to choose which educational goal to pursue. Typically, colleges refer undecided students to campus advisors and websites, but these resources are underfunded and poorly organized to help disadvantaged students sort through the literally thousands of course, program, certificate, and degree options available. This mixed methods study of a matched pair of community colleges develops degree ladder maps and course checklists—low cost, interactive tools that colleges can create and use to help their students make earlier, more informed choice of education goals.

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