

# Increasing Diversity by Changing the Culture of the Academy

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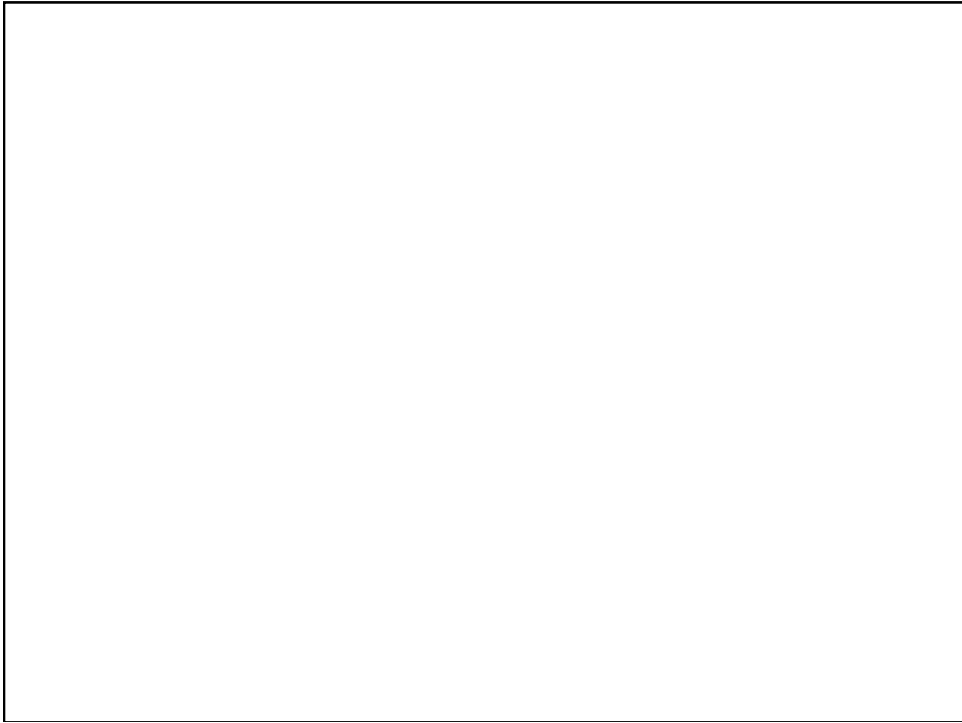
## From S. J. Leslie & colleagues “Expectations of Brilliance (2015)

### Endorsement of Field-Specific Ability Beliefs (FAB)

- “Being a top scholar of [discipline] requires a special aptitude that just can’t be taught.”
- “If you want to succeed in [discipline], hard work alone just won’t cut it; you need to have an innate gift or talent.”
- “With the right amount of effort and dedication, anyone can become a top scholar in [discipline].” <Reverse-coded>
- “When it comes to [discipline], the most important factors for success are motivation and sustained effort; raw ability is secondary.” <Reverse-coded>

### Researchers also assessed alternative beliefs and mechanisms

- Workload (# of hours a week you spend working)
- Field Selectivity (Roughly what %-age of applicants are accepted into your department’s PhD program in a typical year?)



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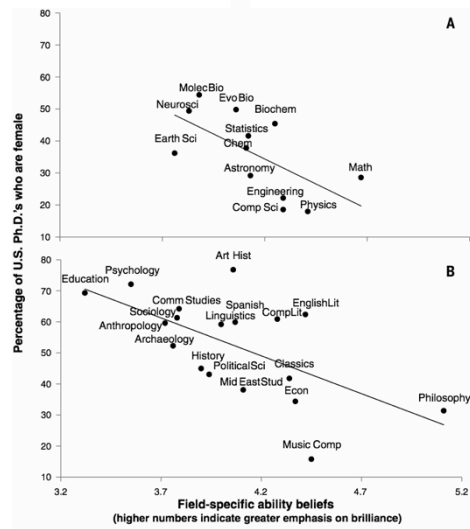


Fig. 1. Field-specific ability beliefs and the percentage of female 2011 U.S. Ph.D.s in (A) STEM and (B) Social Science and Humanities.

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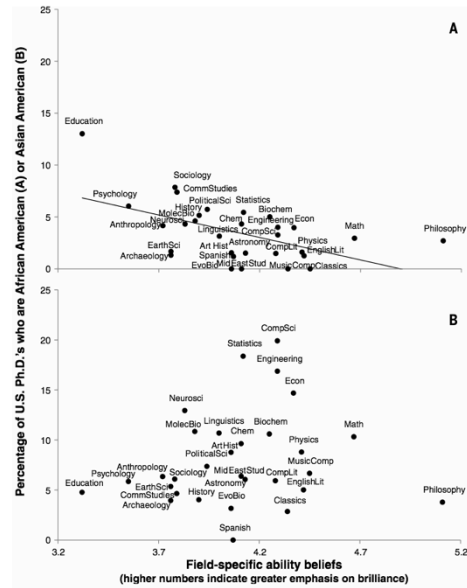


Fig. 2. Field-specific ability beliefs and the percentage of 2011 U.S. Ph.D.'s who are (A) African American and (B) Asian American.

Think about the purpose of a college education. From the perspective on your college or university, what are the most important skills and/or values that students should acquire from college?

## From Nicole Stephens & colleagues “Unseen Disadvantage” (2012)

Table 1  
Percentage of Independent and Interdependent Items Selected by University Administrators

Survey items	% Items selected
Independent	
Learn to express oneself	74
Learn to be a leader	68
Learn to solve problems on one's own	60
Learn to do independent research	55
Learn to work independently	46
Learn to influence others	17
Interdependent	
Learn to work together with others	58
Learn to do collaborative research	46
Learn to listen to others	36
Learn to be a team player	25
Learn to ask others for help	12
Learn to adjust to others' expectations	2

## From Nicole Stephens & colleagues “Unseen Disadvantage” (2012)

Table 2  
Percentage of Independent Versus Interdependent Expectations Selected by University Administrators

Pairs of survey items	% Independent items	% Interdependent items	$\chi^2(1, N = 254)$
Being independently motivated Being motivated by others' high expectations	92	8	185.2***
Working independently Working collaboratively in groups	55	45	2.1 <sup>†</sup>
Conducting independent research Conducting collaborative research	53	47	0.8
Paving their own innovative pathways Following in the footsteps of accomplished others	86	14	133.1***
Challenging the norms or rules Considering the norms or rules	71	29	44.2***
Developing personal opinions Appreciating the opinions of others	60	40	10.1**

*Note.* For each pair of items, a one-way chi-square test was used to test the significance of the difference between the percentage of independent and interdependent items selected.

<sup>†</sup>  $p < .15$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

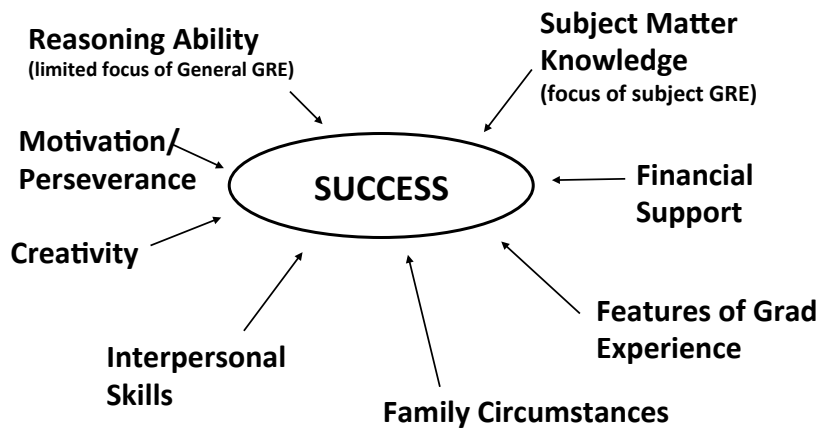
**From Nicole Stephens & colleagues “Unseen Disadvantage” (2012)**

Table 3  
*Mean Percentage of Interdependent and Independent Items Endorsed by Student Social Class*

Survey items	First-generation students	Continuing-generation students
Interdependent items		
Overall scale mean	59	33
Help my family out after I'm done with college	69	31
Be a role model for people in my community	53	38
Bring honor to my family	49	27
Show that people with my background can do well	58	20
Give back to my community	61	43
Provide a better life for my own children	64	42
Independent items**		
Overall scale mean	69	78
Expand my knowledge of the world	78	87
Become an independent thinker**	62	71
Explore new interests**	71	80
Explore my potential in many domains*	60	67
Learn more about my interests	65	77
Expand my understanding of the world**	78	86

*Note.* All chi-square tests,  $\chi^2(1, N = 1424)$ , comparing first-generation and continuing-generation students are significant at the  $p < .001$  level unless otherwise noted.  
 \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

**Factors Influencing Success in Graduate Study**



Adapted from ETS publication *What is the Value of the Graduate Record Examinations?* (available from [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org))

### **Suggestions**

- Affirm ability and rule out stereotype relevance
- Promote a growth mindset (a la Carol Dweck); be explicit about the complex of skills/abilities necessary for success and provide feedback; nurture in students a commitment to lifelong learning
- Support student engagement in outreach/public service, for minority and first-gen students such activities are NOT tangential
- Support non-traditional pathways through graduate study