DRAWING UPON SURVEY DATA FROM 12TH GRADE STUDENTS
following a 45 minute survey within participating high schools, the
College Access and Success Assessment (CASA) will provide a valuable
snapshot of each high school’s college-going culture and offer statistical
measures, reports, and expert guidance to inform continuing efforts to
more effectively target resources in ways that will create and foster a
college-going and college-ready culture within America’s high schools.
CASA is currently being developed by the USC Center for Enrollment
Research, Policy, and Practice at the USC Rossier School of Education. The
center’s research team conducted a pilot study this past April during
which approximately 3,000 high school students within the Long Beach
and Fresno Unified School Districts in California were surveyed. Data
from this pilot study is currently being analyzed and researchers expect
to validate and refine the tool over the course of the next several months.
In 2012, the center intends to implement CASA in up to 100 urban, high-
need schools throughout the United States. 

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LLOYD THACKER AND THE EDUCATION
RESEARCH, POLICY, AND PRACTICE organization, the USC Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice will host, “The Case for Change in College Admissions” in Los

This is a purposeful meeting of approximately 150-200 prominent
scholars, policymakers, college leaders, and admission practitioners
to discuss what is right about college admissions at class-crafting
individual, collective, legal and leadership considerations that lie at the
heart of a reform agenda, paving the way for a national admissions
system from one another and from our distinguished speakers through a
variety of presentation and discussion formats. Scheduled speakers include
Andrew Delbanco, Robert Zemsky, Michael McPherson, Sandy Baum, Harry
Brighouse, and William G. Tierney.

A tangible outline of specific admissions areas in need of change
will be produced from this event. This important document will identity
individual, collective, legal and leadership considerations that lie at the
need schools throughout the United States.

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The U.S. has fallen to 12th Place in college graduation rates for young adults among
developed countries, leading President Obama to set an ambitious goal for Americans. He has
called on the United States to once again have the highest rate of college completion in the
world by 2020. In order to get there, the nation’s graduation rate needs to reach 60 percent in 10
years, compared with about 40 percent today.

“Today we have flat-lined, while other countries have passed us by,” Education Secretary
Arne Duncan has said, calling the president’s 2020 goal “the North Star for all of our educational
initiatives.”

College access is a major component of Obama’s “cradle to career” education agenda. Successful
college completion has to start with access to college. To increase our odds of success, the President
has implemented a number of reforms that target access to higher education, including student
debt reform, increasing Pell grants, simplifying the financial aid application process, and a $2 billion
investment in community colleges.

Higher education has become “the economic issue of our time,” according to Obama, and
increasing the number of college graduates has become imperative to the nation’s economic
recovery.

Research centers at the USC Rossier School have been ahead of the President’s curve in designing
and implementing innovative tools to address the issue of college access and college success, and are
putting these tools into the hands of the students and practitioners who will most benefit.
A NEW BOOK TO BE PUBLISHED IN 2010 by the University of Southern California spotlights the critical issue of creating a pipeline to college for the students from whom no clear pathway exists. College Bound: Strategies for Access and Success for Low-Income Students examines the obstacles to college access and success, and highlights proven strategies that help remove these barriers.

College Bound features an introduction by Dean Gallagher, and scholarly articles by USC faculty across the university that focus on the college-going process. USC Rossier faculty members author key chapters in the book: Jerome A. Lucido authors a chapter on the key members authoring key chapters in the book: Alicia Dowd co-author a chapter on African high schools. William G. Tierney writes about the college application and financial aid processes. Ninety-eight percent of the program's 2009-2010 participants went on to attend college in the fall of 2010. SummerTIME was launched in 2002, and targets local high school graduates who have attended at least one high school in the region. These students learn skills, such as time management and study habits, to help them succeed in college. They also receive intensive writing instruction in anticipation of the many papers assigned at a university. In 2009, Tierney chaired a U.S. Department of Education Access to Higher Education Panel. The panel released its findings on emerging research and the role of the research-based College Access and Success Assessment (CASAS) plays in assessing the college-going culture of high schools. William G. Tierney writes about research-based strategies that work for high schools to increase college access for low-income students. Estela Mara Bensimon and Alicia Dowd co-author a chapter on African American and Latino students who fail to exit the community college system with degrees, jobs, or transfer to four-year institutions. And Kristin Venegas argues in her chapter that dominant theories that shape student affairs programs and college recruitment efforts are inadequate.

To receive copies of College Bound, contact: tjenkins@usc.edu.