

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Using Latent Profile Methodology to Obtain a Midwestern Community

College Student Typology

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The accurate classification of college students is critical if educators are to better understand their student populations. Doing so will enable institutions to target specific student groups with interventions geared toward improving persistence, retention, and overall achievement, which ultimately could result in more effective and efficient approaches. The current study examined the development of student typologies in higher education using student enrollment behavior. The investigation looked at whether a typological model could be shared between institutions, or if regional policies, processes, and student demographics dictated a locally grown solution. Using Latent Profile Analysis (LPA), the results found that each institution would be best served to establish its own model. Additional findings supported the use of behavioral variables, but suggested that the inclusion of gender and race had an impact on a student's group classification.