

An ROI Comparison of Initiatives Designed to Attract Diverse Students to Technology Careers

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ABSTRACT

This study examines two alternative interventions designed to attract diverse students to pursue information technology or, more generally, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) careers from a Return on Investment (ROI) perspective. More specifically, this study examines the effectiveness and efficiency of single-day and multi-day program formats by comparing students' propensity to pursue computer information systems and technology related careers. Using an ROI perspective of comparing relative costs to students' perceived outcomes, our findings suggest that the single-day model is equally effective as the multi-day model at moving students' propensity to pursue information technology careers, albeit at a lower cost. This suggests that the single day model is a better choice from an ROI perspective and offers the best investment opportunity for choosing which program format to use for future interventions. These findings, while specific to a single comparison of two alternative information technology interventions, are useful as they contribute valuable knowledge and may be applicable to the design and evaluation of other STEM-influencing programs.

Keywords: STEM, Diversity, Interventions, Return on investment (ROI)