

Qualitative Determinants of College GPA: A Survey Perspective

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Abstract

This study investigates the determinants of college GPA by using cross-sectional data from a sample of 453 students with majors in four different colleges at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. The major focus of the paper is on the qualitative determinants of college GPA. The statistical analysis indicates that students' aptitude in the subject matter of their first major, the likelihood of their use of the course textbook in studying, their focus on improving weakness areas while studying, and their levels of persistence and determination all significantly and positively influence their college GPA. However, the number of hours the students work for pay negatively and significantly affects their college GPA. The number of contact hours with the instructor outside of class and the number of hours of tutoring received are negatively related to college GPA because students struggling with course content self-select into office hours and tutoring. The estimated relationships are significant and robust. This paper expands the literature on the academic performance of college students by enhancing our understanding of the qualitative determinants of college GPA.