

Alexander W. Astin

*What
Matters
in College?*

Four Critical Years
Revisited

What is the impact of college attendance on students' personal, social, academic, and vocational development? Do different types of colleges produce different outcomes? How important is the curriculum as opposed to the student peer group and the faculty? How are students affected by the quality and quantity of their personal involvement in the academic and extracurricular life of the institution?

*In 1977, Alexander Astin attempted to answer these and other key questions in Four Critical Years, a book the *Journal of Higher Education* has since called the most frequently cited work in the higher education literature. In What Matters in College? Astin presents a completely new and expanded study of how students change and develop in college—and reveals how colleges can enhance that development. Based on a study of more than 20,000 students, 25,000 faculty members, and 200 institutions, the book shows how academic programs, faculty, student peer groups, and other variables affect students' college experiences. He examines more than 190 environmental characteristics of institutions and details how these factors can shape students' personality and self-concept, patterns of behavior, values and beliefs, academic and cognitive development, career development, and satisfaction with the college environment.*

(Book Cover)

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