

How Text Messaging is Leveling the Playing Field

Anatomy of a Personalized Text

Adding these elements of personalization into a message can impact overall response and engagement rates, with student response rates reaching as high as 60% and engagement rates as high as 90%!

Hi Miranda, this is Brian from GEAR UP.
Did you accept your financial aid package to Awesome University?
Make sure you do this by May 12th.
Visit your portal here! <http://bit.ly/1BhT>

Personalization. Use student data to personalize each message.

Relevance. Not every student needs every text. Students are more likely to respond and engage to a text when the information is relevant to their needs.

Timeliness. The best time to send a message is three days before a deadline.

Action. Prompt students to complete tasks by including a "call to action," such as a link to an online resource.

Intelligent Messaging with Low-Income Students

A low-touch texting intervention was tested in which 2,200 predominantly low-income high school graduates received customized text messages each week containing important information about affordability topics such as financial aid form deadlines and loan options.

Students who received texts were up to **11.3 percentage points** more likely to enroll in college than those who did not receive texts.

Reminder: Fall bill due 8/7. Do u have a good plan for paying ur bill? Need help? Questions about loans? Text us, or visit our walk-in hrs!

I saw what my bill is so is that what financial aid takes care of

Do you know how much your bill is for?

3000 & some change

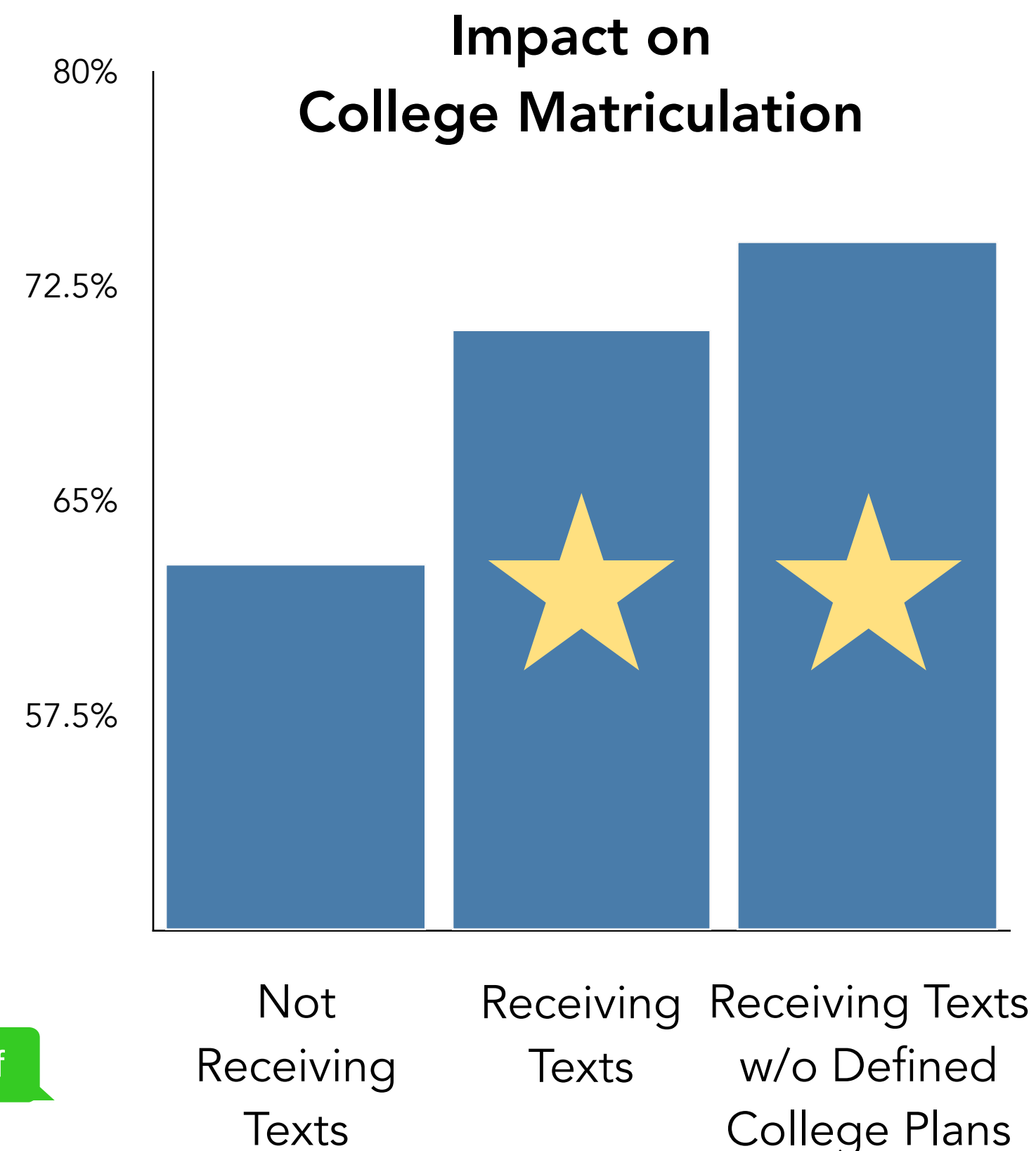
That doesn't sound like your fin aid has been applied yet. Did you check your email? Check to see if you have any emails from the fin aid office

Okay

I figured it out, they need my transcript

Okay that makes sense. Once they receive this, the fin aid office may have more papers for you to fill out. Be sure to check your email often and let us know.

Okay thank you



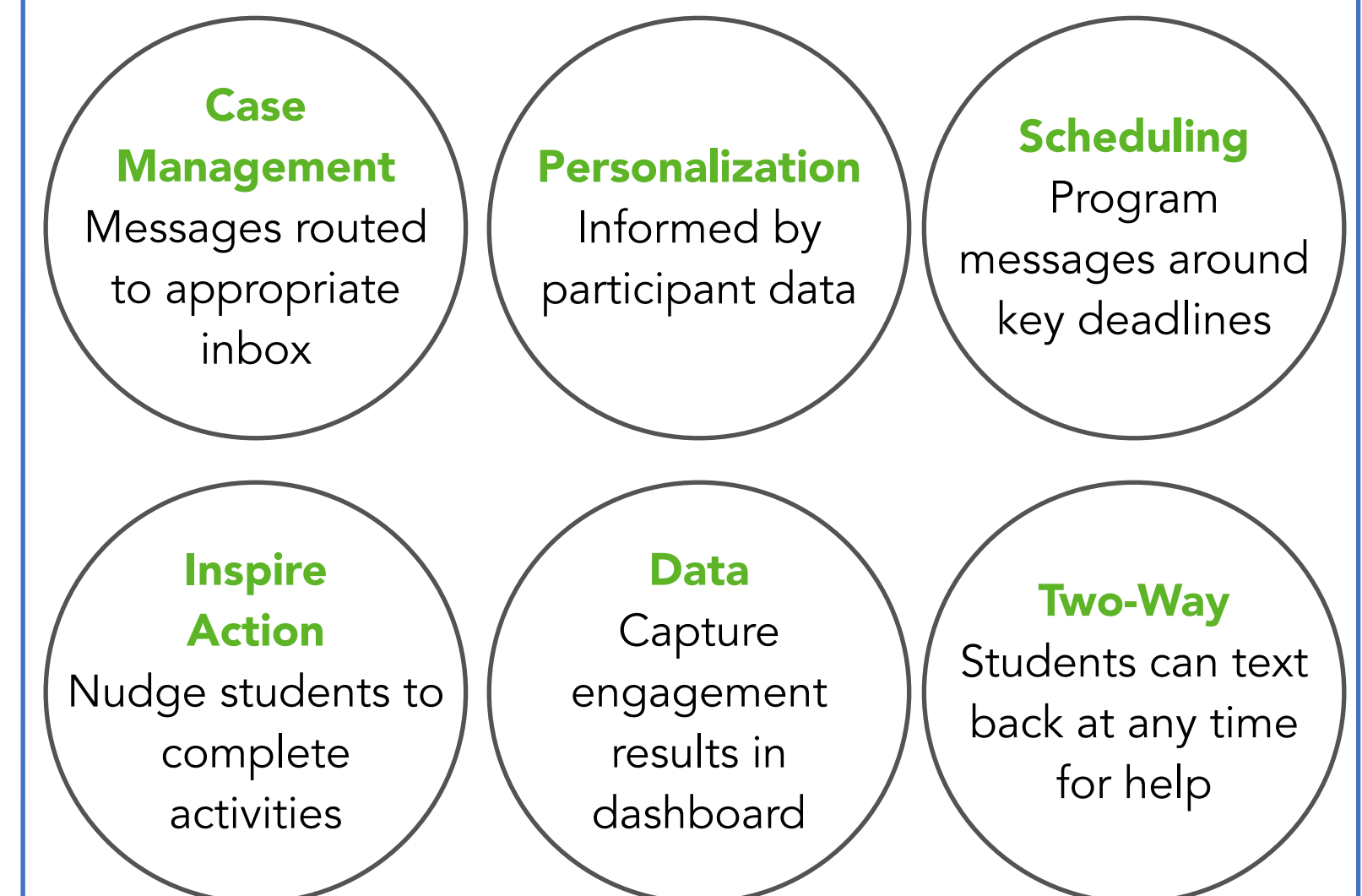
When college freshmen received a series of personalized text message reminders related to FAFSA re-filing, it **doubled the rate** at which community college students sought help with their FAFSA renewal.

Castleman, B. L., & Page, L. C. (2014). *Freshman Year Financial Aid Nudges: An Experiment to Increase FAFSA Renewal and College Persistence*

Castleman, B. L., & Page, L. C. (2014). *Summer Nudging: Can Personalized Text Messages and Peer Mentor Outreach Increase College Going Among Low-Income High School Graduates?*

Why Texting Works

- 90%+ of students text
- 95% of responses come within 24 hours
- 97% of text messages are read
- 4x - 10x increase in counselor capacity
- Low cost, high impact service model



Students report that text messages:

- Prompt them to complete tasks they haven't yet done.
- Inform them about something they haven't realized they need to do.
- Make the tasks to enrollment less overwhelming.