The Changing College Dream: Differences Among Students’ College Aspirations
William Hodes, Rosalyn Rease, Melissa Bogert, Erich Iverson, Alexis Hellman, and Shawn Bergman
Appalachian State University

Background
- SES, race/ethnicity, perceptions of college, & parents’ education level can influence college aspirations
- Low SES students are less likely to view college as an obtainable and realistic option
- Educational aspirations of ethnic students fall below that of non-ethnic students by senior year
- Educational aspirations predict educational and occupational status

Terms
College Aspirations - The desire and ambition a student has to attend college

Future Implications
- Enhance the collective understanding of why educational aspirations change in HS
- Determine which students are in need of early intervention programs
- Close the gap between educational aspirations and educational achievement

Research Questions
- Are there any special populations who are more likely to have decreased college aspirations?
- Will college aspirations change over the span of four years in high schools?

Hypotheses
1. First-generation, low SES, and ethnic students are more likely to have decreased college aspirations.
2. High school aspirations decrease overall within these rural high schools.

Methods
A survey sent out to 3,539 students across four years
Asked questions about demographics (race, ethnicity, SES, parental education)

As asked about their educational aspirations
- “What’s the highest level of education you expect to obtain?”
- “I believe education is linked to success”
- ”I will succeed in college because…”

Will use SAS to measure correlations between demographic factors and educational aspirations