

AGENDA

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Meeting: 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 17, 2020
Virtually via Teleconference

Wenda Fong, Chair
Romey Sabalius, Vice Chair
Silas H. Abrego
Larry L. Adamson
Jane W. Carney
Douglas Faigin
Debra S. Farar
Maryana Khames
Christopher Steinhauser

Consent 1. Approval of Minutes of the Meeting of September 22, 2020, *Action*
Discussion 2. Student-veterans, *Information*
3. Recommended Amendment to Title 5 Regarding Ethnic Studies, *Action*
4. Graduation Initiative 2025, *Information*

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

**Trustees of The California State University
Office of the Chancellor
Glenn S. Dumke Auditorium*
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California**

September 22, 2020

Members Present

Wenda Fong, Chair
Romey Sabalius, Vice Chair
Silas H. Abrego
Larry L. Adamson
Jane W. Carney
Rebecca D. Eisen
Douglas Faigin
Debra S. Farar
Maryana Khames
Krystal Raynes
Christopher Steinhauser

Lillian Kimbell, Chair of the Board
Timothy P. White, Chancellor

Trustee Fong called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

At the request of CSU Trustee Romey Sabalius, Educational Policy Item 2 on Ethnic Studies was moved from the consent agenda for clarification. The minutes from July 21, 2020 were approved as submitted.

***PLEASE NOTE: Due to the Governor's proclamation of a State of Emergency resulting from the threat of COVID-19, and pursuant to the Governor's Executive Orders N-25-20 and N-29-20 issued on March 12, 2020 and March 17, 2020, respectively, all members of the Board of Trustees may participate in meetings remotely, either by telephonic or video conference means. Out of consideration for the health, safety and well-being of the members of the public and the Chancellor's Office staff, the September 20-23, 2020 meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees was conducted entirely virtually via Zoom teleconference.**

Recommended Amendment to Title 5 Regarding Ethnic Studies

Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, executive vice chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs, provided a brief update on Education Code Section 89032, the result of legislation recently signed by Governor Gavin Newsom necessitating an amendment to Title 5 language regarding ethnic studies. Dr. Alison Wrynn, associate vice chancellor, Academic Programs, Innovation and Faculty Development, continued by reviewing the changes to Title 5 that would modify CSU general education requirements and the proposed timeline to implement across the 23 campuses. The Academic Senate of the California State University, as the official faculty voice in matters of systemwide curriculum, was asked to amend or build upon existing core competencies listed in their resolution AS-3403. They also have collaborated with key stakeholders, including representatives from the Ethnic Studies Council, as outlined in the legislation, and approved the core competencies developed by the Council in a plenary session on September 17. Lastly, Dr. Wrynn shared that the Chancellor's Office would draft revisions to the Executive Order on general education and share with campuses for input by October 1, 2020 in order to help inform the development of courses to meet the new requirement.

Trustees posed questions and comments regarding the cost of implementing the requirement, requests for periodic updates throughout the implementation process and ideas for offsetting costs and unforeseen issues. Trustees engaged in active discussion, voicing both support and concerns.

Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity

Highlights of current research, scholarship and creative activities by CSU students and faculty were presented by Dr. Ganesh Raman, assistant vice chancellor, Research. Dr. Raman outlined the many ways research supports the CSU mission through supporting student engagement and success, addressing equity, fostering faculty excellence and meeting the needs of California. In 2018-19, the CSU recorded \$676 million in external grant funded expenditures, which are distinct from state general funds. In addition to facilitating scholarly activities, education grants have also been used by CSU campuses to advance equity in education, particularly among underrepresented groups in STEM majors and graduate studies. Mary Papazian, president, San José State University, shared an example of how research has impacted the life of a recent graduate. Dr. Raman concluded the presentation with an overview of a recent publication titled "Transforming Tomorrow" showcasing exceptional stories of research, scholarship and creative activities by each CSU campus and CSU affinity groups.

Trustees posed questions regarding how many students are assisted by experiential learning or funded research activities and how virtual learning has impacted research activities. Overall, the trustees shared thoughts and comments in support of the research and scholarly activity report.

Graduation Initiative 2025

This information item on the Graduation Initiative 2025 was presented by Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, executive vice chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs and Mr. Jeff Gold, assistant vice chancellor, Student Success Initiatives, Research and Innovation. Mr. Gold provided a brief overview of the six key priorities of the initiative: academic preparation; enrollment management; student engagement and well-being; financial support; data-informed decision making; and removal of administrative barriers. He continued by highlighting milestones that have taken place in many of these key areas across the CSU despite the unprecedented pivot to virtual learning as a result of the pandemic. An example of an innovative response to this challenge was presented in a video by Cal State L.A. Led by President William Covino, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Jose Gomez and Dean of Undergraduate Studies Michelle Hawley, the video captured transformational change in student advisement. The presentation concluded with a preview of the Graduation Initiative 2025 Fall Convening to be held online on October 23, 2020.

Trustees raised the question from public comments regarding the ability of the CSU to sustain Graduation Initiative 2025 goals. Trustees engaged in active discussion, voicing overall support for Graduation Initiative 2025 efforts.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Student-veterans

Presentation By

Loren J. Blanchard
Executive Vice Chancellor
Academic and Student Affairs

Marshall W. Thomas
Director, Veterans Affairs
Academic and Student Affairs

Todd Kennedy
Student and Director of the Joan and Art Barron Veterans Center
San Diego State University

Background

More than 18,000 military-affiliated students attend the 23 campuses of the CSU system. These students bring a diversity of life experience to their campuses, enriching the experience for all the students of the CSU.

In November 2019, the CSU achieved an important milestone when two remaining campuses dedicated new Veterans Resource Centers (VRCs) to serve military-affiliated students. This completes the goal of all 23 CSU campuses having a dedicated space for military-affiliated students, allowing them to better access the wide range of services provided to support their academic pursuits.

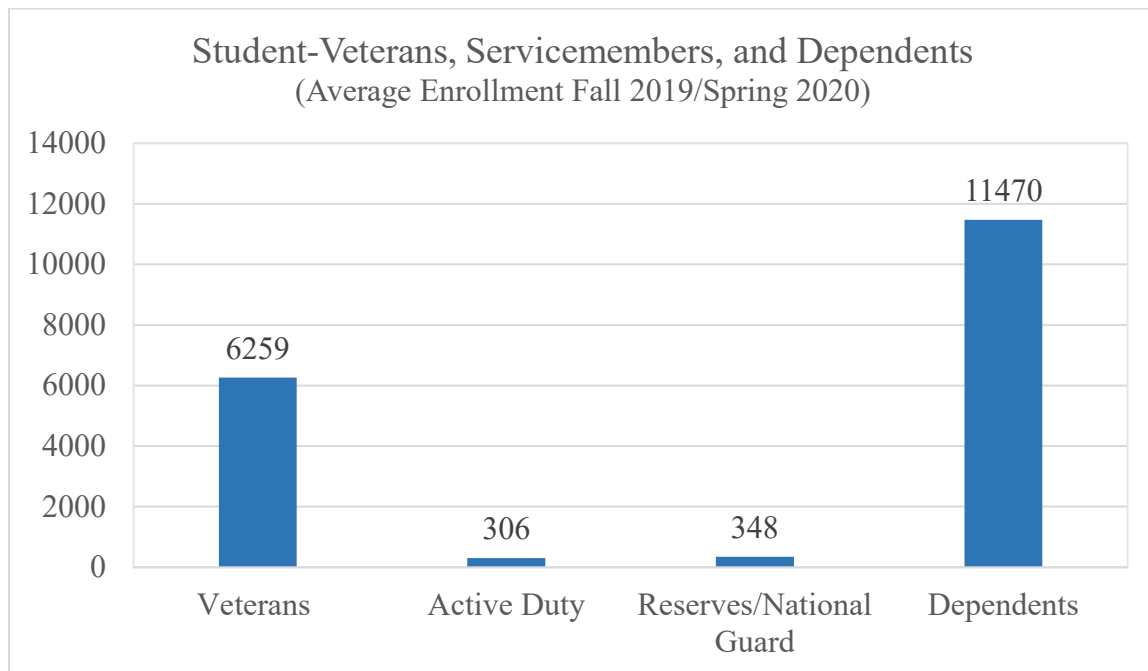
The last presentation to the CSU Board of Trustees on student-veterans was in November 2018. The purpose of this information item is to provide an overview and update of veterans' enrollment, services and programming in the CSU.

Military-Affiliated Student Population

The CSU serves three distinct student populations that together comprise the university's military-affiliated population:

- **Veterans** – Students who have served in the U.S. armed forces and have been discharged from the service;
- **Servicemembers** – Students who continue to serve on active duty, in the reserves or in the National Guard (NG); and
- **Dependents** – Students who are dependents of a servicemember or veteran. Only those dependents eligible for state and/or federal veterans' education benefits are included in this report.

Data from campus VRCs provide an average number of enrollments of military-affiliated students in the fall 2019 and spring 2020 semesters, as shown in the figure below.



With more than 93,000 G.I. Bill eligible military-affiliated students enrolled, California serves the largest population of student-veterans and servicemembers attending college using G.I. Bill benefits. Of these student-veterans and servicemembers attending college in California using the G.I. Bill benefits, more than 48,000 enroll at a public college or university.

Campus-by-Campus Enrollment

Enrollment of military-affiliated students varies from campus to campus. The table below lists the number of military affiliated students at each campus (organized from largest to smallest total number). These data were provided by the VRCs at each campus based on the average fall 2019 and spring 2020 enrollment.

Campus	Veterans and Servicemembers	Dependents	Total
San Diego State University	969	1,851	2,820
California State University San Marcos	396	1,127	1,523
California State University, Sacramento	456	958	1,414
San Francisco State University	546	732	1,278
California State University, Fullerton	455	737	1,192
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona	461	588	1,049
California State University, Long Beach	432	582	1,014
California State University, Chico	227	706	933
California State University, Northridge	462	471	933
San José State University	402	531	933
California State University, San Bernardino	374	418	792
California State University, Fresno	280	368	648
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	93	467	560
California State University, East Bay	256	234	490
California State University, Los Angeles	276	205	481
Sonoma State University	73	298	371
California State University, Channel Islands	112	249	361
Humboldt State University	120	241	361
California State University, Dominguez Hills	170	188	358
California State University, Monterey Bay	75	202	277
California State University, Stanislaus	121	152	273
California State University, Bakersfield	139	104	243
California State University Maritime Academy	24	70	94

Veterans Education Benefits

There are eight federal veteran education benefits and one California state benefit for which CSU military-affiliated students may be eligible. These benefits are in addition to state and federal financial aid that is available to most CSU students.

Eligibility for veteran education benefits is determined by the managing federal or state agency. The chart below lists the nine benefits and indicates the number of CSU students within each category of military-affiliated students using each benefit to pursue their educational goals.

Notably, 82.4 percent of student-veterans and servicemembers are pursuing their education using a federal veteran education program.

Students Using State and Federal Veterans Education Benefits					
Benefit	Veterans	Servicemembers		Dependents	
		Active Duty	Reserve/NG		
Montgomery G.I. Bill (MGIB)	85	5	3		
Vocational Rehabilitation	1431				
Post 9/11 G.I. Bill	3508	97	81	1222	CalVet Fee Waiver recipients also using GI Bill benefits
Fry Scholarship				19	
Dependents' Educational Assist				2319	
MGIB Selected Reserves	201	47	163		
Reserve Education Assist Prog.	0		0		
DoD Tuition Assistance (MilTA)		41	34		
CalVet Fee Waiver				9547	1637
Veterans and Servicemembers using NO benefits	1035	116	68		

A significant number of military-affiliated students are not eligible for any veterans' education benefits. There are several reasons that this is the case. For example, some veterans are ineligible because they were discharged from the military with a rating other than "Honorable." Others have exceeded the time allotted after being discharged from the service for the use of benefits.

One of the most common reasons for military-affiliated students not using benefits at the CSU is that many students have exhausted all their benefits before achieving their educational goal. As more than 90 percent of student-veterans in the CSU are transfer students, many have exhausted or nearly exhausted their benefits at a prior institution.

To be eligible for education benefits, a dependent's servicemember parent or spouse must have transferred his/her own benefits to the dependent, the servicemember must have a service-connected disability or the servicemember must have died while in the service.

The CalVet Tuition Fee Waiver is the primary education benefit provided to dependents of veterans. This state program waives statewide mandatory fees for California resident students who are dependents of veterans with a service-connected disability. Some students who use the CalVet Fee Waiver may concurrently use federal education benefits. Only dependents who are using state or federal benefits are included in military-affiliated student statistics.

Data Collection

An important goal of the CSU has been to improve data collection related to military-affiliated students. While existing data sources have been able to provide a measure of understanding of the number of military-affiliated students and their rates of success, more consistent and in-depth data is beneficial. Better data collection will allow for responding to federally mandated reporting, but it will also improve university efforts to achieve Graduation Initiative 2025 goals. With the adoption of Cal State Apply in 2017, and the introduction of a Veterans Module to the system-wide student information system in 2021, better tracking of the academic success of military-affiliated students is expected. These data will allow the CSU to continue refining services targeted at military-affiliated students and ensure they are successful in their educational pursuits.

Cultural Awareness and Events

CSU campuses regularly provide educational seminars to faculty and staff about military and veteran culture. Many CSU campuses also offer programs that cover the challenges of transition back to civilian life and highlight the contributions student-veterans make to campuses and communities.

The first veteran awareness program in the CSU, VET NET Ally, was developed in 2010 as a student-veteran's doctoral dissertation project at CSU Long Beach. Attendees participate in a seminar that includes modules on military culture, mental health, benefits and a panel of student-veterans. After completing the seminar, participants are presented with decals to display in their workspace to let military-affiliated students know they have taken the time to learn about how best to support this student population. Since 2010, more than 50 colleges and universities across the country have hosted VET NET Ally seminars. Several other CSU, University of California and California Community College campuses have adopted or adapted the program.

Additionally, all CSU campuses formally recognize significant historical events, such as 9/11, and holidays associated with military service, such as Memorial Day. Campuses celebrate Veterans Day with events open to the campus and community. Examples of events include flag raisings, cultural events, cake-cutting ceremonies, film screenings and panels of veterans from different military conflicts. In some instances, campuses have arranged fly-bys of military aircraft.

Campus Veterans Resource Centers (VRC)

All 23 CSU campuses support on-campus Veteran Resource Centers (VRC). Nearly all VRC operations are supported through the campus general fund. VRC staff members provide a wide range of services to military-affiliated students including outreach, advising, benefits certification and advocacy. They also bear the primary responsibility for complying with both state and federal regulations related to the provision of veterans' education benefits.

Outreach

VRC staff engage in regular outreach to prospective military-affiliated students. Campuses in close proximity to military bases have developed relationships with base education offices to provide information to servicemembers and dependents. Additionally, since more than 90 percent of student-veterans enter the CSU as transfer students, each campus has developed relationships with VRCs at their local California Community Colleges. Through these relationships, campuses provide military-affiliated students wishing to transfer to a CSU campus with up-to-date information about admission requirements.

Advising

School Certifying Officials (SCOs) provide essential advising services to students who receive G.I. Bill benefits. The VA only pays for coursework that counts directly toward a student's degree plan. As such, SCOs act in an advising capacity, assisting student-veterans with understanding the intersection of their G.I. benefits and the campus' academic requirements.

Certification of U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits

All campuses have at least one SCO who reviews students' course enrollments, verifies alignment with their established education plans, submits certification of enrollment and bills the VA for tuition and fees for each eligible student every semester. These functions are subject to regular audits by both the VA and the California State Approving Authority for Veterans Education (CSAAVE). The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs recently issued guidance calling for a ratio of one SCO to 200 military-affiliated students using G.I. Bill benefits.

Advocacy

VRC staff engage in advocacy in varied ways. Staff work with individual students to resolve campus concerns. They act as advocates for students with VA service providers. On a larger scale, VRC staff advocate for policy changes at the campus level on behalf of student-veterans, as needed. In addition, VRC staff participate and often provide leadership in regional and national organizations such as the National Association of Veterans Program Administrators and the Western Association of Veterans Education Specialists.

State and Federal Compliance

VRC staff members are responsible for ensuring compliance with all state and federal regulations related to the U.S. veterans' education financial aid programs. This process begins with an annual catalog approval process. When a new catalog is issued by the campus, VRC staff must complete and submit an application to the CSAAVE to request approval of the new catalog. The purpose of the application is to certify that the campus meets all state and federal requirements to maintain the campus' ability to participate in G.I. Bill programs.

Partnerships with Veterans Service Providers

CSU campuses have established strong working relationships with national, regional and local agencies and organizations. One such partnership is with the VA's VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program. Participating campuses host a VA counselor in the VRC who assists veterans with VA services ranging from vocational rehabilitation counseling to employment workshops to assistance applying for a VA home loan. This partnership has proven effective at connecting students with VA services. While there are currently only 94 campuses nationwide that participate in VSOC, four are CSU campuses.

Mental Health Services

While the majority of CSU student-veterans have adjusted well to civilian life and life as a student, some students experience mental health concerns. For student-veterans in need, the first avenue for VRC staff is to connect them with campus-based Counseling and Psychological Services and Disabled Student Services offices. To maintain compliance and confidentiality, VRCs do not compile data on student-veteran usage of mental health services.

Students in need of more comprehensive care are connected with local Vet Centers. Vet Centers are funded by the VA, but operate independently of the VA hospital system. Services at Vet Centers are often provided by other veterans and are easily accessible in a timely (sometimes immediate) manner, where VA hospital services may take longer to access. In the event that an eligible veteran needs longer-term or specialized care, VRC staff encourage the use of traditional VA Health Care services.

Student Engagement

Many VRCs host and provide support for student-veterans organizations. These organizations provide an opportunity for student-veterans to build social connections and develop programming to support fellow veterans. In addition to the benefit of building camaraderie at the local level, many of these campus organizations are affiliated with the national Student Veterans of America organization. This national advocacy group, headquartered in Washington, D.C., provides a voice for student veterans through engagement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and through legislative advocacy.

The Role of VRCs during the COVID Era

VRCs provide military-affiliated students with a place to engage socially with others who have similar life experiences. These opportunities to connect with other student-veterans are instrumental in providing a sense of camaraderie and belonging that veterans often find missing in their lives after leaving the service. While simply providing a social space for those interactions is considered a baseline service at colleges and universities across the country, many CSU campuses take additional steps to build a sense of community. Unfortunately, during the COVID crisis, student-veterans have been unable to visit VRCs to make or maintain these important veteran-community relationships. CSU campuses have risen to the challenge of keeping veterans connected in several ways as highlighted below.

Virtual Veterans Lounges

As students have not been able to visit their VRCs due to the pandemic, several campuses have created virtual lounges. Using Zoom and similar platforms, VRC staff open a virtual room for several hours each day. Students log in to visit the room to interact with other student-veterans, or to connect with VRC staff members. Whether to get a quick answer to a pressing question, or just to say “hello,” these online interactions help keep our military-affiliated students engaged with the campus community and moving towards their degree goals.

Virtual Advising and Orientation

Meeting both campus academic and G.I. Bill requirements can be challenging for military-affiliated students. VRC staff provide important advising on how academic and VA policies interact with one another. Since students cannot set in-person appointments with VRC staff, they meet via Zoom or communicate by telephone to ensure they are following the appropriate guidelines to remain eligible for their G.I. Bill benefits.

One of the earliest instances of VRC advising occurs during new student orientation. In tandem with the campus orientation, VRC staff hold small group orientation programs to educate incoming students about the role of the VRC, the process to access their benefits and student responsibilities. While most students and staff look forward to a time when these events will once again be in-person, the shift to online orientations has proven to be an effective, if temporary, substitute.

Veteran Graduation Ceremonies

In addition to campus commencements, many VRCs have established ceremonies honoring graduating veterans. Many of these ceremonies include presenting honor cords or graduation stoles to graduating veterans in recognition of their service to the country and their academic achievement. Although unable to hold in-person ceremonies this year, several campuses held online ceremonies to honor graduating veterans.

Conclusion

Whether online or in person, the CSU is committed to serving student-veterans, servicemembers and dependents. Through VRCs, staff provide a spectrum of services designed to support these students, including advising, advocacy and benefits assistance. Additionally, staff in these centers connect military-affiliated students with resources – both campus-based and external – that will best meet their needs. The services, programming, and care offered at each of the 23 campuses are evidence of the CSU's unwavering support of all our military-affiliated students.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Recommended Amendment to Title 5 Regarding Ethnic Studies

Presentation By

Loren J. Blanchard
Executive Vice Chancellor
Academic and Student Affairs

Alison M. Wrynn
Associate Vice Chancellor
Academic Programs, Innovations, and Faculty Development

Summary

The amendment to Title 5 presented for board action proposes to amend Title 5 § 40405.1. California State University General Education – Breadth Requirements to revise the description of the lower division requirement in Ethnic Studies and Social Justice to read Ethnic Studies. This will ensure the amendment is in compliance with Section 89032 of the California Education Code, created by Assembly Bill 1460 (AB 1460).

Background

AB 1460 was signed into law by Governor Newsom on August 17, 2020 and created Section 89032 of the California Education Code. In order to comply with the new statute, Title 5 § 40405.1 must be revised to include this newly titled requirement.

The following resolution is proposed for adoption:

RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the California State University, acting under the authority prescribed herein and pursuant to Section 66055.8 and 89030 of the Education Code, that section 40405.1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations is amended as follows:

§ 40405.1. California State University General Education – Breadth Requirements.

(a) Each recipient of the bachelor's degree completing the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements pursuant to this subdivision (a) shall have completed a program which includes a minimum of 48 semester units or 72 quarter units of which 9 semester units or 12 quarter units shall be upper division level and shall be taken no sooner than the term in which the candidate achieves upper division status. At least 9 of the 48 semester units or 12 of the 72 quarter units shall be earned at the campus granting the degree. The 48 semester units or 72 quarter units shall be distributed as follows:

- (1) A minimum of 9 semester units or 12 quarter units in communication in the English language, to include both oral communication and written communication, and in critical thinking, to include consideration of common fallacies in reasoning.
- (2) A minimum of 12 semester units or 18 quarter units to include inquiry into the physical universe and its life forms, with some immediate participation in laboratory activity, and into mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning and their applications.
- (3) A minimum of 12 semester units or 18 quarter units among the arts, literature, philosophy and foreign languages.
- (4) A minimum of 9 semester units or 12 quarter units dealing with human social, political, and economic institutions and behavior and their historical background.
- (5) A minimum of 3 semester units or 4 quarter units in study designed to equip human beings for lifelong understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological, social, and psychological entities.
- (6) A minimum of 3 semester units or 4 quarter units at the lower-division in study designed to understand ethnic studies ~~and social justice~~.

The specification of numbers of units implies the right of discretion on each campus to adjust reasonably the proportions among the categories in order that the conjunction of campus courses, credit unit configurations and these requirements will not unduly exceed any of the prescribed semester or quarter unit minima. However, the total number of units in General Education-Breadth accepted for the bachelor's degree under the provisions of this subdivision (a) shall not be less than 48 semester units or 72 quarter units unless the Chancellor grants an exception.

(b) The president or an officially authorized representative of a college which is accredited in a manner stated in Section 40601 (d) (1) may certify the extent to which the requirements of subdivision (a) of this section have been met up to a maximum of 39 semester units (or 58 quarter units). Such certification shall be in terms of explicit objectives and procedures issued by the Chancellor.

(c) In the case of a baccalaureate degree being pursued by a post-baccalaureate student, the requirements of this section shall be satisfied if:

- (1) The student has previously earned a baccalaureate or higher degree from an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association; or
- (2) The student has completed equivalent academic preparation, as determined by the appropriate campus authority.

Note: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66055.8 and 89030, and 89032, Education Code.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Graduation Initiative 2025

Presentation By

Loren J. Blanchard
Executive Vice Chancellor
Academic and Student Affairs

James T. Minor
Assistant Vice Chancellor and Senior Strategist
Academic Success and Inclusive Excellence

Summary

California State University's Graduation Initiative 2025 continues to make steady progress towards increasing student degree completion rates, eliminating equity gaps and meeting California's workforce and economic needs. Placed in the context of 2020, that included an unprecedented pivot to virtual learning and significant economic and social upheaval, this momentum is both significant and a reflection of the unwavering commitment of CSU students, staff, faculty and administrators. Today, students are engaged in more than 80,000 virtual courses and have access to a full array of advisement, health and support services online. Many campus support centers are reporting record-setting engagement with their students. As the initiative enters its fifth year, this information item provides an update based on final university-wide graduation rate data for 2020.

Graduation Initiative 2025 Goals

Launched and approved by the Board of Trustees in 2016, Graduation Initiative 2025 set forth a set of ambitious goals to support the successful transition of today's students to tomorrow's leaders in virtually every field of human endeavor. Attainment of these goals will set a new national standard for providing high quality affordable degree opportunities, and position the CSU as the exemplar in promoting inclusive excellence. The initiative goals include:

- A 40 percent 4-year graduation rate goal for first-time students;
- A 70 percent 6-year graduation rate goal for first-time students;
- A 45 percent 2-year graduation rate goal for transfer students;
- An 85 percent 4-year graduation rate goal for transfer students;
- Elimination of equity gaps between CSU students who identify as African American, Native American or Latinx and their peers; and
- Elimination of equity gaps between Pell eligible students and their peers.

Operational Priorities

The pathway to meeting the goals of Graduation Initiative 2025 began by articulating clear priorities that, when implemented university-wide, could ensure the most effective and comprehensive approach to student success at the CSU. The six operational priorities for Graduation Initiative 2025 are:

- Academic preparation
- Enrollment management
- Student engagement and well-being
- Financial support
- Data-informed decision making
- Removal of administrative barriers

Over the past six months, as students across the system were challenged with issues ranging from meeting basic needs to navigating a new virtual learning environment, these priorities played an even more essential role. A survey of CSU student basic needs in late August captured some of the ways campuses were responding for requests for help. Many addressed food insecurity by providing food via curbside pick-ups and grocery store gift cards and nearly all campuses provided emergency housing to homeless students.

2020 Graduation Rate Data

Despite the challenges presented by the global health crisis, in the 2019-20 academic year more CSU students earned their baccalaureate degree than ever before. Nearly 110,000 CSU students have now joined the ranks of the CSU's 3.8 million alumni. This record number of degrees represents 23,000 additional graduates as compared to 2015. What's more, the CSU recorded a record first-year retention rate amidst the pandemic with 85.5 percent of 2019's first-year students returning to campus for the fall 2020 term.

The following data provide insights based on specific student populations including first-time, transfer, underrepresented students of color and Pell Grant eligible students. Data which shows progress towards the stated goal are illustrated in green. If there has been no change from the previous year, the information is highlighted in yellow.

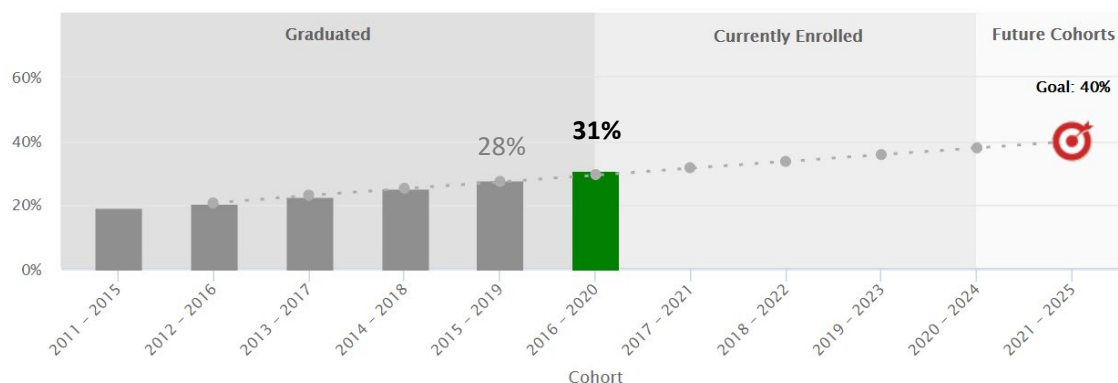
4-Year Graduation Goal for First-Time Students

The 4-year graduation rate for the first-time student cohort that began in 2016 and graduated in 2020 or earlier was 30.9 percent. This rate is the highest ever for the CSU and marks an increase of 3.2 percentage points from the previous year as illustrated in the table and graph below. Please note numbers have been rounded to whole numbers in all graphs.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2013	17.8
2010-2014	18.6
2011-2015	19.2
2012-2016	20.7
2013-2017	22.6
2014-2018	25.5
2015-2019	27.7
2016-2020	30.9
2025 Goal	40



4-Year Graduation Goal for First-Time Students



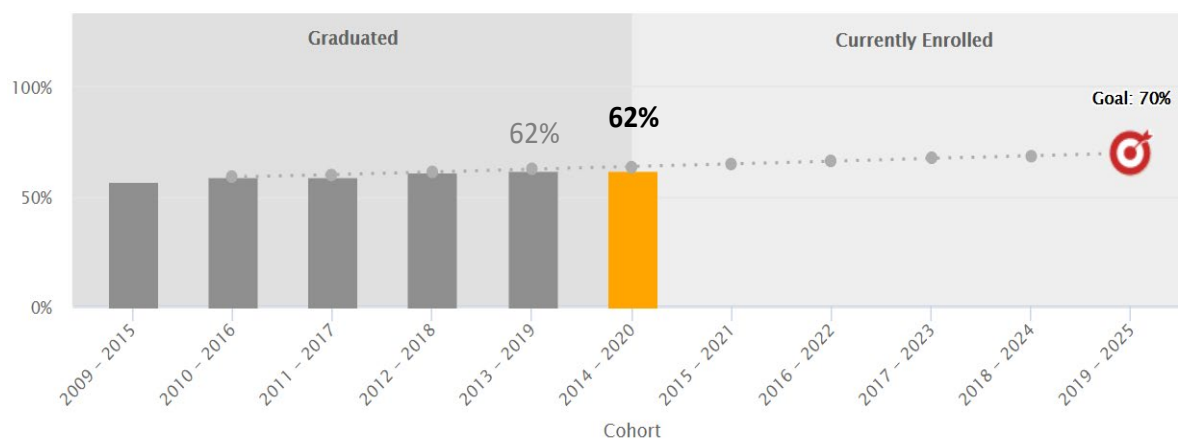
6-Year Graduation Goal for First-Time Students

The 6-year graduation rate for the first-time student cohort that began in 2014 and graduated in 2020 or earlier remained steady at 62.4 percent.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2015	57.0
2010-2016	59.1
2011-2017	59.2
2012-2018	61.1
2013-2019	62.1
2014-2020	62.4
2025 Goal	70



6-Year Graduation Goal for First-Time Students



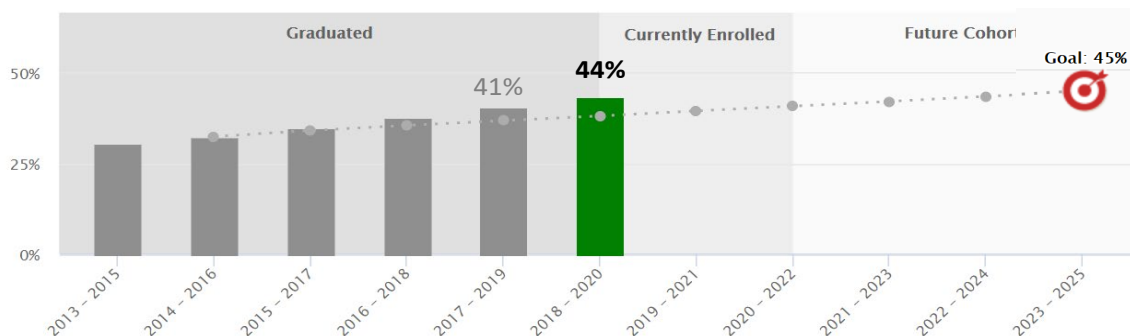
2-Year Graduation Goal for Transfer Students

The 2-year graduation rate for the transfer cohort that began in 2018 and graduated in 2020 or earlier was 43.5 percent. This rate is the highest ever for the CSU and places the university within 1.5 percentage point of the 2025 goal of 45 percent.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2011	24.5
2010-2012	27.8
2011-2013	26.7
2012-2014	28.4
2013-2015	30.5
2014-2016	32.6
2015-2017	35.1
2016-2018	37.8
2017-2019	40.7
2018-2020	43.5
2025 Goal	45



Transfer 2-Year Graduation Goal



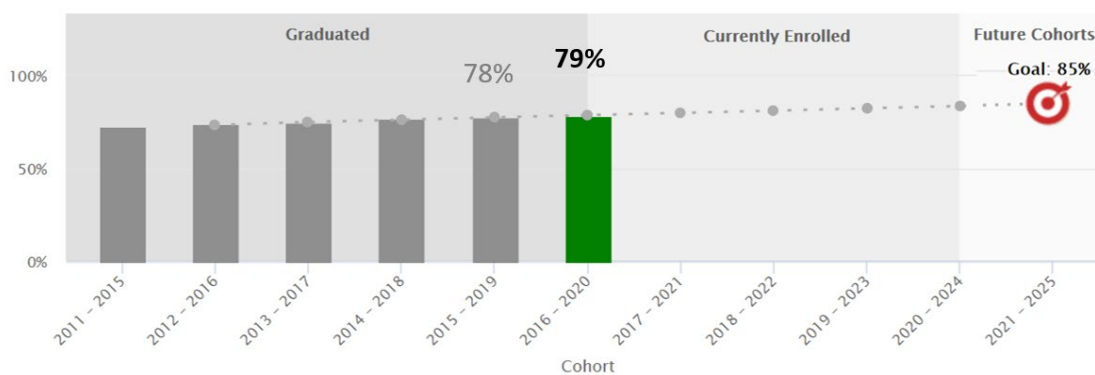
4-Year Graduation Goal for Transfer Students

The 4-year graduation rate for the transfer cohort that began in 2016 and graduated in 2020 or earlier increased to 78.9 percent. This rate is the highest ever for the CSU and builds on recent momentum as demonstrated in the chart below.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2013	69.2
2010-2014	72.8
2011-2015	72.9
2012-2016	73.9
2013-2017	75.3
2014-2018	77.1
2015-2019	77.6
2016-2020	78.9
2025 Goal	85



Transfer 4-Year Graduation Goal



Underrepresented Students of Color Equity Gap Goal

The CSU's commitment to student success is a commitment to equal opportunity for all students who seek to earn a degree regardless of their family income or background. This year, the data indicate students from historically underrepresented communities – those who identify as African American, Native American or Latinx – continue to make gains in their graduation rates. This year the gap between the 2014 cohort that graduated within six years with their peer group slightly narrowed to 10.5 percent.

Cohort	Grad Gap (percentage points)
2009-2015	11.3
2010-2016	12.0
2011-2017	12.2
2012-2018	10.5
2013-2019	11.1
2014-2020	10.5
2025 Goal	0

Pell Equity Gap Goal

The data indicate that Pell eligible students also continue to make gains in their graduation rates. The gap for the 2014 cohort that graduated within six years narrowed slightly to 9.2 percentage points.

Cohort	Grad Rate (percentage points)
2009-2015	8.6
2010-2016	10.0
2011-2017	10.6
2012-2018	9.5
2013-2019	10.2
2014-2020	9.2
2025 Goal	0

2020 Graduation Initiative 2025 Convening

The annual Graduation Initiative 2025 Symposium has provided an opportunity for the CSU community to share the most recent graduation rate data and highlight the work of faculty, staff, students, administrators and alumni who contribute to our progress. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 symposium was moved to a virtual fall convening that drew nearly 4,000 registrants. The theme, The Time is Now, encouraged participants to leverage this time of transition and metamorphosis to take data-informed action and ensure that students, especially historically underrepresented students, do not fall behind.

Featured speakers included:

- **Francesca M. Beer, Ph.D.**, associate dean and director for the Office of Academic Equity in the College of Business and Public Administration at California State University San Bernardino
- **Loren J. Blanchard, Ph.D.**, executive vice chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, California State University, Office of the Chancellor
- **Joseph I. Castro, Ph.D.**, president of California State University Fresno and chancellor-select, California State University
- **Kathryn Ervin**, professor of Theatre Arts at California State University San Bernardino
- **Monica C. Lozano**, president and chief executive officer of the College Futures Foundation
- **Roberto Soto, Ph.D.**, an assistant professor of Mathematics and Math Education at California State University Fullerton
- **Cherokee White**, recent graduate who earned a BA in Theatre Arts from San Francisco State University with a minor in Cultural Anthropology
- **Timothy P. White, Ph.D.**, chancellor of the California State University

Conclusion

Entering the fifth year of Graduation Initiative 2025, it is clear that the university-wide commitment to degree completion and inclusive excellence maintains a positive trajectory. This progress, achieved against the backdrop of a global pandemic and social unrest, is a testament to CSU's unwavering focus on student success. Ongoing support of Graduation Initiative 2025 means this momentum will continue, and that prospective and current students will propel themselves, and California, to greater heights through the transformative power of a CSU education.