

Student Success and Graduation Initiative  
San Francisco State University  
Bi-Monthly Report

November/December 2012

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**What did your team complete this month and how will it help? As proposed in our September/October report:**

1. The Department of Health Education held a 4-day assessment workshop for its faculty in an effort to improve their program assessment. The assessment results will be added to their data gathering on retention and graduation to give the faculty a better picture of the benefits of the high impact practices that have been added to the curriculum.
2. The SSGI task force sponsored, in partnership with the Chancellor's Office, a campus viewing of the film, "First Generation." There was a welcome/introduction from both the President and Provost, and a discussion following the screening facilitated by Jeff Gold. Approximately 100 campus community members attended, and the response and discussion were both extremely positive. The one negative expressed by some was the perception in the film that the CSU is a "last choice" by many students. While it is important for us to know that, we also believe it should be an impetus to improve the CSU image and perception in the general public.
3. We have implemented, as a result of information learned at the Ed Trust Access to Success Conference, an initiative called "On Track to Graduate." Students who began at SF State as frosh in fall 2007 are being given the option for first priority registration in 2012-2013 fall and spring semesters if they complete and follow a Degree Completion Plan indicating they will graduate in spring 2013. They also will apply for graduation and be evaluated a semester early. This initiative should facilitate these students graduating within 6 years. Of 330 students who were eligible to participate in "On Track," 128 signed up for the program and so far 114 applied to graduate in January 2013. The rest of the Fall 2007 cohort who did not sign up initially have been given the same opportunity for Spring 2013 priority registration.
4. A third subgroup to SSGI was added to focus on communication of the initiative to the campus community. Having a student representative on the subgroup has been valuable in identifying social media and other communication strategies, which consist of proposing an Associated Students and Undergraduate Studies

sponsored “Student Success Day” two weeks before spring 2013 finals. Suggestions include tabling campus resources (e.g., tutoring, health and psychological counseling, academic advising), stress reduction activities that build community (e.g., “Dunk a Dr.,” physical edutainment, quad/library office hours), and academic skills workshops (e.g., studying techniques, library research).

5. Undergraduate Studies continued working with Academic Resources to determine the number of seats needed in every area of GE, plus the overlays, in order to successfully implement the new General Education curriculum in 2014. There are fewer university wide units required in the new curriculum, which should reduce time to graduation.
6. Data indicate overall graduation rates improved slightly from 46.5% to 47.3%. Caucasian graduation rates dipped slightly from 46.1% to 44.0%. However graduation rates among URM improved over 6 percentage points, from 38.9% to 45.1%. Most notable amongst this group were the improvements among Native American students (from 35.7% to 50.0%-though a very small number of students) and Chicano/Mexican-American students (from 38.4% to 50.0%). The graduation gap between Non-URM and URM declined from 10.1 percentage points to just 2.9 percentage points, a considerable improvement.

We’ve also updated our fall undergraduate profile. The new profile reveals that we have about 1,000 more students this fall compared to last (total = 30,500). Additionally, we have more of both first-time freshmen and transfers. Total number of undergraduate degrees, however, dipped by about 500 to 7,175. All data can be found here:

<http://air.sfsu.edu/air/acad-inst-research/student/undergraduate>

7. Thirteen faculty members participated in the first pilot of our Early Warning system. Emails were sent to students who had issues with either attendance or academics, after four weeks and again after ten weeks into the semester. Anecdotally, faculty believed it was very helpful in getting students’ attention, and subsequently for them to receive the help they needed. We will know more after grades are posted for the semester. We plan to continue the pilot through spring 2013.
8. Nancy Gerber, professor of Chemistry, and her colleagues in Chemistry and Biology, are looking at the success patterns of students in their majors. This project was inspired by Nancy’s participation in the AAC&U 2011 Student Success/HIPs Institute in Vermont and the general campus SSGI efforts. They are reviewing reports that allow them to track their majors and look at when students start to struggle. They are also submitting a grant proposal to NSF’s STEP (Science Talent Expansion Program). STEM 6-year graduation rates are in the typically 25-30% range, with URMS about half of that. Hopefully, the new efforts around HIPs and faculty development will significantly improve the

STEM graduation rates. (The submission deadline was postponed to December, 2013)

9. The Baccalaureate Requirements Committee has approved FYE learning outcomes that will be forwarded to the Academic Senate for endorsement.
10. The Department of Health Education held a - day assessment workshop for its faculty in an effort to improve their program assessment. The assessment results will be added to their data gathering on retention and graduation to give the faculty a fuller picture of the benefits of the high impact practices that have been added to the curriculum.

**What we hope to accomplish in the next two months.**

1. Undergraduate Studies will continue working with Academic Resources to determine the number of seats needed in every area of GE, plus the overlays, in order to successfully implement the new General Education curriculum. We are making excellent progress in the course approval process. There are fewer university-wide units required in the new curriculum, which should reduce the time to graduation.
2. We will continue assessment of our academic success-coaching program, Beyond 12, as well as the Early Warning pilot.
3. The SSGI team will continue to review the 2009 SSGI proposal and evaluate the activities that have been completed, determining which have been successful, which have not been successful, and what remains to be done.
4. We will begin planning the “Student Success Day” to be held at the end of spring semester.