

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

September/October 2012

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

1. 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 will be given the same opportunity for Spring 2013 priority registration.
2. 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).
3. 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.
4. We continued assessment of our coaching program, Beyond 12. Please see attached for the first year results.

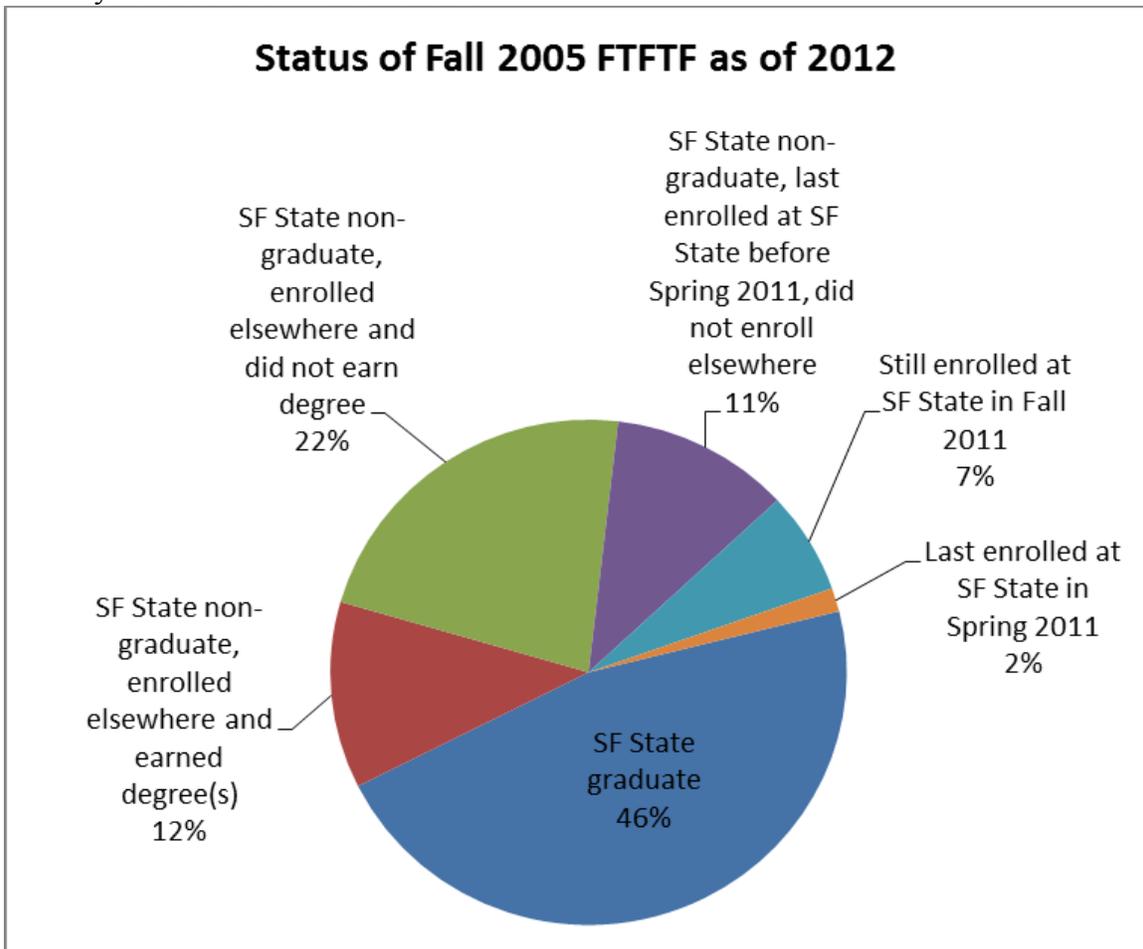
- Although six-year graduation rates at San Francisco State increased between 2006 and 2010 (from 42.5% to 48.0%), this is still below the CSU and national average. And in 2011 the graduation rate dipped from 48.0% to 46.5%.

The Office of Academic Institutional Research (AIR) undertook two studies on attrition-one aimed at general attrition and another specifically at attrition among southern California students.

In the general study, it was discovered that those first-time freshmen students less likely to graduate over a six period included: African-Americans, Latinos, URM (underrepresented minorities) collectively, students whose major was in the College of Science and Engineering, students needing remediation in both math and English, and students whose home is in southern California.

Those who were more likely to graduate were Asians, students from San Franciscan high schools and also students from the six-county local area.

The chart below shows the outcome of all first time freshmen from 2005, six years after their matriculation.



In addition to the 46% who graduated from San Francisco State, another 12% graduated with a bachelor's degree from elsewhere. If we could claim these students among our graduates, our graduation rate would exceed 58%.

Another 22% enrolled elsewhere but failed to graduate. Eleven percent left San Francisco State but did not enroll at another university. Two percent continued into the last semester of the six-year period, but then dropped out. And finally, 7% were still enrolled after the end of the six-year period.

Approximately ten years ago, San Francisco State began recruiting more heavily from southern California. This paid off in increased enrollment from the area. For example, enrollments of southern California students increased by 50% between 2005 and 2009 (from 808 to 1196). However, over a six year period only 43% of them graduated. This compares to a graduation rate of 49% among local students. Had southern California students from the 2005 cohort graduated at the same rate as local students, the campus-wide graduation rate would have increased from 46.5% to 48.8%.

Southern California students who left San Francisco State before the end of six years were much more likely to continue their education at another university (77%) than were local area students (55%). Of the starting cohort from southern California, 16% of them left San Francisco State and graduated at another university with a bachelor's degree. The comparable figure for local area students was just 5%. This raises the intriguing question of whether some students who come to San Francisco State from southern California do so with the intention at the start of moving on elsewhere later. If this were true, the University ends up serving as a transfer institution for them. We don't, however, have evidence to confirm this possibility yet.

6. Thanks to an increase in Lottery funding from the President's Office, the Summer Bridge program sponsored by EOP doubled to serve 110 students (40 males, 70 females). Of the original participants, 108 are still enrolled at census for Fall 2012.
7. Thirteen faculty members participated in the first pilot of our Early Warning system. It is too early to report results, but the faculty all felt the software was very user friendly and easy to navigate.
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.

9. Alvin Alvarez, Associate Dean of the College of Health & Social Sciences, is identifying at-risk students in CHSS and using the data to provide targeted academic advising and career counseling for the purposes of enhancing retention. CHSS has identified three particular groups: a) students at risk for probation (i.e., GPAs between 2.0 to 2.3), b) students on remediation and c) students who are at triple-risk (double remediation in English & Math, 1st generation college and PELL eligible). CHSS is in the process of developing programmatic interventions for each of these groups (i.e., individual advising, group & departmental advising, supplementary workshops, etc.)

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. At ten weeks, the second Early Warning email will go out to students by the 13 faculty members participating in the pilot project.
3. We will continue assessment of our academic success-coaching program, Beyond 12.
4. The SSGI task force will sponsor, in partnership with the Chancellor's Office, a campus viewing of the film, "First Generation." There will be a welcome/introduction from both the President and Provost, and a discussion following the screening lead by Jeff Gold. The screening will be open to the SF State campus community, as well as the Graduation Initiative committees from Bay Area CSUs. The screening will be held October 29th from 2:00-4:30.
5. 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.
6. The Department of Health Education is organizing 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 fuller picture of the benefits of the high impact practices that have been added to the curriculum.