GI 2025 UPDATE

CSU, Bakersfield Graduation Initiative Activities Report for 2020-2021

In September 2016, the California State University (CSU) launched Graduation Initiative 2025, an ambitious plan to increase graduation rates, eliminate equity gaps in degree completion and meet California's workforce needs. As an active participant in the initiative, CSU Bakersfield has worked diligently to work towards meeting our 2025 targets. Despite our good progress, we recognize that there is still much to do, particularly given the formidable challenges associated with the global health crisis. Now more than ever, Graduation Initiative 2025 stands as the CSU's guiding beacon to better support our students and promote equitable opportunities for timely degree completion. This report details some of the tactics deployed during the last academic year to support student success during these challenging times.

Academic Preparation

During Summer 2021, CSUB offered a robust, fully-online Early Start program for incoming freshman, with access to free tutoring and peer mentoring support. A total of 77 incoming freshman enrolled in the program, and over $50,000 of financial aid was dispersed to these students to cover the cost of tuition, fees, and course materials.

Of those who enrolled in CSUB 1029, 88% successfully completed the course, receiving credit toward the completion of their FYS requirement. Of those who enrolled in ENGL 1000, 71% were deemed "A2 ready" and placed into ENGL 1009 in Fall 2021. Of those who enrolled into MATH 1010, 80% successfully completed the course and were able to proceed into MATH 1050 or MATH 2200 in Fall 2021. Of those who enrolled in MATH 1209 or PSYC 2018, 71% successfully completed the course, receiving credit toward completion of their B4 requirement.

Enrollment Management

CSUB *communicated* the value of earning a college degree though a widely deiminated flyer, creating a "Who can I contact for help?" resource list, and engaging the news.csub.edu university readership on trauma-informed approaches to assist students. CSUB *connected* with students through outreach, especially those on the disqualification list during the height of the pandemic, of whom 384 students were saved from dismissal by using an Academic Reinstatement Manual approach. CSUB *engaged* students to seek advising help through AskRowdy as first contact, scheduling follow up appointments with academic advisors, and using a midterm progress reports campaign to prompt students in precarious academic status to get tutoring help. Those who sought academic support services increased 6.7 times their odds-ratio of earning a passing grade.

Student Engagement and Well-Being

During AY 2020-21, CSUB has strengthened it efforts to meet the wellness needs of our students through a variety of programs. Our food pantry served 2511 students and we distributed food boxes to 2418 students. We provided virtual mental health services to 741 students and virtual psychiatric serves to 105 students. Also, our Dreamers Resource Center served 227 students. In addition, our campus administered nearly 3,600 COVID tests to faculty, staff, and students and provided COVID vaccinations to nearly 53,000 faculty, staff, students, and community members.

Financial Support

To assist students with on-time graduation, $92,616 (+81.5%) was dispersed through Runner Completion Grants. This program covered tuition fees for 50 students so that they could complete their final term and graduate on time. To support students residing on campus, Future Scholars Awards dispersed $48,000 (+20.6%) to 50 students and Supplemental State University Grants awarded $78,800 to 108 students. In addition, the campus received approximately 14 petitions from students requesting one additional term of State University Grant (SUG) funding after having reached the maximum unit limit, amounting in $39,908 (+39.0%) in awards. In addition, CSUB's Information Technology Services (ITS) department has distributed approximately 500 computers and 645 Hotspots to students.

Data-Informed Decision-Making

A 16-person team of faculty and administrators participated in the CSU Certificate Program in Student Success Analytics. Participants not only develop advanced data literacy skills to glean insights on their respective campuses, but they also engaged in hands-on data action projects to help bring these insights into practice. The CSU Bakersfield team's project, "Student Success Summit: Closing the Equity Gaps" came to fruition in September with 277 attendees. In addition, CSUB has established a data informed decision-making steering committee. This group is responsible for developing our data governance strategy, data definitions and literacy, data infrastructure, and data advocacy.

Administrative Barriers

The financial aid awarding process is now aligned with Admissions office acceptance. This change allows students who were admitted and had all financial aid documents submitted by March 10 to receive their financial aid award offer notifications. Additionally, the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships implemented Campus Logic software, which allows students to submit required verification documents seamlessly through a portal that accepts e-signature for students and parents and communications to students until their file is complete. This software also includes a new scholarship application platform called Roadrunner Scholarship Universe, which gives CSUB students access to over 3900 verified external scholarships and streamlines the application and awarding process for our CSUB scholarships.

Other changes include improvements to the accuracy of the Degree Audit tool so that students can track their academic progress toward graduation and temporarily increasing the minimum financial balance owed to $1,000 to reduce the number of students dropped from their classes when they have outstanding debts to the campus. In addition, plans are underway to revisit the "One-Stop" informational website and service centers for students on campus. This will eliminate bureaucratic experiences for students and provide more hands-on support for students in need.