Summer Bridge, administered through the Educational Opportunity Program, is a free six-week intensive academic preparation and college orientation program designed to help incoming students make a smooth transition from high school to college.

To evaluate the impact of SMB on student academic performance, we used four measurements: Program enrollment trend, second year retention rate, first term GPA and first term good standing rate, compared with non-participants of the cohort.

**Enrollment Trend**

1. **Participation Rate**
   Approximately 5.7% of first-time freshmen entering Sacramento State participate in the Summer Bridge Program. The highest rate was 6.4% in 2001 and 2004. The lowest rate was 4.7% in 1997.

2. **Program Enrollment**
   Enrollment for SMB first-time freshmen has seen an increase from 78 in Fall 1996 to 156 in Fall 2006 (growth of 94%). The enrollment for SMB has been very stable with an average of 152 students since 2001. The average enrollment of SMB was 123 during the past 11 years.
Retention Rate
Fall-to-Fall retention rate is commonly used as the measurement for retention study. The second year retention rate is crucial since students are most likely to stay and complete their college education if they return for the second year. The withdrawal rate generally continues to decrease the following years.

The second year retention rates for SMB participants has consistently been higher than the rates for all First-Time freshmen in the past five years.

The retention rate for SMB participants was 85%, compared with 76% for their Freshmen peers in Fall 2005, which was significantly higher by Chi-Square Test (p<.01).

First Term GPA
First term GPA refers to the overall GPA of a student maintained by the end of fall semester. The overall average GPA for SMB participants has been slightly higher than the average GPA for all First-Time Freshmen.

The overall mean GPA was 2.7 for SMB participants in 2005 and 2.6 for their peers by the end of fall semester, which shows no significant difference by T-Test.
**Good Standing Rate**
The good standing rate refer to those students who maintain a GPA of at least 2.0 by the end of the first fall semester to avoid academic probation or dismissal.
The percentage of good standing students at the end of fall term for SMB participants was higher than all First-Time Freshmen since 2001. However, the rate jumped to 100% in fall 2005, which was significantly higher than other first-time freshmen (79%) by Chi-Square Test ($p< .001$).

![Graph showing Good Standing Rate of SMB vs. All First-time Freshmen](image)

**Academic Background**
To make sure that the two groups (SMB and all other First-Time Freshmen) are comparable, it is necessary to check their academic background such as high school GPA and SAT scores.

Following are the data for cohort 2005:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HS GPA</th>
<th>SAT Comp</th>
<th>College GPA</th>
<th>Good Standing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMB</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>784**</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>100%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All FTF</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>983</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t or $\chi^2$</td>
<td>No difference</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>No difference</td>
<td>Higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SMB participants had a much lower combined SAT scores compared with their Freshmen peers while having the same level of high school GPA in Fall 2005. However, they maintained the same level of overall GPA as other First-Time Freshmen and gained higher good standing rate than their peers.

**Conclusion:**
The SMB program has indeed helped their students make a smooth transition to college life during the first year:
1. The second year retention rate for SMB participants has been higher than the rate of all First-Time Freshmen in the past five years.
2. SMB participants has made great progress on achieving the same level of academic performance in terms of average overall GPA. Moreover, they have gained higher good standing rates than their peers who came from much better academic background.

However, the participation rate could be higher since it is open to all First-Time Freshmen. It is necessary to review the recruitment process in order to increase participation rate and maximize the positive impact of this program on students' retention rate and academic performance.

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