

Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence: Campus-Based Strategies for Student Success

Sacramento State Action Plan

Project LAUNCH (Learning to Advance Underserved Communities in Higher Ed)

CAMPUS ACTION PLAN GOALS

Campus actions plans should work toward the following measureable goals to advance equity in student learning and success:

- Increased student access to and participation in high-impact practices
- Increased course completion, retention, and graduation rates for low-income, first-generation, adult learners and/or minority students.
- Increased achievement of learning outcomes for underserved students using direct assessment measures
- Increased student understanding of guided learning pathways that incorporate HIPs and the value to workforce preparation and engaged citizenship (i.e., completion with a purpose)

INSTITUTION'S PROJECT DESCRIPTION THAT ADDRESSES THE FOUR OBJECTIVES LISTED ABOVE

Please explain how the proposed campus project aligns with the institution's strategic vision for student learning and success.

The Sacramento State Campus Action Plan has been developed to align effectively with Sacramento State's Graduation Initiative and Strategic Plan both of which include goals to improve graduation rates and to close achievement gaps among various demographic groups. It will also build upon existing institutional structures and opportunities such as (but not limited to) the Peer Academic Resource Center (PARC), First Year Experience, EOP/SASEEP, and Center for Teaching & Learning. The plan is set-up to address equity and inclusive excellence particularly for students whose performance in gateway courses could affect their ability to get into impacted majors. These majors: Business, Nursing, Criminal Justice, and Psychology –all of which currently (Fall 2015 University Fact Book) serve more than 50% minority students—are those which have capped enrollment and have established additional selection criteria. On our campus, students who have not yet successfully completed pre-major courses required as minimum qualifications for the major have a status of “Expressed Interest” but are *de facto* “Undeclared” and, therefore, may face additional obstacles to access and participation in high impact practices. In the absence of a declared major, these students are also less likely to be engaged and supported by a “home” department.

We are, therefore, proposing to focus our efforts for this project on course completion in gateway courses that are part of the “pre-major” minimum criteria for the impacted majors: BIO 10, CRJ 1, ACCY 1, and PSYC 2. Furthermore, given the strong data sets reflecting the importance of successful and timely completion of “remedial” or “developmental” Mathematics for all of our students, we will also include our Learning Skills Math (pre-baccalaureate) courses in this Action Research project. Lastly, we also want to improve student success and course completion in First Year Seminar. At this point in time, there does appear to be an equity gap for African American students (4.7% higher DFWI rate than for all

FYS) that we will seek to narrow. This approach requires strong faculty engagement in course redesign and strategic deployment of equity-minded practices.

Interventions and strategic deployment of High Impact Practices (HIPs) to close the gap, particularly for African American and Hispanic students, will include First Year Seminars, Learning Communities, Peer Support (mentoring and tutoring), and Service Learning. Currently access to and participation in first year HIPs are fairly evenly distributed among URM and non-URM students; however, the purpose for this project will be to make sure that HIPs and other interventions are effectively coordinated and focused to support success and course completion in the gateway courses. Successful completion of these gateway courses and attainment of the essential threshold concepts and skills taught in these courses, as well as engagement with the campus through HIPs should a) improve either entry into the student’s original chosen ‘impacted’ major; or b) declaration of another carefully determined major. Furthermore, that should improve both the first and second year retention rates and ultimately the graduation rates (4 year and 6 year) for these students. By providing a year-long First Year Experience with Learning Communities including the gateway courses and foundational GE courses in both fall and spring semesters, we also plan to improve unit completion, and therefore, progression rates for the targeted populations by increasing the number of students served and the duration of the HIPs experiences.

Our more long-term goals for which this project will provide a foundation include the creation of a “home” College in Undergraduate Studies for Undeclared and Expressed Interest students within which we will establish a carefully designed lower division guided pathway through General Education that intentionally incorporates HIPs and focuses on the value of workforce preparation and engaged citizenship. Such a College would be structured to prepare students successfully to ‘launch’ into a major for their upper division course work and participation in HIPs (e.g. Service Learning, Undergraduate Research, Internships, Capstone experiences, etc.).

EQUITY GOALS BASED ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES: (see attached data on targeted course completion)

The attached data set identifies measurable equity gaps in course completion for the courses we have identified as critical gateway courses for impacted majors, as well as one or more of the Math Learning Skills (MLSK/Developmental) courses. The actual equity goal may change in consultation with faculty participants in those disciplines.

		%Point Difference from All	Equity Deficit	Equity Goal
ACCY1	Ethnicity			
	African American	-12.2%	-7	Reduce by 5%
	Hispanic	-1.8%	-3	Close the Gap
BIO 10	Ethnicity			
	African American	-21.0%	-15	Reduce by 5%
	Hispanic	-11.8%	-23	Reduce by 5%
	Pacific Islander	-8.5%	-1	Close the Gap
CRJ 1	Ethnicity			
	African American	-2.8%	-2	Close the Gap
	Asian	-2.0%	-4	Close the Gap
	Hispanic	-0.6%	-2	Close the Gap
	Native American	-14.7%	-1	Close the Gap
	Pacific Islander	-17.1%	-2	Close the Gap
PSYC 2	Ethnicity			
	African American	-14.9%	-18	Reduce by 5%
	Hispanic	-3.8%	-20	Reduce by 5%
	Native American	-13.6%	-2	Close the Gap
	Pacific Islander	-20.5%	-6	Reduce by 5%

Math Learning Skills Courses

MLSK 10A	Ethnicity	%Point Difference from All	Equity Deficit	Goal
	Hispanic	-2.8%	-9	Reduce by 10%
	Pacific Islander	-33.8%	-5	Reduce by 10%
MLSK 7A	Ethnicity	%Point Difference from All	Equity Deficit	Goal
	African American	-15.8%	-19	Reduce by 5%
MLSK 7B	Ethnicity	%Point Difference from All	Equity Deficit	Goal
	Hispanic	-2.9%	-7	Reduce by 10%

TARGETED INTERVENTION STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITY GOALS

I. Increased student access to and participation in high-impact practices and Increased Course Completion for Minority Students

A. Professional Learning Community (\$10,000--): Committing to Equity & Inclusive Excellence--Project LAUNCH. In collaboration with the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) at Sacramento State, we will bring together a community of practice for collaborative learning and action research. The PLC will include faculty members involved in teaching, redesigning and assessing General Education gateway courses including first year seminars, pre-major courses for Impacted majors and staff members that provide co-curricular and embedded high impact practices. The PLC will engage its members in Equity-minded research (e.g. some of the activities at the AAC&U/CUE conference) and practices, course and pedagogical redesigns, HIPs research, e-portfolio assessment, etc. Each member of the PLC will have a deliverable relevant to the project and his/her program and will receive \$700 in professional development funds upon completion of the project.

B. Increase in Student Support for High Impact Practices and Targeted Interventions Sacramento State has established a strong record of improving course completion, retention and engagement through a variety of peer support systems: FYE Peer Mentoring, First Year Resource Mentors for Developmental Courses in English and Math, Supplemental Instruction (PARC), Peer-Assisted Learning in STEM, and Peer Program Assistants that engage FYE students in the newly created FYE Space. Using the "Equity-Minded" data sets, we propose using additional funding from this grant to scale-up these programs and to create 'teams' of faculty and peer support. This is also being done in conjunction with our DHSI grant funding of a Peer Support Network. Funding from the AAC&U project will be used for targeted interventions in the courses identified above (BIO 10, CRJ 1, PSYC 2, MLSK series of developmental math courses, and ACCY 1). We will, for example, target our recruitment for FYE programming (1st and 2nd semester Learning Communities) through our Parents' Group, and engage students in the new Centers—e.g. Martin Luther King Center, Dreamer Center, as well as our Full Circle Project (Asian Pacific Islander Serving Program). The key here will be coordination of student support services and faculty engagement.

II. **Increased student understanding of guided learning pathways that incorporate HIPs and the value to workforce preparation and engaged citizenship (i.e. completion with a purpose):**

Project LAUNCH event with keynote speaker/workshop leader, Mr. Jullien Gordon.

Career, family, money, health goals, and happiness – this is the focus of Jullien Gordon’s talks. He is not simply a motivational speaker. Jullien believes that inspiration combined with action results in real results. His goal for college events is to make sure students graduate on time, employed and ready for the real world. www.julliengordon.com

We have hosted Mr. Gordon on campus before and student response was very positive. We will be asking him to engage students in a number of different ways including interactive workshops. Much of Mr. Gordon’s work will be anticipated and followed up in First Year Seminars and other FYE activities on campus.

The event will be co-sponsored by other organizations on our campus such as the Martin Luther King Center, First Year Experience, and EOP/SASEEP.

III. Increased Achievement of learning outcomes for underserved students using direct assessment measures:

FYE Rubric Assessment (see attached FYE Rubric)

First Year Experience as a program includes the following:

- First Year Seminars
- Learning Communities
- Peer Mentors
- Mandatory First Year Advising
- First Year Experience Space: a new study/meeting space for First Year students only.

The rubric represents consensus on learning outcomes for all HIPs involved in the FYE program and was adjusted to help us assess the outcomes at the end of the first year.

Service Learning (Writing Partners) Rubric Assessment (Note: This Service Learning program also engages students in Writing Intensive assignments, another HIP)

Writing Partners @ Sac State is a program of the Community Engagement Center and a service learning experience that provides Sac State students an opportunity to teach and learn through a letter exchange with students from elementary schools in the Sacramento region. Service Learning engages students and faculty in service experiences that:

- Enable students to enhance their learning while engaging in hands-on services in the community
- Provide service that benefits the community partner and the student
- Engage students in reflection and critical thinking that link learning from service to learning in the classroom
- Promote social and civic responsibility by relating service experience to issues of public concern and to the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy

As part of the Strategic Plan of the Community Engagement Center, we are in the process of developing rubrics for Service Learning generally and for Writing Partners specifically. Writing Partners is a letter exchange between 5th and 6th graders at elementary schools throughout the Sacramento region and Sac State students enrolled in First Year Experience. By the end of the Fall, 2015 term, we will have developed a rubric to assess Writing Partners. In the spring of 2016, we will pilot this Writing Partners rubric with 1-2 First Year Experience courses and will include this rubric for all First Year Experience courses that include Writing Partners in the Fall of 2016.

BARRIERS TO ACCOMPLISHMENT (AKA Challenges)

- Recruiting and engaging faculty in Course Redesign and Equity Minded Practices. The targeted course completion goals will depend, in large part, on recruiting faculty in those areas. Furthermore, incentives for innovation can sometimes be challenging given the demands of impacted programs.
- Scaling Up: our First Time Freshmen population is currently near 4,000 students. Determining needs based on equity goals may be challenging while we are only able to serve around 50% of our incoming students.
- Enrollment management: Our first year programs rely on cooperation from departments in setting aside seats for students in Learning Communities.
- Needs Assessment: Determining the best interventions for diverse student groups to address equity goals
- Identifying at-risk students for early intervention
- Coordination of Services (Student Affairs and Academic Affairs)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORT

- HSI designation and Development Grant (to establish a Peer Support Network and a Learning Analytics Center)
- Newly Established Martin Luther King Center and Dreamer Center
- Well-established First Year Experience Program with institutional support and strong collaborations across divisions
- Center for Teaching & Learning with model faculty development programs based on Faculty and Professional Learning Communities
- Emerging Student Success Technologies and Projects (e.g. Degree Planner, Platinum Analytics, and data dashboards for identifying at risk students)
- New Service Learning Database for tracking participation (CEC Connect)
- Chancellor's Office Support for Course Redesign with Technology
- Strategic Plan (5 year) and Graduation Initiative (10 year), Presidential Initiatives including the hiring of an Executive Director of University Initiatives & Student Success

ENGAGEMENT PLAN FOR STAKEHOLDERS

- Reporting and Consulting with Steering Committee of the Graduation Initiative. Through this group, we will be able to reach out and engage the working groups
- Recruitment of faculty and staff for PLC
- LAUNCH event
- The Action Team includes faculty and staff from Residence Life, Partners & Parents Group, STEM, FYE, PARC, and the Community Engagement Center. Each of those members will be responsible for engaging their constituencies, e.g. elementary school partners. We also have a student member of the Action Team, the ASI VP for Undeclared Students who will help us engage with students.
- The FYE Program has an extensive network of faculty, staff and students and the annual Convocation will provide engagement opportunities
- Recruitment of graders for FYE and Writing Partners Assessment Activities

Our Expanded Team includes the following individuals (in addition to the original Action Team—Sheree Meyer, Janet Hecsh, Reza Peigahi, Joel Schwartz, Tina Jordan-Brown, and Marcellene Watson-Derbigny):

Aja Holmes, Senior Associate Director, Residential Life

Dana Kivel, Director, Community Engagement Center

Enid Gonzalez-Orta, Director of STEM Success Center

Haley Myers, Director of Parents and Partners Program

Bridget Parsh, Director of First Year Experience Program

Mia Kagianas, ASI, Undeclared Director

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- CTL will help us disseminate information about the Professional Learning Community
- Promotional Materials will be provided during First Year Orientations (parents and new students)
- Promotional Materials for the LAUNCH event will be widely disseminated
- Reports will be given to the following stakeholders:
 - I. Faculty Senate (Student Retention & Graduation Subcommittee)
 - II. Graduation Initiative Steering Committee
 - III. Chairs & Directors Meetings
 - IV. Cabinet Meetings
 - V. FYE Program Meetings
- Sacramento State Public Affairs publications, e.g. Monday Briefing, will be used to disseminate information
- FYE newsletter and Undergraduate Studies website will be used to promote and report on Project LAUNCH.

TEAM ACTIONS AND TIMELINE

ACTION	PURPOSE/DETAILS	WHEN
Disaggregate & track course completion data for: BIO 10, PSYC 2, ACCY, CRJ 1, MLSK courses	Establish baseline and identify gaps Analyze Spring 2016 and Fall 2016 data for tracked course sections	February-March 2016 June-July 2016 January 2017
Comparison Data for course completion: LCOM/NON, FYE/Non, Peer Mentor/Non, Peer-tutoring/Non; Writing Partners/Non	Assess efficacy and retarget interventions and HIPS	February-March 2016 June-July 2016 January 2017
Plan LAUNCH Event	Engage faculty, staff and students in project	Spring 2016 FYE Convocation August 2016

		Event: September or October 2016
Student Participation Surveys & focus groups	To gather qualitative data—particularly re: student understanding of guided pathways	Fall 2016-early Spring 2017
Set up and Participate in Debriefs for FYE and Writing Partners assessment	Direct Assessment of HIPs	January 2016—Trial Assessment Activity May/June 2016 FYE Assessment & Trial Writing Partners Assessment Fall 2016 Writing Partners Assessment
Set Up and Recruit for PLC	Broad-based faculty and staff engagement in course redesign and HIPs for targeted courses	Spring 2016—planning and recruiting Summer 2016—initial meetings Fall 2016—PLC will meet
Final Reporting	Assessment of project & dissemination	Spring 2017

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR CAMPUS WORK

Action	Who	When
Establish Professional Learning Community: syllabus, recruitment, etc.	2 Co-facilitators Center for Teaching & Learning	Spring 2016
PLC action research projects for high stakes gateway courses	Faculty and staff participants	Summer meeting, Fall 2016 meetings, course redesign implementation in Spring 2017
Creation of LCOMs for Fall 2016 to include targeted courses & establishment of peer support teams	Bridget Parsh, Director of FYE Department Chairs Jason Sumi, Director of Peer Mentor Tina Jordan-Brown, PARC and MLK Center	Spring 2016
LAUNCH event/convocation planning/promotion	FYE, PARC, EOP/SASEEP Mr. Jullien Gordon	Spring 2016 for Fall 2016 event
Assess Equity Gaps in current peer support for targeted groups re: course completion	Joel Schwartz Janet Hecsh Sheree Meyer	January-March 2016
FYE Rubric Assessment Activities	Bridget Parsh and faculty from FYE Janet Hecsh, E-Portfolio Assessment	January 2016 and May 2016
Service Learning/Writing Partners Assessment Activities: rubric creation, testing and deployment	Dana Kivel, Director, Community Engagement Center Faculty in Service Learning	Spring 2016 Rubric creation and testing Fall 2016 Assessment Activity for Writing Partners
Engage Faculty & Staff in Equity “Math”—disseminate other AAC&U project information	Graduation Initiative Steering Committee PLC members	October 2015 Spring 2016 Fall 2016

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS ON EACH PROJECT OBJECTIVE

How will we track and monitor progress? One of our key team leaders who attended the conference and will be our primary data person is Joel Schwartz, Senior Research Analyst. Progress will be tracked and monitored in the following ways:

- Course Completion rates for the identified courses (disaggregated)
- Comparative Completion rates with and without HIPs (e.g. how do the students in PSYC 2 sections in Learning Communities compare to those who are not.)
- Comparisons between First Year Seminars with and without Writing Partners
- Follow-Up Surveys for LAUNCH event
- Comparison data pre- and post-course redesign for course completion
- Each member of the PLC will disseminate action research project
- Assessment Data from FYE and Writing Partners

DRAFT SUBAWARD ITEMIZED BUDGET

Subaward may be used to cover development of project materials, faculty release time, meeting expenses, etc.

- I. Professional Learning Community **(\$10,000)**
Co-facilitators (2): \$2,000
\$700 each for Faculty/Staff Development funds for 11 PLC participants to be received upon completion of the PLC and receipt of the deliverables: \$7,700
Materials & Hospitality: \$300
- II. Increased Peer Support for Targeted courses **(\$6500)**
\$1300 per course for BIO 10, CRJ 1, PSYC 2, ACCY 1, and MLSK series of developmental math courses)
- III. Project LAUNCH Event **(\$2,000)**
\$2,000 towards honorarium for Mr. Jullien Gordon
- IV. Promotion of Project LAUNCH **(\$300)**
\$300 for miscellaneous materials, dissemination, hospitality
- V. Direct Assessment **(\$1200)**
\$600 for FYE Assessment
\$600 for Writing Partners (Service Learning) Assessment

Total: \$20,000