SACRAMENTO STATE

Dedicated to Educating, Graduating and Retaining Educational Equity Students (DEGREES)

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Executive Summary

Dedicated to **E**ducating, **G**raduating, and **R**etaining **E**ducational **E**quity **S**tudents (**DEGREES**) is a program designed to promote the retention and graduation of all campus underrepresented students. The program is composed of four tracks including early warning interventions/continuing student support, curricular enrichment, mentoring/tutoring services, and engagement. The overarching goal of the program is to connect students with a variety of campus resources to impact their overall success in college.

This academic year, DEGREES coaches were actively calling and sending e-mail reminders and information to all DEGREES students. They promoted the DEGREES Project Success Source that is designed to promote student success. It is an interactive technological tool that captures the comprehensive list of resources and services offered at Sacramento State. The Success Source aims to familiarize faculty, staff, and students with the many services available on- and off-campus to make appropriate service connections. The Success Source is built on the foundation of the DEGREES Project Resource Guide, which acts as a living document, with regularized updates to ensure the accuracy of information and to be as inclusive of information as possible. The ultimate goal of the DEGREES Project Success Source is to meet the growing needs of our students, as they develop and excel in the academy.

Three main goals of the DEGREES program this 17-18 academic year included high unit seniors will apply for graduation, second year students will register for 15 or more units the following academic year, and students with 60 units or more will register for the Writing Placement for Juniors (WPJ) exam. The results were:

- 79% of high unit DEGREES seniors applied for graduation while 77% of high unit Non-DEGREES seniors applied for graduation.
- 37% of second year DEGREES students are enrolled in 15 units or more for fall 2018 while 38% of second year Non-DEGREES students are enrolled in 15 units or more for fall 2018.
- 35% of DEGREES students with 60 units or more registered for WPJ while 30% of Non-DEGREES students with 60 units or more registered for WPJ.

Mission

The **D**edicated to **E**ducating, **G**raduating, and **R**etaining **E**ducational **E**quity **S**tudents (**DEGREES**) Project seeks to provide enhanced services to underrepresented students to make timely progress to their degrees and to reduce the achievement gap. The program provides a comprehensive and integrated menu of academic and student support services designed to improve the retention and graduation of underrepresented minority (URM) students. Overall, the DEGREES Project aspires to foster an institutional climate supportive of student success.

Goals

The program is anchored by the three primary goals:

1. To provide four academic and student enrichment tracks to support the success of DEGREES Project scholars. These tracks include: transitional and continuing equity student support, curricular engagement/learning resources, mentorship/ tutorial/peer advising interventions, and global engagement with an emphasis on research and community involvement.
2. To broaden the reach of services to more educational equity students on campus through enhanced mechanisms of support as delivered by the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), the Faculty Student Mentor Program (FSMP), the Full Circle Project (FCP), the Peer and Academic Resource Center (PARC), and the College Based Educational Equity Programs (CBEEP).
3. To promote the academic achievements of students in the program as evidenced by improved semester grade outcomes, annual retention and persistence rates, and gradual elevations in the graduation rate of underrepresented students on campus.

Services

Services of the DEGREES Project include the following:
- Provision of advising to reach students beyond the first year of college with an emphasis on the sophomore through senior years
- Peer advising offered through the PARC
- Leadership development opportunities
- Internships and global engagement experiences
- Faculty and peer mentoring as delivered by FSMP
- Individual tutoring and supplemental instruction via the PARC
- Online tutorial services 24 hours a day in distinct subject areas
- FSMP Writing Center satellites to augment services to underrepresented students

- Disability testing for a limited number of eligible students
- Summer Bridge programming
- Transfer Learning Communities
- First generation and educational opportunity program support
- Student support from the DEGREES Project Ambassador Team
- Campus wide mentorship services through the Sacramento State "U" Mentor Program with online mentoring capabilities
- A diverse cadre of interventions for educational equity students through programs in the academic Colleges

Coaches

Elizabeth Sanchez – DEGREES Project Coach
Stephanie Bribiesca - DEGREES Project Coach
Kaifa Yates - DEGREES Project Coach
Jose Anaya - DEGREES Project Coach
Paula Gonzalez - DEGREES Project Coach
Lay Vang - DEGREES Project Coach
Amanda Xiong – DEGREES Project Coach /U-Mentor Coach

College Advisors

Kristen Tudor– College of Arts and Letters
Jesse Catlin – College of Business Administration
Amber Gonzalez – College of Education
Rachel Garcia – College of Engineering and Computer Science
Nassrine Noureddine – College of Health and Human Services
Linda Roberts – College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Yan Zhou – College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies

Program Outcomes

This academic year, the Vice President of the Division of Student Affairs decided to align department goals with the university's goals, Student Affairs Divisional Goals, and Baccalaureate Learning Outcomes. The structure of this section will include the goals, the strategies to achieve those goals, and the outcomes.

Program Goal 1: DEGREES high unit seniors will apply to graduate.

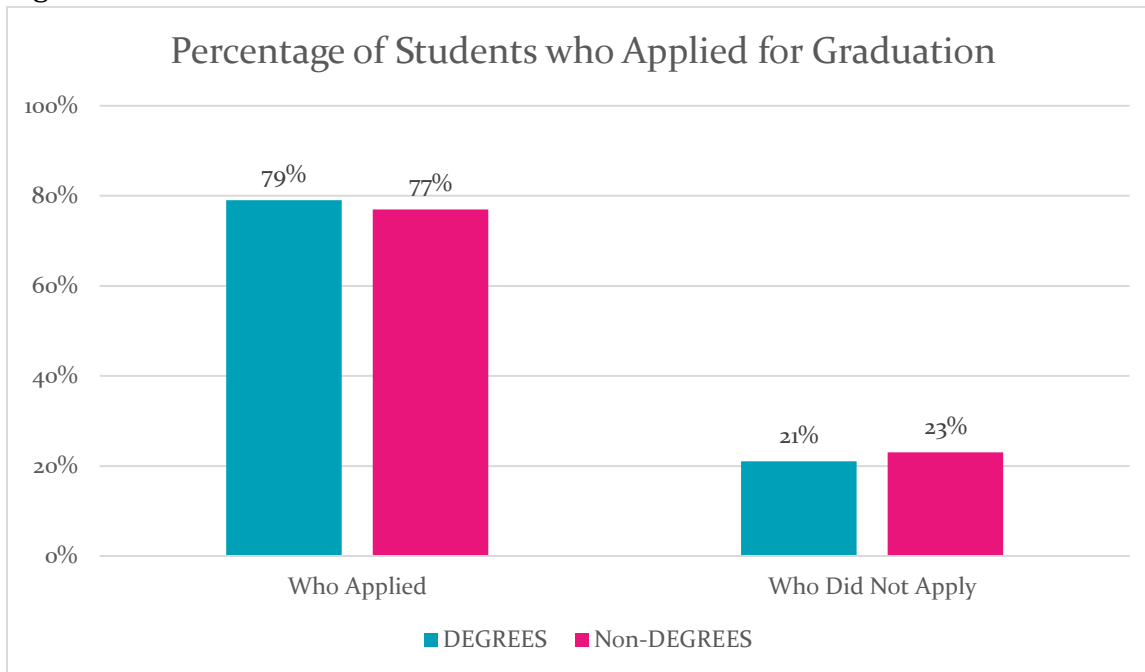**University Strategic Goal:** Enhance student learning and success
Student Affairs Divisional Goal: Increase graduation rates and decrease time to degree
Baccalaureate Learning Goal: N/A

Standard of Achievement: 10% positive difference in graduation applications for DEGREES students vs Non-DEGREES students

Senior DEGREES students with more than 110 total cumulative units passed were encourage to apply for graduation by the DEGREES coaches. Figure 1 shows the percentage of students who applied for graduation during the academic year.

Figure 1

Source: COGNOS – Smart Planner Communication Query extracted on 5/30/18. Notes: 1) Data only shows students with total cumulative units passed >=110. 2) Applied reflects students who Applied or have Pending applications.

Program Goal 2: DEGREES second year students will register for the next academic year with 15 or more units.

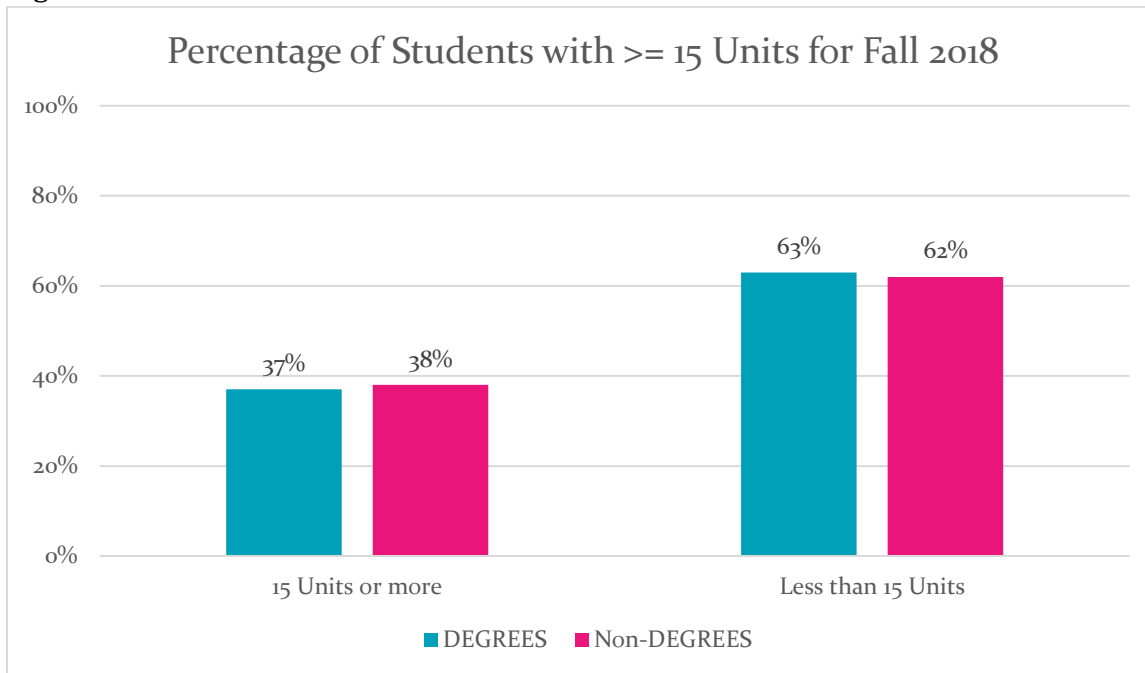**University Strategic Goal:** Enhance student learning and success
Student Affairs Divisional Goal: Increase graduation rates and decrease time to degree
Baccalaureate Learning Goal: N/A

Standard of Achievement: 10% positive difference in student persistence rate for DEGREES sophomores vs Non-DEGRESS sophomores

As part of the Finish in Four Initiative, the coaches supported students to enroll in 15 units per semester in order to graduate within four years. Data shows that 37% of DEGREES second year students are enrolled in 15 units or more for fall 2018. Thirty eight percent of Non-DEGREES second year students are enrolled in 15 units or more for fall 2018.

Figure 2

Sources: 1) Fall 2017: COGNOS – Term Summary extracted on 2/1/18. 2) Fall 2018: COGNOS – Term Summary extracted on 5/22/18.
Notes: 1) Data does not include students who were not enrolled in Fall 2017. 2) Fall 2018 does not include blank data on load description (8 students). 3) The average AUL for DP students is 11.361 compared to 11.668 for non-DP students.

Program Goal 3: DEGREES students with 60 units or more will register for the Writing Placement for Juniors (WPJ) exam.

University Strategic Goal: N/A
Student Affairs Divisional Goal: Increase graduation rates and decrease time to degree
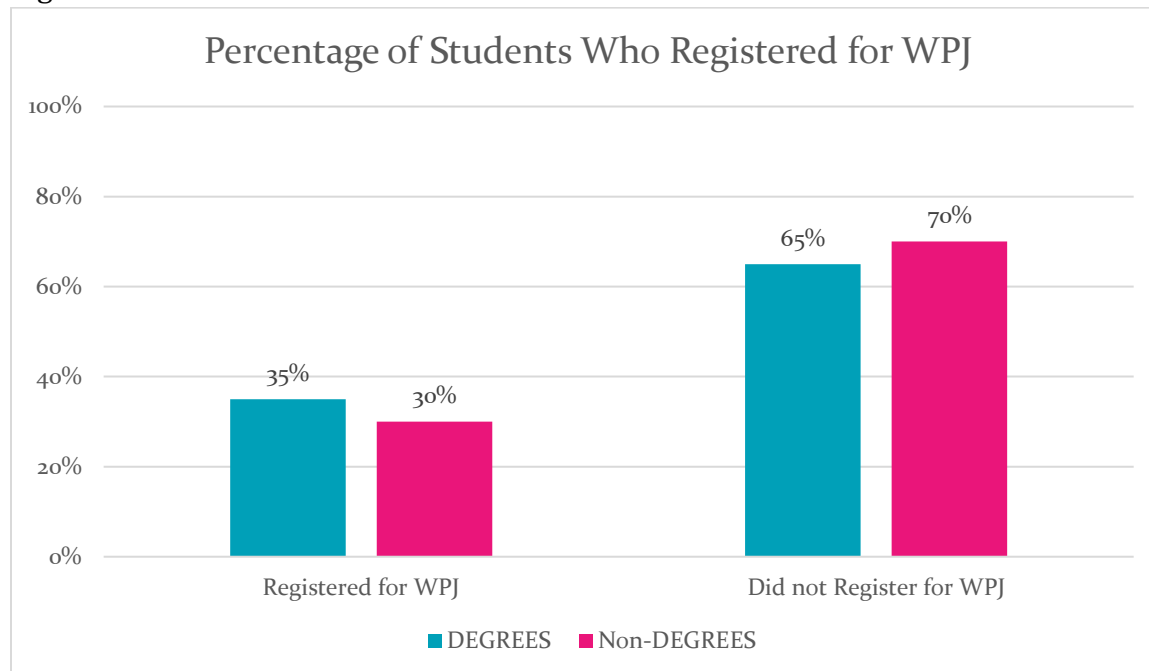**Baccalaureate Learning Goal:** N/A

Standard of Achievement: 10% positive difference in registration for DEGREES students vs Non-DEGREES students

All undergraduate students with 60 units must take the first step toward satisfying the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) by taking the Writing Placement for Juniors (WPJ) test OR the English 109M or 109W class.

The WPJ asks students to write two essays. The first essay asks students to respond and make an argument about a topic represented by several texts. The second essay asks students to discuss their writing history and practices. The standard WPJ is a two-hour essay exam: 15 minutes for instructions, 15 minutes to read the prompts and brainstorm, 1 hour for the first essay, and 30 minutes for the second essay.

DEGREES coaches encouraged DEGREES students with 60 units or more to register for the WPJ via e-mail or phone call.

Figure 3

Percentage of Students Who Registered for WPJ

- Registered for WPJ: DEGREES 35%, Non-DEGREES 30%
- Did not Register for WPJ: DEGREES 65%, Non-DEGREES 70%

Sources: 1) Spring 2018: COGNOS – Term Summary extracted on 2/1/18. 2) WPJ since 2016 from SA IT. Note: 1) Data only includes students with 60+ units.

Appendix A

Program Goals	What will be the standard of performance?	Program Outcomes
1. DEGREES high unit seniors will apply to graduate.	10% positive difference in graduation applications for DEGREES students vs Non-DEGREES students	DEGREES: 79% of students applied for graduation. Non-DEGREES: 77% of students applied for graduation. 2% positive difference in graduation applications for DEGREES students vs Non-DEGREES students
2. DEGREES second year students will register for the next academic year with 15 or more units.	10% positive difference in student persistence rate for DEGREES sophomores vs Non-DEGRESS sophomores	DEGREES: 37% of students enrolled in >= 15 units. Non-DEGRESS: 38% of students enrolled in >= 15 units. 1% negative difference in student persistence rate for DEGREES sophomores vs Non-DEGRESS sophomores
3. DEGREES students with 60 units or more will register for the Writing Placement for Juniors (WPJ) exam.	10% positive difference in registration for DEGREES students vs Non-DEGREES students	DEGREES: 35% of students registered for WPJ. Non-DEGREES: 30% of students registered for WPJ. 5% positive difference in registration for DEGREES students vs Non-DEGREES students