

## Graduation Initiative Advisory Team Annual Report to Senate, May 2023

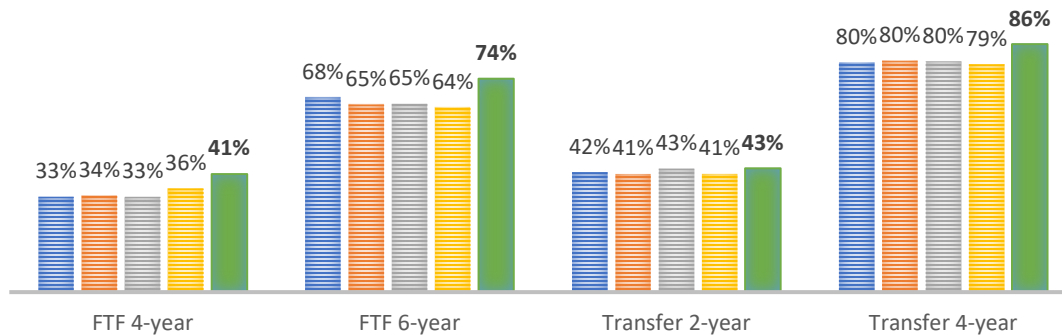
***Charge:** The Graduation Initiative Advisory Team coordinates and advances campus efforts to serve students in making timely progress to a high quality, meaningful undergraduate degree. We do this through intentional and data-driven efforts to improve learning environments and to identify and remove barriers to student success.*

### Current GI 2025 Metrics: Graduation Rates and Equity Gaps

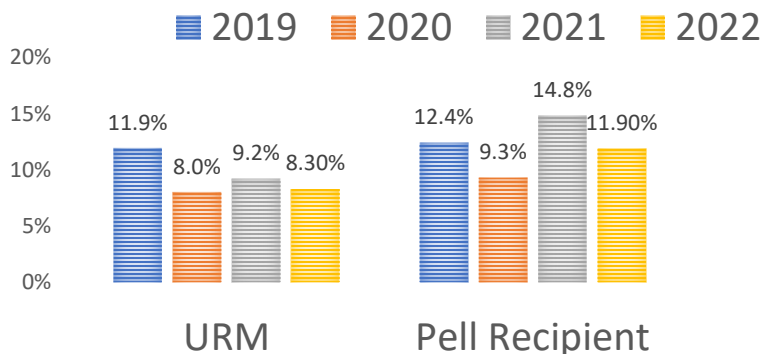
As the pandemic cohorts move through their Chico State education, our graduation rates remain strong (and within the top third of the CSU system), though still short of our 2025 targets. Both Pell and URM equity gaps narrowed for the most recent cohort, to 8.3% and 11.9% respectively.

■ 2019   
 ■ 2020   
 ■ 2021   
 ■ 2022   
 ■ GI 2025 target

#### FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN AND TRANSFER GRADUATION RATES



#### 2021 6-YEAR GRADUATION RATE EQUITY GAPS



## Advancing Equity Project 2022-23

The Advancing Equity Project (AEP), now completing its second year, remains the sole focus of the Graduation Initiative Advisory Team. The AEP is distinguished by (1) an action orientation; we act while we continue to learn; (2) cross-divisional action teams, each of which is charged with (3) specific deliverables and timelines; and (4) adherence to a set of guiding principles that center listening to the voices of historically underserved groups, sense of belonging, and a mentoring mindset.

The AEP objectives for 2022-23 were established in June of 2022, following a review of 2021-22 outcomes and team recommendations. Based on those findings, the focus remained this year on improving first-year students' academic and support experiences so as to improve year-one-to-year-two retention and close equity gaps in those rates.

Early in the fall, AEP leads Dean Kate McCarthy and AVP Kaitlyn Baumgartner Lee were charged with heading the retention arm of the Enrollment Continuum effort to increase Chico State enrollment. We determined that our AEP equity goals aligned well with campus retention goals, and therefore merged these two projects to address two overarching five-year goals.

<b>FIVE-YEAR GOALS</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Improve overall first-time-in-college Year One to Year Two retention rate by 5% over five years (84% by 2027).</li><li>2. Improve underrepresented minority first-time-in-college Year One to Year Two retention rate by 8% over five years (no gap by 2027).</li></ol>

To meet these goals, six objectives were established for 2022-23, each with its own action team (or teams).

<b>2022-23 OBJECTIVES</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Design and Implement College-Based Equity Plans</li><li>4. Pilot Critical Success Course Model</li><li>5. Implement Comprehensive Student Success Team Model</li><li>6. Align and Expand Peer Navigation and Mentoring</li><li>7. Expand and Institutionalize HSI Grants and Efforts to Serve Latinx Students</li><li>8. Remove Identified Barriers through Policy and Process Review</li></ol>

Details on the charges, deliverables and membership of these teams is available on the [Graduation Initiative website](#).

## 2022-23 Highlights

College-Based Equity Plan interim reports are due May 31; year-end reports for teams 2-6 are due May 19. These reports will allow us to prepare for Cabinet a comprehensive summary of work accomplished and recommendations for next year, which we will submit in June.

In the meantime, we note the following select highlights of 2022-23 equity and retention work to date:

- In alignment with the [CSU Chancellor's Office Equity Priority 1](#), Enrollment Management launched **re-engagement and re-enrollment campaigns** to reach disenrolled URM student population and smooth their way to resuming their path to a Chico State degree.
- To improve retention of students who come to Chico without a declared major, fall 2023 will see the launch of **Major Quest** a new program for undeclared students that will provide mentoring, major and career exploration workshops and showcases, a dedicated academic advisor, a specially designed GE course to explore academic identity, and social events to build sense of belonging.
- Summer Orientation 2023 will include an expanded number of **Spanish language sessions** and **reduced-rate overnight accommodations** for students and families coming from out of the area.
- GI 2025 funds were deployed to offer **Summer Boost 2022**, an opportunity for eligible students to retake critical first-year courses in which they had been unsuccessful in the previous year. Over 130 low-income students successfully completed these courses, helping them reset their academic trajectories. This program will be offered again in 2023, with 13 sections of high-impact first-year General Education courses.
- Two courses, Chemistry 111 and Political Science 155, were part of the **Critical Success Course pilot**, in which all faculty who teach the courses reworked the design and delivery of these high DFW/high equity gap courses, with a focus on student engagement, belonging, and equity. Their multi-section agreements were implemented this spring and will be assessed in fall 2023. A third course, History 130 will join the Critical Success Course cohort in fall 2023.
- Faculty can now use **Canvas New Analytics** to support student success through data analysis and Early Alerts when students are falling behind in grades, participation, or other indicators.
- Team 3A has developed the framework for an **integrated HELP team**, a college-centric, cross-divisional team of student services personnel who coordinate holistic and proactive student support. The formation of eight support teams allows for support of students with majors declared in each of our seven academic colleges, as well as undeclared students. A foundation of shared community standards allows these teams to respond to early alerts, remove barriers, and provide effective referrals both within and outside of the participating departments. Plans are to further develop and enact this framework in 2023-24.
- To **expand first-year access to peer mentors**, Advancing Equity team 4 convened a campus wide Peer Support Council. The team worked with the Council to design a cohesive definition and set of core functions for first-year peer mentors and the formation of a first-year peer mentor network that will provide coordinated mentoring to students in four existing support programs (EOP, TRiO, BLM, REACH) **and** all incoming students without a declared major in 2023-2024. The team also created a one-unit course for mentees in these programs and is building a 2-unit training course for mentors.
- At its April 6 meeting, the Academic Senate approved a recommendation to discontinue requiring written verification of serious and compelling reasons for **withdrawing from a course**. In addition to signaling a greater level of trust in our students, this change removes an

administrative barrier to retention by providing students a streamlined exit from a course in which it is clear they will not be successful and allowing them to redirect attention to other courses.

## Graduation Initiative Funding

One-time GI 2025 funding received in 2021-22 was budgeted to cover two years of AEP work; we are in the second year of that plan and are now identifying how to extend support for successful implementation of AEP efforts into a third year.

In addition, the Chancellor’s Office implemented a new funding model this year based on Requests for Funding to support its specific [Equity Goals and Priorities](#). Chico State was very successful in securing these awards, which we aligned with our own AEP activities.

Chancellor’s Office RFP	Amount Awarded	Aligned AEP Activities
Supportive Pathways for First-Year Students (Replacing Early Start)	\$130,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subsidized travel and lodging for Summer Orientation</li> <li>• Enhanced EOP Summer Bridge programming</li> <li>• Support for Student Success in A2 courses</li> <li>• Support for Student Success in B4 courses</li> <li>• Strengths-Based Advising Campaign</li> </ul>
Re-engage and Re-Enroll Underserved Students (Priority 1)	\$63,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative and ongoing effort to engage and enroll URM students previously enrolled at Chico State</li> <li>• Designed to begin with Fall 2019 enrollees, but will be embedded as practice moving forward for students who stop out</li> <li>• Cross-divisional implementation team will be developed</li> </ul>
Expand Summer/Intersession Enrollment (Priority 2)	\$150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer Boost 2023: 13 fully funded sections of A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, and B4 GE courses</li> </ul>
Promote Equitable Learning and Reduce DFW Rates (Priority 5)	\$170,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical Success Courses: POLS 155, CHEM 111, HIST 130 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Course coordinators</li> <li>○ Faculty Learning Community for course redesign</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Learning Support</li> <li>○ Additional faculty compensation</li> </ul>
Family Engagement for Student Success	Pending: \$50,838 requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cross-divisional wrap-around parent/guardian engagement for middle school planning, high school preparation, and first-year college prospering</li> </ul>

**Gratitude**

As the year closes, we are again grateful for the enormous contributions of our faculty, staff, and administrative partners who have made this a genuinely collaborative endeavor through the contributions of their time, passion, expertise, and good will. That so many have stepped up to work on new student success and equity initiatives as we navigate enrollment and budget challenges is a great testament to our collective commitment to Chico State’s values.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate McCarthy, Dean of Undergraduate Education  
 Kaitlyn Baumgartner Lee, AVP for Student Success Initiatives & University Advising  
 Co-Chairs, Graduation Initiative Advisory Team and Advancing Equity Project