

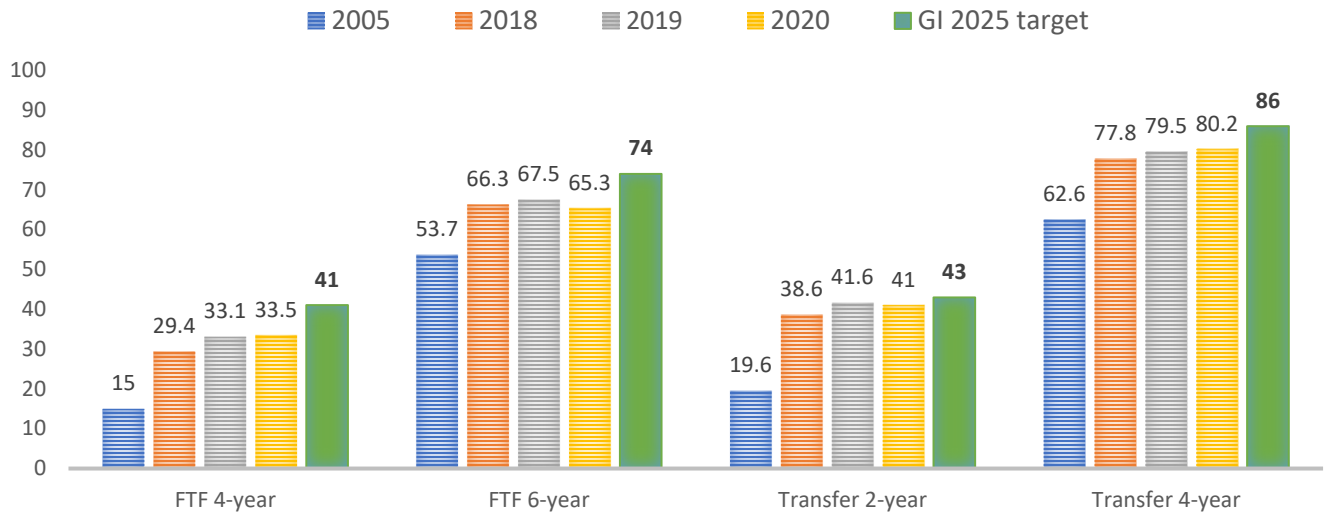
Graduation Initiative Advisory Team

Annual Report to Senate, April 2021

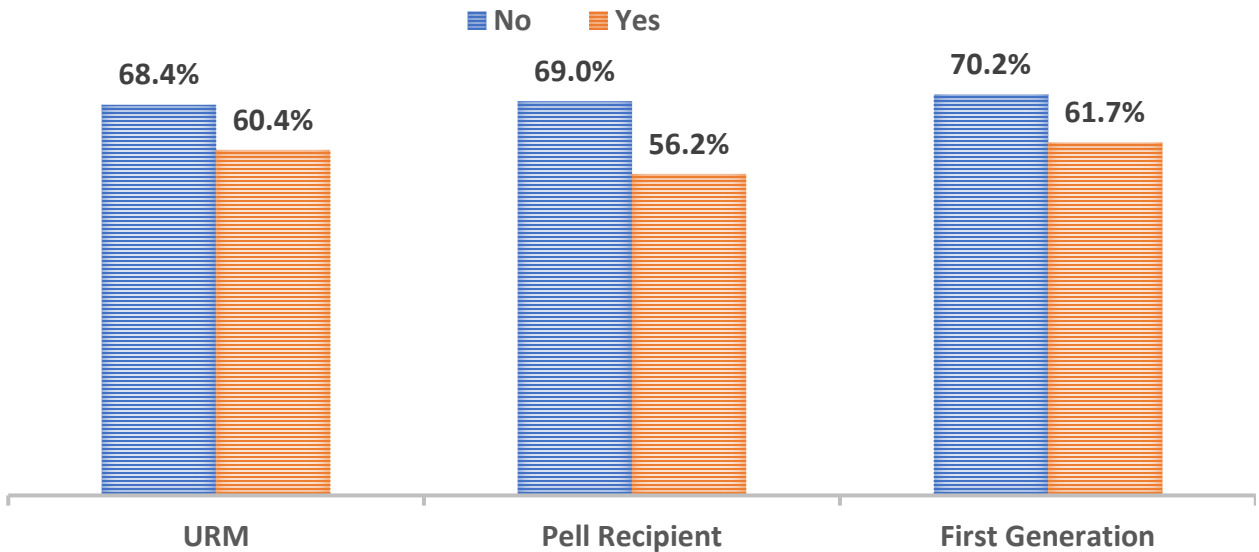
Charge: The Graduation Initiative Advisory Team coordinates and advances campus efforts to serve students in making timely progress to a high quality, meaningful undergraduate degree. We do this through intentional and data-driven efforts to improve learning environments and to identify and remove barriers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

A. Current GI 2025 Metrics: Rising Graduation Rates and Persistent Equity Gaps

FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN AND TRANSFER GRADUATION RATES



2020 6-YEAR GRADUATION RATES SHOWING EQUITY GAPS



B. Strategic Priorities 2020-2021

1. Apply research-driven strategies to promote **high-quality virtual instruction** with a focus on closing equity gaps.
2. Apply research-driven strategies to promote **high-quality virtual student support services** with a focus on closing equity gaps.
3. **Monitor data** on student experience, course outcomes, and retention in relation to virtual instruction and support services and **respond to emergent challenges**.

To advance these priorities, the Graduation Initiative Advisory Team meets in full every other week and working groups meet in the interim on their specific projects. The Steering Committee meets in April-May to prepare for the following academic year.

C. Working Groups 2020-2021

1. Tipping Point Student Success Summit
2. Faculty Engagement with Grade Data
3. Student Communications
4. Financial and Administrative Barriers
5. Equity Action/Middle Leadership Academy
6. Student Success Analytics/Campus Integration Analysis
7. Priority 3 Data Collection and Analysis

D. Highlighted Activities

1. Faculty Grades and Equity Dashboard

In response to the Academic Senate [Resolution Regarding Equity for Underrepresented Minority Students](#) and in collaboration with Institutional Research, Faculty Development, and members of the first cohort of the Middle Leadership Academy, a working group of the GI Team developed the [Grades and Equity Gaps Dashboard](#), hosted on the Faculty Development website. This dashboard offers faculty the opportunity to access (via personal login) their own course data on passing grade rates and any gaps that may exist between rates for URM and non-URM students. The dashboard was launched in December at a Faculty Development Friday Forum, and since then the dashboard site has received 1180 visitors. Faculty Development is also hosting a “Closing the Equity Gaps” FLC this spring, designed around understanding and responding to dashboard findings.

2. Process improvements to remove administrative barriers

During the 2020/21 academic year, the university has made a number of strides to decrease barriers for students, faculty, and staff. The Student Center was replaced with an updated system that provides easier navigation, is device responsive, and is ADA compliant. The grade change process has been updated and automated to make it easier for faculty and staff to track and complete the process. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, certain fees were waived to ease the burden on students. Finally, the institution introduced mass texting of students, allowing offices like the Office of the Registrar to communicate with students in a way they use and understand better than traditional email.

3. Second cohort completing Student Success Analytics Certificate

With a concerted focus on academic advising for student success 14 staff representing all colleges and multiple support programs completed [CSU Certificate Program in Student Success Analytics](#). Leveraging CSU Dashboard, IR factbooks, & Chico State 360, participants developed five data informed & equity minded [Projects](#).

4. Middle Leadership Academy Cohort 3: Faculty Equity Resources

Following on the work of Chico’s first cohort in the CSU Student Success Network’s Middle Leadership Academy (MLA), which initiated the Senate equity resolution and the dashboard project, this year’s MLA team worked closely with Faculty Development to create a series of resources that could accompany the launch of the Grades and Equity Gaps Dashboard. The MLA team provided [resources](#) for the Closing the equity gaps FLC, and started a [database](#) of articles about faculty buy-in and faculty support in relation to equity work and inclusive pedagogy. In order to facilitate access to the dashboard, a [handout](#) and [video](#)

[tutorial](#) were created to give faculty specific instructions on how to navigate the dashboard and make sense of the data. The MLA team has worked closely with the FLC Lead to determine the needs of the faculty, and has functioned as a liaison between Institutional Research and Faculty Development.

5. Analysis of Fall 2020 student experience data

The GI Team's third priority this year was to "monitor data on student experience, course outcomes, and retention in relation to virtual instruction and support services and respond to emergent challenges." We enacted this priority by engaging student researchers (funded through FYE and the Adelante program) to analyze survey and focus group data from multiple sources, ranging from individual faculty surveys of their students to a large-scale IR survey on technology and other distance learning-related needs and challenges. In response to the researchers' [COVID and Student Success Report Fall 2020](#), the GI Team developed a set of recommendations, identified which people/units on campus might address them, and estimated resources needed as appropriate. Two specific initiatives resulting from these recommendations are the development of a prominent and easily navigable "one-stop" digital student resource center, and the pilot implementation of the Pronto text messaging platform, both in progress in spring 2021.

6. Cost-Free Virtual Summer Orientation

Having identified the expense of Summer Orientation (both the fee and travel-related costs) as a significant barrier to participation, and noting evidence of the connection between participating in Orientation and first-year engagement, Summer Orientation and new Student Programs worked with campus partners to build a virtual and cost-free Summer O for 2020, partially supported by one-time GI 2025 funds that had been awarded to student success projects but could not be spent due to the pandemic.

E. Funding Allocations:

In the absence of CSU GI 2025 funding, the Student Success Awards program was suspended in 2020-2021. Awards from 2019-2020 that could not be used due to the pandemic were reallocated to help make the virtual Summer Orientation program cost-free for incoming students, to support the summer Go Virtual teaching institute to help faculty maximize student success in the 2020-2021 environment, and to provide the drive-through lunch at the 2021 Tipping Point event.

Summary:

The GI Team has been active and nimble in its effort to advance student success in the difficult circumstances created by the COVID pandemic. The activities noted above will make a real difference for students' degree progress, but this year has brought into clear relief what our data has indicated for years: we need to address serious issues of inequity in our classroom and student support systems and practices. Closing equity gaps will be the focus of our work 2020-21.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate McCarthy, Dean of Undergraduate Education
Kaitlyn Baumgartner Lee, AVP for University Advisement

(2020-2021 membership roster appears on the following page)

2020-2021 Graduation Initiative Advisory Team

Executive Leadership

Debra S. Larson, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Sandy Parsons-Ellis, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Co-Chairs (selected from committee membership)

- Kate McCarthy, Dean of Undergraduate Education (Provost designee)
- Chela Mendoza Patterson, AVP for Student Life, Acting Chief Diversity Officer, replaced by Kaitlyn Baumgartner Lee, AVP for University Advisement following Dr. Mendoza's retirement in December 2020 (Vice President for Student Affairs' Designee)

Members

Academic Leadership

- Daniel Grassian, Vice Provost for Academic Programs
- Kate McCarthy, Dean, Undergraduate Education (Co-Chair)
- Betsy Boyd, Chair of the Academic Senate

Enrollment Management and Business Processes

- Jerry Ross, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Michael Allen, Registrar
- Kaitlyn Baumgartner Lee, Assistant Vice President for University Advisement
- Dan Reed, Director, Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Anna Magaña, Director of Student Financial Services

University Diversity Committee

- Teresita Curiel, Director, Latinx Equity and Success, Dream Center, Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Faculty (appointed by college chairs)

- Eric Houk, College of Agriculture
- Darin Haerle, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Mitch Casselman, College of Business
- Vacant, College of Communication and Education
- Zahrasadat Alavi, College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management
- Erin Kelly, College of Humanities and Fine Arts

- Jeff Bell, College of Natural Sciences
- William Cuthbertson, Meriam Library

Academic Dean

- Eddie Vela, Dean, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences

Student Life

- Connie Huyck, Interim Associate Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
- Mary Wallmark, Director, Student Life and Leadership
- Shawn Ryan, Program Coordinator for Orientation and New Student Programs, Student Life and Leadership

Academic Support and Innovation

- Kendall Leon, Director, First-Year Experience program
- Chiara Ferrari, Director of Faculty Development
- Dawn Frank, Director, Student Learning Center
- Cecilia Santillan-Robles, Director, Early Outreach and Support Programs
- Jessica Dietrich, REACH Coordinator

Academic Technology

- Kathy Fernandes, Academic Technology Officer

Data and Institutional Research

- Andy Miller, Acting Vice Provost for Information Resources
- Tom Rosenow, Interim Director of Institutional Research

Budget

- Jennifer Mays, Executive Director of Budget and Academic Resources

Students

- Andrea Thao
- Caitlyn Morris

Steering Committee:

Kate McCarthy, Kaitlyn Baumgartner Lee, Betsy Boyd, Chiara Ferrari, Kathy Fernandes, Dawn Frank, Michael Allen, Tom Rosenow, Andrea Thao, Caitlyn Morris