

The California State University has a long history of meeting students where they are and supporting them to degree completion. This is true in many aspects but particularly in the arena of academic preparation.



Student success is our goal as we maintain a commitment to equity, access and achievement.

In his January 2017 State of the CSU address, Chancellor White presented a roadmap for achieving this:

**First**, Academic Preparation. We will provide all CSU students, including those who arrive academically underprepared, the opportunity and support needed to complete 30 college-level semester units—45 quarter units—before beginning their second academic year.

**Second**, Enrollment Management. We will ensure all students are able to enroll in the courses they need, when they need them.

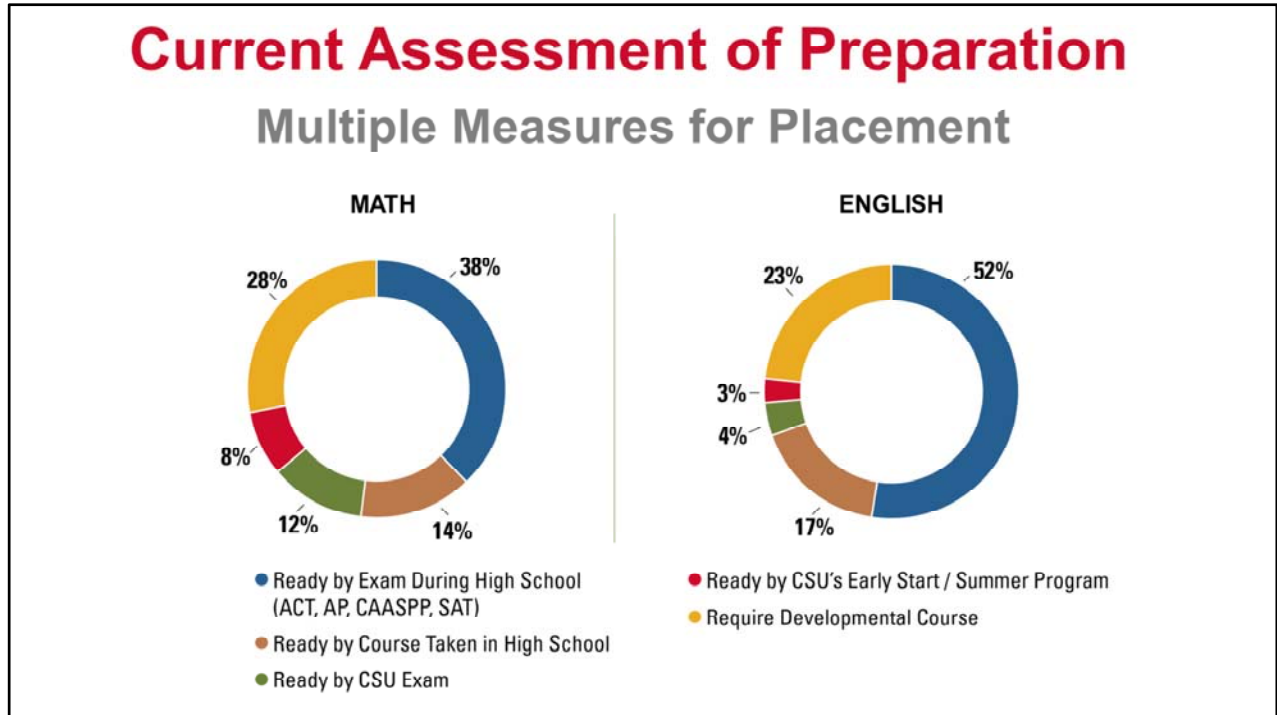
**Third**, Financial Aid. We will ensure that financial need does not impede student success.

**Fourth**, Data-Driven Decision Making. We will use evidence and data to identify and advance the most successful academic support programs

**And Fifth**, Administrative Barriers. We will identify and remove unnecessary administrative barriers.

At future board meetings we will address the other four areas, however it is the first area—Academic Preparation—that is the focus of today’s presentation.

Improving college readiness for all students is a central component of Graduation Initiative 2025 because of its direct relationship with progress toward degree completion. The promise of opportunity at the heart of the CSU mission means that we must remain committed to providing additional support when and where it is required for our students.



I would like to briefly walk you through how an incoming CSU student demonstrates college readiness.

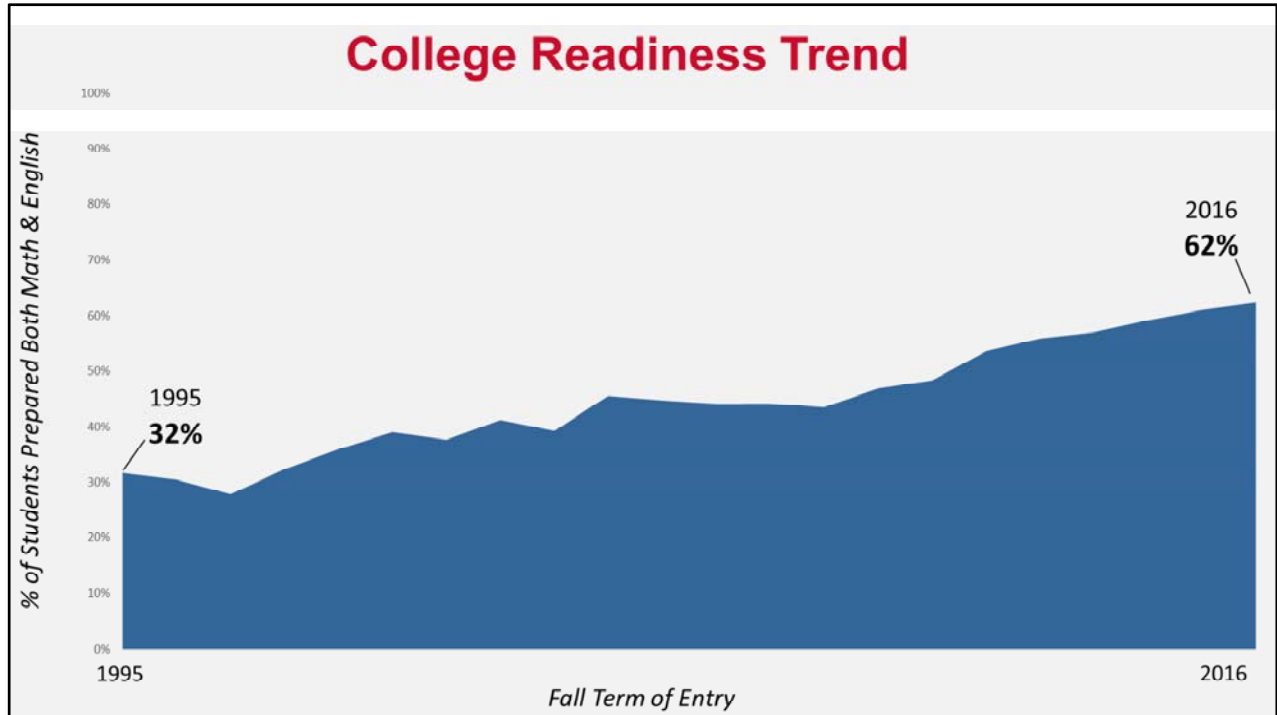
Since 2004, the CSU has used multiple measures to assess college preparation and competencies in English and mathematics. From the end of the junior year of high school through the summer before college entry, the CSU provides students multiple opportunities to demonstrate college readiness.

This slide shows how fall 2016 first-time students demonstrated readiness in English and mathematics. The majority did so as high school students through standardized testing (shown in blue) and senior year coursework (shown in brown).

For students unable to demonstrate readiness through high school testing and coursework, CSU testing provided another opportunity at the end of high school (shown in green).

Students who have not demonstrated college readiness by high school graduation can do so by completing an Early Start course (shown in red).

And finally, the percentage of students who were ultimately required to take developmental education at fall entry is shown in yellow.

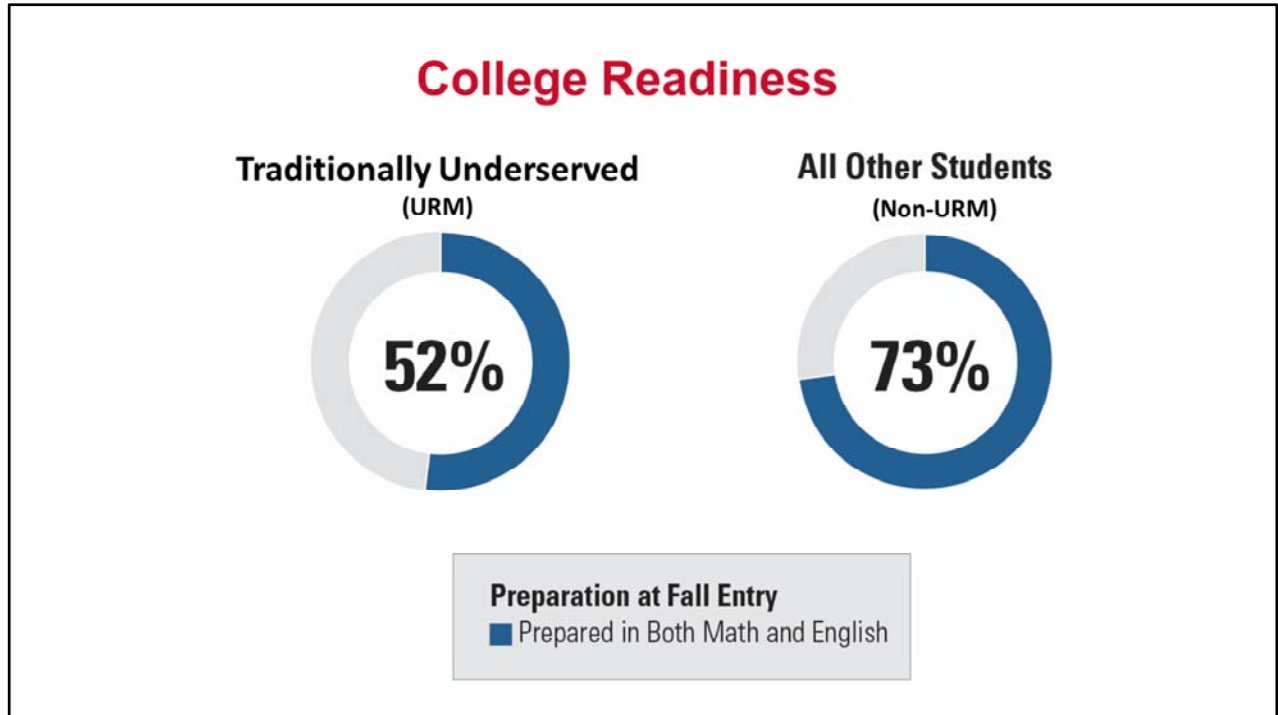


Research clearly demonstrates that college readiness at entry plays an important role in students' ability to earn a degree. A student who arrives ready for college-level coursework has the ability to accumulate more credit-bearing units beginning the first day of class compared to a student who must begin by taking a series of developmental education courses that will not count towards their degree.

This chart demonstrates the ongoing improvement in college readiness among CSU students at entry. Over the past 20 years, the percentage of college-ready students has nearly doubled. These improvements did not happen by accident. They are the result of the work of dedicated CSU faculty and staff who have devoted their careers to helping our most underprepared students achieve academically.

This progress is the result of collaboration with our K-12 partners, improved preparation and curricular alignment in high school and expanded use of multiple measures of assessment.

Despite our overall improvements in college readiness, it is important to note that the percentage of students who arrive college-ready varies across our 23 campuses, ranging from 31% to 99%.



It is also important to note that there are disparities by race and ethnicity which have a direct impact on progress to degree and ultimately completion for students from traditionally underserved communities – those who identify as African-American, American-Indian or Latino.

A central tenet of our Graduation Initiative 2025 is to close all achievement gaps. We must address inequities in college readiness head-on in order to close gaps in degree attainment and afford all students the opportunity to succeed.

Given the CSU’s commitment to opportunity and excellence, we have an obligation to ensure that we give every CSU-enrolled student the best possible chance to earn a degree in a timely manner. In order to build on the progress that our faculty, staff and K-12 partners have made in college readiness, we must improve our current systemwide policies and programs.

## Academic Preparation

### Improving System Policies and Programs

- **Promote Four Years of High School Math/Quantitative Reasoning**
- **Improve Placement and Assessment**
- **Strengthen Early Start Program**
- **Restructure Developmental Education**

Through continued consultation with faculty, staff and other CSU stakeholders, we are now focused on advancing an enhanced set of academic preparation policies. I will briefly highlight four areas where we are making significant improvements:

Thanks to the thoughtful work of the CSU faculty reflected in the Quantitative Reasoning Task Force report, we have already laid the groundwork for improving math readiness. The report recommends requiring four years of high school quantitative reasoning for incoming students. This allows entering CSU students to consistently develop their math skills to improve readiness for placement exams and college-level coursework.

We are working closely with our K-12 partners to ensure a greater percentage of students take four years of high school math and that curriculum is better aligned with college-level expectations.

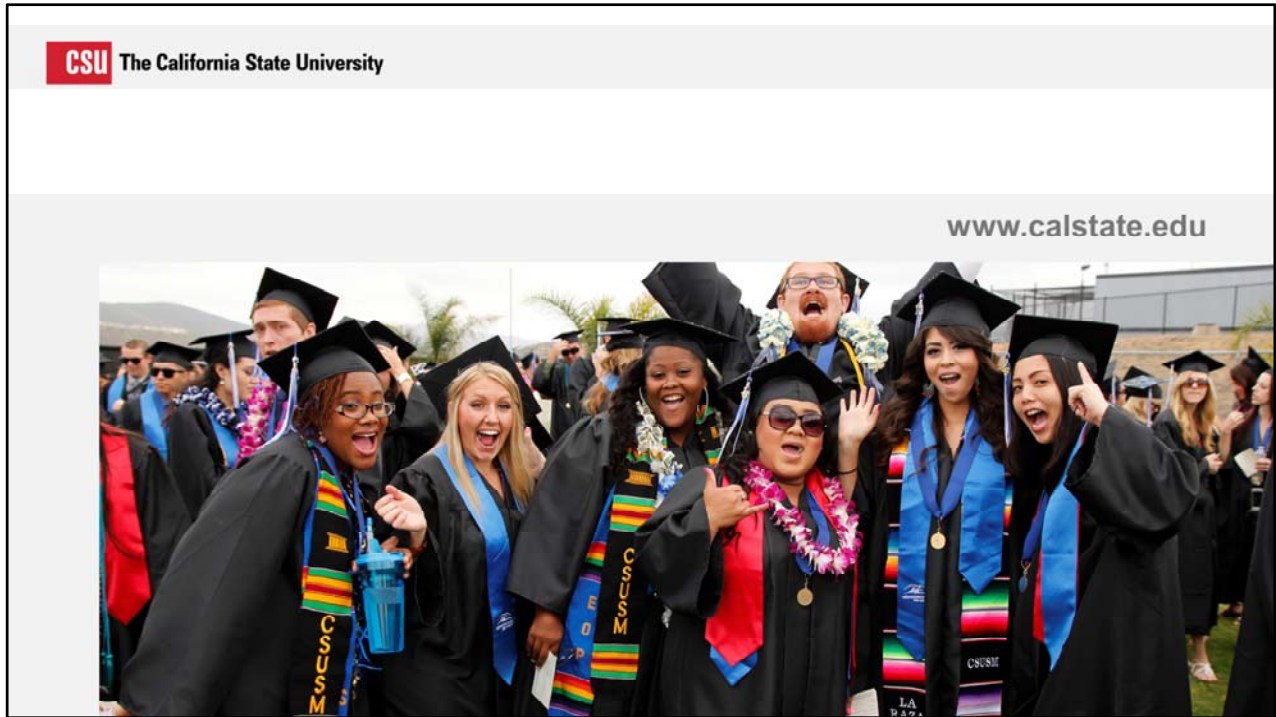
Understanding that some of our most under-resourced school districts may need more time to prepare, the plan is to phase in the 4 years of mathematics requirement gradually, ensuring that it does not have a negative impact on these districts and the students who attend them.

We will continue to improve the accuracy with which we assess and place students who require additional preparation. We will achieve this through a variety of measures, such as greater incorporation and use of high school grades as a predictor of how students are likely to perform in college classrooms. This way, a student who may not be a strong test-taker but is otherwise capable of passing a college-level course over a term will be given an opportunity to earn college credit toward a degree on day one.

Since 2012, Early Start has provided an opportunity for students to develop their academic skills the summer before their first term. It is worth noting that some campuses have developed their Early Start programs to be quite robust—for example San Bernardino’s Coyote First Step program. To achieve our student success goals we must strengthen Early Start by providing students the opportunity to either complete developmental education requirements or immediately enroll in credit-bearing courses with additional support in the summer. This will significantly increase the number of students who earn credit toward their degree in their first-year of college.

Finally and perhaps most impactful, we must work as a CSU system to fundamentally restructure developmental education. For many years, CSU campuses have implemented innovative stretch English programs. These programs provide students who need additional support an opportunity to develop foundational skills in a credit-bearing course rather than a developmental education course for no credit. We are working to implement the English program systemwide and to implement a similar strategy for mathematics, allowing students to earn credit while being supported with supplemental instruction, tutoring and learning assistance. Five of our campuses are already leading the way with this mathematics model.





In closing, I wish to emphasize the moral imperative of taking these steps.

Around this time of year, thousands of students across California are the first in their families to receive an email that says “Congratulations, you have been admitted to the CSU.”

Shortly after, or often in the same communication, more than one-in-three of those students receive notice that they are not ready for college-level coursework. 59 percent of African American students and 47 percent of Latino students admitted will receive that message.

For many students, this represents strike-one before they ever set foot on campus. It represents a deficit model that must be reformed if we hope to achieve our equity and completion goals.

If a student is accepted to a CSU and is willing to put in the work, we collectively have a responsibility as a system to help them achieve their academic goals. This by no means represents a compromising of academic rigor or quality. Instead it means taking the steps required to help more students effectively meet the CSU’s academic standards, while earning college credit.

This concludes our presentation. I am now joined by Dr. Ed Sullivan, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Research and Resources and Nathan Evans, Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor for Academic and Student Affairs to answer any questions you may have at this time.