



Annual Report 2019-2020

I. Department Mission Statement

The Student Transition and Retention (STAR) Center exists to provide a place for academic preparation and support for historically underserved students at CSU, Chico. We strive to provide an atmosphere for educational collaboration and innovative approaches to enhance student achievement.

Department Goals (Last Reviewed August 2020)

- Increase institutional outreach and support for historically underserved students, prioritizing populations not engaged by formal support programs
- Provide intentional engagement opportunities to encourage academic success for historically underserved students
- Foster validation as a means of inspiring agency to improve student persistence and retention amongst historically underserved students

*Historically underserved students (Underserved racial minorities, first-generation, Pell-eligible) encounter campus climates that reinforce social inequities, impeding their ability to successfully navigate a collegiate landscape. The goals of the STAR Center provide us with direction to target students most in need, expand access points to campus resources, promote interdivisional collaboration, and increase the scope of best practices already in place to ensure recruitment, persistence, retention, graduation, and satisfaction.

II. Department Accomplishments

- Grand opening of the STAR Center
- Creation of academic retention program for women of color (Women of Excellence)
- Creation of Men of Color/Women of Color in Leadership courses
- Piloted mentorship program with Chico Unified School District
- Hosted men of color conference
- Effectively transitioned to digital application of programs and academic advising

Highlights

- *Grand opening of the STAR Center*- September 4, 2019 was the official opening of the STAR Center. The event marked the progress the campus made from theory to implementation in serving student needs. The program included programmatic outlooks, student voices, explanation of the design of the center, and land acknowledgement.
- *Creation of Men of Color/Women of Color in Leadership courses*- With the establishment of Women of Excellence, CSU, Chico has one of the few retention programs specifically centered on women of color. In collaboration with MCGS we added a course component to both academic retention programs, making them one of the most unique in the entire CSU System.

- *Piloted mentorship program with Chico Unified School District-* In collaboration with Pleasant Valley, Fairview, and Chico High schools, the STAR Center developed a weekly mentorship program for students in these schools who were at risk youth.

Diversity Efforts

- Established academic retention program centered on women of color
- Hosted Tea with HIM & Her to breakdown stigma of mental health challenges amongst people of color
- Served as mentors in Wildcat connection courses for first-time first-year students
- Hosted Soul Sessions to discuss mental and emotional health during the Covid-19 pandemic that included an HBCU
- Men of Chico participated in Title IX anti-sexual assault and domestic abuse training

III. Changes in Policies and Procedures

Due to Covid-19, the STAR Center was closed to the public on March 20th. Job descriptions and expectations were discussed, evaluated, and adjusted for all staff to accommodate an online presence for the STAR Center.

IV. Re

sources Summary:

Resource Allocation:

2019-2020 Budget Allocation	\$175,984
Additional VPSA Allocation	\$10,000
Associated Students OE Funds	\$85,000
Work Study	\$10,000
Additional Work Study	\$9,870
Total Allocation	\$290,854
Annual Salary Expenses	\$(86,677)
Annual Operational Expense (Includes student earnings)	\$(77,061)
Used Work Study	\$(19,870)
Remaining Funds	
Associated Students OE Funds	\$57,939
Salary Savings	\$49,307

Note: Remaining operating expense funds reflect the inability to continue in-person engagement with students due to campus closures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Salary savings reflect the vacant SSPII position.

Human Resources

- Mariana-Apraiz-Pauls was hired in September as the STAR Center ASA II
- Four student staff were hired to support center programming
- The search for a SSP1-B resulted in a failed search
- The STAR Center received permission and additional funding to support an SSPII search. The search was halted due to a CSU Systemwide hiring freeze. This greatly impacts the sustainability of our programming efforts.
- Additional student staff were hired to supplement some center procedures and forward-planning operations

Facilities/Equipment

- Because this is a new space, new furniture, technology, aesthetic materials, and programming materials needed to be purchased.

V. Program Assessment of Past Year

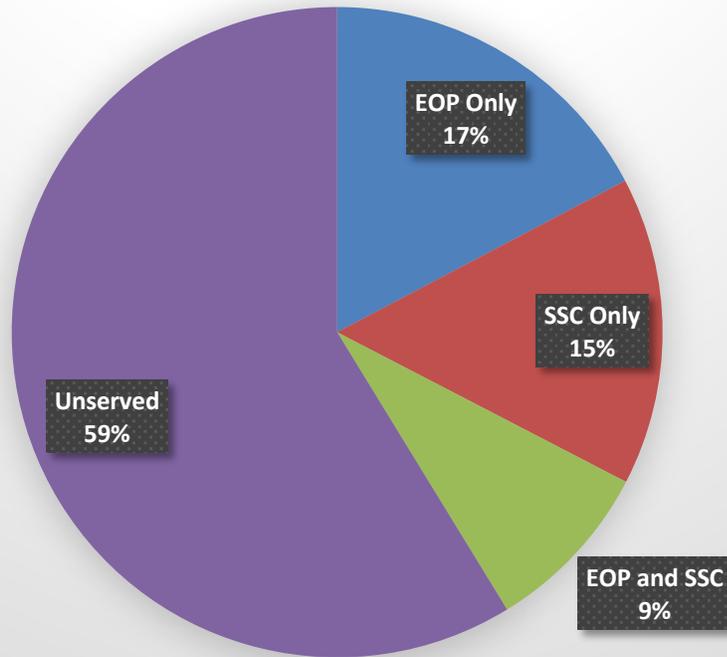
Prior Year's Program Objectives	Ongoing/Met	Description
Develop programmatic assessment mechanisms for the STAR Center	Ongoing	Initial assessment tools were set up to capture usage data. We are developing assessments to capture student outcomes as well.
Get fully staffed and have staff fully trained	Ongoing	We have not been able to fill our SSPII position. We have only managed through help from staff from other departments and an over emphasis on student employees, which is not sustainable.
Integrate ChicoState360 into STAR Center marketing and programming assessments	Met/Ongoing	We developed a method of marketing using <i>ChicoState360</i> , but staff are still learning the broad usability of the system.
Get faculty involved in Center programming	Met	Two signature programs engaging faculty are <i>FaculTea</i> and <i>Nerdy under 30</i> , which allow faculty and students to engage in a low risk atmosphere.
Establish Women of Excellence academic retention program	Met	This was done through help from Brianna Ellis in AAP. The program cannot be sustainable unless we receive a program coordinator.
Standardize courses for Men of Chico and Women of Excellence	Met	Through collaboration with MCGS, we now have two courses for our academic retention program cohorts.

Ongoing Assessment Efforts

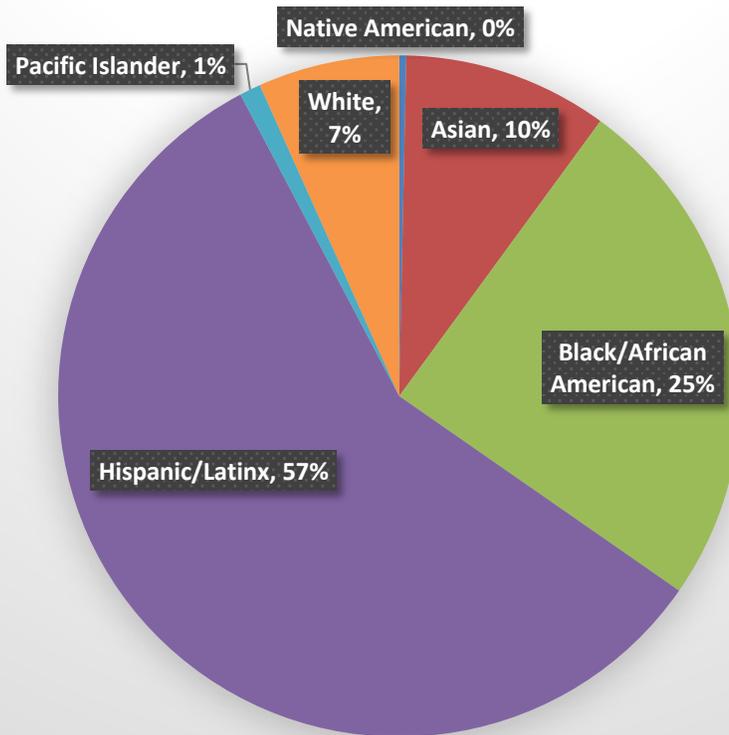
STAR Center User Data September 1-April 1		
Reason for Use	Total Unique Users	Total Users
Academic Advising	169	273
Events/Programs	103	234
Studying	371	3402
Total	643	3,909
Total Academic Days	108	108
Daily Average Use	6	36

Note: Due to the campus closure brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, the STAR Center stopped accruing in-person data as of April 1st.

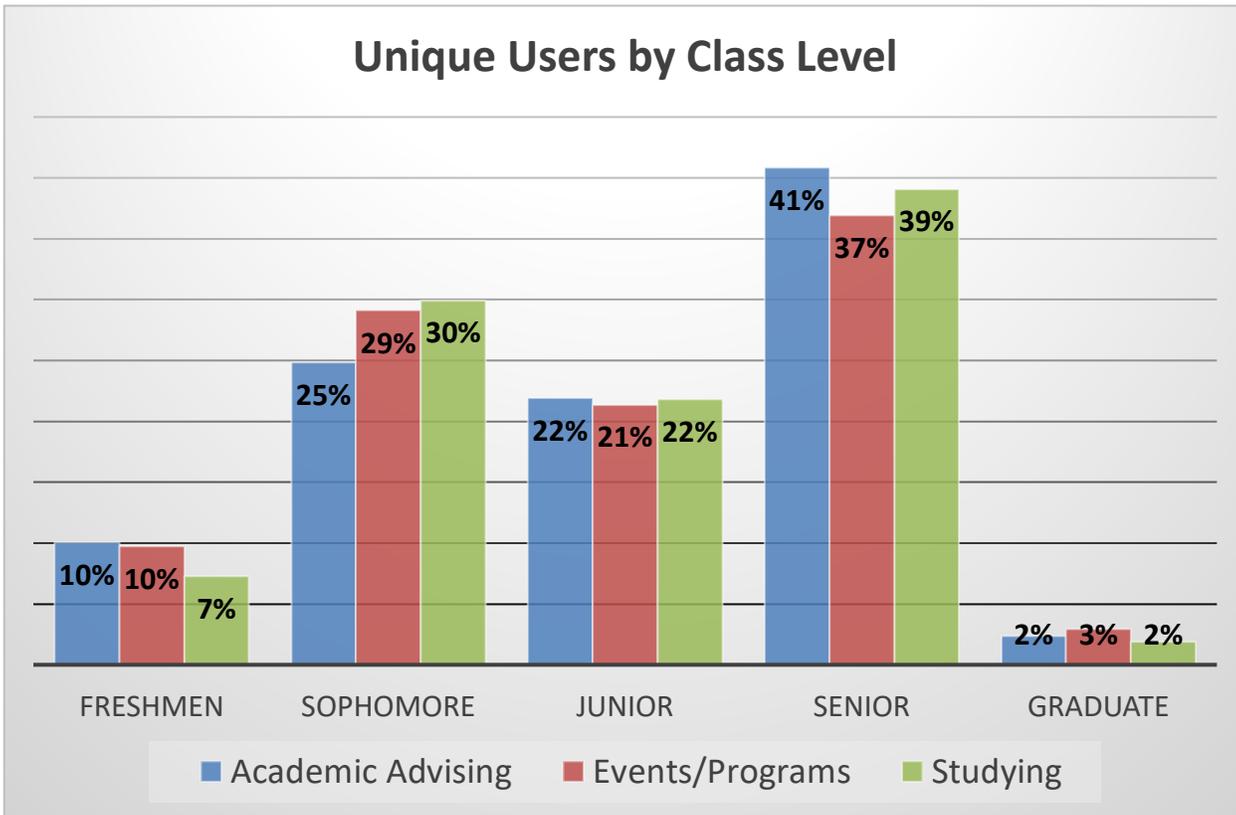
Unique Users by Service Affiliation



Unique Users by Race/Ethnicity



Unique Users by Class Level



STAR Center User Data April 1-June 1	
Reason for Use	Total Users
Academic Advising	290
Events/Programs (15)	395
Total	685

Note: Due to the campus closure brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, STAR Center engagement transitioned online with a full set of programs and academic advising opportunities.

VI. Analysis

In its first year since opening, the STAR Center has shown the potential to have great impact in students' lives. The professional and student staff have developed unique programs to keep students engaged in ways they may have never thought were possible. Additionally, the atmosphere of the center has been carefully tended to as to balance between cultural awareness and academic achievement. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have yet to complete a full year of scheduled programming. Like most departments, this has impeded our ability to fully engage the way we had planned.

Hearing from students, the importance of having a space dedicated to learning that didn't feel stagnant or unfamiliar is what draws students to continue to use our space. While we will not be able to open in the fall, it has become clearly evident that the space has already become a staple in the needs of many students. Additionally, a number of colleges and faculty have sought out the center to try and address challenges in innovative ways. In this there is the risk that some see the STAR Center as a catch-all for equitable educational practices. This ideology would sell our most underserved students short and be highly unsustainable.

In the short time the STAR has been open, the growth potential has multiplied as we have sought out unique collaborations who serve our target populations. This growth has unfortunately been hindered by staffing challenges, budgetary constraints, and an inability to use our space students have come to grow fond of. Our goal is to build a sustainable foundation with hopes of being able to lead the CSU charge in supporting our underserved students. This influences our goals for the coming academic year.

VII: Program Objectives for Next Academic Year

- Strengthen collaboration with Chico Unified School District to build longitudinal mentorship program
- Expand the academic retention programs to focus one semester on cultural affirmation and agency and a second semester on mentorship and service
- Effectively build an engaging digital presence that can seamlessly transition to in person programming and support
- Hire a program coordinator to oversee the academic retention programs.