



Division of Student Affairs



Annual Report 2020 - 2021

I. Departmental 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 (Underrepresented 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 provides 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 for these students.

II. Departmental Accomplishments

The following outlines the STAR Center's major programs facilitated through an increased digital presence (Due to Covid safety procedures). Programs were hosted through Zoom, Instagram, and YouTube, representing over 3,000 digital impressions.

Major Programs	# of Student Participants	Program Description
• Academic Coaching	15	Academic coaching service that offered brief, solution-focused sessions designed to provide extra student support.
• Building a Semester of Resilience	30	An 8-week program aimed to equip students with the tools to increase their mental and emotional health.

• Hump Day Q&A	530	Provided an opportunity for students to ask questions live on Instagram with various departments on campus.
• League of Stars	25	A collaborative mentoring program between Chico State, Butte College, and Chico Unified School District.
• Men of Chico	19	A STAR Center academic retention program that aims to empower, guide, and support men of color at CSU, Chico.
• Nerdy Under 30	118	A quick, 30-minute(ish) program that covered a different topic or campus department each week.
• NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program	6	An initiative that offers a great opportunity to expose diverse students to the field of student affairs and applying for graduate school in higher education.
• Shades of Nature	112	A speaker series focused on conversation around diverse forms of engagement with the outdoors and personal inspirations for getting connected to nature.
• STARS Center Movie Night	44	This was an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to come together in a safe and socially distanced manner to help provide some face-to-face engagement for the campus.
• Women of Excellence	18	A STAR Center academic retention program that aims to empower, guide, and support women of color at CSU, Chico.
Total Student Participants	938	

Highlights

- **League of Stars:** In collaboration with Butte College and Chico Unified School District, the STAR Center initiated a multi-campus mentorship pilot program for students of color at the represented schools (Chico State, Butte College, PV, FV, CH). The program served approximately 25 Chico State Students and just under 100 total participants. The feedback overwhelmingly supported restarting the program in person in the fall.
- **Building a Semester of Resilience:** An 8-week pilot program aimed to equip students with the tools to increase their mental and emotional health. This program provided an opportunity for students to understand how stressors and crises can affect their academic progress.
- **NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program:** This was the first year that the STAR Center officially took over NUFP. We had 6 participating students and all 3 seniors who applied to graduate school were accepted. All participants identified as URM students. We look forward to growing the program.

Diversity Efforts:

- Focused on increasing access points for programming due to distance learning
- Academic advising and coaching were switched to non-traditional hours to accommodate student needs
- Academic retention courses enrolled 19+ URM students
- Hosted Soul Sessions to discuss mental and emotional health during the Covid-19 pandemic

III. Changes in Policies and Procedures

- Due to Covid-19, the STAR Center was closed. Job descriptions and expectations were discussed, evaluated, and adjusted for all staff to accommodate telework schedules, and an increased online presence.

IV. Resources Summary

Resource Allocation:

2020-2021 VPSA Budget Allocation	\$139,112
Associated Students OE Funds	\$42,500
Work Study	\$20,000
2019-2020 Rollover Funds	\$0
Total 2020-2021 Allocation	\$201,612
Annual Salary Expenses	\$(88,941)
Annual OE (Includes student earnings minus work study)	\$(32,242)
Used Work Study	\$(4,723)
Remaining Funds	\$75,706

Note: Remaining funds reflect the inability to facilitate in-person engagement with students and student staff reduction (8-4) due to campus closures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, two MCGS courses were earmarked for funding for the academic year (\$13,000), but were financed by the College of BSS this year.

Human Resources:

- We went from 8-4 student staff to accommodate digital programming and distance learning.
- The Star Center received a temporary, part-time SSP III for the academic year to support programming. Her time was split between the DREAM Center, University Housing, and the STAR Center.
- The STAR Center Interim Associate Director was reclassified as a non-interim MPP

Facilities/Equipment:

- Due to staff teleworking for the 2020-2021 academic year, some equipment was purchased to ensure continuity of programming and support services.

V. Program Assessment for Past Year

Program Objectives:

Prior Year’s Program Objectives	Ongoing/Met	Description
Strengthen collaboration with Chico Unified School District to build longitudinal mentorship program	Met	The League of Stars was a successful pilot program to provide a sense of civic engagement and communal investment for our students. It is now supported by Butte County Office of Education and Chico Unified School District.
Expand the academic retention programs to focus one semester on cultural affirmation and agency and a second semester on mentorship and service	Ongoing	We were unable to do any of the programs that serve as galvanizing experiences for the academic retention programs. Without these programs, the cohorts were fragmented and we decided to halt the mentor aspect and prepare to implement it for the 21-22 academic year.
Effectively build an engaging digital presence that can seamlessly transition to in person programming and support	Met	The STAR Center team did a phenomenal job in transitioning programs and services to accommodate distance learning. Our digital presence reached over 3,000 students with over 900 active participants.

Hire a program coordinator to oversee the academic retention programs.	Ongoing	The STAR Center was not able to hire a SSP II during the academic year, but was granted the ability to move forward for the 21-22 academic year.
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Ongoing Assessment Efforts

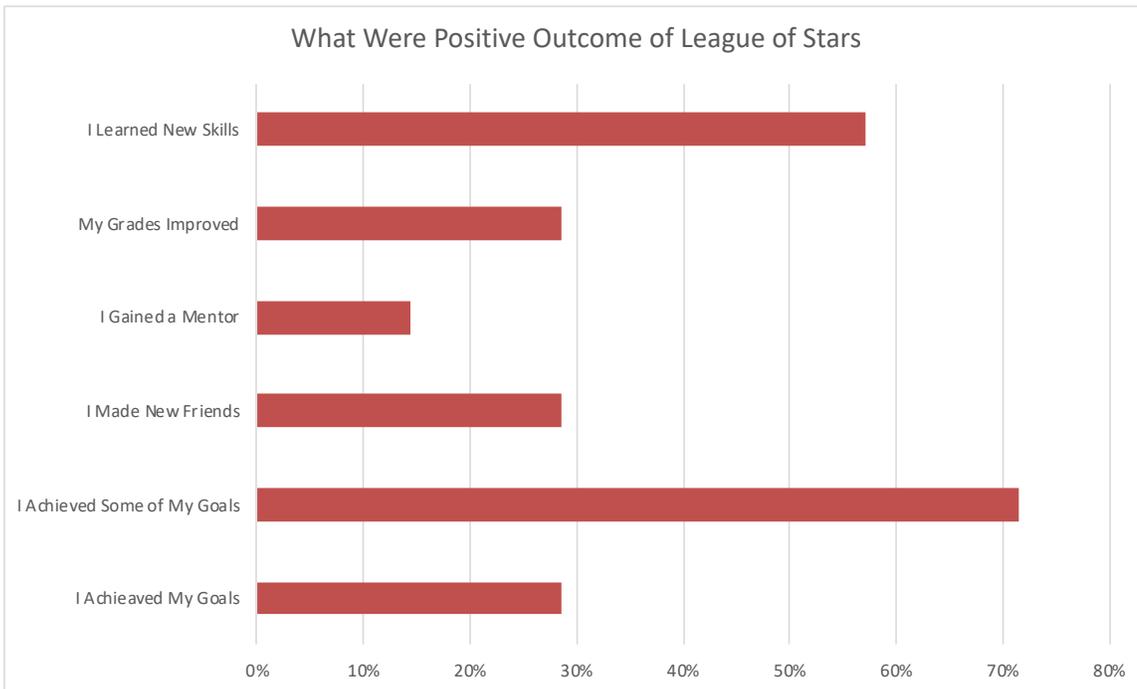
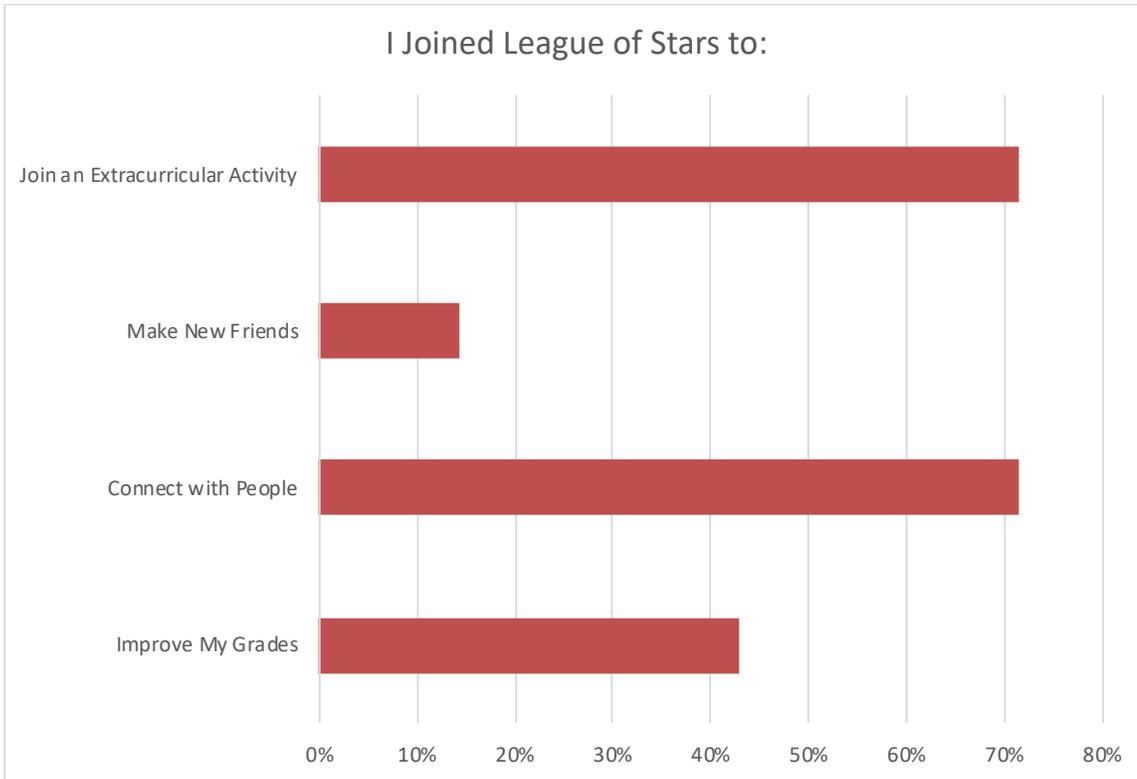
STAR Center User Data		
Reason for Use	Total Unique Users	Total Touchpoints
Academic Advising	384	631
Registration Workshops	27	47
Events/Programs	938	3,123
Total	1,313	3,691

STAR Center Salient Student Feedback of Programs

Program	Successes	Challenges	Recommendations
Building a Semester of Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -100% of Students persisted through the 8-week program -Excellent content and relationship building strategies shared -Partnership and connection to Chico Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sequential content made it difficult for students to join throughout the series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Condense into fewer, longer sessions to continue strong engagement and sharing -Create mechanism to share info gained in sessions -Work to add a first-gen focus to the content
Shades of Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Faculty and staff attended as well -Hosted in-person hike to build community -Students were introduced to new places in Butte County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wanted to do more in-person outdoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More outdoor activities -Local/nearby connections as guest speakers -Collab with sport clubs as well as Adventure Outings?
Hump Day Q&A on IG Live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Many more post-program views than attended in person events -Content available to students on their schedule -Strong connections to campus partners at strategic times to help students advance and persist -Promotes social media accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cannot track attendees who watch afterwards -slight technical challenges getting started 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Plan campus partners at beginning of semester and book way in advance -Collect questions from students in the center -Give away small prizes throughout the live to keep students watching -Incentivize students to share the video on their own pages
Nerdy > 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Building a campus network for students -Personalized content for campus partners -Low risk environment for students to engage with campus partners -Informal and fun! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Not enough consistent participants for a leaderboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Do Kahoot in person for a different feel
Drive-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Community building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What movie to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Drive-In is shutting down

Movie Night	-Seeing everyone was therapeutic	choose -Being aware of possible impact of movie scenes	-Find out if drive-in will open elsewhere in town – bus students over
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League of Stars:



League of Stars Student Feedback

- I am improving my grades (42% of students were most proud of improved grades)
- It's helping me and is teaching me new skills
- I think it is a very encouraging program to set goals and actually accomplish them. Also, it gives me an opportunity to connect with people from CSU who have experience and could help me
- I make new friends and also because I know that I am being held accountable to getting things done and it motivates me more.
- It has helped me a lot with my grades and college

VI. Analysis

The STAR Center has a specific target population of first-generation, URM students who are not being served by other traditional service programs (i.e., EOP, CSSC). This population represents approximately 3,500 students. Since the opening in fall 2019, it has not had a consistent set of programs or a full year in the physical space. Because of this, the STAR Center has had to reinvent program and service application to better serve students. The addition of a temporary program coordinator helped in actualizing the potential of the STAR Center. We increased our program participants by 58% year-over-year and academic advisor unique users by 56% year-over-year.. With the campus opening back up, it will be even more imperative to solidify programming and services that will see a large number of new students come to campus. This means that even if the Center's target population does not increase, the number of students needing academic and retention services may increase.

The 2020-2021 academic year was bitter-sweet. While we had to engage from a distance, the time allowed us the opportunity to think differently as to how we interact with students. This led to a few pilot programs, which we plan to carry into the 2021-2022 academic year as STAR Center staple programs: Men of Chico, Women of Excellence, League of Stars, Student Transfer Enrichment Program. This in conjunction with our academic services: Academic advising and academic coaching, will help to provide a solid platform for the following year.

VII. Program Objectives for Next Academic Year

- Hire a program coordinator to bring the STAR Center to full staffing capacity
- Create and streamline assessment tools and procedures to begin collecting demographic, academic, satisfaction, and student learning outcome data
- Restructure programs and services to fit under one of two umbrellas assessments: Transition (Matriculation, transfer, persistence, graduation) or Retention.
- Increase number of students engaged and served by 50% year-over year