

# **ANNUAL REPORT OF GOALS AND MEASURES 2014-2015**

## **Early Outreach and Support Programs**

TRiO

Student Support Services



A Division of Student Affairs  
California State University, Chico

## TRIO/STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

**Note:** Student Support Services is a TRiO program funded by the United States Department of Education to provide academic support services to low-income, first generation college students. The mission statement and program goals (objectives in the U.S. Department of Education framework) are specified by federal regulations and policies and cannot be altered without approval from a program officer at the U.S. Department of Education.

### I. Mission Statement

The mission of Student Support Services (SSS) is to improve the academic standing, retention, graduation, and graduate and professional school enrollment rates of eligible students who are receiving project services.

### II. Departmental Accomplishments

- Submitted successful grant proposal, securing funding for another five years
- Implemented financial literacy curriculum and hired coach
- Piloted new “coaching” approach to student advising
- Spearheaded North State TRiO Community Pipeline
- Incorporated the President’s Diversity Action Plan into the new grant proposal
- Offered two field school trips to project participants
- Offered spring graduate school tour
- Created more intrusive approach to supporting freshmen on AP
- Created new participant application and selection forms and procedures
- Redesigned the project’s internship program for upperclassmen
- Created and tested prototypes of new participant contracts
- Completed internal audit of participant files

#### Highlights:

- **Financial Literacy Coach** – The project hired for the first time ever a financial literacy coach in January 2015. The new coach designed new workshops and piloted advising forms and techniques while serving cohorts 2013 (sophomores), 2014 (current freshmen), and 2015 (incoming freshmen admitted summer 2015). The pilot points to overwhelming success; 24% of incoming 2015 freshmen switched to a more affordable housing option after only one 30 minute financial literacy coaching session via phone and a follow-up e-mail. 100% of incoming freshmen in cohort 2015 received coaching and created a preliminary

plan to meet their unmet need *before* starting school in the fall. This position was funded using the salary savings created by the vacant project director position (July-August 2014), and was worked into the budget of the new grant so that we can continue to fund this position moving forward.

- **New “Coaching” Approach to Student Advising** – Beginning in May of 2015, the project piloted the new grant proposal’s research-driven approach to providing high quality individualized approaches to student advising and counseling (e.g. coaching). The pilot cohort was comprised of newly admitted freshmen who will start at Chico in fall of 2015. This coaching approach is informed by research deemed acceptable by the US Department of Education and the Institute for Education Sciences’ (IES) What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). The research guiding this new approach can be found at: [https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/bettinger\\_baker\\_030711.pdf](https://ed.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/bettinger_baker_030711.pdf). In accordance with this new coaching model, the project created new tools to support incoming freshmen and transfer students in the selection of housing, majors, Early Start options, orientation dates, fall courses, and more. Mandatory phone coaching sessions were required and used to create baseline needs assessments for each new freshman student in cohort 2015.
- **North State TRiO Community Pipeline** – Beginning in fall 2014, the project collaborated with Butte Community College to create a “TRiO Community Pipeline” between Butte Community College and CSU, Chico. In January of 2015, the project piloted the grant’s new approach to the Student Transfer Enrichment Program (STEP), offering an individualized half-day orientation the week before the spring semester of 2015. Two students participated in the pilot and, based upon their positive feedback and strong academic performance their first semester (both above a 2.5), the project will fully implement the new STEP model beginning August of 2015.

Beginning in spring 2015, the project broadened the scope of the TRiO Community Pipeline by increasing collaboration with CSU, Chico pre-college TRiO programs and community college SSS programs operating in the North State. As a result of this collaboration, 55% of the project’s freshmen 2015 cohort were referred from TRiO pre-college programs, and 100% of the incoming transfer student applicants were referred by TRiO programs in the North State, including Butte Community College, Yuba Community College, and Lake Tahoe Community College.

- **Diversity Efforts** – To ensure that campus diversity initiatives inform the next five years of grant implementation, the project director incorporated the campus Diversity Action Plan into the grant proposal. The Student Development Coordinator also completed the CSU, Chico Diversity

Certificate Program, and the new Project Director completed the Diversity Academy.

Due to low enrollment of male students of color over the past several years, one of the unit's primary diversity initiatives is to increase the number of male students of color in our program. In summer 2015, TRiO Student Support Services increased the percentage of freshmen male students of color by 27% over the previous year. This represents the highest ratio of incoming male participants of color in the past five years (see table below). It is unclear as to the reason for the increase, meriting further analysis of the data.

<b>Freshman Cohort</b>	<b># of new participants</b>	<b># of new males of color</b>	<b>% of new males of color</b>
2011	35	13	37%
2012	19	8	42%
2013	23	9	39%
2014	34	7	21%
2015	27	13	48%

### **III. Changes in Policies and Procedures**

The new Project Director has been developing a CSU, Chico TRiO Student Support Services Policies and Procedures Manual. The anticipated date of completion is September 30, 2015. The following policy statements, procedures, and business practices were developed and/or revised this year:

- New policies regarding the collection and storage of participant documentation were implemented.
- New procedures for processing participant applications were created, implemented, and assessed.
- New processes for documenting and justifying project expenses were created and implemented.
- New processes for submitting travel documentation were created and implemented.
- New interpretations of TRiO legislation and regulations were researched, adopted, communicated to project staff, and documented in the new Policies and Procedures Manual.
- New approaches to training student staff were developed, to be implemented fall of 2015.

#### IV. Resources Summary

##### Budget Summary:

• SSS allocation for 2014-2015	\$247,583
• Rollover from 2013-2014	21,903
• Total allocation for 2014-2015	<b>269,486</b>
• Projected expenses	(269,486)
• Projected carryover balance	<b>\$0</b>
(cannot carry forward due to end of five year grant cycle)	

**Note: Fiscal year is based on a September 1, 2014-August 31, 2015 timeline.**

##### Staffing:

- Project Director, Tasha Dev, hired September 2014
- Academic Coordinator title was changed to Student Development Coordinator and job description was updated accordingly, shifting the position's focus from academic support to non-cognitive student development, as informed by new research-driven TRiO program models encouraged by the U.S. Department of Education during the new grant cycle.
- Financial Literacy Coach (graduate student position), hired January 2015 to provide the individualized financial literacy counseling encouraged by the U.S. Department of Education during the new grant cycle.

##### Facilities/Equipment:

N/A

#### V. Program Evaluation for Past Year

**Primary Goals** (Performance Objectives required by the U.S. Department of Education)

1. Persistence: 85% of all students served by the SSS Project will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate.

Of the 143\* students enrolled in the fall 2014 semester, 136 students or 95% either graduated or have registered for the fall 2015 semester

2. Good Academic Standing: 91% of all enrolled participants served by the SSS Project will meet the performance of good academic standing (2.0 or above).

Of the 143\* participants enrolled in 2014-15, 131 or 91.6% of them were in good academic standing (GPA above 2.0) by the end of the academic year.

3. Graduation: 65% of new participants served each year will graduate within six years.

Of the participants admitted into cohort 2009, 22 or 65% graduated within six years of their point of entry into the program.

**\*This number does not include new freshmen participants admitted summer 2015.**

### **Annual Objectives 2014-2015**

1. SSS will restructure the AS recognized student organization and focus on academic assistance programs for first year students utilizing upper class mentors. (Strategic priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Unfinished/Modified – After conducting two focus groups with TRiO SSS upper division students, it was determined that this is not a sustainable initiative due to the small number of interested participants, as well as competing interests with other TRiO student organizations (e.g. Upward Bound and ETS Alumni Associations). Instead, it was decided to create a TRiO Scholar Advisory Board made up of upper division students serving as representatives of their peers at bi-annual meetings with the TRiO SSS Project Director and Student Development Coordinator. Advisory board members will be current interns. This was piloted spring 2015 and will be fully implemented fall 2015.

2. The project will create four eight-week seminars that will focus on the different grade levels. For example first year (Transition), second year (Career Path/Major Selection), third year (Graduation and Graduate School Preparation) and Fourth year and above (Life After College). (Strategic priorities 1, 3, 4, 5)

Unfinished/Modified – Only the First Year Enrichment Seminar and Life After College Seminar were offered in 2014-2015 due to transitional issues in leadership and new curriculum choices made in response to the new grant application. In keeping with the spirit of the new grant proposal, four developmental seminars will be implemented in 2015-2016.

## VI. Ongoing Assessment Efforts

### Statistics on Program Usage

Number of individualized advising/ coaching sessions with active participants, 2014-15	
Total number of active participants during fall and spring semesters	138
Received individualized non-cognitive skills coaching	176
Received advice and assistance in postsecondary course selection	46
Received education/counseling to improve financial and economic literacy	17
Received information in applying for Federal Student Aid	30
Received assistance in completing and applying for Federal Student Aid	15
Received assistance in applying for admission to Graduate School	12
Study abroad or National Student Exchange advising	2
Career and professional development advising/coaching	6
Completed the LASSI (freshmen)	20
Total number* of individual advising/coaching sessions 2014-15	301
<i>*Many advising/coaching sessions covered several of the topics above. Therefore, the total number of sessions is less than the total number of topics covered</i>	

Number of active participants who participated in group advising and coaching sessions 2014-15	
STEP (new transfer students)—half day orientation including these topics: course selections, financial literacy, non-cognitive skill development	2
FOCUS (new freshmen) – semester long seminar including these topics: financial literacy, non-cognitive skill development, and course selection	20
Field School (RECR 399)	27
TRiO SSS leadership activities—includes non-cognitive skill development and career preparation/professional development	18
Non-cognitive skill development workshops	35
Graduate school preparation activities	3
Total number of participants in group advising/coaching sessions in 2014-15	105

### Student Learning Outcomes

See responses under “Primary Goals.”

### Most Critical Performance Indicators

See responses under “Primary Goals.”

### Changes to Student Learning Outcomes and Measures of Performance:

#### **Student Learning Outcome #1: Increased participation in project services**

As a result of participants creating their own contract each semester in combination with increased communication and monitoring of student progress by project staff (at least one contact per month), student participation in project services will increase over that of the previous year.

#### **Measure of Performance:**

The Project Director will request a report from Advisor in June 2015 to determine the total number of individual and group coaching/advising sessions conducted by the project, as well as a breakdown of the types of sessions attended.

#### **Student Learning Outcome #2: Increased academic self-confidence (first year students)**

As a result of the yearlong First Year Enrichment Seminar, freshmen students will express increased academic self-confidence in the following areas: (1) ability to identify various resources on campus that support students from disadvantaged backgrounds; (2) willingness to utilize campus resources; (3) knowledge that research has proven that intelligence can increase over time; and (4) ability to identify various opportunities for connecting with the campus community during their academic career.

#### **Measure of Performance:**

During the first week of their yearlong First Year Enrichment Seminar, all first year students will anonymously self-report their level of academic self-confidence using the University survey software program. The survey questions will measure each of the areas of academic self-confidence. Survey questions will be gleaned from the research of Carol Dweck (implicit theory), Angela Duckworth (grit), Kathleen Cushman (First in the Family), and Nicole M. Stephens, MarYam G. Hamedani, and Mesmin Destin (difference-education intervention). The same survey will be conducted a second time at the end of the academic year. Results will be analyzed and graphed to determine level of success in increasing participants' level of academic self-confidence. Results will also be compared with end-of-the-year data pertaining to the same cohort's persistence and academic achievement to determine any correlation.

#### **Student Learning Outcome #3: Increased financial literacy (freshmen)**

As a result of four individualized coaching sessions and four group advising sessions over the course of an academic year with the financial literacy coach, first year students will be able to (1) find, read, and understand their financial aid

award, (2) explain the value of reducing dependence upon student loans, (3) compare their financial aid award to their anticipated expenses in order to identify and plan for unmet need, (4) identify strategies and resources to bridge the gap between academic expenses and financial aid awarded, and (5) create a realistic annual budget that will stretch their financial aid dollars.

**Measure of Performance:**

At the end of the spring semester of their first year, rising sophomores will be asked to complete a financial literacy questionnaire and create a sophomore budget using BB Learn technology. The questionnaire will be designed to assess their abilities in each of the five desired outcomes. Each student will discuss the results of their questionnaire and budget with the financial literacy coach in an individual coaching session. To assure a high level of participation, these assessments will be required of all students prior to disbursing their spring TRiO SSS grant aid.

**VII. Analysis: What actions need to occur to move to the “next level”?**

- The project’s Policies and Procedures Manual needs to be completed, fully implemented, and incorporated into staff trainings.
- New interventions and approaches outlined in the 2015 grant proposal will need to be implemented in the 2015-2016 academic year, including:
  - Financial literacy programming (piloted spring 2015)
  - New “menu” style participant contracts focused on non-cognitive skill development
  - Data-driven decision-making will drive project’s programming, staffing, and interventions.
  - Annual seminars designed to serve students at each level of their development (see “Annual Objectives”)
  - Incorporate the use of technology to assist with coaching efforts and instruction of seminars.

**VIII. Goals for the next academic year**

**Annual Objectives 2015-2016**

1. Create new website using university platform that (1) converts, reorganizes, and enhances information from existing website to new website; and (2) is user-friendly and incorporates information and resources for applicants, as well as new and continuing participants. (Strategic priorities 1, 3, 4, 5)
2. Create, pilot, and evaluate two new social media tools to assist with communication with current participants. (Strategic priorities 1, 3)

3. Implement new semester participant contracts in fall 2015 and spring 2016 and evaluate their effectiveness using both qualitative and quantitative measures at the end of the academic year. (Strategic priorities 1, 3, 4, 5, 6)