

AGENDA

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Meeting: 2:35 p.m., Tuesday, November 15, 2022
Glenn S. Dumke Auditorium

Romey Sabalius, Chair
Diego Arambula, Vice Chair
Douglas Faigin
Jean Picker Firstenberg
Leslie Gilbert-Lurie
Maria Linares
Julia I. Lopez
Yammilette Rodriguez
Christopher Steinhauser

- Consent** 1. Approval of Minutes of the Meeting of September 14, 2022, *Action*
- Discussion** 2. Recommended Amendments to Title 5 Regarding the Doctor of Public Health
Information
3. Graduation Initiative 2025, *Information*
4. Academic Preparation, *Information*
5. Veterans Affairs Update, *Information*

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

**Trustees of The California State University
Office of the Chancellor
Glenn S. Dumke Auditorium
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California**

September 13, 2022

Members Present

Romey Sabalius, Chair
Diego Arambula, Vice Chair
Douglas Faigin
Jean Picker Firstenberg
Leslie Gilbert-Lurie
Maria Linares
Julia I. Lopez
Yammilette Rodriguez
Christopher Steinhauser

Wenda Fong, Chair of the Board
Jolene Koester, Interim Chancellor

Trustee Sabalius called the meeting to order.

Approval of the Consent Agenda, Action

A motion to approve the consent agenda without discussion passed. The minutes from the meeting on July 12, 2022 were approved as submitted.

Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity, *Information*

Dr. Sylvia A. Alva, executive vice chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs, began the presentation by explaining the expansive ways that research, scholarship and creative activities provide experiential learning opportunities for students and supports faculty excellence. Dr. Alva invited Dr. Ganesh Raman, assistant vice chancellor for Research, to provide the board with an update on the variety of CSU programs and initiatives that have resulted in both meaningful learning opportunities as well applied research addressing many of California's most pressing issues. While the pandemic posed a unique set of challenges in conducting research, Dr. Raman

shared the many ways the CSU community has continued to advance research and scholarly activities, many of which are student-driven. Dr. Lynn Mahoney, president of San Francisco State University, was invited to speak on a specific project at the university exploring health disparity issues involving the lack of access to nature and the impact on the well-being of underserved populations.

Dr. Raman also provided updates from multi-campus affinity groups as well as student competitions designed to promote innovation and entrepreneurship. To conclude the presentation, Dr. Raman invited CSUN alumna Ms. Jessica Gonzalez to share her experience in the 2022 Grad Slam research competition in which she took first place.

Following the presentation, committee chair Trustee Sabalius shared brief remarks acknowledging the collaborative work and meaningful impact of CSU research. Trustees posed questions regarding different approaches to securing external funding and how are students engaged in research funded by grants. Additionally, a question was raised regarding how CSU research is different from research conducted at the UC system. Comments were also shared regarding the importance of providing faculty with professional research opportunities to support the integral role they play in engaging students – from the funding process to the publication of research literature.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Recommended Amendments to Title 5 Regarding the Doctor of Public Health

Presentation By

Sylvia A. Alva
Executive Vice Chancellor
Academic and Student Affairs

Alison M. Wrynn
Associate Vice Chancellor
Academic Programs, Innovations and Faculty Development

Summary

Recent changes in legislation amended the California Education Code to add Education Code Section 66044 and 66044.1 which grants the California State University (CSU) the authority to offer the doctoral degree in public health, called the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree effective January 1, 2023. The purpose of this information item is to propose additions to Title 5 to reflect this legislation.

This proposal will return to the board in January 2023 as an action item for approval, along with a request to set tuition for DrPH programs through the Finance Committee. As has been done with all previous independent doctoral programs, Chancellor's Office staff will soon begin the process of collaborating with faculty to develop systemwide policy that will include more detailed information related to the DrPH programs so that it is ready for campus use following the January 2023 board meeting. Campuses have already been informed that they have the option of proposing DrPH programs for approval as part of the March 2023 Board of Trustees academic master planning process.

Background

The DrPH is an advanced, terminal professional degree that prepares the future workforce to engage in public health research, teaching, practice and leadership. It is governed by the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) and is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). The degree focuses on the practical application of public health principles across a variety of settings, such as health departments, communications, health advocacy, community organizations, marketing and others. This degree prepares individuals to

take on a leadership role in a variety of public health settings by bridging the gap between research and applied fieldwork, emphasizing knowledge translation and transformative leadership.

There is a need for DrPH professionals as they are uniquely equipped to promote community engagement and conduct tailored needs assessments to quickly identify which priority targets to engage, based on the highest risk and/or need. These professionals engage community stakeholders, promote health advocacy, encourage critical analyses, and influence decision making, policies and laws. They also interpret and translate evidence-based information for the general public in a manner that would be tailored according to individuals' literacy levels.

Nationally, there is a significant shortage in trained DrPH-level public health professionals. This need became more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic. In California as well, there is a shortage of advanced trained public health professionals, especially those who are ethnically/racially diverse.

Senate Bill 684, authored by Senator Ben Hueso and supported by the CSU Board of Trustees, allows for the CSU to offer independent DrPH programs. This legislation was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 30, 2022.

Correspondingly, additions of the following Title 5 sections are recommended:

- **§ 40519.2. The Doctor of Public Health Degree.**
This addition will establish the DPH degree program scope and the minimum number of degree units.
- **§ 40519.3. The Doctor of Public Health Degree: Requirements.**
This addition will establish the minimum requirements for completion of the program.
- **§ 41025. Admission to Doctor of Public Health Programs.**
This addition will establish admission requirements for the degree program.

An item will be presented at the January 2023 meeting for board action to adopt the following recommended additions to Title 5.

Title 5, California Code of Regulations
Division 5 – Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1 – California State University
Subchapter 2 – Educational Program
Article 7 – Graduate Degrees

§ 40519.2. The Doctor of Public Health Degree.

(a) A California State University program leading to a Doctor of Public Health degree shall be distinguished from a University of California doctoral degree program by its conformity with the following criteria:

(1) the program shall be focused on health and scientific knowledge translation and transformative community leadership;

(2) the program shall be designed to address the community public health workforce needs of California;

(3) the program shall prepare qualified professionals to be leaders and experienced practitioners who apply their advanced knowledge in service to California's diverse communities.

(4) the program shall enable professionals to earn the degree while working full time.

(b) Each campus offering a program leading to a Doctor of Public Health degree shall establish requirements for admission to the program. The requirements for admission shall include, at a minimum, the requirements stated in Section 41025.

(c) The program leading to the Doctor of Public Health degree shall conform to the following specifications:

(1) The curriculum shall include learning experiences that balance research, theory, and practice, including field experiences. The core curriculum shall provide professional preparation for leadership in community public health, including but not limited to theory and research methods, the structure and culture of public health, and health and scientific knowledge translation and transformative community leadership.

(2) The pattern of study shall be composed of at least 60 semester units earned in graduate standing. At least 48 semester units required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students, and the remaining units required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students or courses organized primarily for master's and doctoral students.

(3) At least 42 semester units shall be completed in residence at the campus or campuses awarding the degree. The appropriate campus authority may authorize the substitution of credit earned by alternate means for part of this residence requirement. The campus may establish a transfer policy allowing application to degree requirements of relevant coursework and credits completed as a

matriculated student in another graduate program, on the condition that the other program is appropriately accredited.

(4) A qualifying examination shall be required.

(5) The pattern of study shall include completion of a dissertation subject to the following:

(A) The dissertation shall be the written product of systematic, rigorous research on a significant professional issue related to community public health. The dissertation is expected to contribute to an improvement in health and scientific knowledge translation and transformative community leadership. It shall evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale.

(B) The dissertation shall identify the research problem and question(s), state the major theoretical perspectives, explain the significance of the undertaking, relate it to the relevant scholarly and professional literature, set forth the appropriate sources for and methods of gathering and analyzing the data, and offer a conclusion or recommendation. It shall include a written abstract that summarizes the significance of the work, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation.

(C) No more than 12 semester units shall be allowed for a dissertation; and

(D) An oral defense of the dissertation shall be required.

(d) Each campus shall create and distribute to all students enrolled in a Doctor of Public Health degree program a student manual or handbook detailing, at a minimum, the following:

(1) requirements for admission with classified standing;

(2) policies on the transfer of credit earned at other institutions;

(3) policies on professional ethics and academic integrity;

(4) policies on student fees;

(5) provisions for advising and mentoring;

(6) policies and procedures for petitioning for a variance in academic requirements;

(7) policies and procedures for obtaining a leave of absence or for withdrawing from the university;

- (8) policies and procedures regarding student grievances;
- (9) policies on harassment and discrimination;
- (10) policies and procedures for establishing and amending a plan of study;
- (11) requirements for satisfactory progress in the program;
- (12) policies on academic probation;
- (13) requirements for field experience embedded in the program;
- (14) requirements for advancement to candidacy;
- (15) policies and procedures for the formation of a committee for administering a qualifying examination (if the qualifying examination is unique to the individual student);
- (16) dissertation requirements;
- (17) policies and procedures for the formation of a committee for supervising a dissertation;
- (18) forms to be completed by students in the course of the degree program;
- (19) the names and areas of expertise of faculty members affiliated with the degree program.

Credits

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66044 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66044.1 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66600, 89030 and 89035, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66044, 66044.1, 66600, 89030 and 89035, Education Code.

§ 40519.3. The Doctor of Public Health Degree: Requirements.

- (a) Advancement to Candidacy. For advancement to candidacy for the Doctor of Public Health degree, the student shall have achieved classified graduate standing and met such particular requirements as the Chancellor and the appropriate campus authority may prescribe. The requirements shall include a qualifying examination.
- (b) To be eligible for the Doctor of Public Health degree, the candidate shall have completed a pattern of study, including a dissertation, that is consistent with the specifications in subdivision (c)(5) of Section 40519.2 and that is approved by the appropriate campus authority. A grade point average of 3.0 (grade of B) or better shall have been earned in coursework taken to satisfy the

requirements for the degree, except that a course in which no letter grade is assigned shall not be used in computing the grade point average.

(c) The student shall have completed all requirements for the degree within five years of achieving classified standing in the doctoral program. The appropriate campus authority may extend the time for completion of the requirements if:

- (1) the extension is warranted by individual circumstances, and
- (2) the student demonstrates current knowledge of research and practice in public health, as required by the campus.

Credits

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66044 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66044.1 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66600, 89030 and 89035, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66044 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66044.1 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66600, 89030 and 89035, Education Code.

§ 41025. Admission to Doctor of Public Health Programs.

(a) An applicant may be admitted with classified graduate standing to a program leading to a Doctor of Public Health degree established pursuant to Section 40519.2 if the applicant satisfies the requirements of each of the following numbered subdivisions:

- (1) The applicant holds an acceptable baccalaureate degree earned at an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association, or the applicant has completed equivalent academic preparation as determined by the appropriate campus authority.
- (2) The applicant holds an acceptable master's degree earned at an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association, or the applicant has completed equivalent academic preparation as determined by the appropriate campus authority.
- (3) The applicant has attained a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in upper-division and graduate study combined.
- (4) The applicant is in good standing at the last institution of higher education attended.
- (5) The applicant has demonstrated sufficient preparation and experience pertinent to community public health to benefit from the program.

(6) The applicant has met any additional requirements established by the Chancellor in consultation with the faculty and any additional requirements prescribed by the appropriate campus authority.

(b) An applicant who does not qualify for admission under the provisions of subdivision (a) may be admitted with classified graduate standing by special action if on the basis of acceptable evidence the applicant is judged by the appropriate campus authority to possess sufficient academic and professional potential pertinent to community public health to merit such action.

(c) An applicant who is ineligible for admission under the provisions of either subdivision (a) or subdivision (b) because of deficiencies in prerequisite preparation that in the opinion of the appropriate campus authority can be rectified by specified additional preparation, including examinations, may be admitted with conditionally classified graduate standing. The student shall be granted classified graduate standing upon rectification of the deficiencies.

(d) Only those students who continue to demonstrate a satisfactory level of scholastic competence and fitness shall be eligible to continue in Doctor of Public Health programs.

Credits

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66044 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66044.1 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66600, 89030 and 89035, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66044 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66044.1 (effective January 1, 2023 per SB 684 [2022]), 66600, 89030 and 89035, Education Code.

5 CCR § 40519.2

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- (3) the program shall prepare qualified professionals to be leaders and experienced practitioners who apply their advanced knowledge in service to California's diverse communities; and
- (4) the program shall enable professionals to earn the degree while working full time.

(b) Each campus offering a program leading to a Doctor of Public Health degree shall establish requirements for admission to the program. The requirements for admission shall include, at a minimum, the requirements stated in Section 41025.

(c) The program leading to the Doctor of Public Health degree shall conform to the following specifications:

- (1) The curriculum shall include learning experiences that balance research, theory, and practice, including field experiences. The core curriculum shall provide professional preparation for leadership in community public health, including but not limited to theory and research methods, the structure and culture of public health, and health and scientific knowledge translation and transformative community leadership.
- (2) The pattern of study shall be composed of at least 60 semester units earned in graduate standing. At least 48 semester units required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students, and the remaining units required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students or courses organized primarily for master's and doctoral students.
- (3) At least 42 semester units shall be completed in residence at the campus or campuses awarding the degree. The appropriate campus authority may authorize the substitution of credit earned by alternate means for part of this residence requirement. The campus may establish a transfer policy allowing application to degree requirements of relevant coursework and credits completed as a matriculated student in another graduate program, on the condition that the other program is appropriately accredited.
- (4) A qualifying examination shall be required.
- (5) The pattern of study shall include completion of a dissertation subject to the following:
 - (A) The dissertation shall be the written product of systematic, rigorous research on a significant professional issue related to community public health. The dissertation is expected to contribute to an improvement in health and scientific knowledge translation and transformative community

leadership. It shall evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale;

(B) The dissertation shall identify the research problem and question(s), state the major theoretical perspectives, explain the significance of the undertaking, relate it to the relevant scholarly and professional literature, set forth the appropriate sources for and methods of gathering and analyzing the data, and offer a conclusion or recommendation. It shall include a written abstract that summarizes the significance of the work, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation;

(C) No more than 12 semester units shall be allowed for a dissertation; and

(D) An oral defense of the dissertation shall be required.

(d) Each campus shall create and distribute to all students enrolled in a Doctor of Public Health degree program a student manual or handbook detailing, at a minimum, the following:

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- (10) policies and procedures for establishing and amending a plan of study;
- (11) requirements for satisfactory progress in the program;
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- (15) policies and procedures for the formation of a committee for administering a qualifying examination (if the qualifying examination is unique to the individual student);
- (16) dissertation requirements;
- (17) policies and procedures for the formation of a committee for supervising a dissertation;
- (18) forms to be completed by students in the course of the degree program; and
- (19) the names and areas of expertise of faculty members affiliated with the degree program.

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5 CCR § 40519.3

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(2) the student demonstrates current knowledge of research and practice in public health, as required by the campus.

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5 CCR § 41025

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Graduation Initiative 2025

Presentation By

Sylvia A. Alva
Executive Vice Chancellor
Academic and Student Affairs

Jeff Gold
Interim Associate Vice Chancellor
Student Success

Dr. Vanya Quiñones
President
California State University, Monterey Bay

Summary

This information item on Graduation Initiative 2025 provides detailed information on the California State University's systemwide graduation rate data for 2022 and the university's ongoing efforts to address existing gaps between underserved students and their peers. Ultimately the goal of Graduation Initiative 2025 is to ensure that every CSU student has a fair and equal opportunity to earn their degree, contribute to the California workforce and thrive in their community. Through its annual Convening as well as the intentional share of promising practices among its 23 campuses, the CSU remains committed to meeting the goals first set forth in 2016. The following is an update on that progress.

Graduation Initiative 2025 Goals

As the largest and one of the most diverse four-year higher education systems in the country, the CSU has been guided by its Graduation Initiative 2025 to set a new national standard for providing high quality affordable degree opportunities. The initiative's bold goals are to achieve the following milestones by 2025:

- A 40 percent 4-year graduation rate goal for first-time students;
- A 70 percent 6-year graduation rate goal for first-time students;
- A 45 percent 2-year graduation rate goal for transfer students;

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- An 85 percent 4-year graduation rate goal for transfer students;
- Elimination of equity gaps between CSU students who identify as African American, Native American or Latinx and their peers; and
- Elimination of equity gaps between Pell recipient students and their peers.

Operational and Equity Priorities

Graduation Initiative 2025 is comprised of six operational priorities, or pillars, that have been identified as having significant impact on student success. These pillars have served as guiding principles to support students when and where their need was most urgent and acute and include:

- Academic preparation
- Enrollment management
- Student engagement and well-being
- Financial support
- Data-informed decision making
- Removal of administrative barriers

In 2021, the CSU announced five equity priorities to further advance work in promoting equitable learning outcomes for all students. Those priorities include:

- Reengage and reenroll underserved students
- Provide equitable access to a digital degree planner
- Expand credit opportunities through summer and intersession
- Eliminate barriers to graduation
- Promote equitable learning and reduce DFW rates

Progress on these equity priority efforts can be found at www.calstate.edu/graduation-initiative-2025.

2022 Graduation Rate Data

The following data provide insights on graduation rates based on specific student populations including first-time, transfer, underrepresented students of color and Pell Grant recipients.

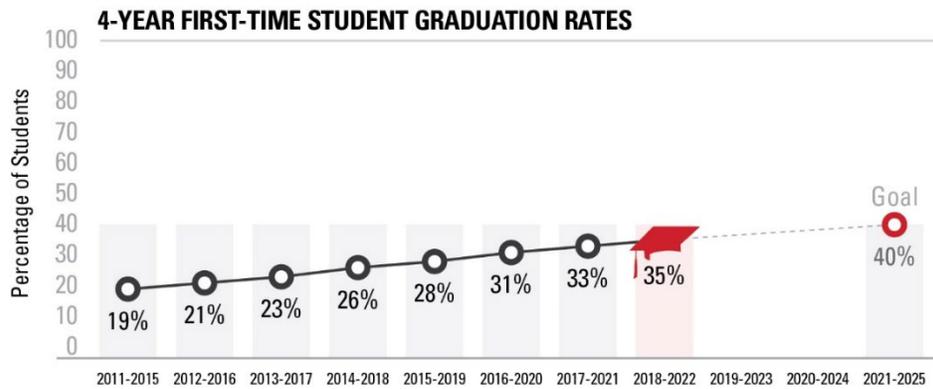
4-Year Graduation Goal for First-Time Students

The 4-year graduation rate for the first-time student cohort that began in 2018 and graduated in 2022 or earlier was 35 percent. This rate is the highest ever for the CSU and marks an increase of 2 percentage points from the previous year as illustrated in the table and graph below. Please note numbers have been rounded up in all graphs.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2013	17.9
2010-2014	18.7
2011-2015	19.3
2012-2016	20.7
2013-2017	22.7
2014-2018	25.5
2015-2019	27.7
2016-2020	31.0
2017-2021	33.3
2018-2022	35.1
2025 Goal	40

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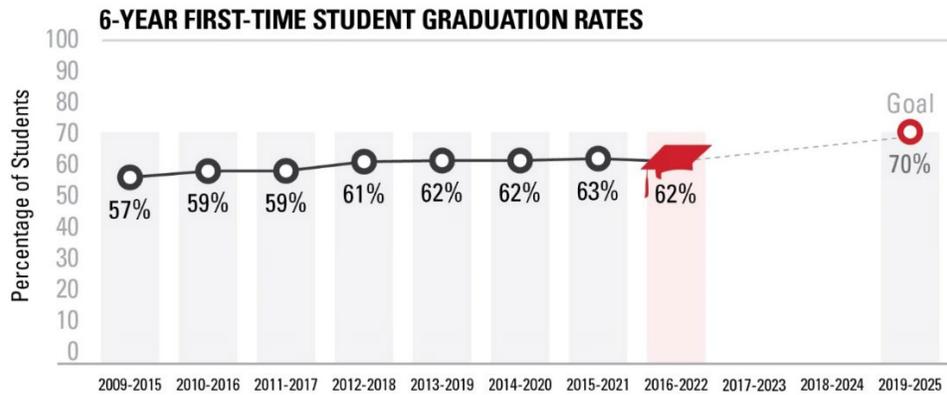
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6-Year Graduation Goal for First-Time Students

The 6-year graduation rate for the first-time student cohort that began in 2016 and graduated in 2022 is at 62 percent.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2015	57.3
2010-2016	59.3
2011-2017	59.4
2012-2018	61.2
2013-2019	62.1
2014-2020	62.4
2015-2021	63.2
2016-2022	62.4
2025 Goal	70



2-Year Graduation Goal for Transfer Students

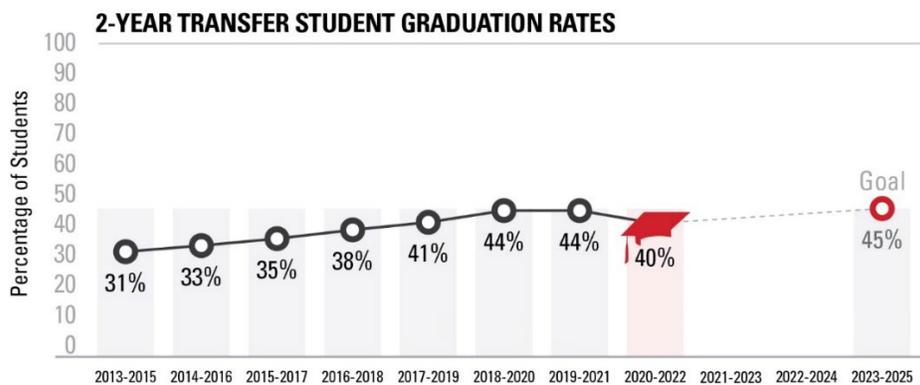
The 2-year graduation rate for the transfer cohort that began in 2020 and graduated in 2022 or earlier was 40 percent.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2011	24.5
2010-2012	27.8
2011-2013	26.7
2012-2014	28.4
2013-2015	30.6
2014-2016	32.6
2015-2017	35.1
2016-2018	38.0
2017-2019	40.7
2018-2020	43.6
2019-2021	44.3

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2020-2022	40.3
2025 Goal	45

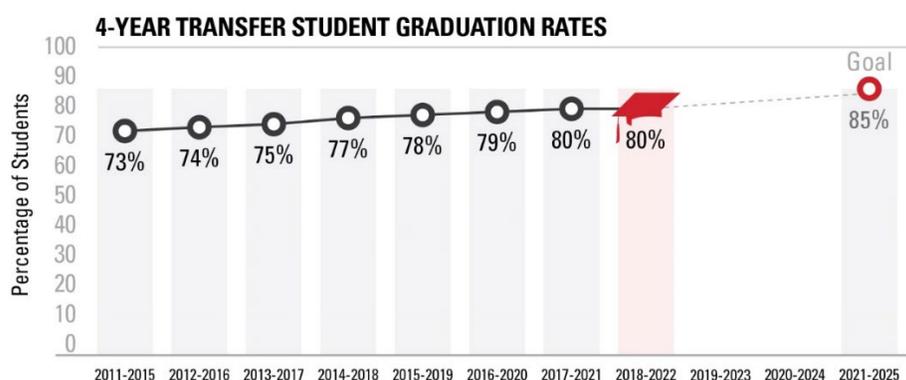


4-Year Graduation Goal for Transfer Students

The 4-year graduation rate for the transfer cohort that began in 2018 and graduated in 2022 or earlier increased slightly to 80 percent. This rate is also the highest ever for the CSU, and puts the university within five percentage points of the 2025 goal of 85 percent.

Cohort	Grad Rate (%)
2009-2013	69.2
2010-2014	72.8
2011-2015	73.0
2012-2016	74.0
2013-2017	75.3
2014-2018	77.1
2015-2019	77.6
2016-2020	78.9
2017-2021	79.6

2018-2022	80.4
2025 Goal	85



Underrepresented Students Equity Gap Goal

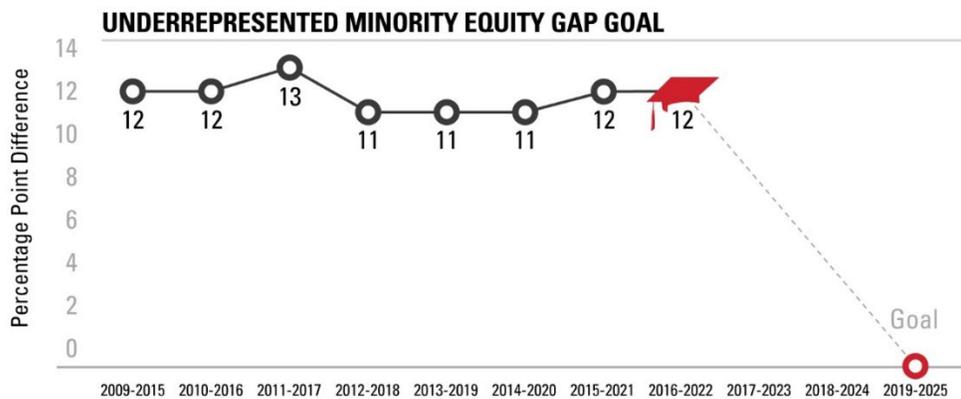
Equity gaps are measured on the 6-year graduation rate for the first-time student cohort. Communities from which students who are historically underrepresented in higher education – those who identify as African American, Native American or Latinx – are included in the student populations measured below.

Cohort	Grad Gap (percentage points)
2009-2015	11.6
2010-2016	12.2
2011-2017	12.5
2012-2018	10.6
2013-2019	11.1
2014-2020	10.5
2015-2021	12.4

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2016-2022	11.9
2025 Goal	0



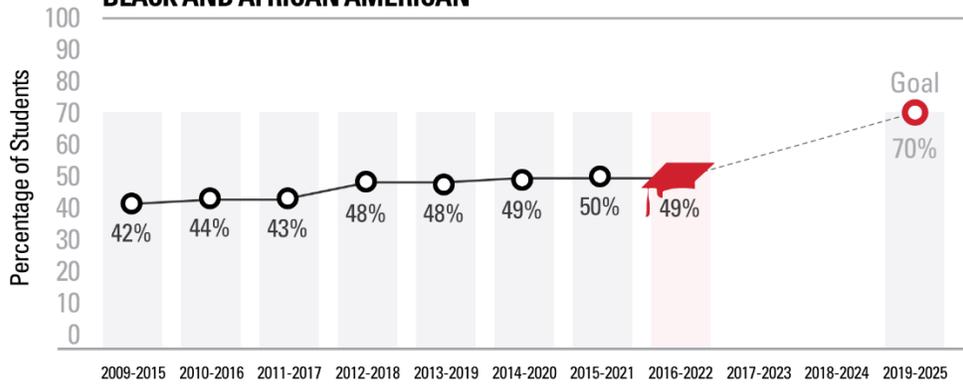
Disaggregated Data by Race and Ethnicity

When the data is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, disparities in graduation rates for students from the CSU’s most marginalized communities is apparent.

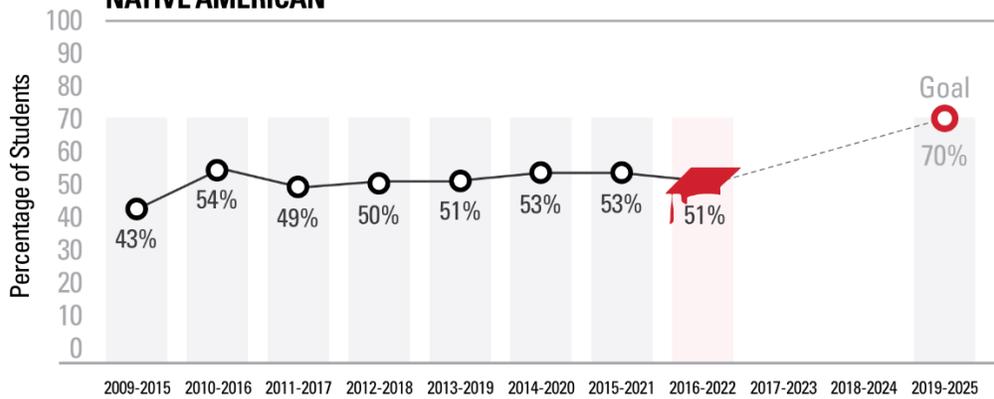
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**6-YEAR FIRST-TIME STUDENT GRADUATION RATES
BLACK AND AFRICAN AMERICAN**



**6-YEAR FIRST-TIME STUDENT GRADUATION RATES
NATIVE AMERICAN**

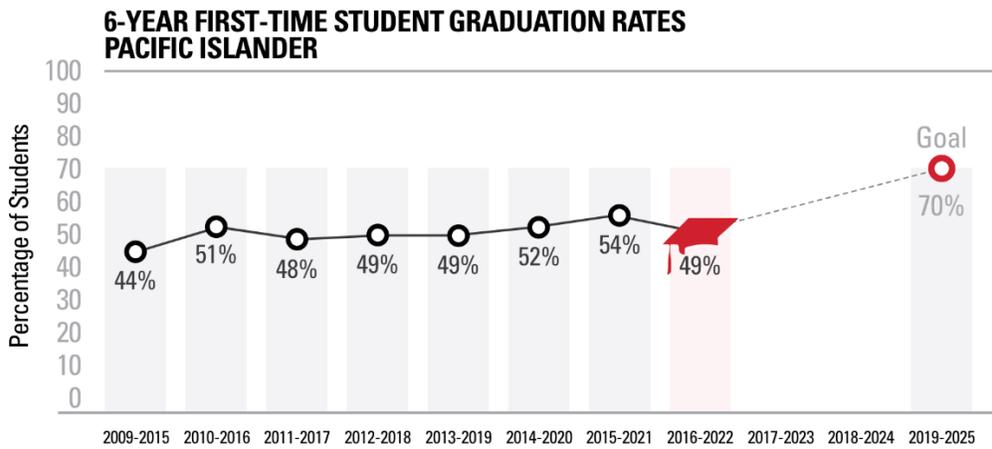
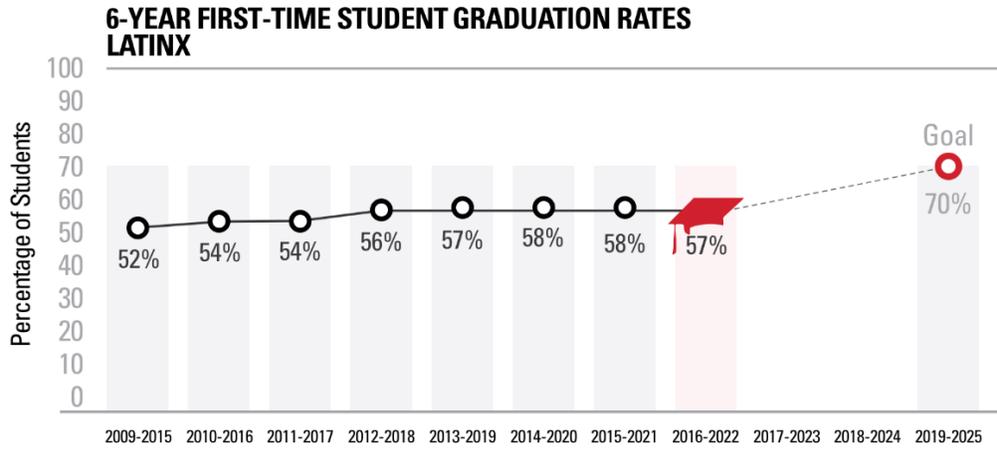


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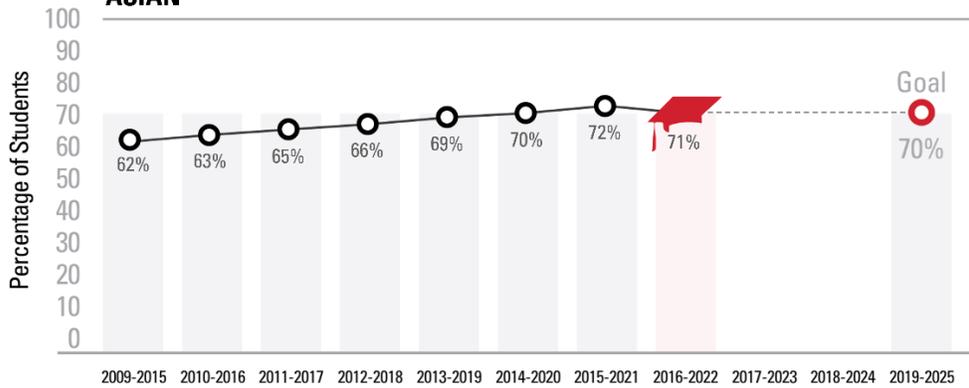
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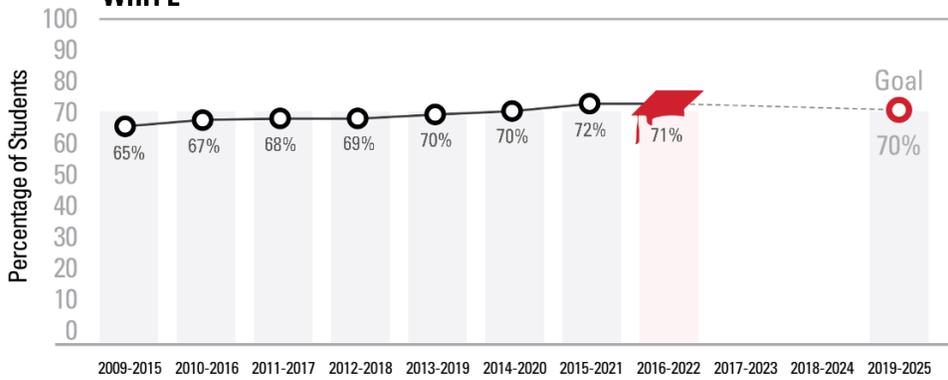
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**6-YEAR FIRST-TIME STUDENT GRADUATION RATES
ASIAN**



**6-YEAR FIRST-TIME STUDENT GRADUATION RATES
WHITE**



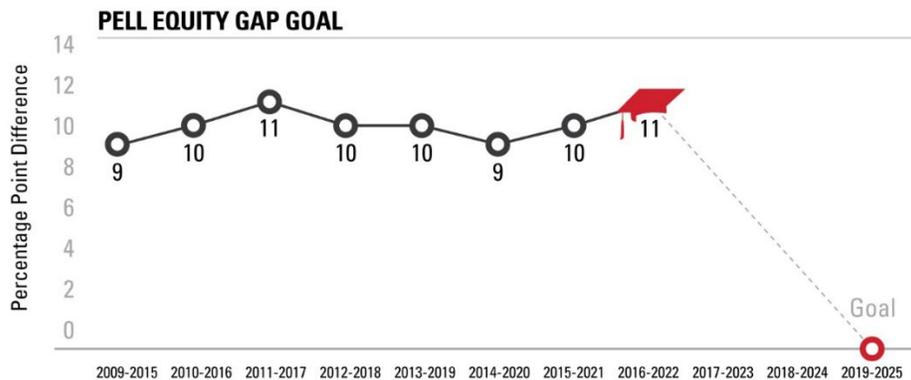
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Pell Equity Gap Goal

The data also indicates that 6-year degree completion outcomes for Pell recipient students trailed those of their peers. The gap for the 2016 cohort that graduated within six years increased to 11 percentage points.

Cohort	Grad Rate (percentage points)
2009-2015	8.8
2010-2016	10.3
2011-2017	11.1
2012-2018	9.8
2013-2019	10.2
2014-2020	9.2
2015-2021	10.2
2016-2022	11.0
2025 Goal	0



2022 Graduation Initiative 2025 Convening

The annual Graduation Initiative 2025 is one of many ways the CSU centers student success among its students, staff, faculty and greater community. On October 28, the CSU community gathered virtually for the seventh annual Convening hosted this year by a CSU student emcee. Three additional CSU students shared their journeys of success, while spotlighting the faculty and staff that supported them through challenges faced. Interim Chancellor Jolene Koester updated attendees on the latest graduation rate and equity gap data, including disaggregated data by race/ethnicity. A closing address was provided by Governor Gavin Newsom, who emphasized the invaluable work of CSU staff, administrators and faculty to support students and the state of California.

To view the Convening at full length or in shorter segments, please visit the Convening website: www.calstate.edu/GradInitiative2025Convening.

Conclusion

Since the launch of the Graduation Initiative 2025 in 2016, the CSU is now on track to produce an additional 200,000 graduates and remains a catalyst for social mobility for California's next generation. Through a heightened focus on eliminating equity gaps systemwide as represented by the university's five equity priorities, the CSU will continue to respond and adapt to the ongoing challenges brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the university will leverage all available data, including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, to better inform local campus interventions and strategies. Collectively, the CSU community is working to ensure that all students are provided the necessary support to complete their academic journey and join the more than four million thriving CSU alumni who are helping to contribute to California's future.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Academic Preparation

Presentation By

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MDRC

Summary

Supporting students' academic preparation is essential to the California State University's (CSU) commitment to supporting equity, access and student success. Too often, quantitative reasoning preparation disparities in PK-12 schools exacerbate equity gaps that follow students to college and influence their academic and career options. The CSU seeks to provide all students greater opportunities to enter and succeed in emerging or growth professions that require higher-level analytic skills and competencies.

Recognizing the pandemic's disproportionately adverse impacts on the state's most underserved students, the CSU is employing an equity lens to re-envision the ways it supports students in their transition from high school to college. Instead of focusing on a change to admission requirements as proposed to the CSU Board of Trustees in January 2020, the CSU is adjusting to the current educational landscape, amplifying existing successful initiatives and exploring multiple new and innovative strategies that prepare students with the critical skills necessary for a full range of academic pursuits and professions.

Background

The CSU has a long history of working with its PK-12 partners to create more equitable access to higher education and support students to degree completion. This includes work to improve new students' academic preparation and readiness in mathematics and English, foundational skills students need to be successful throughout their college experience.

Nearly 30 years ago, CSU, community college and school district faculty and administrators partnered in the development and launch of the Early Assessment Program (EAP), providing indicators of college readiness to students and families midway through high school and creating a new high school English course to better support the transition from high school to college or careers. This partnership and common focus have since been expanded. Through the EAP, Early Start Program (ESP), and other academic preparation efforts, the CSU continues to provide students an opportunity to begin their first term of college better prepared for the academic challenges and rigor they will encounter.

In 2015 the Academic Senate of the CSU (ASCSU) established a Quantitative Reasoning task force to consider current and future expectations and needs of quantitative skills. From that task force's recommendations, the CSU implemented changes to its new student assessment and placement process to consider students' high school courses and grades, while a CSU-specific placement exam was discontinued. The CSU also replaced non-credit remedial courses with supported credit-bearing courses for new students, including during the summer after high school.

Also rooted in the ASCSU task force recommendations, in January 2020, the CSU Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to consider adopting a new first-year admission requirement in 2022 to be effective fall 2027. The resolution called for a progress report to the board that included:

- a third-party independent analysis of the planned implementation and potential impact of the proposed requirement on high school students' application to the CSU;
- progress on doubling the number of STEM qualified teachers annually prepared by the CSU;
- clarity of the charge, role and composition of a steering committee;
- clarity on exemptions for students whose public schools do not provide sufficient courses; and
- the progress on increasing outreach with schools, counselors and families.

Implications of the Pandemic

Since the January 2020 board resolution, the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting social and economic distress and unfinished PK-12 learning have changed the educational landscape for prospective CSU students. Not only has the pandemic disrupted learning, school participation and student and

family engagement, it also had a differential and deleterious impact for many of the most historically underserved student communities. The recent release of 2022 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress data showed that two out of three California students did not meet state math standards and more than half did not meet English standards. Moreover, 84% of Black students and 79% of Latino and low-income students did not meet state math standards. A national assessment showed similar drops in math and reading scores across most of the country.

MDRC Study Findings

Following through on the board’s 2020 resolution, in 2021 the CSU enlisted the nonpartisan research firm MDRC to perform an independent analysis of the planned implementation and potential impact of the proposed quantitative course requirement. The study conducted by MDRC included two types of research. Quantitative analyses were conducted using student- and school-level records collected from the California Department of Education (CDE) and the CSU, and qualitative analyses were conducted using interview data collected from a set of stakeholders across the state. Table 1 maps each research question to the data sources used and analyses conducted to answer that question.

Table 1 Research Questions, Data Sources and Analyses

Research Question	Data Sources	Analyses
1. Potential effect of policy change on access to a CSU	Student-level data from CDE for all 2020 CA high school graduates	Descriptive and correlational
2. Potential influence of policy change on college success at a CSU	Student-level data from CDE, and student-level data from CSU for all CA high school graduates who enrolled at a CSU in fall 2015, 2018, and 2019 ^a	Multivariate regression
3. Potential differential effects of policy change on college access and success	Student-level data from CDE, student-level data from CSU, and school-level Common Core data ^b	Descriptive, correlational, logistic regression, and multivariate regression
4. Stakeholder attitudes about access, success and equity	Interviews with stakeholders conducted from 2020 to 2022	Qualitative analysis
5. District capacity to implement the policy change	Interviews with stakeholders conducted from 2020 to 2022, and	Qualitative analysis, descriptive analysis

	school-level course offering data from 2020	
6. Resources needed to implement the policy change	Interviews with stakeholders conducted from 2020 to 2022	Qualitative analysis

^a Data from the 2018 and 2019 enrollees is used to measure outcomes during the first three semesters of college, and data from 2015 enrollees is used to measure degree attainment at four, five and six years after entering the CSU.

^b Common Core data were used to identify school location (urban, suburban, town or rural).

As shown in the table, the quantitative analyses were conducted using extensive student-level data from the CDE including all available course data from eighth through twelfth grade for all California public high school graduates.¹ The analyses also included course and degree attainment data from the CSU for all CSU enrollees. The complete study findings, including full analyses descriptions, will be made available online at www.calstate.edu/qr.

For the qualitative analysis, over 70 interviews and focus groups were conducted. At the high school level, school district administrators, principals, teachers, school counselors and students were interviewed. On the college level, students, math faculty, math deans and enrollment staff at CSU universities were interviewed. Two CDE staff members whose work is somewhat connected to the proposed policy were also interviewed. The interviewees represented high schools and CSUs from every geographic region of the state; high schools in low-, middle- and high-income districts; districts serving predominantly Black students and predominantly Latinx students; districts serving large immigrant family populations; one district serving a sizable Native American student population; and districts in urban, suburban and rural areas. While the qualitative sample has good coverage of the state’s diversity, it does skew in the direction of high schools identified as more likely to struggle with the policy change, as those schools were purposely oversampled to better learn the barriers they foresaw and identify the resources needed to implement.² See the Supplemental Appendix in the MDRC report for a detailed description of the qualitative analyses.

The following are key findings from the MDRC study:

¹The data from the CDE includes student-level data submitted to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) by Local Education Agencies referred to throughout this report as school districts.

² High schools identified as more likely to struggle with the policy change include schools the CSU identified as needing additional support if the policy change were to go into effect, schools that do not offer any courses that would allow students to meet the additional requirement, high schools that had the worst ratio of senior student enrollment to quantitative reasoning courses offered, and schools with the lowest percentage of high school graduates meeting A-G course requirements.

- Most of the stakeholders interviewed thought that this policy had the potential to improve students' success in college math courses. However, a key concern of the high school and district-level staff members interviewed was around the capacity for schools and districts to provide the additional courses needed to ensure students can, and do, meet the proposed requirement. Interviewees were especially concerned that rural schools and schools in lower-income communities might be more likely to struggle with capacity issues potentially exacerbating existing equity gaps.
- Quantitative data findings and qualitative perceptions were not aligned. However, the interviews were conducted before the analysis of the student records data. While the interviews suggested that the perceived level of effort needed to ensure students meet the proposed additional requirement may be high, the quantitative analysis suggests that almost all students who meet the current A-G course requirements already take, and pass, an additional quantitative reasoning course that would fulfill the proposed requirement.
- Further, while there are disparities in meeting the current A-G course requirements between student groups (including racial groups, groups based on family income level and groups based on school location), the quantitative analysis did not suggest that the additional requirement would substantially enlarge those disparities.
- A considerable number of California high school graduates currently do not meet the A-G course requirements. The additional requirement could put students who do not currently meet A-G requirements due to a missing math or science course further from the proposed requirement. Schools and districts may need to plan how best to mitigate this problem. For instance, due to the hierarchical nature of math and science, the proposed requirement might present an additional obstacle for students who originally planned not to meet A-G criteria and who decide late in high school to change their plans and seek admission to a CSU.
- The quantitative analysis further suggests that taking an additional quantitative reasoning course as proposed is associated with better college outcomes, such as passing first college-level math course and degree attainment. While the proposed change might not have a drastic effect on average across all CSU students because most enrollees already meet the additional requirement, for the small group of students who do not currently meet the requirement, the policy change has the potential to positively affect their college outcomes.

In summary, while the study will be invaluable in shaping and guiding the CSU's work forward in academic preparation, the findings did not present sufficiently conclusive or compelling evidence that the proposed admission requirement would have a significant impact on inequities in student success versus investment in, and expansion of, other existing and potential strategies, including

those listed in the next section.

PK-12 Student Support

To support PK-12 students on their path toward higher education, the CSU provides a number of successful academic preparation programs serving students in seventh grade through their high school years. MDRC data will assist in more intentional and targeted distribution of these programs in the future.

Summer Algebra Institute

For more than 15 years the CSU's Summer Algebra Institute program has provided students entering seventh grade and through high school the opportunity to further develop their mathematic skills and understanding. This summer, the program reached nearly 650 students in 16 locations that included CSU campuses as well as high schools and community and faith-based organizations. Students were assessed at the beginning and end of their program, and most courses resulted in at least a 10-point increase in student test scores.

The majority of students surveyed responded overwhelming that they found their experience valuable. In addition to mathematics courses, students also had the opportunity to participate in cultural and college-focused activities.

Summer Math Academy

As part of community outreach, the CSU also hosts a four-week Summer Math Academy for incoming high school freshmen. With a mantra that states "All students can achieve at high levels," this camp is designed to make math explorative and collaborative and give students a positive experience with the subject matter.

The program features a four-hour day for students to explore math conceptually, including through visual patterns, art and music. Participating teachers are also provided two hours of professional development daily. All curriculum materials are provided including daily lessons, a teacher guidebook and how-to videos for each lesson. In addition to math work, both students and teachers are taught the importance of resilience and how mistakes can lead to greater learning. A pre- and post-assessment showed a 37% growth in students' mathematical skills.

Mathematics Bridge Courses

With support from the California Mathematics Readiness Challenge Initiative (CMRCI) that was part of Senate Bill 828, and the CSU Center for the Advancement of Instruction in Quantitative

Reasoning (CAIQR), the CSU developed six mathematics bridge courses to support the implementation and evaluation of twelfth grade experiences that are designed to prepare pupils for placement into college-level courses in mathematics. The following campuses have developed these bridge courses:

- San Diego State University: Discrete Mathematics Pre-Collegiate (DCPM)
- Sacramento State University: Quantitative Reasoning with Advanced Mathematics Topics (QRAT) and Transition to Quantitative Reasoning (TQR)
- Cal Poly Pomona, CSU Long Beach, CSU San Bernardino, and San Jose State University: Mathematical Reasoning with Connections (MRWC)
- CSU Monterey Bay: Transition to College Level Mathematics (TCLM)
- CSU Northridge: Transition to College Mathematics and Statistics (TCMS)
- CSU Los Angeles: Statistics and Data Science: A Modeling Approach

Note that two courses, CSUN’s Transition to College Mathematics and Statistics (TCMS) and Cal State LA’s Statistics and Data Science: A Modeling Approach, have a data science component. This field continues to grow in popularity among students, teachers and districts, as it is viewed as a practical way for students to gain quantitative literacy skills. CAIQR continues to promote these courses to schools and districts.

Over the past six years, CSU faculty, with support from the CAIQR, have provided professional development to teachers across the state to facilitate the adoption of these bridge courses and are also working on online workshops to ensure a wider reach. These courses have been very popular and serve not only California public schools but also private and out-of-state schools. Table 1 below demonstrates the impact.

Table 1- Professional Development to Promote the Mathematics Bridge Courses

	SDSU	Sacramento State	CSUMB	CalPoly Pomona, CSULB, SJSU, CSUSB	CSUN	CSULA
Districts Served	7	29	7	46	1	4
High Schools Served	22	66	13	95	60	14
Teachers Served	50	232	29	203	121	42
Students	4,500	9,100	1,594	12,090	38,353	1,509

Served						
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Table 1 Note: These numbers are reported by the programs as of summer 2021.

Building Teacher Capacity

In addition to supporting existing PK-12 students, the CSU is a national leader in preparing diverse and highly skilled teachers for California’s PK-12 school system, particularly in the STEM fields. Twenty-two CSU campuses and CalStateTeach, the CSU’s award-winning online teacher preparation program, are preparing PK-12 teachers in innovative ways, working in close partnership with local schools and expanding access to teacher education. The CSU is a leader in advancing diversity in the teacher workforce; more than half of the teachers the CSU prepares each year are candidates of color.

Since 2016, the CSU has prepared 31,500 new teachers, accounting for more teaching candidates than any other institution of higher education in the state. Nearly half – or 47% – of all California teachers who earned their teaching credentials in 2020-21 were made in the CSU. There has been an upward trajectory in the number of CSU-prepared teachers over the past five years. The CSU prepared 7,400 teachers in 2020-21, up from 6,300 teachers in 2019-20, as it continues to address the state’s teacher shortages. See Table 2 below for a five-year trend.

Table 2 – CSU Teaching Credentials Issued

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
California State University-Credentials Issued	5,767	5,946	5,976	6,346	7,487
Total Credentials Issued in CA	11,730	12,171	12,776	14,124	16,005

Source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing, April 2022

Mathematics and Science Teacher Initiative (MSTI)

The CSU has continued supporting the production of PK-12 teachers of mathematics, science, computer science and other STEM fields via its systemwide Mathematics and Science Teacher Initiative (MSTI). Since the initiative began in the CSU in 2005, the Chancellor’s Office has distributed over \$33 million in MSTI funds to campuses to support STEM teachers. This year, an extra goal was added for the campuses to help support the retention of STEM teachers in partner districts. The approaches the campuses used are integrated within MSTI and are inclusive of many

wide-ranging, useful strategies. The MSTI efforts and approaches of the campuses include the following:

- Effective recruitment of diverse new students
- Increasing production through new credential pathways
- Financial support of teacher candidates
- Seamless and effective transfer policies
- Review and preparation assistance for tests
- Early exposure to fieldwork
- Strategies to support schools and districts to retain their teachers
- Sharing best and successful methods with other campuses

CSU campuses continue to increase the production of new secondary STEM teachers, and now also support the retention of these teachers, many of whom are teaching in high-need schools statewide. These graduates attend to school district needs, including those in urban, rural, high-need and low-income districts. CSU campuses are committed to helping eliminate the inequities experienced by PK-12 students in access to highly qualified, well-prepared and diverse STEM teachers.

Mathematics and Science Teachers

The CSU prepared 814 mathematics and science teachers in 2020-21, up from 755 in 2019-20. CSU candidates are skilled in the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. While the number of teachers credentialed in mathematics have remained steady over the past five years, there have been some declines in the number of science teachers prepared in the CSU, attributed to the highly competitive workplace, with competitive salaries for candidates with STEM degrees, and the strain of the pandemic on teachers. Yet enrollments of students in mathematics credential programs have consistently increased over the past five years and enrollments in science programs are on an upward trend. See Table 3 for details.

Table 3 - Mathematics and Science Credentials – Credentials Issued and Students Enrolled

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Credentials Issued/ Students Enrolled					
Mathematics Credentials Issued	408	417	385	373	438
Science Credentials Issued	511	506	472	382	376
Combined Mathematics	919	923	857	755	814

and Science Credentials Issued					
Mathematics Credentials – Students Enrolled	499	474	414	602	700
Science Credentials – Students Enrolled	394	357	310	359	381

Supplementary Authorization in Computer Science (SA in CS)

Another MSTI initiative is the development and/or expansion of CSU campus programs in Supplementary Authorization in Computer Science (SA in CS). With the continued support from MSTI, most CSU campuses have now developed program offerings to both in-service and pre-service teachers to earn their SA in CS. Programs are either online or hybrid, leading either to a certificate or master’s degree. This is another way in which the CSU assists teachers in increasing their pedagogical content knowledge and also help in the retention of STEM teachers. To date, computer science courses may count as the third “d” course or as a “g” course for high school A-G requirements. As such, demand for this program continues to rise.

Early Start Program

In 2010, the CSU Board of Trustees adopted a resolution creating the Early Start Program (ESP). Given the deleterious effects of the pandemic on student learning along with a desire across the CSU’s 23 campuses for more customized programming responsive to existing supportive instructional models in first-year mathematics and English, the time has come to re-envision how to better support the academic success of incoming first-year students.

In partnership with CSU campuses, the Chancellor’s Office is now reframing the ESP beginning in summer 2023 with the goals of establishing intentional pathways and support structures that ensure at least 90% of first-time students successfully complete the General Education A2 and B4 (written communications and mathematics) requirements within their first year, and nurturing a strong sense of belonging among students who participate in these programs. Over the 2022-23 academic year the Chancellor’s Office will partner with university faculty, leaders and stakeholders in a consultative process to develop a new summer transition/bridge program policy. The Chancellor’s Office has also released a CSU-wide request for proposals with funding opportunities to incentivize campus implementations of new or enhanced summer program models to better meet the needs of incoming students.

Recommendations

Going forward, to reinforce the broader definition intended in academic preparation, the description of the CSU's efforts will be reframed as focus on "Quantitative, Scientific and Data Literacy" with corresponding clarification of the range of courses and disciplines encompassed. The CSU will pivot from pursuing a requirement to a strong *recommendation* for all high school students to complete an additional course or elective in quantitative, scientific or data-related skills and competencies most aligned with academic and professional goals. To achieve this new focus, the CSU commits to:

1. Retain existing A-G admission eligibility course requirements and invest in increasing the number of A-G eligible high school graduates, particularly among Black, Latinx, Native American and first-generation student populations. Highly recommend that ALL high school graduates complete an additional college-preparatory course beyond A-G minimums in science, mathematics or analytic/technology-based electives appropriate for their chosen academic discipline or profession of interest.
2. Provide additional support to incoming first-year students through enhanced summer transition programs and provide wrap-around academic support throughout the first year of college allowing students to successfully complete college-level coursework.
3. Invest in and strategically partner with PK-12 districts to expand access to college-preparatory courses beyond A-G minimums in science, mathematics or analytic/technology-based electives. Collaboration will include curricular innovation and expansion, dual enrollment opportunities and instructional professional development.
4. Increase the number of qualified teacher candidates. As the largest producer of teachers in California, the CSU system remains focused on preparing greater numbers of STEM teachers and ensuring that their training and continued professional development includes instructional resources and training programs that incorporate proven, research-based strategies to meet the needs of all students.
5. Target partnerships with PK-12 districts to identify resources and opportunities to address the disparities in CSU-eligible students and completion of college-preparatory courses in science, mathematics or analytic/technology-based electives.
6. Augment CSU communication and outreach activities in PK-12 to emphasize appropriate quantitative/analytic pathways for in-demand academic fields of study and professions.

Conclusion

Recognizing the pandemic's disproportionately adverse impacts on California's most underserved students and the CSU's demonstrated progress in addressing academic preparation in new first-year students, the CSU will not pursue a Title 5 change to admission requirements and will instead invest in exploring multiple strategies that prepare students with the critical skills necessary for a full range of academic pursuits and professions. The results of this work will communicate high expectations for all students while ensuring that students and teachers have the support and resources needed to meet those expectations. The CSU has begun and will continue to engage faculty, students, campus leaders, PK-12 partners and other stakeholders in this process. Additional updates on these discussions will be presented to the board in the future.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Veterans Affairs Update

Presentation By

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Director, Veterans Affairs
Academic and Student Affairs

Jersson Nieto
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California State University, Fullerton

Background

Nearly 18,000 military-affiliated students attend the California State University (CSU). These students bring a diversity of life experience to their campuses, enriching the entire CSU community.

All 23 campuses have Veterans Resource Centers (VRCs) to serve military-affiliated students. These dedicated spaces allow student-veterans, servicemembers and dependents better access to a wide range of services provided to support their academic pursuits and other needs.

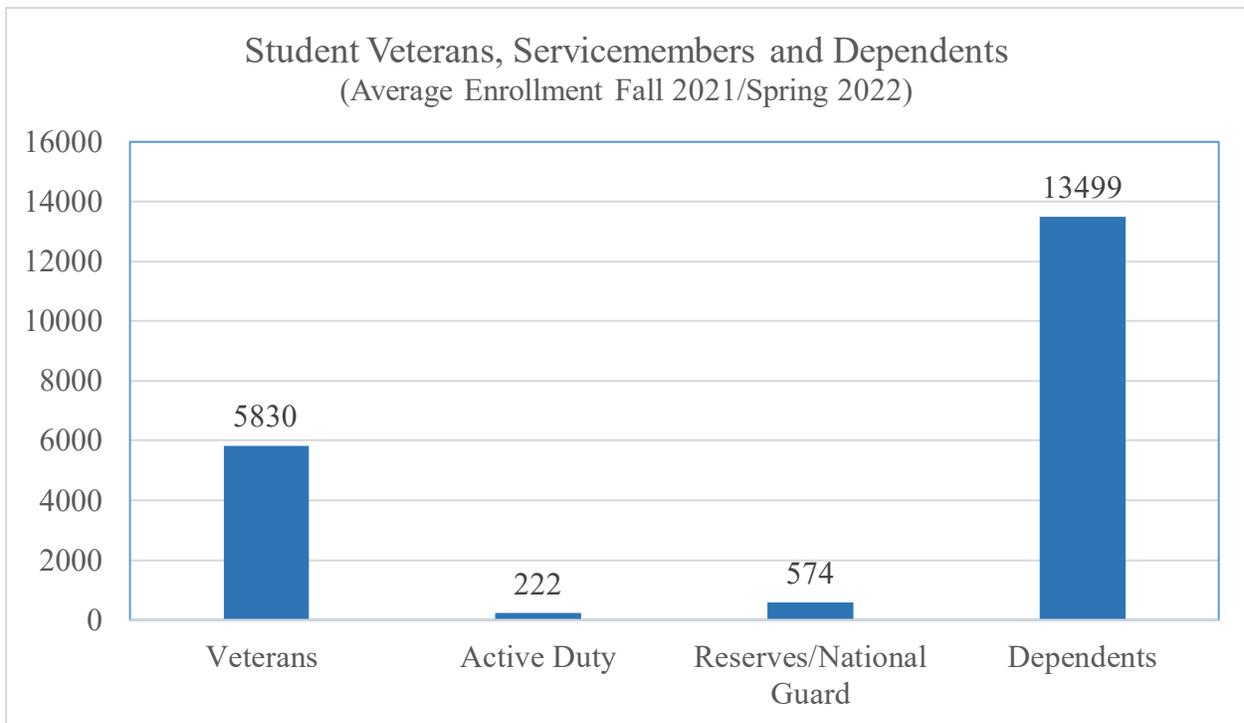
The last presentation to the CSU Board of Trustees on military-affiliated students was in November 2020. The purpose of this information item is to provide an overview and update of veterans' programming in the CSU.

Military-Affiliated Student Population

The CSU serves three student populations that together comprise the university’s military-affiliated population:

- **Veterans** – Students who have served in the U.S. armed forces and have been discharged from the service;
- **Servicemembers** – Students who continue to serve on active duty, in the reserves or in the National Guard (NG); and
- **Dependents** – Students who are dependents of a servicemember or veteran. Only those dependents eligible for state and/or federal veterans’ education benefits are included in this report.

Data from campus VRCs provides an average number of enrollments of military-affiliated students in the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters, as shown in the figure below. Echoing national trends through the pandemic, average enrollment of military affiliated students decreased by approximately 6% from the 2020-21 academic year.



With more than 83,000 GI Bill eligible military-affiliated students enrolled, California serves the largest population of military-affiliated students attending college using G.I. Bill benefits. Of these students, more than 39,000 enroll at a public college or university.

Campus-by-Campus Enrollment

Enrollment of military-affiliated students varies from campus to campus. The table below lists the number of military-affiliated students at each campus (organized from largest to smallest total number). These data were provided by the VRCs at each campus based on the average fall 2019 and spring 2020 enrollment.

Campus	Veterans and Servicemembers	Dependents	Total
San Diego State University	1014	1778	2792
California State University San Marcos	333	1179	1512
California State University, Sacramento	474	932	1406
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona	622	696	1318
San Francisco State University	511	806	1317
California State University, Fullerton	488	828	1316
California State University, Long Beach	504	641	1145
California State University, Northridge	542	535	1077
San José State University	397	426	823
California State University, Fresno	233	529	762
California State University, San Bernardino	298	425	723
California State University, Chico	154	536	690
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	75	491	566
California State University, Los Angeles	287	240	527
California State University, East Bay	271	202	473
California State University, Dominguez Hills	153	138	291
Sonoma State University	50	228	278
California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt	72	198	270
California State University, Bakersfield	106	163	269
California State University, Stanislaus	124	136	260
California State University, Monterey Bay	59	201	260
California State University, Channel Islands	76	174	250
California State University Maritime Academy	16	60	76

Veterans Education Benefits

There are eight federal veteran education benefits and one California state benefit for which CSU military-affiliated students may be eligible. These benefits are in addition to state and federal financial aid that is available to most CSU students.

Eligibility for veteran education benefits is determined by the managing federal or state agency. The chart below lists nine benefits and the number of students within each category of military-affiliated students taking advantage of them to pursue their educational goals at a CSU campus.

Notably, 82% of student-veterans and servicemembers are pursuing their education using a federal veteran education program.

Students Using State and Federal Veterans Education Benefits					
Benefit	Veterans	Servicemembers		Dependents	
		Active Duty	Reserve/NG		
Montgomery G.I. Bill (MGIB)	40	2	1		
Vocational Rehabilitation	1390				
Post 9/11 G.I. Bill	3105	86	149	1294	CalVet Fee Waiver recipients also using GI Bill benefits
Fry Scholarship				28	
Dependents' Educational Assist				3050	
MGIB Selected Reserves	75	1	246		
Reserve Education Assist Program	1		0		
DoD Tuition Assistance (MilTA)		67	93		
CalVet Fee Waiver				9127	
Veterans and Servicemembers using NO benefits	1220	66	86		

A significant number of military-affiliated students are not eligible for any veterans' education benefits. There are several reasons that this is the case. For example, some veterans are ineligible because they were discharged from the military with a rating other than "Honorable." Others have exceeded the time allotted after being discharged from the service for the use of benefits.

One of the most common reasons for military-affiliated students not using benefits at the CSU is that many students have exhausted all their benefits before achieving their educational goal. Given 94% of student-veterans in the CSU are transfer students, it is possible for these students to have exhausted their benefits at a prior institution.

To be eligible for education benefits, a dependent's servicemember parent or spouse must have transferred his/her own benefits to the dependent, the servicemember must have a service-connected disability or the servicemember must have died while in the service.

The CalVet Tuition Fee Waiver is the primary education benefit provided to dependents of veterans. This state program waives statewide mandatory fees for California resident students who are dependents of veterans with a service-connected disability. Some students who use the CalVet Fee Waiver may concurrently use federal education benefits. Only dependents who are using state or federal benefits are included in military-affiliated student statistics.

Data Collection

An important goal of the CSU has been to improve data collection related to military-affiliated students. With the addition of the Veterans Module to the systemwide data management system (PeopleSoft), the CSU is better able to track the academic success of military-affiliated students. As it gathers more data over the next few years, the CSU can continue to refine services targeted at military-affiliated students to ensure they are successful in their educational pursuits.

Cultural Awareness and Events

CSU campuses regularly provide education to faculty and staff about military and veteran culture. A number of campuses offer programs that cover the challenges of transition back to civilian life and highlight the contributions student-veterans make to campuses and communities.

The first veteran awareness program in the CSU, VET NET Ally, was developed in 2010 as a student-veteran's doctoral dissertation project at Cal State Long Beach. Attendees participate in a seminar that includes modules on military culture, mental health, benefits and a panel of student-veterans. After completing the seminar, participants are presented with decals to display in their workspace to let military-affiliated students know that they have taken the time to learn about how best to support this student population. Since 2010, several other CSU, University of California and California Community Colleges campuses have adopted or adapted the program.

Additionally, all CSU campuses formally recognize significant historical events, such as 9/11, and holidays associated with military service, such as Memorial Day. Campuses celebrate Veterans Day with events open to the campus and community. Examples of events include flag raisings, cultural events, cake-cutting ceremonies, film screenings and panels of veterans from different military conflicts. In some instances, campuses have arranged fly-bys of military aircraft.

Campus Veterans Resource Centers (VRC)

All 23 CSU campuses having a dedicated space for military-affiliated students. Nearly all campuses fund VRC operations through the campus general fund.

VRC staff members provide a wide range of services to military-affiliated students including outreach, advising, benefits certification and advocacy. They also bear the primary responsibility for complying with both state and federal regulations related to the provision of veterans' education benefits.

Outreach

VRC staff engage in regular outreach to military-affiliated students. Campuses in close proximity to military bases have developed relationships with base education offices to provide information to servicemembers and dependents. Additionally, since more than 90% of student-veterans enter the CSU as transfer students, each campus has developed relationships with VRCs at their local California Community Colleges. Through these relationships, campuses provide military-affiliated students wishing to transfer to a CSU campus with up-to-date information about admission requirements.

Advising

School Certifying Officials (SCO) provide essential advising services to students who receive G.I. Bill benefits. The VA only pays for coursework that counts directly toward a student's degree plan. As such, SCOs act in an advising capacity, assisting student-veterans with understanding the intersection of their G.I. benefits and the campus' academic requirements.

Certification of U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits

All campuses have at least one SCO who reviews students' course enrollments, verifies alignment with their established education plans, submits certification of enrollment and bills the VA for tuition and fees for each eligible student every semester. These functions are subject to regular audits by both the VA and California State Approving Authority for Veterans Education (CSAAVE). The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs recommends a ratio of one SCO to 200 military-affiliated students using G.I. Bill benefits.

Advocacy

VRC staff engage in a number of forms of advocacy. Staff work with individual students to resolve campus concerns. They act as advocates for students with VA service providers. On a larger scale, VRC staff advocate for policy changes at the campus level on behalf of student-veterans, as

needed. In addition, VRC staff participate and often provide leadership in regional and national organizations such as the National Association of Veterans Program Administrators and the Western Association of Veterans Education Specialists.

State and Federal Compliance

VRC staff members are responsible for ensuring compliance with all state and federal regulations related to the U.S. veterans' education financial aid programs. This process begins with annual catalog approval. When a new catalog is issued by the campus, VRC staff must complete and submit an application to the California State Approving Authority for Veterans Education (CSAAVE) to request approval of the new catalog. The purpose of the application is to certify that the campus meets all state and federal requirements to maintain the campus' ability to participate in G.I. Bill programs.

Partnerships with Veterans Service Providers

CSU campuses have established strong working relationships with national, regional and local agencies and organizations. One such partnership is with the VA's VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program. Participating campuses host a VA counselor in the VRC who assists veterans with VA services ranging from vocational rehabilitation counseling to employment workshops to assistance applying for a VA home loan. This partnership has proven effective at connecting students with VA services. While there are currently only 94 campuses nationwide that participate in VSOC, four are CSU campuses.

Mental Health Services

While the majority of CSU student-veterans have adjusted well to civilian life and life as a student, some students experience mental health concerns. For student-veterans in need, the first avenue for VRC staff is to connect them with campus-based Counseling and Psychological Services and Disabled Student Services offices. VRCs do not compile data on student-veteran usage of mental health services.

Students in need of more comprehensive care are connected with local Vet Centers, which are funded by Veterans Affairs (VA), but operate independently of the VA hospital system. Services at Vet Centers are often provided by other veterans and are easily accessible in a timely (sometimes immediate) manner, while VA hospital services can take longer to access. In the event that an eligible veteran needs longer-term or specialized care, VRC staff encourage the use of traditional VA Health Care services.

VRCs During the COVID Era

VRCs provide military-affiliated students with a place to engage socially with others who have similar life experiences. These opportunities to connect with other student-veterans are instrumental in providing a sense of camaraderie and belonging that veterans often find missing in their lives after leaving the service. While simply providing a social space for those interactions is considered a baseline service at colleges and universities across the country, many CSU campuses take additional steps to build a sense of community. Unfortunately, during the COVID crisis, student-veterans were unable to visit VRCs to make or maintain these important veteran-community relationships. Our campuses have risen to the challenge of keeping veterans connected in several ways.

Virtual Veterans Lounges

As some students were not able to visit their VRCs during the pandemic, several campuses created virtual lounges. Using Zoom and similar platforms, VRC staff opened a virtual room for several hours each day. Students logged in to visit the room to interact with other student-veterans, or to connect with VRC staff members. Whether to get a quick answer to a pressing question, or just to say “hello,” these online interactions helped keep our military-affiliated students engaged with the campus community and moving towards their degree goals. Some VRCs continue to offer online services on a limited basis.

Virtual Advising and Orientation

Meeting both campus academic and GI Bill requirements can be challenging for military affiliated students. VRC staff provide important advising about how academic and VA policies interact with one another. Students can meet with VRC staff via Zoom or through telephone calls to ensure they are following the appropriate guidelines to remain eligible for their GI Bill benefits.

One of the earliest instances of VRC advising occurs during new student orientation. In tandem with the campus orientation, VRC staff hold small group orientation programs to educate incoming students about the role of the VRC, the process to access their benefits, and student responsibilities. While most students and staff look forward to a time when these events will once again be in-person, the shift to online orientations has proven to be an effective, if temporary substitute.

Veteran Graduation Ceremonies

After two years of holding online ceremonies, many campuses were excited to host in-person events to honor graduating veterans again in 2022. Many of these ceremonies included presenting honor cords or graduation stoles to graduating veterans in recognition of their service to the country and their academic achievement.

VRCs in a Post-COVID 19 Era

As campuses spring back to life, so too do VRCs. As cultural resource centers, VRCs provide opportunities for social connection and comradery to develop within the student-veteran community. VRC staff are actively engaging with student-veteran populations to encourage them to return to the VRCs. Student Veterans Organizations, many of which are affiliated with the Student Veterans of America national organization, are renewing their commitment to student-centered activities. It's an exciting time to be on campus interacting with veterans as they return to in-person instruction and campus life.

Conclusion

Whether online or in person, CSU Veterans Resource Centers are committed to serving student-veterans, servicemembers and dependents. Through VRCs, staff provide a spectrum of services designed to support these students, including advising, advocacy and benefits assistance. Additionally, staff in these centers connect military-affiliated students with resources – both campus-based and external – that will best meet their needs. As a reflection of these efforts, U.S. News & World Report listed five CSU campuses among its top 15 Best Colleges for Veterans for 2022-23.