



CSUSB Graduation Rate Initiative 2015

Summary Report

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I. Executive Summary

The purpose of this report was to evaluate CSUSB's Graduation Initiative goals from 2009 and examine whether they were achieved or not.

The Graduation Initiative 2015 was a collective commitment of the 23 CSU campuses to address barriers to timely graduation and student success. Additionally, the initiative was focused on eliminating gaps in retention and graduation between underrepresented minority (URM) and non-URM students. Starting with the Fall 2009 cohort, each campus generated specific goals and action plans. In 2009, CSUSB outlined five specific goals and three broad action plans.

The five specific goals included:

- (1) Raise the overall six-year graduation rate by six percentage points (from 43.7% in the 2002 cohort to 49.7% for the 2009 cohort) by 2015;
- (2) Eliminate the achievement gap in six-year graduation rates between students who are URM and other students by 2015;
- (3) Improve the four-year graduation rate of CSUSB by two-and-a-half percentage points (from 13.1% to 15.6%) between 2009 and 2015;
- (4) Improve the three-year transfer student graduation rate for students who are URM by 4.5% between 2009 and 2015;
- (5) Improve the six-year transfer student graduation rates by two percentage points by 2015 (from 77.2% to 79.2%)

As of 2014-15 academic year, CSUSB achieved two of the goals: the campus met the benchmarks for the six-year first-time freshman (FTF) graduation rate and for the three-year URM transfer student graduation rate. While the achievement gap in six-year graduation rates between URM and non-URM FTF was not eliminated, the gap was reduced substantially from 5.0% to 1.6%. The campus did not meet the goals for the four-year FTF graduation rate and six-year transfer graduation rate.

The institution collaboratively designed aggressive strategies to accomplish the goals through the implementation of additional supports, programs, and services, as well as the development and enforcement of critical academic policies. An analysis of CSUSB's implementation of the action plan shows that the campus made significant progress in the area of developing institutional supports for student achievement. While policy enforcement did improve, there remains additional opportunities to develop and enforce additional key policies that could potentially impact student success.

II. Overview of the Graduation Initiative 2015

The Graduation Initiative 2015 was a collective commitment of the 23 CSU campuses to remove roadblocks to graduation and improve student success. Starting with the Fall 2009 cohort, each campus generated specific goals and action plans. The original proposal, goals, and action plans submitted by CSUSB to the CSU Chancellor's Office can be found at <http://graduate.csuprojects.org/>.

CSUSB outlined the following five specific goals: (1) To raise the overall six-year graduation rate by six percentage points (from 43.7% in the 2002 cohort to 49.7% for the 2009 cohort) by 2015; (2) To eliminate the achievement gap in six-year graduation rates between under-represented minorities and other students by 2015; (3) To improve the four-year graduation rate of CSUSB by two-and-a-half percentage points (from 13.1% to 15.6%) between 2009 and 2015; (4) To improve the three-year transfer student graduation rate for under-represented minority students by 4.5% between 2009 and 2015; (5) To improve the six-year transfer student graduation rates by two percentage points by 2015 (from 77.2% to 79.2%). CSUSB proposed a delivery plan to meet these goals, centering on three broad areas.

First, CSUSB proposed to develop supports, tools, and systems to improve student retention. Specific tasks for this action included: (a) Develop and increase capacity of advising and support services on campus; (b) Improve roadmaps for majors; (c) Develop and implement programs to improve retention of male students; (d) Develop and implement programs to improve retention and graduation of groups with achievement gaps; (e) Improve support for students enrolled in high-risk courses; (f) Implement block scheduling for first quarter courses; (g) Improve the articulation and advising of community college transfer students.

Second, CSUSB would communicate and enforce existing policies which impact student retention. Specific tasks for this action included: (a) Strict adherence to existing academic dismissal for low scholarship; (b) Strict adherence to existing academic dismissal for failure to complete remediation; (c) Enforce graduation of super seniors; (d) Earlier action on remediation

Third, CSUSB would enact and revise policies to improve student retention. Specific tasks for this action included: (a) Change the rules governing the timing of major declaration; (b) Revision of policy on repeating courses; (c) Revision of policies on remedial course work; (d) Revision of general education requirements; (e) Declaration of institutional impaction.

III. Results of the Graduation Initiative 2015 for CSUSB

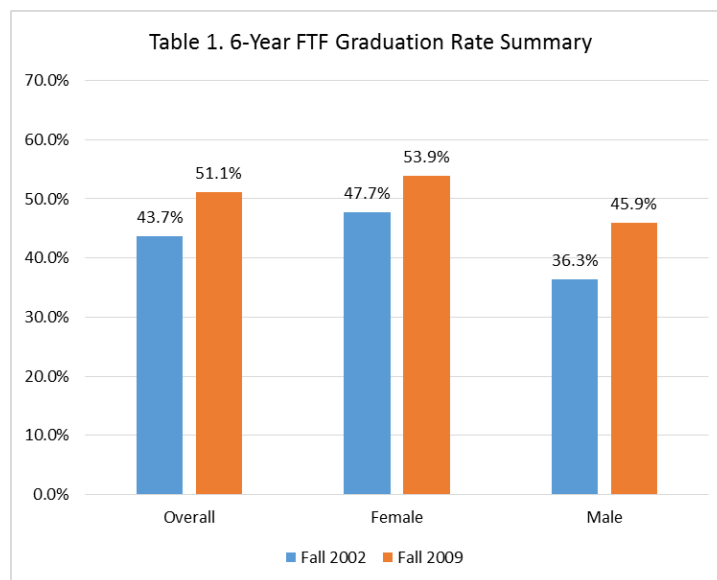
In the following analyses, freshmen cohorts comprised of students who matriculated as first-time, full-time freshmen (FTF) during a fall quarter. Transfer cohorts consisted of all students who matriculated as transfer students during a fall quarter with sophomore standing or higher from a California Community College.

In this report, under-represented minority students (URM) were defined as African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American students and non-URM was defined as all other students. Ethnicity/racial categories were reported as they were during the time of data collection. In 2010, U.S. Census and U.S. Department of Education IPEDS instituted the 'Hispanic trumping rule', and students who identified as Hispanic/Latino were reported as such independent of any other race self-identification. Therefore, those who identified themselves as Hispanic and another ethnicity/race were always counted as Hispanic.

Goal 1. *To raise the overall six-year graduation rate by six percentage points (from 43.7% in the 2002 cohort to 49.7% for the 2009 cohort) by 2015.*

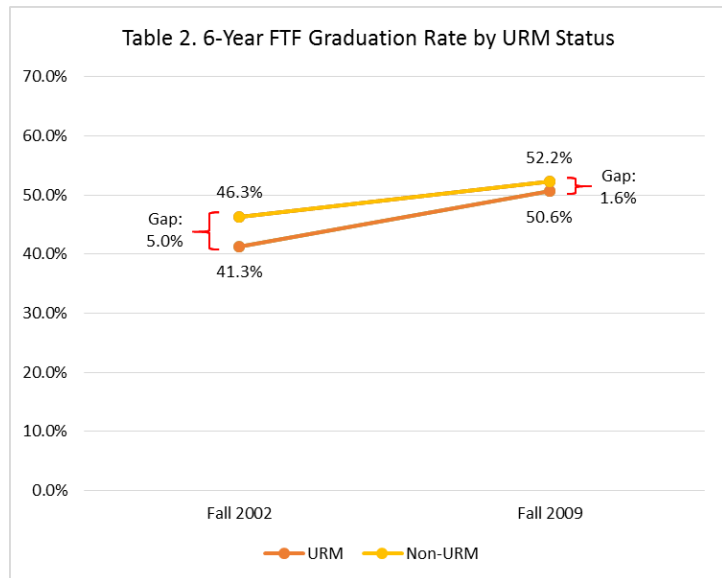
CSUSB's FTF six-year graduation rate for the Fall 2009 cohort was 51.1%, exceeding the established goal of 49.7%. This increase was 7.4 percentage points higher than the graduation rate for the Fall 2002 baseline cohort of 43.7%.

In addition, the graduation rate increased for female and male students, from 47.7% to 53.9% and from 36.3% to 45.9%, respectively. The 2009 grad rate was similar for both Pell (50.8%) and non-Pell recipients (51.4%). Table 1 displays a summary of the graduation rate change for the overall cohort and also split by gender.

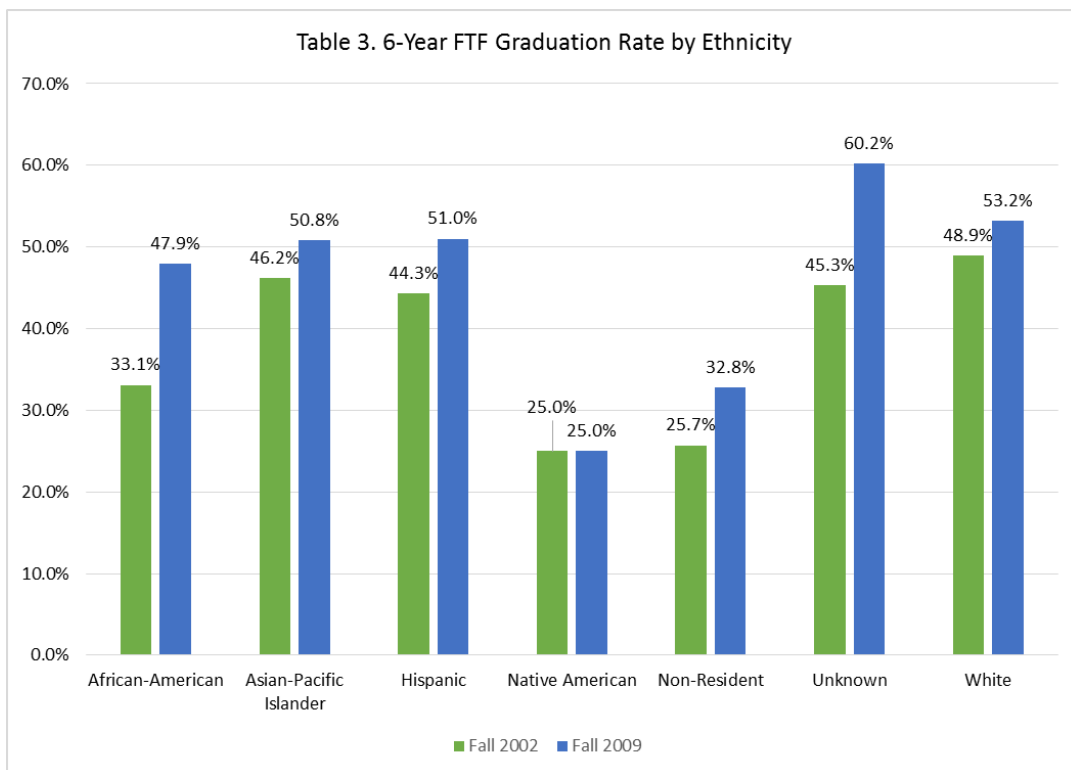


Goal 2. To eliminate the achievement gap in six-year graduation rates between under-represented minorities and other students by 2015.

While the achievement gap was not eliminated, the achievement gap for FTF has narrowed significantly at CSUSB. Between the Fall 2002 and Fall 2009 cohorts, nearly a three-fold decrease was observed in the achievement gap between URM and non-URM students, decreasing from 5.0% to 1.6%. The six-year FTF graduation rate for URM students increased from 41.3% to 50.6% – an increase of 9.3 percentage points. The corresponding rate for non-URM students increased 5.9 percentage points from 46.3% to 52.2%. Table 2 displays the change in the achievement gap.



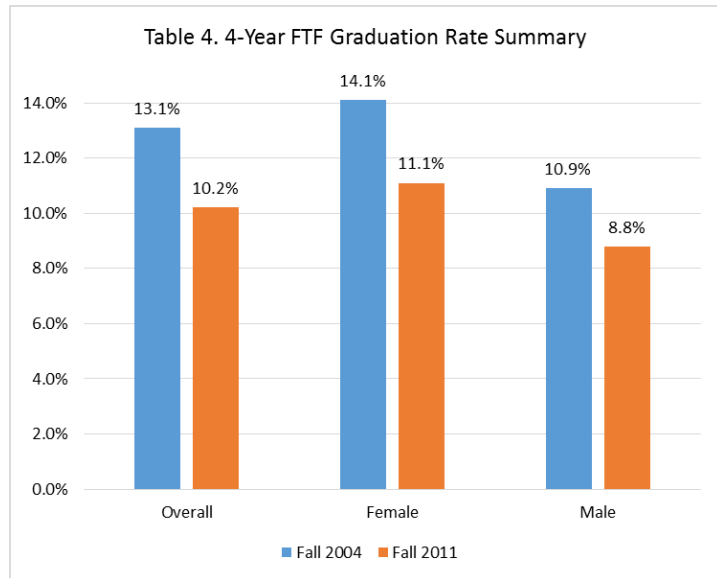
Split by ethnicity, the graduation rate increased for nearly all ethnic/racial groups, with the exception of Native Americans where the graduation rate remained the same. Specifically for URM groups, the graduation rate for African-Americans increased from 33.1% to 47.9% (an increase 14.8 percentage points and the largest gain), from 44.3% to 51.0% for Hispanics/Latinos (an increase of 6.7 percentage points), and remained equal for Native Americans at 25.0%. Table 3 provides the graduation rate change by ethnicity.



Goal 3. To improve the four-year graduation rate of CSUSB by two and a half percentage points (from 13.1% to 15.6%) between 2009 and 2015.

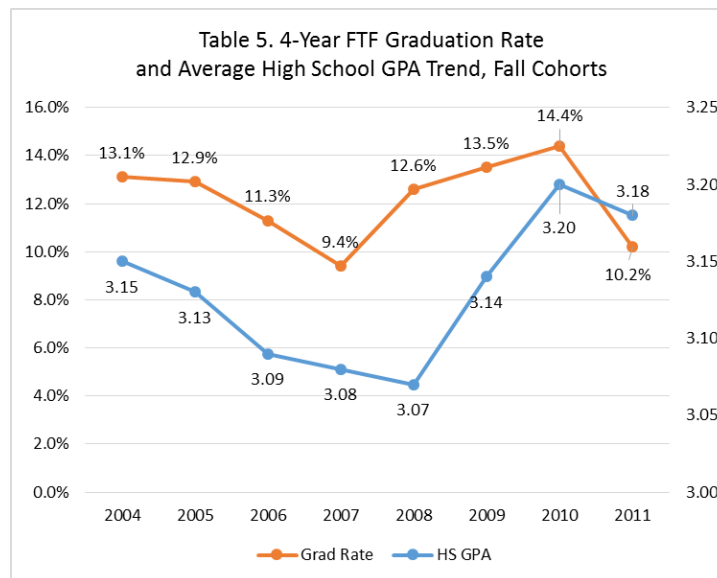
CSUSB’s FTF four-year graduation rate for the Fall 2011 cohort was 10.2%, which did not meet the established goal of 15.6%. This current rate is 2.9 percentage points lower than the four-year grad rate in the Fall 2004 cohort of 13.1%. If we included the projected Summer 2015 graduates, we expect the official four-year graduation rate to be approximately 12.0%, which would still be lower than the established goal of 15.6%.

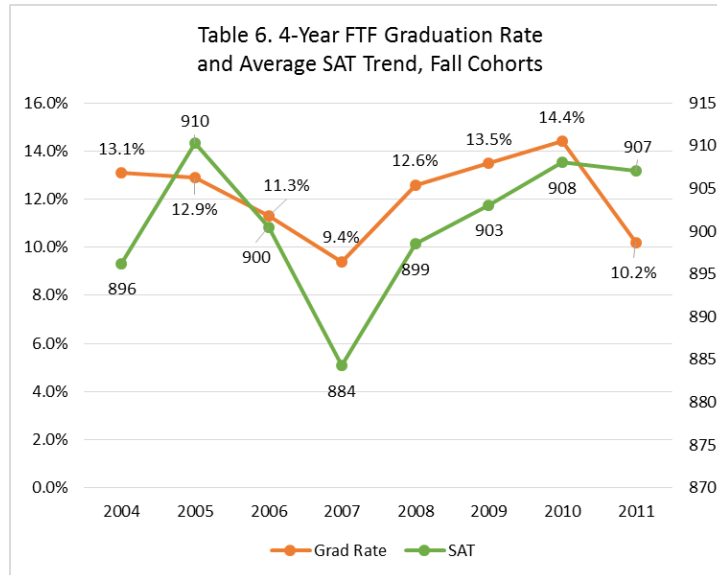
The four-year graduation rate decreased for female students, from 14.1% to 11.1%, and also decreased for male students, from 10.9% to 8.8%. A large difference was observed in



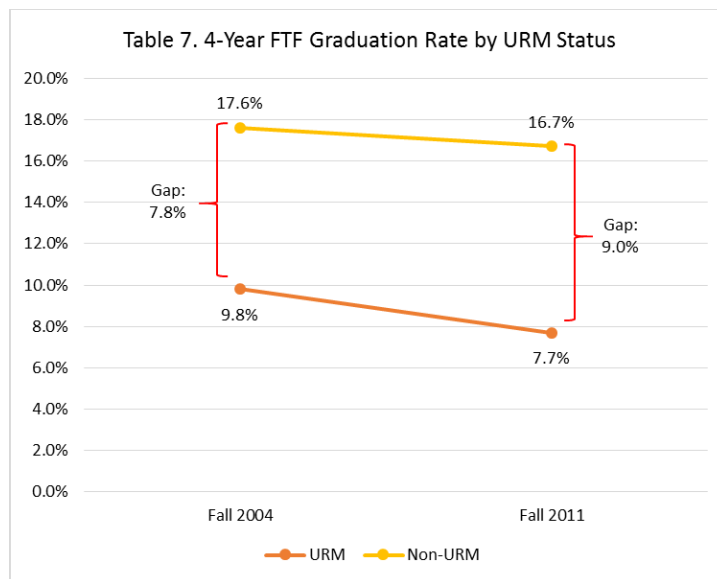
graduation rates between Pell and non-Pell recipient students; non-Pell students graduated at a rate two times higher than their Pell counterparts, 16.7% to 7.7%, respectively. Table 4 displays a summary of the four-year graduation rate change for the overall cohort and split by gender.

While the four-year graduation rate for the Fall 2011 cohort was less than the Fall 2004 cohort, the rates for other recent cohorts have been higher than the 2004 benchmark, as high as 14.4%. Table 5 displays the four-year graduation rates for the eight most recent fall cohorts of FTF against their mean high school grade point average; Table 6 plots these graduation rates against the mean SAT score.

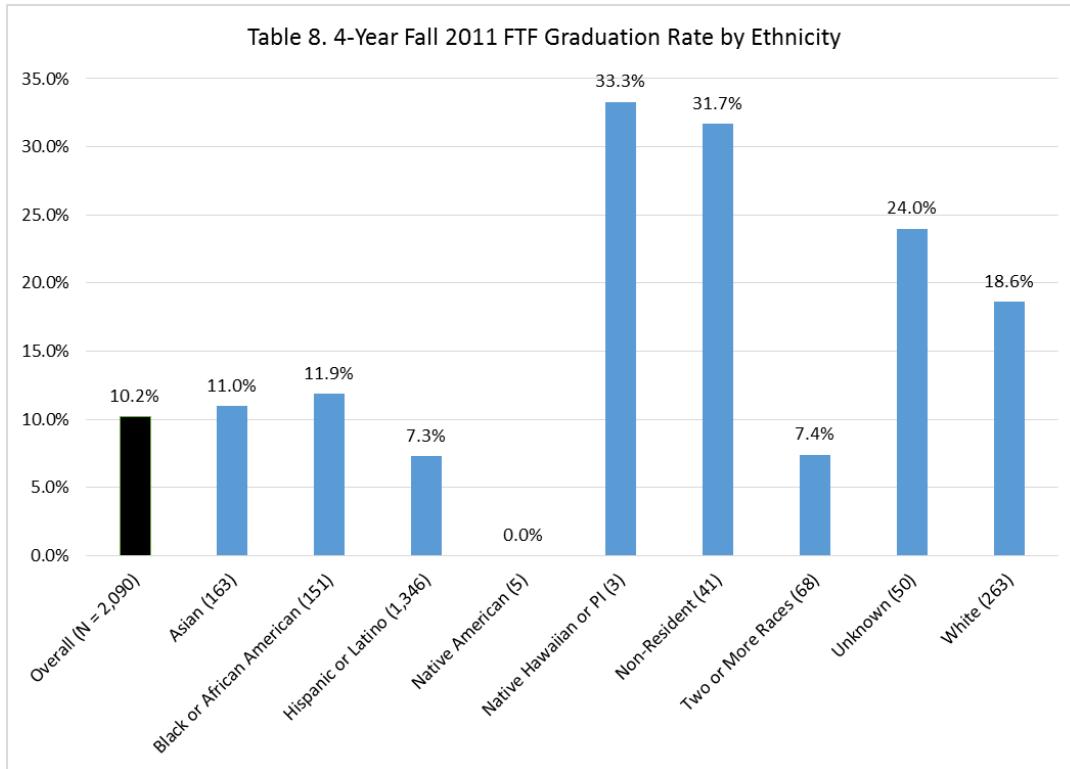




The four-year graduation rate decreased for both URM and non-URM students. Between the Fall 2004 and Fall 2011 cohorts, the four-year rate for URM students decreased from 9.8% to 7.7%, while the decrease for non-URM students was from 17.6% to 16.7%. The four-year achievement gap increased from 2004 to 2011 between URM and non-URM students. The achievement gap in four-year graduation rates for the Fall 2004 cohort was 7.8 percentage points and changed to a 9.0 percentage point gap for the Fall 2011 cohort. Table 7 displays the change in four-year achievement gaps.

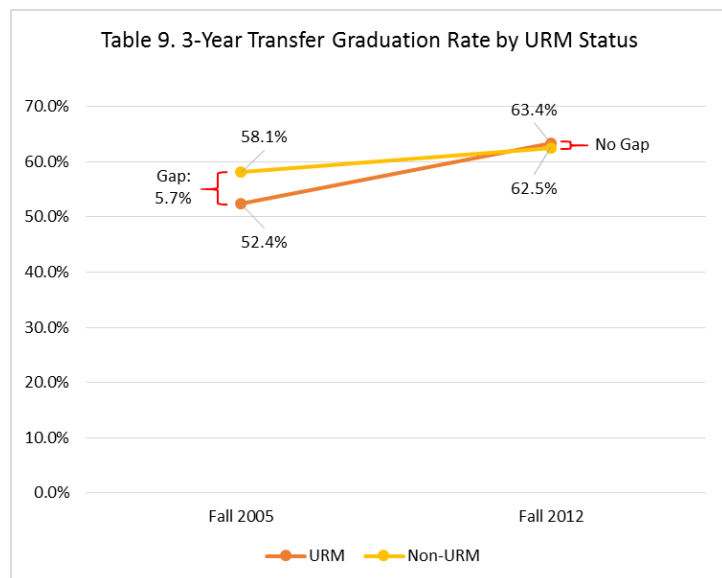


Split by ethnicity, the four-year graduation rate for the most recent cohort of African-Americans is 11.9%, which is higher than the overall campus average. The grad rate for Hispanics/Latinos is 7.3%, while the grad rate for Native Americans was 0% (the cohort consisted of 5 students). Table 8 provides the Fall 2011 cohort graduation rates split by ethnicity.

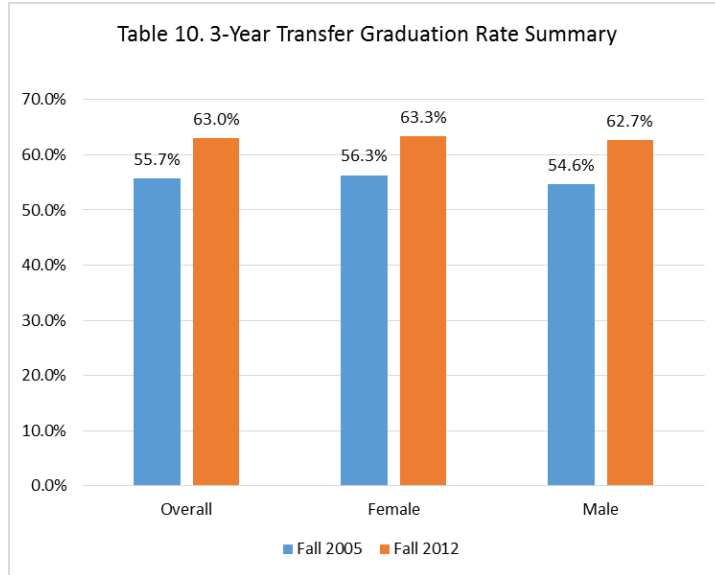


Goal 4. To improve the three-year transfer student graduation rate for under-represented minority students by 4.5% between 2009 and 2015.

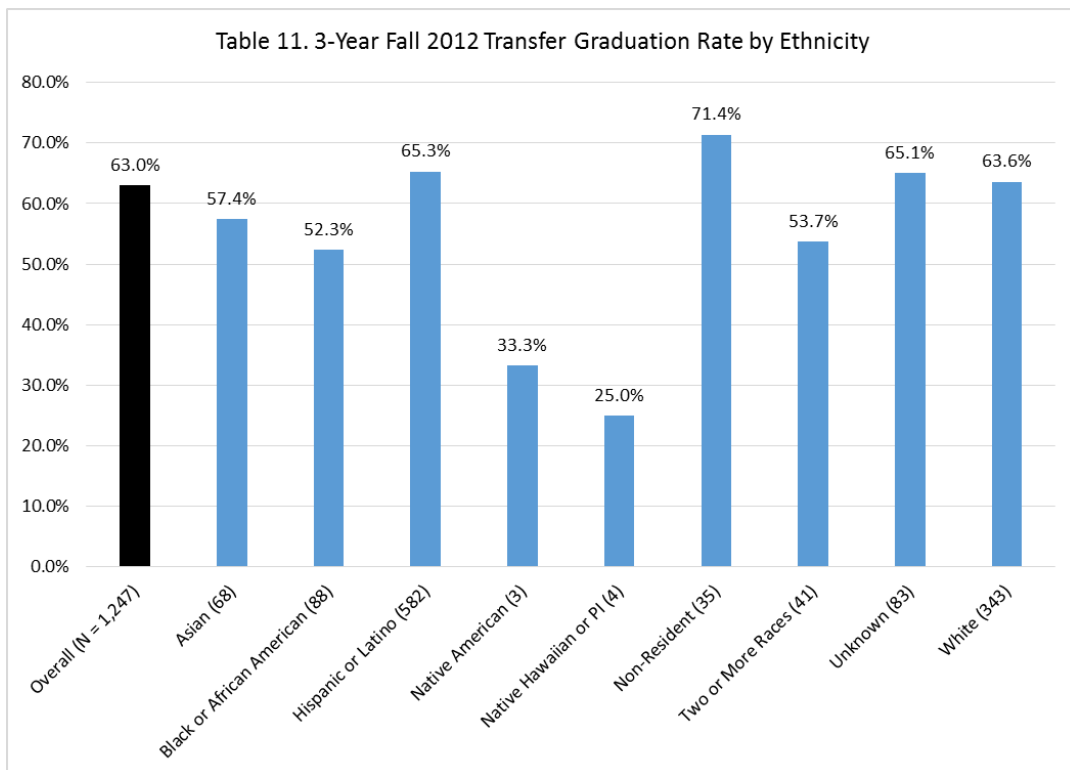
The three-year transfer graduation rate for URM students increased by 11.0 percentage points from 52.4% to 63.4%, exceeding the benchmark set in Goal 4. The rate for non-URM students also increased from the Fall 2005 to Fall 2012 cohort, from 58.1% to 62.5%. The achievement gap was eliminated for the three-year transfer student graduation rate; URM students graduated 0.9 percentage points higher than non-URM students. Table 9 provides the change in these achievement gap rates.



Overall, CSUSB's female and male three-year transfer graduation rate increased substantially during this timeframe. The overall rate increased from 55.7% to 63.0%, a 7.3 percentage point increase; similar increases were observed for female and male students separately. In addition, the graduation rate of Pell recipients was nearly equal to non-Pell recipients, 63.0% compared to 63.1%, respectively. Table 10 displays a summary of these transfer student rates.



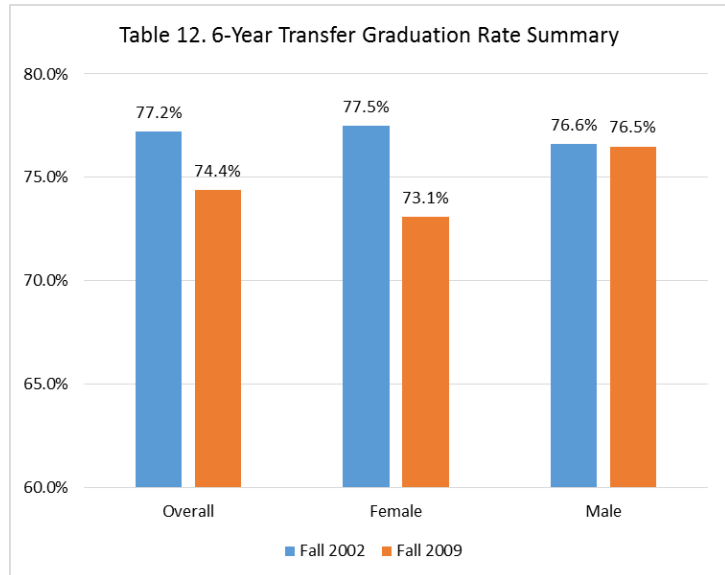
Split by ethnicity, the three-year transfer graduation rate for the URM groups of African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native Americans were 52.3%, 65.3%, and 33.3%, respectively. Table 11 provides the Fall 2012 cohort graduation rates split by ethnicity.



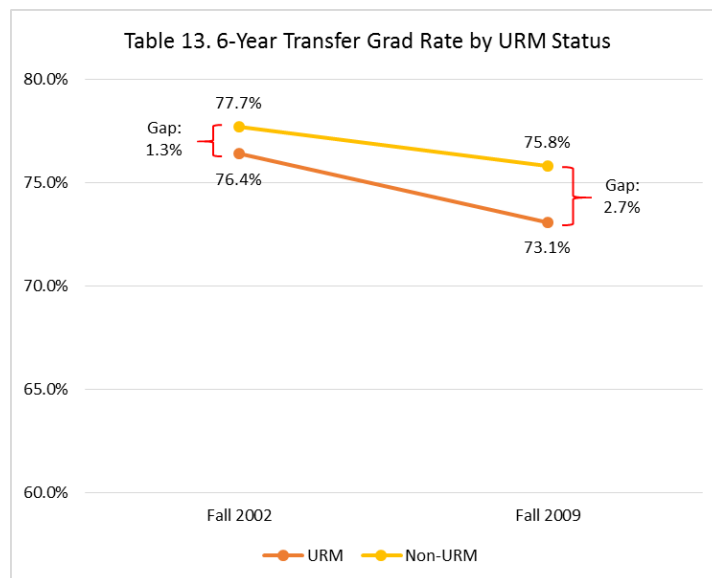
Goal 5. To improve the six-year transfer student graduation rates by two percentage points by 2015 (from 77.2% to 79.2%).

CSUSB’s transfer student six-year graduation rate for the Fall 2009 cohort was 74.4%, which did not meet the established goal of 79.2%.

The most recent transfer six-year graduation rate of 74.4% is 2.8 percentage points lower than the rate for the Fall 2002 cohort of 77.2%. The graduation rate decreased during this timeframe for female (77.5% to 73.1%), and male (76.6% to 76.5%) students. In addition, the graduation rate was higher for non-Pell recipient students (78.0%) than Pell recipient students (70.8%). Table 12 displays a summary of the graduation rate change for the overall cohort and also split by gender.

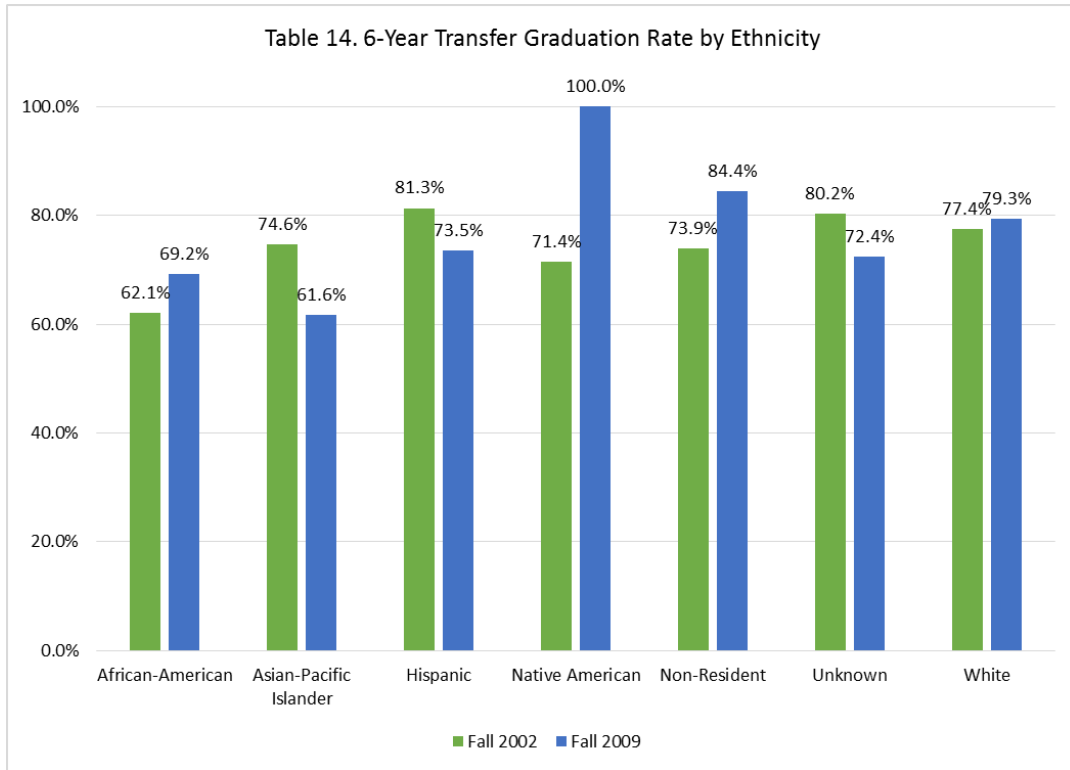


Using this benchmark, the achievement gap for transfer students increased. In the Fall 2002 cohort, the achievement gap in six-year transfer graduation rates between URM and non-URM students was 1.3%; for the Fall 2009 group the gap was 2.7%. The graduation rate decreased for both URM and non-URM students. The rate for URM students fell from 76.4% to 73.1%, while the rate dropped for non-URM students from 77.7% to 75.8%. The change in achievement gap is provided in Table 13.



Changes in graduation rates varied when we examined URM groups individually. Graduation rate for African-American students increased substantially from 62.1% to 69.2%, and the rate also increased for Native Americans from 71.4% to 100.0%, although the cohort for the latter group is very

small. However, the rate decreased for Hispanic students, from 81.3% to 73.5%. Table 14 provides the graduation rate change by ethnicity.



IV. CSUSB Delivery Plan to Meet the Graduation Initiative

CSUSB developed a comprehensive delivery plan to meet the goals established in the Graduation Initiative 2015. Specific details regarding the delivery plan are described below in detail by specific actions steps in the original report.

Area 1. *Develop support, tools, and systems to improve student retention.*

Action 1A. *Develop and increase capacity of advising and support services on campus.*

Capacity of advising and support services at CSUSB was significantly increased. Ten professional advisor positions were created and assigned strategically to units across campus; one advisor was added in the College of Arts and Letters, two advisors in the College of Business and Public Administration, two in the College of Natural Sciences, two in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, two in Advising and Academic Services, and one advisor was hired to serve as a Health Professions Advisor. In addition, based on evidence regarding the efficacy of peer-level support, the number of peer advisors and peer mentors was increased across campus, including the expansion of Student Success Peer Advisors in Undergraduate Studies (SSPA), a Peer Advising Center in the College of Natural Sciences (CNS Peers), and the Student Mentoring Program (SMP).

Advising and support services were strategically developed during this period using a new advising model for the campus. This model was specifically designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, and other scarce institutional resources while improving students' educational outcomes. In this model, advising activities were shared between a university-wide advising centers, a central advising unit within each college, and the faculty members in academic departments. Both faculty members and professional advising staff (including supervised/trained peer mentors) shared the responsibility for student success by adopting a "tag team" approach to advising, providing a range of expertise and multiple perspectives in the process. The campus created a university-wide council of advisors (UAAC) consisting of both faculty and professional staff advisors to review policies and practices, provide ongoing professional development and support, and offer opportunities for learning. In addition, the campus acquired and implemented the *Campus* software by the Educational Advisory Board (EAB). This software allowed academic advisors to provide outreach and intrusive supports for students who may be "at risk" based on various characteristics. *Campus* is both a predictive analytics program with a web-based, integrated, shared advising platform. This ensures timely and accurate student and institutional data is available for decision-making and assessment.

Action 1B. *Improve roadmaps for majors.*

The Office of the Provost required departments to develop roadmaps for all undergraduate programs. The Office of Undergraduate Studies pursued the development of a roadmap template for all departments, which incorporated the developmental math and English needs of students, and encouraged and supported all departments with the development and promotion of roadmaps. To this end, UGS conducted an informal review of roadmaps using student focus groups to gain insight on the utility of roadmaps. In addition, the Office of Academic Affairs worked closely with each department to ensure the accuracy of the roadmaps for each of the undergraduate majors offered at CSUSB. These data were shared with academic departments. However, no campus-wide changes were developed in this action area.

Action 1C. *Develop and implement programs to improve retention of male students.*

Action 1D. *Develop and implement programs to improve retention and graduation of groups with achievement gaps.*

A variety of programs and initiatives were implemented to improve retention and graduation rates of male students and of groups with achievement gaps. The CSUSB Black Faculty, Staff, and Student Association (ALFSS) developed campus chapters of the Student African American Sisterhood (SAAS) and Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB). SAAS and SAAB are evidence-based and focus on academic excellence, personal development, social utility, service learning, financial affairs, and cultural enrichment. In collaboration with the Office of Housing and Residential Life, the Black Faculty, Staff and Student Association also created a Black Scholars Hall, a living-learning community that delivered specialized programs and services targeted towards African American students that encouraged participation in academic advising, community service, and increased interaction and mentoring with faculty.

The CSUSB Association of Latino Faculty, Staff, and Students (ALFSS) developed the Madrinos y Padrinos (MAPA) mentoring program for students who are interested in working one-on-one with a mentor to receive additional and support to improve academic success and retention.

The university also placed an emphasis on student engagement in high-impact practices using campus and external funding provided by the Office of the Chancellor for the scaling high-impact practices initiative. As a result, the Office of Student Research created the peer lab, peer research consultant, student research symposium, and student journal to increase student engagement in undergraduate research and opportunities to showcase their research with faculty. Furthermore, the Office of Community Engagement has developed additional opportunities for students to engage in service-learning. The service-learning component also included the development of a first year seminar pilot course with a service-learning component.

Action 1E. *Improve support for students enrolled in high-risk courses.*

To improve support for students enrolled in high-risk courses, supplemental instruction (SI) sections were added to high-risk courses through a data-driven approach by identifying courses with combinations of low mean GPA over time, high enrollment numbers, and a high percentage of course seats occupied by underclassmen. To encourage participation in these SI sections, marketing and recruitment efforts were employed, including e-mails, in-class presentations, and marketing in student housing. Since 2013, all incoming students receive information about SI during the advising portion of CSUSB's summer orientation program, Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration (SOAR).

The Office of Student Research also implemented the Peer Lab/Peer Consultant program to provide supplemental support in research courses and encourage student research and creative activities. By focusing on upper-division research courses, these programs not only assist students in understanding the course material, but also improve students' overall learning and reasoning skills.

Action 1F. *Implement block scheduling for first quarter courses.*

The CSUSB Office of Undergraduate studies analyzed qualitative data provided by other CSU campuses in addition to empirical evidence to explore effective block scheduling models for first-time

freshmen. However, given the number of retention projects simultaneously developed and deployed during this time period, no first-year block scheduling programs were instituted.

Action 1G. Improve the articulation and advising of community college transfer students.

Recognizing that the needs of transfer students are different than first-time freshmen, CSUSB implemented a mandatory transfer student orientation program. This one-day program provides students with key resources and tools to assist students with the transition to CSUSB, and revolves around the development of Coyote PRIDE: Power, Responsibility, Integrity, Determination, and Enthusiasm. In addition, faculty and professional staff advisors were provided additional training to better equip them with the knowledge and tools to support transfer students. System have also been improved to ensure that PAWS (Program Advising Worksheets for Students) or degree audits are available for *new* Transfer Students during their SOAR session. With their PAWS reports, students know what courses were transferred to meet specific graduation requirements at CSUSB and what requirements still need to be fulfilled at CSUSB, as they provide accurate degree progress information so students can make the right choices during registration and remain on track to graduate.

Community college transfer student articulation challenges were addressed through the PASS GO program. The purpose of this grant-funded program is to develop articulation agreements and a pipeline program between San Bernardino Valley College (SBVC) and CSUSB to increase the number of Hispanic and other low-income students attaining bachelor's degrees in the STEM disciplines.

CSUSB has completed lower-division articulations with all California Community Colleges, twenty-one California State Universities, and nine University of California campuses. CSUSB has also started the implementation of Transferology, a nation-wide network designed to help students understand transferrable courses, enter coursework, exams, and/or military learning experiences, and identify which campuses in the Transferology network offer matching courses that may be awarded when the student transfers. This system communicates to students how transferrable courses will count and can inform schools of students' interest in transferring.

Area 2. Communicate and enforce existing policies which impact student retention.

Action 2A. Strict adherence to existing academic dismissal for low scholarship.

Action 2B. Strict adherence to existing academic dismissal for failure to complete remediation.

The campus currently strictly enforces the policies related to low scholarship and failure to meet remediation. The Office of Advising and Academic Services is responsible for enforcing requirements regarding dismissal while having the authority to grant exceptions to students with extenuating circumstances through a petition process. Scholarship policies, academic expectations, and consequences are clearly communicated to students during orientation.

In order to better serve students who are at-risk for dismissal for low scholarship, the Office of Advising and Academic Services requires students who not meet the terms of their probation contract to enroll in University Studies 27, a two-unit course designed to connect students with more intrusive advising and support. Students enrolled in this course are required to create an educational success plan and are closely monitored by professional and peer advisors.

Action 2C. Enforce graduation of super-seniors.

To enforce graduation of super-seniors (students with credits which exceed the total number of units required to graduate by 20%), the campus is using the new advising software (EAB) to design advising campaigns specifically focused on super seniors. Then academic advising units will implement their own college-level targeted interventions to the specific students identified through their campaign. For new students, expectations about credit accumulation are provided when they attend orientation. Informal messages are sent to continuing students at appropriate milestones.

Action 2D. Earlier action on remediation.

Prior to the Early Start requirement, students who planned to attend CSUSB and needed developmental coursework were presented with options for which they were required to pay “out of pocket” expenses, and spaces in these programs were limited. With the addition of the Early Start requirement, CSUSB has been able to expand summer math offerings to include access for all students to receive a summer math experience based on the model which has shown the most success with regard to completion of developmental math prior to first term enrollment. Consequently, the number of GE math-ready first-time freshmen in the fall quarter has increased considerably. For the Fall 2014 FTF class, the percentage of GE math-ready students increased from 48% before summer intervention to 72% after summer intervention.

The English department at CSUSB does not use placement exam scores for students and instead has transitioned to directed self-placement for its first-year English composition courses. This new model allows students to explore the expectations for the various first-year composition course options and to assess their own experiences as a writer to make their own decisions regarding which option best suits their preferred experience.

Area 3. Enact and revise policies to improve student retention.

Action 3A. Change the rules governing the timing of major declaration.

Students are now required to declare a major by the end of their second year.

Action 3B. Revision of policy on repeating courses.

In compliance with Executive Order 1037, CSUSB revised its course repeat policy; students are allowed to repeat a maximum of 24 units of work for grade forgiveness (the first course attempt is ignored) and an additional 18 units where the grades for the first and subsequent attempts are averaged. In addition, the course repeat policy was revised so that students cannot repeat a course where they earn a grade of “C” or higher, unless approved by the Associate Dean. Also, courses can only be repeated a maximum of three attempts.

Action 3C. Revision of policies on remedial course work.

Policies on remedial course work were not revised; however, options available for students who needed developmental coursework were expanded to include the Intensive Mathematics Program and, recently, Coyote First STEP, the fully-residential developmental math and co-curricular experience for first time freshmen with Entry Level Math (ELM) scores between 0-49.

Action 3D. Declaration of institutional impaction.

Institutional impaction was declared for four specific majors: Criminal Justice; Kinesiology - Allied Health; Nursing; and Social Work. Students who wish to enter these majors must meet higher admissions criteria for these programs because the demand is greater than the seats available. The impact of these changes on student success and retention will be analyzed to determine whether additional strategies, such as the declaration of institutional-wide impaction, are necessary.

V. Conclusion

Research on student success suggests that students, when provided with the appropriate level of support, are able to perform and succeed in college. While the campus developed a highly aggressive plan to address challenges with retention and graduation through support and policy enforcement, a greater level of resources and attention were allocated toward the support.

As the campus reflects on previous cohorts and the opportunities, which lie ahead to improve success, there are some critical areas which have become the focal point of interest of the administration. The new strategic plan includes increasing the number of high impact practices each undergraduate student completes prior to graduation, provides support for faculty development which helps to increase evidence-based and equity-based pedagogy, and develop evidence-based co-curricular experiences for students which affirm their experiences and identities. Additionally, the high level of need for developmental coursework for first time freshmen has been identified as a priority. This summer, all students who are required to complete any developmental mathematics based on the CSU system pre-matriculation assessments were required to participate in a three to four week full residential summer residential experience.

The campus is also developing a culture of assessment. Through the use of on-going assessment, supports, services, and instruction will be examined and modified in ways in which the literature and campus level data suggests we should move to increase student success.

As a result of our campus' efforts in the last several years, we are beginning to see an impressive increase in our graduation rate for the Graduation Rate Initiative benchmark cohort of Fall 2009 first time freshmen (Table 15).

