

Diversity In Action Group

Assessment of the CSM Student Achievement/Equity Gap

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Introduction

The Diversity In Action Group, one of CSM's Institutional Planning Committees, has developed this report in fulfilling one of its primary objectives. As presented in its Institutional Plan Narrative, 2009/10 to 2012/13, "The Diversity In Action Group and its affiliate, the Diversity Planning Committee, has as its charge ensuring that the College follows through in acknowledging, promoting, celebrating, and integrating diversity, equity, and student success as an institutional priority." In fulfilling this directive, DIAG developed a specific goal that states, "Annually assess the academic success rates of students disaggregated by demographics which include ability, gender and ethnicity." This goal was further predicated by one of the College's Institutional Priorities which focuses on improving the academic success of all students and includes course-completion, retention, and persistence. (CSM Institutional Priorities, 2008-2011) The importance of DIAG's role in monitoring student success is further emphasized in its mission statement, "The mission of the Diversity In Action Group is to ensure that unity through diversity is among the College of San Mateo's highest priorities. DIAG assures that the college's operational decisions—from the executive to the unit level—support its commitment to diversity and student success."

Brief Literature Review

During the past decade there has been a significant amount of research focusing on and emphasizing the importance of using data to support institutional planning, decision-making, and in assessing student success. More recently, the research literature has been addressing the achievement or equity gap that is occurring at all levels of the education system and particularly the gap resulting for low income students and students of color. (Using Data to Close the Achievement Gap: How to Measure Equity in Our Schools, 2006; Big Gaps, Small Gaps in Serving African American Students, 2010; Examples of ¡Excelencia!, What Works for Latino Student Success in Higher Education: Compendium, 2012; Introducing Equity Achievement as a Strategy for Strengthening Student Success, 2012). In California, a number of studies have been completed and several initiatives addressing the achievement gap are being developed and implemented. (Divided We Fail: Improving Completion and Closing Racial Gaps in California's Community Colleges, 2010; 2020 Vision for Student Success, 2011; Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in the California Community Colleges, 2007; Student Success Act, 2012; SMCCCD, A Framework for Measuring Student Success, 2011).

During the past several years, College of San Mateo has become increasingly adept at collecting and analyzing data to inform and support its institutional planning and decision-making (Educational Master Plan 2008; Educational Master Plan-Information Update, 2012; College Index, 2009-2012; Campus Climate and Satisfaction Surveys, 2012; Substantive Change Report:

Distance Education, 2013). The collection and analysis of data is becoming the norm at CSM and decisions are now mostly informed and largely driven by a “culture of evidence.”

Framework

In fulfilling its goals and objectives, DIAG has prepared this document incorporating the same student success measures incorporated in the CSM Student Equity Report; a California State mandated report which was last compiled at CSM in September of 2005. The data that follow in this DIAG report was culled from the *CSM Educational Master Plan, Information Update 2012* (EMP, 2012). What the data confirm is that achievement gaps, similar to those identified in the 2005 Student Equity Report, continue to exist at CSM. The gaps are most notable for the gender, age, and ethnic demographic. It is the latter demographic that is of utmost concern to DIAG because the achievement or equity gap for segments of this population reflect the greatest disparities and have a prolonged history at CSM.

To insure an understanding of what is meant by the achievement gap it is important to define the concept. One definition of this phenomenon is provided by the U.S. Department of Education which describes the achievement gap as “the difference in academic performance between different ethnic groups.” Another reference to the achievement gap as presented in *Education Week* (2011) is “The ‘achievement gap’ in education refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students. The achievement gap shows up in grades, standardized-test scores, course selection, dropout rates, and college-completion rates, among other success measures. It is most often used to describe the troubling performance gaps between African-American and Hispanic students, at the lower end of the performance scale, and their non-Hispanic white peers, and the similar academic disparity between students from low-income families and those who are better off.” It is within the context of these definitions that this report endeavors to identify and assess the achievement and equity gaps that exist at CSM.

Access

As prescribed by the California Education Code, any student who has a high school diploma or its equivalent or is 18 years of age or older and can benefit from further education can enroll in a California Community College. College of San Mateo is therefore an open access institution. However, providing open access does not in of itself lead to academic success or educational goal completion. For the past eight years, 70 percent of CSM’s first-time students have placed below college-level math, English, and reading; essentially extending time to degree. (EMP, p. 10) The basic skills course completion rate was reported at 59.5% which is -2.5% below the California State Rate. (EMP, p. 11) The successful course completion rate is 70% collectively for CSM students but there are significant disparities when disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity. Similarly, while retention rates for the past 20 years have hovered at 85%, there are disparities when the data is disaggregated for the aforementioned groups. (EMP, p. 10) Further, historically, 44% of all students at CSM enroll in one semester only and another 17% in two semesters only. (EMP, pp. 124-125) Again, access does not necessarily lead to success. As noted by renown researcher Vincent Tinto, “Access without effective support is not opportunity” (2008). In a recent article, the issue of access and success was addressed this way, “College is on the rise for all students, but gaps exist between whites and underrepresented minority groups.” (Shifting from College Access to College Success, 2011)

As presented in the table below, the CSM student population has shifted dramatically during the past decade and a half. In fall 1995, 51.9 percent of CSM students were White. In Fall 2011, the

percentage of White students had decreased to 34.4% reflecting a -17.2% decrease. In Fall 1995, African American, Asian, Filipino, Hispanic, and Native American students comprised 43.3% of CSM students; in Fall 2011 that percentage had increased slightly to 45.3%. Interestingly, the Others/Unknown category shows an increase of 4.2% during this period.

A new category, Multi-Ethnic was introduced in 2009 resulting in a representation of 11% in Fall 2011. Also introduced in 2009 was the ethnic category for Pacific Islander which in fall 2011 was represented by 231 students or 2% of the student body. Another recently introduced demographic is first generation college applicants. The applicant total for this group from July 2010 to September 2011 is a duplicated headcount of 3,031 with the largest group being Hispanic at 42.5%; followed by Asian, 26.2%; White, 22.1%; Multi Races, 12.8%; African American, 5.6%; Filipino, 4.5%; Unknown, 3.7%; and Pacific Islander, 3.2%. Data for first generation college students at CSM is not currently accessible but should be available in the very near future. Lastly, there was a significant decrease in student enrollment between Fall 1995 to Fall 2011; 11,506 vs. 10,540; an -8.4% decrease.

CSM Student Ethnicity

	Fall 1995	Fall 2011
African American	3.8%	3.5%
Asian	16.1	15.4
Filipino	6.9	6.9
Hispanic	15.9	19.1
Native American	0.6	0.3
Pacific Islander	---	2.0
White	51.9	34.4
Multi-Ethnic	---	11.6
Others/Unknown	4.9	9.1
Total Enrollment	11,506	10,540

(EMP, Table B, p. 68.)

Course Completion and Withdrawal

Course completion and withdrawal rates have remained relatively stable from 2007-08 to 2010-11 with an average of nearly 70% and 16% respectively. However, when disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity, there are some notable differences. Course completion and withdrawal rates for 2010-11 are presented below.

- Women successfully completed courses at an average of nearly 71% compared to men at 67%. Withdrawal rates for women and men were similar at 16% and 17% respectively. (EMP, Table A, p. 153)
- More dramatic differences can be found in the age demographic where older students (50 years or older) experience course success rates at 79% in comparison to younger students age 20-24 at 66%. The younger age group also has the highest withdrawal rate at 18%. (EMP, Table A, p. 155)
- Ethnic comparisons also present significant differences as Asians and Whites have course completion rates of 75% and 72% respectively in comparison to Hispanics at 64%; Filipinos 68%; African Americans 58%; and Pacific Islanders 57%. (EMP, Table B, p. 159). Withdrawal rates also reflect moderate to significant differences with Asians

having the lowest withdrawal rate at 14%, followed by White, 16%; Filipino, 18%; Hispanic, 19%; Native American, 19%; African American, 19%; and Pacific Islander, 20%. The gaps experienced by both African American and Pacific Islander in relation to course completion and withdrawal rates raise concern.

Note: A request for disaggregating age groups by ethnicity to determine if there are differences in success rates among the groups has been submitted to PRIE.

ESL and Basic Skills Completion

In 2011, 61.5% of new students were placed into at least one basic skills course. Basic skills courses are those whose units are not AA/AS applicable. Approximately one half (52.1%) of new CSM students placed into basic skills math. In comparison, 5.8% of students placed into basic skills English. There were 11.1% of students who placed into reading during this same timeframe. ESL placement reflects a rate of 92.7%. (EMP, p. 129)

During 2011, 1,608 students were enrolled in basic skills courses. The majority of students were enrolled in math, 1013; English 146; Reading, 158; and ESL, 450. In addition, there were 18 students enrolled in Study Skills courses. Student success rates for all courses were 60.3%. By discipline the success rates were: Math, 56.8%; English, 54.8%; Reading, 71.4%; ESL, 63.1%; and Study Skills, 88.9%. (EMP, p. 130)

Overall success rates disaggregated by ethnicity are not readily available for all basic skills courses, however, in the EMP 2012 document there are several examples of CSM Student Success Indicators that track students' progression from basic skills English and Math to degree applicable and up to transfer course levels. The completion rates by ethnicity vary greatly; however, African Americans most often exhibit the least successful course completion and progression in both math and English. (EMP, 2012, pp. 132-151)

When reviewing ESL course completion rates for the period of Fall 2003 to Fall 2011, Hispanics have the least success. For example, of those students initially enrolling in ESL 400 and eventually progressing to and successfully completing English 110, Hispanics were represented at 15.1%; Others/Unknown, 30.3%; Filipino, 37.5%; White, 37.5%; and Asian, 50.7%. (EMP, p. 139)

Degree and Certificate Completion

Degree and certificate completion rates from Fall 2006 – Summer 2011 also reveal some interesting outcomes when disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity.

- Women earned more degrees and certificates combined than men by more than a ten percent margin at 54.4% vs. 44.1%.
- A review of degrees awarded finds that women at 55% outperformed men who earned 43% of degrees.
- Certificates awarded reflect similar results with women surpassing men by 9 percentage points, 54% vs. 45%. (EMP, Table A, p. 161)

-Degree and Certificate Completion by Age

Analyses of degree and certificate completion rates by age also result in unexpected outcomes. Of the total 4,233 degrees and certificates awarded from Fall 2006 to Summer 2011,

- 76.6% were earned by students aged 20 – 39 yet only 53% of students fall into this age range.
- In contrast, students 20 and younger comprise 28.5% of all students yet represent only 3.8% of all award earners. Since many students take more than two years to earn a credential, it could be that some of these younger students are later captured in the 20-24 age range. (EMP, Table A, p. 164).
- 38.2% of degrees and certificates are earned by the 20-24 age group. This age group reflects the highest percentage of degree and certificates awarded. (EMP, Table A, p. 164).
- As noted in the EMP, “approximately the same relationship between age and earning awards is found for each award type, i.e., AA Degrees, AS Degrees, Certificates of Achievement, and Certificates of Specialization. (EMP, pp. 163-164)

Further, of the 4,233 degree and certificates awarded from Fall 2006 to Summer 2011, the ethnic distribution of award earners closely approximates the ethnic composition of the total CSM student population (EMP, p. 166).

CSM Degrees and Certificates by Ethnicity Fall 2006 to Summer 2011			CSM Student Ethnicity Fall 2010
African American	156	4.2%	3.7%
Asian	664	14.2	16.1
Filipino	303	6	7.2
Hispanic	830	19.6	19.5
Native American	16	4	0.4
Pacific Islander	92	2.9	2.3
White	1,431	34.1	34.2
Multi Race	3	0.1	7.5
Other/Unknown	738	17.4	9.1

(EMP, Table A, p. 167)

Transfer

As presented in the Educational Master Plan, Information Update 2012, transfer rates are calculations based upon tracking 3-year cohorts of students. The most recent data is for the cohort from 2007 – 2010 in which CSM’s transfer rate was 16.9%. The California State average for this same time frame is 15.2%. As also noted, “With the exception of one year, since transfer rates have been calculated and reported by U.S. Department of Education (1995), CSM’s transfer rate has been consistently above the statewide average, as much as 15 points.” (EMP, p. 188) While certainly a positive outcome, CSM’s transfers have significantly declined. Over the past 21 years, 1989-90 to 2010-11, CSM’s combined total of UC and CSU transfers has decreased -43.2%; this decline does not mirror CSM’s total enrollment decline (-26.9%) for the same period.” (EMP, p. 185). In contrast, during this same period, UC increased the total number of California Community college transfers by +95.7%. As well, the CSU increased its statewide

transfer population by 24.9%. Further, the number of CSM transfers to UC and CSU has declined -5.9% and -50.7% respectively. (EMP, Fast Facts, p 187)

-Transfers Disaggregated by Ethnicity

Disaggregating CSM transfer data by ethnicity presents some notable differences as presented in the table below. Only 4 African Americans transferred to a CSU or UC in 2001-02 representing a 0.6 percentage rate. Eight years later there is essentially no change. Asians reflect a significant decrease from 2001-02 to 2009-10 resulting in a -7.8% decrease. Filipinos experienced a -3.4% decrease in the same timeframe. Hispanics while maintaining the same transfer numbers in 2001-02 and 2009-10 have a significant increase in percentage, 11.2% to 19.3%. Regardless of a decrease in total transfers for Whites from 167 in 2001-02 to 136 transfers in 2009-10, there is a significant percentage increase from 25.5% to 36.0%. The percentage fluctuations can be attributed to the substantial decline in actual transfer numbers which decreased from 654 in 2001-02 to 378 in 2009-10, a -57.8% decline. (EMC, Table H, p. 225)

Ethnic Profile of CSM Student Transfers to CSU & UC: 8-Year Perspective

Ethnicity	<u>Number of Transfers and Percent of Total</u>					
	2001 - 02		2004 - 05		2009 - 10	
African American	4	0.6%	4	0.9%	3	0.8%
Asian	231	35.3	158	33.8	104	27.5
Filipino	39	6.0	26	5.6	10	2.6
Hispanic	73	11.2	53	11.3	73	19.3
White	167	25.5	146	31.3	136	36.0
Other/Unknown	140	21.4	80	7.1	52	13.8
Total	654	100%	467	100%	378	100%

(EMC, Table H, p. 225)

-Transfers by Ethnicity to the CSUs

Disaggregating transfer rates specific to the CSUs and UCs provide the following data for 2001-02 vs. 2009-10. For CSUs in 2001-02, African Americans are represented by 3 transfers or 0.7% with basically no change in 2009-10. Asians experienced a dramatic decrease from 113 transfers or 25.3% to 36 transfers or 14.9%; Filipinos also had a decrease from 31 transfers or 6.9% to 6 transfers or 2.5%; Hispanics reflect an increase from 56 or 12.5% to 60 transfers or 24.8%; Whites went from 128 transfers or 28.6% to 96 transfers or 39.7%; and Other/Unknown went from 116 transfers or 26.0% to 42 transfers or 17.4%. (EMP, Table B, p. 221) Again, the dramatic increase in Hispanic and White transfer percentages are a result of the significant decrease in CSM transfers to CSUs, 447 in 2001-02 decreasing to 242 in 2009-10. (EMP, Table B, p. 221)

-Transfer by Ethnicity to the UCs

The comparable UC transfer rates for the same period of 2001-02 to 2009-10 reflect the following: African American, 1 transfer or 0.5% with no change eight years later. Asian, 118 transfers or 57% vs. 68 or 50%; Filipino, 8 or 3.9% vs 4 or 2.9%; Hispanic 17 or 8.2% vs. 13 or 9.6%; White, 39 or 18.8% vs 40 or 29.4%; and Other/Unknown, 24 or 11.6% vs. 10 or 7.4%.

Overall, there was a decrease in CSM transfers to the UCs from 207 transfers in 2001-02 decreasing to 136 transfers in 2009-10, a -65.7% decrease. (EMP, Table E, p. 223).

-Transfers to the CSUs as a Proportion of Student Enrollment

An ethnic comparison of CSM transfers to the CSUs vs. their representative proportion of all CSM students during 2009-10 results in the following disparities. As noted in the table below, African American, Asian, and Filipino ethnic groups reflect a proportional gap while Hispanics and Whites have higher transfer rates than their proportional representation at CSM.

Transfers to the CSUs as a Proportion of Student Enrollment 2009-2010

	Transfer Percent	Percent of CSM Student Population	Gap
African American	0.8%	3.7%	-2.9%
Asian	14.9%	16.1%	-1.2
Filipino	2.5%	7.2%	-4.7
Hispanic	24.8%	19.5%	5.3
White	39.7%	34.2%	5.5

(EMP, p. 218; EMP, Table A, p. 220; EMP, Table J, p. 226)

-Transfers to the UCs

There are similarities and significant differences when reviewing the ethnic distribution of CSM transfers to the UC System for the most recent year, 2009-2010. This comparison reveals the following disparities in the ethnicity of student transfers vs. all CSM students. As presented in the table below, all ethnic groups except Asians have transfer rates to the UCs lower than their proportional CSM representation. In 2009-2010, one African American, 68 Asian, 4 Filipino, 13 Hispanic, and 40 White students transferred to a UC. (EMP, Table E, p. 223). The fact that only one African American transferred to a UC in 2009-10 is cause for concern.

Transfers to the UCs as a Proportion of Student Enrollment 2009-2010

	Transfer Percent	Percent of CSM Student Population	Gap
African American	0.7%	3.7%	-3.0%
Asian	50.0%	16.1%	33.9%
Filipino	2.9%	7.2%	-4.3%
Hispanic	9.6%	19.5%	-9.9%
White	29.4%	34.2%	-4.8%

(EMP p. 219; Table D, p. 222; Table J. p. 226)

Summary of the Findings and Recommendations

-Summary of the Findings

A review and analysis of student data as compiled in the Educational Master Plan, Information Update 2012 provides for significant achievements and important insight to a number of measured student success factors. These include course completion, withdrawal, ESL and basic skills completion, degree and certificate completion, and transfer rates. CSM can be proud of the many students who have successfully completed courses leading to certificates, degrees and have realized transfer opportunities to four-year colleges and universities. However, data analysis also

confirms that there are significant achievement gaps in most if not all of the student success factors analyzed in this report. What is most disconcerting is the significant disparities that appear when disaggregating data by gender, age and ethnicity. These disparities are evident and vary by success factor among the three demographic groups. The most glaring and consistent gaps are among ethnic groups and particularly prevalent for African American and Pacific Islanders. In nearly every assessment category, African Americans experience the least success whether it be course completion, transfer or degrees. Pacific Islanders also exhibit lower success rates but unfortunately data on this group has not been compiled on a number of measures, therefore a full assessment of their success rates is not possible.

-Recommendations

While there are various disparities presented in this report, notably gender, age and ethnicity, the resulting data highlight that African Americans and Pacific Islanders most often exhibit the greatest disparities in the success measures that have been analyzed. African Americans, in particular, stand out as having the greatest disparity in nearly every measure.

CSM has already implemented initiatives targeted to enhancing student success. For example, Writing in the End Zone, which began in 2003, has long supported student success and promoted transfer, but with a narrowly focused mission of serving African-American and Pacific Islander male student-athletes in an English and Football Learning Community. The Learning Center (LC) was opened in spring 2012. The LC is designed to serve all students at CSM with services such as tutoring, a Summer Bridge Program for new students, and providing access to computers. The Puente Program was reinstated in Fall 2012 to primarily support Latino students. This program has a long history of promoting student success with transfer being a primary focus. Still another initiative to promote academic success at CSM is the reconstituted Honors Project. This program provides students and faculty an opportunity to critically engage in a shared intellectual experience. Students participate in scholarly work with their peers and with direct support and guidance from project faculty. Further, math and science faculty are involved with the Reading Apprenticeship project, and a math instructor has developed a supplementary instruction (tutoring) program for basic skills math students that is funded by the Basic Skills Initiative.

As presented above, CSM has invested in its students' academic improvement by developing and implementing programs and services that contribute to enhancing student success. Based on the data analysis in this report which has identified a significant achievement gap for African Americans and Pacific Islanders, DIAG is recommending that CSM consider establishing programs targeted to improving the student success rates of African Americans and Pacific Islanders. The data in this report which in large part mirrors the 2005 Student Equity Report justify the establishment of such programs. However, given the demands and expense of establishing intrusive support programs that are targeted to ensuring student success, DIAG recommends that the African American student population be singled out as the first of the two targeted student populations. This recommendation is made based on the larger representation of African American students at CSM and the disparity in achievement rates as presented in this report. Once a successful program is established, an intrusive student support and success program should be established for Pacific Islanders.

It is critical that the recommendation presented in this report receive timely consideration so that the needs of African Americans and Pacific Islanders can be met and their opportunity for success be enhanced. While it is very likely that without intrusive support services and other interventions that African American and Pacific Islander students will continue to have access to

CSM, it is also very likely that their success rates will continue to lag behind those of other students. Once again, as noted by Vincent Tinto (2008), “Access without effective support is not opportunity.”

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