

DRAFT Quality Focus Essay – 9/15/22

Introduction and Rationale

City College of San Francisco’s overall goal for the Quality Focus Essay (QFE) Action Projects is to help students—credit, noncredit, and lifelong learners—to achieve higher levels of timely educational goal attainment. The College is broadly defining “educational goals” as completion of certificates, degrees, transfer, skill-building/professional growth, language acquisition, and personal enrichment.

The focus of the selected Action Projects emerged from a number of entities/initiatives at the College, including: the Office of Student Equity (which coordinates the development of the College’s Student Equity Plan), the Completion Center, the Office of Research and Planning, RiSE, and the self-evaluation process that culminated in this Institutional Self Evaluation Report (particularly related to Standards IIA6 and IIC3).

The specific Action Projects address the following two challenges that the College has identified:

- **Action Project 1** addresses a significant gap in the College’s ability to collect accurate information about students’ intended majors and goals. Without accurate information, it is challenging to ensure students’ timely achievement of their goals.

Stimulus for Action Project 1: Students often declare majors and goals when they apply to the College that don't match their actual course-taking patterns, which have been a better indicator of major/goal. In fact, the Office of Research and Planning has found that, of students who earn a certificate or degree at CCSF, only about 60% receive one that is offered by the same department as their declared program; and, even then, the award they earn isn’t necessarily the one they declared. Collecting more accurate information from the outset of a student's journey (or when they change majors/goals) would be more effective and sustainable than having to continually analyze course-taking behavior, and this project is aimed at doing so.

- **Action Project 2** addresses the difficulty the College has had in raising sufficient awareness of resources and services available to students, thereby making it challenging to connect students to those supports to ensure their timely achievement of their goals.

Stimulus for Action Project 2: CCSF engaged the RP Group to conduct student focus groups in 2019 as part of its Guided Pathways work (which the College refers to as Re-imagine the Student Experience, or “RiSE”) and again in Spring 2022 to inform Equity planning.¹ Despite efforts to increase awareness through Equity and RiSE activities, the Spring 2022 recommendations include raising awareness and increasing access to resources and support services, echoing an earlier recommendation from 2019.

To address this recommendation, the College has already begun to take action toward increasing students’ awareness and access to resources. Activities include:

¹ All California Community Colleges are required to submit a Student Equity Plan to the State Chancellor’s Office.

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- developing a [Student Resources and Services List](#) (with plans to transform it into an interactive list on the website that students can filter according to their needs) and a [Student Essentials Support Guide](#);
- creating Success Networks aligned with the College's Academic and Career Communities (“meta majors;” these RiSE-sponsored networks are relatively new and evolving, with some still under development);
- developing a Student Parents' Guide (which includes translations) that includes internal and external resources;
- circulating the guides through *CityNotes* (the College's newsletter) and *Equity Times* (the Office of Student Equity's newsletter);
- conducting in-class presentations and workshops to inform students and faculty and to help students navigate the resources available to them using a [navigation tool](#) on the Basic Needs website;
- tabling at events (e.g., at Welcome Day, Unity Day, and others); and
- establishing the [Sparkpoint Center](#) for basic needs which serves as a “single-stop” location (in person and online) for students to learn about the resources available to them.

The College is now focused on amplifying the availability of these resources. This includes using Canvas campaigns to promote the Student Essentials Support Guide which appear to be a promising approach; the College would like to test further the use of Canvas campaigns for promoting awareness along with other approaches.

Underlying Student Achievement Data. The particular student achievement data underlying these action projects include timeline to transfer, timeline to graduation (completion of certificate or degree), and average number of accumulated units upon completion.

As Figure 1 depicts, transfer rates have been relatively steady for the three-year window. Many students take longer than three years to transfer, so transfer rates are higher as the timeframe expands to four years and then six years. Figure 2 shows how student attainment of certificates or degrees is also relatively steady for the three-year window with increases as the timeframe expands. These outcomes are not surprising given that the vast majority of CCSF students work while attending college, often enrolling only part time.

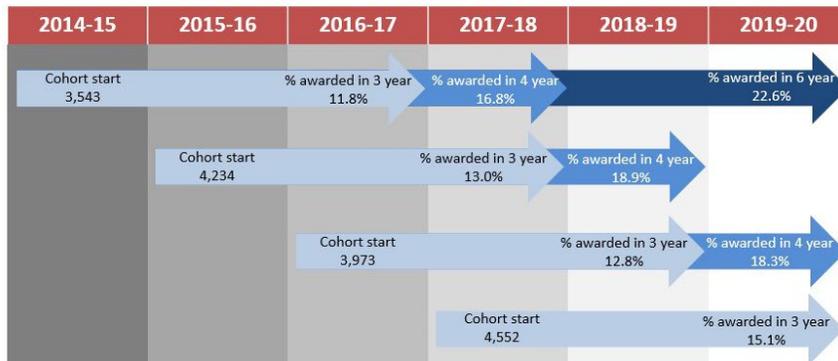
Figure 1. Timeline to Transfer

Students enroll at CCSF → Students take classes → Students transfer → 4 year institutions share transfer data



Figure 2. Timeline to Graduation (Certificate or Degree)

Students enroll at CCSF → Students take classes → Students earn an award



The average number of units accumulated by all first-time Associate Degree earners in Figure 3, however, potentially indicates cause for concern. This figure, currently 85 units, is well in excess of the relatively standard degree requirement of 60 units. This figure may capture some of the natural and encouraged exploration that students engage in while in college, but the magnitude of the difference suggests students are spending more time than necessary to complete degrees, even when allowing time to explore.

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Figure 3. Average Units Accumulated by All First-Time Associate Degree Earners

		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
All Associate Degree for Transfer Earners	Avg # units	92	94	91	86	87
	<i># students</i>	235	270	357	379	446
All AA/AS Degree (Not for Transfer) Earners	Avg # units	88	89	89	87	85
	<i># students</i>	841	863	975	957	896
All Associate Degree Earners	Avg # units	88	89	88	86	85
	<i># students</i>	987	1,044	1,188	1,200	1,167

In addition to students whose educational goals include earning associate degrees and credit certificates, a substantial number of students have educational goals aligned with noncredit offerings. Currently we have limited data regarding students’ noncredit goals. We are exploring ways to improve clarity about noncredit options for students through encouraging programs to clarify course mapping and sequencing and strengthening connections to student support services for noncredit students.

We also have limited information about students who are taking classes for personal enrichment or those taking a class or two to gain or brush up on a skill. We need to more clearly define and investigate ways of capturing their intentions and goals, in order to better understand the educational aspirations and support needs across all our student populations.

Anticipated Impact on Student Learning and Achievement

The table below captures the anticipated impact of the project with respect to outputs and short-term outcomes. The **anticipated long-term outcome** of the two projects combined, as noted in the Introduction, is **higher levels of timely educational goal attainment**, where “educational goals” includes traditional goals such as completion of certificates, degrees, and transfer as well as goals related to skill-building/professional growth, language acquisition, and personal enrichment.

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Project	Outputs	Anticipated Short-Term Outcomes
<p>Project 1 - Collect and analyze information regarding student majors and educational goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More accurate information about students' majors ● More accurate information about students' goals, including Noncredit students and life-long learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students have easy access to information about their progress toward their goals. ● College is able to view and analyze progression of student groups toward their goals. ● Class offerings support student completion of goals in a more timely manner.
<p>Project 2 - Raise greater, just-in-time awareness of resources and services that support students' achievement of their educational goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continuous, routine engagement with students to connect them to resources/services semester after semester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students, faculty, staff, and administrators are aware of resources/services for students. ● Faculty, staff, and administrators communicate the availability of resources/services to students. ● Students connect to resources that support their success.

Outcome Measures

The table above captures the anticipated short-term outcomes for which specific measures include, for Project 1, number/proportion of students whose declared major matches the award they earn; and, for Project 2, number/proportion of students accessing services. Ultimately, the goal of the Action Projects is to improve timely achievement of goals, and we anticipate that we would see the following additional outcomes to varying degrees, likely beyond the scope of the three-year Action Projects:

- An increase in the transfer rates within three to four years of the cohort start
- An increase in the certificate/degree attainment rates within three to four years of the cohort start
- A decrease in the total units accumulated upon degree attainment
- Improvements in additional measures based on stated goals that aren't certificate/degree/transfer (these would be determined depending on how we move forward in defining/collecting data related to this)

Project Action Plan

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Action Project 1 Activities	Action Project 1 Responsible Parties	Action Project 1 Resources Required	Action Project 1 Timeline
<p>1a. Modify CCCApply to organize majors within Academic and Career Communities (done)</p> <p>1b. Implement DegreeWorks for credit and noncredit students (ensuring collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic & Institutional Affairs)</p> <p>1c. Determine feasibility of utilizing DegreeWorks as a data source for class scheduling purposes</p> <p>1d. Utilize data from DegreeWorks to inform class scheduling (if deemed feasible in Activity 1c)</p>	<p>Administrators, faculty, staff within Student Affairs, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Office of Student Equity ● Completion Center and Counseling <p>Administrators, faculty, staff within Academic & Institutional Affairs, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RiSE/Success Networks ● Adult Education ● Noncredit departments ● Office of Research and Planning ● Enrollment Management Committee <p>IT Staff</p>	<p>CCCApply SARS DegreeWorks Banner Argos College Scheduler CourseLeaf</p>	<p>1a. Completed</p> <p>1b. DegreeWorks launched in Summer 2022</p> <p>1c. Begin exploring feasibility in Spring 2023</p> <p>1d. If 1c deemed feasible, begin planning in Fall 2023 to inform scheduling for Spring 2024</p>
Action Project 2 Activities	Action Project 2 Responsible Parties	Action Project 2 Resources Required	Action Project 2 Timeline
<p>2a. Expand use of Canvas to raise awareness of resources among students and faculty</p> <p>2b. Explore and identify ways to disseminate information communicated via Canvas to employees who aren't Canvas users</p> <p>2c. Implement additional ways to disseminate information to employees who aren't Canvas users</p>	<p>Administrators, faculty, staff within Student Affairs, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Office of Student Equity ● Completion Center and Counseling ● Representatives from the Student Resources and Services List (see Student Services, Health/Safety, Finances, Technology, Resource Centers) <p>Administrators, faculty, staff within Academic & Institutional Affairs, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RiSE/Success Networks ● Office of Research and Planning ● OLET / OER ● Representatives from the Student Resources and Services List (see Academic Support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Canvas (campaigns/ student services hub/syllabi) ● Student Resources and Services List ● Student Essentials Support Guide ● Noncredit Canvas Student Support 	<p>2a. Launch additional campaigns at least twice a semester beginning in Fall 2022</p> <p>2b. Begin exploring in Spring 2023</p> <p>2c. Implement in Fall 2023</p>

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