

**Strategic Task Force
End of Year Progress Report (May 2014)**

Task Force Name: Closing the Gap

Charge: Identify and increase participation in new and ongoing efforts that support underrepresented student persistence and achievement (strategy B of Goal 2)

Committee Members: Angela Della Volpe (Chair), Berenecea Johnson-Eanes, Susamma Barua, Phil Janowicz, Ed Sullivan, Sheryl Fontaine, James Rodriguez, Michael Perez, Marua Yates, Melba Castro

Meeting Dates: 10/1/2013, 10/31/14, 11/13/2013, 11/21/2013, 12/4/2013, 12/18/2013, 2/18/2014, 3/11/2014, 3/25/2014, 4/23/2014, 5/8/2014

Summary of Work Performed: During the 2013-14 academic year, the Task Force completed an inventory of existing, university-wide efforts aimed at supporting underrepresented students' persistence and achievement. This list included programs housed in student services, departments and colleges. A preliminary evaluation of existing, university-wide programs shows that only a few of them are specifically aimed towards cultivating underrepresented student persistence and achievement and thus closing the gap.

Recommendations:

1. Evaluate strategies to encourage further growth and focus on development in Closing the Gap.
2. Develop an action plan for fall 2014 which includes reaching out to the campus at large and the outside community.
3. Develop a model to combine efforts with other task forces focused on bottlenecks, accountability, and assessment around campus as well as CSU system funded course redesign and student success efforts. The first step would be to fund an expansion of the efforts currently underway in the CSU/CSUF sponsored redesign RFPs. The Task Force plans to implement this plan in fall 2014.
4. Develop a plan to increase participation of underrepresented students in existing programs.
5. Continue to frame the discussion on basic questions about student attrition that can be revealed by data.
6. Generate a data table that identifies additional areas that require further investigation and/or clarification. This requires moving away from the "underrepresented" category and looking at actual ethnic group rates for 2009, 2012, and 2013; comparing first year persistence rates by colleges in 2009, 2012, and 2013; comparing remediation rates by colleges in 2009, 2012, and 2013; and looking at admissions to see if campus impact has raised students eligibility index.

Conclusions:

- Student preparation on attending college may be an important predictive factor.

- Strategies that could narrow achievement gaps include advising, high-impact practices (HIPs), an early-warning system and increased faculty/staff engagement.
- Review and evaluation of selected ongoing strategies seems to suggest the need to increase participation of underrepresented students through HIP practices and in co-curricular activities and review of bottleneck courses.
- Obstacles and challenges include the difficulty of documenting student participation in each program and pushback from faculty, departments, and colleges.

Supporting Documents (Please Attach):

1. Task Force Meeting Minutes (October 2013-May 2014)
2. Task Force Progress Reports (October 2013-May 2014)
3. References
 - 3.1 “ A Discussion of Retention, Graduation, and Gaps – Institutional Research Coffee Talk” (October 18, 2013)
 - 3.2 “Developing an Integrated First-Year Experience at Institutions with Large Non-Traditional Student Populations” – Education Advisory Board (June 2012)
 - 3.3 “Stakeholder Review of the McMaster University Library Transformation Initiative: Final Report November 13, 2006” – Inergy HR Solutions Inc.
4. CSUF Reports
 - 4.1 Town Hall presentation
 - 4.2 “Programs Aimed at Closing the Achievement Gap – Division of Student Affairs” report
 - 4.3 “Activities Related to Retaining Students” report (categorized by department)
 - 4.4 “CSU Fullerton Data Relative to Campaign for College Opportunity Findings” presentation (January 2014)
 - 4.5 “Academic and Student Success Check-In Meeting: Gap Closing Discussion Starter” presentation (February 2014)
5. Draft Action Plan: Unifying the Advisement, Bottlenecks, Gaps, Assessment, and Accountability Task Forces