CSUF

FULLERTON FORWARD: 2024-2029 STRATEGIC PLAN

Exploring the Environmental Factors to Support Visioning for the Future

A more comprehensive environmental scan is available at https://planning.fullerton.edu/help-us/index.html.

DEMOGRAPHICS — What does our potential student population look like?

The population in our service region (Los Angeles County, Orange County, Riverside County, and San Bernardino County) is declining, aging, and becoming more diverse.

↓2%

The overall population of our service region has declined by 2% since 2018, and is projected to decline further.

Growth is expected only among those aged 65 years and over, and the 0-14 age group is projected to decrease 13% between now and 2029.

The population in our service region is becoming more diverse. The Hispanic population is expected to rise by 1% to 8.6M, and the Asian population to increase by 4% to 2.6M by 2029. The White population is projected to decline by 13% to 4.2M in the same time period.

Although the number of high school graduates in our service region has increased over the past few years, the number is expected to peak in 2025. Additionally, college-going rate among high school graduates has decreased, and is projected to decrease even more.

AGES 25+

One potential student population that is on the rise is the workforce population aged 25 years or more. Almost 5M of the regional workforce population is projected to obtain a college degree or higher by 2029, a 2% increase from now.


ENROLLMENT — What does our current student population look like?

Higher education enrollment is declining, and student profile is changing.

California faced a decline in higher education enrollment, with CSU experiencing a decrease by 5% since 2018. Despite a projected national increase in undergraduate enrollment by 2030, it will not reach "peak time" enrollment for higher education.
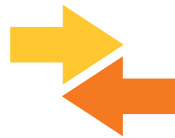
Transfer students make up a significant proportion of CSU's undergraduate population. The significant decrease in enrollment at the Community Colleges contributed to the decline of new transfer students at the CSU, particularly postpandemic.

Graduate student enrollment has increased to a level that is slightly higher than pre-pandemic. With the challenges facing undergraduate enrollment, graduate student enrollment is becoming a priority for many institutions.

There has been a considerable increase in non-resident student enrollment on both CSU and UC campuses. Looking beyond our traditional service region may offer a fruitful strategy to offset the decline in first-time freshmen and transfer enrollment from local areas.

PUBLIC INTEREST — What are the public expectations for higher education?

DURABLE SKILLS

Trends of enrollment change vary by field of study, with computer science and business seeing the most increase.

Higher education is called upon to prepare students with "Durable Skills" that transcend majors, e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, leadership, communication, & teamwork.

$8,700 MORE EARNED

Alumni research provides evidence for the value of higher education in terms of developing "Durable Skills". A recent Strada survey showed that alumni who developed such skills during college earned $8,700 more in their first year of work than their counterpart.

Authentic experiential learning opportunities in college such as undergraduate research, internships, and service learning have shown to help students gain career relevant knowledge and skills, secure higher paying jobs, and experience stronger job satisfaction.

ADULT LEARNERS

Adult learners are becoming an increasingly critical student population, as many of them are looking to return to higher education for "retooling". Institutions need to shift to better support adult learners' needs.

Higher education institutions in our service region are producing more college graduates, ready to enter the job market that has recovered from COVID-19. However, only 2/3 of CSUF graduates are employed in their fields of study.

National Center for Education Statistics data suggest that for the 25-34-year-olds, the employment rate is the highest for those with at least a bachelor's degree (86%), highlighting the value of college education with respect to employability.

TOP 10 POSTED OCCUPATIONS
Mar. 2022-Feb. 2023

OCCUPATION	POSTINGS
Registered Nurse	23,885
Software Developer/Engineer	18,986
Project Manager	12,189
Business Development/Sales Manager	10,952
Sales Representative	10,933
Operations Manager/Supervisor	10,161
Accountant	9,298
Computer Systems Engineer/Architect	8,651
Office/Administrative Assistant	8,545
Human Resources/Labor Relations Specialist	8,429

Source: Lightcast ™ https://lightcast.io/ 2023.

TOP IN-DEMAND SKILLS SOUGHT BY EMPLOYERS
Mar. 2022-Feb. 2023

SPECIALIZED SKILLS		COMMON SKILLS	
Marketing	86,760	Communications	310,383
Auditing	65,381	Management	237,849
Accounting	65,165	Leadership	174,902
Finance	63,617	Operations	154,732
Computer Science	58,121	Customer Service	138,497
Nursing	47,456	Planning	130,121
Data Analysis	42,458	Writing	126,746
Workflow Management	38,690	Problem Solving	124,135
Project Management	36,209	Sales	120,035
Process Improvement	34,284	Detail Oriented	117,558

TOP 10 COMPANIES HIRING
Mar. 2022-Feb. 2023

OCCUPATION	POSTINGS
Boeing	9,832
University of California	8,558
Northrop Grumman	8,408
Elevance Health	8,130
Cedars-Sinai	7,215
Disney	5,758
Deloitte	5,323
Providence	4,893
California State University	4,420
Amazon	4,412

Source: Lightcast ™ https://lightcast.io/ 2023.

The cost of higher education affects how potential students and families select colleges. Growing price sensitivity has made online learning an attractive choice for many students, and simultaneously, a competitive space for higher education institutions.

Online learning experience has shown to facilitate equity, inclusion and accessibility, particularly for underrepresented students. However, such experiences must be of high quality, which requires resource and support to ensure faculty and institutions are equipped to do so.

Technological advancements such as the latest AI-powered chatbot, ChatGPT, present opportunities for institutions to push for curriculum refresh and innovation so that our graduates have the skills necessary to adapt to any changes.

Governor Newsom's budget proposal released in January 2023 includes a 5% base funding increase for CSU for 2023-24, renewing the state's commitment to support our efforts in increasing enrollment, improving timely graduation, eliminating equity gaps, and helping students successfully enter the workforce.

This document is not meant to be an exhaustive review of all external environmental factors impacting CSUF. It is intended to stimulate conversations as we collectively vision our future as part of the strategic planning process.

CSUF | Institutional Effectiveness and Planning