

Many students come to college because this is what they see as the logical next step that everyone takes after high school, what their parents did, what their siblings might be doing now, and what their friends have planned, also, in enrolling in college.

But these students make the very deliberate decision to come to college to pursue a better way of life, and they are blazing their own trail ... for themselves, for their families, and for their generations to come.

Listening to First Generation College Students

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Listening to First Generation College Students...

“Being new to college can be difficult because I am in a new environment with many strange people. The transition from high school to college is a big step. I am also a first generation college student which motivates me to do well in classes and ask for help when I need it.

From my perspective, the experiences I would like to share is that professors on campus are open and willing to help students who are struggling. I struggle and experiences with professors has been a great one because I get all my questions answered which helps me in my work.

I like the different services and programs that are available whenever I need them. The variety of programs is many that are helpful.”

—New to College

“It is actually pretty difficult to be a 1st generation college student because no one in my family helped me w/the enrollment process or anything else. I had to get information about college from my high school counselor. I also don’t receive help w/my assignments from my family.

I transferred ... in the fall. I really like this campus because people are more focused in school. The professors are helpful, well most, and assignments aren’t too difficult.

I like how I can walk in and see an advisor whenever I need to speak to someone about my classes. I like that teachers have office hours that work well with my schedule. Campus staff are nice & very helpful.”

—Hispanic & 1st gen. college student.

“It has its challenges...while its been fun and educational, it has also had its overwhelming times. The pressure of being the first one at a four years and maintaining my work habits have been an obstacle for me.

I’ve had a fun time critically thinking about the new things that I’ve learned as well as meeting more people from different backgrounds.

The only things that I did not like are the personal things that I can work on and do better as a student here.”

—I am a first generation African American female who is 19 years old.

“1st generation has given me a lot of insecurities going into college and it made me ignorant of all the opportunities that I could have had.”

—Straight, Male, Hispanic, 1st gen. College, Engineering

“The challenge of being the first person in the family to go to college is that nobody tells me what college is like. So often time, I have to find out the information by myself.”

—Im Chinese and I was born in Hong Kong. Im 18 years old. Im the first person in my family to go to college.

“For me being a first generation college student, adapting to college has been more difficult to those who have parents or sibling who went to college because I came in as a clean slate eager to learn so that I can help my family as the oldest child out of five.

What I like is that my classes have not been so big, so I have the opportunity for one on one with the professor.”

—1st generation Mexican college student

“Well, to be honest, it is quite hard being able to attend Sacramento State because of the help that I did not receive from my family due to them not having further education.”

—First year of Sacramento State University of the age of 18 years old. I am an Asian American that has a Chinese and Hmong cultural background. I am a Bilingual first generation female student that is focusing on helping out my family in the future.

“Being young and first generation student is definitely a challenge. Sometimes I have many questions and I have to look for that help.”

—19 yrs old first generation student

“Being a student at a 4-year university is awesome. First one in my family to go to college! I really enjoy the professors here. They are extremely helpful.”

—Caucasian, 21, 2nd semester

“I am honored in being first generation to attend a 4-year university. Also for being Hispanic/Latina because that race/ethnicity doesn’t dominate the populations in universities.”

—Hispanic/Latina, 18, female, first-generation

“Being the first generation college student is intimidating! Passing all classes is a struggle. College is stressful! College gave me a high blood pressure as a Christmas gift. ☹️”

—Pacific Islander – 19 years old!

“Being first generation puts a lot of pressure on my self to succeed. I have challenges at home that I get through and try not to let affect my school work.”

—First generation Chicana American mixed with native american, age 19 from sacramento california.

“It’s new for me. Being Hispanic the cliché that my grandparents and parents didn’t go to college is real. I’m always nervous or unsure here.

Since I have no clue what I was doing when I started I missed New Student orientation and came to the wrong major orientation.”

—Hispanic Female 20 years old

“I am a first generation here in college and it is somewhat difficult for me to stay motivated. Some courses are difficult to comprehend. A challenge that I face was being motivated in some of my classes because some of them are lectures and its difficult to maintain a class without no discussions.

What I would like to share from my experience is having all these fantastic resources. I could not ask for more than that. There are such great resources like laptops, printers, wifi, reading and writing center, study places, and etc. What I like that has work for me at CSUS is having some professors who are so kind and such motivating teachers.”

—I am Asian-Hmong, 18 years old.

“It is a bit of a challenge because I am a first generation so when I come across an issue with school I can not go my family.”

—A first generation, 18 year old, Hispanic female.

“It’s a journey.

I’ve had several educators who have sparked my interest in learning.

I’ve encountered professionals working at this campus who are not understanding or patient with first generation college students.”

—Mexican, Female, 21

“No one in my family ever went to college and therefore it has been a challenge.

I enjoy the professors how that can be there for you. The campus is big and there is enough room for each person who comes. Sometimes work gets overloaded and too much stress on my plate.”

—I am Hispanic/Mexican-American and I am 18 years old.

“It is a bit challenging as I am the first in my family to come to a four year university. I is exciting as I know I am part of a minority group that I push myself to succeed.

I like that the environment is very diverse and that works for me because I feel comfortable with where I am at.”

—I am an 18 year old mexican american.

“Being a first generation to attend college is hard because you don’t know a lot of the resources available to you, that maybe someone with a family member in college has.”

—1st generation to attend college, Mexican, 24 years old

“It is great to be at CSUS. I am the first of my family to go to college and CSUS has been a great experience. I love the professors.”

—Mexican, Age 18

“As a first generation college student, it motivates me to not give up & strive for excellence; be the 1st in my family to get a degree.

(An experience I would like to share is) Becoming connected – being heard. Seeing professors during office hours or asking questions in class; be heard – don’t just be ‘another student’”

—Latino, Male, 19 and A 1st Generation College Student

“I come from a Hispanic family where I am the first in my family to go to college in the US. My mother and my dad always encouraged me to go to college because they knew getting a degree/education is important.

CSUS has treated me great!”

—Hispanic/female

“I think it is good to be the first student from my family to come to college and to be able to go to a university and keep my goals it feels great and so much accomplished.

I would like to share how everybody is caring and really want us to keep pushing.”

—I am a black African American student that is 19 years old and I am also a young mother and I am a first year student here at sac state and is enrolled in EOP program here on sac state campus.

“Being a college student coming from a minority group can be very difficult. Sometimes you lack a lot of motivation because neither parent went to college they barely made it through grade school. So discouragement would be a big part.

(I like) the environment, and all the resources. I just feel so welcomed and in the right place.”

—Hispanic, 18 years old. Went through depression this year due to a family loss.

“first from family in college...classes have been comfortable”

—twenty and pacific islander

“Being a FG has made college be on a new spectrum. I came into college not knowing a lot of information and I had very little support from my family

I like finding this university as a home”

—first generation

“It’s difficult to be the first one in your family in college because it’s a lot of pressure. As a Mexican American, I’m also driven by my cultural need to help my family. Again, a lot of pressure.”

—Mexican American female. First generation college student

“College can be scary since you don’t have no one at home to help you with college.”

—first year generation student/Hispanic

“Of course I can not compare my experience so far to anything else because this is all I’ve ever known. But so far my experience has been fairly laid back or easy. I’ve had to work my way through college while maintaining full-time status.”

—Caucasian, first generation college, senior, 23, male

“It can be hard because no one in my family has knowledge about college.

Everything is doable when you have the right courage and motivation to reach your goals. It can be scary at first but being persistent will always help.”

—a Chicana first generation student

“good, encouraging. Experiences w/amazing professors.”

—21 yrs old (1st in fam to go to college)

“I feel proud being in CSUS and being mexian american, im like an example to the Mexican community if I graduate college. Also my parents are proud because im the first generation in the family to go to college.

Majority of the teachers here are very nice, they want you to succeed.”

—Im a first generation student. Im Mexican American. I started as seventeen in college and know im eighteen. I come from a middle class family.

“Being Mexican-American is an honor, because I’m one of the many first generation students on campus, and my parents are very proud of me.

I like how I feel welcomed and at home here on campus.”

—Mexican American, 18, female (1st generation, migrant background)

“Being a student here makes me feel like a role model.

What I like about CSUS and has worked for me is CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program). I like CAMP because CAMP is like my family away from home. Guiding me through college since I am a first generation student.”

—of Mexican Culture

“It makes it harder because I also have to commute everyday with the risk of something happening to me.

What I like about Sac State is the sports where I can relieve my stress.

What I don’t like about Sacramento State is that not all teachers make it a welcoming environment for the students so it makes it difficult for students to get proper education. Sometimes is hard to concentrate in class because some classmates won’t be quiet.”

—a low income student and trying to have a proper education that is a first generation college graduate.

“It’s a challenge because I have no family members whom I can count on when it comes to college education. Also, because of my language barrier & because I’m the first person in my family to go to college. Not an easy experience. It’s difficult.”

—Mexican born & raised, 23 years old, first generation student who attends college in my entire family. Move to the US 10 years ago.

“Being a student who is Hmong and is a first generation college student, there are a lot of pressure to do well and graduate college with a degree and have a career set.

What I like about here at CSUS is the fact that there are many organizations you can get involved with and everyone, even the students (whether you know them or not) are all really warm and welcoming.”

—Hmong and first generation college student

“Here at CSUS the college is diverse with many people of different culture whether its race or ethnicity and I feel comfortable and welcomed. No matter the age I get to meet different people and it helps me network through college so far.

The peer tutoring workshops or career workshops in general help expand the sources I can go through to help with the classes I am struggling in.

The advisors were helpful and welcoming in allowing my questions to be answered as clearly as possible. The tutoring sessions helped me as well in aiding my classes.”

—I am a Asian female student and currently 18 years old turning 19 this year. With the challenges of being the first in my family to go to college, I am new to this experience of college.

“It is hard to be a student...because I have no mentors and role models. I feel like getting to know people and the resources was hard. Also, at first you feel like you don’t belong, but as time passes, it feels different.

What I liked about Sac State was that I got the opportunity to attend here.”

—I am Mexican. I am a female, 19 years of age. First Generation college student. I am not poor nor rich. I am one of 3 kids going to college in my family. I have 6 sisters and 2 brothers, not counting my dads kids.

“Being hispanic is very fun in that there are people with similar backgrounds. One difficulty is that even with support from my parents I feel like I’m on my own because my parents never went to college.”

—Mexican male 20 Gay 1st generation to go to college

“Its a very different experience then being in high school. I live out here in sacramento so I did not go very far but I love living away from home in a way.”

—I am a first generation college student, straight out of high school. african american female

“First-Year: In my family (& extended) I am the only one who has graduated & make it into a 4 yr university. So many things are expected of me because I have made it this far. I can’t give up because there’s so many people in my family relying on me to succeed.

I want to be able to succeed in school & make my family proud. I don’t have a social life, I don’t have friends & my whole week consists of studying & still failing half of my exams.

Classes that do not require multiple choice exams are what has worked for me in Sac State. Classes that provide alternatives to exams (essays, short quizzes, presentations, projects) are what made my experience worth while. Those alternatives provide a hands-on approach that help me imbed these things in my school career. – I actually learn –

Exams do not work for me. I don’t get feedback from exams & a pass/fail does not help me succeed in school, instead it discourages me from trying harder—because no matter what I’m only memorizing to pass & not learn.”

—Latina / 19 / First generation college student

“Being a first generation college student is a source of pride and accomplishment for me & my family.”

—white, female, 25, heterosexual, transfer student, first generation college student

“It’s a bit more challenging being the first in my family to attend college. At first it was hard seeing other more seasoned college students take the classes they need, study a specific way, and work the college system. As I got older and took more classes, reached out to campus organizations, it got easier, but I felt I had to LEARN it on my own.

—21 years old, Laotian, first generational.

“It’s what every college student should experience, diversity, challenges and hard to relate (to professors, culture, and style of teaching).

As a latino male who is new to college, it is hard to adapt. I myself struggle to pay for my tuition and some of the topics feel outdated or not needed to be successful in my career or when I graduate. Our semesters are tailored to learn a little about the subject and move on to the next, not go in depth and truly learn the subject.”

—Male, Latino, 27 years old, New to College, first generation college student.

“I am the oldest and my parents immigrated here 25 years ago. I did not have any older siblings to tell me how to do little things. I did not have anyone to seek advice from.... Nobody was open to help (here at CSUS). So I really had to struggle to get through it.”

—a female, graduating in Dec. First generation graduating from college in America.

***“I am a female, Hispanic, first generation student who feels that I am going on the right path to a brighter future by attending CSU. Although I had many paths to take I chose this path because I want to discover who I was, my strengths, and capabilities of not only attending a CSU but also attending a CSU that isn’t close to home.*”**

***In the beginning I felt like it was hard to concentrate on my studies but after I stopped and began to remember why I decided to take this path it motivated me to keep striving no matter the circumstances.*”**

I felt like belonging in a group is what helped me get through my first year especially when you don’t know anyone and don’t want to feel down because you feel like you are alone.”

—No students specifics given, other than what is stated above

“The challenges are being on my own—being the first in my family to go to college. I have to rely on my own motivation from within. It can be a little intimidating and discouraging at times.”

—male, 27, learning challenges, with possible dyslexia, anxiety, returning student, junior year. I will be the first in my family to graduate with a degree.

“Being the first person to get this far in college, I find it important to set a good example that if the work is put in, success in college is achievable for anyone.”

—Male, mixed ethnicity, 23, first generation college student.

“It can be difficult due to the fact that I am the first in my family to come to college and my parents don’t speak English.”

—a first year, Mexican, woman who is 18 years old

“My first year has been great.... (I like) The FYE & the friends I’ve made.”

—Mexican, 18, Male, 1st Generation College Student

“It’s also difficult b/c I have no family who’s gone to college and I’ve had to figure it out on my own b/c Sac State does a poor job of providing graduation plans, enough classes, and it’s very overwhelming.”

—Latina (F) age 23, 1st to graduate

“Being a student with the perspective of a first generation Hmong student who is 19 years old, I feel welcomed and glad that I came to Sacramento State University.”

—I am a first-generation female Hmong student who is 19 years old.

“I’m the first one in my family to go to college so I never had the stories/past experiences to look back on from my siblings.”

—Female, Filipino, 23 years old, graduating senior

“Being a first generation college student may be challenging at times. I’m the youngest out of 6, left my home at the age of 18 in Los Angeles to come to Sacramento State. It’s challenging because its hard for me to communicate with my family about college life because they don’t understand it. You also can’t ask them for help because they didn’t pursue higher education. That is why the available resources are extremely helpful for students like me. Adjusting from high school to college can be a little challenging. A challenge for me so far has been writing at college level English meeting the Professors standards.”

—first generation, hispanic, 18 year old

“Its different and sometimes difficult to navigate the way of ‘college’ without having anyone for guidance. Sac State staff is helpful!

Advising is super helpful and faculty eager to help!”

—First Generation, ESL, Latino

“It is challenging, feel like I have no guidance. When I go to advising, my questions aren’t answered....”

—25 yo First Gen. College Student, Female

“It is hard!! I don’t have any professors that have the same skin color as me. Many professors do not understand the life of a low income/first generation student.

Thankfully, equity programs have helped me (such as CAMPS & EOP). I am now graduating from Sacramento State...and it has only taken me 4½.”

—Latino, 23, Graduating Senior

“It feels nice to be the first of my family to attend a university here in the U.S.”

—a 22 year-old Mexican

“There is nothing particularly unique about being a student with this perspective here at CSUS it’s at home where CSUS and education that I gain is undermined & irrelevant according to my family.

I like the community of this university as well as the opportunities provided.”

—first generation, 1 out of 10 siblings, second to graduate college

“All of my professors have really great and I haven’t had any difficulties understanding them so they have made the class easy to understand, they have also been very helpful....”

I feel like I picked the right school for me so far as now I love everything about CSUS.”

—a first generation female college student. Who is of age 19 and parents are divorced.

First Generation College Students

The last *Sacramento State University Fact Book* reports 14,780 undergraduate first generation students in Fall 2016, 53.1% of the study body.

First generation college students are students whose parents have not obtained a post-secondary degree. They will be the first in their families to get their college education, or one of the first; a younger sibling will also likely be learning educational processes and pathways all or mostly on their own, making it a first generation college experience for them, as well.

First generation college students are very likely to come from a financially disadvantaged family. They may come from middle income family backgrounds, but the majority are from low income family backgrounds, some the children of migrant workers.

Many are from a culturally diverse background, and may be immigrants, documented or undocumented. They are often students of color and, thus, minority underrepresented: African American students, Latino students, American Indian students, and Pacific Islander and Asian students who are typically the most academically at risk of students.

Some may also be multilingual students, learning a new language while also learning the subject matter in their courses.

Low income, underrepresented minority, and multilingual are factors that, alone and in combination, can lower the likelihood of a student's success in college.

Yet research shows that, once controlling for these variables, first generation status, in and of itself, puts the student at risk academically.

Study after study shows that first generation college students are very likely to drop out of college in the first year or two because of the enormous difficulties they face.

Less Readiness for College

First generation college students:

- Tend to have less familiarity with the world of college—they are “going it alone” in terms of figuring out how to apply, how to enroll in classes, where to go, what to do, and whom to ask. College is an entirely new and often intimidating world to just about any beginning student, but especially to those who do not have the benefit of family members to provide pivotal guidance and direction.
- Tend to have taken little to no college preparation courses in high school—they are already academically behind. Many assess into remedial courses, and many struggle in these and their other college classes. Research tell us that they often have not yet developed good study habits or time management skills from their high school education, they don't usually know where to turn for help in terms of student services/academic support, and they will be less likely to approach their instructors or classmates for assistance or advice.

Less Money for College

First generation college students:

- Usually have little to no family financial assistance—their parents tend to be low in income and may not be able to afford college tuition for their child. Money is a primary concern for the family, and especially with a child going to college.
- Tend to not be aware of how and where to obtain financial aid—they may not know of all the resources available to them, the very students who often need that support the most. They also will probably not know about the many opportunities on campus for student employment, paid internships, scholarships, student discounts, and the like, to offset costs.
- Typically have to work hard to pay for tuition, books, and living expenses—trying to balance the demands of work and school can be exhausting for them, and the worry over money and trying to make ends meet can be a huge stressor.

Less Time for College

First generation college students:

- Usually have less opportunity to take advantage of campus support services, student study groups, faculty office hours, and college life activities and organizations, due to work pressures.
- Often also have family pressures that pull them away from the campus or their coursework to come home and spend time with family, care for younger siblings, do chores around the house, or assist parents in interpreting in various errands and household tasks (e.g., mail, bills, taxes, shopping, form completion).

The Stress and Support of Their Families

First generation college students:

- Often receive high family support—parents who really want to see their child graduate. Some may have heard the stories of how family members struggled and sacrificed for future generations to make a better life for themselves or heard the pride in their parents’ voices in sharing the news that their child is the first going to college. They carry with them lifelong messages about the great importance placed on education by their families, and feel the significance and honor of their role as the first in the family to go to college. This may cause a tremendous amount of pressure to succeed, either from parents who are really “on” their child in terms of graduating, or that the student places on themselves, in not wanting to disappoint the family. Sometimes it is both. Fear of failing can be overwhelming for first generation college students, especially if the student doesn’t perform well on an assignment or slips in grades.
- May receive low to no family support—get pressure from their families to drop out of college and “get out there and make money” in order to help relieve financial stresses. Studying for exams and writing papers can be difficult enough for just about any student to summon up the motivation to do, but first generation college students might be faced with the added disincentive of their family’s disapproval or even ridicule.

- May receive mixed family support—parents who want their child to graduate but do not understand the demands of college and just how much studying might take away from time on a job or work at home caring for younger siblings or doing chores. The student might be really working hard on coursework, but have the stress of parents pressuring them to hurry them up, parents who might see them as slow to do the work or even lazy.

Their Feelings about College

First generation college students:

- May feel very intimidated—college, in terms of both the campus and the concept, may be very new and unfamiliar territory. First generation students often report feeling an onslaught of uncertainty, one that often begins on that very first day of the semester as the student takes a look around the class and at the course syllabus.
- May feel a real sense of guilt—about being in college when their other family members did not have that opportunity, about not contributing to the family while their parents sacrifice financially to help them attend college, about sitting in class while their parents work long, hard hours.
- May feel embarrassment or shame regarding their low socioeconomic background—and feel that divide between themselves and their classmates.
- May battle feelings of inadequacy or deficiency—because no family members have gone to college, they may wonder, at some level, if they even belong here on campus. And if they are struggling academically, that feeling of not being cut out for college, not being “college material,” may deepen.
- May feel estranged from or rejected by the people in their lives—their friends or family members who do not go to college. Pursuing their higher education makes them very different, and, for some, this may become a sharp wedge between themselves and the people they care about. Sometimes relationships may become strained or ties deteriorate because of the choice the student made to attend college.
- May feel very isolated for all of these reasons—being so very different from most of their classmates, but not entirely fitting in any more with their family and friends. Sometimes this is described as “having one foot in each world,” college life and home life, but not fully belonging in either.
- May feel very conflicted about being in college—they may want badly to succeed, but struggle with the feeling that they just might be losing themselves and the people they love in the process. Feeling torn can be anguishing and competing loyalties confusing.

Any or all of these feelings may result in some first generation college students procrastinating on their school work, only putting forth partial effort, or even self-sabotaging their academic standing. This may also cause some students to devalue their academic achievements or career aspirations. This may even be the reason that some first generation students drop out altogether, even when they were succeeding in college.

What We Can Do

Connect With the Student

Faculty/staff interaction with a student is pivotal. Whether academic or social, formal or informal, short or longer-term, the interactions we have with our students matter in so many ways. Every connection a student makes with someone at the college helps to build a stronger foundation for that student's academic success. Every connection made can help the student to feel more comfortable in the classroom, more included and content in college life, and set down the "roots" so essential to academic persistence and retention. Every connection made can help the student to better learn course material and academic skills, contribute to the student's personal growth and intellectual development, shape decisions made in major and future career, and impact educational aspirations and attainment. *Those connections are key, and every single one counts.*

This is true for all students, decades of research show, but especially with first generation college students. You might be the one person on campus at this time that the student knows, the only person in the student's academic life that they feel able to turn to with questions, concerns, or conversation.

As staff and faculty, myriad opportunities to connect with our students arise in the classroom, office, department, or out on campus.

Talk with the student.

Get to know students through more personal conversation. Ask how their semester is going, what classes they are taking, and what their interests or hobbies might be. Taking the time to talk in this way shows interest in the student, and also paves the way for greater discussion regarding college or coursework.

Show you care.

Faculty and staff members' heartfelt, caring attitude is one of the most important factors in student retention and success. Offering encouragement to the student who feels overwhelmed, conveying concern for the student who is going through something, validating a student who has expressed self-doubt regarding academic ability, reaching out to the student who appears lost or disengaged, or finding services for the student who is clearly struggling, all can mean more than we ever realize. *So much rides on first generation college students*, but they are often all on their own in terms of making it through college. You may be the only source of support that the student has, the one person who turns that situation around for the student.

Show you believe in them.

All students benefit from a faculty or staff member's clear and strong stated belief in them, but some more than others. Research shows that first generation college students tend to doubt their academic abilities, even when they have the same level of high school preparation and achievement as other students. Our faith in them can be incredibly impactful, assuring them that they are well-placed and have what it takes to succeed in college—when others in their educational pasts or even themselves may have said otherwise.

Encourage Student Connections

Student-to-student interactions are also vital. As human beings, we all want to feel a sense of belonging. Young adults, in particular, typically have a much higher need for acceptance and inclusion with their peers, and older students, with a much lower number of similar-aged peers, may struggle to feel connection with their classmates.

Creating opportunities for students to interact and connect with one another can go a long way toward building a greater sense of belonging, and has other important benefits, as well. Student-to-student interactions can also enhance classroom experiences and learning, help with studying and assignment completion, lead to advice given about classes and college life, and build support systems that are sometimes the one thing that keeps a student coming to school.

Student talk is powerful. Yet while students often want to talk with their peers, they don't always know how to start up a conversation, especially in the first half of a semester. Often, for example, you will see that they turn to checking their text messages before class rather than chatting with their peers, and many will admit this is because they feel awkward or unsure of what to say.

As faculty and staff, we are well-positioned to facilitate student relationships in the classroom and out on campus.

Get them talking.

We typically feel more at ease when we get to know people, but sitting silently side by side in a classroom lecture next to strangers will not help in this regard. Icebreakers and introductions will go a long way to helping all students to feel more at ease and open up conversation with others. Introducing students to one another in casual conversations in departments, offices, or out on campus can also be helpful in forging student-to-student connections. Highlighting the unique qualities, interests, and achievements of students, academic or otherwise, may also offer a way for students to learn more about their peers and create conversational openers.

Keep them talking.

Provide opportunities for students to continue to talk to one another and work together in the classroom through pair or group learning activities, assigned group projects, class discussions, student presentations, and so forth. Encouraging student dialogue further increases the possibility of student connections being made, and also promotes more active learning of course content, development of cognitive thinking and communication skills, and exposure to diverse views, values, work habits, and life-worlds. Straight lecture, in contrast, is seldom ideal to maximum student learning, and has the added disadvantage of limiting student interaction.

Getting students to connect with each other, as well as with you, is key to student success, research has shown time and time again.

Help the Student to Connect with College

While students wonder from time to time whether they really want or need to be here, first generation college students may find it especially difficult to connect with the material they are learning and the campus they are attending. Some may struggle with the inability to fully appreciate the long-term benefits of their college education when, in the immediate here-and-now, they may be really struggling financially, emotionally, and/or academically. Some may question the cost of pursuing their higher education when this may distance themselves from the people they love and the world they come from and feel comfortable in. Some may want desperately to be here, but question whether they are capable—or even deserving—enough. Add to that the fact that first generation college students are typically going it alone—tackling college with little to no family background to help navigate academia—and this can make their enrollment and success in college tenuous.

But first generation college students stand to gain so much from their college education—for themselves, for their families, and for their future generations. And we, as a community and as a country, stand to gain so much from their success. As staff and faculty, we can help students to better see the importance of college and relevance to their lives, and do all we can to support their efforts to achieve their college education.

Remind them of how much their education is worth.

Students usually know that “college is important,” but they don’t always realize just how much in concrete terms. In addition to discovering and developing skills and talents and learning about the vast, dynamic world in which we live, a college education increases one’s career options and life-time financial stability. Many positions these days require a college degree to even be permitted an interview or promotion at work. Those who attain a Bachelor’s degree earn over four hundred dollars per week more than those without college degrees and their chances of unemployment are cut almost in half when compared to those with a high school diploma, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Earnings and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment 2017.” This totals about a million dollars more earned in one’s lifetime than those with only the high-school degree, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Help the student to set educational goals.

When students have difficulty deciding upon a major, they may flounder in college. Helping the student to formulate educational goals gives students a clear purpose and path to take in academia, and helps to reduce the uncertainty of how to move forward or why they are here. Setting specific goals has the added advantage of increasing the likelihood of goal attainment—student success. Students declaring their major as early as possible in the first or second year, increase the likelihood of graduation and decrease the time-to-degree, according to a 2013 study by the campus Office of Institutional Research (OIR) (“Student Behaviors in Relation to Majors and the Impact on Graduation”). And for students who remain unsure about their educational goals, sometimes just letting them know that college is a good time to explore their interests can set their minds at ease and give them a little breathing room while they are still deciding.

Share your “college survival tips.”

Who knows better the ropes of making it through Sacramento State than the faculty and staff who work here? “College knowledge” is valuable, but something not all students have. Some of our students may be first generation college students without the benefit of having family members who have gone to college and can provide guidance, others may not yet have friends on the campus who can “dial them in” to college life. Discussing the process of class registration and payment or the importance of assignment completion, prioritizing time, due dates and late work, attendance and absences, and so forth, can be tremendously helpful.

Encourage student involvement in college life.

Research shows that student engagement, such as extra-curricular activities, positively impacts academic performance, including research done on this campus by the Office of Institutional Research (“The Impact of Extracurricular Activity on Student Academic Performance”). Students reap so many other practical benefits from participation in campus life, as well. Campus clubs and organizations give students the opportunity to develop leadership and interpersonal skills, and gain experience to state on a resume or in a job interview and then draw upon in the working world. Campus events offer students exposure to information and experiences different than classroom learning. All forms of campus involvement give students opportunities for interacting with their peers, faculty, and staff, where they can make those personal connections so essential to feeling a sense of inclusion on campus and also increase access to valuable information regarding courses, services, and opportunities. Studies show that first generation college students will spend the least amount of time participating in student clubs, projects, study groups, or campus events—despite the fact that they typically have the most to gain from connecting with their classmates and the campus in such ways. Faculty and staff can encourage student engagement by announcing campus events and activities (or building these into course assignments) and explaining the importance of these to students.

Tell students all that the campus has to offer.

Sacramento State also offers so many great programs and services, all additional ways to get students engaged and increase their likelihood of staying and succeeding in college. There are internships and study abroad opportunities, campus rooms for veterans, athletes, and LGBT students, and programs geared to first generation college students, first year students, honors students, and more. The opportunities abound for all, but students don’t always know they are there. Faculty and staff can help in this regard by helping to spread the word about campus programs and services.

Let them shine.

When students are able to showcase their talents and bloom in their abilities for all to see, they forge for themselves a place in academia that has real meaning and significance to them. When students are given the opportunity and encouragement to shine in their classes and out on campus in all of the ways unique to them, they may feel a greater sense of belonging at the school, a stronger belief in their capabilities, a deeper connection to what they are learning. And for some, this may be the exact point when they realize they are here to stay, when they begin to envision more themselves graduating from college one day.

Foster Academic Competence

Studies show that first generation college students are typically not academically prepared coming into college, and the basic skills deficit may be considerable due to any number of factors, including socioeconomic and cultural disparities that often accompany first generation college student status. *Some may really struggle in their classes here.* This can impact not only a student's sense of self-efficacy in academia and, consequently, the choice to continue on with their coursework or not, but also, potentially, the possibility of even attending college in the first place.

Many first generation college students rely upon financial aid to get their college education, but if a student fails to show consistent satisfactory academic progress, then the student may have to pay that money back and/or becomes ineligible for financial loans. Students in this position may be forced to leave college, sometimes never to return. We lose them, and they lose the opportunity to obtain that college degree that will help to secure greater future financial livelihood.

As faculty, we play a significant role in our students' success in our classroom and progress through college.

Know that the student's first year here is critical.

How well the first year goes for a student may be the deciding factor in continuing on with their college education or not. Research tells us that when students' grades drop below a 2.0 GPA in the first or second semester, they are at greater risk of dropping out ("Peak Time and Class Level for Withdrawals: A Study on First-Time Freshmen and Transfers, 2011-2012"). While this study was done in 2011, before Graduation Initiatives, and the retention, attrition, and graduation rates have recently improved, this finding regarding peak withdrawal time still may be used, according to the OIR. That means that helping students who are struggling from the very start is essential; early intervention is crucial. Every instructor can help in this regard, and especially those who teach remedial courses and those who teach the core classes in their subject areas, those "gateway" classes that must be passed in order for the student to move on to the next consecutive courses.

Reduce costs to their learning.

Again, many students depend on financial aid, but many forms of financial aid do not kick in until a few weeks after the start of the semester. Not having the money to buy the course textbook and any other required class supplies puts them at a definite disadvantage in terms of getting off to a good start and feeling comfortable with coursework and assignments. Instructors can help to offset financial obstacles to learning by putting their course textbooks on Reserve and/or offering an extra desk copy to loan a student in need, allowing online submission of papers to lower printing costs, and keeping required supplies or other class expenses to an absolute minimum.

Be clear on why they need to come to class.

Research shows that students' class attendance can be the best predictor of college grades, more so than high school grade point average, SAT scores, and study habits and skills. Students need to be in class in order to stay on track with assignment due dates, and learn the material presented in lecture that is not in their textbook but shows up on exams. Students also better complete assignments and work with their fellow classmates when there is regular, ongoing contact with the instructor and their peers. Having a clear attendance policy in your syllabus, and stating the importance of it to students, will go a long way in this regard.

Create a supportive classroom climate.

In addition to strategies already mentioned earlier, your own good nature, humor, approachability, and warmth can help students to feel comfortable in class and connection with the instructor. This will set a good tone all around and facilitate greater, more positive interaction with you and their peers. Similarly, your love for teaching and passion for your field also help students to connect with you, and learning increases when students can see how deeply their instructor regards the act of teaching and the value of course content.

Encourage students to come see you.

We all know that richer, sometimes even transformative conversation becomes more likely in one-on-one interaction, something that the other students in the classroom may prevent. Your genuine invitation to students to stop by and see you in your office hours can go a long way to increasing the number who do. This can also help those who feel intimidated at the prospect of doing so or who are hesitant to "bother" you to feel more comfortable. Office hours are that key time where you can answer questions that a student might feel reluctant to ask in class or need answered more fully, allay concerns or help a student overcome obstacles to course progression, give guidance to help a student get on track or stay on track in college life, help students to get to know and connect with you, lend an ear to a student in need, and inspire students to aim high in their professional and educational aspirations.

Teach clearly.

As clear as we want to be or maybe think we are, there is always room for improvement. A few quick reminders: Start each lecture with a preview of the key material to be covered, transition clearly between points so that students can more easily follow along, and then summarize key points at the end to drive them home. Present all key terms and concepts visually on slides, the board, or hand-outs, and provide clear definitions, explanations, and examples. Deliver material with appropriate vocal rate, volume, and expressiveness, pausing to allow time for processing and/or note-taking, and use good eye contact, facial expression, and movement, all to enhance learner attention, enjoyment, comprehension, and retention of the material. Offer frequent opportunities for students to ask questions, but also look for nonverbal signs of confusion indicating that you may have lost them.

Engage learners.

There will likely be a time or two in class when our students' interest or level of thinking about the day's material wanes. A few quick tips: Teach in a way that invites the learners' critical reflection of, active participation in, and personal connection to the subject matter at hand. Highlight the aspects of the content each day that you find or past students have found particularly fascinating, thought-provoking, or valuable. Play to your strengths as an instructor. Try to work within the natural human attention span by breaking up straight lecture segments with stimulating class discussion, meaningful student work, challenging group collaboration, great clips, and helpful skill development exercises. Craft lessons in keeping with the notion that students learn best when they can engage in course material with their eyes, ears, voice, minds, and hearts.

Make room in instruction for them.

Remember that academia can seem like the professors' world, ruled by instruction and the instructor, without a real place for the student other than a desk in class, so be sure to give space and freedom for students to share their own knowledge, understanding, perspective, or experience in relation to the topic at hand, whenever possible. Students teach students in ways we cannot, and, of course, students teach us, too. Not only do all learn more fully and richly, but the students come to see themselves as co-creators of knowledge, active in their own education, and gain confidence in their academic potential and sense of place.

Show the value of what they're learning.

Some students may question the importance of the course content they are studying, the relevance of the material to the reality of their day-to-day lives and future success, especially in their general education courses, and this may demotivate and hinder learning. Try to show at every turn the value of the subject matter to students in terms of how learning the material will be useful to them personally (in their daily lives and growth as a human being) professionally (in their present and future occupations) academically (in progressing through their next level courses, satisfying their academic requirements in order to get that degree, etc.) and societally (in our communities and country).

Prep them for what to expect on your tests.

We often forget just how daunting or difficult exams can be, sometimes even for our top students. Add in the fact that often times instructors test very differently, and some students experience very real test anxiety, and the potential for poor exam performance rises. A few quick tips: Provide good study guidelines for exams well in advance, and give sample study questions that demonstrate both the format and the content of the questions that will be asked, if possible. Explain what constitutes a good answer to a test question and why. Offer adequate opportunity for students to ask questions about the exam, including an instructor review of the material, if possible. Encourage the use of student study groups by highlighting the benefits and, if possible, allowing a little class time to form the groups and get them started reviewing for the test.

Offer a variety of assignments.

When possible, use different types of assignments, such as papers, presentations, and group projects, as well as exams. Different assessment measures allow students greater opportunity to maximize their strengths and improve in other less developed areas. The former builds confidence to achieve the latter.

Give freedom in topic choice.

Allow students to choose their own topic, if possible, when assigning papers, presentations, or projects. This can help with comfort level (they will likely have some knowledge of a topic they have chosen) motivation (they will probably pick something of interest to them) and learning (they can focus on learning the new skills or information that the assignment was designed to accomplish).

Be clear in what you want.

Clear assignment descriptions and rubrics give all students a foundation for success, but especially the students who may already be feeling a little lost or shaky in academic life. Give assignment directions both in writing and out loud, and welcome questions to clarify expectations when there is confusion or misinterpretation. Try to prevent student mistakes by sharing samples of exemplary work done by past students and giving students a “heads up” regarding common mistakes made on the assignment in the past.

Set high expectations accompanied by high support.

Setting the bar high in terms of the nature or specifications of assignments and exams can challenge students to do their best, drive them to excel, and spur them to realize just how strong and capable they are as learners. All are substantial dividends that carry forward to their other classes, present and future. That said, setting high expectations without providing clear assignment directions and grading criteria, accompanying academic resources, sufficient classroom preparation or instructor guidance, and so forth may set students up for failure. Scaffolding of assignments (building smaller assignments, with points and due dates, into the larger ones) can be a great way to help students achieve a lot in terms of course objectives and end tasks, while also decreasing anxiety (taking it one step at a time) and room for error (the instructor can see if the students are on track with the bigger assignment).

Provide opportunity for maximum assignment performance.

Allow students the opportunity to have you review a rough draft of their work prior to the due date, arrange for peer review opportunities in your course, and/or consider building rough drafts into an assignment process/grade, when possible. This helps the student to stay on track with due dates and assignment requirements and gain confidence in the work they have done, and may prevent failure to do the assignment correctly or at all. Allowing an assignment “re-do” is also a good way to help a student salvage a grade, as well as increase learning.

Give helpful, corrective feedback.

We all know that timely and constructive feedback on assignment performance can be highly influential on a student's academic performance in class. Be clear on exactly what the student could improve upon and how specifically they might do so. Many times students don't understand what mistakes they made on an assignment and are hesitant to ask the instructor, and the result may be that they continue to make the same mistakes in that class and their other classes, too.

Give positive, encouraging feedback.

Complimenting strengths shown can help students to capitalize upon these skills in future coursework and gain greater confidence in their academic abilities. We oftentimes forget just how much a compliment to a student can mean, and for some, your praise can be that sometimes badly needed reassurance that they are capable, that they do belong here in academia.

Keep an eye out.

Again, first generation college students are typically not academically prepared coming into college and may struggle in their coursework; studies also tell us they will be the least likely to seek assistance. Be proactive and "check in" with students, especially when they might appear to be struggling, but don't come to you for help. This one gesture can make a world of difference in terms of a student passing a class or failing it, in continuing on in their college education or dropping out.

Teach the basics to a student in need.

Take a few minutes with a student in need to give advice on such things as how best to take notes in lecture, study for your tests, research a topic or cite sources, outline a speech, or structure a paper. That one area that you helped the student in might have been the one thing styming them on an assignment's completion. That small amount of guidance on a fundamental college skill can be a turning point in the student's sense of competence in academia and lead to a huge step forward in the student's progress in college.

Steer students to the academic help they need on campus.

Research tells us that first generation college students will typically know the very least about all of the student services available to help them out financially, academically, and in many other ways. Sacramento State has excellent academic support services that most students don't know very much or at all about, and that some students especially might need to survive and succeed in their classes. Show the student the specific service on the campus website or describe what the service will provide for the student and where it is located. Even better, walk the student over there. At the end of this section, you will find a list of campus resources that first generation college students usually need, sometimes desperately, in order to succeed in their college education.

Pick them up if they fall.

Students may really struggle in your class and fail an assignment, exam, or the class itself. The sense of shame or futility may be a real roadblock to moving forward in their other classes and/or in the next semester. When a student stumbles academically, a few quick words or, better yet, sitting down and having that talk to try to mitigate the effects of a low or failing grade can mean so much. You can help the student to realize that sometimes the most valuable learning comes from mistakes made or that academic ability is much like a muscle that needs to be exercised and, over time, will grow and strengthen. This may set their mind at ease and give them badly needed encouragement. Sharing your own stumbles in school or problems in learning can also show the student that even someone who works at a college can struggle academically and still get back on track, still be an intelligent person, still belong in academia.

(With appreciation to all who work with first generation college students on our campus,
and especially to
Viridiana Diaz, Assistant Vice President, Strategic Diversity Initiatives, and Director, College Assistance Migrant Program,
and Miguel P. Molina, Assistant Director, College Assistance Migrant Program,
for assistance with this information.)

Campus Resources

Below is a list of campus services specifically geared to first generation college students and underrepresented students, and in the following pages, you will find the many academic support services available at Sacramento State for students.

For First Generation College Students:

First Generation Institute (FGI)—

Offers workshops, speakers, and more to increase awareness and skills needed to progress from first generation students to first generation professionals, helping to increase academic success and degree-to-work readiness.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[FGI Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/first-generation-institute.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/first-generation-institute.html>

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)—

Helps students from migrant and seasonal farm worker backgrounds to successfully transition from high school and graduate from the university through first year support services to develop the skills necessary to persist and graduate from college.

Location: River Front Center 1

Phone: (916) 278-7241

[CAMP Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/college-assistance-migrant-program/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/college-assistance-migrant-program/>

DEGREES Project (Dedicated to Educating, Graduating, and Retaining Educational Equity Students)—

Connects students, with a focus on underrepresented students, with a variety of resources to promote their success in college, including: early intervention, academic advising, graduation support, mentoring, and referral to other valuable campus resources. Students and faculty may look on the website listed below to find DEGREES Project Advisors and Coaches and their contact information for emailing, calling, dropping by, or making an appointment to meet.

Location: Lassen Hall 2302

Phone: (916) 278-7017

[DEGREES Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/>

Parents and Families Program—

Offers information and resources on the “Parents” website for the parents of Sacramento State college students who want to know more about what their child needs and experiences in their college life, including a Parent Guide and Hornet Parent Newsletter. The home Program website has a Parents and Families calendar of events and further information.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205-O

Phone: (916) 278-4353

[Parents Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/parents-families/parents.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/parents-families/parents.html>

[Parents and Families Program Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/parents-families/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/parents-families/>

For Students Wanting Help with Academics:

Tutoring and academic support services are free to students, with the exception of a few listed as “courses” (which may then require enrollment fees). Take advantage of all of the help offered to you around the campus!

Peer and Academic Resource Center (PARC)—

Provides a home base of academic support to students at all levels through a number of services that include Peer-Led Advising for College Experiences, Workshops and Individual Tutoring, and Supplemental Instruction courses and review sessions, described below. Students may go online, call, or come by for further information, availability hours, and appointments.

Location: Lassen Hall 2200

Phone: (916) 278-6010

[PARC Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/>

Peer-Led Advising for College Experiences (PLACE)—

Has student advisors who can help their fellow students with issues such as time management, study skills, assignment anxiety, and more, and refer students to additional academic resources.

Location: Lassen Hall 2200

Phone: (916) 278-6010

[Peer Advising & Tutoring Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/peer-advising-tutoring.html)

<https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/peer-advising-tutoring.html>

Workshops and Individual Tutoring (WIT) —

Offers tutoring (on a one-on-one basis or in workshops with small groups) to help students in challenging courses learn material, complete assignments, and prepare for exams.

Location: Lassen Hall 2200

Phone: (916) 278-6010

[Peer Advising & Tutoring Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/peer-advising-tutoring.html)

<https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/peer-advising-tutoring.html>

Supplemental Instruction (SI) Courses and SI Plus Review Sessions—

Helps students enrolled in difficult general education courses to become more successful in their coursework by taking an accompanying SI course that will help the student to better learn the material, complete assignments, and study for exams. SI courses are taken for one unit of credit, and course offerings are provided on the website. SI also offers SI Plus Review Sessions that are scheduled during the semester, usually before exams/quizzes, in large lecture classes.

Location: Lassen Hall 2200

Phone: (916) 278-6010

[SI Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/supplemental-instruction.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/supplemental-instruction.html>

Smarthinking—

Provides online tutoring that enables students to get the help they need 24-hours a day, seven days a week, in areas such as: writing, reading, mathematics, science, business, Spanish, nursing and allied health, and computers and technology. A tutorial for how to access and use this online tutoring service is there on the website.

[Smarthinking \(PDF\)](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/_internal/_documents/degrees-smarthinking.pdf) https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/_internal/_documents/degrees-smarthinking.pdf

University Reading and Writing Center (URWC)—

Provides encouraging one-on-one peer tutoring for students wanting help with reading and writing at any point in the process, including planning, organizing, developing, and revising a paper to understanding difficult texts. Students are welcome to come in with reading and writing assignments for any course in any academic discipline and learn how to become a more confident writer or reader. Students may come by during the drop-in hours posted (website/at Center) for a single session of tutoring, or may make a session appointment or regular weekly standing tutoring appointments for the semester.

Location: Calaveras Hall 128

Phone: (916) 278-6356

[URWC Website](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html) <https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html>

Math Lab—

Offers tutoring on a drop-in basis to students enrolled in lower division mathematics and statistics courses in need of assistance with course-related problems encountered in homework assignments and preparation for exams.

Location: Brighton Hall 118

Phone: (916) 278-6796

[Math & Statistics Math Lab Information Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/mathematics-statistics/explore.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/mathematics-statistics/explore.html>

Business Tutoring and Study Center—

Offers students a study center and tutoring on a drop-in basis for business courses.

Location: Tahoe Hall 1006

Phone: (916) 278-2499, #5

[Business Tutoring and Study Center Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/business-administration/undergraduate/student-engagement.html#BusinessTutoring) <https://www.csus.edu/college/business-administration/undergraduate/student-engagement.html#BusinessTutoring>

Center for Science and Math Success—

Provides programs designed to support and enrich student learning in primary Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) classes, including Commit to Study and Peer Assisted Learning, described to follow.

Location: Sequoia Hall 320

Phone: (916) 278-2790

[Center for Science & Math Success Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/>

Commit to Study (C2S)—

Offers to students in Math and Science classes one-on-one support in study skills, mentoring, and referral to other campus resources.

Location: Sequoia Hall 320

Phone: (916) 278-2790

[C2S Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/commit-study.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/commit-study.html>

Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Program—

Offers a one-unit cooperative learning class connected to a primary STEM course (e.g., Biology, Chemistry, Math, Statistics) to improve student success in those courses. PAL classes are led by trained student facilitators.

Location: Sequoia Hall 320

Phone: (916) 278-3577

[PAL Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/peer-assisted-learning-program-pal/) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/peer-assisted-learning-program-pal/>

Chemistry Department Help Office—

Offers assistance with chemistry classes. Students can go online or drop by to see the schedule.

Location: Sequoia Hall 502

[Help Office \(PDF\)](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/chemistry/_internal/_documents/help-office-fall-2019.pdf) https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/chemistry/_internal/_documents/help-office-fall-2019.pdf

Engineering and Computer Science (ECS) Tutoring Services—

Offers tutoring on a drop-in basis for any engineering or computer science student. Tutoring Center Schedule is on the website.

Location: Santa Clara Hall 1217

[ECS Tutoring Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/engineering-computer-science/student-success/ecs-tutoring.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/engineering-computer-science/student-success/ecs-tutoring.html>

Physics and Astronomy Department Tutoring Center—

Offers tutoring on a drop-in basis for any student in physics or astronomy classes. Tutoring Center Schedule is on the website.

Location: Sequoia Hall 124

[Physics and Astronomy Information for Students/Tutoring Center Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/physics-astronomy/information-students.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/physics-astronomy/information-students.html>

University Library—

Provides a comfortable environment for study and an extensive resource base to do so, including over a million volumes and non-print media forms, thousands of maps, slides, pamphlets, and subscriptions to magazines, newspapers, and journals, and access to on-line data bases. Students with research questions and questions about library services may get them answered by the main floor User Services Desk staff, or call, e-mail, and use the online research guides and tutorials on the library website.

Location: South End of Campus Near Quad

Phone: (916) 278-5679

[Library Website](https://library.csus.edu/) <https://library.csus.edu/>

Student Success Academic Support Services for the Sac State Colleges Website —

Provides a list of links to the different College Student Success Centers for the different Colleges at Sac State: Health and Human Services, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Education, Engineering and Computer Science, and Arts and Letters. There, further information regarding assistance with academics for each of these Colleges and more may be found.

[Student Success Academic Support Website](https://www.csus.edu/experience/student-success/academic-support/) <https://www.csus.edu/experience/student-success/academic-support/>

Further Assistance with Academics—

Additionally, students participating in the many campus groups, programs, or services may explore further academic support options there.

For Students Who Might Be Struggling in College:

DEGREES Project (Dedicated to Educating, Graduating, and Retaining Educational Equity Students)—

Connects students with a variety of resources to promote their success in college, including: early intervention, academic advising, graduation support, mentoring, and referral to other valuable campus resources. Students and faculty may look on the website listed below to find DEGREES Project Advisors and Coaches and their contact information for emailing, calling, dropping by, or making an appointment to meet.

Location: Lassen Hall 2302

Phone: (916) 278-7017

[DEGREES Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/>

Student Academic Success and Educational Equity Programs (SASEEP) Office—

Encourages and supports students in persisting toward their educational goals to ensure the success of all students on campus while closing the achievement gap. The office has an “open door” policy—students may come on in or call.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[SASEEP Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/>

Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD)—

Provides assistance to students who may require assistance related to the following disabling conditions which may impede a student’s educational process: visual, hearing, speech, mobility and other physical disabilities, psychological disorders, cognitive disabilities, learning disabilities, and ADD/ADHD. Services and accommodations for students may include, but are not limited to: specialized educational materials, adaptive equipment, adaptive computer training and use, note-taker services, testing accommodations, consultation with faculty for students with special academic needs, and library assistance. Further information may be found on the website regarding the application process and forms, the services and accommodations offered, and more. Students with questions and faculty with inquiries or wanting to make a referral are welcome to contact or come by the office for further information.

Location: Lassen Hall 1008

Phone: (916) 278-6955

[SSWD Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/>