

*They are at-risk in higher education.
Earning a college degree is the key to their future,
and their success is vital to our campus, community, and country.*

***Listening to
Minority Underrepresented Students***

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**Listening to
Minority Underrepresented Students...**

“I am a 22 y.o. hispanic male. I am proud to be here at CSUS. Growing up I heard that not many Hispanics made it passed high school and now I am here in college – I have noticed that I am not alone. There is a good amount of Hispanics here. There are definitely more than it sounded like. Most classes are full of Caucasians but there are a few hispanics, African-Americans, and even Asians. It is nice to see a diversity when I kept hearing that the minorities never really went to college.

Everyone is super friendly. It does not matter what color your skin is or what language you grew up speaking. Everyone is willing to help if you ask politely.”

—Hispanic male 22 y.o.

“I feel that its harder to join certain groups with my type of background.”

—Being mixed (black, mexican, native American) in a school that seems mostly white is a tad intimidating

“I like it here so far. I wouldn’t change much.

I enjoy the tailgates and student concerts.

Not enough classes for all the students.”

—22 yr old African American male

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

—twenty and pacific islander

“Through CAMP I met people with my same ethnic background I can relate to their lives just like they can relate to mine. I loved summer bridge with EOP that opportunity to explore campus before the year started was awesome.”

—Hispanic

“Different, minority in classes”

—Black young male graduating college

“I feel pretty comfortable where I stand and I feel welcomed on this campus for the most part. I would like to share that Sac State has many opportunities to be involved and interact with so many different people.”

—Hispanic, 18, deaf studies major

“I like how there are many resources available to students on campus. Most faculty and staff are very supportive and want to see students succeed.

In some of my classes it seems as if everyone is in their own world. I like to get to know the people in my classes so that I can form study groups.”

—hispanic, 18 years old, first generation, low income, female

“It’s difficult, a challenge some would say but it’s not too difficult to overcome. As a student, there are still challenges we face.

I’m a hard working student who puts the time into all assignments.

Be attentive in class & class participation.”

—African American

“it’s normal for a hispanic student at CSUS.”

—Hispanic, female, 19

“I love being a Pacific Islander and sharing what I am to other people.

My first semester here at CSUS and met a lot of great people and professor who has helped me through the semester.”

—female, pacific islander, 24 years old

“I thought meeting people would be really difficult how other university students had mentioned but for me it was easier than I thought.”

—18 years old & Latina

“As a student in my shoes, it doesn’t stick me out of the box too much, I don’t see I have any problems or false looks because my, not downfalls, but temporarily struggles. I only find difficulty in testing situations, I am hands-on so written tests lose my attention fast and I begin to panic.

Be confident in yourself, there are many people like you and a majority of the staff and students are quite kind and helping.

Talking w/ prof. and other students helps a lot w/ my slow learning and loss of focus in long classes. Open your mouth, ask for help and clarification.

Some professors do not care enough to help w/your needs, the learning test did not work for me I did not have a ‘Big Enough’ problem so some teachers won’t honor my testing skill difficulties.”

—Hispanic/Black, female, 23, Hetero, dyslexia, anxiety

“Can be challenging connecting with classmates. CSU makes it difficult to graduate for my demographic.

Professors in my major make education enjoyable”

—Male, Mexican-Native American, Older, Re-Entry Student, Parent

“Average, don’t feel a difference.

Great campus, helpful staff.”

—24 y/o male pacific islander/white

“It is rewarding knowing I can be looked at with the same knowledge as everyone else, and respect.

There are a lot of resources and you can make a lot of friends.”

—African-American

“It is really a great experience being a Hispanic girl, first year college student and being able to attend CSUS. Everyone here is friendly. Many clubs and groups to join.”

—Hispanic, 18

“I have my good and bad days but honestly, I do not really think of my ethnicity when doing school work. However, when I do, I try not to be overwhelmed by the numbers of people like me who graduate and who do not. I want to go far in life”

—Tongan American, 19 years old, from Sacramento California, second out of six children, first generation female student, low-middle income, jobless

“My experiences here at Sacramento State as a young African American male have been an okay experience thus far, I really haven’t had any negative experiences.”

—a young African-American male.

“It is fairly normal no stress causing situations other than those that are self inflicted. Enjoyable campus with a good amount to offer if you seek it out.”

—Mexican, 20, no challenges

“Not that different of an experience, I feel behind being 22 going on 23 and still 2 years away from my BA though.

I love the atmosphere on campus with all the events and ways to get involved.”

—Female, African-American & Filipino, 22 & heterosexual

“My perspective is that CSUS is a good campus, friendly environment.

I have met many great people. They are all very helpful. I have participated in many on campus activities.”

—Mexican

“It’s okay. There are a lot of resources here on campus to help me deal with academic struggles. Sometimes I feel too old to be here even though I’m only 25. Luckily I look very young so I blend in.

I enjoy some of the professors here as they try hard to provide relevant information to my major in an interesting way.”

—black, female, 25 yrs old. junior

“You get along easily with others from similar backgrounds.

(I like) the wide variety of culture.

Night classes kill me.”

—21 year old Pacific Islander

“I believe my perspective is no different from others, I do not believe my age or being biracial interferes w/being a student here.”

—Mixed Race (Latina/Black) 18 years old

“It’s actually not as bad as I thought because I can connect with many people here in campus.”

—Hispanic, First Generation Age 21

“It doesn’t seem much different than high school.

There are more resources, but many people don’t seem to talk to each other.”

—black/filipino, male, 18: new to college

“Ethnicity &/or age does not affect in any way how I am as a student or my perspective.”

—Pacific Islander Senior Status

“I truly enjoy being here at Sac State. One of the reasons is because I am part of CAMP. The other reason is because I am here to further my education.”

—Hispanic

“To be a 19 year old African American 1st yr college student here is great because the campus has people my age/race that are 1st years to. The school is very diverse when it comes to that. I have learned that college is no joke especially Sac State. They hold their students to a high standard.”

—19 year old African-American 1st yr college student

“Not enough faculty who looks like me.”

—Latina

“Since Sac State is such a diverse campus it doesn’t make me feel out of the circle”

—Pacific Islander, 27, Hindu

“Being able to communicate with my peers and professors has been a plus. I do enjoy being able to do that.”

—an African American female

“I have many opportunities on campus through programs. I am a participant of organizations that assist me in my transition to college.”

—Hispanic/female, 18 yrs/New to College

“It is great. I honestly feel just like anyone else attending college, just trying to be successful.

I like everything from the river to the classes, to the size of the campus.

People aren’t really friendly or easy to make friends w/. Everyone just stays to themselves.”

—Hispanic

“I commute, I don’t feel that I experience anything out of the ordinary.”

—Christian, African American, 21

“I love CSUS. I think it’s a really nice campus and the people here are very welcoming and friendly.”

—I am Mexican, I am 18 years old. I am a female.

“Culture, diversity in campus is great and also the challenge of using time management & also discipline yourself to complete classes.

(I have experienced) Meeting different people from different parts of the world & making life long friends. Having them help me through this semester.”

—Pacific Islander

“Students can learn a lot at CSUS as a Pacific Islander and join event on campus.

CSUS is a fun and a beautiful campus to attend to as a student and the professors are fun and very helpful.”

—half Pacific Islander (Tongan)

“Everything has pretty much worked for me at CSUS. I believe that you make things work if you really want them to. So most of everything in my first year has worked for the most part.”

—I am a first generation Mexican female student who is 19 years old and low income.

“What it feels like is a overall good experience. I made friends easily in school. I understood the classes really well I didn’t really struggle from what the professors was saying. There was a lot of help around school....”

—Im a first generation male. I am of Mexican American decent. I come from a middle class family. Im a freshman at the age of 19.

“it is nice I feel accomplished. Not discriminated in any way.”

—a 22 year old Mexican

“It’s great. I feel that I have all the support that I need to be successful in my first year and the next years. CAMP and EOP has gave me that support that I need and I’m grateful for that.

I would like to share that CAMP has helped me to adapt to this new part of my life.

I like that there’s a lot of resources that you can use as a freshman.”

—Mexican, 18 years old, New to College, Female

“I have noticed that some of my ‘tougher’ classes don’t have many minority students.”

—Latino, first year

“It’s nice having a variety of cultures in Sac State.

I like how I am in CAMP and most of my friends are in that program and we are all Mexican and do activities together.

There is always students in campus, so its never quiet & lonely.

I have learned to manage things by myself.

I like the resources in campus like CAMP, EOP, tutors. They are all helpful and give good advise.”

—Mexican American, 20 years old, Freshman

“I really don’t feel any different than the rest of the students here. I think Sac State is a very great campus to go to. I feel comfortable here.”

—a 22 year old hispanic female

“It is a good feeling because I know a lot of others that are not doing as well for themselves. I would like to share that I enjoy the large diversity of students and faculty.”

—Young Black male

“Not many Hispanics go to this university.”

—Hispanic & Native American, 18

“As a Mexican-American at CSUS having a perspective of being that culture here is that although I am a minority, having the support of the CAMP Program was very beneficial.

As a first year student at CSUS I have experienced many great things. Such as meeting new people or having the freedom of choosing my own classes for the career I have chosen.”

—Mexican-American

“Coming from a more Asian background, the diversity of the campus is welcoming.”

—Male, 23, Pacific Islander, Straight, Senior

“The community of students is very diverse, and you don’t feel like there are any underrepresented groups.”

—Latino male, mid-twenties, gay

“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

“Sac State is very inclusive and with so many different types of people attending I feel included. The several clubs and activities geared toward certain cultures or races makes minority students more involved.”

—19, black, female

“I really like it, it is great to represent my ethnicity in this diverse campus.... I have really like the experiences I have had here in Sac State. I have been able to meet new people, and since I am part of the CAMP program I have been able to connect with students that have the same background as me.”

—a freshman Latina, 19

Minority Underrepresented Students

“Underrepresented” in higher education refers to racial and ethnic populations that are disproportionately lower in number relative to their number in the general population.

Nationally and at Sacramento State University, minority underrepresented groups include:

- African American students
- American Indian students
- Latino students
- Pacific Islander/Asian American students

The achievement gap in educational attainment for minority underrepresented students has been well-documented over the years, beginning pre-kindergarten on up in all levels of schooling through to postsecondary education.

Continued research provides evidence of disproportionately lower rates of academic success for minority underrepresented students across the nation in college, specifically:

- Lower access—Coming to college
- Lower success—Passing a class
- lower persistence—Returning each semester
- Lower transfer—Moving on to a four-year institution
- Lower completion—Earning a degree

In the State

According to the Campaign for College Opportunity, in its 2019 report, “Our California: Addressing Racial Equity:”

About 70% of college students in the state are minority underrepresented groups.

While graduation rates have been rising, there is still a real achievement gap in the number of adult Californians with a Bachelor’s degree or higher:

- American Indian/Alaska Native: 17%
- Black: 24%
- Asian: 54%
- Latinx: 12%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 17%
- White: 43%

The need to address disparities in higher education for minority underrepresented students has long been noted, beginning with the moral imperative: *It is the right thing to do.*

We need to close the achievement gap for civil rights and societal betterment, and a more prosperous future for the student and for our nation.

Greater educational attainment means improved financial livelihood and standard of living that comes with a college degree for students and their generations to come—and better economic conditions and increased material gains for all, which comes with a more highly educated workforce.

In this last regard, the Campaign for College Opportunity offers the following projections: By 2030, 65% of California’s population will be people of color, and 60% of the jobs in this state will require postsecondary education.

Unless more Californians graduate with their college degrees, there will be a considerable shortfall in the workforce, leaving California at risk of losing its economic vitality and standing as the fifth largest economy in the world.

[For further information, please see:

The Campaign for College Opportunity, “[Our California: Addressing Racial Equity](https://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Racial-Equity-WP_FINAL.pdf)” (2019) (PDF)
https://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Racial-Equity-WP_FINAL.pdf]

Here on Campus

The Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning reports:

In terms of enrollment: Underrepresented minorities are 39% of student enrollment here, totaling 12,139 students.

In terms of the achievement gap, the results are mixed: The underrepresented minority undergraduate four-year graduation rate was 13% (compared to the 15% overall undergraduate four-year graduation rate), and the six-year graduation rate was 52% (compared to the 51% overall undergraduate six-year graduation rate).

It should also be noted that:

Sacramento State ranked among the top 100 minority degree producers in the nation in 2015 according to *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* data, and

Sac State ranks 26th in the nation, 11th in the state, and 5th in the California State University system in facilitating economic opportunity for underserved students as a top school in College NET’s 2015 Social Mobility Index, a point of pride for the university.

Risk Factors

Minority underrepresented students:

- Tend to come from families who have, for generations, experienced the effects of underrepresentation—a history of disadvantage.
- May bring an experience of low expectations from their elementary, middle schools, and high schools—have learned that their teachers and peers may doubt their abilities.
- May come from a K-12 school system with very minimal resources to adequately provide bilingual/bicultural teaching strategies or counseling services—have been taught and assisted by school staff in a language and cultural norms that are different from their own.
- Tend to come to college with less high school preparation than their peers—already academically behind.
- May experience culture shock or a sense of isolation on campus—for some, their numbers are lower, and they can see and feel this.
- Often have learned to switch modes of being and communicating when interacting with others of the dominant culture—and the interpersonal energy and effort expended can be exhausting and feel delimiting.
- Tend to have no or few family members who have graduated from high school or attended college, pivotal people to provide role models, advice, and support—they are first generation college students.
- Tend to carry the added weight of responsibility to attend college and succeed academically for family and community obligations, and not just for the individual—a lot of pressure.
- Tend to face economic hardships—struggle financially with living and college expenses.
- May face first language barriers—trying to learn English while also trying to learn in their classes.
- Often find that their courses and/or campus don't have much of a multi-cultural curriculum and consequently lack relevance to their lives as a person of color—a sense of separation from their school and the subject matter they are trying to learn.
- Often have to battle stereotypes and prejudice in college and in the surrounding community—causing stress, problems, and distractions.
- Often don't have the academic role models or mentors they need who are similar to them—who really “get” them, who fully understand what they are going through and the obstacles they might face.

Minority underrepresented students are greatly at-risk in higher education due to one or more of the above factors, and young men of color even more so.

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 study 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, and especially for minority underrepresented students.

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

Say "hi."

Never under-estimate the power of a smile, simple greeting, or a wave hello on campus. Small things to do, but such a big difference these can make to a student, especially when they come from a professor or university staff member.

Be on a first name basis.

Try to learn and use those first names—it is well worth the effort. Students' sense of belonging and acceptance may deepen when you, a staff or faculty member, remembers exactly who they are. Our students may feel especially welcomed when we demonstrate the value of correctly pronouncing names that may be more difficult to say. In such cases, you can ask the student privately to help by phonetically writing out their name with you, as is done in commencement with announcement of the names of graduates, at many institutions.

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.

Be real.

Share a little bit about who you are outside of the classroom or office, hobbies you have, mistakes and blunders you made, your own experiences as a student. Humanizing yourself in this way can help the student feel more comfortable and better relate to you.

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. *You may be the only source of support that the student has, the one person who turns that situation around for the student.*

Work with a student.

Offer students the valuable opportunity to work with you on projects, research, or writing, or in campus organizations, events, services, or in other capacities outside of the classroom. This will increase the quantity and quality of interaction with you, and likely give the student a different and richer context for learning, professional experience to help get a job and use in the working world, and a role model of good communication, work ethic, and leadership. You, personally, and the work you are doing will also likely be greatly enriched through collaboration with students.

Mentor a student.

Become a mentor, someone who looks out for, champions, and encourages a student on in their college education. Both mentee and mentor stand to gain so much. You will likely find that just the word itself, "mentor," gives a sense of academic place and pride to the student who has one. Such a valuable, cherished relationship may be absolutely instrumental in the life and success of a student, and irreplaceable for both of you.

Fight for them.

Minority underrepresented students are striving to achieve their college education against so very many risk factors, and are attempting to do so in the face of potential bias, intentional and unintentional, even at an institution of higher learning. Any and all efforts to help the student to feel safe, accepted, and valued are needed, especially when instances of stereotyping or bias arise. Seeing someone stand up and speak out against prejudice in the classroom and out on campus, feeling like someone "has your back," can be an incredible source of psychological security and support for a student of color.

Keep in touch.

Check in with the student, even after they have left your office with the services received or questions answered, or the course that the student took with you is over. Understand just how strong of an impact and show of support it can be when you attempt to maintain contact or follow up with a student, even when the student might not return your message, or show outwardly just how much that gesture means.

Leading educational equity reform scholar, Anne-Marie Núñez of the University of San Antonio, Texas, came to Sac State a few years ago and presented her work on minority underrepresented students. One of the most significant themes she noted woven throughout their stories was of a faculty or staff member that students pinpointed as pivotal to them staying and succeeding in college.

Encourage Student Connections

Student-to-student interactions are also vital. As human beings, we all want to feel a sense of belonging, and young adults (the majority of our students) in particular, typically have a much higher need for acceptance and inclusion with their peers. Some minority students, however, may feel distinctly isolated in their classes or lonely in academic life.

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. Working together is also the preferred method of learning for many groups, and especially African American, Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander students, research shows, rather than solitary study or sole lecture-listening.

Help the Student to Connect with College

While students wonder from time to time whether they really want or need to be here, minority underrepresented 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. Some may be first generation college students 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 even more tenuous.

But they 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 can increase the likelihood of graduation and decrease the time-to-degree. 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 Sac 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 for these students.

Encourage student involvement in college life.

Research shows that student engagement, such as extra-curricular activities, positively impacts 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. 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.

Sac 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 programs for historically underrepresented students, second language learners, and first year students; services for students with physical, learning, and psychological disabilities; campus places for students of color, women, veterans, LBGT students, and undocumented students; and resources and support for first generation college students, former foster youth, student parents, and students experiencing hunger or homelessness. 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.

Connect with the Student’s Culture

Minority underrepresented students come with different cultural backgrounds to higher education, bringing wonderful diversity that enriches campus life and classroom learning. Academia, however, is historically Eurocentric, which can prove detrimental to minority underrepresented students unless we take steps to make their education and experiences on campus more in keeping with the cultural backgrounds that they bring.

Consider culture in curriculum, programs, and services.

There are differences in learning needs and styles, and risk factors and obstacles in their education, things we may be able to proactively anticipate in our various spheres of responsibility. Ask: What barriers or challenges might students of different cultures have in learning this area of study or completing these types of assignments we give? What are specific things we can do to be more culturally inclusive in our pedagogy and curriculum? What barriers or challenges might students of different cultures have in awareness or accessing of this service? What specifically can we do to become more inclusive of different cultural groups in the services we provide?

Ensure cultural diversity in course content and campus materials.

Remember that students of some cultural groups, especially students of color, are much less likely to see their culture represented in the course material they are studying—and consider the impact this may have on their learning and sense of belonging in academia. Use of culturally diverse subject matter, references, and examples in what you teach, clips or slides you show, assignments you give, test questions you write, and reading you assign can provide badly needed connection to what they are trying to learn in class and the place they see for themselves in the realm of college. Such use of culturally diverse material is also better representative of the world and usually a more accurate account of most subject areas, which benefits the instruction of all students. Materials in campus life outside the classroom, too, should show the diversity of human beings.

See the cultural capital that they bring.

There is sometimes a tendency to only see deficits of culture in minority underrepresented students—and not see the strengths. Researcher and scholar at the University of California at Santa Barbara, Tara Yosso, once came to Sac State to present her work on minority underrepresented students. She shared her “Cultural Wealth Model,” describing a variety of cultural strengths that students bring to college:

- (1) Aspirational: The continued belief, hope, and faith in higher education, despite longstanding inequities for their cultural group in education.
- (2) Linguistic: The benefits of multilingualism, for some, and other benefits accrued through their culture’s communication norms.
- (3) Familial: The wisdom, knowledge, and support of family and community networks.
- (4) Social: The use of relationships and networks with their peers and other contacts in the educational setting to share information and advice.
- (5) Navigational: The ability to work within educational systems not designed for them.
- (6) Resistance: The history of activism and social efforts to secure change for their people.

She argued that students bring great talents, perspectives, experience, and skills from their cultural background that educators should recognize as such—as assets—and strive to draw upon and support, because students are empowered with these forms of cultural capital.

Understand and Assist with the Challenges of Financial Disadvantage

Minority underrepresented students are likely to come from a background of financial disadvantage. They may come from middle or higher income families, but the majority are from lower income family backgrounds.

These students:

Usually have little to no family financial assistance—

Their parents may not be able to afford to help with college tuition for their child. Money is a primary concern for the family, especially with a child going to college. Other students will be living all on their own as they make their way through college, or perhaps with families of their own to support. In the worst of financial circumstances, the student may experience food insecurity or homelessness.

Tend to not be aware of how and where to obtain financial aid and other assistance—

They may not know of all the resources available to them. They also will probably not know about the many opportunities on campus for student employment, paid internships, scholarships, student discounts, the student food pantry, and the like, to offset costs. Research shows they are often the least likely to know about financial aid.

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, and the worry over money and trying to make ends meet can be a huge stressor. This puts added pressure on the student to work while in school, rather than maximizing financial aid and scholarships that could help with such concerns, and students are pulled back to working to make ends meet, taking time away from school studies and extracurricular events and opportunities, and sometimes leaving college entirely.

Not having the money to buy the course textbook and any other required class supplies (or needing to wait for financial aid to come in to purchase materials) 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, offering an extra desk copy to loan a student in need, or using cost-free textbooks; allowing online submission of papers to lower printing costs when possible; keeping required supplies or other class expenses to an absolute minimum; and being mindful about assignments or extra credit opportunities tied to events with an admission price or events off-campus that are free but, nonetheless, may require money for travel or parking (and considering offering other low/no cost options for students to do the work).

Staff and faculty can also help with financial burdens by:

Announcing scholarship and employment opportunities throughout the semester, and helping to spread the word about the valuable resources on campus for students in financial need, including financial aid and scholarships, the student food pantry, and opportunities for employment, housing assistance, and Hornet Emergency assistance.

Foster Academic Competence and Confidence

Minority underrepresented students are, statistically, more likely to be academically behind coming into college. The basic skills deficit may be considerable due to any number of factors, including socioeconomic and cultural disparities, likely first generation college student challenges, and possible language challenges. *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 minority underrepresented 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.

We, as faculty, can 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. 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.

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 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.

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. We can offset any doubts by trying to show at every turn the value of the subject matter we teach to students: 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 the communities and country in which we live).

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 handouts, 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.

Engage learners.

Different students have different learning needs, yet straight lecture seldom accommodates all. 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. It is also helpful to: 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. Craft lessons in keeping with the notion that students learn best when they can engage in course material with their eyes, ears, voice, mind, and heart.

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. Minority underrepresented students, especially, may feel a real disconnect with the "Ivory Tower" in relation to their lived experiences and struggles. Whenever possible, give that space and freedom for students to share their own knowledge, understanding, perspective, or experience in relation to the topic at hand. 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.

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.

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 freedom in topic choice.

Allow students to choose their own topics, 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.

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.

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, minority underrepresented college students are typically not academically prepared coming into college and may struggle in their coursework. 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 stymying 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.

Sac 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.

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.

Campus Resources

Below begins a section listing some of the many campus services specifically geared to students who face socioeconomic and cultural equity challenges to getting their college education, and in the section to follow you will find a list of academic resources for students.

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/>

Dreamer Resource Center (DRC)—

Helps undocumented students and students with mixed-status families to overcome challenges that get in the way of academic, personal, and professional excellence. Services include financial and academic guidance, support, events, a free legal Immigration Clinic, a Dream Connections support group, the Dream Leader Internship Program, DRC Student Emergency Grant, a Dreamer Experience Seminar to help students navigate college life as an undocumented student, and more.

Location: River Front Center 1022

Phone: (916) 278-7241

[DRC Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/dreamer-resource-center/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/dreamer-resource-center/>

Extended Opportunity Program (EOP)—

Supports incoming freshmen and transfer students from disadvantaged economic and/or educational backgrounds by providing services that include: academic advising, personal counseling, tutoring, financial aid advising, course placement and planning, learning communities, and more.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[EOP Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/educational-opportunityprogram/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/educational-opportunityprogram/>

Faculty Student Mentor Program (FSMP)—

Offers academic and personal support to students from traditionally low-income communities through mentoring in the discipline of choice, as well as opportunities to meet other students with similar academic, cultural, and social interests. FSMP also provides assistance with study skills, time and stress management, course and major selection, and more

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

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

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>

Cooper-Woodson College Enhancement (CWC) Program—

Offers an Educational Equity, African American Student Retention Program. CWC helps to shape a nurturing learning environment for CWC students through faculty, staff, students, and community members who are committed to upholding the traditions represented in African American culture and creating an African-based support structure and educational experience.

Location: Amador Hall 460

Phone: (916) 278-5363

[CWC Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/student-programs-services/cooper-woodson-college-enhancement-program/) <https://www.csus.edu/college/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/student-programs-services/cooper-woodson-college-enhancement-program/>

Full Circle Project (FCP)—

Assists Asian American and Pacific Islander students through their college careers, with services that include: First Year Experience courses and learning community courses, academic advising, personal counseling, tutoring, mentoring, leadership development and service learning opportunities, and cultural enrichment activities.

Location: Library 1000

Phone: (916) 278-5172

[FCP Website](https://www.csus.edu/center/full-circle-project/) <https://www.csus.edu/center/full-circle-project/>

Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholars Center—

Offers a home base of support such as academic services, workshops, and events, to ensure the success of African American students or students with an interest in African American heritage in their quest toward a degree at Sac State. Students may come in to get their questions answered regarding coursework or the campus, and study or socialize in the Center.

Location: Lassen Hall 2201

Phone: (916) 278-2655

[MLK Scholars Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/mlk-scholars/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/mlk-scholars/>

Native Scholars and Transition Program (NSTP)—

Offers a program to support Native scholars through the admissions process, and transitioning into and succeeding in college, through lower-and upper-division learning communities, social and student support gatherings, cultural events, and more.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[NSTP Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/native-scholars-transition-program.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/native-scholars-transition-program.html>

Project HMONG (Helping Mentor Our Next Generation)—

Strives to ensure the academic, career, and life success for Hmong and other underrepresented students by building a community of mentors and peers, and offering support, guidance, and encouragement, while promoting positive character development.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-5877

[Project HMONG Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/project-hmong.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/project-hmong.html>

Serna Center—

Sponsors programs and events with a focus on the social, political, economic, historical and cultural realities and needs of Chicanxs/Latinxs students and students from other underrepresented backgrounds at Sacramento State, and works to establish a strong foundation that enriches cultural identity and develops a sense of *familia* within the campus. Students may come in to inquire about getting connected and involved on campus, or meet one-on-one to discuss scholarships, mentorship, professional development, employment, and more.

Location: River Front Center 1

Phone: (916) 278-7241

[Serna Center Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/serna-center/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/serna-center/>

College of Education Equity Program Office—

Provides advising and resources for those interested in a career in education and who are from specific student groups, such as financial aid and work study candidates, Cal Grant recipients, individuals that are first in family college students, and multilingual/multicultural learners. Services include: academic advising, mentoring, assistance with scholarships and applications, and more.

Location: Eureka Hall 437 (inside the College's Student Success Center)

[Educational Equity Program Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/education/student-support/equity-office.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/education/student-support/equity-office.html>

CSU-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (CSU-LSAMP) at Sacramento State—

Strives to increase participation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors and help students to advance their education to a graduate program with services that include: one-on-one advising, research opportunities, graduate school preparation, workshops, guest speakers, and support to attend local, regional, and national conferences. Students who apply must belong to an underrepresented group in STEM fields, including any of the following: African American, Latino, Native American, and South Pacific Islander students, and first generation college students, students with disabilities, and students whose families live below the poverty line.

Phone: (916) 278-6519

[CSU-LSAMP Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/louis-stokes-alliance-minority-participation.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/louis-stokes-alliance-minority-participation.html>

MESA Engineering Program (MEP)—

Offers students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds support to increase their success in their engineering or computer science studies, including: counseling, academic advising, tutoring, workshops, mentoring, opportunities for community service, a network of peer support, and a study center.

Location: Santa Clara Hall 1207

Phone: (916) 278-6699

[MEP Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/engineering-computer-science/mesa-engineering-program/) <https://www.csus.edu/college/engineering-computer-science/mesa-engineering-program/>

RISE Program (Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement)—

Offers a research training program designed to cultivate talented undergraduate students interested in pursuing biomedical research careers, and help them become more competent in their scientific disciplines, confident in their laboratory skills, and resilient to adversity in the classroom and lab settings. The program provides support for hands-on research opportunities at

Sac State or the UC Davis Medical Center or main campus, and career-enhancement opportunities to help students become competitive for admission to PhD programs in the biomedical fields. Students who apply must belong to an underrepresented group, including any of the following: African American, Latino, Native American, and South Pacific Islander students, and first generation college or educationally disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students whose families live below the poverty line.

Phone: (916) 278-6519

[RISE Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/research-initiative-scientific-enhancement.htm) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/research-initiative-scientific-enhancement.htm>

Graduate Diversity Program—

Provides assistance in the form of financial, academic, and community support to disadvantaged and underrepresented students who want to pursue graduate level work.

Location: River Front Center 203

Phone: (916) 278-3834

[Graduate Diversity Program Website](https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/graduate-diversity/) <https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/graduate-diversity/>

McNair Scholars Program—

Offers a two-year program designed to prepare students for doctoral program admission and study. Selected students must be juniors or seniors who are the first in their families to go to college, and who meet federal low-income guidelines or are a member of a traditional underrepresented group in graduate education (African American, Hispanic/Latino, Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaskan Native).

Location: River Front Center 203

Phone: (916) 278-5118

[McNair Scholars Website](https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/mcnair-scholars-program/index.html) <https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/mcnair-scholars-program/index.html>

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/>

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).

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>

Paving Excellence, Retention and Success in Student Trajectories (PERSIST)—

Serves students in their sophomore year and students who have stopped out/dropped out at Sacramento State with campus resource support, college level advising, sophomore success workshops, and assistance with registration and creating a productive course schedule facilitating time to degree, all to help students to persist in their educational pursuits.

Location: Lassen Hall 2006

Phone: (916) 278-4294

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