They have been away from school for a while.

It may have been one year, one decade, or longer since they were in the classroom, but they are back and ready to learn and earn their degree.

Listening to Reentry Students

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Listening to Reentry Students...

"It's daunting at first coming back to CSUS after 10+ years away. Add the challenge of working and you find sleep is at a minimum. But finding the classes I need at night is the toughest challenge.

The readmittal process was great & put me at ease." —Returning to school while working a full time job.

"Being a returning older female its hard to get that 'college' experience everyone talks about. Its harder to get involved because my first priority isn't to be social its to be a good student. Also, Sac State is very much a commuter school.

Being this is my 1^{st} semester I can honestly say I have not had many 'wow' experiences. I go to class, get my work done then work full time the other $2\frac{1}{2}$ days I'm not here.

(I like) The teachers here. If you ask them for help or a better understanding they are more than willing."

—A 28 yr old female returning to school after having a career w/o a degree

"I don't feel like it is hard. This school provides good opportunities. I was amazed to see how big the school is.

I haven't had any issues reaching my teachers when I need to talk to them." —Returning to school, finishing degree

"At this point in my life I had expected to be done with school & working my dream job, but life had other plans. Due to financial issues, I am barely now returning to school to complete a BA. So far, I feel that due to my life experiences, I am able to appreciate the education I am receiving more than I did in my younger years.

Being a new student at a new school after so many years, I was worried that it would be a struggle trying to get back into the swing of things. To my delight, the staff, from orientation leaders to professors, have helped make my transition a smooth one.

I am very grateful for the computer labs on campus.

All of my instructors this semester (first semester) have been so accommodating & a true pleasure to learn from."

-27, returning to college after a 5 year break, and is Hispanic/Caucasian

"I am a returning student after a 7 year break. I feel a little older but I am still comfortable in my surroundings. All classes seem to have a diverse group of people.

I have had a pretty good experience so far on my second stint at Sac State." -31 "My journey is a challenge because most resources are geared for those just out of high school.

For the most part, University experience is wonderfully enriching with no lack of resources for exposure to the world.

I sometimes run into elitist behavior or hostility from the staff. Perhaps a reminder that this is a place to teach and encourage is in order."

-returning to complete a degree

"I have been out of college for six years and returning as a Junior has been smooth so far. At first I was intimidated because I thought everyone was going to be fresh out of high school but that wasn't the case at all.

The classes and the professors are all wonderful." —Asian, female, 27 y.o., Junior

"It has been a challenge for someone my age because there is no returning/acclimating programs to visit.

Most of the professors are always in a rush with no time to hardly spare to make some of the assignments clear.

What has worked for me at CSUS is that I'm on campus every day to learn new things about myself.

Being an older student, I sometimes don't feel comfortable about talking about some of the challenges that occur. For example, knowing how to navigate the SacCT system totally." —African American Woman 49

"My perspective is that school, college specifically, is an opportunity to enrich your life. It is also my perspective that picking a specific career or field of study that interests you is also important.

I appreciate the faculty who truly cares about the students...I love the passion that some teachers/faculty bring."

-29, male + white, and returning to school

"A difficult challenge was in getting back into the university during a time where returning students were not being admitted. I waited 2 years to get back into classes and had to start with late registration dates even though I was closer to being finished than others.

(I like) That everyone can come here and succeed in a major of your choice. The faculty take the time to teach you. (I don't like) The implementation and push toward an online environment. We learn best from seeing, hearing, and knowing faculty and peers in a <u>physical</u> environment."

-Returning to School

"I have a lower tolerance for students distracting others in class. The rampant cheating I observe is more disheartening than when I was younger.

(I don't like) ... constantly (receiving) bad information. Registration is a joke. In general, information I need is hard to come by."

-White male 36 years old, returning to school, ADHD

"I love Sac State. I appreciate the wisdom that my age brings to my studies. It is not very often that I feel out of place in learning.

I would like additional avenues for returning students to gather, learn—aside from the 'normal' college experience. It is often assumed from admin. that surveys, training, etc. is that of a young, 1st year student."

---old, parent, returning to school -- with college age kids

"I am more focused on my future and I'm getting better grades.

Get involved even if you're an older student

(I like) The amount of places to go for resources." —returning to school, 25, female

"Being my first semester here (a) at Sac State, I don't have much feedback but from the short time I've been here, I have no complaints whatsoever. I really think this school cares about their students and provides a lot of helpful services. I've enjoyed my time here so far and that's about all I have to say after the first couple of months here." -27 yrs old male Latino

"I know more about recent history than most students!" —Returning to School

"I am a returning student – started in 2003. The second time around I have taken my education more seriously. It also helps knowing what you want as a career.

Being an older student sometimes it's difficulty to make closer connections to younger students due to different maturity levels. I also expect more from my professors in regards to their lectures/exams/assignments.

I like the availability of the professors – majority of them are willing to work with you as long as you put forth the effort.

The resources (a) the IRT are awesome, not many people know about it."

The school really makes you jump through hoops to reinstate. I guess it might be necessary to prove your seriousness – But it's also frustrating and inefficient." —Filipino – 29 years old – Female "Because I'm a somewhat older returning student, I don't really participate in much. I feel like I've kind of done a lot of <u>college</u> type stuff already & now I'm just trying to get it done.

I tend to show up for my classes and don't spend extra time on campus. I haven't really been apart of campus atmosphere. *I'm a shitty hornet.*

—anxiety filled, depressed returning student, Caucasian, female, 24, straight

"It feels different like I don't quite fit in. Most of my classmates are at least 10 years younger than me."

---Vietnamese Male/32/Returning to School

"I am more mature."

—27, female, American (w/a Mexican background), straight, 4'11'' (short), returning to CSUS after 6 years.

"Its interesting to be around so many young people.

I really appreciate the faculty." —Returning to School

"As a student who is returning and working to get out soon it is frustrating <u>NOT</u> finding help (to ensure I am on track)!!

I really enjoy the relationships that I have built with many of my instructors and the motivation they have given me to pursue my education despite the road blocks." —Transfer/Returning to School

"It's intimidating. I waited to come back to school. I don't feel as smart as the younger ones." —Cerebral Palsy on one side, macular degeneration one eye, female

"Overall I don't think it is too hard. I can see it's all about your individual study habits and personal choices. Also about time management.

Overall, professors are pretty knowledgeable and good at their jobs. (In the sense that they keep me interested and engaged)."

-29, male, Hispanic, Returning to College

"I don't feel that I am having a typical college experience in that I do not belong to clubs or participate in campus activities outside of class and research. I am a serious student w/ 3.99 GPA. I get the impression that my education means more to me than the majority of my peers. Maybe because I am slightly older. I do not have a social life"

-white, female, 25, straight, depression and anxiety, returning to school

"I feel like CSUS is a place for returning students or students who are unsure of other possibilities.

School takes time. And it is better that way. Attending school once I have matured slightly more than fresh out of high school has allowed me to appreciate my education more.

I have developed great relationships with my professors which has greatly benefitted me." —male in his mid-twenties

"It feels like most of the college social activities and class discussions are geared toward younger students.... I have teachers that are younger than myself." —Graduating Senior, Returning Student, GLBT, Male, 37

"Its odd being one of the older students in class but at the same time it is nice because I tend to have more patience than those who are younger.

I have found working prior to returning to sac state has given me a small advantage. I feel I can communicate better w/ my professors & classmates." —27 & Hispanic

"It feels like an accomplishment to be at a university but at 23 I sometimes feel like I've been here too long and should have already graduated." —23 year old woman, Latina, Returning to School (Junior)

"Refreshing enlightening convenient.... There are several other older students here. I do not feel out of place and because there is such a huge demographic of students everyone seems to respect the environment. The students are mindful and mature outside of class." —older Parent Returning to School

"Classmates are younger. Sometimes instructors are younger. Having worked and retailed I know what things will actually apply in workforce and what is just busy work or really not necessary. Young people believe it. I know better.

Met so many wonderful people. Had some really great teachers. I was not a typical student. So I did not participate in social events, sporting events, etc. Maybe you need a class geared toward older returning students."

—58 yrs, African American, Female, Retired, Christian, transfer from ARC

"43, 18 units, 4 kids, divorced, poor...it's awesome! Ha-Ha – I've overcome a lot and worked my butt off and I'm proud of it.

I really loved my...professors – especially the ones w/outside work experience that lends to teaching."

-White Female 43 Hetro Return Stud. Parent

"My perspective is different now at 28 than when I first attended Sac State at 20. If I did not have a flexible job, I think I would find it very difficult to create a workable schedule. I think Sac State is very affordable and amenities are plenty. As someone involved in the Sacramento Community, it would be nice to go to a school w/ more school sport and community involvement and support. I know it's there, but we could do so much more.

I stopped attending Sac State after 2 years because of a traumatic life event, as well as classes being impacted at the time. I also working 40 hours/week and it was very difficult to maintain. I feel that it would be nice, even 6 years later, to be able to bring my medical records that show a medical reason for not doing well in classes and being able to remove those grades from my transcript so that my chances for grad school might improve. Other than that I have loved the ease of attending Sac State.

The tuition payment plan has been incredibly helpful. (I like) smaller classes and general ease of professor accessibility. The beautiful trees of campus and Guy West Bridge. Health Center & the Well gym/facility. Decent eateries/Starbucks, computer labs, Sac RT pass/lightrail"

-Female, 28 year old, 5th generation American of Mexican/Spanish descent

"Balancing full time work, family and classes." —25, Male, Returning to School

"Older and returning to school has been an exciting time at Sac State. Although I try to participate in activities around campus I find time constraints due to 'life' outside of school sometimes limiting.

(I like) Time management. I found out what is important to me and make time to do the things I really want.

(I don't like) Getting some classes that fit my schedule. I was limited to 3 classes this semester because of scheduling conflicts."

-31 yrs old. Returning to School

"Sacramento State makes it harder to obtain a bachelor's degree. Not enough assistance with the guidance of being on track to graduate. The university makes it difficult to graduate because of the required GPA's, internships, courses and units. Some pre-requisites are too extreme and are required to graduate. Also the expensive materials for classes are too much. With books being expensive it affects learning for students. Furthermore, expensive facilities do big harm to tuition....

(I like) Advisors, counselors, financial aid" —Male/26/Returning to school

"For me, I am nothing special here so being a student and seeing all these different cultural perspectives is eye-opening."

-a white female & returning student

"It feels odd, because sometimes I feel disconnected from the younger crowd. Their perspective is different from mine. I also feel embarrassed to admit my age to my peers, so I lie sometimes. This all leads me to detach myself from the campus and campus activities, because I just want to focus on finishing my schooling. That being said, I do notice the even older students who go back to further their 'experiences' and I feel a little jealous.

Experience and age has made planning and accomplishing my goals much easier. CSUS provides a lot of resources that I use now compared to when I was younger at a different school."

-Vietnamese male returning to school (30 yrs old)

"It has been a primarily positive experience. Much of faculty is helpful and interesting." —female, white, returning to school.

"At times, extremely easy. Maybe because I'm older, but these 18-21 year olds need to be spoonfed everything. Teachers make it too easy.

Maybe this is all schools, but the limited # of classes.... Having to crash/add classes becomes so stressful."

—30, Returning to School

"It is difficult to be almost 30 in a class full of 20 year olds but I used to be like them and I sometimes wish I could reach out to them and tell them that they have more potential than they are giving themselves credit for. I want to tell them that they don't want to end up like me, they should and could work harder and smarter.

Though class have been hard to get into the ones I've had have been great. All you have to do is show up and pay attention. After that the work becomes so much easier. I know that sounds obvious but some students still have a hard time with it. I wish I would have done it more when I first entered college.

(I don't like) the rate in which it is difficult to raise my GPA. I've worked so hard since I came back to school but nothing I do gets rid of the mess I made when I was younger." —a 28 year old female

"It is a good accomplishment to be going to school to obtain a degree. However, at my current age of 27, I am very late on accomplishing this goal in my culture. Most 27 year olds are already graduated, married, and working instead of attending school.

My experience at CSUS has been incredible and amazing. I am very happy I decided to return to school after 4 years off from it.

I have had many great experiences at CSUS, but the most important experience has been meeting great individual people here on campus. Through classes and interactions I have learned a lot from CSUS students and faculty. I have liked all of the professors I have had for the 5 semesters I have attended CSUS so far."

---Culture = Sikhism Age = 27 years old

"I feel like this transition was an easy one to make. I still get to be close to my friends and family and support system. Having a year at CSU Chico under my best also aided in the transition back to a 4-year college.

I always had the perception that Sac State, as a commuter school primarily, would lack a community or ways to build relationships. I have found the opposite to be true. I have established several friendships and relationships both with students and faculty. I never thought a 'commuter school' could feel so comfortable.

I love this school."

—a white male returning to a 4-year school after battling depression/anxiety

"It has been more of a challenge because I have a heavy course load and also have to work part-time. Being older I have noticed that many younger students have already established relationships with one another.

The teachers and faculty have always been willing to help me. I have a great department chair that really made sure I would graduate this semester."

—28 female, re emerging back into school after taking a break.

"I feel like I have more of a point to prove. I've been out of school for a while and now that I found a place that I really like I want to thrive. Sac State has given me this opportunity and I'm thankful."

-Returning Student

"Coming back to school is a privilege and a challenge. Returning to school has allowed me to pursue degree and further my education. The challenging aspect is I work full time, which don't allow for enough study time.

I love the idea that there are options for students to take classes at night and online while working full time.

I am close to graduating from school." —Returning to School, Parent, Male

Reentry Students

The term "returning student," often used interchangeably with "reentry student," has various definitional parameters, but some of the most common are:

- Delayed entry into college by a year or more after high school graduation (or high school age completion in the case of those who receive their GED) The student is returning to school life. This "returning student" status puts the student at risk in terms college persistence and completion.
- Break from past college enrollment for a term or longer: The student is returning to postsecondary education. For this reason, they are sometimes called "non-first-time college students" (a "continuing student," in contrast, takes classes semester after semester).

Because in either case the student is reentering the educational arena, the term "reentry student" is often used.

Students may have put off going to college or decided to leave college due to any number of factors, including: financial pressures, job priorities, family duties, or other personal circumstances or hardships. But now they are back.

Who They Are

These students are also included under the broader term "nontraditional students" due to the characteristics listed below, which typically define returning students, wholly or partially:

- Older in age: Typically 25 years of age and up. In contrast, "traditional students" are age 18-24 and are the majority at most institutions. At Sacramento State, most students fall within this traditional age range (76.3% of undergraduates), according to the last *Sacramento State University Fact Book (Fall 2016)*.
- Part-time enrollment: Taking 11 units or less. In contrast, the majority of students here (83.1% of undergraduates) take a full course load of 12 units or more, again according to the *Fact Book*.
- Family responsibilities: Often have dependent children, in contrast to most of the undergraduate student population, the majority of which are not parents. They may have partner or family support in caring for children or may be a single parent going it alone. Sometimes the student may be caring for their own elderly parents, and, if so, this may be in addition to that of their own children.
- Financial responsibilities: While many college students work, often returning students are the primary wage-earner for their family or sole source of income for themselves, and work close to, at, or more than full-time.

The above are characteristics that many returning students share, in whole or in part—but not all. There is great variation in the returning student population in terms of: life stage (young adult to older in age), family circumstances (have children or not), employment status (have a job, need a job, retired from a job) and work schedule (full-time or part-time), finances (able to pay for school and living expenses sufficiently or barely keeping their heads above water in terms of bills), academic level (prepared and ready for academic work or in need of refreshers or remedial coursework), stage of education (pursuing a degree for the first time, returning to get that degree, or coming back for a second degree), and more.

Why They Come

Colleges is a big step for most, but note the significance of a person's decision to return to college after time has elapsed or to enroll in college for the very first time after a sustained period since high school. It may have taken great soul-searching, courage, resolve, self-sacrifice, encouragement from others, or that inner voice telling them to seek more for themselves.

Returning students come back to college for different reasons, but the primary ones are to:

- Change careers, start a business, or update job skills
- Make a better life for their families through the increased earnings of a college degree
- Realize lifelong dreams and reach full potential

What They Bring

All students bring wonderful things to our university, but returning students tend to show even greater:

- Hunger for learning
- Passion for their studies
- Desire to succeed
- Valuable life experience

In doing so, returning students—whether they realize it or not—are often the students who most frequently:

- Remind faculty and staff just why we do what we do, so clear is their appreciation of, and need for, their college education
- Increase our knowledge base and push us to expand our research of the subject matter we teach beyond what is sometimes termed the Ivory Tower because of their "real world" questions, comments, and connections
- Drive us to continually move beyond theoretical concepts into actual application and use of knowledge in order to better position students in their present and future jobs
- Stretch us in our individual spheres of campus life to find new ways to assist or encourage, determine more relevant ways to reach, or teach a little differently to this different type of student learner

The Obstacles They May Face

Returning students face a number of potential barriers to achieving their education, including the key ones stated below:

- Age: The older age often makes it harder for returning students to feel a full sense of belonging on campus and in college life.
- Time: The considerable competing demands of job and family while trying to complete coursework may be overwhelming for many.
- Learning: Because returning students have typically been out of school from a year to a decade or longer, they may feel apprehensive regarding their learning abilities or rusty in their academic skills. Some may also lack technological proficiency.

Moreover, research has consistently shown that factors common to returning students—delayed college enrollment, having dependents, being a single parent, working full-time, and going to college part-time—increase their time-to-degree and risk of not completing college at all.

What We Can Do

Returning students have every incentive to achieve their educational goals, and we have so much to gain from their presence and success at this university. Yet returning, nontraditional students tend to find that college life is geared primarily to the traditional college student, the first-time, full-time younger students who are the majority of the undergraduate student population. This makes it especially incumbent upon us to help returning students to feel welcomed and valued on our campus, and to achieve their full potential in academic life.

Help Them to Feel at Home

Research shows that while traditional students usually see themselves as students first, nontraditional students tend to reverse the order: they see their primary role as worker, partner or spouse, parent, and/or community member, before that of student. While this is certainly understandable, it may also be very telling. We don't always realize just how difficult it may be for some to forge a place of fit and belonging here, and they may not realize how important it is that they do so.

Connect with the Student

Because faculty and staff are typically older in age and working professionals, many returning students will likely relate much better to us than their classmates. You may be the one person at the campus with whom the student connects, the only person that the student feels "gets them," includes them, with whom the student feels comfortable conversing. Talking with the student about things academic or otherwise helps to create a climate of inclusion for returning students that they may find very difficult to achieve with the majority of their classmates. Such conversations also pave the way for the student to come to you with questions, concerns, support, or assistance in navigating college life, determining major or career path, and more. Introducing the student to or including the student in conversations with other faculty and staff, can, similarly, help to expand connections made on campus.

Connect the Student with the Campus

Returning students often have a very limited understanding of campus life. They may not realize that events offered include highly informative lectures, the powerful performing arts, beneficial career fairs and workshops, and activities for them to attend for personal growth or to enjoy with their families. They may not know there are over 300 student organizations on campus, including many that are related to their major and/or chosen career path, which offer greater knowledge about the job field, guest speakers, networking opportunities, and more. Returning students may also not understand that campus engagement positively impacts academic performance and offers myriad other benefits, including: exposure to information and experiences different than classroom learning; opportunities to develop team, leadership, and communication skills; and occasions 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 and explaining the importance of these to students.

Bring Down the Age Gap

Age is often the single greatest source of divide for returning students. They may well feel the difference in age when they look around at the other students or listen to the youthful comments or conversations that surround them in the classroom or campus life. While staff and faculty work with this age group, some of our returning students may not be familiar at all with the young adults of today and feel very out of place or sharply different from their classmates.

We can help to mitigate age differences in a few key ways:

Watch What You Say

When we are with the general undergraduate student population out on campus or in the classroom, we may not recognize just how much of what we communicate directly or indirectly assumes a younger audience. We often don't realize this until we look around and see the discomfort in an older student and feel the distance created by our words. Assumptions made regarding age often include that all students: are single or dating (rather than married or in committed, long-term relationships); don't have children (rather than have started families); live in the dorms or at home with, or in housing financed by, their parents (rather than have and pay for their own homes); work part-time or not at all (rather than have full-time jobs and possibly established careers); and spend free time engaging in campus life or going out (rather than not having free time, or spending time outside of school or work caring for their families). Those who teach GE classes or work with new student populations, in particular, need be especially mindful to guard against such references.

Maximize the Value of Age Differences

Students older in age often come to realize just how helpful their classmates may be in increasing their awareness of the younger population, which can come in handy in their role as parent to their own children, employee who works with a younger population, or person wanting to keep up with trends in our culture. Older students will often tell you just how much they appreciate the outlook of youth: The way of thought can be freeing, the optimism inspiring, and the freshness invigorating. You can see students younger in age listening with even greater attention when their older classmates share their wealth of experience, the wisdom age brings and valuable "big picture" perspective. Younger students will often say they really want to know about the "real world" of work from those actually in it, and how they appreciate the insights of longer life experience shared by their older classmates. As faculty and staff, we can create that climate where students of all ages feel comfortable in contributing and can facilitate realization of, or make explicit ourselves, the value of age differences.

One more thing when it comes to age: For the older students who might become discouraged at classes with so many youth, you might let them know that this doesn't have to always be the case. Students coming into GE classes may not realize that age differences become less pronounced the higher they go in their studies (upper division coursework) or that night classes tend to bring more classmates closer to their age.

Reassure Them That They Made the Right Decision

In returning to their education, they may feel excitement and happiness, a sense that they are doing what they need to do and fulfilling their life's purpose and goals. Some returning students, however, may also feel intimidation or uncertainty. They may doubt that they have what it takes to succeed in academia or doubt that they have the time to devote to college. They might weigh their considerable responsibilities in terms of family and/or work with the added demands of coursework. They may struggle with the financial investment of money spent for college (or money that could have been earned had school not taken away from available work hours) with the cost to them or their families. And some will wonder at some point if they made the right decision to return to school.

Remind Them They Made a Wise Investment in their Future

Students usually know that college is important to their future, but they don't always realize just how much in concrete terms. Telling them just how much their education is worth can be a huge source of motivation, especially when the many responsibilities of the returning student in the here-and-now can obscure the longer-term picture. 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 National Center for Education Statistics.

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 professionally (in their present and future occupations), personally (in their daily lives and growth as a human being), and academically (in progressing though their next level courses, satisfying their academic requirements in order to get that degree, etc.).

Show the Value of Campus Services to Their Future Livelihood

In addition to the many opportunities for campus involvement described previously, Sacramento State provides excellent resources for students to expand or develop their technological skills through the many services offered by the Student Technology Center and the many job search, career exploration, and interviewing and networking resources available at the Career Center. You will find a description of these resources in the list of campus resources provided at the end of this document.

Make Your Class as Conducive as Possible to Their Needs and Goals

One of the best known approaches to adult learning is andragogy, a theoretical concept popularized in the nation by Malcolm Knowles in the 1980s. According to this framework, adult learners are most highly motivated based on a need to know or do something, bring a task- or problem-orientation to the subject matter, need to incorporate their experience in the topic at hand, desire immediate application of the material, enjoy critical thinking, and prefer self-directed, active learning. Accordingly, below you will find some strategies for the classroom, as well as attendance considerations, specifically suited to returning students, but with likely application to other students, as well.

Lessons

Due to their typically longer life and work history than their classmates, returning students are a wealth of information, so draw upon this experience in class discussion to benefit all. Put them to work with critical thinking, problem solving, and application questions and exercises to explore the topic at hand. Provide more active learning in the form of group collaboration, self-reflection exercises, demonstrations, and simulations. Incorporate as much as possible "real world" examples or applications of course concepts into the day's lesson, as well as clips and guest speakers in the form of professionals and alumni. Emphasize, at every turn, the relevance or value of course material to life success by stating this explicitly and/or asking the students to consider how what they're learning can be put to good effect outside of the classroom, to link class content to real-world outcomes.

Reading and Assignments

When possible, choose reading relevant to their situations or life goals, as well as nonacademic materials (e.g., newspapers, magazines, websites). Craft assignments designed to draw upon the experiences of the student and/or apply to real life and the working world situations as much as possible, in order to maximize student motivation, satisfaction, and benefit. Allow students, when possible, to choose the topic and/or assignment format (e.g., paper, presentation, portfolio, etc.) in order to spark greater interest and learning drive.

Attendance

Keep in mind that returning students, more than their counter-parts, may well be juggling work schedules, childcare arrangements, community obligations, and other demands on their time that can make coming to campus difficult. They may be the primary wage-earner with small mouths to feed and cannot, consequently, say "no" to a boss asking them to come in on their scheduled day off (for school). They may be a single parent with no recourse but to stay at home when a child becomes ill. This makes it helpful to clearly state how to get assignments turned in on time for the student who can't make it to campus on the due date, or any policies for making up tests or turning in coursework late. If assignments or extra credit opportunities are tied to attendance at campus events, then offering different options to make it easier for the student who can't always stay longer or return to campus outside of class time may also be appreciated.

Help Them to Feel Capable in Their Abilities

Students returning to their education for the first semester or so may feel uncertain of their ability to learn, understand, and retain information. Research shows they often require remedial instruction, and even those well-prepared for college may need refreshers in some areas:

Help with Academic Conventions

Academic protocols can be a real source of frustration or roadblock for the returning student. They may spend half of the limited time that they have available for completing an assignment trying to figure out how to use an online research engine effectively, format a paper or structure an essay properly, or cite sources correctly in APA or MLA. Academic practices such as these are important, and students need to learn them. For some, however, this may feel like a huge learning curve in and of itself, on top of an already tremendous amount of subject matter learning, on top of learning how to learn again, for many returning students. Taking a few minutes to give the student a quick tutorial or some pointers on these types of basic academic skills can allow the student to focus more on the greater task at hand (the assignment) and give that student confidence moving forward in the other assignments in the class and all of their other classes, present and future.

Help with Coursework

Returning students who encounter coursework they find difficult may assume that it is their age and/or break from school, rather than the subject matter itself, that is to blame. They might not realize that it is a course concept or entire subject that many of their peers also find hard to learn. Reassurance that they are not alone in their struggles can help to ease doubts about their personal ability to succeed in college. You sharing any of your own struggles in college learning can also help them to understand that anyone—even a university employee—can encounter difficulty in coursework and still forge on and be successful. Referring students to campus resources for academic support can also be tremendously helpful. At the end of this document, you will find a list of academic resources.

Help with Technology

When we tell students to "look online" or "e-mail me if you have a question," we may not realize that for some returning students, familiarity with technology may be low or non-existent. They may not know at all or have only limited understanding of how to type papers, cut-and-paste sections or spellcheck drafts, create a presentational slide show, save their work, e-mail, attach documents, and more. Now factor in university online processes: getting information about campus programs and services from webpages, using Sac CT, participating in online class discussions or google docs, taking online exams, etc. Taking a few minutes to show a student how to perform one of these tasks can be a huge form of practical assistance, as well as psychological support. You may refer the student to campus support for learning, as well. At the end of this document, you will find a list of campus resources to help students with technological learning. Returning students may especially appreciate knowing more about the many services available to students, especially in the areas of (1) connecting to campus life, (2) exploring career paths and strengthening job search skills, (3) getting assistance with technology or developing technological skills, (4) building academic success skills and getting assistance with coursework, and (5) finding support for student parents.

Below and in the pages to follow, you will find a list of some of the many great services Sacramento State offers to help students to progress successfully in their education here.

Campus Resources

For Students Wanting to Get More Involved in Campus Life:

Associated Students, Inc. (ASI)-

Serves as the official governing body of Sacramento State and provides the framework for students to become engaged in campus life through participating in student government, joining campus committees, advocating for higher education, planning and promoting ASI events, joining clubs and organizations, and attending university events and activities.

Location: University Union, Third Floor 3250 Phone: (916) 278- 6784 ASI Government Website http://www.asi.csus.edu/student-government/

Sacramento State Campus Calendar of Events-

Provides listings of upcoming events, including movies, concerts, recreational activities, club and program events, comedy showcases, lectures, performing arts, gallery showings, and more. Campus Calendar Website http://calendar.csus.edu/

Sacramento State Athletics-

Hosts athletic competitions for the many Sac State sports teams. Admission is free for Sac State students, faculty, and staff to Hornet athletic events during the regular season. Hornet Sports Website http://www.hornetsports.com/landing/index

Student Organizations and Leadership (SOL)-

Helps students to get involved in campus life through numerous clubs and organizations, including those that are academic, cultural, fraternal, honorary, political, professional, recreational, religious, service, social, sports, and special interest in nature.

Location: University Union, Second Floor 2035 Phone: (916) 278-6595 SOL Website https://www.csus.edu/student-life/student-organizations/

State Hornet Newspaper-

Provides a daily online publication during the academic year for students, with a newsletter with a weekly roundup of State Hornet coverage (just join the mailing list), and also the opportunity for students to gain experience in reporting and other aspects of news publication.

Location: Del Norte Hall 1006 Phone: (916) 278-6584 State Hornet Newspaper Website https://statehornet.com/ Provides regular programming for the campus, including a range of different radio personalities and music genres, interviews, and broadcastings for Hornet athletic events, and more. Students interested in volunteering may help out with events or deejay an on-air show for the station.

Location: The Union, First Floor (ASI Hot Spot) Phone: (916) 278-3343 <u>KSSU Radio Website</u> http://www.kssu.com/

<u>UNIQUE</u>—

Offers students the volunteer opportunity to plan, promote, and produce quality campus events such as concerts, lectures, performing arts, and multi-cultural programs.

Location: University Union, Third Floor 3216Phone: (916) 278-3928Unique Websitehttps://theuniversityunion.com/unique

Community Engagement Center (CEC)-

Offers students opportunities to develop the skills necessary to become engaged citizens in their communities by volunteering in a number of ways, including the Sac State Volunteers and Alternative Break programs for one-day or longer service projects held throughout the year in the community.

Location: University Library 4028

Phone: (916) 278-4610

CEC Community Service Volunteering Website

https://www.csus.edu/experience/anchor-university/community-engagement-center/internal/community-service.html

Multi-Cultural Center (MCC)-

Encourages cultural understanding and awareness and action on the important issues and concerns of our communities through campus events, programs, and volunteer and personal development opportunities for students. MCC also offers a welcoming place for students to come in, hang-out or study, and learn more about themselves and others.

Location: Library 1010 Phone: (916) 278-6101 <u>MCC Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/diversityinclusion/multicultural-center.html

One World Initiative (OWL)—

Offers events and activities to inform and prepare world citizens, each year centered on a chosen theme. Students, faculty, and staff may participate in the One World Initiative each year in different ways, such as attending events or planning events.

Location: Sacramento Hall 234 Phone: (916) 278-5344 OWL Website https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/one-world-initiative/

Sacramento State "U" Mentor Program-

Pairs students with faculty, staff, alumni, and graduate and upper-division students who serve as mentors that work one-on-one with students to ensure their success at Sac State and build connection, community, and sense of belonging.

<u>U Mentor Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/umentor.html

Executive Trainers Program (ETP)-

Strives to create an atmosphere of caring and directed support that enhances the student success experience and degree attainment. The program includes: campus navigational and hospitality services, student welcome support activities and guidance, course and job shadowing/trainer

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interventions, mentoring, civic engagement opportunities, and graduate and post-graduate workshops to promote student success.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

PRIDE Center—

Provides programs, events, access to campus and community resources, a weekly support group, and a place where LGBTQIA students can hang-out and build community. The Center also offers opportunities for learning regarding the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity. Students may come in to learn more or contact the Center to volunteer (people are always needed to help with events or around the Center).

Location: University Union, First Floor Phone: (916) 278-3940 PRIDE Center Website https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/diversity-inclusion/pride-center.html

Male Empowerment Collaborative (MEC) -----

Helps to improve the retention and graduation rates of male students who are less likely to stay in and graduate from college (in contrast to female students), by offering opportunity for personal self-discovery and growth through mentorship, dialogue, guidance, and support to connect more fully to the campus community and services.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205 Phone: (916) 278-6183 <u>MEC Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/maleempowerment-collaborative.html

Women's Resource Center (WRC)-

Offers programs, events, and workshops to challenge sexism and promote gender equity. Students may come in to hang-out, socialize, study, or to learn more, inquire about volunteering, and/or attend events.

Location: University Union, Second Floor 2250 Phone: (916) 278-7388 <u>WRC Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/diversityinclusion/womens-resource-center.html

For Students Wanting to Explore Career Options and Strengthen Job Search Prospects:

Career Center-

Offers a number of resources, programs, and events for students and alumni seeking to lockdown employment and pursue their career path. On the website is a schedule of events and workshops, including on-campus interviews, job and internship fairs, a "Here to Career' workshop series, and more. Students may come by during the drop-in hours posted on the website or call/come by to schedule an appointment for Career Counseling to get help with cover letters and resumes, job search strategies, interviewing preparation, job fair preparation, job application questions, professional communication, networking, career planning, and more. Students may also visit the Career Center Jobs website, which provides further information about employment and on-campus interviewing with regional and area employers, including a Job and Internship Handbook, and the other services and resources described to follow.

Location: Lassen Hall 1013 Phone: (916) 278-6231 <u>Career Center Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/ <u>Career Counseling Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/career-counseling/ <u>Career Center Jobs Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/jobs/

FOCUS 2 Career—

Offers an online self-directed program that helps students and alumni to learn more about their personal strengths and attributes, explore careers and majors to match, and more. FOCUS 2 Career may be found on the Career Center's website as one of the featured tools on the right. Career Center Website https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/

Handshake Job Search Portal-

Provides an online job board for students and alumni to post their resume and search for full-time or part-time jobs, on-campus employment, and internships and co-operative education positions that may be paid. Students will also receive e-mails describing positions that match their search criteria and have access to the Career Center's calendar of upcoming events, workshops, and information sessions on job search, interviewing, and networking strategies.

Handshake Job Search Website https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/jobs/

Big Interview-

Helps students and alumni to improve their interview skills for a job in different industries or for grad school. Students can get coached by an expert, and learn what questions to expect and what responses will impress interviewers.

Big Interview Website https://csus.biginterview.com/

Sac State Career Network-

Offers insight, advice, and networking opportunities with Sac State alumni. Students can have conversations with alumni who are in the industry or company of the student's interest, get their resume critiqued, engage in mock interviews for practice, and more.

Career Network Website https://sacstatecn.firsthand.co/

For Students Needing Technological Assistance or Services:

IRT Service Desk-

Helps students with any tech-related questions they might have, including inquiries regarding MySacState account, wireless service, software, accounts and passwords, Sac State mobile, Canvas, accessibility, and so much more. Their motto is: *Service. Solutions. Making "IT" easy!*

Location: Academic Information Resource Center 2005 Phone: (916) 278-7337 IRT Website https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/

The IRT Services website additionally provides information on campus computer labs for student use for coursework, campus printing and copying, laptop loans, and software.

<u>Computer Labs Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/teaching-learning/computer-labs.html

<u>Campus Printing/Copying (PrintSmart)Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/devices-printing/printsmart.html

Laptop Checkout Website https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/teaching-learning/laptop-checkout.html

<u>Software & Tools Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/software-catalog/

For Students Wanting Help with Coursework and Academic Success Skills:

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 <u>PARC Website</u> 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 <u>Peer Advising & Tutoring Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centersprograms/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 <u>Peer Advising & Tutoring Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centersprograms/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 <u>SI Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academicresource/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.

<u>Smarthinking (PDF)</u> 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-writingcenter.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 Math & Statistics Math Lab Information Website 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/businessadministration/undergraduate/student-engagement.html#BusinessTutoring

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-mathsuccess/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-assistedlearning-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-sciencesmathematics/chemistry/ internal/ documents/help-office-fall-2019.pdf

Phone: (916) 278-6796

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

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

<u>Physics and Astronomy Information for Students/Tutoring Center Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/physics-astronomy/informationstudents.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 <u>PERSIST Website</u> 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 Library Website https://library.csus.edu/ Phone: (916) 278-5679

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.

<u>Student Success Academic Support Website</u> 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 Feel They Are Struggling:

<u>DEGREES Project (Dedicated to Educating, Graduating, and Retaining Educational Equity</u> 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 <u>DEGREES Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/

<u>Student Academic Success and Educational Equity Programs (SASEEP) Office</u>— 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/

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 <u>SSWD Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-studentsdisabilities/

For Students Who Are Parents:

Parents and Families Program for Students with Children-

Offers support and information for students who are parents, with the "Successful Student Parents" website listing several on-campus and community resources for students with families, as well as upcoming events, a newsletter, and more. The home Program website has a Parents and Families calendar of events and further information.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205-O Phone: (916) 278-4353 <u>Successful Student Parents Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centersprograms/parents-families/student-with-children.html <u>Parents and Families Program Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centersprograms/parents-families/ Mother's Room-

Offers a private space where lactating mothers are welcome to pump or nurse in a room equipped with a sink, changing table, seating, and electrical outlets. Nursing mothers with photo ID may check out a key at the University Union Information Desk on the first floor and proceed to the room on the third floor. The website also lists the locations of other Lactation Rooms on campus.

Location: University Union, First Floor Information Desk Phone: (916) 278-6997 Mother's Room Website https://theuniversityunion.com/student-resources/mothers-room

Children's Center-

Offers day care services for children enrolled in the program (ages six months through kindergarten) of Sacramento State students and employees. Fees are based on hourly and full day rates, and students in need may apply for childcare financial assistance if they meet income eligibility guidelines.

Location: State University Drive East Phone: (916) 278-6216 Children's Center Website http://www.asi.csus.edu/programs/childrens-center/

<u>Division of Inclusive Excellence: Equal Opportunity: "Pregnant and Parenting Student Rights"</u>— Provides the answers to frequently asked questions from students regarding their Title IX rights in higher education and what to do if they feel their rights are being violated.

<u>Information Website</u> https://www.csus.edu/diversity-inclusion/office-inclusive-excellence/equal-opportunity.html