

They are nearing the end of their educational journey...

Listening to Seniors

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Listening to Seniors...

“I felt like I was slightly behind being 23 & taking me longer @ a community college. However, I’m entering my senior year and feel right on track now!”

—23, female, Caucasian, transfer student

“So far my experiences here are good. This is my first semester and I just became a senior. If I had the time I would definitely like to be more involved in activities and just become a more active student.”

—Hispanic/Female/30/Transfer Student/Parent

“I feel welcomed and comfortable but since I transferred last year from a community college I have found it difficult to be involved in school activities/clubs.

It is mostly a commuter school so its hard to stick around campus when you don’t have classes. This makes it harder to make friends and join extracurriculars.”

—Female/22/Latina/transfer student/senior

“Sac State community is awesome!”

—Asian American Senior

“I’m not very involved at school because I’m just trying to finish my degree. Being a student as me is tedious because I don’t think college does a proper job for preparing students for the real world.

CSUS is a great school for ‘commuters.’ College is what you make of it. It’s been great to me.”

—White Female 25 Senior Fully Employed

“Being a student who has entered their senior year is motivating because the main goal of professors here is for us to graduate.”

—Senior (4 year), 23, PR major

“It’s a hard balance between work and school. Time management is a big issue when you become a senior with many senior group projects, working with students who don’t have a job.

(I like) The tutor resources that we have. It helps so much to have free tutors on campus that are available with my crazy schedule.

(I don’t like) Hybrid classes (teachers don’t give a set schedule on when is online and when is inperson)”

—Female, Senior, full time work, full time student

“I feel Sac State is very diverse and I’ve enjoyed my experience here. I like how there are many clubs/organizations with diverse backgrounds.

I like the online platform Sac CT and how professors utilize it to give students more resources to learn.

I have only had one class where I did not like the style/design of the class mostly because of disorganization from the instructor.”

—hispanic, age 29, senior

“Being a senior, I’ve experienced a lot.”

—Male, 25, Japanese, Senior

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

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

“I enjoyed my experience.”

—White, male, 25, Straight, Single, Senior at CSUS, Christian, Athlete

“(I like) How at Sac State students have the opportunity to explore a lot of different things and options.

Everything I have done here has benefitted me in some way.”

—22, white, senior, mass coms major, female

“After learning about all the things that CSUS provides for its students, it is disheartening seeing other students who are uninformed.

I would like to promote being involved on campus and for students to study abroad if they can.”

—Male, 23, Pacific Islander, Straight, Senior

“Very open, helpful...department...I enjoyed my experience.

Intramural activities at the Well has been my best experience. Very diverse and fun.”

—White, male, 25, Straight, Single, Senior at CSUS, Christian, Athlete

“Most professors are friendly but there are a few who do not care.”

—Latina female age 22 (senior)

“I have experienced many well-educated teachers who have turned courses I thought I would hate into courses I recommend to my friends.”

—Mexican-american; student-athlete; senior

“I feel like I blend in with everyone else. I enjoy the variety of ethnic clubs at this school as well.”

—mixed-race, 22 years old, senior (grade)

“My perspective is a little rushed, that even though I have been in college for 5 years, it just wasn’t enough time. I would like to have spent more time at Sac State because I spent 3 years in Junior College.

The dynamic campus. There is always some group of people trying to make some kind of difference on campus. And it seems like every semester I come back and see something different on campus.”

—a fifth year senior

“Being a student, a female as well as African American, (my experience) is typical of any college student that works full time and goes to school. It is hard but manageable.”

—Female African American 26, Senior

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

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

“(I like) e-mail communication, online access and use of SacCT.

(I don’t like) huge variance of teacher grading/structure.”

—23, white, senior

“I’m not a new student and therefore am able to take advantage of the services provided by the school.”

—22, Female Senior Student

“I have met a lot of great people & connected well with other classes and the professors were helpful”

—senior, Caucasian, age 22, male

“Frustrating because I have my own personal pressures about wanting to graduate and yes it has taken me a long time to actually decide what my major is, but on top of my own pressures I feel this university is just trying to push me out and not helping me graduate. I say this mostly because my financial aid was revoked for having too many units. Despite my income, despite my high GPA and trend of progress since I transferred here and despite the fact that the majority of my units are from a junior college, CSUS won’t even let me get student loans anymore (unless they are private). Just a bunch of BS.”

—a white super senior

“Personally, it’s stressful because I know that the ‘real world’ is going to be more difficult than being a student (and that’s a challenge in itself). From talking w/ recent grads, I know that it’s going to be difficult finding a job. I also feel that I didn’t receive an education equal to the amount of debt I’m in. I wish Sac State challenged me more like private schools do. After 5 years in school, I don’t feel prepared for life after college in many aspects.

I enjoyed my time in Greek life while it lasted (3 years). However, with the fees and little time due to the fact that I work 30+ hours/week, sorority wasn’t an option anymore. I also studied abroad in England for 5 months which is the best choice I have made since being at Sac State.

I’m happy I was apart of the honors program. The professors in the honors program were the only professors I’ve had that truly wanted to push me to be the best I can be.

Too many students and not enough professors. Because of this, professors didn’t take the time to develop a relationship but rather just did their job to put food on the table.”

—23 years old, 5th year senior, full time worker & student

“It is getting hard to stay focused/motivated. I don’t have a lot of free time

Being on the 5 year plan has allowed me to work full-time and support myself”

—23 yrs old, 5th year graduating senior.

“The courses I have taken have all been wonderful & informative!”

—22, Filipino-American, Senior

“I have had a fairly normal experience at Sac State. Come to school, get work done and leave.

Sac State’s education has taken me away from one major for the better.

Sac State has allowed me to get more involved on campus if I wanted to.”

—white male, 23, senior, athletic

“The experience here is overall positive, but outside factors often make things difficult.

I’ve had some negative experiences with professors being too extreme in one respect or another (too passionate, right-out insane, unorganized, overall hellish) but most experiences have been positive.

Many of the professors are willing to work with you or allow certain leeway under certain circumstances.”

—23 y/o female, senior

“It is hard for an African American student to be successful on this campus.

I do not like this school and I cannot wait to graduate.”

—Black Female Senior

“I am a senior. I have had a great experience here at CSUS. It has been very positive.”

—Asian Indian (east Indian/Punjabi) 23 years old female

***“For this last semester specifically, I’d say it’s like the light at the end of the tunnel.
Most of the teachers are pretty good, and the campus is nice.”***

—White, 24, Male, Senior

***“I spent 2 years at CSUS (will be 7 semesters total) and will graduate in Fall. The head
chairman of my department was extremely helpful in helping me graduate on time.”***

—Filipino, 23, Female

***“I feel pretty well-attended to as well as educated.... Professors (mostly) care about your
success. Amazing school.”***

—24, Caucasian, senior

“I feel like a college student waiting to graduate”

—female, caucasian, senior

Seniors

The last *Sacramento State University Fact Book* reports there were 10,921 seniors of the 27,876 total undergraduate students enrolled in Fall 2016, 39.2% of undergraduate students.

What We Can Do

They are in the home stretch, likely feeling ready to get out and excited to graduate. As faculty and staff, we can help seniors to complete their last year smoothly and maximize their remaining time by making sure they understand the process toward graduation and the steps they may take to better prepare for their futures. Below are some of the key tasks of seniors at Sacramento State:

Completing Coursework

Seniors have 90-120 plus units earned at this grade level, and want to stay on track with all courses left to complete to satisfy the requirements for their major field of study and GE. Students can see their progress, stay on track, and learn more what they need to do to graduate and the assistance available to them by going to their:

KEYS to Degrees Toolbox (Kit to Empower Your Success)—

Helps students to better navigate college life and stay on track with timely graduation with online tools such as Smart Planner, which automates course scheduling and offers dashboards showing the student's real-time progress toward degree.

[KEYS Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/academic-advising/general-advising/keys-to-degree-toolbox.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/academic-advising/general-advising/keys-to-degree-toolbox.html>

Students with questions regarding GE should seek assistance at the Academic Advising Center and those with questions regarding the major should discuss the matter with an advisor within their department.

Preparing for Graduation

Students may file their petition to graduate one year prior to graduation and at 85 units or more. Deadlines for applying to graduate are February 1 (for graduation in the upcoming Fall Semester) and October 1 (for graduation in the upcoming Spring/Summer Semester).

The Office of the University Registrar provides the

“Bachelor’s Degree Graduation Requirements Checklist” (PDF)

https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/student-services-center/_internal/_documents/bachelors-graduation-checklist.pdf

The Student Services Center provides a “Forms” website, with all of the forms needed for college life, including those for Graduation and Degree Evaluation

[Forms Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/student-services-center/forms.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/student-services-center/forms.html>

Once the application has been submitted, the student will be notified of next steps in the process.

Students with questions in this regard or in need of further information about preparing for graduation may refer to:

The University Registrar’s Graduation and Degree Advising Office—

Reviews the courses completed by a student to determine the official status of the student’s progress toward graduation. Students may visit the website to schedule an appointment and obtain further information regarding eligibility and applying to graduate, with a link to the forms to do so. Students who have applied to graduate and have questions may schedule an appointment with a Degree Advisor.

Location: Lassen Hall 2000

Phone: (916) 278-1000, #6

[Graduation Advising Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/records-transcripts/graduation-advising/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/records-transcripts/graduation-advising/>

Students may also find the following campus resources helpful for further information or assistance in the graduation process:

Commencement Office—

Provides information regarding preparing for graduation, schedule, policies, steps to take, and answers to frequently asked questions about the commencement ceremony.

Location: Sacramento Hall 150

Phone: (916) 278-4724

[Commencement Office Website](https://www.csus.edu/president/commencement/) <https://www.csus.edu/president/commencement/>

ASI Student Shop—

Sells graduation caps, gowns, tassels, and more online or at the store location.

Location: University Union, Third Floor 3231

Phone: (916) 278-7916

[ASI Shop Graduation Supplies Website](http://www.asi.csus.edu/services/student-shop/products/) <http://www.asi.csus.edu/services/student-shop/products/>

A Quick Note about Graduation and Commencement

“Graduation” refers to the date in which the undergraduate degree was officially conferred, while the term “commencement” refers to the graduation ceremony held for students. Students sometimes view the two terms as synonymous, and, consequently, think they cannot participate in commencement if the requirements for graduation are not met.

Please note that students may still “walk the stage” when they are short a class or so or if they missed the deadline to apply for graduation. Their graduation date will state the day that all requirements were successfully completed, but they may still celebrate with their peers in commencement.

Readying Themselves for Life after Undergraduate Degree Achievement

Seniors can better position themselves for a successful future by exploring the many opportunities on campus available to them in the areas of:

1. Internships and volunteerism to gain greater work experience,
2. Career Center resources to hone job search skills and obtain employment, and
3. Graduate School information to consider going further in their educational journey.

The campus resources to explore these options are discussed in the pages to follow.

Internships and Volunteer Work

Seniors should take advantage as much as possible of internships and volunteer work in order to get a taste of what certain careers are like, gain work experience and skills, build connections, and develop professionalism and confidence in the working world.

Internships may be full- or part-time, on or off campus, for academic units or not, and paid or unpaid.

To learn more about internship opportunities, students should check with the Career Center:

Career Center Internship Services—

Offers tools and resources to help students identify and obtain an internship, where they can gain industry experience, develop professional skills, and make valuable connections that could lead to employment in career paths they seek. Internships may be full- or part-time, on or off campus, paid or unpaid, and for units or not. The website provides further information, including links to the Jobs and Internship Handbook, Handshake Job Search Portal, and the CA Internship Network, described to follow. Students may come by during the drop-in hours posted on the website or call/come in to schedule an appointment for Career Counseling to get help with cover letters and resumes, internship search strategies, interviewing preparation, and more.

Location: Lassen Hall 1013

Phone: (916) 278-6231

[Internship Services Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/internships/) [Career Counseling Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/career-counseling/)

Handshake Job Search Portal—

Provides an online job board for students to post their resume and search for internships, volunteer work, and co-operative education positions, as well as full- or part-time jobs.

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

California Internship Network—

Provides information for students to find part-time paid internships throughout California.

[CA Internship Network Website](https://www.calinterns.org/for-students/)

Center for California Studies—

Offers students valuable opportunities for civic education and leadership development through public service internships and fellowships for students who have graduated.

Location: Tahoe Hall 3046

Phone: (916) 278-6906

[Center for California Studies Internships Website](https://www.csus.edu/center/center-california-studies/internship-opportunities.html)

Students may also check with their department, the majority of which house an internship program for the major or field of study. Students may additionally check for internship opportunities with the many campus programs and organizations.

Career Search and Preparation

Seniors can better position themselves for the workforce and obtain employment by utilizing the Career Center.

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

[Career Center Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/>

[Career Counseling Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/career-counseling/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/career-counseling/>

[Career Center Jobs Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/jobs/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/jobs/>

[Handshake Job Search Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/jobs/handshake/) [https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/jobs/](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/jobs/handshake/)

[Big Interview Website](https://csus.biginterview.com/) <https://csus.biginterview.com/>

[Career Network Website](https://sacstatecn.firsthand.co/) <https://sacstatecn.firsthand.co/>

Graduate School

Seniors may want to pursue higher degree attainment and postgraduate work to immerse themselves further in their field of study. The following resources will be helpful in this regard:

Office of Graduate Studies—

Provides information and services regarding policies and procedures for applying to and attending Graduate School, coordinates admissions, and assists students through their graduate programs on campus.

Location: River Front Center 215

Phone: (916) 278-6470

[Graduate Studies Office Website](https://www.csus.edu/graduate-studies/) <https://www.csus.edu/graduate-studies/>

Career Center—

Offers Counseling for students and alumni to get help with graduate school research and personal statements. Students may come by during the drop-in hours posted on the website or call/come by to schedule a counseling appointment. The Career Center webpage also has a link to Events and Workshops, including those for students considering graduate school in their future.

Location: Lassen Hall 1013

Phone: (916) 278-6231

[Career Center Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/>

[Career Counseling Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/career-counseling/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-life/career-center/career-counseling/>

One Last Thing

The last *Graduating Student Survey Report* (Spring 2016) by the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning reports the following, with regard to Sacramento State's seniors:

What they do while they're here...

According to student survey respondents,

With regard to their classes:

- 64.1% frequently contributed to class discussions,
- 63.4% frequently discussed course content with students outside of class,
- 55.6% frequently used the library for research or homework,
- 67.2% frequently made a presentation in class,
- 43.6% frequently worked on independent study projects,
- 40.4% frequently studied with other students,
- 20.2% frequently performed community service as part of a class,
- 53.6% frequently worked with classmates on group projects during class, and
- 5.19% frequently did so outside of class.
- 7.2% frequently missed class due to employment, and
- 8.8% frequently missed class for other reasons.
- 34.7% frequently had difficulty getting the courses they need.

With regard to their instructors:

- 39.4% frequently communicated regularly with their professors,
- 32.3% frequently asked a professor for advice after class, and
- 11.0% frequently worked on a professor's research project.

With regard to not-so-great-moments:

- 6.9% frequently came to class late,
- 23.2% frequently have been bored in class,
- 5.4% frequently failed to complete homework on time, and
- 6.1% frequently fell asleep in class.

What they think of faculty and staff...

- 79.3% of the survey respondents reported that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the amount of contact with faculty.
- 82.6% strongly agree or agree that faculty here are interested in students' academic problems, and
- 56.8% strongly agree or agree that faculty here are interested in students' personal problems.
- 76.3% strongly agree or agree that staff here are interested in students' academic problems, and
- 51.6% strongly agree or agree that faculty here are interested in students' personal problems.

What they think about their education...

88.4% of the survey respondents reported that they strongly agree or agree that if asked, they would recommend this college to others.

77.2% said they were very satisfied or satisfied with general education and core curriculum courses, and

83.0% were very satisfied or satisfied with courses in their major field.

72.3% were very satisfied or satisfied with the relevance of coursework to everyday life, and

76.0% relevance to future career plans.

82.3% were very satisfied or satisfied with the overall quality of instruction,

81.9% were very satisfied or satisfied with overall academic experience, and

82.1% were very satisfied or satisfied with overall college experience.