

**IEAP Initiative Status Report
Fall 2023**



Initiative Title: Block Enrollment

Initiative: IEAT 6.1

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Date: 2/19/2024

A. OVERVIEW: Respond briefly (about 50-75 words per answer) to each of the following questions.

1. **Purpose:** Increase the number of courses from four (4) courses in Fall 2022 to five (5) courses in Fall 2023 with a goal of 15 units for first-year students in their first semester.
2. **Goals:** Fall 2023 goals were as follows:
 - a. Continue to use Guided Registration approach to blocks.
 - b. Increase number of courses for a goal of 15 units per semester.
 - c. Guide students to take courses following their major roadmap and to complete their general education requirements.
 - d. Scale Learning Community participation to 70% of first year students and include LC ranking in Joining the Pod Survey
3. **Metrics/Data for Evaluation:**
 - a. Primary metrics will be average unit load for first-year students, completion of A2 and B4 requirements during the first year, percentage of students reaching sophomore status (30 units) by the start of their second year, and retention rates from the first to second year.

B. STATUS: Again, please respond briefly to each of the following.

1. **Progress:** Yes, we have made progress on several fronts. At Fall 2023 Census, the average unit load for first year students (CA resident) was 14.59. At census of Fall 2022, the average unit load for first year students was 14.0. Additional comparison of first year student average unit load: 14.5 in Fall 2021; 14.47 in Fall 2020; 14.98 in Fall 2019; 14.21 in Fall 2018.

Increasing the number of courses in guided registration appears to have a positive effect on the average unit load for our first-year students. There is continuing research that students perform better academically if they take 15 units versus taking less units. [Sample report from CSU San Marcos.](#)

There was also improvement on the Joining the Pod Survey and First Year Student Communication. For the 2023 survey, the questions were reduced to only required logistical questions, regular reminder emails were sent, and “to-do” list items were placed within the Student Center (CI Records) to encourage incoming students to complete the survey. These efforts helped increase our response rate. 429 new first-year students (out of 666 intents for 64.5% as of 6/2/23) submitted surveys as of June 2, 2023 (date survey closed), versus a grand total of 324 for the fall 2022 survey (out of 769 intents for 42.1%).

In addition, there was a concerted effort to streamline communications regarding first year student enrollment information after the 3-Step Intent deadline ([Next Steps for Enrolling at CSUCI](#)). This brought together information regarding the Joining the Pod Survey, the Advising & Registration sessions, Learning Communities, and Orientation.

2. **Evaluation:** Through various debriefs with the Guided Registration Working Group, academic advisors and staff members who work with new student registration, we have learned that this is conceptually a worthwhile effort, but refinement is needed. For Fall 2024, the focus is on how to make this as logistically smooth as possible during the student experience. This involves adjusting the planning timeline to allow for more setup and testing prior to students enrolling in late-June and early-July. For program chairs, they are seeking more specific guidance on scheduling practices as well as additional data to help plan the appropriate number of sections. Our academic advisors expressed the need to have college transcripts and transfer credit posted for first-year students who took college work during high school. For the latter, we have implemented “to-do” items and a communication plan for Fall 2024 to address this issue.
3. **Continuation:** Yes, we should continue with our efforts for block enrolling and guided registration for our first-year students. It aligns with the CSU’s Equity Priority 2 to expand credit opportunities and ensure our first-year students are starting on the right track towards degree completion.
4. **Future Needs:** When funds were initially requested, our thought was that we’d need an outside consultant to help us implement the appropriate technology for either block enrolling or guided registration. On the implementation side, we were able to borrow a modification from another CSU campus and implement using our own ITS and Student Systems resources. As we anticipate our campus’ overall resources shrinking in the future, there is now a need for our scheduling practices to become more precise. We need to ensure our program chairs have the data that they need to plan a schedule that accommodates both our continuing students and anticipates the needs of our new students. Our Student Systems team has seen an increase in requests for operational data from chairs to help them plan. With internal resources being stretched thin, we could potentially bring in a consultant to help build planning-specific queries that can continue to be modified & used for years.
5. **Other:** The Guided Registration Working Group has been implementing changes to improve the planning process including advocating for more specific scheduling guidance, including more members to ensure all schools have representatives, and working closely with the Learning Community team to contribute toward a more seamless first-year enrollment experience for our students.