

# EL CAMINO COLLEGE

## First Year Experience

### PROGRAM REVIEW

#### Program Description

**a. Describe the program. How does the program link to the College's mission statement, or statement of values, and local vision goals? Include program mission if appropriate.**

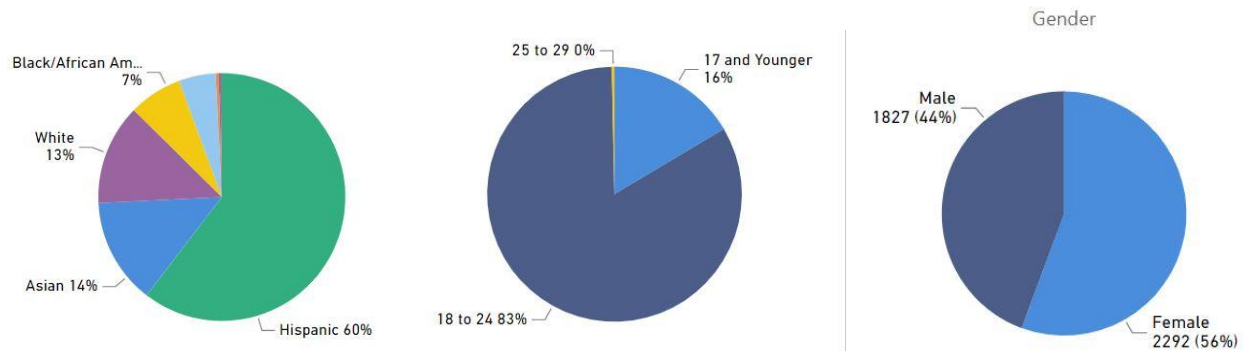
In 2021, FYE was honored with two resolutions from Assemblymember Al Mursuchi and Senator Steven Bradford for its outstanding contribution to closing equity gaps and increasing graduation and transfer rates for first-year students. The program has been recognized by the Chancellor's Office as well as the National Resource Center for First Year Experience for setting the standard for First Year Experience programs across the nation. The First Year Experience (FYE) program is designed to assist new and continuing students transitioning from high school to college with their academic goals, including degree and/or certificate attainment as well as transfer. The program enhances student success by offering a comprehensive summer orientation that provides students with the necessary tools to manage their class schedule, academic transcripts, and registration for classes. Additionally, FYE students are given a financial aid orientation to familiarize them with financial aid resources such as fee waivers, federal Pell grants, and scholarship assistance. FYE uses an integrative approach to teaching and learning where students participate in multiple learning communities for an entire academic year. In 2019, FYE converted all of its learning communities courses on campus to align with the Guided Pathway framework. Each learning community is based on the Meta-Majors model which includes Behavioral Sciences, Business, Creative Arts, Health & Community Wellness, and STEM courses. Learning communities are designed to help students complete their English and Math courses during their first year in college and allow students the opportunity to complete a higher level of graduation and transfer requirements during their first year in college. Participating in a cohort model, students acclimate to the campus at a faster rate than students who do not participate in a cohort model.

FYE is the only program on campus to ever go through an efficiency study. The purpose of the study was to determine whether FYE produces faster throughput and better outcomes for students relative to the additional cost of the program. The study showed clear indications of greater and faster throughput of students and goal completion for participants in FYE versus a control group of similar students who received no special services. FYE students needed fewer courses in English and math to successfully complete transfer-level English and college-level math, even when the starting course was held constant. FYE students also reached the 30-unit threshold faster than the control group, nearly one term faster than the control group. The FYE program and its students have outperformed their comparison groups in the following areas: student success, retention, persistence, and course progression. Further, FYE students are more likely to persist beyond their second year than students who do not participate in the program.

FYE serves over 3,000 students each academic year and continues to serve as the campus's largest non-categorical program. The program is open to all new first-year students regardless of income or academic abilities.

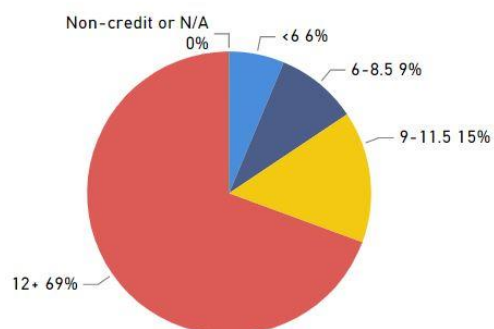
**b. What students does the program serve (include demographic such as: age, gender, race/ethnicity, financial aid eligibility, case load).**

Below are characteristics of the student population that participate in the program.

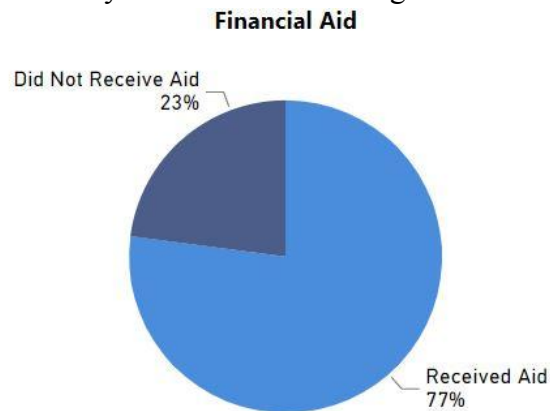


The student population of FYE is 56% female and 44% male; over 60% of the students participating in FYE identify as Hispanic/Latino. Over 70% of the students are First-Generation, which means that neither parent nor guardian completed a degree from a four-year university in the United States, the definition established by the First-Generation advisory committee on campus to track First-Generation status. The average age of an FYE student is 18-24, since FYE works exclusively with recently graduated high school students.

FYE has been very successful in aligning with the Chancellor's Vision for Success. On average FYE students enroll in 12 or more units during the fall and spring semesters.



Over 77% of FYE students receive some type of financial aid in the form of a grant, pell grant, and/or South Bay Promise. The program uses a robust case management model to ensure students are awarded before the start of the academic year. Extensive research from Patricia McDonough's seminal studies at UCLA in the area of financial aid has shown that first-year students who do not receive a timely financial aid award packet by the start of the fall semester are more likely to withdraw from courses and/or drop out than students who receive their financial aid in a timely manner ( McDonough, 1998.) FYE established the first Financial Aid Advocacy and Student Training (FAAST) Program in 2015 to better equip students with the necessary skills needed to navigate the complex process financial aid.

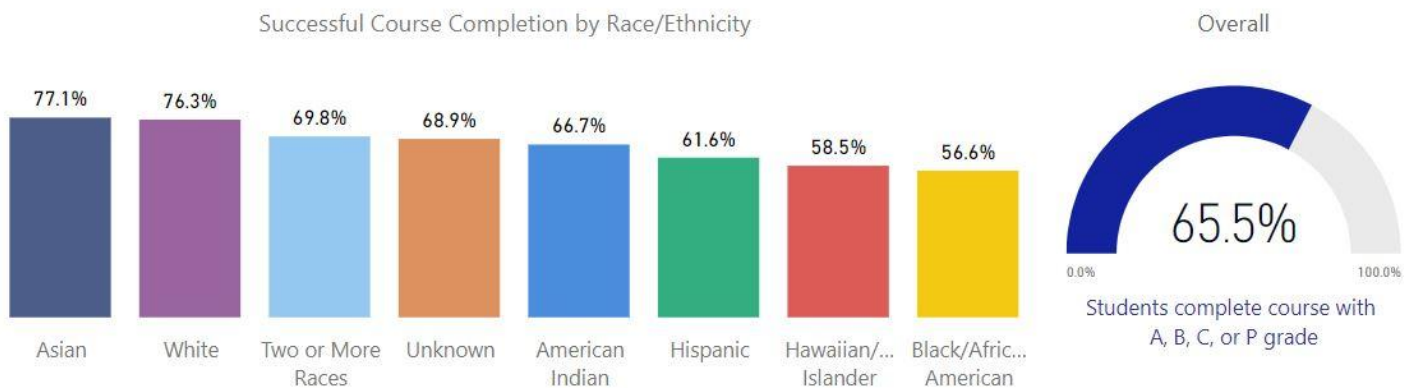
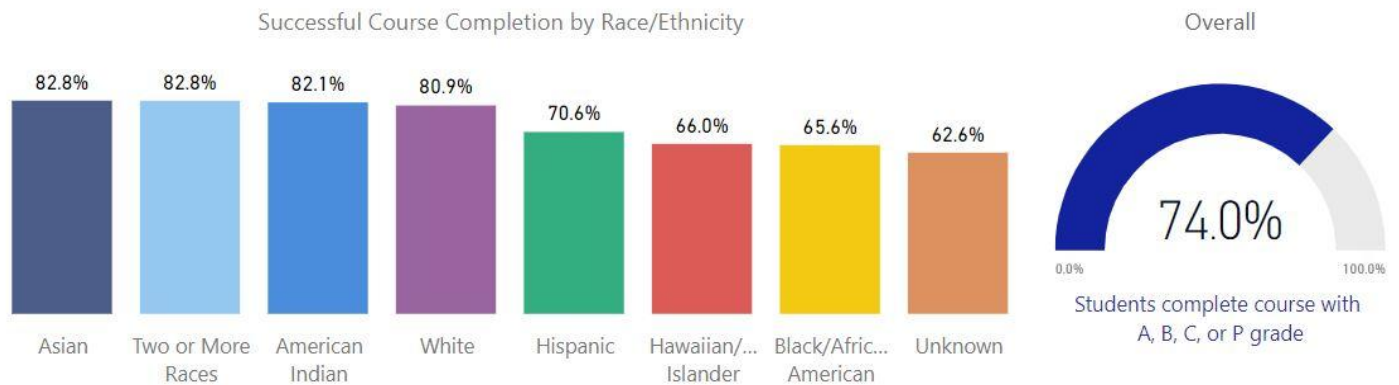


**c. What groups of students has the program served particularly well during the last four years?**

Since its inception as a Title V Grant in 2001, FYE has prided itself on the success of its students. For over 20 years, FYE has ensured that students are completing the metrics in alignment with the Chancellor's Office Vision for Success and El Camino College's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan.

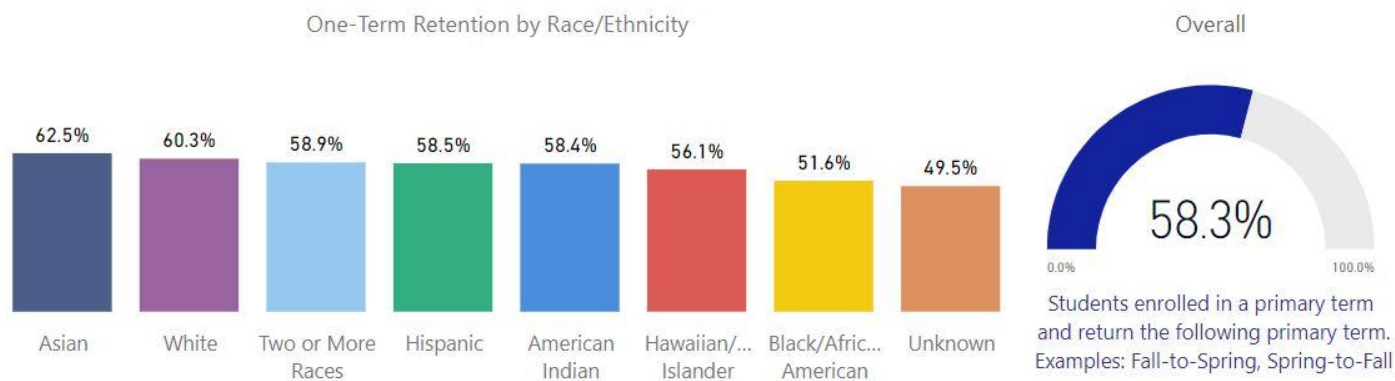
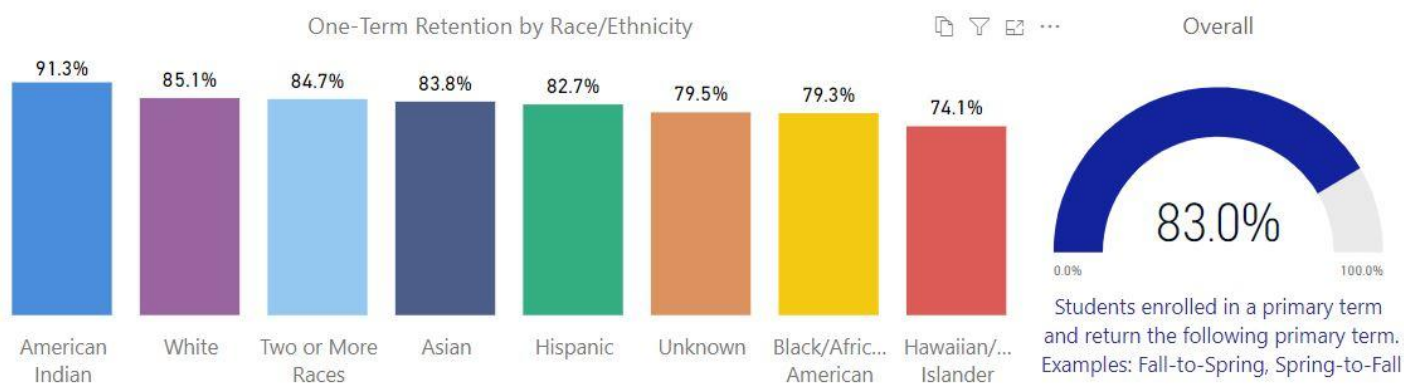
- Increase by at least 20 percent the number of CCC students annually who acquire associates degrees, credentials, certificates, or specific skill sets that prepare them for an in-demand job.
- Increase by 35 percent the number of CCC students transferring annually to a UC or CSU.
- Decrease the average number of units accumulated by CCC students earning associate's degrees, from approximately 87 total units (the most recent system-wide average) to 79 total units—the average among the quintile of colleges showing the strongest performance on this measure.
- Reduce equity gaps across all of the above measures through faster improvements among traditionally underrepresented student groups, with the goal of cutting achievement gaps by 40 percent within 5 years and fully closing those achievement gaps within 10 years.
- Reduce regional achievement gaps across all of the above measures through faster improvements among colleges located in regions with the lowest educational attainment of adults, with the ultimate goal of fully closing regional achievement gaps within 10 years.

FYE students have consistently outperformed across all measures first-year students who are not affiliated with the program: successful completion, course progression, unit achievement, retention, and transfer and graduation. The chart below shows completion rates for students who participated in FYE in comparison to students who did not participate in the program. On average, FYE students successfully completed courses at 74% rate versus 65.5% for students who did not participate in FYE.



#### d. What are notable achievements of the program during the last four years?

FYE students also have higher retention rates than students who do not participate in the program. The high touch services that include counseling, advising, registration assistance, and wrap-around services contribute to FYE's retention rates. Below is a chart illustrating the retention rates for FYE students compared to non-FYE students. FYE students are retained at 83% while students not enrolled in an FYE cohort achieve a 58.3% retention rate.



Further, FYE students are more likely to attend on a full-time basis and complete a higher number of units than students who are not enrolled in the program. In late 2021, The RP Group conducted a robust quantitative analysis of the transfer trajectories of transfer-motivated African American/Black students. This research identified a number of factors salient to the journeys of African American/Black students, including timely unit completion, passing transfer-level English and math early on, receiving academic counseling in the first year, and avoiding academic probation. Because of this study and previous research, all FYE students are enrolled in English and Math during their first term at the college. Further, each student receives a comprehensive educational plan that includes all courses needed for graduation and/or transfer regardless of their academic goal. The plan is available to students through their portal

for viewing and walks each student through their timeline from their first term until their final semester at El Camino College. The plan also includes key dates for transfer application periods as well as degree petition submission deadlines.

### Average Unit Load

Race/Ethnicity	2018/FA	2019/FA	2020/FA	2021/FA	Average
American Indian	12.0	13.5	13.0	12.9	13.0
Asian	12.2	12.5	12.4	12.6	12.4
Black/African American	11.8	11.7	11.4	11.7	11.7
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	12.8	9.0	12.5	6.0	11.3
Hispanic	12.2	11.9	11.9	12.1	12.0
Two or More Races	12.7	11.7	11.8	12.8	12.3
Unknown	11.5	11.4	10.3	11.0	10.9
White	12.7	12.8	12.5	12.7	12.7
<b>Average</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>12.2</b>

In the *African American Transfer Tipping Point* study, Black students who completed 30 units within their first two years of college were shown to increase their chances of transferring by 66%, and if they completed 45+ units within their first two years their probability of transferring increased by 85%. Community college students who completed less than 30 units within their first two years decreased their chances of transferring by 24%. The findings are clear: students who complete more transferable units within their first two years of college increase their likelihood of graduation and/or transfer by 66% or more. FYE has been able to achieve these metrics by creating learning communities with a meta-major framework to help students maximize their unit attainment within their first year of college. The chart above illustrates the average unit completion for FYE students of 12.2 units.

### Average Unit Load

Race/Ethnicity	2018/FA	2019/FA	2020/FA	2021/FA	Average
American Indian	8.1	8.5	8.5	7.1	8.1
Asian	7.7	8.1	8.6	7.6	8.0
Black/African American	7.6	7.3	7.6	7.4	7.5
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	7.7	7.8	8.0	8.3	7.9
Hispanic	7.8	7.7	8.1	7.6	7.8
Two or More Races	7.9	7.6	8.3	7.5	7.8
Unknown	6.1	6.7	7.2	6.4	6.6
White	7.6	7.6	8.3	7.8	7.8
<b>Average</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.8</b>

The second chart illustrates unit attainment for non-FYE cohort students who completed on average 7.8 units. FYE students are getting on the path early in their college career because of the high-touch services during pre-enrollment stages of the matriculation process. Pre-enrollment activities are



especially critical to first-generation students who often do not have anyone at home to assist them with admissions, financial aid, and educational planning. Because FYE students are completing more units during their first year in college, they are more likely to transfer within a two to three year timeframe. Transfer has been one of the core missions for the program, and over 85% of FYE students cite transfer as their educational goal. The metrics below illustrate our transfer record for recent academic years:

Destination Type	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
CSU	129	177	251	252	<b>757</b>
Out of State/Private	94	52	139	101	<b>363</b>
UC	61	62	106	92	<b>309</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>1287</b>

The top destinations for FYE students are CSU campuses as many students are commuter students and try to stay close to home. The FYE program has strong partnerships with the Transfer Center, working closely with the transfer team to increase the number of students participating in the Northern California tour to expose students to campuses outside of Southern California.

Transfer School	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - LONG BEACH	41	66	66	91	<b>261</b>
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - DOMINGUEZ HILLS	40	57	85	80	<b>255</b>
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-LOS ANGELES	11	14	22	22	<b>69</b>
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA - IRVINE	8	16	18	22	<b>63</b>
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - FULLERTON	12	16	11	16	<b>55</b>
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY - LOS ANGELES	6	4	27	17	<b>54</b>
LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY	3	19	11	21	<b>52</b>
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA	8	9	24	12	<b>52</b>
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY- NORTHRIDGE	7	9	17	18	<b>51</b>
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA - RIVERSIDE	6	7	12	11	<b>35</b>
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-SANTA BARBARA	8	3	12	11	<b>34</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>1287</b>

Transfer equity is important to our core mission, and the numbers below mirror El Camino College's reputation for being a top transfer institution for students of color. As a Hispanic Serving Institution, it's important that our transfer numbers reflect the overall campus community.

**Percent of Students and Transfers by Race/Ethnicity**

Four Years Combined

Race/Ethnicity	Students	Race/Ethnicity	Transfers
American Indian	0%	American Indian	0%
Asian	14%	Asian	14%
Black/African American	7%	Black/African American	7%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%
Hispanic	60%	Hispanic	59%
Two or More Races	5%	Two or More Races	5%
Unknown	0%	Unknown	0%
White	13%	White	15%

The FYE program works tirelessly to create a transfer receptive culture for all students participating regardless of academic goals. A transfer receptive culture has five elements established through UCLA's Center for Community College Partnerships:

- Establish the transfer of students, especially nontraditional, first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students, as a high institutional priority that ensures stable accessibility, retention, and graduation.
- Provide outreach and resources that focus on the specific needs of transfer students while complimenting the community college mission of transfer.
- Offer financial and academic support through distinct opportunities for nontraditional-reentry transfer students where they are stimulated to achieve at high academic levels.
- Acknowledge the lived experiences that students bring and the intersectionality between community and family.
- Create an appropriate and organic framework from which to assess, evaluate, and enhance transfer-receptive programs and initiatives that can lead to further scholarship on transfer students. (Jain et al., 2011, p. 258)

FYE uses this framework to build a transfer receptive culture that allows students who might not otherwise consider themselves transfer bound. In the fall of 2011, CCC started offering Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs)—degree programs based on model curricula that were created jointly between the CCC and CSU systems.



Providing the major is available as an ADT at El Camino, FYE program ensures each new student is placed on an ADT path. This practice has resulted in a significant increase in the number of FYE students earning their Associate Degree for Transfer degrees.

Award Type	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
AA or AS	189	188	273	338	<b>956</b>
ADT	131	181	239	312	<b>861</b>
Certificate	166	136	28	75	<b>396</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>1355</b>

The program is consistently increasing the number of students earning associate degrees at the college. There has been a steady increase for all FYE students with a special emphasis on Associate Degree for Transfer programs. Students who successfully earn an ADT are guaranteed admission to the CSU system (though not necessarily their first choice campus), are granted junior standing, and only need to complete an additional 60 credits to earn a Bachelor's degree and receive a 0.1 bump in cumulative GPA at the time of admissions.

Award	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
General Studies-Social & Behavioral Sciences-AA		90	92	142	<b>324</b>
Transfer Studies-CSU Breadth-Achievement	109	75	9	21	<b>214</b>
Psychology for Transfer-AA-T	19	48	53	69	<b>189</b>
General Studies	178				<b>178</b>
Business Administration for Transfer-As-T	24	30	47	71	<b>172</b>
General Studies-Biological & Physical Sciences-AA		39	63	61	<b>163</b>
Transfer Studies - IGETC-Achievement	50	38	7	30	<b>125</b>
General Studies-Arts & Humanities-AA		22	42	52	<b>116</b>
Pre-Nursing-Transfer		30	34	34	<b>98</b>
Sociology for Transfer-AA-T	19	31	17	20	<b>87</b>
Communication Studies for Transfer-AA-T	17	9	30	26	<b>82</b>
Administration of Justice for Transfer-AS-T	17	15	18	19	<b>69</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>1355</b>

The top five degrees for FYE students are in Social & Behavioral Sciences, Transfer Studies, Psychology, General Studies, and Business. Transfer Studies is a popular degree for FYE students because many of them transfer onto four-year institutions.

**e. What major challenges did the program confront in the last four years? What groups of students need to be a priority during the next four years?**

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on how FYE operated in the last four years. Many of our students suffered from digital inequities that exist for communities of color and did not have reliable access to laptops and /or wifi. Consequently, many of our students could not receive quality instruction during the time El Camino College was mostly remote. Many of our students also faced financial hardship due to one or both parents being unemployed because of the closures that existed in L.A. County during the beginning stages of the pandemic. Also, communities of color were more likely to experience illness to Covid-19 because they worked as essential workers and/or possibly lived in multi-generational homes, so they were unable to complete courses due to illness. The pandemic also limited the number of opportunities for FYE students to interact and engage with peers and faculty, a critical part of the college experience. The students most affected by the pandemic in FYE were men of color and particularly Black and Latino males. FYE saw a decrease in the number of men of color matriculating to the college as well those who were retained. FYE is working closely with the Black Student Success Program as well the Office Of Outreach and Recruitment to recruit men of color into the program and has expanded case management strategies for this group to ensure students are joining the program in higher numbers.

FYE implemented the following strategies to help students through the pandemic:

- Trained counselors how to use Canvas' online counseling system which allowed students to pop into online counseling and advising sessions.
- Moved all of the new-student information sessions online allowing for more students to be part of our prospective student orientations.
- Created a Zoom-chat for FYE faculty and staff to stay in constant contact.
- Trained multiple areas of Student Services how to use Zoom for workshops, training, and meetings.
- Created online registration workshops to help students enroll in courses for fall and spring semesters. FYE was one of the first programs on campus to create online registration tools for students to navigate through the various forms of online classes that included synchronous, asynchronous, and live online courses
- FYE offered online Financial Aid workshops in partnership with the Financial Aid Office on campus to help students submit forms in a timely manner in order to be awarded before the start of the fall semester.
- Hosted online graduation workshops to identify students eligible for graduation and/or transfer.
- Created the first Canvas Orientation Module for students- a module that was shared across the campus so all faculty could introduce their students to Canvas.
- Upon returning to campus from the pandemic, FYE, recognizing that too many students were not thriving in online learning and needed in-person engagement, shifted as many classes as possible to face-to-face formats.

## **f. How does the program interact with other on-campus programs and off-campus entities?**

This has been one of FYE's greatest strengths since its inception in 2001. FYE has earned a reputation across campus and academic divisions for creating partnerships that elevate student success. Below is a list of how FYE has worked with other programs, divisions, and off-campus entities:

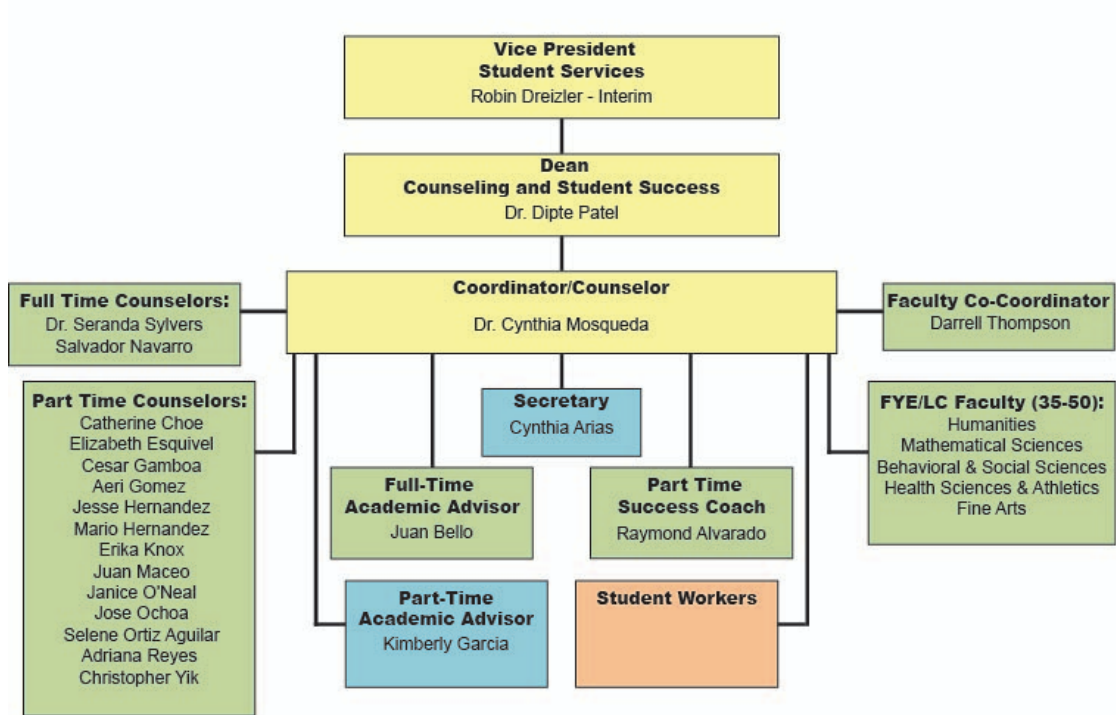
- Based on the research done by Dr. Xueli Wang examining the roles community colleges play in accelerating STEM pathways for community college students, FYE partnered with the MESA program and Math Department to pilot the first series of STEM cohorts for students majoring in Computer Science, Pre-Med, and Pre-Engineering. Dr. Wang's analysis revealed that community colleges fail to provide clear STEM pathway trajectories for students and often provide more roadblocks and barriers for students pursuing STEM careers. FYE created STEM cohorts to help students complete English and Calculus courses during their first year of college. Students who participated in the FYE/STEM cohort passed Math 190 with a 68% percent success rate in comparison with the department average of 50% success rate. The FYE/STEM cohort had a retention rate of 84% in comparison to the department average of 53% percent. The program is expanding for fall 2023 adding cohorts for students who place into Math 170 (trigonometry) as well as Math 180 (pre-calculus).
- In spring 2018, El Camino College launched the First-Gen Initiative on campus to bring more awareness to first-gen students on campus. Close to 51% of first time El Camino College students identify as first-gen, those whose parents did not graduate from a four-year college or university. With support from our college president, El Camino College started its First-Generation Initiative on campus. This effort is focused on responding to and supporting the fast-growing first-generation college student population on campus. Over 165 faculty and staff have participated in first-generation professional development training. Further, El Camino College hosted the first ever "First-Generation Student Symposium" to highlight the needs of first-generation students across campus. As a result of this work, El Camino College was recognized by First-Gen Forward, an initiative of NASPA and The Suder Foundation. **First-gen Forward** is the nation's first recognition program acknowledging higher education institutions who have demonstrated a commitment to improving experiences and advancing outcomes for first-generation college students. The institutions represent a community of professionals prepared to share evidence-based practices and resources, troubleshoot challenges, generate knowledge, and continue to advance the success of first-generation students across the United States. El Camino College was the first community college to participate in the advisory committee. Advisory committees work with institutions across the country to help start and/or expand first-generation programming.
- As part of our ever-increasing partnership building, FYE recently partnered with El Camino's Student Outreach Office to offer a one-day first-gen training session to counselors from our local high schools and community programs. While FYE offers a great deal of programming for our own first-generation students and their families, we knew that earlier exposure to the vocabulary and tools for first-generation students would be beneficial. High school counselors who are guiding their students through the college application process and transition, if aware of the concepts surrounding first-generation status, could ensure a better transition to the college system. Intentional first-generation counseling from high school counselors can help high school students prepare their

families for what is to come, increase the likelihood of completing the matriculation process, and highlight the capital that students already have despite their first-gen status, all contributing to upstream gains. Over 125 high school counselors, community access partners, and non-profit organization representatives were in attendance.

- The First-Generation Initiative has created partnerships with STEM faculty and MESA center on campus. In fall 2018, FYE kicked off a series of STEM family dinners to help students and families better understand the STEM pathway as well as the demands placed on first-generation students pursuing careers in STEM fields.
- In partnership with the Financial Aid Office and the South Bay Promise, FYE launched the Financial Aid & Advocacy Student Training--better known as FASST--workshops on campus during the summer of 2015. The program was launched in anticipation of new legislation impacting fee waiver guidelines for 2016 as part of the Student Success Act. The program aims at helping first-year students understand financial terms, policies, procedures, and tools needed to maintain their financial aid status while in college. FASST is especially important for first-generation students who often do not have the social capital or network to navigate financial aid processes. FASST has a self-advocacy component to teach students about how to maximize their financial aid and how to ask important questions throughout their higher education journey. The program has assisted thousands of students with financial aid literacy and has reduced the number of students who end up not meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) while enrolled at the college. *\*A copy of the last three years of data is available in the appendix.*
- In 2016, FYE hosted a series of dialogues with undocumented students on campus in response to the anti-immigration sentiments as a result of the Trump administration's immigration policies. FYE took the lead and hosted undocumented students to share their thoughts, fears, and concerns regarding the anti-immigration rhetoric and how El Camino College could serve as a space of safety for all students regardless of immigration status. As a result of this event, the undocumented task force was born on campus, made up of campus stakeholders eager to build comprehensive programming for both undocumented and immigrant students. The college now has a full-time Immigrant Success Coordinator, two adjunct counselors, and a graduate student working in the program. The program also received funding to partner with *CHIRLA*, a non-profit immigration organization providing free immigration-related legal services for students attending the college. The program will receive its center later this year and will serve undocumented as well as immigrant communities who may or may not be DACA recipients. FYE has been at the forefront of all of these initiatives and continues to partner with the program to date.
- FYE has a strong presence with our neighboring K-12 partners and frequently provides training for high school counselors. FYE provided training for "**Partnership for Los Angeles Schools**" to better prepare students for community college pathways. Over 65 counselors were in attendance to hear about the newest initiatives at the college.
- In partnership with the Office of Student Development and Associated Student Organization (ASO), FYE has consistently included student clubs and organizations as part of our new student orientations to expose students to opportunities that exist outside of the classroom which provide students with leadership opportunities during their time at the campus.

g. Include an Organizational Chart

**FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE / LEARNING COMMUNITIES  
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2022-2023**



## **Program Assessment**

### **Program Improvement Assessment**

**a. Review the last program review and explain in what way the program has improved its services to students in the last four years. Where applicable, include qualitative and quantitative data and cite sources of the data. Areas to consider for writing about program improvement may include: Students Services Metrics Tool, data that aligns with ECC Institutional Goals, customer survey findings, and business practices and processes.**

In the last four years, the First Year Experience program has continued to improve the experiences of first-year students on campus by providing a comprehensive support system that begins in K-12 and continues throughout their time at the college. The First Year Experience program collaborates closely with our K-12 and college access partners to facilitate a seamless transition for students, commonly referred to as “a warm handoff,” a term coined by Dr. Luke Wood, a professor and researcher at San Diego State University. Prospective students are invited to information sessions as they begin their college application process. One of the strengths of the program is its ability to ensure all FYE students complete core services (admissions, orientation, and educational planning) before the start of registration. The implementation of a guided framework model enables FYE students to promptly embark on their academic journey and enroll as full-time students during their initial year in college. Pre-enrollment strategies are critical to first-generation students who do not always have the social and experiential capital needed to navigate higher education spaces. In addition, the First Year Experience program has enhanced its services by reorganizing cohort options to align with meta-majors offered by the college. Each FYE cohort consists of courses needed to fulfill requirements for graduation and/or transfer in specific meta-majors helping students get closer to completing their educational goals.

FYE, often the program the college goes to when new technology and/or software needs to be implemented, continues to improve services for all students through multiple initiatives across campus. FYE has led the way in multiple technological initiatives, including being the first program to implement the new counseling scheduling system and then later serving as the trainers for the entire Student Services department. FYE also piloted the online degree planner system (ECC Connect) purchased by the college to develop online educational plans and provided training to the Counseling Department as well as other student success programs. Early Alert (formerly Starfish) was also piloted in FYE and continues to be used, helping faculty and counselors intercede when students begin to struggle. Further, the new degree online planner provided FYE students with a comprehensive educational plan that outlines the number of courses and semesters needed towards graduation and transfer. By using this new system, FYE developed graduation/transfer campaigns targeted to students who complete 45+ transferable units to fill out a degree petition and/or receive a graduation evaluation. This targeted campaign has helped FYE to increase the number of students receiving their ADT and AA/AS degrees within our program. FYE’s case management approach has allowed for higher output of students transferring and meeting the Vision for Success student metrics.

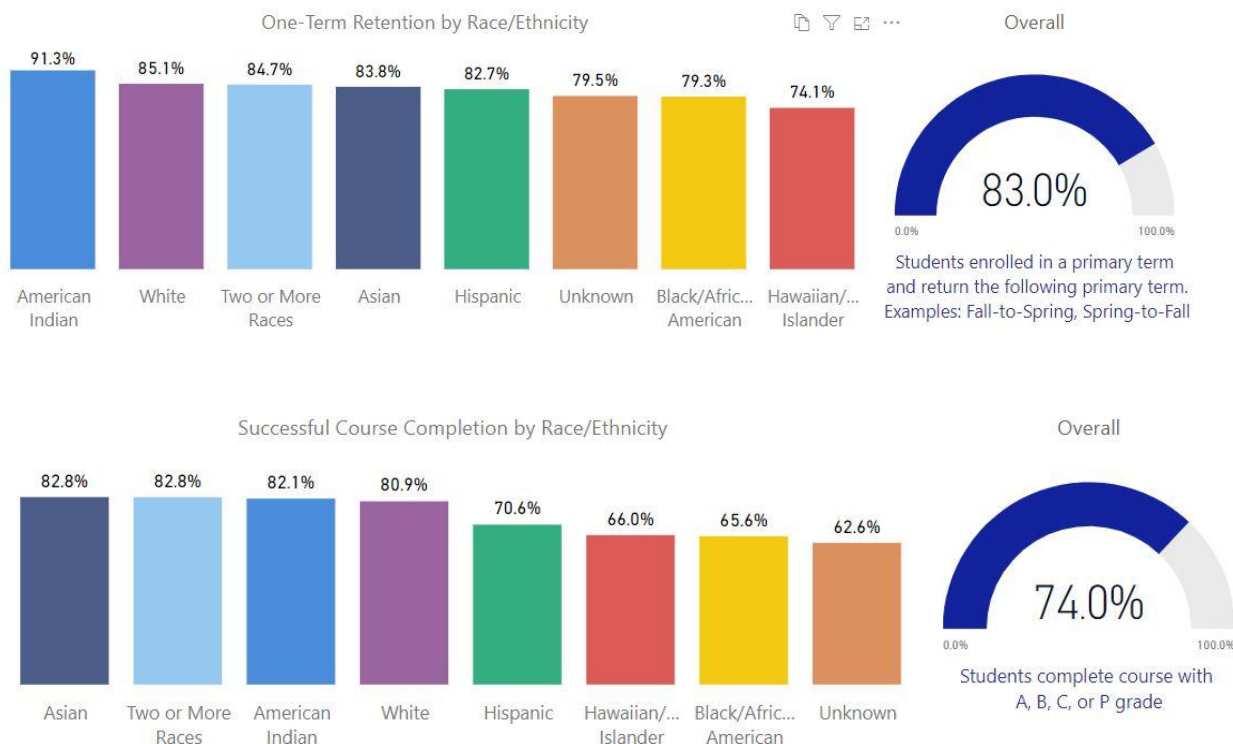
The First Year Experience Program distributed a satisfaction survey to all of its students in spring 2023. Overall, 90% of students were satisfied with how FYE assisted them with their transition from high school to college. Close to 90% of students indicated FYE assisted them with creating an educational plan and that they had a better understanding of graduation and/or transfer requirements.



The classroom and coursework experience has improved as well. Students are now put in cohorts according to their meta-majors, so the courses and ed-plan are transparently related to students' goals. Also, our faculty have gone through hours of equity training and workshops, ensuring they are more responsive to our student demographics, being especially mindful about our students of color and/or first-gen populations. Indeed, students gave high marks to their FYE experience, with 80% identifying as "very satisfied" with their classroom and cohort experiences. The major findings indicate that students are satisfied with their experience—that FYE as a program is meeting, if not exceeding, their educational needs.

**b. Using the data sources selected above, review and list equity gaps within the program's data. Focus on examining student data by race/ethnicity in order to dismantle racism on campus.**

The First Year Experience Program has been successful in narrowing the equity gaps among participating students. Irrespective of race, FYE students consistently outperform their non-participating counterparts. For instance, 79% of FYE's Black/African-American students retain while 51.8% of non-FYE Black/African-American students complete their first term. Similarly, 82.7% of Hispanic students in FYE are retained through their first term while 58.5 of Hispanics not in FYE accomplish this same goal. While FYE students do retain at a higher rate, we do acknowledge our equity gaps. Hispanic FYE students, for instance, are retained at 2.4 percent less than White FYE students, but for the general population the same gap is a difference of 1.8%. For Black/African-American students in FYE, the gap is 5.8% as compared to 8.7% who are not in FYE. FYE is in some respects equal to, or slightly better than, the overall campus at retaining our students, and intends to continue to be so.



Similarly, FYE students are considerably more likely to successfully complete their course and have lower equity gaps than students not in the program. 70.6% of Hispanic FYE students successfully complete courses compared to 61.6% of Hispanic students not in FYE. The equity gaps for this

demographic are 10.3% for FYE students and 14.7% for those not in FYE. Similarly, Black/African-American students not in FYE successfully completed at 56.6% for an equity gap of 19.7%. Black/African-American FYE students, on the other hand, successfully completed classes at 65.6% equating to a smaller, but not negligible, equity gap of 15.3%. Though FYE students do tend to outperform students not in the program, the equity gaps still concern us. While FYE's equity gaps are better than the campus at large—a testament to all of the training our faculty and staff participate in—we look to improve these gaps.

## Service Area Outcomes Assessment

**Based on the the program's work during the past four years, review the program's SAOs and respond the following questions:**

**Student Area Outcomes (SAO) List the program's SAOs.**

**SAO#1** Students participating in the First Year Experience Program will have a comprehensive educational plan online via ECC Connect outlining requirements needed to earn their degree and/or transfer

**SAO#2** By participating in the First Year Experience Program, students will be equipped with a more comprehensive understanding of the essential steps required to successfully transfer to a four-year institution.

**SAO#3** Students who complete the FYE Financial Aid & Advocacy Student Training (FASST) workshops will increase their financial aid knowledge as a result of their participation in the program.

### **a. To what extent were they achieved?**

**SAO#1** - According to the Office of Institutional Research, 90% of FYE students have a comprehensive educational plan on file. According to a Guided Pathways study conducted by the El Camino College Institutional Research Office, students who have a comprehensive educational plan are more likely to complete a higher number of units at the end of their first year in college than students who did not have one.

**SAO#2** - FYE assesses this SAO through our workshop attendance as well as through the end of the year survey. Over 90% of students survey indicated they had a strong understanding of the steps needed to fulfill their educational goals.

**SAO#3** - This SAO is assessed at the end of every FASST workshop that takes place during the months of June, July, and August. Students are given a pre-survey (n=1,032) at the beginning of the training to determine their knowledge about financial aid programs, policies and resources The survey is repeated at the end of the training to ensure students have a greater understanding of financial aid policies and programs.

*Table 1: Knowledge in Financial Aid Programs at El Camino College:*

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
California Promise Grant	8%	62%
South Bay Promise Scholarship	47%	78%
Federal Pell Grant	7%	56%
Federal Work Study	8%	59%
California Dream Act Application	13%	53%
El Camino College Scholarships	7%	64%
COVID 19/Warrior Emergency Grant & Rent Relief Aid	7%	52%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale-percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.

Table 3: Knowledge in financial aid policies at El Camino College:

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
<b>Maintaining your financial aid eligibility</b>	21%	77%
<b>Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)</b>	12%	65%
<b>How GPA affects your financial aid</b>	36%	84%
<b>The 67% completion rate to maintain your financial aid</b>	15%	75%
<b>Grants and scholarships you do not have to be repaid</b>	39%	78%
<b>El Camino does offer student loans should you need additional assistance</b>	19%	71%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale - percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.

The results clearly show that students has a better understanding of the types of financial aid programs and policies El Camino College offers as a result of their participation in the FASST program.

## b. What evidence supports that SAOs were partially or fully achieved?

The evidence that exists that all SAOs were achieved consist of the following items below. All of the instruments are included in the appendix of this report.

- FYE Satisfaction Survey
- FASST Survey
- Institutional Data Collection

The SAO assessment process plays a critical role in how FYE offers student programming each academic year. The program is consistently looking for ways to improve services to an ever- changing student population. FYE has made changes in programs and services when the results of an SAO assessment cycle have shown evidence that a program was ineffective or lacked value for an FYE student. For example, as a result of the SAO for our Financial Aid & Academic Student Training program, we added additional instruction to help students distinguish among Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), Academic Probation, and Progress Probation. Through student questionnaires we were able to identify gaps in our training cycle in 2015 and found that many of our students were confused about the distinction among these policies. We have since corrected this in our training modules, and we have seen an increase in students' knowledge, with over 98% indicating they were knowledgeable about the ways GPA affected their financial aid and SAP.

## c. To what extent SAOs were designed to focus on students in the program with the greatest needs?

Aware that financial barriers are among the most pervasive in community college (and first-generation) students' lives, FYE has made major efforts and improvements in student's understanding of financial aid. Through our FASST training mentioned earlier, which happens before students even start their first semester, students are made aware of how to earn and maintain their financial aid, reducing one of the most common obstacles to student success. This effort helps students across all populations, but may

benefit the equity populations the most because first-generation, low-income, marginalized students are more likely to be awarded late because they often do not have the navigational capital needed to maximize their financial aid awards.

**d. To what extent SAOs were designed to respond to students with diverse learning needs, and to prepare them to actively engage in a diverse society**

FYE is an open program; anyone who is a true freshman graduating from high school can join in that year. Consequently, we admit a diverse array of students: socio-economic factors, gender, geography, and ethnicity inform how students are placed into their cohorts ensuring that students are in a diverse and welcoming environment. Our faculty, mindful of the potential for many learning styles, employ pedagogical practices that account for these variances in learning and rely on curriculum that acknowledges and celebrates diversity. Students, thus exposed, are more likely to stay on their respective paths and complete their ed-plan.

## **Program Vision and Future Planning**

### **1. Program Vision**

**a. Describe the vision of the program for the next four years considering the assessment reported in the previous section. A vision statement describes the desired future state of the program.**

**FYE Program Mission:** Our mission is to create a welcoming and supportive environment that fosters academic and personal growth, while promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion. FYE provides students with a range of personal development workshops, and provides students with thematically linked courses getting them on the path to fulfill their graduation requirements. FYE is dedicated to providing all students with comprehensive wrap-around services so they can excel at the college.

**FYE Vision Statement:** FYE's vision is to provide a transformative learning experience that empowers and equips students with the necessary skills needed to navigate their transition from high school to college, and from college to a four-year university. FYE fosters a cohort learning environment where students can thrive and achieve their personal and educational goals. FYE aims to inspire all students to maximize their full potential while studying at the college.

**The following is a list of initiatives FYE will engage in over the next four years:**

1. Increase the number of STEM cohorts being offered by FYE to improve the outcomes for students of color who wish to enter STEM fields.
2. In order to improve the social engagement of students returning from the pandemic, and to increase retention and success, we want to explore more program-wide thematic content. Themes that students are more interested in (i.e. social media, social justice) and that they can view through the lenses of their many classes can improve engagement and, thus, success.
3. Partnering with the relevant programs on campus and increasing our outreach to local schools and community programs, we want to increase the percentage of African-American students in FYE.
4. Expand the first-gen programming to include more professional development, student engagement, and enhanced training for our K-12 and college access partners.



## 2. Future Planning

Based on the assessment reported in the previous section and considering the Guided Pathways framework:

- Advance towards a more equitable program to close equity gaps
- Clarify students' paths to completion, further education, and employment
- Help students explore options and build foundation skills
- Help students stay on the path

### **a. Develop program goals to be completed during the next four years.**

**Goal #1: As part of our first-generation initiative, establish a family orientation program to involve the families of first-generation students across campus.**

The FYE program will provide family orientation before the start of the fall semester to teach families how to better support their sons and daughters through their higher education journey. We will develop a program that can be adopted by other student success programs across campus.

**Goal #2: Increase the number of STEM/ FYE students transferring to UC/CSU campuses.**

The FYE program will create a campaign to encourage more students to consider transferring to four-year institutions. The program will partner with the Transfer Center to create better tracking mechanisms for students to know when they are eligible for transfer.

**Goal #3: Provide high schools and college access partners with first-generation training to better prepare students for a successful transition from high school to college.**

The FYE program will provide high schools with a list of first-generation trainings that will occur every other semester.

**Goal #4: To increase student engagement and faculty cohesion, generate program-wide thematic curricula that can be used across the many instructional disciplines in FYE.**

Establish themes that can be used throughout the year for all faculty to focus on. Bringing the various expertise from the many disciplines in the program, FYE can offer a broad approach to a focused theme. Holding relevant events outside of the classroom (movie screenings, guest speakers, etc.) can also increase engagement, allowing students to interact and connect not only with their particular cohorts but with others across the program.

**b. Develop/adjust the program's Service Area Outcomes (SAOs).**

- **Goal#1:** Increase the number of El Camino College STEM students participating in FYE/STEM cohorts to better improve the STEM pathway for first-year students.
- **Goal#2:** Increase outreach and recruitment of Men of Color into the First Year Experience program by the end of the academic year for 2023-2024 by 5%.
- **Goal #3:** Increase the number of FYE students earning Associate Degrees for Transfer by 10%.

**c. What projects will the program complete to achieve the desired goals and SAOs? Please specify at least two for each goal and SAO.**

**Goal#1:** The program will work closely with the Math department to identify STEM faculty interested in teaching in the program. Second, the program will partner with the MESA program on campus to accelerate outreach and recruitment of STEM students enrolling in FYE/STEM cohorts. Third, the program will work with our Office of Institutional research to develop a STEM success dashboard that better identifies STEM students early on in their college journey. Last, FYE will work with Supplemental Instruction to increase the chances of students successfully completing these courses.

**Goal#2:** FYE will work with the Men of Color Initiative, Assessment, Outreach and Recruitment, Enrollment Services, and the Social Justice Center to recruit and retain Black/African-American students participating in FYE.

**Goal #3:** In an effort to boost the number of students earning Associate Degrees for Transfer, FYE will maintain its collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research to identify FYE students for graduation or transfer. Graduation campaigns, text messaging, and calling will be utilized to reach students eligible to file grad petitions.

**d. When the next program review is due, how will the program determine if the goals and SAOs have been met? Please specify at least one quantitative target or qualitative accomplishment for each goal and SAO.**

To determine if the program has achieved its goals and SAOs during the next review, the following qualitative and quantitative targets will be considered when working with the Office of Institutional Research. We will also have a new survey of our students, intending to collect not only quantitative data as we did this time, but qualitative data as well.

- **SAO#1:** Increase the number of El Camino College STEM students participating in FYE/STEM cohorts by 10% to better improve the STEM pathway for first-year students.
- **SAO#2:** Increase outreach and recruitment of Men of Color into the First Year Experience program by the end of the academic year for 2023-2024 by 5%.
- **SAO #3:** Increase the number of FYE students earning Associate Degrees for Transfer by 10%.

## **Program Resources**

**In the following areas, what are the resources needed by the program to meet the goals and SAOs for the next four years?**

- List resources in order of priority. You might want to prioritize them within each category and/or develop an overall prioritized list of resources
- Explain how these resources contribute to achieving the program's goals and SAOs
- Explain how these resources contribute to the ECC Institutional Goals

### **a. Staffing**

The program will require one more full-time advisor, one full-time counselor, and a project specialist. The program currently serves over 1,000 new students each academic year along with the approximately 2800 continuing students. All these students utilize FYE's counseling and transfer services into their second, third, and last year at the college prior to graduating and/or transferring. Further, with the addition of the three hundred new South Bay Promise students, FYE will need additional support staff and counselors to offer wrap-around services such as financial aid, orientation, counseling, and transfer. The current schedule of hours is sufficient for the program because the majority of the students work in the afternoon, so the flexibility of scheduling counseling appointments or seeing a walk-in advisor from 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday is convenient for the majority of our first-year students. Further, counselors frequently visit FYE classes during these hours to conduct in-class presentations about college events and transfer information. FYE also offers two days during the week to accommodate students who are enrolled in evening classes, staying open Tuesday and Wednesday until 7:00 p.m. to offer counseling appointments as well as access to academic advisors.

### **b. Facilities and Equipment**

Currently in our new center, FYE has no known needs for facilities or equipment.

### **c. Technology/Software**

We requested five new desktop computers to replace our older and more inefficient computers used by our counselors.

### **d. Contracts/Services**

FYE often uses guest speakers, relying on them to share their expertise with our students, faculty, and staff. Be it first-gen training for our faculty or inspirational speakers from industry for our students, FYE expands the information available by tapping outside voices when appropriate.

# El Camino College

## First Year Experience Financial Aid & Academic Student Training (F.A.A.S.T.)



### Context & Objectives

In the Summer 2021, the First Year Experience Financial Aid and Academic Student Training (F.A.A.S.T.) was held and focused on financial aid literacy for new first-year students. Students were given a pre-survey (n=1,105) at the beginning of the training to determine their knowledge about financial aid programs, policies and resources. Once the training was completed, students were given a post-survey where they were asked again about their financial aid literacy.

### Pre and Post Survey Results

#### Financial Aid Programs

Eight percent of students were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about El Camino College scholarships prior to the training. The percentage increased to 74% after students participated in the training. Prior to the training, 3% of students indicated that they were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable on the COVID 19/Warrior Emergency Grant & Rent Relief Aid. By the end of the training, the percentage increased to 56%.

*Table 1: Knowledge in Financial Aid Programs at El Camino College:*

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
<b>California Promise Grant</b>	9%	63%
<b>South Bay Promise Scholarship</b>	56%	82%
<b>Federal Pell Grant</b>	7%	58%
<b>Federal Work Study</b>	6%	60%
<b>California Dream Act Application</b>	14%	61%
<b>El Camino College Scholarships</b>	8%	74%
<b>COVID 19/Warrior Emergency Grant &amp; Rent Relief Aid</b>	3%	56%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale-percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.

#### Financial Aid Tools and Resources

Thirteen percent of students indicated that they were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable on submitting missing documents using the Financial Aid Self Service Menu at the beginning of the training. The percentage increased to 66% at the end of the training. Nine percent of students were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable on how to submit na El Camino College

application. By the end of the training, the percentage of students with knowledge on how to submit an El Camino Scholarship application increase to 74%. At the beginning of the training, 3% of students were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable on how to submit a COVID-19/Warrior Emergency Grant Application. The percentage increased to 52% by the end of the training.

*Table 2: Knowledge in Financial Aid Tools and Resources at El Camino College*

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
<b>Submitting missing documents using Financial Aid Self Service Menu</b>	13%	66%
<b>Importance of renewing your financial aid application each year</b>	34%	84%
<b>Activating your Bank Mobile Vibe</b>	8%	67%
<b>Ways to receive your financial aid refund</b>	5%	60%
<b>How to check your financial aid award letter</b>	22%	81%
<b>How to submit El Camino Scholarship application</b>	9%	74%
<b>How to submit COVID-19/Warrior Emergency Grant Application</b>	3%	52%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale-percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.

### Financial Aid Policies

Fifteen percent of students indicated that they were knowledgeable regarding the policy of having a 67% completion rate in order to maintain financial aid. At the end of the training, 75% of students indicated that they were knowledgeable about this policy. When asked about Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), 12% of students indicated that they were very knowledgeable or knowledgeable regarding this financial aid policy. The percentage increased to 65% at the end of the training.

*Table 3: Knowledge in financial aid policies at El Camino College:*

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
<b>Maintaining your financial aid eligibility</b>	21%	77%
<b>Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)</b>	12%	65%
<b>How GPA affects your financial aid</b>	36%	84%
<b>The 67% completion rate to maintain your financial aid</b>	15%	75%
<b>Grants and scholarships you do not have to be repaid</b>	39%	78%
<b>El Camino does offer student loans should you need additional assistance</b>	19%	71%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale - percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.

# El Camino College

## First Year Experience Financial Aid & Academic Student Training (F.A.A.S.T.)



### Context & Objectives

In the Summer 2022, the First Year Experience Financial Aid and Academic Student Training (F.A.A.S.T.) was held and focused on financial aid literacy for new first-year students. Students were given a pre-survey (n=1,032) at the beginning of the training to determine their knowledge about financial aid programs, policies and resources. Once the training was completed, students were given a post-survey where they were asked again about their financial aid literacy.

### Pre and Post Survey Results

#### Financial Aid Programs

Seven percent of students were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable about El Camino College scholarships prior to the training. The percentage increased to 64% after students participated in the training. Prior to the training, 7% of students indicated that they were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable on the COVID 19/Warrior Emergency Grant & Rent Relief Aid. By the end of the training, the percentage increased to 52%.

*Table 1: Knowledge in Financial Aid Programs at El Camino College:*

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
<b>California Promise Grant</b>	8%	62%
<b>South Bay Promise Scholarship</b>	47%	78%
<b>Federal Pell Grant</b>	7%	56%
<b>Federal Work Study</b>	8%	59%
<b>California Dream Act Application</b>	13%	53%
<b>El Camino College Scholarships</b>	7%	64%
<b>COVID 19/Warrior Emergency Grant &amp; Rent Relief Aid</b>	7%	52%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale-percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.

#### Financial Aid Tools and Resources

Eleven percent of students indicated that they were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable on submitting missing documents using the Financial Aid Self Service Menu at the beginning of the training. The percentage increased to 63% at the end of the training. At the beginning of the training, 6% of students were knowledgeable or very knowledgeable on how to submit a



COVID-19/Warrior Emergency Grant Application. The percentage increased to 53% by the end of the training.

*Table 2: Knowledge in Financial Aid Tools and Resources at El Camino College*

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
<b>Submitting missing documents using Financial Aid Self Service Menu</b>	11%	63%
<b>Importance of renewing your financial aid application each year</b>	35%	77%
<b>Activating your Bank Mobile Vibe</b>	10%	62%
<b>Ways to receive your financial aid refund</b>	5%	57%
<b>How to check your financial aid award letter</b>	15%	77%
<b>How to submit COVID-19/Warrior Emergency Grant Application</b>	6%	53%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale-percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.

### Financial Aid Policies

Fourteen percent of students indicated that they were knowledgeable regarding the policy of having a 67% completion rate in order to maintain financial aid. At the end of the training, 73% of students indicated that they were knowledgeable about this policy. When asked about Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), 11% of students indicated that they were very knowledgeable or knowledgeable regarding this financial aid policy. The percentage increased to 65% at the end of the training.

*Table 3: Knowledge in financial aid policies at El Camino College:*

	Pre-Survey*	Post Survey*
<b>Maintaining your financial aid eligibility</b>	20%	73%
<b>Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)</b>	11%	65%
<b>How GPA affects your financial aid</b>	31%	81%
<b>The 67% completion rate to maintain your financial aid</b>	14%	73%
<b>Grants and scholarships you do not have to be repaid</b>	42%	76%
<b>El Camino does offer student loans should you need additional assistance</b>	19%	72%

\*Based on a 5 point Likert scale - percent of respondents that rated 5 or 4.