De Anza College Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Accreditation
Survey of "Course Success with Equity Gaps" Report
Winter 2024

Since spring 2022 the Institutional Research Office has emailed a report to each faculty member at the end of the quarter which provides course success rates with equity gaps for each course section disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, low income status, foster youth and veteran students. Faculty members are able to compare their own course success rates to that of others in their department and to the college overall. Data reports are accompanied by a set of questions intended to be used for self-reflection and departmental discussions. An example of the report and email is available here.

In winter 2024, a link to a reflection survey was included in the email to all faculty members. Fifteen faculty members participated in the survey. The results are included below. Overall, feedback was positive, in that the reports help faculty members think about their teaching and learning strategies and result in self-reflection and departmental discussions.

Question 1: The "Course Success with Equity Gaps" report was first emailed for the spring 2022 and provided for every term in which a faculty member taught a section thereafter (excluding summer term). Please indicated how often you did the following:

	THIS IS THE FIRST TIME	ONCE OR TWICE BEFORE	THREE OR MORE TIMES	NOT YET	TOTAL
Received the email with my individual course data with equity gaps	36% 5	43% 6	21% 3	0% 0	14
Opened the attachment and reviewed the information provided	40% 6	33% 5	27% 4	0% 0	15
Used the reflection questions provided in the email to reflect on my data individually	33% 5	40% 6	20% 3	7% 1	15
Used the reflection questions provided to discuss the data with my department or colleagues	29% 4	14% 2	7% 1	50% 7	14

- 15 respondents answered question one, of those, 100% reported using the reflection questions provided in the email to reflect on their data individually.
- 14 of the respondents (93%) indicated that they used the reflection questions provided to discuss the data with their department or colleagues.

Question 2: Indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: The information provided:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
Encouraged me to think a bit differently about my teaching and learning strategies	29% 4	21% 3	43% 6	7% 1	0% 0	14
Is important to ongoing improvements in teaching and learning	40% 6	33% 5	27% 4	0% 0	0% 0	15
Can help the college address its equity gaps for disproportionately impacted students	36% 5	29% 4	29% 4	0% 0	7% 1	14

- 15 respondents answered question two, of those, seven (46%) strongly agree or agree the information provided encouraged them to think a bit differently about their teaching and learning strategies, another 6 (43%) indicated their neither agree or disagree and one respondent (7%) indicated they disagreed.
- Seven respondents (73%) agree that the information is important to ongoing improvements in teaching and learning, while four respondents (27%) neither agree nor disagree).
- Nine respondents (65%) selected agree that the information can help the college address its equity gaps for disproportionately impacted students, while four respondents (29%) neither agree nor disagree, and one (7%) strongly disagree.

Question 3: What were your initial thoughts when you received (or reviewed) your data?

- My initial thoughts when I reviewed my data were about sharing this information with my peers. I was happy to see that our department had a higher success rate than all students. It also motivated me to implement some changes I have planned some time ago, hoping to increase the success rate of all students groups in my section next time I teach this class.
- For asynchronous online courses, the ethnicity/race of enrolled students are largely unknown. Surnames may supply some clues but don't confirm identification. Also students often use avatars rather than photos of themselves and only a handful opt to attend Zoom office hours. The course content was diverse and inclusive in terms of representation and addressed different learning styles.
- You are using the data from admissions and records, so it's strictly numbers. Yes, it does show the facts that African Americans and Latinx are especially down in successfully graduating.
- I thought that the data provided is fair and optimistic.

- My sections and my department, are doing well.
- My biggest challenge with these reports is identifying specific students in the demographic categories we're tracking. In Asynchronous Online Education courses, we never meet in person so all I see is a name unless the student attends my Zoom office hours. As an example, I'm not sure how to identify foster or low-income students without the student offering that information willingly. If I have a gap in those categories, I'd need to dig into the reasons why a particular student wasn't successful in that particular class, but I need to know who the particular student was first. The other thing I don't understand is students who withdraw from a class after census being considered a "non success". I can't tell you how many students I have that drop to take care of parents, a sibling, or because they needed to increase work hours to support their family financially. As an instructor, there's not much I can do in the scenario to make the student complete the class if they choose not to, yet it counts as a "non success" in the report.
- Great
- Why a number of groups had all of the students complete the course for 100% but my section which had all of students of the group complete the course but my sections shows 91%. In fact, all of the group completion rates for my section had a 91% rate. I need a lesson on how to read the data.
- I was mainly curious about why, beyond the skill set, students didn't pass the class.
- I see the data as a report on an outcome, but there was no specific institutional mechanism in place that creates a process that will ensure expected outcomes. For example, in the last question above, I answered that the data cannot help the college address equity gaps. My reason: because there is no institutional process in place for instruction and assessments that works towards that specific goal. Instructors use their academic freedom in very different ways. In addition, there are rampant academic integrity issues (cheating in exams) among students. So, what exactly is the institution defining as student success?
- I was surprised to see the challenges for African American, Latinx, and students from low-income groups. I definitely want to do more to support the success of these students in particular.
- Although I appreciate the data collected, and the comparable information. I think there are several measures that are missing and might more accurately reflect and compare numbers. While it was valuable to see my numbers in my class of 40 students. I think the gender and ethnicity breakdown would have been more valuable if compared to all sections and across the whole school. such as in the final table that looked at the overall success rates. Additionally as it refers to gender, I would also be interested in seeing the gender/ethnicity breakdown and the possible overlaps. Finally, if you are collecting this information quarter to quarter, year over year, I wonder if there isn't an opportunity to see if things are increasing, decreasing or staying the same across my sections of classes, as well as the course in general (all sections) and the campus as a whole.
- I'm pleased with our success rate for all sections, and mine in particular.

Question 4: After you had time to review your data and reflect on the information and talk with others, what are your thoughts on the data?

- This class has a prerequisite. The success rate of my class at the end of the quarter is better than the success rate of the class in the beginning of the quarter, measured on the review of the material covered in the prerequisite class. There was definitely an improvement, but the results should have been better.
- The data doesn't tell the whole story. I was in contact with the three students in this Honors section. One dropped the course due to a heavy academic schedule. Another earned an A+ for the most extraordinary performance on assignments and exams. And the third was grappling with fraud, identity theft and the consequences that resulted in debt, among other things. Although the student was offered an "Incomplete" in the course, they never responded to my help and support. The data failed to address individual circumstances, instead painting a negative picture of an equity gap among three students.
- However, it has been my experience that there are more elements that contribute to success than just numbers. High school preparation A#1 - the preparation through elementary school and high school are not as good as others. So they can be not as well prepared to use self-discipline to complete all the assignments for example. I had a Black student who was from Palo Alto, so good education, but still needed more self-discipline to successfully complete assignments. I have a Latino student who was a high school dropout, by his own words, but he is now applying himself with gusto as he is self-motivated to improve. Many students of every color work at one or two jobs and do not have a lot of time for doing assignments thoroughly which ALWAYS hinders their ability to get the best grades. Some students work full time and think they can do school when they get home, only to find that they are too tired to stick with the rigors of learning. Everyone is entitled to choose their way of getting through community college. There is always a shock to many when they transfer to a UC or CSU and find the work is harder. We need to address that problem of preparing CC students for what comes next and helping the poorly prepared students to get up to speed at the Community College so they will succeed when they transfer. Your statistics need to take those elements into consideration also when you spout numbers. Students use AI to write their homework for them to SAVE TIME - this negates the CC mandate to learn critical thinking.
- I think the data is helpful in the ongoing improvements in teaching and learning in my courses.
- Economic factors are the significant barriers to success. Ethnic and gender categories are not particularly relevant (outside of their contribution to economic status).

- It's hard for me to do much with the data without matching who the specific students were that were not successful in the class, AND what demographic category they're in.
- Any ideas to improve our teaching is a great idea.
- My thoughts were that I am doing well with most groups and the one that is the lowest has been a issue for the last 49 years that I have been teaching.
- I noticed students with low incomes didn't pass my class, which doesn't surprise me. A lot of research has been done on income inequality, and it would be ideal for the college to address it.
- There are so many variations in the way instructors assess students. For example, if one instructor allows students to take an exam multiple times (which means student grades improve with each additional attempt), and another instructor uses only one attempt (which means if students do not do well, then they keep their single grade), or if one instructor has an open book exam, and another has a closed book exam... then comparing student performance across multiple instructors that teach the same course does not provide meaningful data - because it did not take account how each instructor structures their course assessments etc.
- The evidence is clear- we have inequities in the class that impact student success.
- I think there is also an important measurement missing in this data, the preparedness level of the student taking the course. Or maybe even the engagement level of the student. I have found that the students that do not "pass" the course, are students that are not logging on or showing up for classes. So I guess, I wonder if there isn't room for additional data to be collected, to better help the college to meet its equity goals.
- Economic status is much more significant than ethnic or gender categories.

Question 5: Do you have any suggestions for improving how the information is provided?

- Add into your statistical mix who is working - full time, part time, how many jobs/hours?? How much does working impact their college success?? Your outcomes will be much closer to what is really happening to students of color as well as white students. Students from India knock themselves out to do well and it shows!!! How LONG have they been working before coming back to college? Self-motivation to do well in Community College is the key. Students HAVE to WANT to do well and MAKE TIME for themselves to do a thorough job on every assignment. Students are not encouraged by counselors to take time to do well, counselors could do more. Right now it seems like they are encouraging students to take as many classes as possible to get through quickly. I had a WORKING student who was encouraged to take 5 classes during Fall Quarter! A smart student but used AI to write all homework to save time because she was taking so many classes!!! I give zeros for AI work so she flunked the class. Until De Anza pays attention to these other conditions that hamper learning, you're going to have to rely on stereotyped statistics and that's not actually helping

anyone!!! How many hours do they spend on school work? How many depend on A I to help them do their homework?

- I think the information is clear and fair.
- Breakdown subcategories relevant to economic disadvantages.
- This is a tough one. I understand why we're doing this and I support it. As an instructor, it almost feels like I have to guess to understand which demographic category a student might be in (maybe even more than one category). Additionally, it almost makes me feel like I have to profile a student to proactively understand and provide what they need to be successful and to close gaps. The one thing I' don't want to do is loosen the integrity of the course content to correct and address success gaps. I'd rather analyze how to address certain success rate gaps in the classroom, but I have to know who the students are and in that demographic they're in to go back and determine why they weren't successful and how to best improve the learning experience to close the gap. Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Online classes should not be compared to in person classes. In person classes will always have a significantly higher success rate.
- Explain what each column means.
- We have multiple resources on campus to address income inequities, but now it's time to create innovative and alternative ways to address the income gaps for poor students.
- De Anza (and Foothill) as an institution needs to come up with a more coherent approach to BOTH instruction and assessments. Without a "standard" approach or set of guidelines on this issue, the data on student success is not a meaningful reflection of actual student success. Is success getting good grades? Or is success equipping students to be better, even if they get bad grades initially? According to De Anza vision statement, successful students are those that develop the six success factors i.e. directed, focused, nurtured, engaged, connected and valued. Even this is just ONE of many ways to view student success.
- I have to find an equitable way to identify these students earlier in the class to make sure they have support.
- Since economic status is much more significant than ethnic or gender categories, give priority to issues underlying low-income status.