Graduation Initiative
Reporting Form
June-July 2012

Campus: East Bay

Team Leader: Susan Opp

1. What did your team commit to completing during these months? (What did you promise?)
   - Five University Commencement ceremonies will be held to celebrate the successful completion of
degree programs by our bachelors, masters and doctoral students.
   - The Student Success and Assessment Committee (SSAC) will meet to discuss data from 2007-2011
   regarding the relationship between admission type (regular or exception) and remediation status on the
   retention and success for first-time freshmen.
   - A task force to examine ways to focus graduation improvement efforts on the 2008 and 2009 freshman
   cohorts will be formed and charged with developing plans. The task force will focus both on students
   who are still enrolled and on students who stopped-out while in good academic standing and thus have
   the potential for successful degree completion if re-enrolled.
   - Academic Advising and Career Education (AACE) will work with PEMSA (Planning, Enrollment
   Management and Student Affairs) and Athletics to begin talking about ways to offer better advising
   services for athletes.
   - Student Academic Services will host two mandatory “Transfer Welcome Sessions” for
   incoming transfer students on July 30th and 31st. After attending the 2 hour workshop, which provides an
   overview of services, students will then be able to schedule a meeting with their assigned EOP counselor.
   - Student Academic Services will host their “End of the Year Ceremony.” The department plans to
   highlight the academic success of student participants who have earned a 3.3 or higher GPA. EOP and
   Renaissance Scholars graduates will be honored and given a commemorative medallion.
   - Summer Bridge, a four-week program for 50 EOP exception admits, will begin on July 28, 2012.
   Students will go through an intensive program for math, English, general studies, topics studies, and a
   fitness series.
   - Over the summer, Student Academic Services will offer workshops on Counseling/Therapy Options;
   Financial Aid; Major and Career Connection; Utilizing CBay; and Banking Basics and Credit Cards.
   - Eight Summer Bridge Peer Leaders will be selected and participate in a two-week training to prepare for
   the 50 incoming Summer Bridge students. Their role throughout Summer Bridge is to meet 3 days a
   week in small groups to assist students understand their transition to college; peer leaders will attend
   General Studies classes and workshops.
   - Academic Advising and Career Education (AACE) will offer a series of eight workshops for new
   graduates, under the “Career University” banner, with topics ranging from resume writing to use of
   technology in a job search.
   - AACE will continue working with the New Student Orientation program and the “Smooth Transitions”
   workshops for incoming Fall quarter students.
   - Counselors will review their students’ academic performance to identify students at risk and in the need
   of additional services.
   - EXCEL will participate in Commencement ceremonies to congratulate EXCEL graduates and
   acknowledge their academic success.
   - A summer EXCEL Quarterly Newsletter will be published and sent to all EXCEL students. The
   newsletter features student accomplishments and informs about EXCEL and CSUEB student support
   resources and important dates.
   - The McNair Scholars program will host a graduation reception for spring McNair graduates, and will
   have an orientation for new faculty mentors of McNair Scholars to orient them to the program and the
   roles of mentors.
   - New McNair Scholars will attend McNair Graduate Boot Camp at SJSU to go to workshops on graduate
   school preparation, writing personal statements, requesting letters of recommendation, selecting graduate
   programs, and preparation for graduate school and beyond.
   - McNair Scholars will attend summer research classes as well as the UC Berkeley McNair Symposium.
• The GE Office will continue contacting SIRed freshmen, focusing on the students who will be coming to the next scheduled orientation to welcome them and schedule appointments for those who wish them. Our goal is to advise all local students before they come to campus for orientation.

• Half of the incoming freshman orientations will be completed. At each advising session, either at orientation or in small groups, students will identify three learning communities that they are interested in taking and additional freshman-level courses they wish to take in the fall term.

2. What did you do and how will it help?

New Initiatives:

• SSAC formed a task force to develop focused intervention plans for the 2008 and 2009 first-time freshman cohorts. Analyses of many years of freshmen data indicated that freshman cohorts with high numbers of exception admits and high remediation needs tended toward low retention and graduation rates. The task force identified specific strategies aimed at improving graduation rates including intensive and focused advising. In addition, for students who stopped out but were in academic good standing, we will be waiving re-application fees, waiving filing for graduation fees, and providing scholarship funds (called PRESS, for President’s Re-Entry Student Scholarship). The plan also includes providing students with individualized roadmaps for degree completion.

• Block scheduling of first-time freshmen in all of their fall courses was successfully completed for athletes and EOP students, as a trial run for all remaining fall freshmen. This enabled us to determine where modifications to processes were needed so that we could enroll the remaining 1500 freshmen with minimal problems in August and September.

• Early Start math and English courses were successfully implemented. Approximately 250 students took ESE and 675 took ESM at CSUEB.

• AACE began offering a series of eight workshops for new graduates, under the “Career University” banner, with topics ranging from resume writing to use of technology in a job search. These have been well-attended, and have helped new graduates develop necessary job-search skills.

Improved Advising:

• Freshman and transfer student summer orientation events were attended by representative from the Freshman Year Experience program, EOP and Student Academic Services, the McNair Scholars, and AACE. These orientation events served to connect students with the campus and services available to them at CSUEB prior to fall quarter.

• Feedback from prospective freshmen and their parents about the small group advising provided by the GE Office in the summer was very positive. This led to less stressful freshmen orientation sessions in the summer and more opportunity for parents and students to examine Freshman Learning Communities before making class choices. We attempted large group advising sessions and planned Skype advising sessions, neither of which were successful and will not be continued next year.

• EOP Counselors contacted all students who were on Academic Probation or close to graduation. All students were asked to make appointments and those on academic probation were given a learning contract to assist and support them towards good academic standing. Our students who were close to graduation were provided with information on what they needed to file.

• AACE revised our front-office appointment schedule, allowing students to make appointments in advance, and in a more convenient manner. This has reduced students’ anxiety about trying to see an Academic Advisor, and generally reduced the wait-time for individual appointments.

• AACE started working with PEMSA and Athletics to create better advising services for athletes.

• EXCEL Counselors assessed graduation status of EXCEL students who enrolled as freshmen in 2008 and 2009. Out of 44 students, 75% of the students are still enrolled at CSUEB and 63% of them have filed for graduation or are expected to graduate in AY 2012-13.

• EXCEL conducted a survey to assess its students’ interest and availability in workshop participation. The most popular topics were related to graduate school, i.e., “Writing your graduate/professional school personal statement, “Applying for graduate/professional school.” Preparing for graduate/professional school exams (i.e. GRE, GMAT). Obtaining assistance in writing a scholarship personal statement was
also a very popular topic among respondents. The third area of interest included study skills and how to raise the GPA.

Enhanced Access and Success:

- Summer Bridge Student Mentors were selected and went through a two week training to prepare for the incoming Summer Bridge students. Their role throughout summer Bridge is to support faculty in classes, meet with Summer Bridge students in small groups to assist in their understanding of the transition to college; and attend the skill building class and workshops. This year the program was structured to mirror our Freshman Learning Communities program to better prepare them for the transition to college by providing an intensive program of special topic seminars based on their major/interest (Theater Arts, Science, Psychology and Ethnic Studies), math, English, tutoring, fitness and general skills course.

- EOP Counselors provided advising for the 235 incoming freshman during summer orientation sessions, and EOP Counselors called all first time freshmen to review and follow up on their “To Do” list items on MYCSUEB. This initiative provides the department an opportunity to connect with our incoming students and ensure that their paperwork for financial aid and housing is completed to foster a smooth transition. In addition, 77 transfer students were admitted into the EOP program for Fall 2012. Student Academic Services provided 2 transfer welcome sessions to incoming students. After attending the 2 hour workshop which provides an overview of services, students scheduled a meeting with an EOP counselor to create their educational plan, in order to move students toward graduation in a more timely fashion.

- Two orientation sessions for Faculty Mentors (FMs) of new (2012) McNair Scholars were held to discuss issues such as the history and funding mechanisms of the McNair Scholars Program, the McNair Scholars Program as it functions here at CSUEB, the highlights of our program thus far, and finally, the role of the Faculty Mentor. These FM orientation sessions serve to proactively address questions the faculty might have about their role in the program.

- At the final Spring quarter meeting of the McNair Scholars, a CSUEB Librarian served as a guest lecturer and talked at length about resources available to the Scholars in the library as they prepare for researching and writing a literature review on their study topic.

- The 2012 CSUEB McNair Scholars attended the McNair Graduate School Boot Camp at San Jose State University. During this event, the Scholars attended various workshops relevant to preparing for, applying to and succeeding in graduate school including: graduate school preparation; how to write a personal statement; how to select recommenders and the significance of the letter of recommendation; and selecting compatible graduate programs.

- EXCEL Counselors contacted their prior year students (students who received services in 2010-11 academic year did not return in 2011-12) to check on their status and remind them about available services.

- To acknowledge student success, EXCEL staff met graduating students at CSUEB Commencement ceremonies. Students received a chain of accomplishment and photographs of each student with their counselor were taken and featured at the EXCEL office.

- The summer EXCEL Quarterly Newsletter was published and sent to all EXCEL students. The newsletter featured student stories and informed students about EXCEL and CSUEB student support resources and important dates.

3. What will you accomplish in the next two months?

- Additional Freshman Orientation events, as well as orientation for international students, will be held before the fall quarter starts in late September.

- Block enrollment for all 1500-1600 first-time freshmen in fall classes will be completed before Labor Day. Freshmen will be prohibited from dropping their courses thereby ensuring enrollment in required Freshman Year Experience (cluster) and remediation courses.

- In the first week of fall quarter, a Freshman Convocation event will be held to welcome freshmen to campus and introduce the Freshman Reading for 2012-13, “The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks”, by Rebecca Skloot.
In August, the McNair Scholars will finish their CSUEB MSP Summer Research Course. The course will culminate with their attendance and poster presentation at the Annual UC Berkeley McNair Research Symposium and the submission of a research proposal to McNair staff.

The McNair Director will moderate and participate in a panel on undergraduate research as part of the Back to the Bay Fall Faculty Orientation. The goal of this session will be to inform faculty about the McNair Scholars Program and other opportunities to work with undergraduates on research and to educate them on the role of the Faculty Mentor.

The McNair Scholars Program will have the first of their Fall Quarter Meetings for the 2012 cohort. Scholars will hear about upcoming opportunities that are likely to be of interest to the McNair Scholars, including: the Forum for Diversity in Graduate Education; Chancellor’s Doctoral Incentive Program; and CSU Student Research Competition.

AACE will: 1) continue our series of “Career University” workshops for recent graduates, assisting them in transitioning to the workplace; 2) send two staff members to a professional conference to learn about national foundation-based scholarships for students, in order to expand our services to include this much-needed service; 3) participate in two planning retreats, to develop programs and activities designed to move students more expeditiously toward graduation; 4) continue to work with the New Student Orientation program and the “Smooth Transitions” workshops for incoming Fall quarter students; 5) begin the hiring process for two A2E2-funded positions, to coordinate advising in the new college-based advising centers, and to concentrate specifically on career planning for graduate students; and 6) continue to offer workshops for disqualified (DQ) students and students on academic probation, to encourage them to continue to pursue their higher education plans.

With the beginning of the fall quarter, the EXCEL program will focus on providing one-on-one counseling to the students but will also hire an A2E2-funded Veteran’s Counselor to manage a caseload of students and assist in increasing retention and graduation rates through counseling and advisement, workshops, referrals, and other forms of direct interventions.

All EOP first time freshmen will be required to attend EOP Welcome Day to provide students with a greater understanding of the support and resources within the department, the campus, the requirements for maintaining their EOP grant, as well as an opportunity to meet and get to know their counselors, peer mentors other EOP students.

Student Academic Services/EOP will: 1) administer the College Student Inventory to all first time freshmen to provide EOP counselors with information regarding the student’s strengths, challenges and motivation and likelihood of drop out; 2) offer Math 911 for all exception admits who are enrolled in the 800 level remedial math to provide supplemental instruction and assist students in passing their remedial classes; 3) provide study tables facilitated by tutors in Pioneer Heights Residence Hall lounge every Sunday and Thursday, and at other locations on campus to serve commuter students, to address the areas of math, English and Science (Study tables will also be available on campus to offer this service to our commuter students.); 4) implement a quarterly workshop series to enhance learning and assist with areas identified that are challenging or part of their developmental process; and 5) hire an additional EOP Counselor to provide advising to a greater number of students, particularly AB 540 students who will be entering the EOP program.

EOP Peer Mentors will assist first time freshman via a quarterly newsletter, attendance at events, and provision of workshops for their mentees.

Freshman Peer Mentor services run out of the General Education office will be expanded to include freshmen at the Concord Campus, as well as transfer students.

Freshmen Peer Mentors will participate in a cultural and educational exchange program with students from Fukuoka Institute of Technology, first for a week at CSUEB and then in Fukuoka, Japan for a week at their university.

Students will be identified who started at CSUEB as part of the 2008 freshman cohort but who have since stopped attending. They will be contacted and offered the PRESS (President’s Re-Entry Student Scholarship) to encourage re-entry and graduation.