

Enhancing Strengths and Addressing Challenges to Support Student Success



Photo by Garvin Tso, CSUEB

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Pioneers for Hope Learning Framework Team

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Overview of Today's Talk

- Our campus
- Learning Framework project goals, progress, and preliminary findings
- Highlight strategies faculty can use to reach students
- Brainstorm about how to apply what we've covered to your classes this year



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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY EAST BAY

Mission: Cal State East Bay welcomes and supports a diverse student body with academically rich, culturally relevant learning experiences which prepare students to apply their education to meaningful lifework, and to be socially responsible contributors to society. Through its educational programs and activities, the university strives to meet the educational needs and to contribute to the vitality of the East Bay, the state, the nation, and global communities.



Image from the CSUEB Campus Photo Gallery:
<http://www.csueastbay.edu/universitycommunications/campus-photo-gallery.html>

Motto: *Per Aspera Ad Astra*
Through Adversity to the Stars

Cal State East Bay is among the top 10 campuses in the country for **social mobility**: <http://socialmobilityindex.org/>

Fall 2018 total enrollment: 14,525

68% of students receive financial aid.

41% received Pell Grants in 2017-2018.

Over 60% of students are the first in their families to go to college.

	Undergraduate	Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate
Full-time	10,020	1,331
Part-time	2,296	878
Gender		
Female	61%	63%
Male	39%	37%
Race/Ethnicity/Domestic		
African American/Black	10.1%	9%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.2%	0.2%
Asian	22.5%	18%
Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	1%	0.5%
Hispanic/Latino	35.8%	15.1%
White	14.3%	22.9%
Multiple Ethnicity	5.2%	3.3%
Race/Ethnicity Unknown	5%	9%
International	5.9%	22.1%

CSU Call to Action

System-wide, the 6-year graduation rate for students entering as first-years is 61%, and the four-year graduation rate for transfer students is 77%.

A 2018 survey of CSU students² ($n=24,537$) found:

- **42.6% Reported food insecurity** (not including marginal food security)
- **Almost 11% had experienced an episode of homelessness** in the past year
- Students experiencing food insecurity and/or homelessness are likely to have lower GPAs, more academic concerns, and more health and mental health issues.

CSUEB Call to Action

Graduation rates for CSUEB² are approximately:

- 48% of incoming first-year students graduate in 6 years
- 75% of transfer students graduate in 4 years

A 2016 survey of CSUEB students¹ ($n=770$) found:

- About half reported experiencing food insecurity
- Close to 1 in 5 had experienced an episode of homelessness in the past year

Sources: 1. <http://asd.calstate.edu/dashboard/graduation-success.html> 2. Internal campus report prepared by the CSU Basic Needs Initiative (<https://www2.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/student-success/basic-needs-initiative/Pages/default.aspx>)

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short - Year 1	Medium - Year 2	Long - Post-Year 2
Funding Project team staff Collaboration MSW student support Financial aid Campus resources/ shared data Salesforce Excel and Google docs Current programs that target food and housing insecurity	<u>Year 1</u> Strategy sessions Short-term longitudinal study of 60 undergrad students Literature review Website <u>Year 2</u> TBA based on Year 1 findings	Departments Staff Students Researchers Administrators	Engage with campus and community stakeholders Increase knowledge of barriers and facilitators of student success Develop and share new and innovative ideas to support student success Learn about best ways to reach students	Increase student awareness of resources available to them Decrease stigma of utilizing services Increase student satisfaction with school staff and services Increase in number of students accessing supports and services	Increase student retention and graduation rates Alums are "Proud Pioneers" and leaders in their communities

Logic Model Contributors

Learning Framework Project Team and SW 6935 Program Evaluation Class (Winter 2018):

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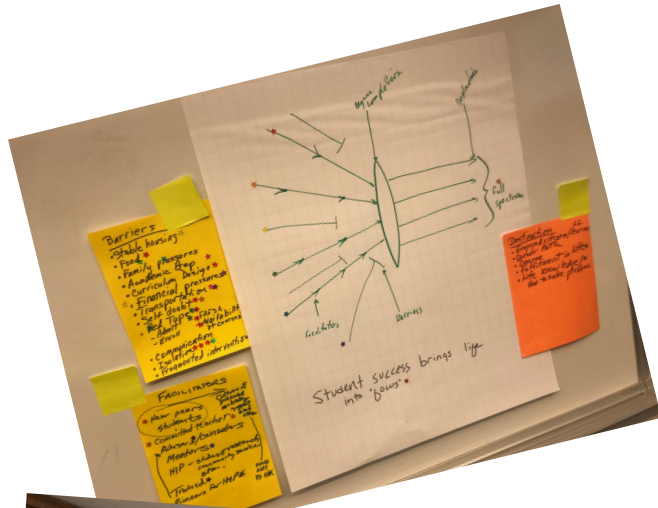
Assumptions

Students, staff, and faculty are committed to and invested in student success.

External Factors

High cost of living in the SF Bay Area, CA budget for CSUs, transition from quarters to semesters, policies on General Education requirements for all CSUs

Strategy Sessions & Hackathon Recap



- Open to the campus community
- Four sessions: Nov 2017 & June 2018
- 24 people attended the strategy sessions, 37 people attended the hackathon; a mix of students, faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Strategy Sessions: brainstormed about how we define student success as well as the barriers and facilitators of it.
- Hackathons: shared preliminary findings and brainstormed about Year 2 interventions






Methods Overview*

- Exploratory, participatory, longitudinal, mixed methods study
- Four waves of open-ended, semi-structured interviews and surveys; Data collection from Jan-Jul 2018
- Purposive recruitment (Picked students with challenges)
- Goal Attainment Scaling

Thinking About Your Goals

A wonderful achievement 

A good achievement 

An undesirable outcome 

*Additional information on methods available in the electronic handout for participants:

<https://tinyurl.com/LearningFrameworkKeynote>

Key Caveat

Most of today's presentation of *qualitative* data is based on **preliminary coding** of Wave 1 interviews as well as keyword searching through cleaned (but not coded) transcripts and review of interviewer notes. Cleaning and coding transcripts is very time intensive, and will continue through the Spring.

Strengths & Resilience

*Yeah, everything else I've kind of gone through it once or twice, like with my car and financial aid. **I always find ways to get it done.***

*Yes. I always get emotional when that comes up. Even just ... not only is ... it's not because the lack of support, too, **it's just how far I've come on my own, too,** when I think back to that.*

*So I'm feeling OK. I think I'm gonna make it, so I'm gonna pull that, **I'm gonna reach my goal.***

Sample Characteristics (n=53)

Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Female 83% (44) Male 11% (6) Non-binary 2% (1) Not reported 4% (2)	Black/African American 23% (12) Latinx 19% (10) Multiracial 17% (9) White/European American 13% (7) Asian/Pacific Islander 13% (7) Native American 4% (2) Middle Eastern/Arab 2% (1) Not reported 14% (7)
Sexual Orientation	Age
Heterosexual 62% (33) Bisexual 8% (4) Lesbian 4% (2) Other LGBTQ+ identity 4% (2) Not reported 23% (12)	17-25: 53% (28) 26-35: 23% (12) Over 35: 19% (10) Not reported: 6% (3)

Interviewer: *What do you think are the barriers that could get in your way?*

Student: *Money. That's a main one.*

Financial Challenges Survey Responses

Students (n=51) were surveyed about their challenges that affected their academic progress and most students had challenges with

- Housing: 59% (30)
- Paying tuition: 75% (38)
- Work-school conflicts: 71% (36)
- Other financial issues: 94% (48), and notably, 40% (19) of these students rated this challenge as a five.



Financial Challenges



Transportation

- ***“I’m driving a car which is not reliable and it stresses me out sometimes. If the car gives up on me, I have nothing else.”***

Cost of Books

- *“It was a [specific discipline] class and they did quizzes. And I wasn’t like too good because I didn’t have the book for like the first two three weeks...Probably because I used to get book grants but I--I don’t get them anymore so I think that’s--and then to pay a lot like up front, I didn’t have it at the time”*

Balancing Work and School

- ***“I could have been out of here in three years if I didn't have to work two jobs all five years.”***
- *“Having to put that work and those hours in at work has prevented me from being the best I could be in my academics”*

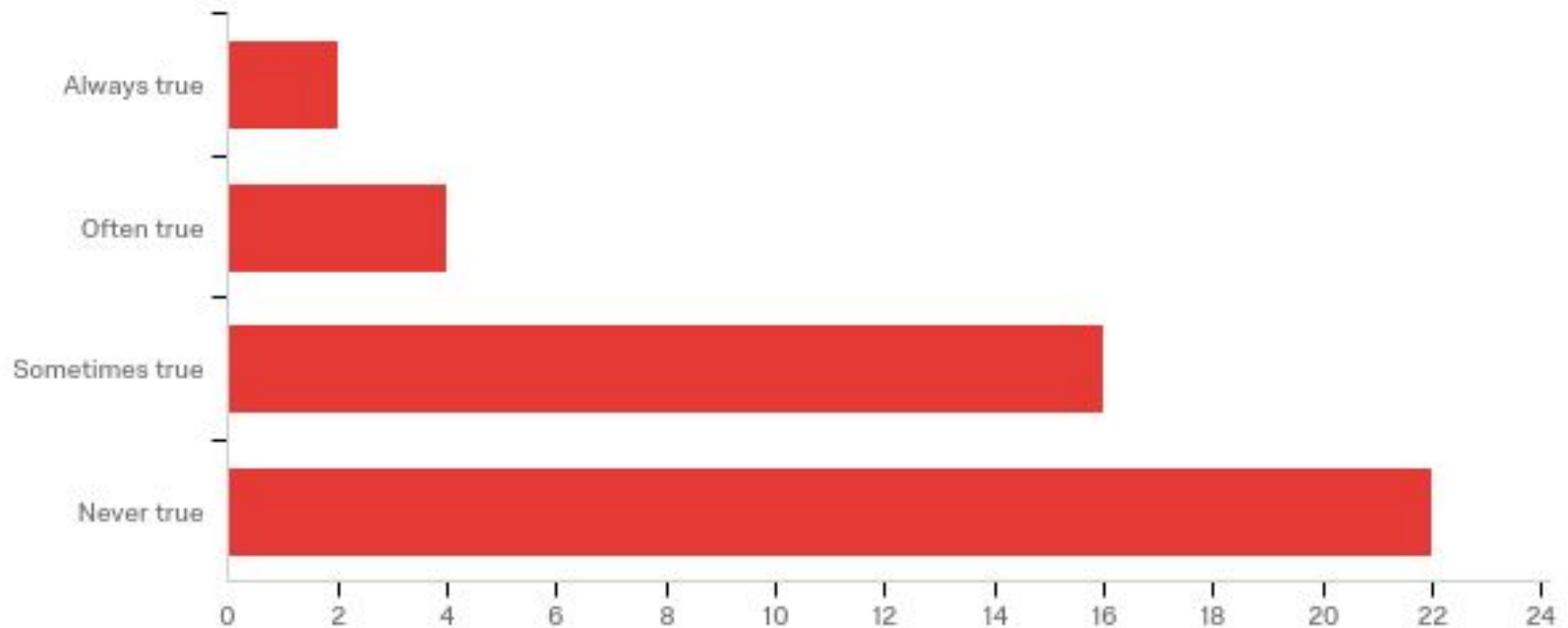
Housing

“People are living on top of each other out here and all the students are scrambling to get places. The CSU off campus housing page on Facebook is like, insanity ...”



Wave 2 Food Insecurity

Q8 - Within the past 30 days, the food I bought just didn't last and I didn't have money to get more.



Food



“God yeah it was like really bad at one point, I have been sneaking into the DC [Dining Commons] a lot for food. It is really good though because they let you take fruit, so like bananas and apples have saved my life when I didn’t have anything else.”

Family Challenges and Supports

guilt Emotion
away-from-family
family-expectation
BACKGROUND-PRESSURE
LACK-OF-FAMILY-SUPPORT
POVERTY fear living-environment
illness family-dysfunctioning
Multiple-OBLIGATION
absence-of-parenting
Finances

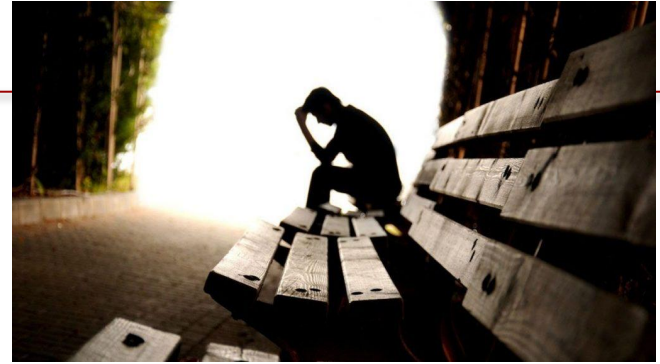
"My house is like, **not stable**...My parents like they're **divorcing** and my sister's like going through a bad phase and like **she's getting dismissed from school**. And like when **dad lost his job**. So we have to get more hours and like my mom is not working so we **have to basically pay for everything**."

"It really just **having somebody that can check me** and be like OK how have you been this week? Like how are you doing this week? And I get it from friends that I get it from family."

Mental Health

*“You know it's kind of like it's just harder because like with my depression and stuff, I can't really like function. I'm really **low functioning when I'm having an episode**. And then it gets in the way because it's like **my life stopped but school doesn't**.”*

*“Being in a classroom full of people is not conducive to my learning. You know like **I can really punch the person behind me because I can hear them breathe** kind of deal you know like I know. And it's like I don't know it's just I have to be on high alert because of the social anxiety.”*



*“ I am a **DACA student** and like that thing always stress me out. Like if I can keep on continuing school like what holds for my future. It's so like it brings my emotion up and down up and down up and down like thinking like what, like, even after graduating, like what is my future after that... **I had a lot of like depression because of my past... like the trauma I come from.**”*

Accessibility

Social Stigma

*"I attend class on a regular basis I epically fail. I don't do well with auditory learning and I have auditory processing issues... **most teachers don't understand.** How can a student do well and not be in class you know how can... **But it's just how my brain has always worked since I was a kid.**"*

Navigating the Campus & Classrooms

*"This is not a disabled friendly campus...**But when yours is like you're not in a wheelchair. But say you've gotta use, you know, crutches, or you're in pain walking. It is very difficult.... it becomes difficult trying to get the right furniture in the class...People removed the table, they removed the chair. It was there part of the time and then it was removed.**"*

Strengths

- Courage to share
- Resilience
- Connect to resources

*"**I just keep pushing through it. Because my mother tells me all the time, to just keep on building.** You gonna find out pains you never had. Things are gonna hurt in areas you didn't know you had. So I get up I take something for the pain and I keep it pushing."*



Academic Goals



Photo by [Samuel Zeller](#) on [Unsplash](#)

- Participants' "reach" goals varied widely. For some, it was passing a particular class; for others it was "getting all As."
- Some participants' "reach" goals were "undesirable outcomes" for others. For example, one participant said a "grade below B" was undesirable, while another said that "getting a C or better" would be a "reach."
- Overall close to 40% of students in our study achieved their "reach" academic goal.

Academic Issues



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Time Management

“Between me and those C’s.. it’s getting my kids ready on time, getting myself out the door on time, getting them to school early on the days that I have to be out here early.. It all comes back to time management”

Class scheduling

“ If they [classes] are not offered next quarter, then..I may have to wait a year and it stresses me out”.

Faculty support

“ Reaching out for help and making connections has helped me the most. Without advice from professors and faculty I’d be lost, because I can’t get support from family.”

Fragmentation

Different entities may not communicate well	<i>“[Because the professor asked me] I took a W. I got kicked out of financial aid because I didn’t realize that if I took a W, it would affect it like that. Financial aid said teachers don’t know the repercussions when they ask you to drop a class like that.”</i>
Students may perceive the system to be confusing	<i>“..when I was in community college, it was one counselor for everything. And here is like... you go over here, you go over there that's really confusing to me so I don't know. I don't know how.”</i>

Campus Supports and Services

“Coming to CSU East Bay has really made me academically better because of [the] resources.”

*“But I just feel like if each like area **can just kind of open their arms** more towards students. You know I feel like it would be less intimidating for students to like go to the faculty and ask questions and tell them their concerns.”*

Frequently mentioned suggestions for services included more:

- Personalized advising and/or mentoring
- Access to services that have a high volume of students to serve
- Consistency in advice offered
- Early morning or later evening hours
- Assertive outreach to students

What Students Say About Faculty Who Made a Difference

"They have that passion..."

"Being approachable is huge..."

"They were willing to work with me."

What Students Are Looking for from Faculty

- Flexibility
- Interaction & connection
- Respect
- Engagement
- Real world applicability
- Clarity & accuracy
- Guidance



Photo by [Alexis Fauvet](#) on [Unsplash](#)

What Faculty Can Do

- Overall teaching approaches and small changes that can make a difference
- Supports and accommodations for students with disabilities
- Referral to the CARE Team and food, housing, and financial supports
- Mentorship and advice



Photo by [Clark Tibbs](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Pair & Share A - How Would You Support this Student?

Sometimes, when stuff's popping up there, I can't focus on stuff like, "Oh you have a quiz tomorrow you need you to study this better." I remember things like that just fly out the window and it's just like OK somebody is possibly ending up in jail tonight. And what am I going to do to get them out - bail them out? How am I going to figure this whole problem out without 1) compromising my academics and 2) without having to come to the professor or whoever with an excuse because that's one thing I really hate. I hate it when you get that look where it's like, "Oh really. Yeah. You have an issue on the day that the assignment is due. Oh really." That sense of judgment, it kills people. It really just diminishes your soul and it just like it makes you - it makes me want to go back to that. This is why I don't ask for help. This is also why my people cannot get far in life because the system does that so much and it's just, "Oh so you're just going to give us another excuse," or "You're just another Latino that is trying to fake his way into the system," and it's just like that's not the case I'm trying to meet you halfway. The least you could do is meet me halfway.

Pair & Share B - How Would You Support this Student and Include a Disability-Friendly Framework?

Interviewer: *I thought it was sort of automatic like give your [accommodation] letter to the instructor at the beginning and they just set it up for you. But it sounds like no, you don't need to?*

Student: *Well I have been really selective in who I want to share with because I'm not sure how people take to it and feel like it's just me. The instructors aren't very kind sometimes. They're not very approachable...I almost wonder if they think they're talking to kids that are 19. My mind is kind of 45 years old and I don't expect to be talked to like a kid. So I struggle with that and I'm still struggling with it because it seems to be happening every quarter where they kind of talk to you like you don't have sense so which makes me very apprehensive about asking questions. So I'm still dealing with that trying to figure out how to process that and still have a relationship with the teachers that I have with my instructors.*

Pilot Intervention

- Faculty Learning Community on Supporting Students Experiencing Complex and Overlapping Challenges involving 14 faculty and staff from 9 different departments & programs on campus.
- Mentoring intervention currently serving 27 students. We have trained 27 faculty, staff, and graduate students to serve as mentors with capacity to mentor up to 40 students.

Interviewer: What made you not drop out?...

Student: I think it's the people you have watching you...whatever I need she's there..they have gone above and beyond the college's duties for me and having support makes a world of difference

Key Takeaways For Faculty and Staff

Students Experience

Food Insecurity \implies Over 1 month, 50% of students ran out of food and did not have \$ to buy more

Housing Insecurity \implies 60% of students say that housing affects their academics

& Mental Health issues.

- Literature shows that housing and food insecurity negatively affect health and academic outcomes such as mental health, GPA, attendance and retention.
- Literature has also shown that due to a lack of institutional support and other factors, students with disabilities are less likely to graduate on time.

These things are hard to “see” - we are not trained to see them and it is not your responsibility to address these issues alone.

There is a great opportunity in notifying students about resources on campus that can help.

*Serving students facing homelessness, food insecurity,
and various crisis situations.*

- Text Message when free hot food is available on campus
- Free food, snacks, career clothes, toiletries, winter coats/socks
- Temporary housing resources & economic crisis assistance.
- Access free food at pantries located in Hayward (Student Health Center & Library Kiosk) and Concord (Academic Services Bldg)

www.csueastbay.edu/HOPE
510-885-H.O.P.E. (4673)
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510-885-4840



Campus Resources

Check out our [electronic handout](#) for more tips, language you can add to your syllabi, and powerpoint slides you can use in your lectures to get the word out to your students about the resources available.

<http://tinyurl.com/CSUEBatCSUSymposium2019>

Please also visit our website for project information and updates:

<http://www.csueastbay.edu/learningframework/index.html>

Q&A and Possible Points for Discussion

How can you provide support to students experiencing hardships while:

- maintaining work-life balance?
- ensuring that students learn and meet the standards of your discipline?

What strategies have you tried in the past?

What new strategies will you try this semester?

Appendix - Methods Details



Photo by [Mathew Schwartz](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Interdisciplinary, Collaborative, Team-Based Approach

- Team includes faculty, administrators, staff, and students from about 10 different departments/units on campus.
- Strategy sessions in November & Hackathon session in June open to the entire campus community
- Weekly team meetings
- Ongoing, hands-on collaboration in Google docs
- Engagement with other on- and off-campus partners



Qualitative Component

- 4 Waves of interviews, ideally late January to late May/early June 2018. Six participants completed three waves (with a combined Wave 1/2 or 3/4 interview).
- Open-ended, semi-structured interviews focused on:
 - Academic and personal goals
 - Barriers and facilitators to goal achievement
 - Experiences with classes and on-campus supports and services
- Each Wave of interviews informed the next; the team discussed each Wave as it was unfolding and collaborated on the instrument for the next Wave.



Example Questions - Waves 1 & 2

- Can you tell me a bit about what brought you to CSU East Bay? (Wave 1)
- Identification of academic and personal goals, and exploration of facilitators and barriers towards goal achievement (Wave 1 and review progress in Wave 4)
- If you could change one thing about your personal circumstances to facilitate your success, what would it be? (Waves 1 & 4)
- If you could change one thing about CSU East Bay to facilitate your success, what would it be? (Waves 1 & 4)
- Many of us have a lot on our plates, and it's hard to juggle all of our various responsibilities. Think of a time in the last couple of months when you meant to do something related to your school work, but were unable to. Can you tell me what happened? (Wave 2)
- Most classes require students to have access to computers, books, and other materials. Have you been able to access the things you need to succeed in your classes? (Wave 2)

Example Questions - Waves 3 & 4

- Financial issues are a challenge for many of our students. I'd like to read you a list of things people often need to pay for to meet their basic needs and talk about whether you had any challenges paying for these things on a regular basis in winter quarter. (Wave 3)
- As you know, we will be on a semester calendar next year. What kind of advising and support have you received to prepare for the transition? How helpful has the advising been for you? (Wave 3)
- What are your plans for summer? (If graduating, plans for post-graduation) (Wave 4)
- If you received a grant to do something to support students at CSUEB, what would you do? (Wave 4)
- What was it like for you to participate in this study? (Wave 4)

Quantitative Component

- Three brief surveys sent to participants - screening/enrollment, prior to Wave 2, and prior to Wave 4.
- Demographic questions and matrix of challenges in the past 30 days. Specific food insecurity questions included in the second survey.
- Numbers from goal attainment scaling

Thinking about the past 30 days, please let us know which of these things were a challenge for you, and how much these issues impacted your academic progress. Please rate each one on scale of 0-5, with 0 indicating that this was not a challenge for you and 5 indicating that this was a big challenge that had a significant impact on your academic progress.

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Trouble enrolling in the classes I need to take	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trouble figuring out which classes I need to take	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Schedule conflicts between work and school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Schedule conflicts between family obligations and school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trouble accessing food when I needed it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trouble finding or maintaining housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trouble paying my tuition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other financial difficulties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties with my family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties with my friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties related to a disability or health condition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Another difficulty (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text"/>						

Study Progress

Jan-Feb

Recruitment
and Wave 1
Interviews
($n=48$)

Mar-April

Wave 2 ($n=44$);
plus combined
Wave 1/2
Interviews
($n=5$); **total of
53 entered
study with
Wave 1 and
Wave 1/2s
together.**

April-May

Wave 3
Interviews
($n=48$)

May-July

Wave 4 Interviews
($n=48$, including one
combined Wave 3/4);
attrition over the
course of the study
was fairly low ($n=5$).

Analysis: Overall Approach

- Pragmatic and step-wise approach (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013; Saldaña, 2013)
- Iterative cycles of analysis to organize the data and identify themes
- Informed by the goals of the study, research and practice literature, and shared team expertise & dialogue
- Team coding in Dedoose
- Multiple team coding sessions & email thread to reach agreement

Analysis: Index Codes

Academic performance and reflections
Academic strategies
Accessibility (Disability-Related)
Advising
Barriers towards goals
CSUEB Reflections
Daily Life
Domino Effect
Facilitators towards goals
Faculty-student interactions
Family Issues
Financial Issues
Fog of information
Food and housing
Fragmentation

Goals-academic
Goals-other
Logistics and access to materials
Mental health issues
Peer interactions
Personal Characteristics
Resilience
Self-care
Services-off campus
Services-on campus
Stress
Trauma