



California State University San Marcos TRIO Student Support Services Program Evaluation

Report prepared by

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The TRIO Student Support Services Program at California State University San Marcos offers personal, transitional, and academic support to students from first-generation, low-income, and disability backgrounds, enabling them to persist and graduate from Cal State San Marcos. The project evaluation aims to assess SSS program participants' experiences of program services; their relationships with SSS program staff, fellow students, and faculty; their perceptions of the effectiveness of SSS program in helping them achieve their educational goals; and their perceptions of the supportiveness of the overall CSUSM institutional climate.



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INTRODUCTION

TRIO at California State University San Marcos conducted a comprehensive evaluation to track and monitor completion of the project's identified needs, objectives, and plan of operation. The program evaluation incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

The National Latino Research Center (NLRC) was contracted to carry out the external evaluation including the qualitative portion of the TRIO evaluation along with some quantitative elements. The NLRC is a research institute promoting scientific research, training, and dissemination of information on Latino populations in the United States. The NLRC's evaluation of TRIO utilized a qualitative research model consisting of semi-structured surveys and focus groups with program participants. Using a reliable and culturally-sensitive approach, the research design gathered measurable baseline and process data. The first phase of the program evaluation focused on gathering qualitative data. The qualitative evaluation provided descriptive and narrative data via a semi-structured survey. This qualitative data effectively assesses participants' experiences with program services; their relationships with program staff, fellow students, and faculty; their perceptions of the effectiveness of TRIO in helping them achieve their educational goals; and their perceptions of the supportiveness of the overall institutional climate. The results of the semi-structured survey will help to inform the scope of focus groups, to be conducted in phase two of the evaluation plan.

The evaluation is designed to involve a pre- and post-test administration of semi-structured surveys and focus groups/interviews with at least 50% of program participants. In the first phase of data collection, the survey results will provide a qualitative description of student's perceptions of the program services, program staff, and the institutional climate. The third (post-test) phase of the study will consist of surveys to



help TRIO program to assess change in the student's perceptions of services, staff, and institutional climate. This report summarizes the survey results collected in Fall 2010 and focus group results collected in Spring 2011.

BACKGROUND

The TRIO Evaluation is the result of a partnership between TRIO and the National Latino Research Center promoting educational equity and serving underrepresented students at California State University San Marcos.

California State University San Marcos



California State University San Marcos was founded in 1989 when Governor George Deukmejian signed legislative action into law, making CSUSM the first of a new generation of Cal State campuses and the first totally new campus in the U.S. in more than two decades. Its creation resulted from more than 20 years of work by business and civic leaders who understood how important a university campus could be to the region. Today, the campus is the higher education leader in northern San Diego County, fostering quality of life through lifelong personal growth and sustainable community development.

CSUSM has an enrollment of nearly 9700 students and offers 30 bachelor's degrees, 11 graduate programs including teaching credentialing programs. In the spring of 2011, 62% of the students were female and 38% were male. The CSUSM student body (based on fall 2011 enrollment) is ethnically diverse with 3% African American, 11% Asian/Pacific Islanders, 26% Hispanic/Latino, 47% White/Caucasian, and 10% other (2% declined to respond).



An academic blueprint has been developed to guide creation of new programs to serve the higher education needs of the area. The number of faculty has increased from the original 12 to 230 full-time tenured (and tenured track). Men's and women's athletic teams in golf, cross country and track have been added and dozens of student clubs and activities are available.

The university focuses on the student as an active participant in the learning process in the classroom as well as in the community. Students work closely with a faculty of active scholars and artists whose commitment to sustained excellence in teaching, research, and community partnership enhances student learning. The university offers rigorous undergraduate and graduate programs distinguished by exemplary teaching, innovative curricula, a strong writing requirement, and the application of new technologies. CSUSM provides a range of services that respond to the needs of a student body with diverse backgrounds, expanding student access to an excellent and affordable education.

As a public university, CSUSM grounds its mission in the public trust, alignment with regional needs, and sustained enrichment of the intellectual, civic, economic, and cultural life of our region and state (http://www.csusm.edu/mission_statement030700.htm). This vision is reflected in the university's five strategic priorities: (1) *academic excellence*, (2) a *student life* that is rich, welcoming, and inclusive, (3) a *campus climate* of camaraderie, mutual respect, and trust, (4) the desire to strengthen and further expand our local, national, and international *community partnerships*, and (5) *educational equity*, respecting and modeling the diversity of our region within a context of social justice (<http://www.csusm.edu/plan/strategicpriorities.htm>).



CSUSM achieved Hispanic Serving Institutions Program eligibility in Spring 2011 and TRIO continues to be one of the key support programs on campus contributing to student retention and graduation.

National Latino Research Center



The National Latino Research Center (NLRC) is under the auspices of CSUSM's Office of Research and Sponsored Projects. The Associate Vice President for Research serves as the authorized organizational representative overseeing the responsible implementation of research and sponsored programs, including the university's centers and institutes.

The NLRC was founded in 1998 with the mission of promoting research, training, and the exchange of information related to Latino and under-served populations in the U.S. As a multi-disciplinary unit of Cal State San Marcos, the NLRC brings together faculty and professional staff who possess a broad range of research and program experience.

Specializing in applied research, the NLRC is uniquely positioned to bring together key stakeholders from the community, government, NGO sector, and private industry to identify solutions and develop strategies to address local and regional challenges. NLRC's research focus is in the areas of education, cultural competency, health, environmental issues, public policy, and community development. NLRC conducts program evaluations, needs assessments and population studies for community-based organizations and public agencies in a broad range of fields. In addition to research projects, the NLRC provides technical assistance to a range of organizations and actively supports multi-agency collaborations that seek to leverage resources and expertise. For additional information about the NLRC visit their website at <http://www.csusm.edu/nlrc/>.



Student Support Services



The TRIO program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The program has been hosted at Cal States San Marcos since 1993. It currently supports 192 students from first-generation, low-income, and/or disability backgrounds, who are U.S. citizens or legal residents, qualify and applied for federal financial aid, and have evidence of academic need.

TRIO provides services to increase retention and graduation rates of targeted students. By collaborating with other service departments on campus such as Educational Opportunity Program, students receive targeted outreach to maximize their success in higher education. The services provided to students include:

TRIO SERVICES	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES
Annual Recognition Ceremony	Each spring, graduating TRiO SSS students and their families are honored at a ceremony preceding University commencement. The TRiO Senior Excellence Award recipient – selected for academic achievement, campus leadership, and commitment to the SSS program – is recognized.
The Center	TRiO SSS students may utilize The Center, a multi-purpose computer lab, study area, and community building space. Limited amounts of free printing and copies are available at The Center.
Cultural Enrichment Activities	A limited number of co-curricular events and activities (plays, lectures, musical performances, museum exhibitions) are available each year to SSS students, with the intent of increasing cultural awareness and building community among SSS participants. University credit may be available with participation.



Counseling	Students work with counselors to develop an educational plan, which includes both short-range academic goals and long-range graduation planning. Counselors assist students in exploring majors, academic success strategies, and personal matters which impact their academic performance.
Summer Transitional Enhancement Program (STEP)	This first-year program is offered to students prior to their first semester of attendance at CSUSM in order to help them solidify a community, and provide a foundation for success in the structured first-year experience for TRiO SSS participants.
Financial Literacy	TRiO SSS staff offers financial literacy workshops to its program participants, covering such things as budgeting, managing credit and making a savings plan.
Graduate School Preparation	Students are encouraged to pursue graduate and professional school opportunities through participation in graduate school fairs and workshops addressing graduate school preparation strategies. Counselors provide students with assistance in writing personal statements and letters of recommendation.
Laptop Loans	A limited number of laptop computers are available for TRiO SSS students who do not have computer access at home.
Mid-Semester Evaluations/Early Interventions	Faculty are encouraged to complete mid-semester progress reports for TRiO SSS students each semester. Students who are having academic or other difficulties meet with a counselor to identify appropriate interventions to increase their likelihood of success in the course(s) of concern. First-Year students receive additional early intervention strategies and services.
Mentoring	Peer mentors provide general academic information and assist students in becoming active members and leaders in the campus community. Faculty mentors, available to upper-division students, encourage academic inquiry and mentor students



	wishing to pursue graduate and professional degrees.
Priority Registration	Students in TRiO SSS receive first selection of classes each semester.
Supplemental Grant Aid	First and Second Year TRiO SSS students who are financially eligible, as determined in collaboration with the Financial Aid office, may receive supplemental SSS grants during their first and second years of college enrollment. Students must have a current FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) on file to be eligible.
Academic Tutoring	We offer our students one-to-one tutoring in English, English as a Second Language, and writing. Students who are struggling in any of the above mentioned areas can contact the program tutor for help. Tutorials are conducted in three ways, in person, by e-mail and phone. TRiO SSS program tutors are professionally trained and gain certification through accredited tutor programs.
Workshops	A diverse range of workshops provides students with opportunities for academic and personal development. Topics, which vary each semester in response to student requests, have included time management, library research strategies, making campus connections, managing stress, financial literacy and diversity awareness.
<p>For additional information about TRiO SSS, visit their website at http://www.csusm.edu/SSS_EOP/SSS/.</p>	



Sample

A comprehensive list of current TRiO SSS students was compiled by SSS staff ($N=192$) and provided to NLRC researchers. All of the listed students were sent an initial email requesting participation in the program evaluation. The notification email advised students of the study and directed them to a web site to complete the survey. Of the 192 students contacted via email, a total of 79 students completed the survey (response rate of 41.1%).

Materials

Demographics

Student respondents were asked to respond to a number of demographic questions. Students were asked about their current academic standing, age group, gender, racial / ethnic status, and the year they started at CSUSM.

Attitude, Perception, and Frequency

After completing the demographics section of the survey, students were asked a series of questions covering three main topics. The survey questions asked students to report on their attitude about and perceptions of



the 'institutional climate', the 'SSS staff members' and 'SSS services' they received at CSUSM. Students were asked to respond to two types of questions. First, they were asked to respond to 'attitude' and 'perception' questions in a Likert type format options, e.g., 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Neutral', 'Agree', and 'Strongly Disagree'. Second, students were asked to respond to 'frequency of use' questions in a Likert-type format ranging from 'Frequently', 'Occasionally', 'Rarely' and 'Never'.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Below is a summary of survey findings including demographics, perceptions of institutional and campus classroom climate, TRiO SSS staff members, and services.

Demographics

The total of 79 students completed the online survey. The sample consisted of college Seniors (44.3%), Juniors (29.1%), Sophomores (17.7%), and a few 'First Year Students' (8.9%).

Age

Students indicated a categorical age range from "17 to 20" to "40 or older." Students aged '21 to 25' were the largest subgroup (44.7%), followed by students aged '17 to 20' (36.7%), '26 to 40' (9.2%), '31 to 40' (6.6%), and '41 years of age or older' (1.3%). Furthermore, the sample comprised mostly female students (75.9%), and fewer male (22.8%) and no transgender (0.0%) students.



Race/Ethnicity

The racial or ethnic status of the sample revealed a high number of 'Hispanic/Latinos' (64.6%), 'Whites/Caucasian' (8.9%), African American/Black (7.6%), 'More than one race' (5.1%), 'Other' race (8.9%), Asians (2.5%), and no Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (0.0%). Finally, the majority of the respondents began at CSUSM 'First year students' (61.5%) compared to 'Transfer' students (38.5%).

Institutional Climate

Students were asked to evaluate the "institutional climate" at CSUSM on a scale ranging from 1 = 'Strongly Disagree', 2 = 'Disagree', 3 = 'Neutral', 4 = 'Agree', to 5 = 'Strongly Disagree' or a scale ranging from 1 = 'Strongly Disagree', 2 = 'Disagree', 4 = 'Agree', to 5 = 'Strongly Disagree'.¹

Overall, the students rated CSUSM's institutional climate favorably ($M=4.09$, $SD=.93$, $N=74$). Students reported that the 'SSS Learning Community professors' were sensitive to their needs ($M=3.37$, $SD=1.44$, $N=59$) and that they 'felt comfortable' expressing ideas in the CSUSM classroom environment ($M=3.71$, $SD=1.14$, $N=73$). Similarly, on average, respondents felt favorably about CSUSM professors understanding their unique needs ($M=3.59$, $SD=1.25$, $N=74$).

TRiO SSS Staff Members

Students were asked to report on their experiences and perceptions of TRiO SSS staff members. Overall, the students rated their interactions and experiences with SSS Staff members very favorably ($M=4.59$, $SD=.74$, $N=79$). The students perceived the SSS staff as being knowledgeable about university requirements ($M=4.54$, $SD=.66$, $N=79$) and campus resources

¹ note that option "Neutral" was not offered for some questions



($M=4.56$, $SD=.64$, $N=79$). Furthermore, students perceived the SSS staff as being understanding ($M=4.48$, $SD=.83$, $N=79$) and sensitive to their unique needs ($M=4.52$, $SD=.75$, $N=79$).

TRiO SSS Services

The majority of the survey asked students to rate their perceptions and experiences with specific aspects of the program. Overall, students expressed favorable attitudes toward SSS services they have received. The students reported positive perceptions of specific aspects of SSS services ranging from helping them to pass entry level requirements” to learning about persons from diverse backgrounds (See [Table 1](#)). Additionally, students perceive that the SSS program encouraged them to become involved in diverse campus or civic activities ($M=3.82$, $SD=.90$, $N=79$).

Table 1: TRiO SSS Services	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
helped clarify and achieve Personal goals	4.39	.78	79
helped clarify and achieve Academic goals	4.33	.84	79
helped maintain a good GPA	4.18	.89	79
helped persist toward graduation	4.35	.87	79
encouraged the sharing of ideas	3.88	.90	79
offered at convenient times	4.28	.96	79
helped students learn about people of diverse backgrounds	3.77	.97	79
helped complete CSUSM entry level math requirement	4.04	.88	50
helped complete CSUSM entry level writing requirement	4.14	.80	51



Students were also asked to report on the 'most helpful' aspects of their experience with TRiO SSS services. The students responses were tallied and ranked from the most to least frequently occurring responses (see Table 2). The students ranked 'Counseling / Advising' and "Priority Registration" as the most helpful services provided by the program staff. Conversely, the lowest ranked service was "Supplemental Instruction".

Table 2: Rank Order of 'Most Helpful aspects of SSS'	
Most Helpful Aspect of SSS	Rank
Counseling / Advising	1
Priority Registration	2
Mid-Semester Evaluations	3
The Center	4
Mentoring	5
Supplemental Grant Aid	5
Cultural Enrichment Activities / Fieldtrips	7
Workshops	8
Laptop Loans	9
Advocacy	9

Financial Literacy

A new indicator introduced in this year's survey is financial literacy. In general the majority of the students (78.4%) reported being concerned with accumulation of excessive debt from educational expenses and worry about not being able to pay off their loans when they graduate. Although the majority (60.3%) reported a necessity to borrow loans for college and know the difference between subsidized and unsubsidized loans, 51.4% of the



students indicated needing more information and/or guidance to help them manage their finances. Half of the students currently have financial aid yet cannot make ends meet. The findings suggest students would greatly benefit from having more guidance to help them understand financial systems and how to manage personal finances.

Summary

The results of the semi-structured survey reveal that on average, students are satisfied with the SSS staff, SSS services and the institutional climate at CSUSM. The survey also helped to identify a few areas for further review and evaluation. Additionally, students reported several issues for future review and consideration. For example, students reported a relatively lower rating for the CSUSM professors understanding their unique needs. There were no open-ended questions within the 'institutional climate' section of the survey which might be useful to consider for future surveys. Secondly, the students did not perceive that the SSS program was actively encouraging them to become involved in diverse campus or civic activities. The SSS staff may consider formalizing strategies for getting students to become more engaged in campus or civic activities.

It is evident from student responses that they value TRiO SSS services and utilize them frequently. Most importantly, SSS students attribute SSS staff, programs and services with helping them to clarify and achieve personal goals, to stay in school, and achieve academic goals. The SSS program is achieving its mission of providing services that support student retention and graduation at CSUSM.



SURVEY RESPONSES SUMMARY

2012 Spring SSS Online Survey Results

Total # of SSSP participants:211

Total # of survey invitation email sent:211

of respondents attempted:74

of respondents *consented*:72 (97.3% response rate)

(# of respondents *declined*):2

of respondents completed:72* (n of our analysis)

*3 respondents started but withdrew after completing at least half the survey questions

INFORMED CONSENT:

Participation in this study is voluntary and all responses are confidential. If I agree to participate in this study, I can choose not to answer any question or stop at any time. I am providing my consent to participate by selecting "Accept" below or I may choose not to participate by selecting "Decline."

Accept Decline (q001)

ID number (q002): _____

Directions: Please read each question below and select the most appropriate response.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Current class level (q003)

- | | |
|--|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freshman | 9 (12.5%) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore | 8 (11.1%) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior | 27 (37.5%) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior | 21 (29.2%) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate school | 1 (1.4%) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graduated already | 4 (5.4%) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No longer attending college | 1 (1.4%) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | 1 (1.4%) |

2. Age Enter actual age (q004)

Mean=22.89, SD=5.051 and n=72 (min=18; max=44)



3. Gender (q005)

Female **61 (84.7%)** Male **11 (15.3%)** Transgender **(0.0%)**

4. How do you identify your racial/ethnic heritage? (q006)

<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native	1 (1.4%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	3 (4.2%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American	1 (1.4%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino	49 (68.1%)
<input type="checkbox"/> White	6 (8.3%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0 (0.0%)
<input type="checkbox"/> More than one race	5 (6.9%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	7 (9.7%)

Other included: Laotian, Mexican, Mexican-American and Middle Eastern

5. Where were you born? (q007)

United States **56 (77.8%)** Mexico **12 (16.7%)** Asia **2 (2.8%)** Other **2 (2.8%)**

Other included: Colombia and Afghanistan

6. What language do you usually communicate? (q008)

English **35 (50.0%)** Spanish **4 (5.7%)** Both Spanish and English **31 (44.3%)**

7. In what language do you read/write most comfortable? (q009)

English **57 (79.2%)** Spanish **0 (0.0%)** Both Spanish and English **15 (20.8%)**

8. Enter 1st year of enrollment at Cal State San Marcos (q010): _____

2002: 1 (1.4%)
2004: 1 (1.4%)
2005: 1 (1.4%)
2006: 1 (1.4%)
2007: 4 (5.4%)
2008: 9 (12.2%)
2009: 16 (21.6%)
2010: 15 (20.3%)
2011: 18 (24.4%)

9. What was your academic standing upon entering CSUSM? (q011):

First Year Student **46 (66.7%)** Transfer student **23 (33.3%)**



Students transferred from local community colleges including: Grossmont College, Mira Costa College, Miramar College, Mt. San Jacinto, Palomar College, Southwestern College

10. What is your GPA? (q012)

Mean=3.11, SD=0.4497 (min=2.0; max=3.96)

11. What is your major? (q013)

Accounting:	1 (1.4%)
Biochemistry:	1 (1.4%)
Biology:	2 (2.7%)
Business:	5 (7.0%)
Criminology:	6 (8.1%)
Global Studies:	1 (1.4%)
Human Dev.:	14 (19.6%)
Kinesiology:	2 (2.7%)
Liberal Studies:	4 (5.5%)
Lit. and writing:	1 (1.4%)
Mathematics:	1 (1.4%)
Nursing:	1 (1.4%)
Poli. Sci:	3 (4.1%)
Pre-majors:	7 (9.5%)
Psychology:	4 (5.5%)
Physics:	1 (1.4%)
Social Science:	1 (1.4%)
Sociology:	1 (1.4%)
Spanish:	1 (1.4%)
Undeclared:	1 (1.4%)
Double major:	7 (9.5%)

12. Where do you live? (q014):

Off-Campus 66 (95.7%) On-Campus 3 (4.1%)

Those who live off-campus live in the following cities:

Cardiff:	1 (1.4%)
Encinitas:	1 (1.4%)
Escondido:	10 (14.0%)
Fallbrook:	2 (2.8%)
Imperial Beach:	1 (1.4%)
Murrieta:	2 (2.8%)
National City:	1 (1.4%)
Oceanside:	15 (20.3%)
Poway:	3 (4.1%)
San Diego:	4 (5.4%)
San Jacinto:	1 (1.4%)
San Marcos:	13 (17.6%)



Temecula: 3 (4.1%)
Vista: 8 (10.8%)

13. Do you currently work? (q015):

Yes 50 (73.5%) No 18 (26.5%)

If you work, how many hours per week? (q016)

Mean=17.5, SD=11.497, n=48 (min=0.0; max=40.00)

If you work, do you have an on- or off-campus job? (q017):

Off-campus 37 (72.5%) On-campus 10 (19.6%) Both 4 (7.8%)

14. What was your academic standing upon starting the SSS program at CSUSM (q018):

First Year Student (60.8%) Transfer Student (38.0%) Continuing Student (1.3%)

ABOUT SSS STAFF

16. SSS staff members have directed you to valuable campus resources (i.e. financial aid, tutoring, etc.) (q019-1)

Strongly Agree (60.3%) Agree (39.7%) Disagree (0.0%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=68, mean=1.40, sd=0.493

17. SSS staff members have created a comfortable environment for you on campus (q019-2)

Strongly Agree (69.1%) Agree (30.9%) Disagree (0.0%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=68, mean=1.31, sd=0.465

18. SSS staff members have advocated on your behalf (q019-3)

Strongly Agree (70.2%) Agree (26.3%) Disagree (3.5%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=57, mean=1.33, sd=0.546

19. SSS staff members have demonstrated sensitivity to your unique needs as a first-generation, low-income, and/or disability background. (q019-4)



Strongly Agree (66.2%) Agree (30.9%) Disagree (2.9%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=68, mean=1.37, sd=0.544

20. SSS staff members encouraged you to stay in college and to do well in your class (q019-5)

Strongly Agree (72.1%) Agree (27.9%) Disagree (0.0%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=68, mean=1.28, sd=0.452

21. SSS staff members have reminded you of important deadlines (q019-6)

Strongly Agree (76.1%) Agree (19.4%) Disagree (4.5%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=67, mean=1.28, sd=0.545

22. Please describe how SSS program staff have helped you in the past. (q020)

(Please see the appendix 1)

SSS RESOURCES

23. SSS support and services are helping you to make progress towards completion of your degree (q021_1)

Strongly Agree (71.6%) Agree (28.4%) Disagree (0.0%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=67, mean=1.28, sd=0.454

24. SSS support and services are helping you to maintain good grades (q021_2)

Strongly Agree (67.2%) Agree (25.0%) Disagree (7.8%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=64, mean=1.41, sd=0.635

25. SSS support and services are helping you to complete entry-level math and writing requirements (q021_3)

Strongly Agree (68.1%) Agree (23.4%) Disagree (8.5%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=47, mean=1.40, sd=0.648

26. SSS support and services are offered at times/days that are convenient for you (q021_4)



Strongly Agree (59.7%) Agree (34.3%) Disagree (4.5%) Strongly Disagree (1.5%)

n=67, mean=1.48, sd=0.660

27. Which program services and resources have been most helpful to you? (please select your top 5 choices):

- 45 Educational and personal counseling (q022_1)
- 46 The center (q022_2)
- 8 First-year learning community (q022_3)
- 20 Peer and faculty mentoring (q022_4)
- 12 Tutoring (q022_5)
- 64 Priority registration (q022_6)
- 23 Cultural enrichment activities (q022_7)
- 38 Mid-Semester evaluations/early intervention (q022_8)
- 9 Graduate school motivation and preparation (q022_9)
- 17 Supplemental and aid grant (q022_10)
- 14 Workshops (q022_11)
- 10 Laptop loans (q022_12)
- 2 Annual recognition ceremony (q022_13)
- 2 Other (q022_14)

(Please see appendix 2)

28. Do you have additional comments about the services and resources SSS provides? Please write your comments. (q023)

(Please see appendix 3)

INCLUSIVENESS & COMMUNITY-BUILDING

29. SSS has helped you feel more connected on campus (q024-1)

Strongly Agree (58.2%) Agree (35.8%) Disagree (6.0%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=67, mean=1.48, sd=0.612

30. SSS has provided opportunities to meet other first generation college students on campus (q024-2)

Strongly Agree (58.8%) Agree (35.3%) Disagree (5.9%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=68, mean=1.47, sd=0.610

31. SSS is increasing campus awareness and understanding of challenges first generation college students face in college (q024-3)

Strongly Agree (54.4%) Agree (36.8%) Disagree (8.8%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)



n=68, mean=1.54, sd=0.656

32. SSS is contributing to building a sense of community on campus for first generation college students (q024-4)

Strongly Agree (58.2%) Agree (32.8%) Disagree (9.0%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=67, mean=1.50, sd=0.670

33. SSS promotes a sense of pride and belonging at CSUSM for first generation college students (q024-5)

Strongly Agree (60.3%) Agree (35.3%) Disagree (4.4%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=68, mean=1.44, sd=0.582

34. SSS encourages you to get involved in campus activities, student organizations, or community events (q024-6)

Strongly Agree (52.2%) Agree (43.3%) Disagree (4.5%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

n=67, mean=1.52, sd=0.587

35. Do you have additional comments about your experiences at CSUSM as a first generation college student? Please write your comments. (q025)

(Please see appendix 4)

FINANCIAL NEED & LITERACY

36. Has SSS provided you with guidance about your financial aid needed to pay your educational and living experiences? (q026-1)

Strongly Agree (49.2%) Agree (32.8%) Disagree (16.4%) Strongly Disagree (1.6%)

n=61, mean=1.70, sd=0.803

37. Has SSS helped to alleviate any concerns you have about accumulating excessive load debt? (q026-2)

Strongly Agree (43.9%) Agree (34.1%) Disagree (17.7%) Strongly Disagree (4.9%)

n=41, mean=1.83, sd=0.892

38. Has SSS made you aware of scholarships? (q026-3)



Strongly Agree (53.7%) Agree (29.9%) Disagree (13.4%) Strongly Disagree (3.0%)

$n=67$, mean=1.66, sd=0.827

49. Has SSS given you guidance about the loans you have taken or are currently taking out to pay for educational and living expenses? (q026-4)

Strongly Agree (42.6%) Agree (27.7%) Disagree (25.5%) Strongly Disagree (4.3%)

$n=47$, mean=1.91, sd=0.929

40. Has SSS given you guidance about, and do you understand the difference between subsidized student loans and unsubsidized loans?? (q026-5)

Strongly Agree (45.1%) Agree (33.3%) Disagree (19.6%) Strongly Disagree (2.0%)

$n=51$, mean=1.78, sd=0.832

41. Would you like SSS to give you more information and/or guidance to help you develop a financial management plan? (q026-6)

Strongly Agree (49.1%) Agree (40.0%) Disagree (10.9%) Strongly Disagree (0.0%)

$n=55$, mean=1.62, sd=0.680

42. If you have applied for any scholarships, how many scholarships have you applied for? (q027)

$N=24$, Mean=4.083, SD=8.048 (min=1.0; max=30.00)

42. If you have applied for any scholarships, how many have you received and how much? (q028)

$N=9$ (9 students), Mean=\$3044.44, SD=2467.85 (min=\$200; max=\$8000.00)

43. What is the best part of being in SSS? (q029)

(Please see the appendix 5)

44. What is the least favorite part of being in SSS? (q030)

(Please see the appendix 6)

45. What is the most effective means of communicating with you? (q031)



- 59 Email (q031-1)
- 31 In person (q031-2)
- 11 Texting (q031-3)
- 4 Mail (q031-4)
- 14 Phone (q031-5)
- 0 Other (q031-6)

Appendix 1: Describe how SSS staff members have helped you in the past

- -counseling -mentorship -free printing
- After not passing the Accounting 301 class, I was debating if I should retake the class or change my emphasis from Accounting to Management. I talked to Mr. Joe LeDesma about it and he told me that I was the only one that could ultimately make a decision, but he thought the classes for management were easier and more interesting than accounting. After talking to him, I decided to switch to Management.
- Directed to me to which department can help me with my financial aid. Also they have helped me to determine which classes work for my schedule if not they advise me to see my advisor.
- every problem that has been presented to me Heather Northway has always been there to help me and help me to get through it!
- great counselors
- Having emails sent from SSS with important deadlines of school events and paperwork has been very helpful.
- Heather helped me figure out my semester schedule and answered all my questions I had. She even emailed other faculty members to find other information.
- I have participated in events that I would not have participated without their flyers, and reminders.
- I meet with Jason and he remembers the lab research I do and he is always encouraging.
- I received help with choosing the proper courses that are credited toward my major.
- I want to graduate in spring of '14. Heather has helped me figure out how I can make that happen.
- It has helped me with tutoring, being able to use the computer and printer, with questions regarding classes and priority registration!
- It is a very vital support system I have here on campus.
- Joe has just helped me vent about my educational goals. Jason helped me look at how many classes I need to graduate
- Joe Ledesma has advocated on my behalf in order for me to be able to be deemed independent by Financial Aid so that I may continue coming to school.
- I have interacted with Joe Ledesma and Jason Tan and they both have taken the time to listen to me and have offered their assistance to me. I feel their attention is truly genuine and I feel that I can turn to them with any problems or concerns I may have. I don't feel in any way rushed or pressed for time when I meet with them.
- Keep me motivated
- made academic counseling more readily available to me
- My counselor always encourages me to succeed and try my best whenever I feel like I'm struggling in a course. Every staff member is always available and willing to help me with anything.
- Specifically, 2 things: 1. counseling. It has been a privilege to go to advising sessions just to make sure I am taking the right classes, and get updated with anything else I can or need to do. 2. computers and printing. Having to depend on myself, I would not have the capabilities to print out my homeworks or lecture notes at home. Printing elsewhere is expensive. For the above two points, I am very, very grateful for the privilege I have as a TRIO student. Those have greatly impacted my grades and encourages me to study harder because I have the help many people need to pay to get. So blessed.
- SSS and EOP have been one of the top elements in where I am so far. I have been able to enroll in my classes as well as been on track with my studying thanks to the program.
- sss has helped me with my writing
- SSS has really made me feel comfortable and safe in their office. All the staff members are extremely nice and make me feel welcome. I love knowing that there is always somewhere I can go.
- SSS have been very beneficial in many aspects but most important a guidance to help us take appropriate classes based on our major and help us with any college related and personal struggles.
- SSS program has helped me every single semester with getting priority registration. It's great because I feel that that helps me get all my classes that I need. SSS is a great support group as for the staff they are caring towards me I feel a real connection to them. Which makes me really comfortable talking to them about anything. SSS staff seem very interested for us and I really appreciate that it gives me a piece of mind.
- SSS, has been helping me a lot with the services they offer through my years at CSUSM. This Spring semester of 2012, I went through a really tough time in the middle of the semester as we discovered my younger brother had Cancer. I was worried/stressed about my classes and what was going to happen to me. They directed me through the steps in which I had to go through so this semester will not affect my academic standing at CSUSM. They were very helpful with every step of the process I had to go through and very sensitive to my situation. I am



very grateful!

- the program helped me tremendously by getting me priority registration
- the advisors are helpful and really supportive, and the printing has saved me a lot of money. I use that money on gas and extra supplies I need
- The counselors genuinely care about your needs and worries. They truly are there to help you.
- they kept reminding me when things were due and help with advising toward being able to graduate soon
- The program has been super critical in my continuing edu. Staff is supportive, positive about my ideas, and always willing to help. I don't know if I could have done it without SSS.
- The program has guided me through my college experience. Being the first of my family to go to college I gave no guidance or an understanding of what to do, and I'm extremely thankful that the SSS program has guided me through my academic struggles. I would like to highlight Mr. LeDesma, because he has offered me so many options, that has definitely opened my eyes towards my future. I could not thank him enough.
- The program has helped me by providing me with a computer I can use. I am able to print for free. They have provided me with a wonderful tutor that has always helped me with my papers.
- The SSS Counselors are always there for me. If they are busy, they make time to answer questions and if they have time they're always willing to meet. I have grown to know them on a personal level since I have been at CSUSM for a while now. They are always willing to make sure that I get helped so that I succeed in my academics and life in general.
- The SSS program helped me familiarize not only with the campus but with students as well! thanks to SSS I've met great people who I consider great friends. priority registration is also very helpful!!!
- The staff at the SSS program have been awesome guide for me in the sense that they always are aware of the student involved in the program keeping us updated with all the info via email. The cultural events they provide are amazing, always fun and educational! You can have a counselor student relationship where they remember you and help you out with any personal, educational, or any question/ problem you may be going through!
- The staff has been extremely helpful in more ways than one. As an extremely stressed out student when I come to them with problems I am always met with calmness and good advice. The staff has always held a non judgmental approach in coinciding and advising me. The personal level of follow ups and help by the staff in the SSS office are what make this program exceptional. I have been helped on the topics of academic major, status, class scheduling, career choices and financial aid.
- They are helping me by discussing my options for my math classes
- They are really supportive of decisions and usually are well prepared to answer questions/redirect to someone who can. For me it was changing my major, pros and cons.
- They have helped me by informing me on upcoming events, deadlines for FAFSA, dropping/adding classes, etc. Also by helping me choose classes, and what major is best for me.
- They have helped me stay on track on all of my classes. They were also here when I needed emotional help. They have guided me through the right path and encouraged me to stay in school after I have my baby. Also the priority registration if we made the two contacts was great because I was able to work around my schedule: time for school, job and my family.
- They help out as much as they can with questions I have had regarding classes and registrations, and also supportive.
- They helped me learn how to use the ARR to know where I stand with my classes.
- They helped me with writing tutoring and overall counseling when I needed help with what classes to take and how to do better in certain classes.
- They were really open when I went to talk to them about my personal life. They always listened and gave me good advice
- VERY HELPFUL WHEN CHOOSING CLASSES, AND SUPPORTIVE.

Appendix 2: Which program services and resources have been most helpful to you? Other

- Printing

Appendix 3: Do you have additional comments about the services and resources SSS provides? If so, please write your comments below.

- Can you send advertisements of events and workshops through via email?
- Free printing really helped a lot
- Free printing.
- Great program for the success of the students who otherwise would not be able to keep up with College.
- I am glad I am part of the SSS program!
- It is a great community, in my case it has saved me many times. The center, is very accessible and the resources are really geared towards a successful education..
- It is a great program and every Cal State should have it. It really helps a lot of students get through with their college experience and they make it fun.
- It's a really great program! I think it has facilitated being a student, especially my junior year where my classes



have become harder. I am really grateful for a wonderful staff!

- Keep on doing what your doing.
- N/A
- None
- Thank you so much for all you guys do!! it has helped me a lot in many ways, I'm very proud and glad to be part of SSS!
- The student staff is very friendly.
- They are really helpful and nice.
- very welcoming, awesome that I can use computers and print. The counseling sessions are helpful. Priority registration has been a tremendous help.
- While I have been told that some of the SSS Staff members can be available after hours. I have yet to use this resource. As a night student I wish the SSS office was open a little later.

Appendix 4: Do you have additional comments about your experiences at CSUSM as a first generation college student? If so, please write your comments below.

- As I have not attended classes during the day I feel I am not completely aware of the activities and have few experiences on campus. I hope this will change next semester.
- excellent program!
- Honestly, it's been tough and continues to be. SSS helps a lot. It's hard to explain, it's a motivating factor I guess.
- I have not been able to attend to events only because of work.
- None.
- The SSS program were and are there for me ffrom day one which is great.

Appendix 5: What is the best part of being in SSS?

- Access to resources (free printing, laptop loans, computers, etc.) which relieves extra stress and worry.
- always available, friendly, helpful
- Being able to ask questions in person. Priority registration
- Being able to have advisers that help you educationally, scholarships, priority registration, and the computer lab with free printing.
- being able to have support and guidance from helpful staff.
- Being able to print for free. Thank you!
- Being able to talk to my counselor about my academic goals and progress.
- Being part of a program with students with same background as me
- Check ins.
- Coming into contact with other students and receiving support from them and the staff.
- Counseling and priority registration!
- counseling services Priority registration and the feeling that someone is on my side
- Counseling services.
- Counseling, Printing, LapTop Loan, & Priority Registration
- cultural trips
- Early registration and I the students I have met because of SSS.
- Free printing and couesling support
- Grant and free Printing
- help me through some concerns that i have
- I can get any questions i have answered
- I get priority registration.
- I like the priority registration, Its really hard to get into classes with out some priority. I also like the fact that i can come to a computer and print a certain amount of pages for free.
- I love going to talk to them. I can go there and I know they will not judge me. They not give academic support but also emotional. They are like a family.
- Knowing that I'm not alone.
- meeting face to face
- meeting great helpful counselors!!
- Meeting other first generation students which allows me to find people I know easily in my classes.
- Meting new people.
- Mid semester evaluations and priority registration.
- My counselor he's very helpful and supportive
- priority registration
- Priority Registration.
- priority registration and counseling
- priority registration, free printing and avabile advisors
- Priviledge of getting to register for classes early, the advising and the printing allowed.
- resources-printing, computer access, fee deferment, counseling
- That I am able to walk-in and talk to my advisor during convenient times. The priority registration has also helps



me a lot and has been one of the best parts.

- the best part is when you come in in the morning to use the computers and you see one of the staff. And we greet each other in the hall away.
- The best part was getting priority registration and tutoring.
- The counseling services by far.
- THE COUNSELORS
- The counselors!
- The extra counseling and help readily offered, when it is sometimes impossible to get an advising appointment. Also the priority registration
- The guidance, support and educational resources that have benefit me as a student during my four years in the program.
- the mentoring
- The priority regristation
- The relationship that I have created with the staff and how helpful they are.
- the resources in the office
- The staff
- The support
- The warm community, welcoming staff and the friends you can make.
- They are always available.
- Top priority, Early registration with the given amount of shortage of classes

Appendix 6: What is the least favorite part of being in SSS?.

- being strict on certain things
- Being that printing is free I feel too many people take advantage and maybe even let there friends know about it because there is never enough computers for people to do work on.
- Didn't feel like I knew alot of SSS students
- Hard to get a computer.
- I don't have a least favorite part.
- I find there is no least favorite par of being in SSS.
- I'm not able to help any financial aid from SSS where EOP students do!
- meeting other sss students and having friendships with them
- mid semester evaluations
- My schedule is too busy and I couldn't go to the cultural event.
- N/A
- None
- Not a lot of events to hang out and meet fellow participants, unless you attended STEP.
- NOt apply, program is very beneficial to first year students.
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing
- people take too much advantage on printing and many students enrolled are too wasteful in that concern
- Probably that the funding given to students is only for the first couple of years.
- Sometimes it's really difficult to find an available computer, I would of liked the lab to be a little bigger.
- The office closes at 5
- the size of the computer lab
- The small office
- walk in times
- When it was mandatory to do volunteer work. I have no time.

