

Barriers to Student Success

Leading Indicators of Achievement Gaps Across the Student Lifecycle

A Guide for Gap Identification

EAB has identified 116 demographic disparities that institutions need to address or that they themselves create. These items are the leading indicators of gaps in common metrics like retention, graduation, and career outcomes and often reflect the influence of institutional policies on students' sense of belonging. Members should consider these items as they try to identify the barriers to equity on their own campuses.

Common Student Success Metrics

- First year retention rates
- Term-to-term persistence rates
- · Critical course DFW rates
- Four-year graduation rates
- Six-year graduation rates
- First destination surveys

Cut data by race, gender, ethnicity, income, first-generation status, and other demographics aligned with your population



Pre-College Academic Preparation

- 1. High school teacher expectations
- 2. Access to AP courses
- 3. Access to ACT/SAT prep courses
- ACT/SAT test taking rates
- Placement in developmental education
- Success in developmental education
- Disciplinary rates and experiences in K-12 schools
- Writing ability by English Language Learner (ELL) status



- 10. Impact of diversity of high school teachers
- 11. Segregation of K-12 schools
- 12. Access to guidance counselors
- 13. SAT/ACT scores by income quintile
- 14. AP exam pass rates



Family Expectations and Self Efficacy

- 15. Family expectations of student's ability to go to college
- 16. Family expectations of student's ability to succeed in college
- 17. Student expectation of their own ability to succeed
- 18. Resilience during the job and internship search
- 19. Impact of first failed course
- 20. Acceptance rates in competitive majors
- 21. Family perception of importance of high-impact practices
- 22. Undermatching in college selection process

- 23. Undermatching at the course-level
- 24. Impact of academic probation and dismissal language
- 25. Parental pressure on major choice
- 26. Disparity between high school and college GPA



Climate

- 27. Sense of belonging on campus
- 28. Perception of inclusivity in major
- 29. Treatment by local businesses
- 30. Treatment by local community
- 31. Impact of negative diversity event
- 32. Diversity of student organization leadership in relation to student body demographics
- 33. Success rates based on demographics of faculty encountered

- 34. Responsiveness of faculty to students
- 35. Consideration of racial justice activism in admissions decisions
- 36. Interactions with campus and local law enforcement
- 37. Access to facilities (e.g. building accessibility, gender neutral restrooms)
- 38. Faculty and staff diversity in relation to student diversity



Financial

- 39. Perception of cost of college
- 40. Ability and desire to take on debt
- 41. Application fee waiver request rates
- 42. FAFSA submission rates
- 43. Timing of FAFSA submission

46. Impact of unmet financial need

- 44. Financial aid verification selection rates
- 45. Financial aid verification completion rates
- 48. Internet access at home
- 49. Ability to afford course materials

47. Ability to afford social experiences

- 50. Need to work while enrolled in college
- 51. Need to support dependents
- 52. Impact of financial emergencies

53. Loss of scholarship rates

54. Rate of recovery from loss of financial aid or scholarships

- 55. Exhaustion of financial aid eligibility
- 56. Food insecurity
- 57. Housing insecurity
- 58. Access to transportation
- 59. Ability to afford graduation regalia
- 60. Access to employer-sponsored tuition reimbursement programs
- 61. Ability to take unpaid internships



Pedagogy and Academic Experience

- 62. GPA in lecture-heavy courses
- 63. Perception of representation within curriculum
- 64. Impact of grading practices
- 65. Perception that curriculum is relevant to students' goals and values
- 66. Teaching in First Nations' languages
- 67. Effect of pre-requisite course sequencing
- 68. Grades in online courses
- 69. Completion of online courses
- 70. Major switching patterns 71. Junior graduation rates



College Navigation

- 72. Likelihood to register late for classes
- 73. Student expectations of coursework rigor
- 74. Utilization of mental health resources 75. FAFSA resubmission rates
- 76. Summer melt rates
- 77. Unproductive credit accumulation
- 78. Enrollment in toxic course combinations
- 79. Graduation application submission rates 80. Understanding of re-enrollment policies

- 81. Perceptions of time needed to study
- 82. Parental engagement by ELL status
- 83. Expectations of frequency of faculty interactions
- 84. Understanding of academic honor codes
- 85. Impact of academic jargon
- 86. Knowledge and use of medical withdrawal policies
- 87. Enrollment by discipline
- 88. Knowledge and use of academic support resources



Policies and Procedures

- 99. Student loan default rates 105. Need and ability to apply for financial independence
 - 106. Ability to access all required courses
 - 107. Faculty dropping students from courses 108. Need for on-campus housing during breaks
 - 109. Misalignment between aid disbursement and
 - 110. Mismatch between credit accumulation and financial aid awards
 - 111.Placement on academic probation
 - 112.Referrals to honor board

- 113.Impact of registration and bursar holds
- 114.Impact of differential tuition rates
- 115.Impact and knowledge of transfer credit articulation policies
- 116. Knowledge of Title IX policies and procedures

Source: Based on literature review and EAB interviews and analysis.
Bibliography available upon reques



Post-Graduate Outcomes

- 89. Participation rates in undergraduate research
- 90. Participation rates in study abroad opportunities
- 91. Experience during study abroad
- 92. Ability to use social network for career advancement
- 93. Post-graduate employment rates
- 94. Alumni engagement rates
- 95. Post-graduate economic mobility 96. Career fulfilment and engagement
- 97. Impact of student debt
- 98. Career boost from non-degree credential

- 100.Participation rates in internships
- 101.Participation rates in learning communities
- 102. Participation rates in servicelearning 103. Ability to receive letter of

recommendation from faculty

member 104. Graduate school application

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Implementation Planning Guide

Identifying Barriers and Actions Associated with Closing Demographic Disparities

Analyze Institutional Data and Develop Implementation Plan

Use this planning guide to identify leading indicators of demographic disparities in key student success metrics. Many campuses will begin prioritizing their work by conducting analyses with strategic goals such as promoting experiential learning or accelerating time to degree. After determining the most important gaps, campus leaders should select a small number to prioritize and task student success, faculty, and staff leaders to craft solutions.

Input Your Institutional Data Analyze your overall institutional data and develop targets for each student success metric. Cut your data by race, gender, ethnicity, income, first-generation status, and other demographics aligned with your population to identify where you have the biggest disparities.	Leading Indicators of Equity Gaps: List the leading indicators of the gap and/or barrier that you hope to eliminate on your campus.	Programs and Offices Involved: Identify the academic program or administrative office that has direct oversight of the gap or barrier in question	What Information Do You Need to Get Started Solving the Problem? How Will You Get It? Use this space to think about what data or evidence you will need to convince faculty and/or staff to start addressing the gap/barrier	Solution Owner: Designate an individual or team to lead efforts to collect information and manage the solution	Next Steps: List the first two to three actions you will take on this gap or barrier upon returning to campus
Sample: Critical Course DFW Rates Overall: 23% Goal: 17% Biggest Gap: Between first-gen and continuing-gen students	Sample: GPA by type of pedagogy; Impact of grading practices;	Chemistry; Biology	How do we collect type of pedagogy? Charge departments with recording the type they use?	Center for teaching and learning, but they would also need a member of the faculty from those departments. We could ask the department chair.	First, pull GPA data by first-generation status from each department's courses. Start with the introductory courses. Then, show the data to the CHEM and BIO departments
First Year Retention Rates Overall: Goal: Biggest Gap:					
Term-to-Term Persistence Rates Overall: Goal: Biggest Gap:					
Critical Course DFW Rates Overall: Goal: Biggest Gap:					
Four-Year Graduation Rates Overall: Goal: Biggest Gap:					
Six-Year Graduation Rates Overall: Goal: Biggest Gap:					