



## BEACH XP

# A learning community for first-year students

## OUR ORIGINS AND PHILOSOPHY

The Beach Experience (Beach XP) at California State University, Long Beach is a learning community created as part of a strategic initiative to empower first-year students by enhancing their sense of belonging, persistence, and academic success. At its core, Beach XP seeks to support students through a holistic, wrap-around approach as they navigate the transition into university life, offering a structured learning community where they can connect with peers and mentors, engage with campus resources, and foster a strong foundation for personal and academic growth.

The program's goals are:

- To improve retention among first-year students
- To offer resources and support to meet students and faculty where they are
- To engage all first-year students

Aligning with the university's broader vision, "**Cal State Long Beach: Where California Dreams,**" Beach XP embodies the spirit of enabling dreams and encouraging students to make meaningful contributions within California and beyond. The program dovetails seamlessly with CSULB's values, offering a nurturing environment in which students can not only dream big, but also take concrete steps toward realizing those dreams.

Each college's Beach XP pathway will be unique, as some students will part of cohorts and others enrolled online. But many will include the following:

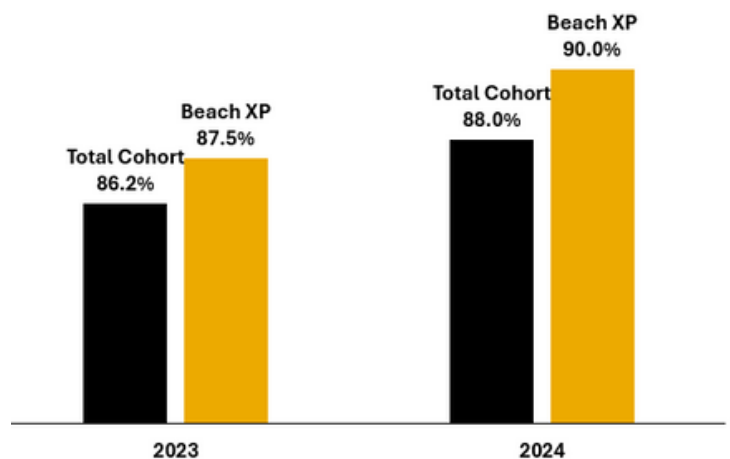
- Exclusive access to the Beach XP podcast
- Full-service learning hub through Canvas
- Personalized contact with professors (for cohorted students)
- Social activities and workshops (for cohorted students)
- Connection with campus resources
- Smaller class sizes (for cohorted students)
- Mentorship and tutoring opportunities

## Demonstrating Impact

Since its launch in fall 2023, Beach XP has demonstrated a positive impact on student retention and success. In its inaugural year, the program welcomed 742 students, representing 13% of the incoming class. Among this group, first-year persistence rates were notably higher than their non-participating peers, signaling the program's effectiveness in fostering resilience and academic commitment. The program nearly doubled in size during year two, supporting around 1,300 students across 55 cohorts.

### One-Year Persistence Rates By Cohort

*Both Beach XP cohorts had higher persistence rates compared to the cohort average.*



## LOOKING AHEAD: YEAR THREE AND BEYOND

Beach XP aims to further extend its reach in year three, serving all incoming first-time, first-year students and ensuring every new student experiences at least one touchpoint with the program. This expansion will broaden Beach XP's reach on campus and strengthen the OneBeach community. To support this goal, the program is reimagining how students engage with learning management systems by introducing hybrid modules and tailored learning experiences.



## THE BEACH XPERIENCE LEARNING HUB

The Beach XPerience Learning Hub is an asynchronous, full-service digital platform designed to support all incoming first-time, first-year students at California State University, Long Beach. As a one-stop-shop for student success, the hub provides centralized access to academic guidance, campus navigation, peer mentorship, and community engagement.

Through a structured, gamified learning experience, students engage with key topics that foster both academic and personal development, complemented by self-paced modules that allow for flexibility and adaptability. The hub also houses the **Beach XP Podcast**, an engaging resource that leverages new media to connect commuter students to campus life with relatable, accessible content.

All Beach XP resources — including **gamified activities and essential campus tools** — are thoughtfully integrated within the Learning Hub to ensure students remain connected and supported throughout their first year. Upon completing the hub experience, students seamlessly transition into their respective college's **Beach XP and Beyond Shell**, where they can continue to access tailored

resources and opportunities that support their ongoing academic journey. Together, these initiatives reinforce CSULB's commitment to inclusive, accessible, and flexible learning for every student at The Beach.



One-Stop Shop  
Canvas Shells



Gamified Activities



Beach XP Podcast



XP and Beyond  
Canvas Shell

## CELEBRATING MILESTONES AND BUILDING TRADITIONS

A cherished tradition in the Beach XP program is recognizing each student's commitment to their educational journey with meaningful symbols of achievement and support. After completing the Learning Hub, students receive an exclusive **Beach XP headgear** — a celebratory “hats-off-to-you” moment that not only honors their decision to pursue higher education at CSULB but also symbolizes their commitment to persist toward graduation — a reminder of the graduation cap they'll soon earn. Alongside the hat, students are awarded the **Beach XPerience First-Year Navigator badge** — a professional digital credential that can be proudly displayed on LinkedIn and resumes. This badge signifies their successful completion of the Learning Hub, showcasing their dedication to academic and personal development. Together, these tokens connect students' current efforts to their future aspirations, serving as both a keepsake and a source of inspiration throughout their college journey.



"I enjoyed the friendships and relationships made in the classroom."

"The professors are very helpful and that helps me do well in class."