

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM (SBP) AS A HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE TO SUPPORT CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

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Scanning the QR code on your mobile device will allow you to access electronic version of this Data Fellow's project.

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Research Questions

Examination of student participation and engagement within Summer Bridge Program (SBP) to determine a significant effect on student degree attainment of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) students.

Examination of the increased effectiveness of the SBP for First-Time Freshmen (FTF) to align with the CSU Graduation Initiative 2025 and associated pillars (i.e. Academic Preparation, Enrollment Management, Student Engagement & Well-being, Financial Aid, Data-Driven Decision Making, and Administrative Barriers).

Introduction

High-Impact programs provide opportunities for students to more fully engage in their college and academic career, which could impact a student's performance, well-being and feelings of being personally invested and part of the university (Kuh, 2008). The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies (AAC&U, 2008). The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) provides multiple opportunities for students to participate in high impact practices; one of those is the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Summer Bridge Program (SBP). For this project, we explore data to determine the effectiveness of this high impact practice as it aims to support student transition to the university.

Methods

We conduct our research based on the Propensity Score Matching method that examines and compares our group of interest SBP students (treated group) and EOP students who did not participate in the SBP (non-treated group). These two groups share similar demographic characteristics and high school academic performance. In addition, we also look at the overall CSULB student data to measure and compare the performance of our data samples.

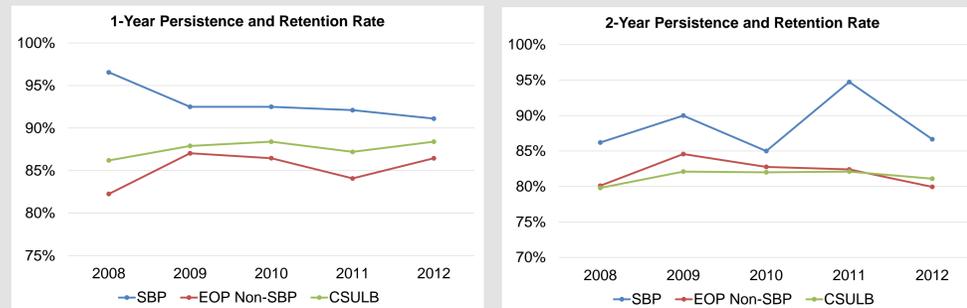
. Collect and analyze SBP student information from 2008 to 2012. The cohort counts for each year are 2008: 29; 2009: 40; 2010: 40; 2011: 38; 2012: 45.

. Collect and analyze EOP - Non SBP student information from 2008 to 2012. The cohort counts for each year are 2008: 372; 2009: 324; 2010: 406; 2011: 358; 2012: 369.

. Collect and analyze CSULB FTF persistence, retention, and graduation data from Student Success Dashboard data set (SSD 2.0)

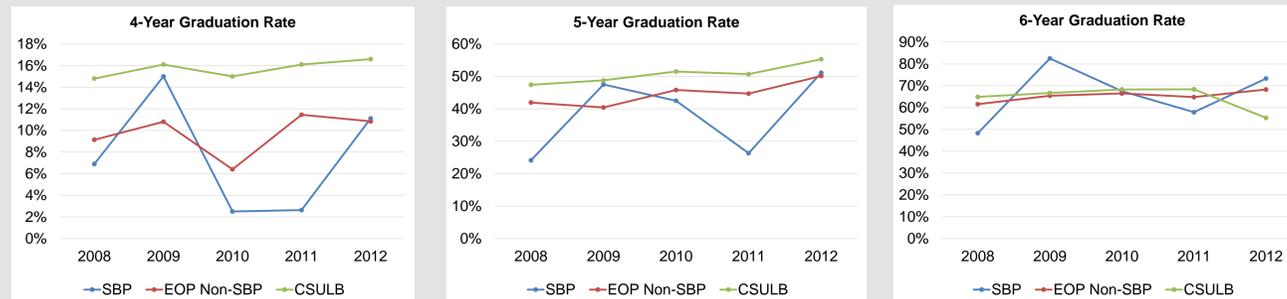
Results

Persistence and Retention Rate Results



SBP 1-year and 2-year rates are better than the other 2 populations.

Graduation Rate Results



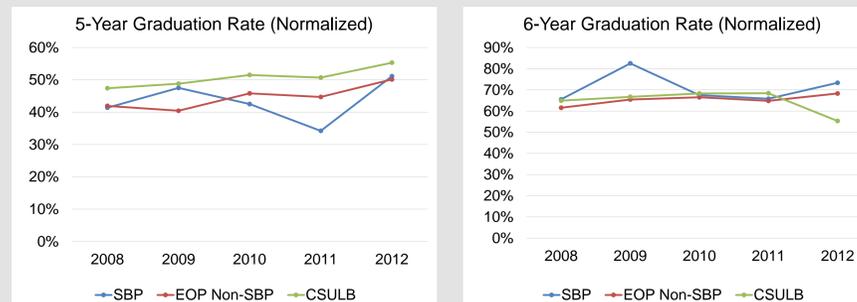
4-year Graduation Rate: Both SBP and EOP Non-SBP is below the overall university's level. Various academic, personal, and institutional factors (first generation university student, low-income, and educational disadvantage) could have contributed to timely degree completion.

5-year Graduation Rate: In general, the 5-year graduation rate for SPB is lower than EOP Non-SPB or CSULB. We found 2008 and 2011 cohort had the lowest graduation rate compared with the other years.

6-year Graduation Rate: We found SBP students performed the same or better than EOP Non-SBP and CSULB students. Same pattern of sharp dip for 2008 and 2011 cohort.

Normalizing Data: For 2008 and 2011, since the count of the cohort for SBP is small, we wanted to further research to find reasons/external factors for students not graduating in 5-years or 6-years. One of the major external factors contribute to the graduation is:
2008: Good academic standing, left CSULB = 4
2011: Good academic standing, left CSULB = 3

To normalize our data, we remove these students from the original data set and the graduation rates for SBP now aligned with the other two populations.



Conclusion / Discussion

Overall, our research findings demonstrate the connection between the services provided by the program and students' success in regards to persistence, and retention rates.

The results validate the purpose and mission of SBP as it pertains to helping students' successful transition to university life prior to the start of the fall semester. The enrichment activities, academic support, financial aid information, and access to resources are effective aspects of the program to assist in the transition and retention of these students. Academic support for SBP students included Math and English writing workshops facilitated by CSULB Math and English departments. In addition, the SBP also provided student engagement and well-being workshops with interactive activities emphasizing campus support resources, financial literacy, personal development, leadership development, and promotion of diversity and inclusion within EOP and CSULB community.

Although our persistence and retention rates demonstrate effectiveness, we did not find the same gains for graduation rates. These results provide staff insight to identify the needs of targeted support services in the students' third and fourth year, and then to explore impact on the graduation rates.

Implications for Action / Next Steps

Expand the SBP to all EOP as well as URM student population

. Provide an opportunity for all student to have a successful first year transition.

Continue to assess current or new services/programs

. Provide specific and timely services beyond the first and second year.

. Connect support services in year 3 and 4 centered around the academic support, student engagement and well-being and financial support.

. Research ways to improve timely degree completion.

Meet with similar programs to share best practices, data and possible collaboration.