



Summary of Responses from ARC's Institution-Set Standards Reporting Form (Fall 2023 Implementation)

Summary of Actions taken to address Department Set Standards: Course Success Rates (22-23 rates, 23-24 AUP Cycle)¹

Departments that fell below their department-set standards for course success rates for 2022-2023 indicated a robust list of actions for improvement, including seeking professional development in online teaching and accessibility, removing financial barriers to student success (through the adoption of OER and ZTC materials), better connecting students to campus resources through avenues such as HomeBases or CAST, and promoting more equitable outcomes through collaboration and dialogue, data analysis and reflection, and enrollment management. Actions included the following:

- Seeking additional professional development in online teaching and accessibility of course materials
- Expanding the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) and increasing the number of zero textbook cost (ZTC) courses offered
- Better connecting students to campus resources early in the semester, such as HomeBase
- Collaborating both within the department and across the ARC community to incorporate strategies to become more equitable practitioners
- Encouraging faculty to use their own individualized data when reflecting on their own courses
- Reaching out to students to ascertain barriers to their success and make referrals to on-campus resources as appropriate (including Crisis Assessment Support Team (CAST) referrals)
- Monitoring the relationship between modality, enrollment size, and success rate

External factors beyond the college's or department's control that may have contributed to the outcome (Course Success Rates) falling below the institution (or department) set standard. (Optional)

Departments that fell below their department-set standards for course success rates for 2022-2023 also indicated the external factors beyond their control that may have contributed to these outcomes, including changes in modality and class sizes, an increase in life-stressors for students since the COVID-19 pandemic, and retirements and faculty turnover. Factors included the following:

- Switch to asynchronous online modality from face to face led to a corresponding growth in class size (from about 20 historically, to almost 50), many of which did not actively participate and led to an increase in withdrawals.
- Retirements and faculty turnover
- Large class sizes and large online class sizes set by the college reducing the amount of student-interactions
- Increased life stressors for students since the pandemic (e.g., more students working full-time, taking online courses but not being able to fully participate, lacking stable access to the internet, increased mental health issues reported, including increased reports of alcohol abuse, lack of affordable child care, housing and food insecurity)

¹ All summaries are representative lists and may not necessarily be exhaustive of all actions.

- Lower course success rates associated with introductory courses that students are taking to meet a graduation requirement
- Increase in students seeking extensions of assignment deadlines due to changes in circumstances (housing, jobs, loss., etc.,)

Summary of Actions taken to address Department Set Standards: Job Placement Rates (21-22 Results, Reported in 2023 ACCJC Annual Report)

Departments that fell below their department-set standards for job placement rates for 2021-2022 indicated several actions for improvement with a clear emphasis on engaging with industry partners to promote connections between employers and students, creating additional opportunities for those interactions to occur, through career fairs, networking events, and internships, and creating more opportunities for students to gain practical and clinical experiences and technological readiness so that they are better positioned for the job market. Actions also focused on increasing collaboration with partners on campus, such as with HomeBases, Workforce Development, Work Experience, and other support services and increasing efforts to promote more equitable outcomes. Actions included the following:

- Collaborating with our HomeBase, Career Center, and Work Experience to connect students to industry recruitment efforts, career fairs, networking events, and internship opportunities
- Actively engaging industry partners/Advisory Committee to connect students with employers, promote hiring out of the program, and promote transfer to the CSU
- Encouraging faculty professional development in diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Encouraging faculty referrals to college resources to support student success
- Encouraging faculty to complete the Canvas Creations course to facilitate online instruction of program courses that regulatory agencies will certify
- Coordinating with the ARC workforce development team to build a more robust internship program for existing students
- Emphasizing workforce preparation and job search opportunities through a new speaker series
- Reviewing opportunities for a new clinic that students can participate in to obtain real-world, practical experience
- Developing a new elective course focused on technology literacy in the field of study. This will enable students to highlight their knowledge and competency with a wide variety of technology and software tools used in the field, thereby improving their workforce readiness
- Adding additional mentoring and experiential learning opportunities as part of mock and fieldwork courses
- Providing several career readiness events to better prepare students for post-graduation and employment
- Continuing to work with regional employers to ensure awareness of graduation standards, recruitment opportunities, and basic skills training
- Establishing a student Club for our field at American River College and rethinking content delivery/strategies for our disproportionately impacted students. The student club will include career events hosted by state agencies that will inform students about related positions available at the state.
- Creating a succession plan for our department to ensure that equity efforts have continuity in staffing
- Implementing a career interest survey and discussions with students taking upper division classes

External factors beyond the college's or department's control that may have contributed to the outcome (Job Placement Rates) falling below the institution (or department) set standard. (Optional)

Departments that fell below their department-set standards for job placement rates for 2021-2022 also indicated the external factors beyond their control that may have contributed to these outcomes, including the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, wages, and the job market, and challenges posed by the growth of artificial intelligence (AI). Factors included the following:

- The COVID-19 Pandemic and the unprecedented shutdown of the economy
- Inflation and a constricted job market
- COVID and the administration's mitigation policies impacting student enrollment and success
- Cancelation of classes due to loss of qualified faculty
- Cancelation of classes due to "impossible to convert" nature of classes or not approved or certified by the regulatory agencies for online instruction
- Changes in California law removed the need for a clinic that the department use to run. These changes reduced opportunities for students to gain valuable clinical experience
- The college has allowed all courses in our department to remain online and asynchronous which has resulted in higher enrollment but lower completion rates and lower proficiency in their interactive practical skills
- National shortage of students interested or enrolling in public safety courses
- Disconnect between the prevailing reputation of our discipline (working long hours, tedious desk work, lack of staff diversity) and what today's students are seeking in a career (flexibility, work-life balance, diversity and creative freedom)
- Stagnant wages in our discipline, relative to related fields in business that have experienced more wage growth
- Challenges faced by Artificial Intelligence, where technology solutions are replacing services that are a part of our discipline's core processes.