CSU The California State University

PROPOSAL TO MODIFY FIRST-YEAR ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

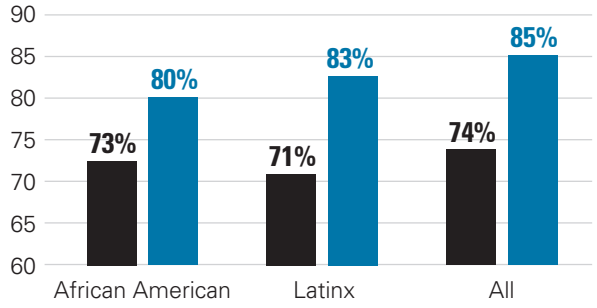
The existing 'a-g' requirements for admission to the California State University have remained unchanged for more than 20 years. Yet, the preparation needed to be successful in college, the workforce and virtually every aspect of life has changed. This is particularly true for high-demand, high-paying STEM careers, where racial and gender disparities persist.

To ensure that California's students have not just access to higher education, but also the opportunity to earn a high-value degree that prepares them for the future, the CSU is proposing expanding the 'a-g' requirements that determine minimum eligibility for CSU admission to require the completion of one additional quantitative reasoning course. The proposed implementation term is fall 2026 to ensure ample time for planning, communication and capacity building, particularly at high schools that currently have fewer course options.

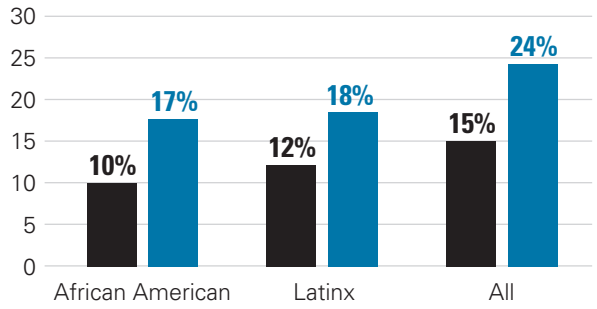
QUANTITATIVE REASONING PREPARATION SUPPORTS STUDENT SUCCESS

National research and CSU data are clear: students – from all backgrounds and pursuing all majors – are more likely to remain enrolled in college and earn a degree in four years if they have taken an additional course of quantitative reasoning in high school.

First-Year Retention CSU Fall 2017 First-Time Students



Four-Year Graduation Rate CSU Fall 2014 First-Time Students



Fulfilled Only Existing a-g Requirements

Additional Year of Quantitative Reasoning (area 'c' or 'd')

MULTIPLE PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENT

This proposal provides high school students with flexibility to take courses that reflect their interests or desired field of study, while also meeting CSU admission requirements. The quantitative reasoning requirement could be fulfilled through a:

- Science course
- Elective course with a quantitative reasoning foundation
- Traditional math course (beyond Algebra II)
- Select Career and Technical Education courses
- Dual enrollment in partnership with a community college
- Online course (where offered)

Examples of Qualifying Elective Courses

- Coding
- Economics
- Forensics
- Personal Finance
- Sports Medicine
- Computer Science
- Engineering
- Green Technology
- Robotics
- Veterinary Science

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If the quantitative reasoning admission requirement were in effect today, the vast majority of California students could meet the requirement through their existing course-taking behavior and the courses available at their high school.

- 91% of all fall 2018 incoming first-year CSU students would have fulfilled the proposed requirement by taking an additional mathematics or science course.
- Of the 1,435 high schools in California, only 16 offer fewer than three qualifying courses. These are predominately small charter schools.
- Examining the data, the CSU has identified 21 school districts where students' course-taking behavior and course availability need to be closely examined. These districts will receive the initial wave of implementation support.

AN EXEMPTION WILL BE OFFERED TO STUDENTS WHO ARE UNABLE TO ACCESS A QUALIFYING COURSE

Come 2026, any student who is otherwise eligible for the CSU but who cannot fulfill the new requirement due to a lack of resources and/or course availability at their high school will be provided an exemption. The CSU intends to partner with the University of California and the California Department of Education to automate the exemption for students from schools with limited qualifying course offerings, reducing the burden on students to "seek out" the exemption.

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERSHIP AND INVESTMENT

Over the next six years, the CSU will continue to support K-12 school districts with building teaching capacity and will support efforts to communicate with students and families regarding this proposed change prior to the 2026 implementation timeline.

Support the adoption of "bridge" courses, which currently exist in more than 160 California high schools through the California Mathematics Readiness Challenge

Offer professional development and in-service opportunities for K-12 teachers and administrators

Leverage the existing success of CSU's colleges and schools of education to grow the teacher workforce

Invest an additional $10 million in the CSU's Mathematics and Science Teacher Initiative to recruit and prepare teachers in STEM fields

Launch a communication campaign to ensure educators, families and prospective students are prepared for the admission change

Communicate directly to high school counselors regarding the quantitative reasoning requirement