



Office of the President



October 2, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you to everyone who joined Thursday's virtual Convocation! With nearly 300 employees in attendance, we had a fun time celebrating our students' successes. It was great to see our campus well represented at the event—faculty, classified and confidential, part-time employees, managers, and even a few students were able to join us! I hope that you found the conversation about student data informative and inspiring.

The majority of our incoming students state they want to attain a baccalaureate degree; that is their goal, that is their dream. Together we are making a difference, and the numbers clearly show we are making a positive impact on our students' lives and in the community. We are getting them closer to that goal. The numbers also show that we have a lot of work ahead of us, and I am confident that we have the skill, the drive, the commitment, and the determination to close all achievement gaps and increase the velocity of completion for ALL students.

I will share a few highlights from Thursday's event below, but I urge each of you to:

1. View the full event and slides on our [Convocation](#) web page, and
2. visit www.cerritos.edu/dashboard to dig into our student data (you can log in using your Cerritos username and password).

Yesterday, we presented a student profile based on the averages of the spring 2021 completion data. Many of our students:

- Take over 95 units for degree completion (9 more units than the statewide average)
- Attempt an average of 9 units in fall/ spring semesters
- Wait over 1.5 years to take their first English class
- Wait nearly 3 years to take their first math class
- Complete in 5.69 Years.

Year-to-year student data shows that we are doing excellent work to improve these numbers, and there is a lot of opportunity to continue to improve. By focusing on early momentum for our students, ensuring that the college is student-ready, providing embedded support, and offering data-informed, student-centered course scheduling, we will continue to see improvements for our students across the board.

Below are few more student data points from the full presentation that underscore our students' successes as well as our collective efforts:

- The number of degrees and certificate awards has increased 85.9% since 2015-16.
- Compared to student data from six years ago, 385.7% more students have completed a transfer-level math course in their first year. 106.8% more students completed a transfer-level English class in their first year.
- Despite the challenges of COVID-19, students succeed at higher rates when part of a high-touch program. Our students' complete transfer-level math and English in their first year and persist from semester to semester at higher rates than students who are not in a high-touch program (Cerritos Complete, Puente, EOPS, Umoja, to name a few).
- Over one-third of our incoming freshmen are Cerritos Complete students in 2020-21. Cerritos Complete students are demonstrating excellent momentum in their first year, which is strongly associated with higher rates of completion.

Now more than ever, we need to keep our foot on the gas. Our communities are facing challenges like never before, and we know that Cerritos College is the only launchpad for upward social mobility for so many in our communities. Let's keep the momentum going. Let's keep closing the achievement gaps for ALL of our students. Let's make the dream of a baccalaureate degree a reality for them. Our students deserve our best effort yet!

I encourage you to reach out to me as we keep the campus momentum going. Please let me know if you have questions.

Thank you,
Jose L. Fierro, D.V.M., Ph.D.
President/Superintendent