

Barriers to Student Success

Leading Indicators of Attainment Gaps Across the Student Lifecycle

A Guide to Gap Identification

The student success and attainment gaps that institutions seek to address often have their genesis in demographic disparities. In our research, EAB has collected leading indicators that later manifest in gaps in retention, graduation, and career outcomes. These leading indicators often reflect the influence of institutional policies on students' sense of belonging. As you look to identify barriers to equity on your own campus, consider whether any of these play a role for your students.

Primary/Secondary Academic Preparation

- 1. Teacher expectations
- 2. Placement and success in developmental education
- 3. Disciplinary rates and experiences
- 4. Writing ability
- 5. Engagement with mentors and counselors
- 6. Access to tutoring and other exam preparation support
- 7. Geographical access to further/higher education institutions
- 8. Impact of diversity of primary/secondary teachers

Climate

- 16. Sense of belonging on campus
- 17. Perception of inclusivity in one's course of study
- 18. Treatment by local businesses/community
- 19. Engagement in extracurricular activities
- 20. Impact of negative diversity event
- 21. Diversity of student union leadership in relation to student body demographics
- 22. Responsiveness of academic staff to students
- 23. Academic and professional staff diversity
- 24. Interactions with campus and local law enforcement
- 25. Accessibility of inclusive spaces
- 26. Awareness and use of academic support resources
- 27. Awareness and use of mental health resources

Family Expectations and Self Efficacy

- 9. Family expectations of a student's ability to go to university
- 10. Family expectations of a student's ability to succeed at university
- 11. Student's expectation of their own ability to succeed at university
- 12. Parental pressure on course choice
- 13. Undermatching in university application process
- 14. Impact of low exam/assessment marks on self-esteem
- 15. Disparity between school and university academic performance

Financial

- 28. Perception of cost of education
- 29. Ability and desire to take on debt
- 30. Ability to afford social experiences
- 31. Internet access at home
- 32. Ability to afford course materials
- 33. Ability to afford computer
- 34. Need to work while enrolled in college
- 35. Need to support dependents

Pedagogy and Academic Experience

- 43. Perception of representation within curriculum
- 44. Impact of assessment and grading practices
- 45. Perception of curriculum as relevant to goals and values
- 46. Effect of module sequencing
- 47. Perceptions of time needed to study

- 48. Amount of time actually devoted to studying
- 49. Student expectations of coursework rigor
- 50. Frequency of academic staff interactions
- 51. Prevalence of course switching

- 52. Understanding of academic honour codes
- 53. Referrals to honour board
- 54. Impact of academic jargon
- 55. Knowledge and use of medical withdrawal policies
- 56. Applications for on-campus housing during breaks
- 57. Impact and knowledge of transfer credit articulation policies

Common Student Success Metrics

- Continuation rates
- Completion rates
- Degree attainment
- Progression to employment
- Satisfaction surveys

Cut data by race, gender, ethnicity, income, first-generation status, and other demographics aligned with your population

Post-Graduation Outcomes

- 58. Participation rates in undergraduate research
- 59. Participation rates in study abroad opportunities
- 60. Quality of experience during study abroad
- 61. Ability to use social network for career advancement
- 62. Post-graduation employment rates
- 63. Alumni engagement rates
- 64. Post-graduate economic mobility
- 65. Career fulfilment and engagement

- 66. Impact of student debt
- 67. Career boost from non-degree credential
- 68. Participation rates in internships
- 69. Participation rates in learning communities
- 70. Participation rates in service-learning opportunities
- 71. Ability to leverage university relationships for a letter of recommendation
- 72. Resilience during the job and internship search

- 37. Food insecurity 38. Housing insecurity
 - 39. Access to transportation

- tuition reimbursement programs
- 42. Ability to afford unpaid internships

Policies and Procedures

36. Impact of financial emergencies

40. Ability to afford graduation regalia

41. Access to employer-sponsored