

John Burton Advocates for Youth Presents

# THE OVERLOOKED OBSTACLE

## PART II:

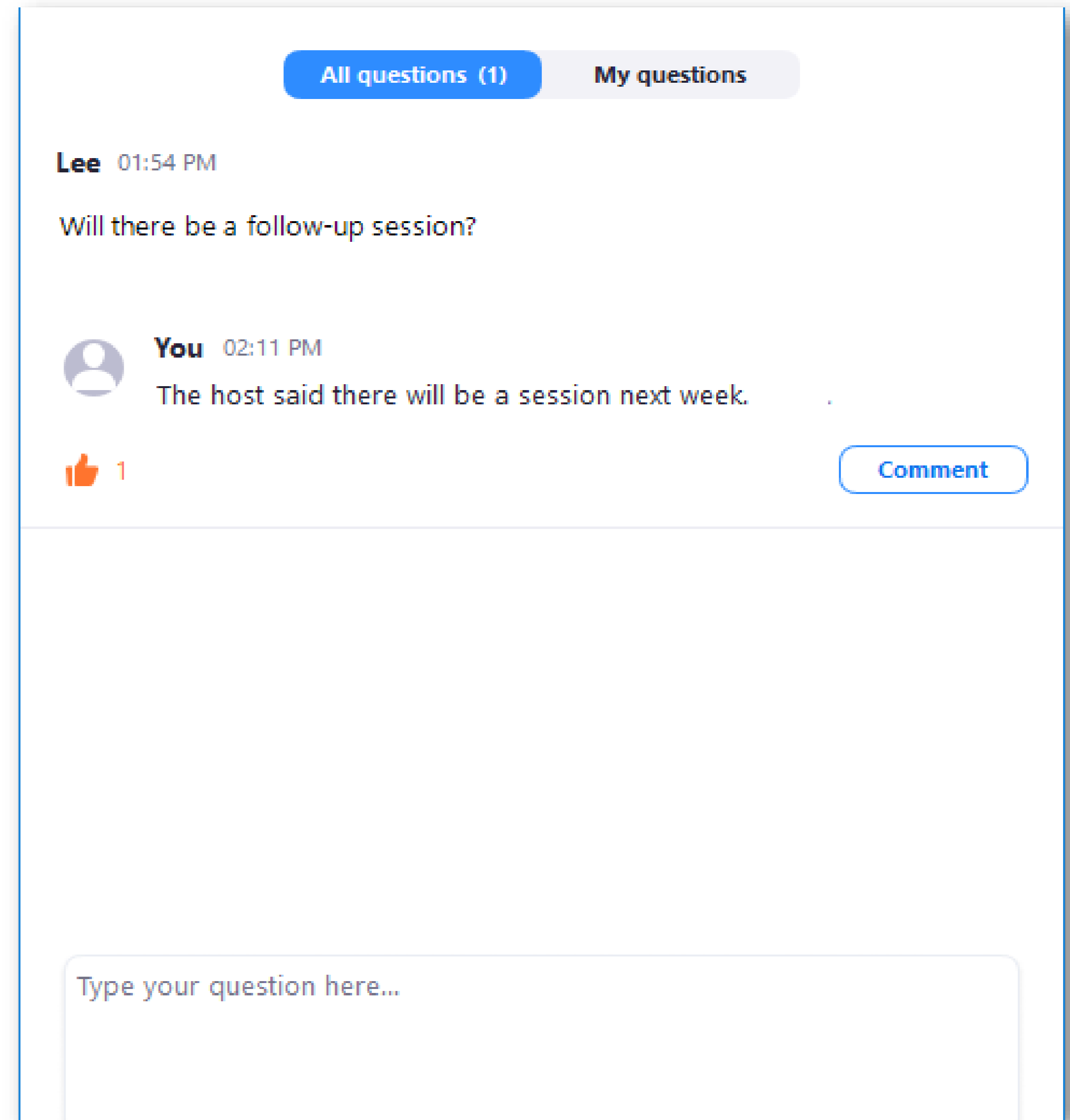
**Strengthening Satisfactory  
Academic Progress Policies to  
Better Support Student Success  
and Equity**



January 19, 2023

# Using Zoom Webinar

- To submit questions, click on the Q&A icon on the control panel. The Q&A window will appear, allowing you to ask questions to the host and panelists.
- You can also access the chat feature, raise your hand, and adjust your audio settings from the control panel.
- The webinar materials and recording will be posted at [www.jbay.org](http://www.jbay.org) following the live presentation.



The screenshot shows a Zoom Q&A interface. At the top, there are two tabs: "All questions (1)" and "My questions". Below the tabs, a question is displayed: "Lee 01:54 PM Will there be a follow-up session?". Below the question, there is a response: "You 02:11 PM The host said there will be a session next week.". To the left of the response, there is a thumbs-up icon with the number "1". To the right of the response, there is a "Comment" button. At the bottom of the window, there is a text input field with the placeholder text "Type your question here...".

# AGENDA

- 1** Overview of SAP Standards
- 2** Impact of SAP on Students
- 3** Community of Practice Findings
- 4** Best Practices
- 5** Policy Recommendations
- 6** Q&A

# TODAY'S PRESENTERS



**Sarah Pauter**

Senior Project Manager

John Burton  
Advocates for Youth



**Elizabeth Clews**

Youth Advocate

John Burton  
Advocates for Youth



**Andrea Dargo**

Student Advocacy  
Fellow

uAspire



**Gina Browne**

Interim Assistant Vice  
Chancellor, Equitable  
Student Learning,  
Experience, and  
Impact Office

California Community  
Colleges Chancellor's  
Office



**Christina Tangalakis**

Associate Dean,  
Financial Aid Office  
Glendale Community  
College

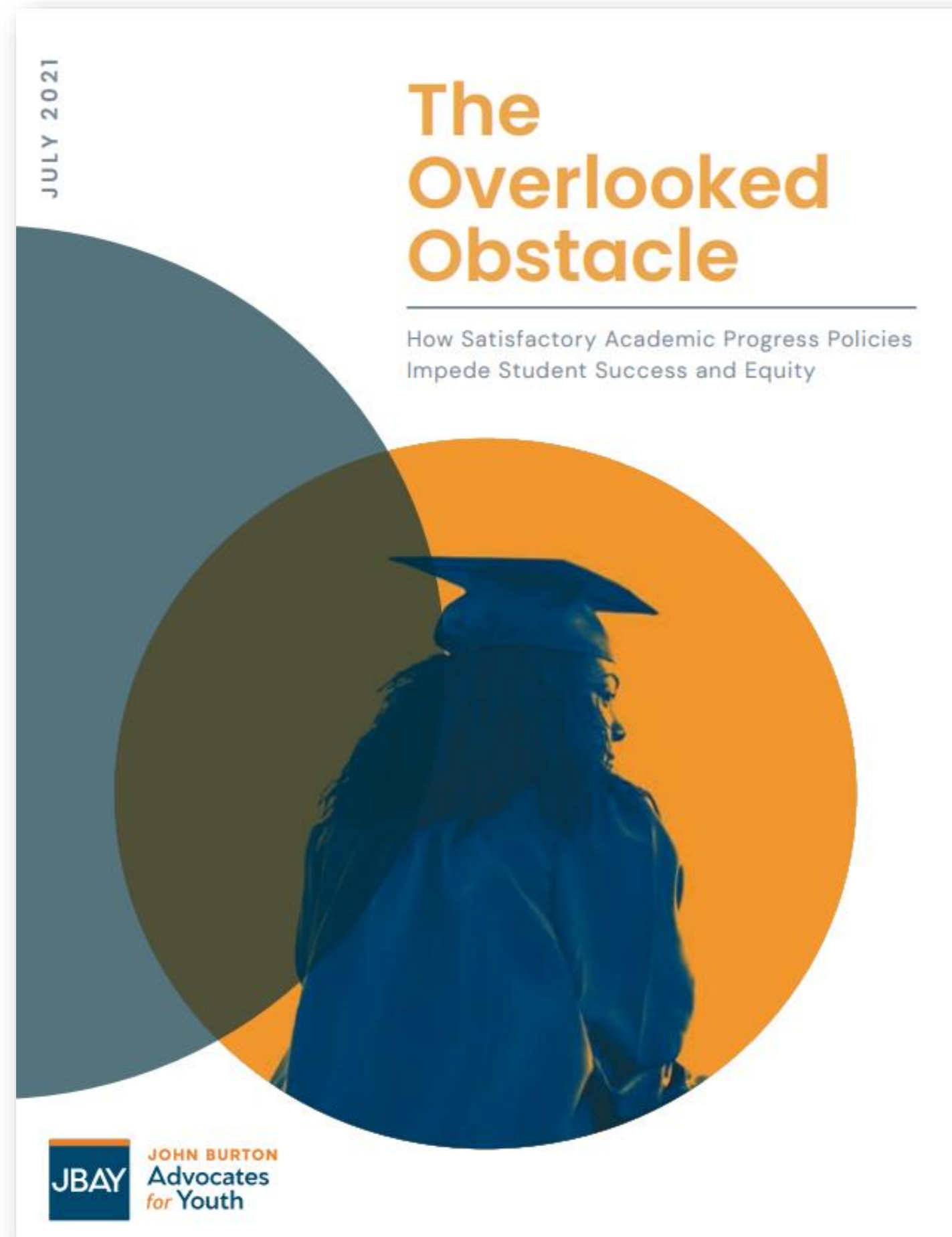


**Zach Taylor**

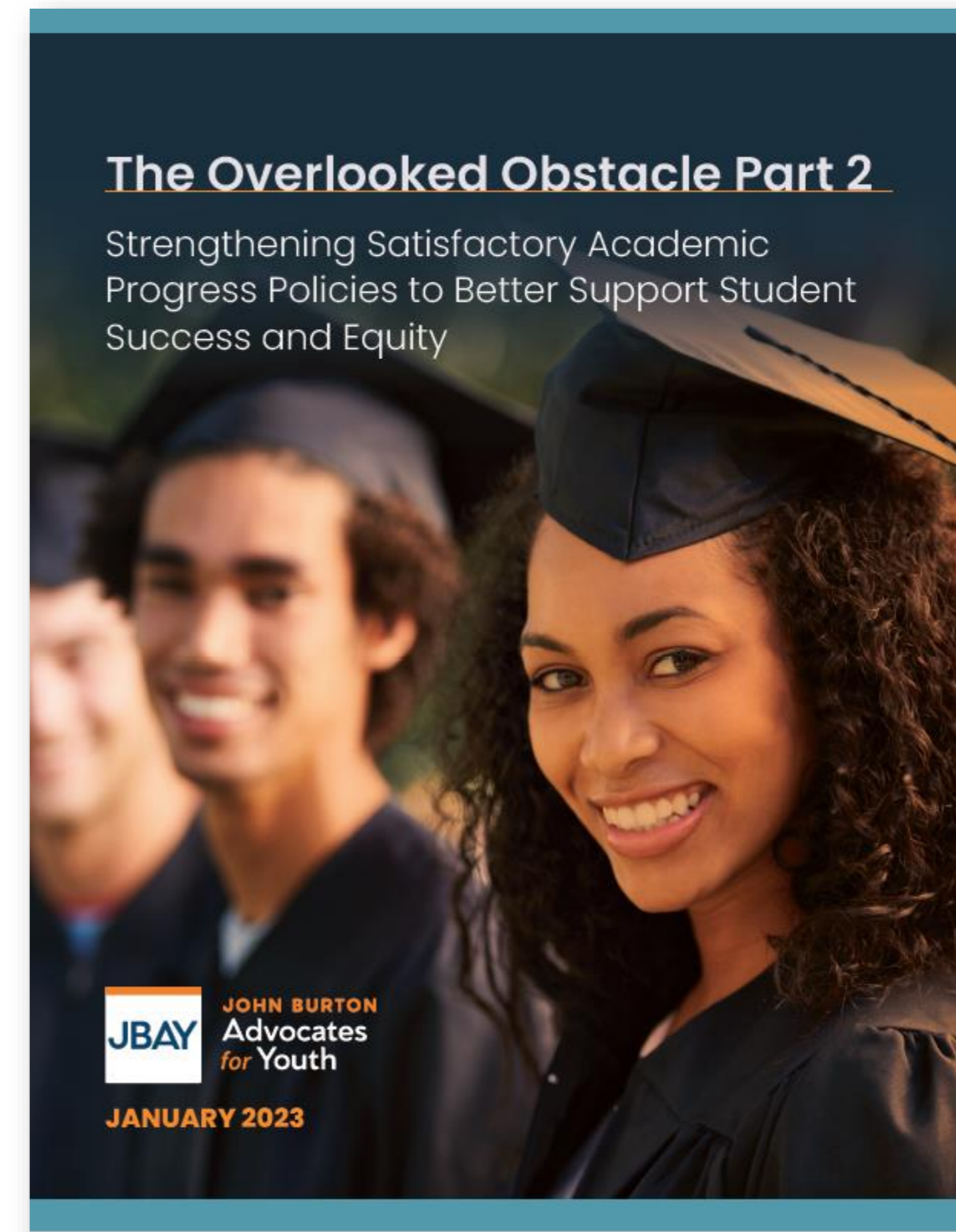
Assistant Professor  
University of Southern  
Mississippi

# INTRODUCTION

# The Overlooked Obstacle Series



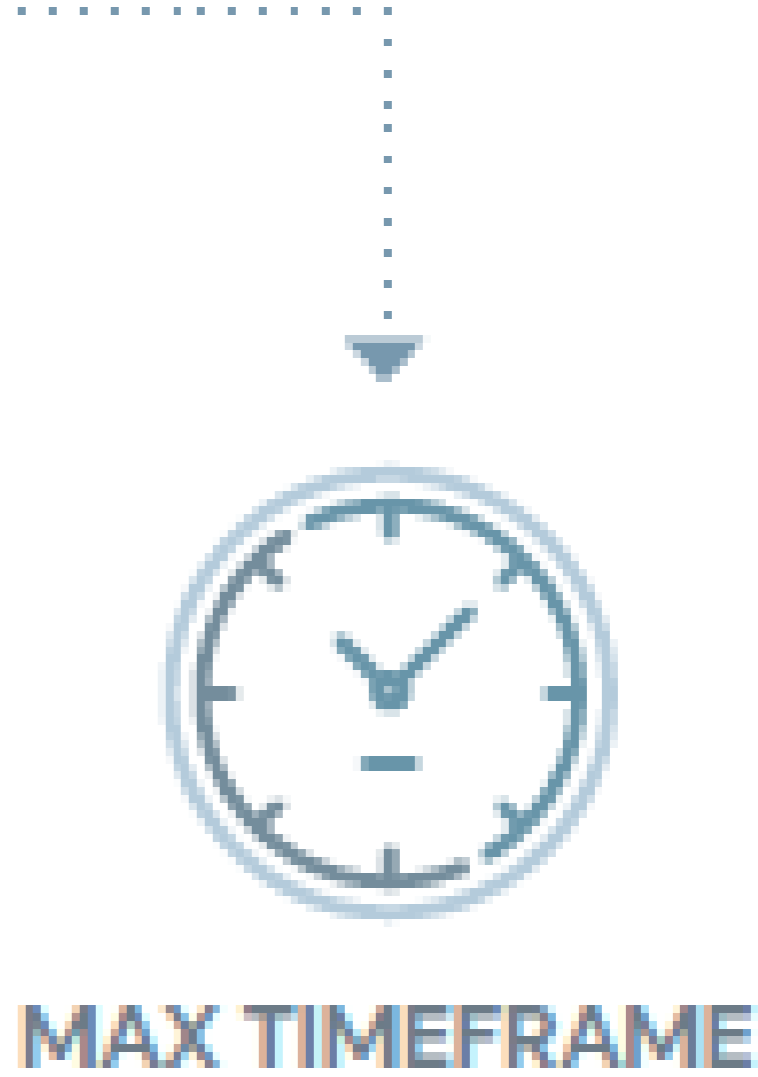
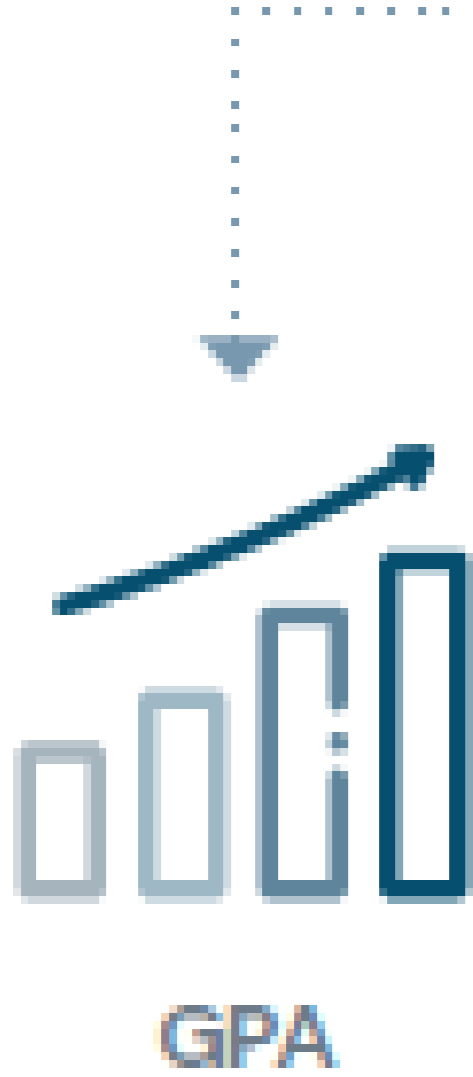
[jbay.org/resources/overlooked-obstacle/](http://jbay.org/resources/overlooked-obstacle/)



[jbay.org/resources/over-looked-obstacle-part-2/](http://jbay.org/resources/over-looked-obstacle-part-2/)

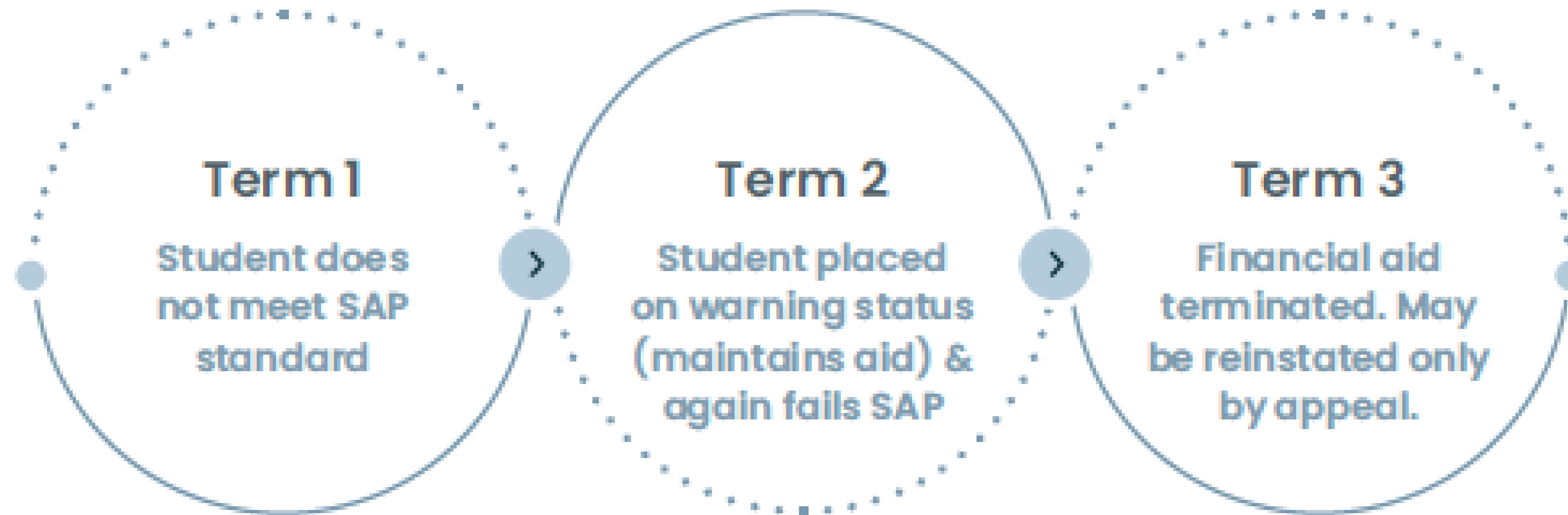
# What is Satisfactory Academic Progress?

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)



# How Does SAP Impact Financial Aid?

## INSTITUTIONS THAT EVALUATE SAP EACH PAYMENT PERIOD



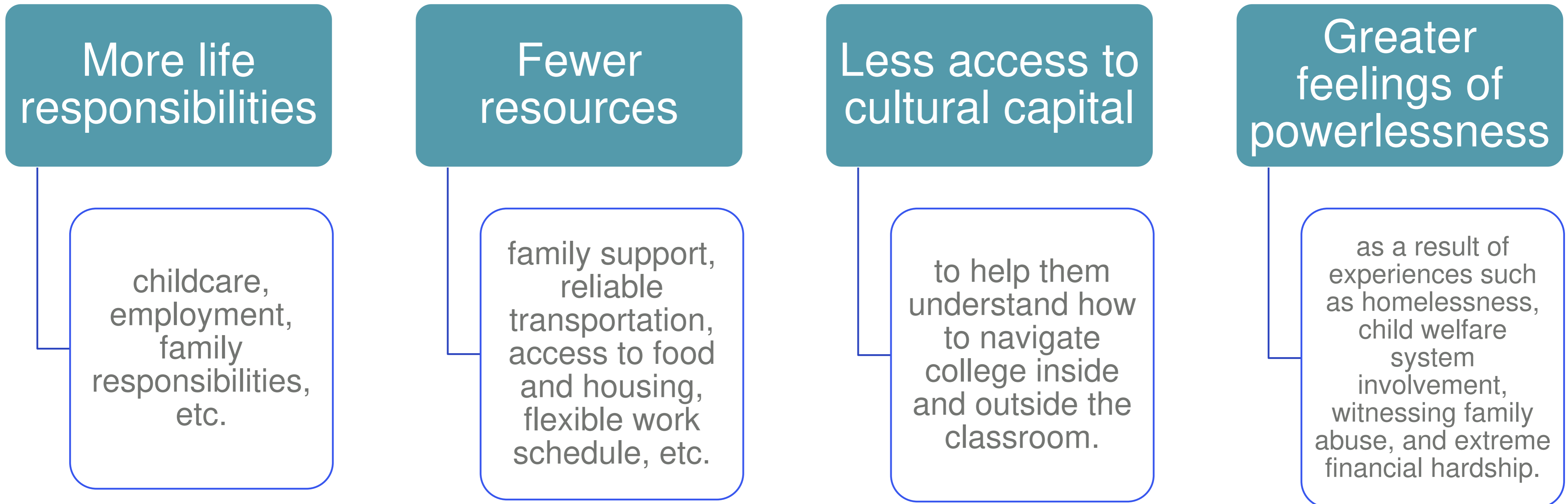
*Appeal: “death of a relative, an injury or illness of the student, or special circumstances as determined by the institution”*



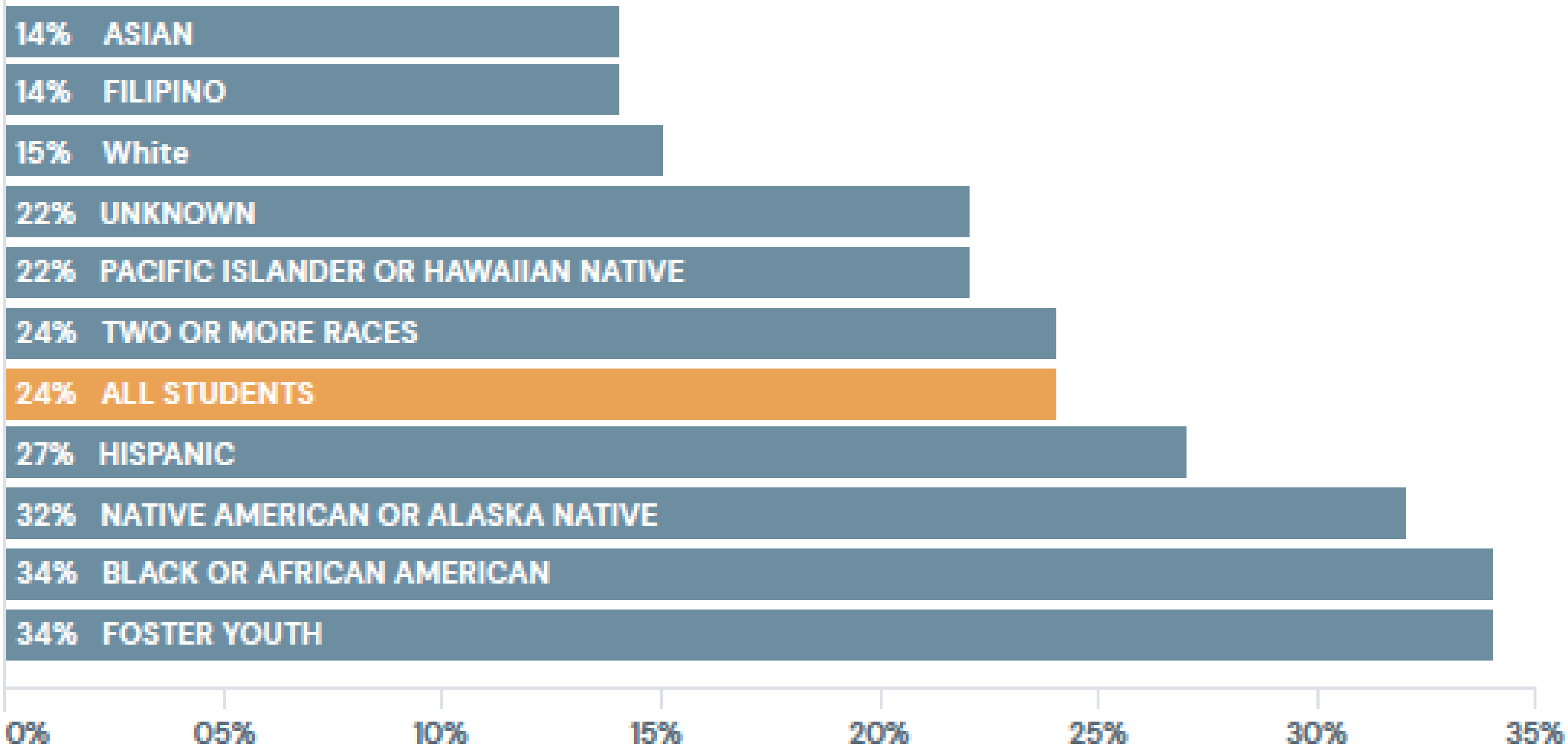
# IMPACT OF SAP

# Research Review – Qualitative

Students not making SAP had:



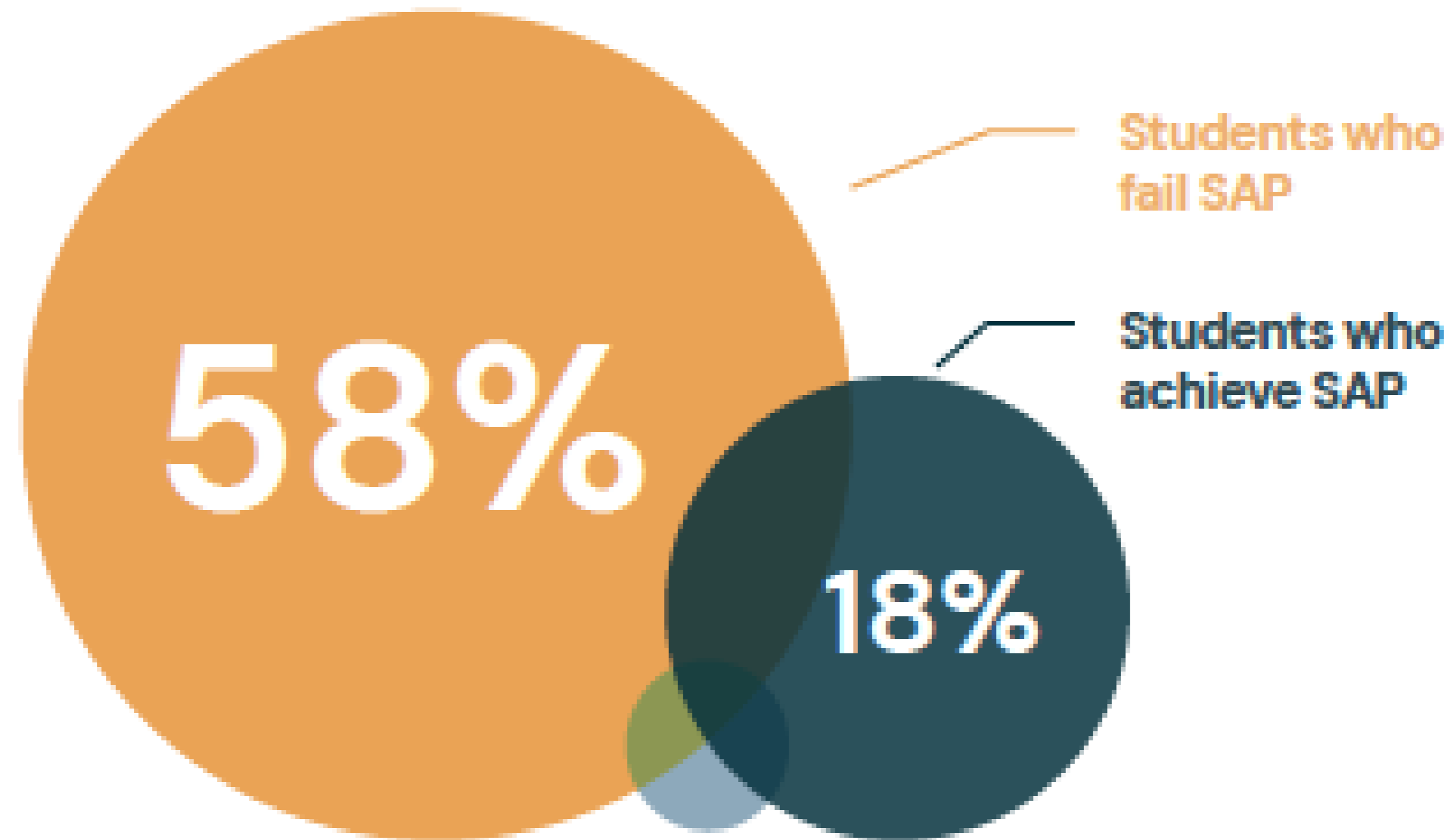
# Percent of students who remained enrolled for first two consecutive terms and failed to make SAP in both terms



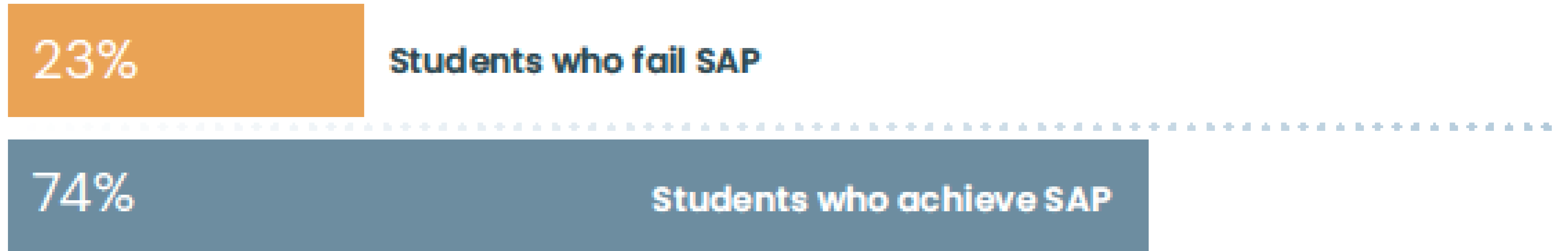
Among foster youth, Black, and Native American Pell Grant recipients, over one-third have been disqualified from financial aid after their first year.



# Percent of students who fail to enroll for a third term



# Percent of students who maintain financial aid in their third term



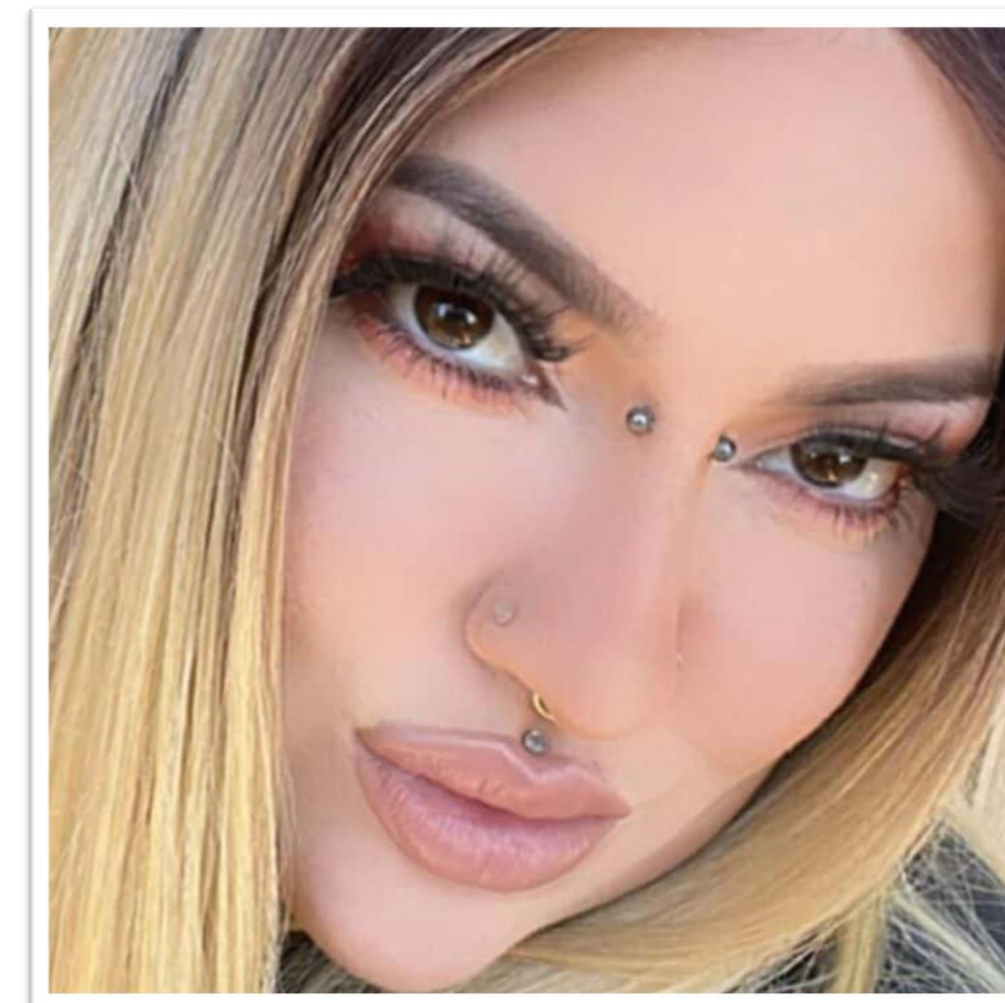
# Combined Impact Of SAP on Enrollment and Pell Grant Receipt

The percentage of students who did not make SAP during their first two consecutive terms and who had either disenrolled or lost their Pell Grant by their second year is **87 percent.**

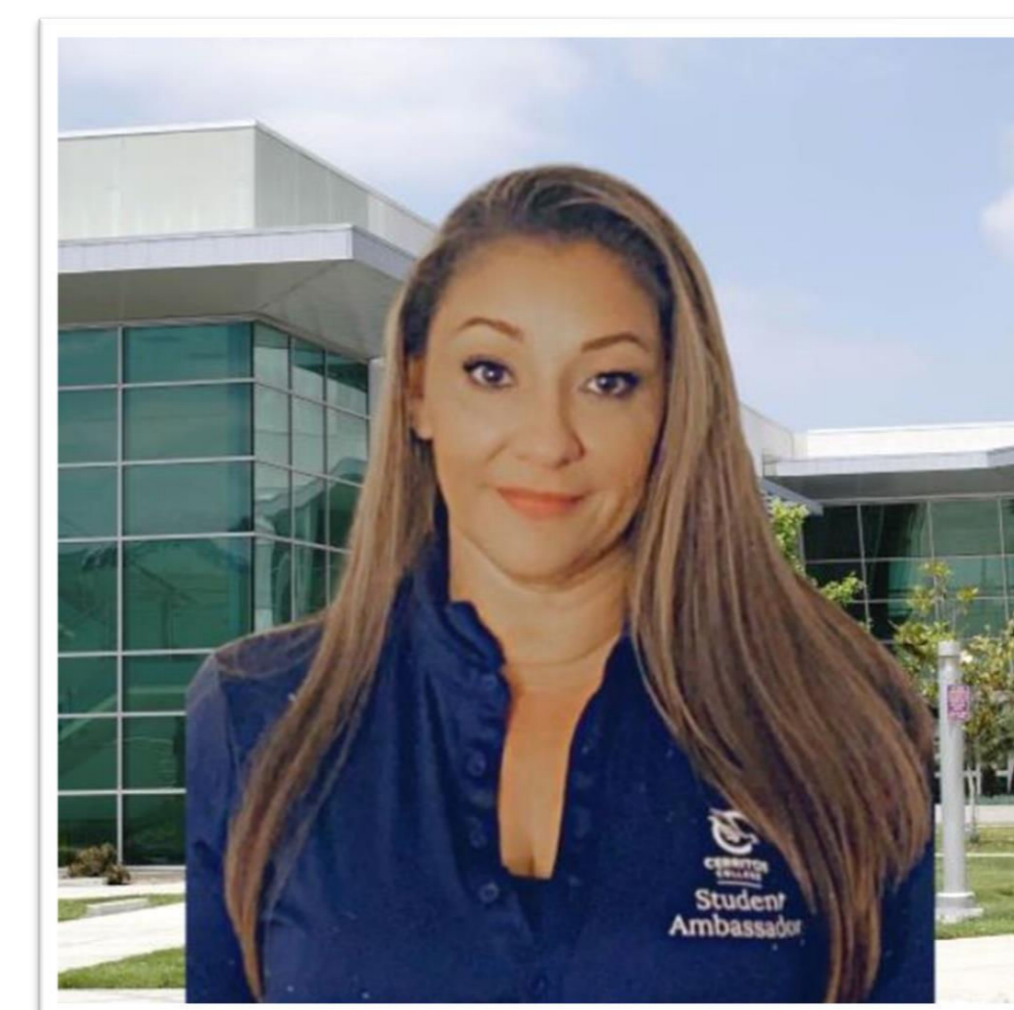
# STUDENT STORIES

# Student Panel

1. What was it like transitioning to college?
2. What were the circumstances that resulted in you not meeting SAP?
3. What was it like navigating SAP policies and appeals processes when you were first disqualified and when you re-enrolled?
4. What resources or supports would have been helpful?
5. Where are you now in your educational journey?



**Elizabeth Clews**



**Andrea Dargo**



# PERSPECTIVE FROM THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

# GINA BROWNE

Dean, Educational Services and Support  
California Community Colleges Chancellor's  
Office



# SAP COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

# SAP POLICIES ACROSS CALIFORNIA'S INSTITUTIONS

- **A scan of SAP policies and appeals processes of California's public two- and four-year institutions revealed that many imposed requirements that were stricter than federal requirements:**
  - 10 institutions mandated course completion thresholds higher than 67 percent
  - Some campuses assessed SAP based on cumulative measures while others examined cumulative and term-based measures
- **No two campuses had the same appeals process or criteria:**
  - The grounds for filing an appeal varied widely—some special circumstances were explicitly allowed at some institutions while being explicitly disallowed at others
  - Some campuses limited the number of “lifetime” appeals a student could submit

# SAP COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PRIORITIES

*Table 1: SAP Community of Practice Priority Areas of Improvement*

<p><b>Create Student-Friendly and Equity-Based SAP Policies and Appeals Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➔ Align SAP policies with the minimum federal standards.</li><li>➔ Streamline the collection of appeal forms.</li><li>➔ Improve the review process and timeliness of appeal decisions.</li><li>➔ Create a multidisciplinary appeal review panel.</li><li>➔ Eliminate or extend appeal deadlines.</li><li>➔ Expand the types of extenuating circumstances.</li></ul>	<p><b>Simplify and Translate Communication With Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➔ Update and/or simplify language on websites, forms, and overall communications to be more student-friendly and encouraging.</li><li>➔ Offer SAP workshops.</li><li>➔ Implement early alert activities and proactive communication to students, including leveraging technology.</li></ul>	<p><b>Strengthen Connections Between Financial Aid and Academic Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➔ Provide mid-semester guidance and targeted interventions.</li><li>➔ Coordinate with campus partners (e.g., faculty, student support and equity programs, etc.) to develop an early outreach plan.</li><li>➔ Utilize proactive and intrusive coaching strategies to reach out to students on warning status.</li></ul>
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# BEST PRACTICES

# 1. Create Student-Friendly and Equity-Based SAP Policies



- Align institutional SAP policies with the minimum qualitative and quantitative standards
- Evaluate SAP based only on cumulative measures as opposed to cumulative and individual term-based measures
- Create flexibility in the evaluation of certain types of credits
- Implement graduated course completion and GPA standards
  - Butte College: 50 percent (<18 credits)
  - CSU Dominguez Hills: 1.5 (freshman), 1.8 (sophomore), 2.0 (junior and above)

# Campus Spotlight: Glendale Community College



- Received a mini-grant from JBAY to analyze data pertaining to SAP disqualification rates and completed appeals.
- Examined data before and after modifying their SAP policy to align with the federal minimum requirements and create flexibility in evaluating certain credits (e.g., exclusion of repeated courses).



# Campus Spotlight: Glendale Community College

The changes to Glendale Community College’s SAP policy resulted in a **30.11%** overall decrease in the number of students on financial aid disqualification due to SAP.

SAP Data AY17 and AY21	Number AY17	Dismissal AY17	Number AY21	Dismissal AY21	Decrease
All students	2228	9.3%	1475	6.5%	<b>30.11%</b>
Latinx	883	15.3%	585	13.9%	<b>9.15%</b>
Black/African American	98	13.7%	61	10.6%	<b>22.63%</b>
Total Student Enrollment	23,982		22,662		

## 2. Create Student-Friendly and Equity-Based Appeals Processes



- Develop low-barrier SAP appeal processes
- Ensure ease of access to forms and allow electronic, mail and in-person submission
- Expand special circumstances to include common challenges students face
- Do not impose deadlines or limits on the number of appeals
- Do not require burdensome documentation or paperwork

# Campus Spotlight: Glendale Community College

	Students on SAP Dismissal in 2020-2021		Students Appealing in 2020-2021		SAP Dismissal Students Re-enrolling at GCC After SAP Dismissal and Appeal in 2020-2021		SAP Dismissal Students Re-enrolling at GCC Anytime After Dismissal		
	Student Count	Percent of Total	Student Count	Appeal Rate*	Student Count	Percent of Total	Student Count	Re-enroll Rate**	Attrition Rate***
<b>Number of Students</b>	1,475	6.5%	105	<b>7.1%</b>	99	<b>94.3%</b>	1,026	<b>69.6%</b>	30.4%
<b>Latinx/Hispanic</b>	585	13.9%	42	<b>7.2%</b>	41	<b>97.6%</b>	415	<b>70.9%</b>	29.1%
<b>Black/African American</b>	61	10.6%	2	<b>3.3%</b>	2	<b>100.0%</b>	35	<b>57.4%</b>	42.6%

# Campus Spotlight: Glendale Community College



- **Next steps:**
  - Implement a graduated GPA standard
  - Provide intrusive advising
  - Explore methods to increase the number of appeals submitted
  - Campus-wide SAP training for counselors and students
  - Mini-courses on writing effective appeals

# 3. Simplify and Translate Communication with Students



- **Simplify:**
  - Utilize lower grade-level diction and sentence structure
  - Use active voice, second-person pronouns, verb-first language, and dot points when explaining a process
- **Translate:**
  - Work with native speakers of non-English languages to translate simplified SAP communication

# 3. Simplify and Translate Communication with Students (continued)



- **Communicate:**
  - Embed contact information into policy information
  - Segment policy information into smaller sections that pertain to student actions
  - Leverage multi-media

# WE KNOW THAT OUR STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH SAP COMMUNICATION

- Decades of research = students and their support networks (e.g., parents, caregivers, siblings, community members, etc.) struggle to complete financial aid processes, namely completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Students have also expressed difficulty with other financial aid processes, such as applying for scholarships, understanding their award letters, accepting their aid, and successfully paying housing deposits or other fees.
- As a result, many efforts have been made to simplify financial aid communication to ease the information burden on students and their support networks, subsequently increasing access to higher education.

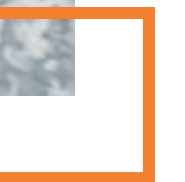
# WE KNOW THAT OUR STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH SAP COMMUNICATION

- Among first-generation, low-income students, researchers found that students were seemingly unaware that SAP status can linger for multiple semesters, finding that students were surprised that they had received SAP notification again despite having improved their grades.
- This response from participants meant that they did not understand that the SAP notification was triggered by a combination of GPA, completion rate, and attempted credits, rather than simply a GPA range. Students attributed the lack of understanding to inadequate institutional communication and overly complex policies that were difficult to access.



# SOME INSTITUTIONS HAVE A GOOD THING GOING

Although research and practice has found SAP to be a difficult concept and policy to understand, several institutions have adopted linguistically-inclusive practices to help diverse students and their support networks understand and navigate SAP.



# University of Wisconsin-Madison

- Includes clear, simple SAP information on their website, parsing the content in easy-to-follow menu schemes.
- Clearly, simply explains how to make SAP, what happens if students do not make SAP, how to appeal, and what the appeal process is.

## What is Satisfactory Academic Progress?

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**    Not Meeting SAP    Appeal Process    Other Options

The following three components are evaluated at the end of each academic year:

1. Undergraduate students must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0.
2. You must successfully complete a cumulative 2/3 (67%) of all credits for which you attempt.
  - **“Attempted”** coursework includes all classes that appear on your official transcript, including those with a DR (dropped) or W (withdrew) grade notation. The last day to drop classes without a DR or W notification varies each semester – check the Registrar’s Office “Key Deadlines” for specifics.
  - **“Completed”** coursework includes all classes with a passing grade (D or above). Credits that are dropped, failed, or incomplete will negatively impact your completion rate.
3. You may not enroll for more than 150% of the number of credits needed to complete your degree. Transfer credits and prior degree credits are included in this evaluation.



# University of South Florida

- Utilizes a student-friendly way of communicating SAP policies using multimedia.
- Instructional video features students who convey SAP information in simple, easy-to-follow steps.

## To check your Satisfactory Academic Progress in OASIS:

1. Login to **OASIS**
2. Choose "Financial Aid"
3. Choose " My Award and Loan Information"
4. View your Satisfactory Academic Progress status under the "General Information" tab.



QUESTIONS? ASK FINN

<https://www.usf.edu/financial-aid/sap/>

# Milwaukee Area Technical College

- Provides a translated version of their entire financial aid website, including SAP information.
- Has embedded a trilingual chatbot into their financial aid website—most other institutions stop at admissions.

S BLDG. ENTRANCE CLOSED; ENTER THROUGH MAIN BLDG  
More information is available here: [matc.edu/gethelp/closures-and-relocations.html](https://www.matc.edu/gethelp/closures-and-relocations.html)

MILWAUKEE AREA *Technical College*

SEARCH EN ESPAÑOL MENU

## NORMAS DE PROGRESO ACADÉMICO Y ELEGIBILIDAD PARA RECIBIR AYUDA ECONÓMICA

Home | ¡Bienvenidos a MATC! | COSTOS, BECAS Y AYUDAS | **NORMAS DE PROGRESO ACADÉMICO Y ELEGIBILIDAD PARA RECIBIR AYUDA ECONÓMICA**

### NORMAS DE PROGRESO ACADÉMICO Y ELEGIBILIDAD PARA RECIBIR AYUDA ECONÓMICA

MATC sigue las [normas federales sobre progreso académico satisfactorio \(Satisfactory Academic Progress, SAP\)](#) que definen los requisitos que los estudiantes deben cumplir para mantener un progreso académico satisfactorio y la elegibilidad para recibir ayuda económica. MATC establece un proceso formal para identificar a los estudiantes que no alcanzan los estándares académicos para recibir ayuda. Esto incluye el proceso de apelación.

MATC calcula el SAP de un estudiante al final de cada semestre y después del semestre de primavera y de otoño. Las calificaciones y la finalización de calificaciones incompletas se calcularán el semestre siguiente. Para alcanzar las siguientes normas:

- **Mantener un promedio general (Grade Point Average, GPA) mínimo acumulado de 2.0 en el programa.**

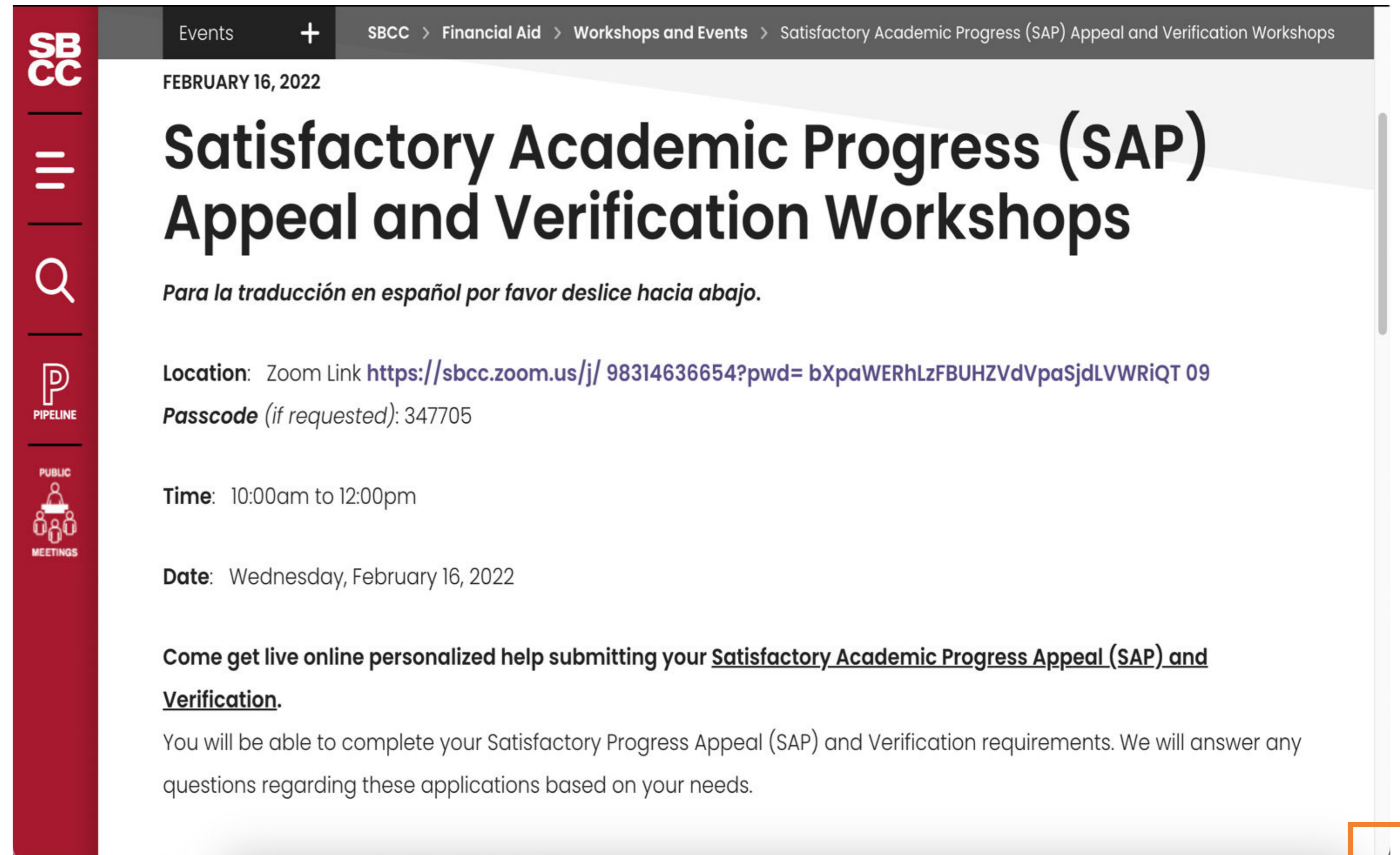
May I help you?

Hi there! I'm a chatbot here to answer your questions in English, Spanish, and Chinese. What would you like to know?

<https://www.matc.edu/es/costs-scholarships-aid/satisfactory-academic-progress1.html>

# Santa Barbara City College

- Hosts bilingual SAP appeal and verification workshops to help students and their support networks understand these processes and learn to be more self-sufficient.



The screenshot shows a web page with a dark grey header containing navigation links: "Events", "+", "SBCC", "> Financial Aid", "> Workshops and Events", "> Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal and Verification Workshops". Below the header, the date "FEBRUARY 16, 2022" is displayed. The main title is "Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal and Verification Workshops" in large, bold black font. Below the title is a Spanish translation instruction: "Para la traducción en español por favor deslice hacia abajo." The "Location" is listed as "Zoom Link" with the URL "https://sbcc.zoom.us/j/98314636654?pwd=bXpaWERhLzFBUHZVdVpaSjdLVWRiQT09". The "Passcode" is "347705" (if requested). The "Time" is "10:00am to 12:00pm". The "Date" is "Wednesday, February 16, 2022". A bolded paragraph encourages students to "Come get live online personalized help submitting your Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal (SAP) and Verification." Below this, a paragraph states: "You will be able to complete your Satisfactory Progress Appeal (SAP) and Verification requirements. We will answer any questions regarding these applications based on your needs." On the left side of the page, there is a vertical red sidebar with icons for "SBCC", a menu icon, a search icon, a "PIPELINE" icon, and a "PUBLIC MEETINGS" icon. An orange square is located in the bottom right corner of the screenshot.

[https://www.sbcc.edu/financialaid/workshopsandevents/workshop\\_sap\\_appeal\\_verification\\_feb16th.php](https://www.sbcc.edu/financialaid/workshopsandevents/workshop_sap_appeal_verification_feb16th.php)

# College of San Mateo

- Utilizes Financial Aid TV (FATV) and links all Spanish language FATV videos to their financial aid website.

The screenshot shows the College of San Mateo Financial Aid TV website. The header includes the college name, language options (Español), and navigation links. The main content area features a video player for the video 'En Español: Fundamentos de Ayuda Financiera'. The video player has a play button and a progress bar. To the right of the video player is a transcript titled '¿Que significa SAP?' which explains the federal regulations regarding SAP. Below the video player is a 'NOW PLAYING' section with a 'NEXT UP' section and a 'NEXT PLAYLIST' section. A 'QUESTIONS? ASK FINANCIAL AID' button is visible in the bottom right corner.

COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO Español Financial Aid Homepage Browse Categories Search videos

BACK TO BROWSE CATEGORIES

En Español: Fundamentos de Ayuda Financiera

ASK A QUESTION SHARE THIS VIDEO

¿Que significa SAP?

Las regulaciones federales requieren que un estudiante haya cumplido y continúe cumpliendo un estándar básico de progreso académico antes de que pueda recibir ayuda financiera federal.

Cada institución académica establece su propia política de SAP, y los estudiantes deben cumplir con los requisitos de la política de SAP de la institución en la cual está inscrito a fin de calificar para la ayuda financiera.

See Less Transcript

NOW PLAYING ¿Que significa SAP?

NEXT UP

NEXT PLAYLIST Federal Work-Study Student Basics

QUESTIONS? ASK FINANCIAL AID

<https://collegeofsanmateo.financialaidtv.com/play/1227-en-espa%C3%B1ol-fundamentos-de-ayuda-financiera/10332-%C2%BFque-significa-sap>

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

# State Policy Recommendations: SAP Standards



- Require campuses to adhere to a common set of SAP standards aligned with the federal minimum requirements
- Evaluate SAP based only on cumulative measures
- Allow students who successfully appeal to remain on “financial aid probation” and continue to receive aid for any term for which they adhere to their academic plan
- Require information on SAP to be provided during new student orientation and embedded in course syllabi and financial aid award notifications
- Notify students after every term in enrollment in which SAP is not met



# State Policy Recommendations: Appeals Policies & Processes



- Notify students subject to the loss of financial aid with information on the appeals process
- Create realistic appeal deadlines and require completed appeals to be reviewed within 30 days of submission
- Offer a second review process for all appeals that are denied
- Expand “special circumstances” that form the basis of an appeal
- Allow students to self-attest to special circumstances that cannot be reasonably documented
- Create opportunities for re-entering students on SAP disqualification status to appeal as soon as possible

# Q&A

Please type your questions in the Q&A window or raise your hand to be unmuted.

The screenshot shows a Q&A chat window with two tabs: "All questions (1)" and "My questions". A question from "Lee" at 01:54 PM asks, "Will there be a follow-up session?". An answer from "You" at 02:11 PM states, "The host said there will be a session next week." Below the answer is a thumbs-up icon with the number "1" and a "Comment" button. At the bottom, there is a text input field with the placeholder text "Type your question here..."

# SAP Institutional Audit

- Consider completing the SAP Institutional Audit to assess your campus' current policies and practices
- Scan the QR to participate!



# THANK YOU

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JBAY.ORG