



Santa Monica College

# Institutional Effectiveness Report

# 2025

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research  
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# Introduction & Background

Institutional Effectiveness (IE) is the systematic and continuous process through which Santa Monica College (SMC) assesses the extent to which it fulfills its mission, goals, and strategic objectives.

At its core, the purpose of institutional effectiveness is to advance educational quality, promote equity, and drive continuous improvement across the College.

SMC’s IE process involves the regular compilation, review, and analysis of key performance metrics that reflect student access, learning, progress, completion, and post-college outcomes. These metrics are benchmarked against both minimum expectations, referred to as “institution-set standards (ISS)” by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), and aspirational target goals aligned with the College’s long-term vision.

The Institutional Effectiveness Report is produced annually and serves as a transparent, high-level summary of the College’s performance on these metrics. The report is organized around thematic metric groups such as access and enrollment, progress and momentum, degree and certificate completion, and employment outcomes.

Each year, the Academic Senate Joint Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IE Committee) reviews the selected metrics, evaluates progress, and recommends updates to the metrics and goals based on emerging trends and the College’s evolving priorities. This iterative process ensures that institutional effectiveness remains a dynamic and responsive tool for organizational learning and accountability.

This year’s report provides an overview of SMC’s performance on key student learning, success, and equity metrics and analyzes the College’s progress toward its 2028 goals. The findings are intended to support campus-wide dialogue, inform planning and resource allocation, and guide institutional strategies for improvement.

## Organization of the Report

To provide a coherent and holistic view of institutional effectiveness, the metrics in this report are organized to reflect the key stages of a student's educational journey at SMC, as well as the broader community and institutional context in which learning occurs. This structure helps the College monitor how students enter, progress through, and ultimately complete their educational goals, while also recognizing the importance of the systems and people that support their success.

The metric groupings are as follows:

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# Metric Groupings by Student and Institutional Journey



## Group 1: Progress & Momentum

This section captures early indicators of student academic progression and engagement. Metrics include credit accumulation, course success rates, and retention (persistence) between terms. These are foundational momentum points that help predict long-term student achievement.



## Group 2: Transfer-Level Math & English Completion

Recognizing the importance of early completion of gateway courses, this section focuses on the percentage of first-time college students who complete transfer-level math and English within their first academic year. This is a key metric for closing equity gaps and accelerating progress toward degree completion.



## Group 3: Degree and Certificate Completion

This section highlights the number and rate of students who complete associate degrees and certificates. It includes measures of completion within three years and the total number of awards conferred annually. These metrics directly reflect SMC's ability to support students in reaching their educational goals.



## Group 4: Employment Outcomes

Post-graduation success is measured through employment outcomes such as living wage attainment and employment in a related field of study. These indicators demonstrate how well SMC prepares students for the workforce and supports upward economic mobility.



## Group 5: Transfer to Four-Year Institutions

This section focuses on the proportion of students who successfully transfer to a four-year college or university. It includes disaggregated data to evaluate transfer equity and effectiveness across student populations.



## Group 6: Community & Student Support

Beyond academics, student success is influenced by access to financial resources, support programs, and a sense of connection to the college community. This section includes metrics primarily focused on financial aid access.



## Group 7: College Community

Recognizing that institutional effectiveness also depends on the people who support students, this final section examines employee-focused metrics such as staff and faculty diversity and employee satisfaction.



# Data Disaggregation

At SMC, a central component of institutional effectiveness is the intentional use of disaggregated data to identify and address racial equity gaps in student outcomes. Whenever possible, all student success metrics in this report are disaggregated by race/ethnicity. This allows the College to monitor disparities in outcomes and evaluate whether all student groups are equitably supported in achieving their educational goals.

To measure disproportionate impact, SMC uses the Percentage Point Gap – 1 (PPG-1) methodology, the official method recommended by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. PPG-1 identifies equity gaps by comparing the outcome rate for a particular student group (e.g., Black/African American or veteran or first-generation college) to the overall average for all other students combined (e.g., non-Black/African American or non-veterans or non-first-generation college). If the gap exceeds the margin of error or is negative (i.e., the group is performing worse than average), the group is identified as experiencing disproportionate impact. This method helps ensure that equity gaps are identified in a statistically valid and meaningful way, rather than relying on comparisons to institutional averages alone. For more information, refer to the guide ["CCCCO Percentage Point Gap Method Minus One"](#).

## Local Goal Setting Framework

In 2019, SMC's IE Committee established a local goal-setting framework for metrics included in the statewide accountability reports, grounded in the following core principles:



### Focus on Racial Equity

Among all disaggregated student groups, the most persistent and significant equity gaps have been observed for racially minoritized students, particularly Black, Latine, and Native American/Alaskan Native students. As such, the IE process prioritizes monitoring and addressing equity gaps by race/ethnicity to ensure that improvements are both meaningful and just.



### A Racial Parity-Based Goal Calculation

To avoid a “rising tide” scenario, where overall student success improves while equity gaps persist or widen, SMC adopted a race-conscious goal-setting method grounded in the principle of racial parity. The aspirational goal for a metric is set at the performance level of the highest performing racial/ethnic group. This benchmark represents the standard of success that all student groups should be supported in reaching. The assumption is that the highest group's success rate will remain steady, while the outcomes of other groups will improve until the equity gap is eliminated. This method affirms that disparities in outcomes are not the result of student deficiencies but reflect systemic barriers that the institution is committed to addressing.



### Time-Bound Targets

The goals are tied to a fixed timeframe to promote a sense of urgency and support institutional accountability. For this report, the target goals are set to be achieved by the 2027–2028 Institutional Effectiveness reporting year.



### Aspirational Yet Actionable

The goals are symbolic and designed to reflect SMC’s aspirational commitment to eliminating racial equity gaps, not as rigid projections, but as catalysts to drive strategic investment, structural reform, and equity-minded practice across the institution.

The local goals are **revised every three years** to align with the Student Equity Plan planning cycle, ensuring that goal-setting remains responsive to changing conditions, updated data trends, and evolving institutional priorities. The most recent set of goals was developed by the IE Committee in 2025 as part of the planning process for the 2025–2028 Student Equity Plan. These goals are tied to a fixed target year, 2028, to promote urgency, accountability, and a shared institutional commitment to achieving equitable student outcomes.

**In contrast, goals for ACCJC-required metrics are determined on an ad hoc basis and developed through in-depth discussion of the College’s internal context and broader statewide landscape, rather than tied to the Student Equity Plan cycle.**

## Conclusion

The Institutional Effectiveness Report is both a reflection of SMC’s progress and a tool for strategic planning and accountability. Guided by the College’s mission, vision, and goals, the Academic Senate Joint Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IE Committee) analyzes collegewide performance across key student success, achievement, and equity metrics. The committee reviews progress toward aspirational targets and institution-set standards (minimum thresholds), identifies persistent equity gaps, and engages in inquiry to understand underlying trends and institutional conditions. Findings from this report directly inform the IE Committee’s annual report to the District Planning and Advisory Council (DPAC), which includes recommendations for collegewide action plans.

**SMC updates most of its target goals every three years to align with the Student Equity Plan. The current targets are set for achievement by 2028.**



# Metric Legend

A majority of the metrics included in the SMC Institutional Effectiveness Report align with key statewide accountability frameworks. The legend below identifies which external reports serve as the source for each metric, with icons indicating the corresponding report where applicable. This alignment ensures that local metrics provide a consistent foundation for both statewide accountability and institutional improvement efforts.



**ACCJC**



**California Adult Education Program**



**Guided Pathways**



**Strong Workforce Program**



**Student Centered Funding Formula**



**Student Equity Plan**



**Vision 2030**