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## University joins national initiative to measure student achievement

Fresno State will take part in a new initiative to improve the public's ability to track student progress and achievement. The [Student Achievement Measure](#) (SAM) is a metric that allows colleges and

universities to deliver a more complete picture of student progress along the path to earning a college degree or certificate.

This is a joint project among six leading national higher education associations including: the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the American Council on Education (ACE), the Association of American Universities (AAU), the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU).

The six partner associations include 3,000 postsecondary institutions and annually enroll nearly 24 million undergraduate students.

According to Fresno State President John D. Welty, the large number of colleges and universities participating in the project ensures a more complete look at how well students are progressing through the higher education system. "This new measure provides a much more accurate measurement of our students' progress. Many of our students need to hold down jobs while completing their degree and that may require students to attend several institutions over time."

The Student Achievement Measure initiative was announced Monday. Participating institutions will start reporting data this fall and the results will be available to the public at the Student Achievement Measure website ([www.studentachievementmeasure.org](http://www.studentachievementmeasure.org)).

*"Many of the students who attend AASCU colleges and universities are unable because of their life circumstances to complete college in four years," said Muriel A. Howard, president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). "The information provided by the SAM will acknowledge many more student-completions than were previously counted."*

Funding for the SAM project is provided in large part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "The foundation is pleased to support colleges and universities in responding to the call for better student outcome and institutional performance measures. We are very encouraged to see the major associations converge on shared measures that recognize that students take different pathways through higher education. This is important information for institutional leaders in understanding

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whether their students continue on a path to success even after leaving their institution,” said Daniel Greenstein, director of the Postsecondary Success Program at the foundation.

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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY,  
FRESNO  
5241 N. Maple Ave.  
Fresno, CA 93740  
P: 559.278.4240

Email Us

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