

Pathways Data Handout

Because at Mesa we recognize that the educational journey for some students can be lengthy, confusing, costly and/or inequitable.

Lengthy	Source									
The average Cumulative Units for Associate Degree Earners at Mesa college is 97	<u>SD Mesa Awards Dashboard</u>									
Average number of years to complete an Associate’s degree is 4.2	<u>SD Mesa Awards Dashboard</u>									
<p>Students in ADT programs, those (currently) with the clearest program requirements, complete faster and have fewer excess units than those in AA/ AS programs.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">ADT</td> <td style="width: 20%;">3.6 years</td> <td style="width: 20%;">89 units</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AS</td> <td>5.1 years</td> <td>112 units</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AA</td> <td>4.2 years</td> <td>94 units</td> </tr> </table> <p>*It is understood that ADT’s may not work for all students.</p>	ADT	3.6 years	89 units	AS	5.1 years	112 units	AA	4.2 years	94 units	<u>SD Mesa Awards Dashboard</u>
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Costly	Source
The number one strategy used by students to deal with the challenge of schedule conflicts or cancelled course sections was taking other classes in the meantime. This translates into additional costs for students in terms of both time and money.	<u>Major and Course Navigation Project</u>
<p>A student who completes their degree in 4 years (rather than 2 years) has approximately \$48,700 in additional costs and lost wages.</p> <p>6 years = \$119, 700 in additional costs and lost wages</p>	<u>The Real Cost of College: Time & Credits to Degree, 2014</u>

Confusing	Source
Only 55% of students said they received consistent information regarding their major requirements.	Major and Course Navigation Project
Less than 1/3 of first-time degree/transfer-seeking students, complete a Comprehensive Ed. Plan with their first 3 primary terms.	Major and Course Navigation Project
<p>Top 2 suggestions from students for Improvement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More education on campus services 2. More and better counseling <p><u>Focus Group Quotes:</u> <i>"Lack of knowledge on the best path, shortest path"</i> <i>"Challenges knowing what classes to take... some counselors say you need to take these to transfer and others say you don't "</i></p>	Major and Course Navigation Project

Inequitable	Source
White students take about .4 years less than Latinx and Asian students to complete their Associates degrees	SD Mesa Awards Dashboard
<p>FT students complete a Comprehensive Ed plan within their first 3 terms at over 2 times the rate of Part Time students (48% vs. 21%)</p> <p>*These are students who have set a goal of degree completion or transfer.</p>	Student Success & Support Programs Dashboard
African American/Black students persist through their first 3 terms at a rate of 4% less than the overall student population.	HSI/Equity Dashboard

Comments from our Pathways Fellows:

- I wish I had gotten more help right away in Mesa. I feel like counseling is so overwhelmed constantly by appointment requests that it is hard to get the proper guidance needed. You're not even allowed to make an appointment until after a semester has been completed, which is 6 months down the drain if you picked the wrong major by accident, like myself. At this rate, I pretty much have started down a different degree than I originally planned due to the math requirements for my originally intended major taking over two years.. So proper counseling as a newly enrolled student would have saved me a lot of grief.
- As far as costs go, Mesa has been great at being inclusive. The enrollment waivers for tuition are incredibly helpful, and a lot of the classes use low-cost textbooks.
- Equity is one of the main reasons I have been enjoying my stay at Mesa. Medically, I have had several situations over 2020 that have caused me to miss class, and the professors at Mesa have been very understanding and compassionate every time. During none of those times did I ever feel rushed to catch up or worried about being left behind.
- Discovering my resources at Mesa College truly helped me not only with my Student Success but financially as well. During my journey at Mesa it came to my attention that there are a lot of students who even after being at Mesa for more than 2 years they weren't aware of the wonderful resources made available to them. For example not many students know about Star Trio where if you apply to the program & get accepted they give you free school supplies like scantrons, notebooks, bluebooks, etc. all of this helped me a lot financially because school supplies does get pricey. Another example would be how not many students in DSPS don't know how there is a section in the LRC at Mesa for them to go to get free printing, request books in PDF forms, etc. With all of this being said, as a Mesa Pathways Fellow I want to ensure that students are aware of their resources and don't go through many struggles whether it be financially or academically.
- Personally, it only took me 2 years to get my associate's degree and transfer into a four-year university. However, I know that this is not the case for a lot of students at Mesa. In fact, a lot of my friends took longer, about 3 - 4 years to transfer to a four-year institution. When I talked to them, they all had similar stories. They mentioned that at the beginning of their educational journey they felt lost and disconnected from the campus. But when they began using the resources provided to them by Mesa, such as meeting with their counselors, going to the library for tutoring, and going to workshops that informed them about the transferring process, they felt motivated and strongly guided to take the next steps towards their education. As a pathways fellow, I want to bring awareness to all the resources we offer to students and help them get connected to campus.
- The cost of higher education can create a barrier for a lot of students. But I think it is important to show these students that there are programs that can help them financially. For example, the EOPs program helps students with book vouchers and other resources. Another

example is scholarships. Mesa provides many scholarships every year. There is a lot of money that is used to help students but unfortunately, not a lot of students apply to these scholarships for various reasons. I believe that as a pathways fellow, we have a duty to bring awareness of these different programs and scholarships and help students apply so they can have financial support throughout their educational journey.

- Educational journeys can be inequitable, but it is up to us as pathway fellows to meet all students where they are at and help them with their own needs.
- When I first started my college journey back in 2012 I didn't have a clear path to take. My first counselor didn't tell me what classes satisfy a degree and I didn't know what questions to ask so I took what ever classes sounded fun. Not knowing that they started accumulating units and that there was a limit for financial aid. When I finally found the major that I liked I didn't qualify for financial aid anymore. There were a lot of programs like EOPS and others that I didn't know about or how to apply until it was too late. I've been seeing many counselors but never established one that would be with me throughout this journey or knows what I've been through.
- What I tell other students is to find a counselor that they like and stick with them. Ask what they can join or qualify for that can help with college life. To come up with options they have for the majors they are interested in. Things have changed since 2012 and now counselors can do so much to help you get to your goal.