



# COSUMNES RIVER COLLEGE

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OFFICE OF RESEARCH & EQUITY

## **Fall 2022 and Fall 2023 Opt-Out Scheduling Evaluation**

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Report author:

Katy Wilson, Faculty Researcher

Office of Research & Equity



## Background and Purpose

In fall 2019, Cosumnes River College (CRC) implemented the first iteration of the new student Opt Out schedule. First-time students were provided with a 15-unit schedule in the fall, including units in math and English, which are strongly correlated with community college completion<sup>1</sup>. Program evaluations in fall 2019, 2020, and 2021 found a correlation between the Opt Out program and enrollment in 15 units, completion of 15 units, and persistence to a second term at CRC<sup>2</sup>. In an effort to continue monitoring CRC’s Opt Out program, the Research Office conducted an abbreviated evaluation of the Opt Out schedule using fall 2022 and fall 2023 cohort data. Unless otherwise specified, all analyses in this report aggregate fall 2022 and fall 2023 data.

## Key Findings

1. Students receive an Opt Out schedule by filling out an online form that indicates their major of study, which then generates a recommended list of courses based on that major. The proportion of first-time students who received an Opt Out in fall 2022 and 2023 was significantly higher than in previous years ( $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 172.12$   $p < .001$ ). A greater proportion of first-time CRC students have received an Opt Out schedule almost every term, with the exception of fall 2021, during COVID-19.

Term	Number of Students who Received an Opt Out Schedule	% of First-time Students
Fall 2020	1240	43%
Fall 2021	918	33%
Fall 2022	1378	46%
Fall 2023	1474	49%

2. As with previous evaluations, students’ receipt of the Opt Out schedule in fall 2022 and 2023 was correlated with several student demographic characteristics. The following groups of students were found to be less likely to receive an Opt Out when compared to their peers. This comparison is across the same demographic group (e.g., students under age 25 or under are more likely to get a schedule than peers over age 25). The asterisk represents emergent trends that were not found in previous evaluations.
  - a. Students over age 25 ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 584.02$   $p < .001$ )
  - b. Students from a high school district other than EGUSD ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 459.67$   $p < .001$ )
  - c. Students of an Unknown race, African American\*, Native American\*, and White students ( $\Delta\chi^2(8) = 253.46$   $p < .001$ )
  - d. Male students\* ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 11.755$   $p < .01$ )
  - e. Veteran students\* ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 15.973$   $p < .001$ )
  - f. First generation students ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 22.051$   $p < .001$ )
  - g. Students with no recorded high school GPA ( $\Delta\chi^2(4) = 581.23$   $p < .001$ ) (this was also correlated with age such that students over 25 were more likely to not have a GPA)

<sup>1</sup> Community College Research Center, [ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/early-momentum-metrics-leading-indicators.pdf](http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/early-momentum-metrics-leading-indicators.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://employees.crc.losrios.edu/crc/employee/doc/equity-ie/research/F20-Opt-Out-Analysis.pdf>



3. Enrollment rates in 15 units for new-to-college students were significantly higher in fall 2023 than in prior years. The student demographics that are correlated with receipt of an Opt Out schedule are similarly correlated with enrollment in 15 units in the fall and could therefore act as potential confounding variables. For example, if Asian students enroll in more units than their non-Asian peers, and they were over-represented in the fall 2021 Opt Out cohort, then any increases in 15-unit enrollment in fall 2021 could be attributed to over-representation of this group, and not the Opt Out program. With this in mind, the correlated demographic variables were controlled for in the analysis. **When controlling for these variables, students having received an Opt Out schedule were still three times more likely to enroll in fifteen units in fall 2023 and 2.6 times more likely in fall 2022.** The below table was updated on 1/9/2025 to reflect first-term enrollment numbers; it previously shared second-term enrollment numbers. The analysis remains the same as it used first-term fall enrollment.

Term	Number of Students who Enrolled in 15 Units	% of First-time Students	Number of Students with Opt Out Schedule who Enrolled in 15 Units	% of Students with Opt Out Schedule
Fall 2020	454	15.8%	313	25.2%
Fall 2021	449	16.2%	201	21.9%
Fall 2022	490	16.5%	346	25.1%
Fall 2023	613	20.4%	449	30.5%

4. New-to-college students completed 15 transfer units at increasingly higher rates (9.7% in fall 2020; 8.3% in fall 2021; 10.0% in fall 2022; 11.8% in fall 2023), all higher than pre-Opt Out implementation. Opt Out participation continues to be correlated with completion of 15 transfer units in the first term ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 48.495, p < .001$  in fall 2023). **When holding other factors constant (age, school district, race, first generation status, enrollment in math, and enrollment in English), students who received an Opt Out schedule were 1.25 more likely to complete fifteen transfer-level units.** It should be noted that equity gaps in completion persist for those students who receive an Opt Out. Filipino students, African American students, Hispanic/Latine students, Pacific Islander students, non-EGUSD students, students with lower high school GPAs, and students over age 25 are less likely to complete fifteen transfer-level units even with the Opt Out schedule.

Term	Number of Students who Completed 15 Transfer Units	% of First-time Students	Number of Students with Opt Out Schedule who Completed 15 Transfer Units	% of Students with Opt Out Schedule
Fall 2020	279	9.7%	176	14.2%
Fall 2021	229	8.3%	93	10.1%
Fall 2022	296	10.0%	197	14.3%
Fall 2023	354	11.8%	235	15.9%



5. The evaluation found a correlation between Opt Out participation and persistence to the second term ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 400.63, p < .001$ ), such that when controlling for confounding variables, **students participating in Opt Out were 1.3 times as likely to return in the spring. Additionally, when holding other factors constant, Opt Out students were 1.4 times as likely to enroll in fifteen units for a second term ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 5.1125, p < .05$ ).**

Term	Number of Students who Persisted to Spring	% of First-time Students	Number of Students with Opt Out Schedule who Persisted to Spring	% of Students with Opt Out Schedule
Fall 2020	1907	66.4%	977	78.8%
Fall 2021	1764	63.7%	697	75.9%
Fall 2022	1968	66.2%	1115	80.9%
Fall 2023	2101	70.0%	1184	80.3%

6. After controlling for potentially confounding variables, students who received an Opt Out schedule did not have significantly lower first-term GPAs than those who did not (2.48 v. 2.17) or withdraw from a significantly higher number of units than students who did not participate in Opt Out (2.14 v. 1.5). This supports the assertion that Opt Out is not a detriment to course success, despite increasing unit load. Indeed, term GPA is positively correlated with enrollment in fifteen units in the fall.

**Recommendations**

1. Enrollment in transfer-level quantitative reasoning and English are correlated with completion and persistence metrics along with Opt Out. It is recommended that these courses continue to be included in the Opt Out schedule.
2. While the effect of Opt Out on access on enrollment, enrollment in math and English, completion, and persistence is promising, Opt Out does not appear to affect equity gaps for these metrics. The Research & Equity team recommends further qualitative research that explores Opt Out students’ experiences with the 15-unit course load and factors leading to course completion and persistence.
3. This evaluation marks the fourth evaluation of the Opt Out program, spanning five years of data. No marked changes to program outcomes, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, have occurred in this time. Because of the consistency of these findings, the Research & Equity team recommends a less frequent evaluation cycle, modelled in this report, that focuses on monitoring of program outcomes every other year. Should program practices change, a more thorough evaluation is recommended.