



ARC ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



An AANAPISI Initiative

Access, Relevance, and Community (ARC) Transfer Pathways
San Francisco State University

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INTRODUCTION

This annual report highlights the Access, Relevance, Community (ARC) Transfer Pathways Initiative from October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025.

Since October 1, 2024, San Francisco State University (SFSU) and the three community colleges of San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) (Cañada College, College of San Mateo, and Skyline College) have been working together on a cooperative arrangement development grant project. ARC aims to create an accessible and welcoming community for underserved Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) and low-income transfer students. The initiative does so by strengthening transfer enrollment pathways from SMCCCD colleges and integrating career-focused learning experiences.

In ARC, we utilize the following framework:

ACCESS: At the heart of the ARC program is its connection to the founding goals of the Black Student Union and the Third World Liberation Front Strike at SFSU which called on the university to provide access, relevance, and community (ARC) (Collier and Gonzales, 2009).

The ARC of Ethnic Studies is grounded within self-determination aimed at challenging Eurocentric curriculum in education and using Ethnic Studies as a lens to respond to educational inequities (SFSU Communications, 2019).

The ARC of Ethnic Studies fuels this initiative's purpose by authoring and implementing a curriculum, services, and programs that center on the experiences of AAPI students to become critically community-engaged scholars.



RELEVANCE: At the heart of the ARC program is its connection to the founding goals of the Black Student Union and the Third World Liberation Front Strike at SFSU which called on the university to provide access, relevance, and community (ARC) (Collier and Gonzales, 2009). The ARC of Ethnic Studies is grounded within self-determination aimed at challenging Eurocentric curriculum in education and using Ethnic Studies as a lens to respond to educational inequities (SFSU Communications, 2019).

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COMMUNITY: Taking collective action toward sustainable social justice is a collaborative process in transforming the student's community and understanding of the world (Daus-Magbual, 2011). Building on the definition of community action, it is necessary to foster relationships with teachers and students that influence their decolonization process, understand the changing context within the community, and serve as an education leadership pathway that sustains wellness. Students will develop the capacity to organize around pressing issues that affect their community's health. These relationships between teachers and students will contribute to their personal and political transformation (Daus-Magbual, 2011).





At the heart of the community is the individual, and so to have a strong community, healthy individuals need to be mentally, physically, and spiritually balanced. The ARC project focuses on supporting teachers and students on (a) mental health and well-being, (b) academic and career counseling and guidance, and (c) community building (inside/outside classroom). The building of a critical community and transformative relationships serves as a space where students are learning to grow and foster their community.

Our measurable objectives include establishing a transfer peer mentor program, developing professional development for faculty and staff, expanding culturally responsive student learning communities, establishing transfer programming in collaboration with SFSU and SMCCD.

Measurable short, mid, and long-term outcome objectives include: increase transfer students' social-emotional health and wellness; increase persistence of FT degree seeking undergrads; increased transfer students' knowledge, awareness, and access to postsecondary education-transfer pathways, support, advising; increase the number of FT degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled at AANAPISI institutions; increase timely graduation of FT degree-seeking AANAPI and LI undergrads; increase institutional/faculty capacity to support social-emotional wellness and career readiness; and grow cross-college knowledge and data sharing capacity. Baseline data for the target population has been established using SFSU's access and enrollment data on High Need API student cohorts (a product of SF State's 2016 AANAPISI ASPIRE and 2020 REACH projects) and SF State's most recent persistence and graduation data.



Between October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025, ARC at SFSU has met most of the desired outcomes described in the AANAPISI grant including the following:



- New ARC Coordinator worked with 8 peer mentors and 3 student assistants on transfer support and programming
- Met regularly with ARC collaborative partners in San Mateo County Community College District
- 9 faculty participated in 10 faculty development workshops / faculty learning community
- Support 545 students in ARC student learning community
- Collaborate with campus partners (Asian American & Pacific Islander Student Services, Transfer Peer Mentors, REACH) to host 25 transfer workshops, events, or campus visits for 922 community college and SFSU students
- Attended 2 conferences to share our work, Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE) conference and Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS) conference.



METHODOLOGY

This annual report describes our programs and numbers reached. We have kept records of presentations and curriculum developed. As part of the annual report, the ARC team has also been collecting post-surveys from community college and SFSU workshops. In addition, we have conducted a post evaluation of students engaged in our student learning community.



KEY RESULTS



This project aims to address student needs by implementing an array of complementary strategies in the areas of student belonging and community, transfer student enrollment pathways, and transfer student transition to careers. Our findings focus on these strategies at SFSU: faculty learning communities; peer mentoring; and our transfer pathways initiative.

FACULTY LEARNING Communities

Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) are an effective professional development tool that produces a range of positive changes in faculty involved in the training program. (Gibbs & Coey, 2004). By engaging faculty members in the scholarship of teaching and learning, providing opportunities for reflecting on their practice, and demonstrating knowledge or competence of effective teaching, FLCs have been shown to be effective at enhancing teaching and learning (Smith, et al., 2008). In an FLC focused on service learning as a pedagogical innovation, Furco & Moely (2012) found that FLCs successfully increased faculty expertise, improved faculty's ability to collaborate with community partners, and enhanced their appreciation for the value of work-based experiential learning for students.



Considerable research has examined the potential of LCs for increasing students' academics and retention. Johnson, J.L. (2001) conducted a two-year evaluation of four well-developed and implemented retention programs at a comprehensive university. The study confirmed the positive impact of LCs on student retention (Johnson, 2001). Russ, S. (2010) studied the impact of LCs on underprepared students enrolled at three two-year colleges and found that students who participated in LCs demonstrated slightly higher persistence rates. Significant to the ARC project's underserved AANAPI population, the findings included significantly higher rates of academic achievement, as well as significantly higher rates of social and academic integration for LC students compared to students who did not participate in the LCs. ARC's LC will also be guided by best practices such as ensuring that the LC provides a strong sense of community, includes engaged and approachable faculty, and provides a strong and visible relationship between instructors, course organization, and subject matter (Lichtenstein, 2005).



We continue to develop and provide professional development / LCs for faculty and staff. Since August 2023, we continue our faculty learning community which focuses on increasing faculty capacity to instructing transfer students in equity-minded pedagogy and support social-emotional wellness and career transition. Our learning community includes seven different courses with faculty teaching across the College of Ethnic Studies. Our training meetings included topics such as: working with student peer mentors, defining career readiness, understanding college resources, and participation in SMCCD college visits.

PEER MENTORING

The ARC project's strategy of peer mentoring is supported by a wide body of research confirming the connection between mentoring and improved student outcomes. Bruce & Bridgeland (2014) examined mentoring's connection to mentee aspirations and outcomes, as well as the value of mentorship programs. The report boasts a strong research base (more than 73 independent mentoring programs were examined in a meta-analysis) and provides evidence that mentoring produces positive outcomes across social, emotional, behavioral, and academic areas. The report concluded that mentoring should be leveraged as a key tool to address the pressing issues facing the next generation. Bettinger & Baker (2011) similarly found that mentoring improved college students' success when they examined the impact of a one-on-one student mentoring program on college student persistence. The study created a randomized lottery system for assigning students to service groups or comparison groups and measured retention at 6, 12 and 18 months after randomization.

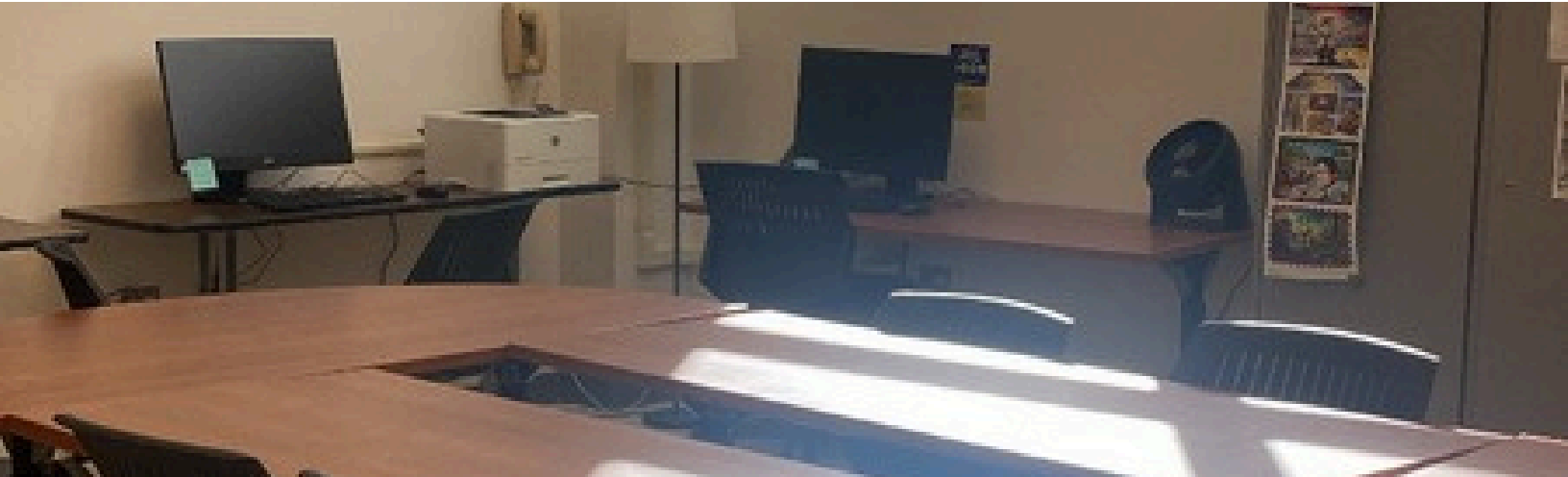




The study found students assigned to receive mentoring services were significantly more likely than students in the comparison group to remain enrolled at their institution. Lewis (2017) found that a mentorship program for underrepresented students enhanced the development of communication skills and strengthened feelings of community. Mentors in a previous SFSU initiative noted the strong relationships they developed with their mentees and deep personal connections. Mentors also mentioned the value of serving as a resource to refer students for academic, emotional, and basic needs support (SF Department of AAS, 2021).

Last year, we were able to establish an ARC Peer Mentor program. We hired and trained students in August 2024, and again in August 2025, to work with faculty to develop our first ARC student learning community. These peer mentors were undergraduate and graduate students that had transferred from Chabot College, Skyline College, and Cypress College. They worked with faculty to support students in their ARC courses and in weekly study circle hours, and they also helped to provide prospective and transfer student programming through workshops, campus visits, and student panels.

STUDY CIRCLES



ARC Peer Mentors and Student Assistants at San Francisco State University are responsible for hosting a study space where students can receive help for their ARC linked courses and have a space to build community. During the 2024 Fall Semester from August to December, there were a total of 584 sign-ins to study circles. As for Spring 2025, there were a reported 494 sign-ins to the Study Circles space. There is at least one peer mentor or student assistant in the space when Study Circles is open in order to facilitate the space and provide help wherever needed.

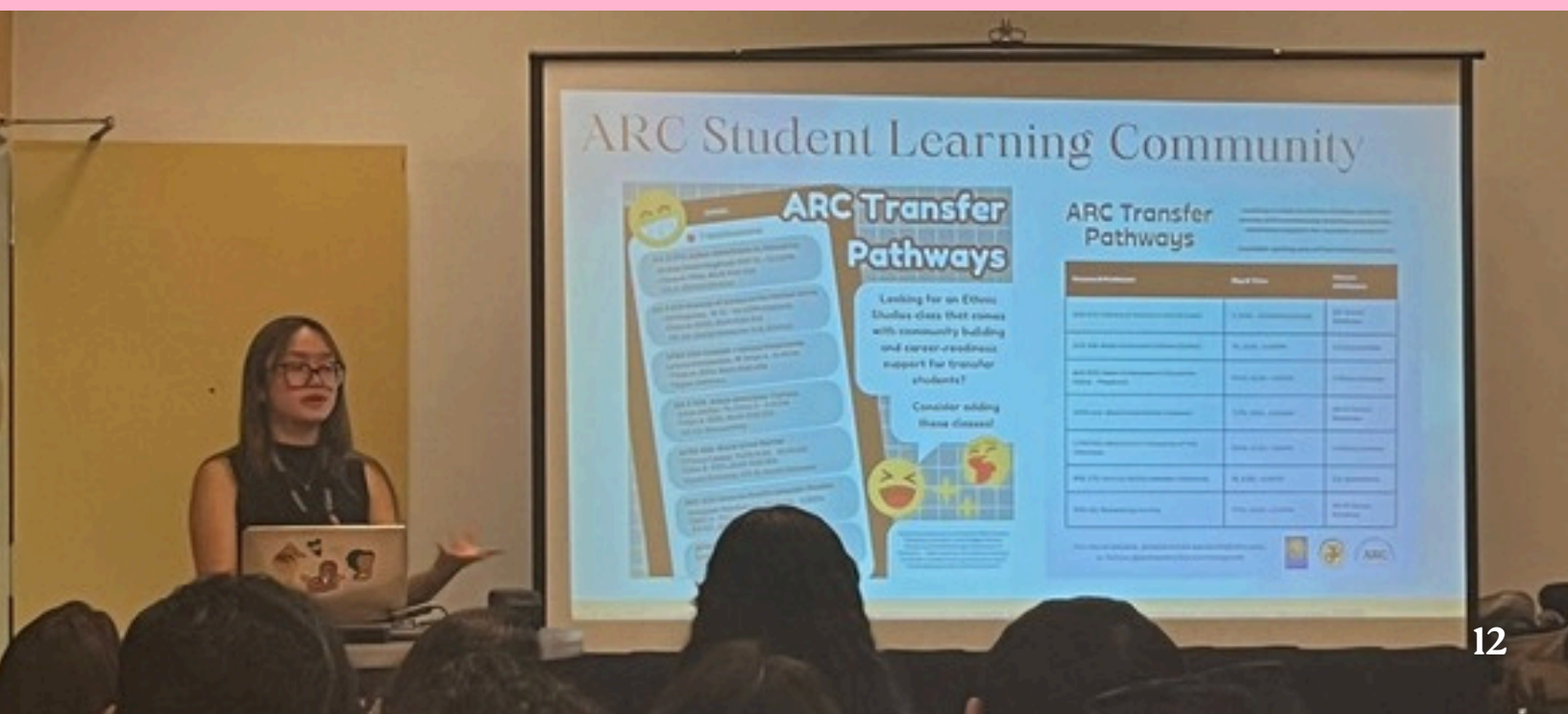


TRANSFER Pathways Initiative

This year, our faculty learning community and peer mentors have helped to establish our ARC student learning community at SF State. Students in the following courses are asked to participate in study circles hosted by peer mentors, as well as attend workshops and events focused on transfer support, career readiness, and wellness:

- AAS 210: History of Asians in the U.S.
- AAS 218: Asian American Culture
- AAS 593: Asian Americans in Education
- AFRS 466: Black Lives Matter
- AFRS: Research Methods
- LTNS 350: Gender + Latinx Feminisms
- LTNS 455: Resistance Literatures of the Americas
- RRS 103: Intro to Pacific Islander Studies
- RRS 275: Intro to Pacific Islander Literature
- RRS 415: Reclaiming the Bay

In the 2024-2025 school year at San Francisco State University, there were 545 students enrolled in our student learning community.



CAMPUS VISITS

A key strategy in our ARC project focuses on offering specific programming to support students to transfer. This year, we were able to offer multiple visits from students within SMCCD.

On various dates in October and November of 2024, we welcomed students from Cañada College, College of San Mateo (CSM), and Skyline College to immerse into the university experience during a visit called AANAPISI Day. On this day, students were able to hear from current transfer students, ethnic studies faculty, and meet different representatives from student organizations.

In AANAPISI Day during Spring 2025, we made sure to tailor our campus visits to the needs of transfer students, focusing on building community, learning more about financial literacy skills, and having students participate in a campus-wide acceptance day.



DATA SHARING

We are working to develop and implement convening for cross-college knowledge sharing. We are currently meeting twice a month to share knowledge. To increase cross-college knowledge sharing and build institutional capacity, ARC strategies include an Annual Learning Institute for faculty and students. The convening will be developed in Year 1 and hosted by each of the colleges in Years 2-5. By rotating hosting across the campuses, all institutions share the benefit from strengthened relationships, clearer pathways, and greater institutional capacity. Our second(or third?) Annual Learning Institute occurred at Skyline College on September 26, 2025. There were 31 people in attendance including ARC staff, peer mentors, and faculty across the SMCCCD campuses and SFSU.



ARC LEARNING INSTITUTE

The goal of the ARC Annual Learning Institute is to enhance cross-college knowledge sharing and build institutional capacity for administrators, staff, faculty and peer mentors. Participants had the opportunity to learn from each other, enhance their ability to support Asian American, Pacific Islander, and low income students, engage in responsive programming, and assess their efforts. Meanwhile, ARC peer mentors benefitted from guest speakers and an exchange between each other's programs. This engagement aims to foster and maintain a partnership between SMCCCD (San Mateo County Community College District) campuses and SFSU (San Francisco State University). The second ARC Learning Institute took place on September 26, 2025 at Skyline College. There were over 30 participants from SFSU and SMCCCD that participated, including peer mentors, faculty, and staff. One participant noted that three things they took from the insitutute included: “Community building with the other campuses, learning more about the impact that we have on our communities, and planning valuable goals that we can implement in the future.”



WORKSHOPS

In our transfer pathways initiative, we were also able to offer multiple workshops to community college and SF State students during the Spring 2025 semester. These included the following topics focusing on mental health and wellness, student support and resources, and understanding ethnic studies. They were hosted by peer mentors and student assistants at San Francisco State University. In their evaluations, students shared that in addition to learning about ARC, they gained information about:

- Counseling and Psychological Services
- Building Community
- Ethnic Studies Core Values
- SF State Student Strike
- Advising
- Storytelling

We will continue to work on sharing more information about the transfer process and making sure to connect with students as they transfer to SFSU.



EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

Date	Activity	Partner(s)	Audience	Attendance
10/23/24	Skyline College Visit	Skyline College	SMCCD	48
11/8/24	Cañada College Visit	Cañada College	SMCCD	17
11/22/24	CSM College Visit	College of San Mateo	SMCCD	10
Multiple	Workshops: Guest Speakers	Patricia Ovando, Craig Santos Perez	SFSU, Multiple	Multiple
Multiple	Workshops: ARC Peer Mentors	SFSU ARC Peer Mentors & Student Assistants	SFSU	50
3/21/25	AANAPISI Day	ARC Collaborative	SMCCD	
4/10/25	APAHE Conference	SFSU ARC	Multiple	
4/17/25	AAAS Conference	SFSU ARC	Multiple	
9/26/25	ARC Learning Institute	ARC Collaborative	SFSU, SMCCD	31



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