2025 Kickstart Survey
Becoming a cougar: New transfer student experiences

In Fall 2025, CSUSM administered the "Kickstart" Survey to new incoming students to better understand students' decision-making process to attend CSUSM, what their enrollment experience was like, and their expectations about the upcoming college journey.

Before CSUSM

*Based on the number of transfer students who responded to the survey

- Top reasons for selecting CSUSM…
  - **65%** say that the location of the university is near home
  - **63%** say that the major they're interested in is offered
  - **44%** say that CSUSM is affordable

- Students' ranking of CSUSM…
  - **70%** 1st choice institution
  - **22%** 2nd choice institution
  - **4%** 3rd choice institution
  - **4%** 4th choice institution or more

- Most helpful sources of information when choosing to attend CSUSM…
  - **42%** of students selected Campus visits
  - **41%** of students selected CSUSM website
  - **39%** of students selected Community college counselor or professor
  - **30%** of students selected Friend(s)
  - **27%** of students selected New student orientation

Getting started

*Based on the number of transfer students who responded to the survey

- The application experience…
  *Excellent/Good response options combined
  - **94%** reported that they had a positive* experience applying to CSUSM

- Experience becoming a CSUSM student…
  *Excellent/Good response options combined
  - **82%** reported that they had a positive* experience becoming a CSUSM student

Looking ahead…

*Based on the number of transfer students who responded to the survey

- CSUSM involvement plans…
  *Very likely & Likely response options were combined
  - **67%** indicated that they would likely* participate in an internship
  - **67%** indicated that they would likely* seek academic support
  - **65%** indicated that they would likely* participate in student organizations and/or clubs

- Expected graduation time…
  - **71%** of students say they expect to graduate in 2 years or less

- Most important planned outcomes…
  - **69%** Finding a fulfilling career path
  - **59%** Getting a well-paying job
  - **51%** Growing and developing personally
  - **29%** Interacting and connecting with others
  - **29%** Building and growing a professional network

The Kickstart Survey was administered from August 25 to September 15, 2025 with a response rate of 14.5% (n=282) for new transfer students.

Questions? Contact survey@csusm.edu