**PURPOSE**
California State University, Dominguez Hills’ commitment to student success and degree completion has driven the examination of current policies and procedures. In support of this mission, the University Advisement and Testing Center (UATC) analyzed records of 263 undergraduate students who were denied Spring 2015 graduation. Identifying graduation barriers faced by these students allows for evidence-based recommendations to improve policy and procedures resulting in better support for student success.

The barriers to higher achievement are systematic, and no institution can overcome them on its own. Leaders at all levels will need to work together...to establish higher operative standards across the board for college readiness and college achievement.

- The LEAP Vision for Learning | AAC&U

**METHODS**
The UATC identified 263 undergraduate students from across the five degree awarding colleges who were denied Spring 2015 graduation. See Table 1 for a breakdown of students by college. Students were contacted by their respective college specialists via phone and email to address remaining graduation requirements. College specialists assisted students during the Summer and Fall semesters by supporting the development of their graduation plans. As student cases varied in complexity, students’ interventions ranged from needing assistance navigating academic departments to creating individualized graduation plans which required several advising sessions. To simplify the process for students and to maximize efficiency, the UATC and Admissions & Records collaborated to allow students to file for a change of graduation date electronically. The combined efforts permitted students to quickly regain access of graduation date electronically. The combined

**ROADBLOCKS TO DEGREE COMPLETION**

Highest First-time Freshmen 6-year Graduation Rate!  
43% of students earned their CSUDH degree in 2016, compared to 35% in 2015 (CSU average for 2006-2011=54.11%)

**Roadblocks Persist**
A Spring 2016 graduation review identified 64 students from the Fall 2010 cohort that are currently deficient in one or more of the six graduation requirement areas. The data shows the targeted population from the 2010 cohort are facing the same barriers at the same rate as students identified in the Spring 2015 graduation denials.

While college specialists have outreached to this targeted population to address the needed requirements, the data suggests our students will continue to face the same roadblocks year after year, if graduation barriers are not addressed.

**Strategies**

**Roadblock**

100% of the roadblocks experienced by students could have been mitigated with academic advisement.

**Strategy**

Develop graduation check-out process
- Create a graduation check-out process across the University that will allow students to clearly identify needed graduation requirements in a timely manner.

22% of students faced deferment due to missing course substitutions for major or general education coursework, pending “incomplete” coursework, and late submission of grade changes, all of which include faculty involvement.

Develop information campaign for faculty
- Remind faculty of the impact a late grade or ARRC submission may have on a graduating student.

- Faculty should have general knowledge of the graduation evaluation process and should be familiar with the graduation evaluator assigned to their colleges.

Faculty/Advisor outreach was inconsistent throughout the university, as a protocol to support deferred students does not exist.

Develop procedure to retain and graduate deferred students
- Strategy should include faculty and/or staff from each college and UATC advisors to ensure students register or meet remaining graduation requirements.

**Roadblock: Preventative & Proactive Strategies**

**Graduation Innovative Team**

Graduation Innovative Team Committee Charge
To work collaboratively as a unified and coordinated cross-divisional team of faculty, staff, students, and administrators to increase our 6-year freshmen graduation rate to 60% by 2020, and eliminate the achievement gap while sustaining a high quality degree.