

Reframing Academic Probation to Make Your College More *Student-Centered*

October 2024



HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A STRONG ECONOMY





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Activity

Who is in the room?

What is your role at your community college?

How many of you interact with students on a daily basis?

A background image showing a group of students walking away from the camera on a paved path. They are carrying backpacks. In the background, there are trees and a brick building.

Shasta College

More Than a Jumping Off Point

What we
believe

Shasta College is a nationally recognized model community college engaging its communities through innovation in student learning and growth.



California Competes:

Higher Education for a Strong Economy

What we
believe

Higher education is both a vaccine and an antidote against economic stagnation and social stratification—for individual Californians, our communities, and the state's economy.

How Do We *Better Serve* Prospective Students to Meet State Needs?



2 Million

Shortfall of college-educated professionals



6+ Million

Adults with some college but no credential (SCNC)



- Research-practice partnership with Sacramento State, Shasta-Tehama-Trinity Joint Community College District, and ProjectAttain!
- How do we reengage, reenroll, and propel SCNC to completion?

Our *Approach* for Year 1

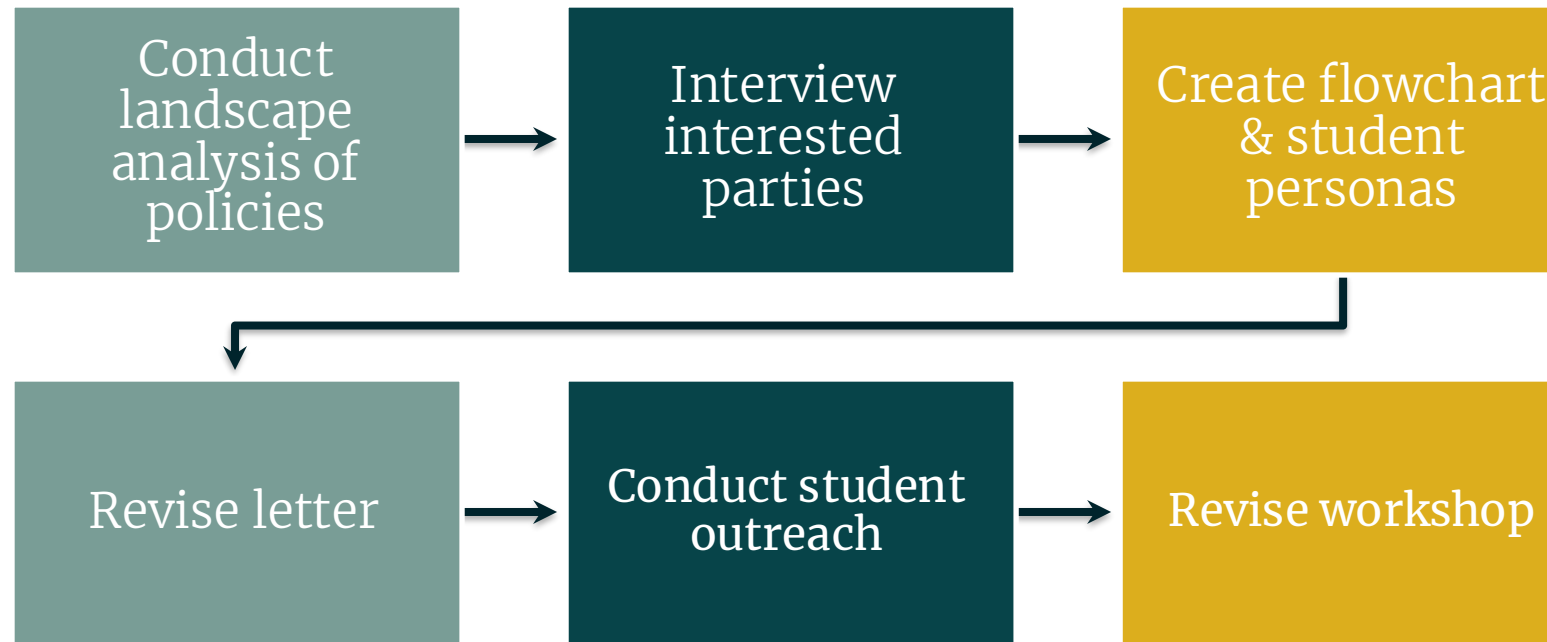


Unexpected Finding

STUDENT VOICE: RICK

“I was alerted to the fact that I was doing poorly, and I was on academic probation, which is just a way of the college being like ‘Hey we notice you are struggling. By the way you suck at doing these things. We’re going to watch you closer now.’”

Our *Approach* for Year 2



Others Doing Great Work: *Leaders of Change*

CSU Fullerton

Renaming academic probation, educating others, and implementing RESET program



San Diego State

Created and implemented the Bounce Back program



CSU Humboldt

Rebranding academic probation to academic notice; working to shift culture, through reeducation



San Jose State

Revising academic probation; implementing the Bounce Back program



Others Doing Great Work: *Leaders of Change* (cont.)

The RP Group



Hosting webinars with community partners; The African American Transferring Tipping Point Study

Moorpark



Hosting the academic Probation Reimagined webinar; rebanding academic probation

UC Irvine



Rebranding academic probation to academic recovery; implementing early alert warnings

Activity

Empathy Walk

Imagine you are a student who just received notice that you are on academic probation.

June 27, 2023

Dear Student:

We are writing to inform you that you have been placed on probation because of your overall record at Shasta College. There are two types of probation. Academic probation occurs when your cumulative grade point average is below a 2.0 (“C”), and progress probation occurs when you have withdrawn from at least half of the units you’ve attempted.

We want to be sure you understand some of the negative consequences that may result from probation, the most common of which may include:

- loss of priority registration after two consecutive semesters on probation;
- loss of financial aid;
- loss of eligibility for athletics, dorms, EOPS, and/or transfer admission.

You will become ineligible for the California College Promise Grant (CCPG) if you are placed on academic or progress probation or any combination thereof for **two consecutive primary semesters** (primary semesters are Fall and Spring). Loss of eligibility shall become effective at the first registration opportunity after such determination is made. Foster Youth are not subject to this regulation. Because you have only one semester on probation, you will not lose your CCPG per this regulation for the Fall semester.

Landscape Analysis



Interviewed stakeholders

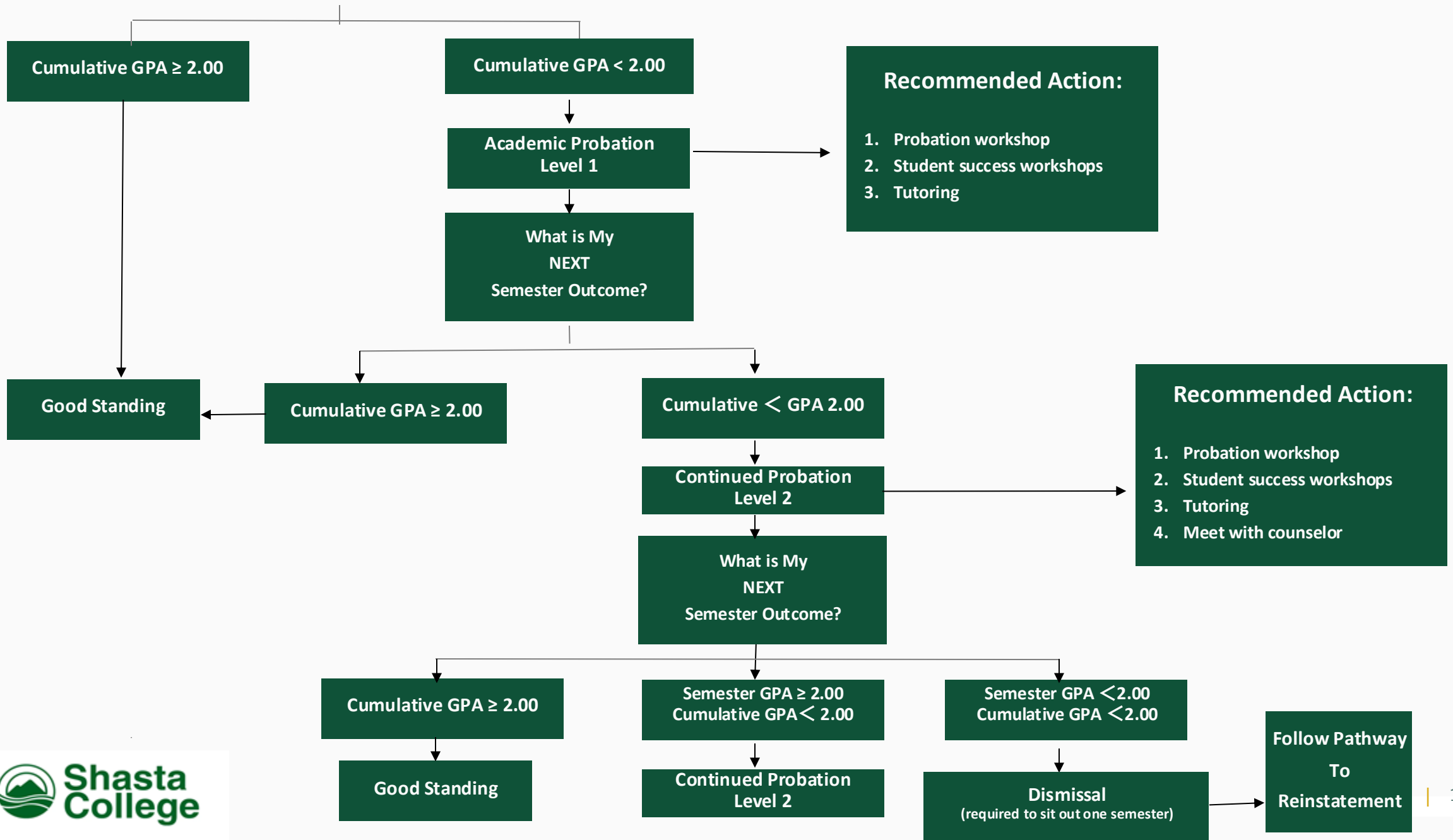


Developed a flowchart of current academic probation policies and procedures



Created student personas

Shasta College GPA





Age: 33

Status: Part-time

Units: 9

Current GPA: 2.0

Major: Child & Adolescent
Development

Education: 17 units

Work Status: Full-time off campus

Relationship Status: Married

Caregiving Responsibilities: 2
children

Housing: Own residence

Grace: Stop Out / Returning Student

Goals: Graduating with her associates for job advancement

Challenges: Balancing work, school, & caregiving responsibilities

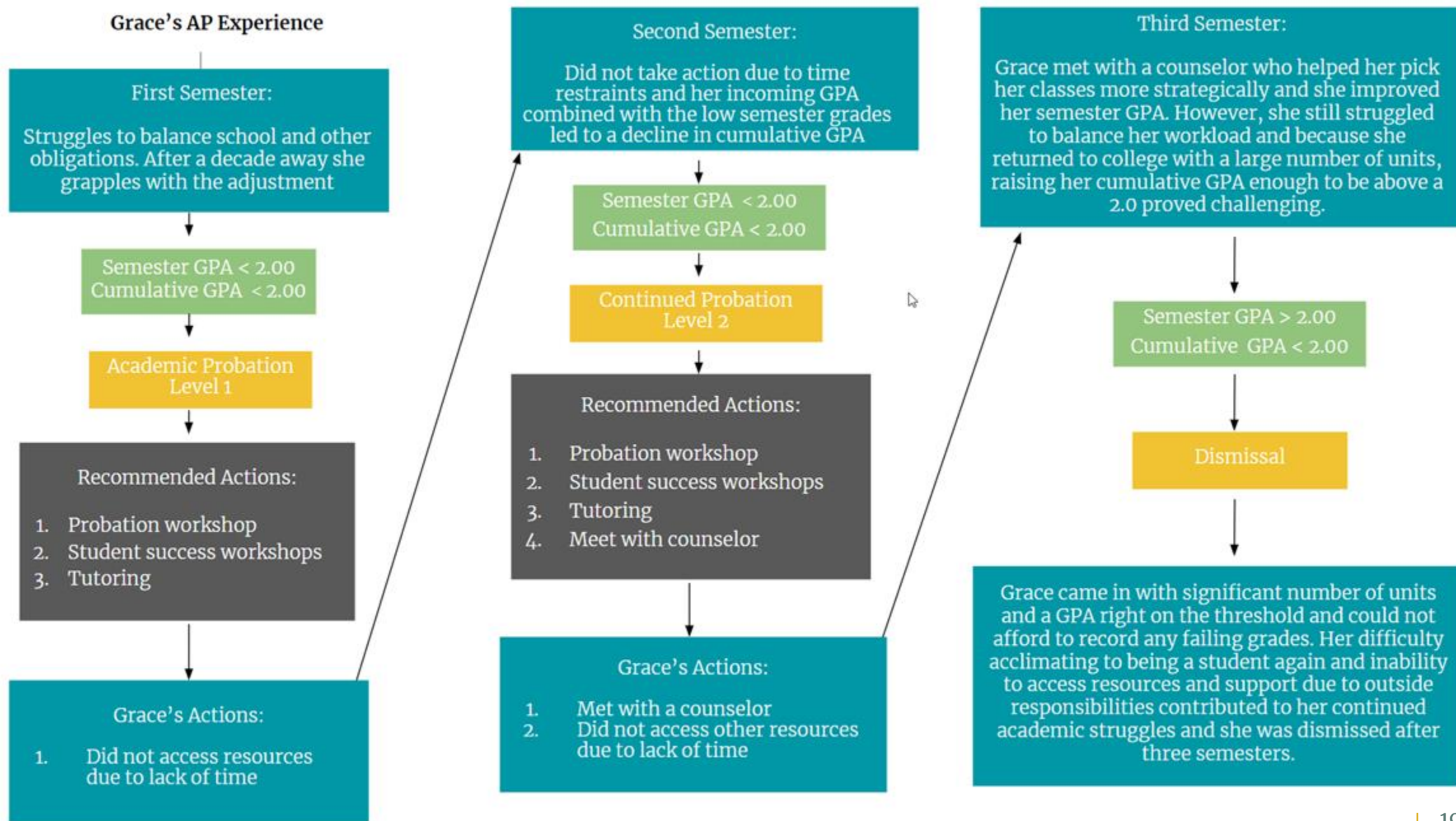
Background

Grace is a first-generation student who has returned to higher education after more than a decade away.

She returned to find that she is already starting with a low GPA due to her prior enrollment. She is majoring in Child and Adolescent Development through the ACE program, with a goal of getting her associates so she can advance at her current job.

She is enrolled completely online as a part-time student taking 6 units per semester. She works full-time off campus averaging 40 hours a week. She is a wife and mother of two young children ages 4 & 9.

Grace's AP Experience





Activity

Landscape Analysis

Use your college's website to locate information regarding academic probation.

Shasta's Steps Towards *AP Revision*

- ☑ Changed terminology and phrasing
- ☑ Revised notification letter
- ☑ Conducted outreach to students
- ☑ Updated academic notice workshop

Changed *Terminology and Phrasing*

Academic Probation ➡ *Academic Notice*

Academic Dismissal ➡ *Academic Pause*

Previous Notification Letter



Shasta College

Shasta-Tehama-Trinity Joint Community College District

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(530) 242-7500 • Fax: (530) 225-1990
www.shastacollege.edu

Level 1 Probation Status

June 27, 2023

Dear Student:

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Revised Notification Letter



Shasta College

Shasta-Tehama-Trinity Joint Community College District

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www.shastacollege.edu

Dear Student,

We at Shasta College are some of your biggest supporters, and we want to make sure you succeed during your time here. We noticed some bumps in your academic path recently, and we want to help you get back on smooth ground.

We are writing to tell you that you are on **Academic Notice, Level 1**, which is your “heads up” notice. It is important that you understand the varying levels and consequences of Academic Notice and Academic Pause; please go [online](#) for details. While you are on Academic Notice, you are limited to register in a maximum of 14 units per term (a Counselor *may* remove this limit after a discussion with you).

How do I get back into Good Standing? Bring your cumulative GPA up to a 2.0 or higher, and make sure you successfully complete more than 50% of the cumulative units you attempt.



**Shasta
College**

Conducted *Student Outreach*

- All 217 students on academic probation from spring 2023 were contacted in fall 2023 ; staff spoke directly with 67 students
- Staff asked students the same six questions
 - Were you aware of your status? Do you know what it means?
 - Was the communication clear? Any feedback?
 - Did you make use of resources?
 - Did you utilize the workshop? If yes, what was helpful?
 - Did you meet with your Counselor? or other individual?
 - Other comments?

Conducted *Student Outreach* (cont.)

- Student responses to questions asked varied wildly
- Realized need to improve our written communication AND conduct follow-ups much earlier
- Plan for spring/summer 2024: conduct follow-up messaging/phone calls within a month of initial academic notice notification

Updated *Academic Notice Workshop*

- Formed committee
- Reviewed current workshop and other institutions' workshops
- Format decision: self-paced workshop in Canvas
- Built new workshop using CSU Fullerton's structure (thank you, CSUF!)
- New counselor will continue to improve workshop in 2024-25

Workshop: *Before*



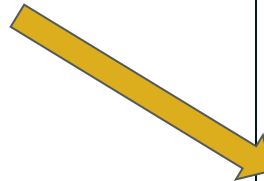
We beat them over the head with everything that is **WRONG** and could go wrong for the first 11 modules

Not until **module 12** do we get to resources and support

Instructions
1 Welcome
2 What is probation?
3 Academic Probation
4 Progress Probation
5 Progress Probation Example
6 Consequences of Probation
7 Dismissal
8 Dismissal (continued)
9 Reinstatement
10 Getting Off Probation
11 Appeals
12 Resources
13 Success Tips

Workshop: *After*

Reassuring the student
that the college **WANTS**
them to stay in college



A Knight's Quest for Success

We know - college can be a bumpy road. Maybe it's an extra difficult class, a busy life, or health or finances getting in the way of your studies. There is probably not a single person here (students, staff, and faculty!) who hasn't struggled at some point. The good news is you are not alone. We at Shasta College believe in you. This workshop gives you information and resources you can use to restore your academic record, and to triumph!

You can use this workshop in one of two ways:

- Click on the module title below that seem most relevant to your situation. We want you to complete the whole workshop, but you can choose the order you work through the content. You can continue to navigate through the workshop by clicking "Home" or "Modules" on the left side bar menu.
- Click on "Start Your Quest" below to move through the workshop sequentially.

<u>The Kingdom of</u> <u>Knowledge:</u> Understanding Academic Notice	<u>A Knight's</u> <u>Armor:</u> Helpful Policies and Processes	<u>The Academic</u> <u>Castle:</u> Fortifying Your Knowledge Base	<u>The Knight's</u> <u>Court:</u> Student Support and Career Programs	<u>Knights of</u> <u>Resilience:</u> Overcoming Personal Challenges	<u>The Knight's</u> <u>Vigil:</u> Reflection on Your Learning
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YOU BELONG AT SHASTA COLLEGE. YOU ARE A KNIGHT.

START YOUR QUEST!



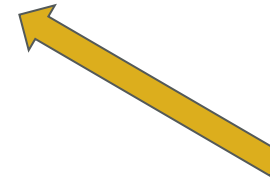
Workshop: *Module Checks*

Knight's Challenge for Clarity #2

Due	No due date	Points	4	Questions	4	Time Limit	None
Allowed Attempts	Unlimited						

Instructions

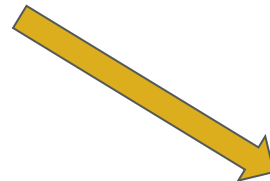
This Challenge is simply to help you remember key information. It is **not** graded, but if you answer incorrectly, you will be shown the correct answer after you submit. Please don't feel any pressure when answering - we just want you to have the tools you need to slay the dragons!



Language **emphasizes** that quizzes are for knowledge building and are not graded.

Workshop: *Module Checks* (cont.)

Quizzes display **correct** answers and repeat information.



Question 1

0 / 1 pts

True or False? Students are automatically put on Academic Pause after one semester of Academic Notice and another semester of Academic Notice Level 2.

You Answered

☒ True

Correct Answer

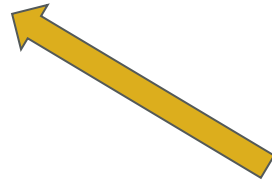
☐ False

Good try, but this answer is incorrect. It is possible to be placed on Academic Notice/Academic Notice Level 2 for multiple semesters in a row, as long as the student is continuing to make positive movement on their GPA and/or their academic progress. We don't want to put on you on Academic Pause as long as we can see improvement!

Workshop: *Words of Wisdom*

A Knight's Treasure: Words of Wisdom

Here are some words of wisdom from fellow students like you who have been on Academic Notice:



Students receive **supportive** messages from others and are asked to create their own words of wisdom.

Workshop: *Words of Wisdom* (cont.)

*“The best advice I can offer is **keep moving forward**. It can be incredibly easy to beat yourself up and keep reliving some of the mistakes that you made, but that isn’t really productive. You can analyze what you’d like to change, but then start working on making that change, try not to get stuck on it.”*

Workshop: *Words of Wisdom* (cont.)

“I found myself on Academic Notice because of my grades from 8 years ago. When I talked to my Counselor about Academic Renewal, my GPA went from a 1.93 to a 3.0!!! As an older student, fitting college into my life with work and kids is so challenging. But when I think about my “why,” it helps me put all the struggle into perspective.”



Activity

Small group brainstorm

Break into small groups to brainstorm ways to foster change on your campus.

Next Steps

- Start the conversation
- Make a change
- Read our commentary
- Connect



Reworking Academic Probation to Promote Student Success

POLICY ANALYSIS / SEPTEMBER 03, 2024

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Academic probation can be a common experience for many college students. Nationally, about one in five first-year students' cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below a 2.0, a standard threshold for the status.
- 2 There is growing recognition that current academic probation policies and practices are not providing the necessary support for students to avoid this status or return to good academic standing. Some institutions are making changes but many others have yet to begin and the inconsistent and slow pace of change is leaving some students behind.
- 3 Higher education leaders, and potentially state legislators, should work together to study and reform policies within and across systems.
- 4 To achieve this, we propose all three higher education segments:
 - transition to the term "academic notice" from "academic probation,"
 - revise notification letters to use strengths-based language,
 - offer a workshop or class that covers various skills and resources, and
 - establish a statewide academic probation task force to examine policies systematically, promote student-centered approaches, and ensure equitable support for all students enrolled in a California public institution.

Contact Information



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