FOOTHILL COLLEGE
INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

DATE: 10/2/18

TO: Adrienne Hypolite

FROM: Doreen Finkelstein, Research Analyst

RE: 2017-18 Owl Scholars Program Academic Alerts

Introduction:

The Owl Scholars program seeks to identify students who are struggling academically in a course and connect them to support and services that will increase their chances of success. Beginning in Fall 2017, a new software system for the Owl Scholars program, Starfish, was introduced, which allowed both instructors and students to more directly raise and address alerts about academic struggles.

This report answers the following questions about the Owl Scholars program:

- How many students received an academic alert in 2017-18, and has there been a change in the number of alerts compared to the previous year?
- What were the demographic characteristics of students who received an academic alert in 2017-18?
- What were the course success rates of students who received an academic alert in 2017-18, and have they changed over time?

Results Overview:

- 577 unique students received an academic alert in 2017-18. These students received

- Course success rates for students who received an academic alert and did not withdraw from the class have shown gains over the past three years: 14% for math, 9% for English, and 8% for ESL.

Results Detail:

Students are eligible to participate in the Owl Scholars program when they are enrolled in specific English, Math, or ESL courses. Table 1 below shows which courses participated in the Owl Scholars program in 2017-18 compared to the previous year.

In total, there were 18 courses participating in the Owl Scholars program in 2017-18, compared to 11 courses in 2016-17. Eight courses were added in 2017-18 (English 1A, English 1S, Math 108, Math 217, Math 230(J), Math 235, ESL 26, and ESL 226), and one course (Math 1A) was no longer eligible in 2017-18.

Table 1
Courses Eligible for Owl Scholars

Subject	Eligible in 2016-17	Eligible in 2017-18
English 1A	no	yes
English 1S	no	yes
English 1T	yes	yes
English 110	yes	yes
English 209	yes	yes
Math 1A	yes	no
Math 105	yes	yes
Math 108	no	yes
Math 217	no	yes
Math 220	yes	yes
Math 230 / 230J	no	yes
Math 235	no	yes
ESL 26	no	yes
ESL 25 / 125	yes	yes
ESL 226	no	yes
ESL 227	yes	yes
ESL 236	yes	yes
ESL 237	yes	yes
ESL 249	yes	yes

In 2017-18, 577 unique students received an academic alert through the Starfish system. Some students received an academic alert more than once: e.g., for different courses

in the same term, or for different terms over the year. Overall, the 577 students received 660 academic alerts.

As shown in Table 2 below, compared to the previous year, 531 additional students were enrolled in Owl Scholars-eligible courses, and 178 additional students received an academic alert in 2017-18. The percent of eligible students who received an academic alert was 13% in 2016-17 and 16% in 2017-18, for a gain of 3%. The average number of academic alerts received per student (1.1) remained the same between the two years.

Table 2
Academic Alerts for Owl Scholars
2016-17 vs. 2017-18

	2016-17	2017-18	Gain

Table 3
Academic Alert Students vs.
All Students Enrolled in Program-Eligible Courses

	Academic Year (Fall 2017-Spring 2018)			
Student Group	Count of Students in Program-Eligible Courses*	Count (%) of Academic Alert Students	Expected Academic Alert Count** (16%)	Disproportionately More Likely to Receive an Academic Alert?***
By Ethnicity				
African American	179	40 (22%)	28 (16%)	YES

Chart 1
Relative Likelihood of Student Groups to Receive an Academic Alert

Note: Red bars indicate groups that were disproportionately more likely to receive an academic alert.

Chart 2 illustrates which groups were more or less likely to receive an academic alert in each subject area by graphing the difference between the total percent of academic alerts in a subject area and the percent of academic alerts for the student group in that subject area. Student groups with a negative gap were more likely to receive an academic alert in that subject area, while student groups with a positive gap were less likely to receive one.

African-American and Native American students were more likely to receive an academic alert in English and Math, but less likely in ESL, while Latinx students were more likely to receive an academic alert in all three subject areas. Pacific Islanders had a large negative gap for ESL (larger than the graph area), but the percentage difference was equivalent to only 2 students.

The negative gaps by subject area were not large enough to reach the threshhold for

Chart2

Relative Likelihood of Student Groups to Receive an Academic Alert by Subject Area

Note: Students who received academic alerts in different subject areas are duplicated in the chart.

Table 4 shows the course success rate of students who received an academic alert in different subject areas in 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18, and the gain in course success rates over the three years (the difference between the success rate in 2017-18 and the success rate in 2015-16).

Note that only students who received a course grade of A-F are included in these analyses; students who withdrew from the course we

gain in course success rate in 2017-18 over 2015-16; this difference was statistically significant (less than 5% probability that the gain was due to chance)

Table 4
Course Success Rates of Academic Alert Students

Subject Area	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	3-year Gain
Math				