

Create an incentivized challenge program modeled on the "x-prize" to radically improve the pass rate of "gate keeper" courses at Fresno State.

CURRENT CHALLENGE:

Many majors have one or more "gate keeper" courses that large numbers of students will not pass on their first attempt. Examples of these courses and their no pass rate are: Chemistry 3A, 25%; Biology 11, 36%; Math 75, 40%; and Physics 2A, 30%*. This failure makes it more likely that these students will leave the university or take longer to graduate. Additionally, these "gate keeper" classes are often requirements for other courses, especially technical courses needed for STEM fields of study.

*This information was calculated from Fall, 2015, pass rate data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE)

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

Fresno State Education X-Prize:

The solution to this problem is to create an incentivized challenge program modeled on the "X-prize" to radically improve the pass rate of "gate keeper" courses at Fresno State.

The following is an example.

Chemistry Education "X-Prize"

Award a \$25,000 prize to the group that creates an educational system for Chemistry 3A that has a consistent 95% pass rate. Funds for the award would be generated through fund raising. Large donors could have their name associated with the prize they sponsor. Criteria and awarding of the prize would be determined by an independent group from the community.

If we can create "human powered" airplanes, and helicopters that were once considered impossible, we should be able to create "gate keeper" college courses with 95% pass rates.

BENEFITS TO FRESNO STATE:

This Fresno State "X-prize" program would be a great benefit to the University. This program would make a huge difference to students who would be demoralized by failing a class. These students won't have to reconsider their plans to attend college (especially first in family students) Passing these classes would keep them on track to graduating in 4 to 6 years. This program would be of monetary benefit to the university. It cost the university when students have to take the same class twice. If a student graduates earlier, it makes more room for new students in an already impacted university. Clearly, such a successful program would distinguish Fresno State as a university that can help struggling students succeed in their education.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: