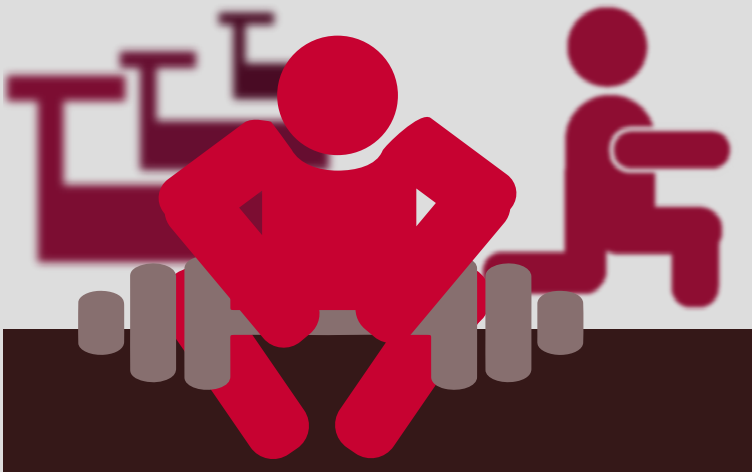


# Visits to the CSUN Student Recreation Center And Academic Outcomes



## PURPOSE

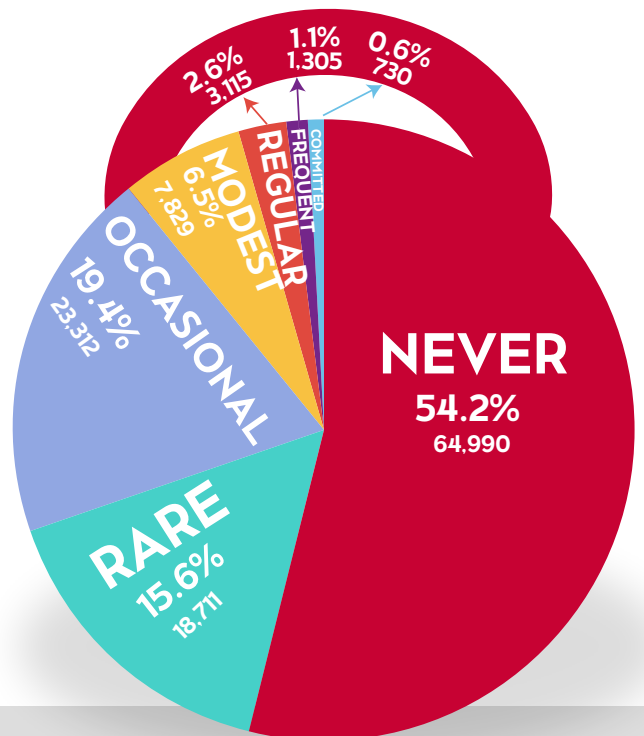
The **Student Recreation Center (SRC)** is an exercise and leisure facility that encourages lifelong health and wellness for the greater campus community. It was first opened during the Spring 2012 semester and provides a variety of student amenities, ranging from the most up-to-date exercise equipment, group exercise classes, personal training, intramurals, two pool facilities, and locker rooms equipped with showers. Here we report on an evaluation of how student visits to the SRC are associated with academic outcomes.

## DATA

Student SRC visit data were collected by SRC membership software and merged with student background and academic data supplied by the Office of Institutional Research. The final dataset includes 119,926 student observations compiled over the course of ten semesters (five academic years), from Fall 2013 to the Spring 2018 semester.

The analysis includes semester GPA as the academic success outcome, and also accounts for the number of times a student visited the SRC each semester.

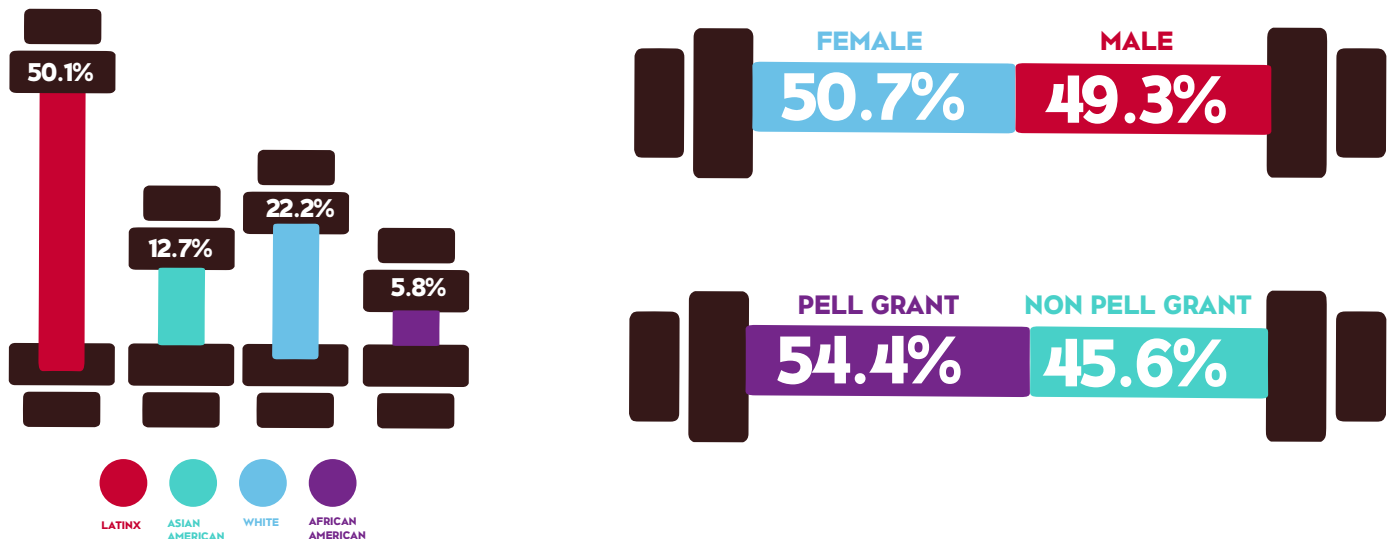
To summarize SRC usage among CSUN students, we categorized the number of SRC visits per semester into seven distinct categories, from “Never” (0 visits) to “Committed” (80+). About half of CSUN students during the time period studied never visited the SRC. Among those who visited the SRC, most are classified as either “rare” or “occasional” visitors.



The Never group includes students who showed 0 visits to the SRC, the Rare group includes 1 to 3 visits, the Occasional group includes 4 to 20 visits, the Modest group includes 21 to 40 visits, the Regular group includes 41 to 60 visits, the Frequent group includes 61 to 80 visits. The committed group includes over 80 visits.

# ATTENDANCE BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Students who visited the SRC were most likely to be Latinx, female, and Pell recipients. These characteristics generally match up to the make up of the general student population at CSUN during this time period.



## IS VISITING THE SRC ASSOCIATED WITH POSITIVE ACADEMIC OUTCOMES?

The analysis below examines the relationship between the number of SRC visits and term GPA among first-time freshman (FTF) and first-time transfer (FTT) students while accounting for a host of student-level characteristics, including gender, ethnicity, college of major, Pell status, and the number of terms attended. The analysis also accounts for students' GPA prior to their entry into CSUN (i.e. high-school or transfer GPA).

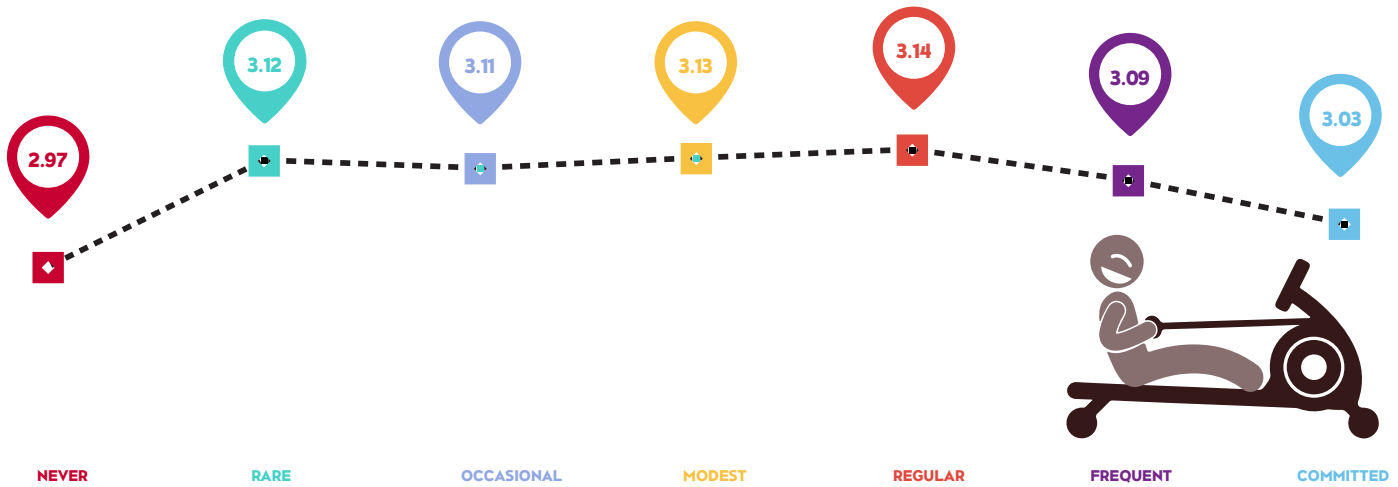
Among first-time freshmen, the results show that visiting the SRC by any amount is associated with higher semester GPA. "Regular" users earn the highest GPA on average and are statistically indistinguishable from frequent and committed users.

### FIRST TIME FRESHMAN (FTF) GPA BY SRC USER CATEGORY



Among transfer students, the results show that visiting the SRC by any amount is associated with higher semester GPA. Students who “rarely” use the SRC are statistically indistinguishable from all other SRC user categories.

### TRANSFER STUDENTS GPA BY SRC USER CATEGORY



## TAKEAWAY

**Overall, visiting the SRC during a given semester even once is associated with better term GPA, and this is true for both freshmen and transfers.** Ultimately, SRC attendance may be a strong indicator of campus engagement; therefore, an evaluation of the impact of SRC attendance as compared with participation in other on-campus activities would be helpful to understanding these findings. Further, our data only indicate whether students visited the SRC, not what they did there, so getting additional data on the type of usage would be helpful. Nonetheless, these data are an important first step toward understanding how student activity and participation data can help us to better understand student success.

