

Factors Contributing to Timely F-1 Graduation Rates

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Research Questions

CIE has two primary areas of inquiry:

- Can we identify factors that have a significant impact on 4-year graduation and 6-year graduation rates?
- Of those factors, which ones will inform CIE in modifying practices for international enrollment and intervention to increase the 4-year graduation rate?

Introduction

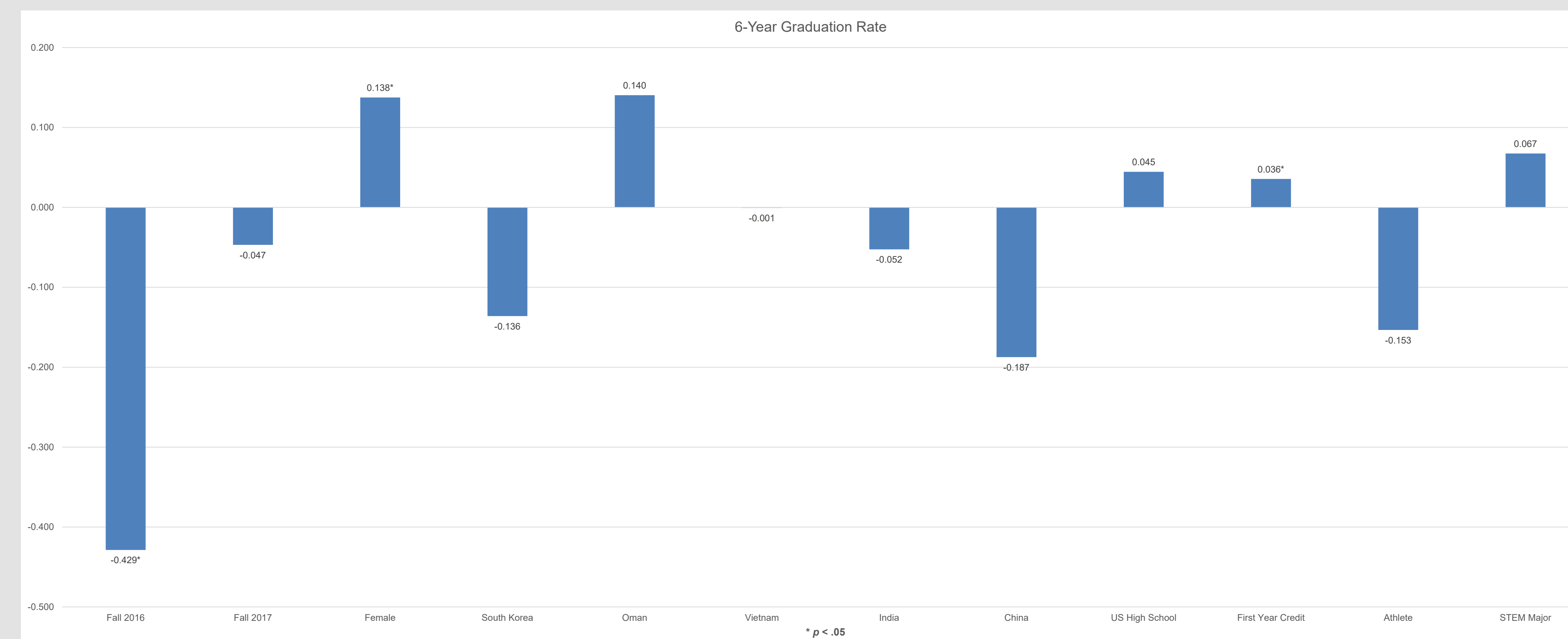
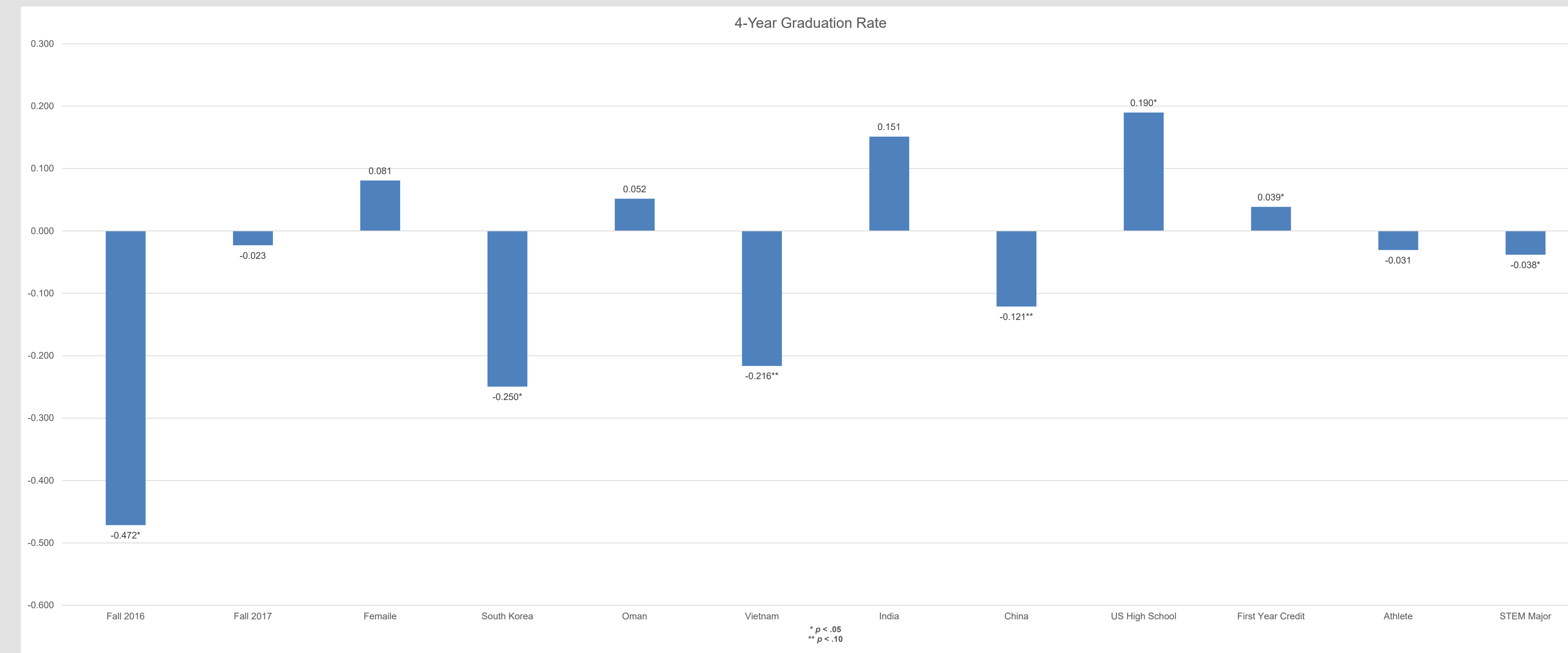
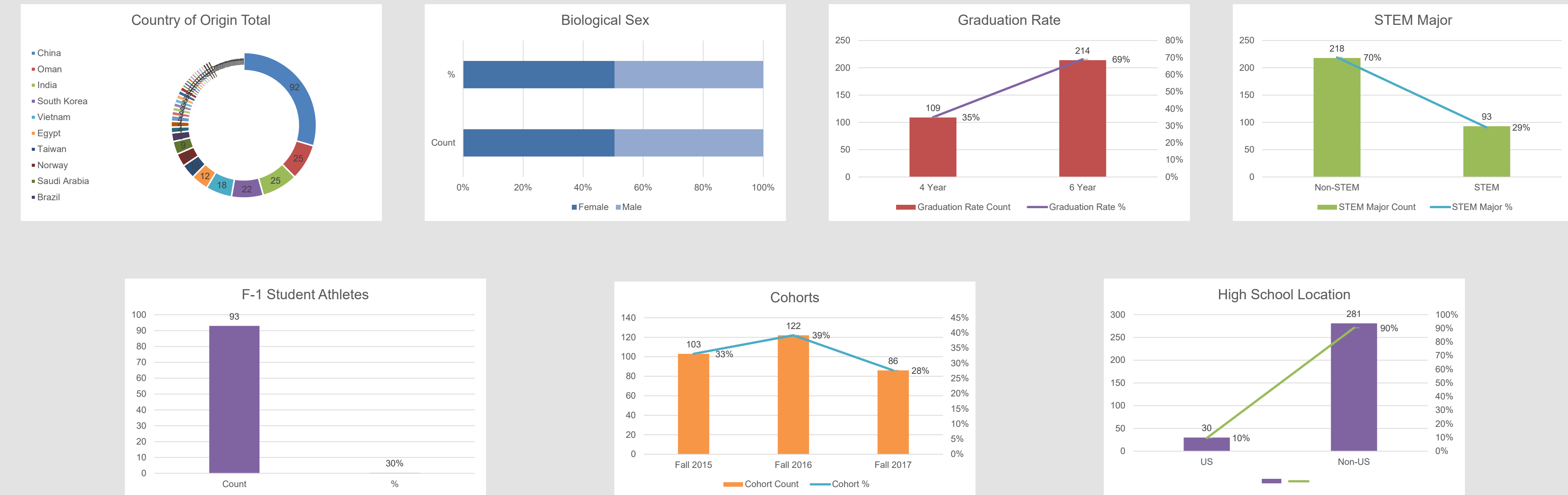
Understanding factors that significantly impact international, F-1 visa student 4-year and 6-year graduation rates contributes to CSULB's goal of increasing nonresident enrollment to 10% of the campus' student population. International students currently account for 5% of all degree-seeking students. International students bring diverse perspectives to campus and carry the CSULB experience all over the world. Our preliminary analysis aligns with the Graduation Initiative 2025 and CSULB's Inclusive Excellence Mission.

F-1 visa students, per immigration regulations, are required to maintain progressive, full-time enrollment while studying in the United States (U.S.). Due to the rigid enrollment regulation and the rising cost of attendance the CIE team expected the 4-year graduation rate to be higher when compared to the domestic student graduation rate.

Methods

- Beach Data Graduation Rates
- Fall FTF Cohorts 2015, 2016, and 2017
- Limited the data to only F-1 visa holders
- Coded the data to specifically look at the top 5 countries of origin: China, Oman, India, South Korea, and Vietnam
- Used a linear regression to determine the probability for timely 4-year and 6-year graduation rates

Results



Conclusion / Discussion

Through Beach Data we identified several factors that had varying degrees of impact on 4-year and 6-year graduation rates for first-time, first-year (FTF) international students. Notable revelations include:

- **Fall 2016 cohort** was 47 percentage points less likely to graduate in 4 years. This significant finding may be a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **South Korean students** were 25 percentage points less likely to graduate in 4 years.
- **STEM cohort students** or students beginning as STEM majors were 4 percentage points less likely to graduate in 4 years.
- **Female students** were 14 percentage points more likely to graduate in 6 years.
- **U.S. High School** or F-1 students coming from U.S. high schools were 19 percentage points more likely to graduate in 4 years.
- **First-Year Credit** indicated that for every 3 units of freshman credit brought in at time of enrollment F-1 international students were 12% more likely to graduate in 4 or 6 years.
- **Vietnamese students** are 22 percentage points less likely to graduate in 6 years.
- **Chinese students** are 12 percentage points less likely to graduate in 4 years.
- **Student Athletes** that don't graduate in 4 years are 21 percentage points less likely to graduate in 6 years.

While we did include high school GPA in our analysis, there was no statistically significant probability associated with incoming high school GPA.

Implications for Action

- There are unique factors that only impact international students and CIE needs to develop a specific international student success dashboard to monitor this student population to better inform our policies and advising practices.
- CSULB needs to create a unique Beach Data source that more effectively monitors international student success as there are unique variables that impact this student population that do not impact domestic students.
- CIE needs to develop tailored pre-arrival and first year programming to better prepare Chinese and South Korean students.
- CIE is better informed to recruit students for CSULB.

Next Steps / Future Directions

These preliminary findings suggest a need for further statistical analysis with larger data sets. Future analysis also needs to include cross reference with new variables, such as financial support and the impact of compulsory military service in South Korea and its impact on South Korean students' graduation rates.

Finally, numbers only provide a snapshot of the international student experience at CSULB. Further analysis requires a qualitative study particularly into the student records of CSULB's Chinese and South Korean student populations.