Two local colleges present a new "Finish in 4" program

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Bakersfield, Calif.- Two local colleges have come together to create a program that will help students graduate in four years flat. But some students are skeptical.

Bakersfield College and Cal State Bakersfield presented their collaborative "Finish in 4" program Tuesday. Both campus presidents rave - this is the most time-efficient and cost-affordable way for students to pursue their degree.

But there are students who say - it isn't realistic.

While graduating with a bachelor's degree in four years is generally the standard - it's not uncommon for students to take 5 years or longer to get a degree.

Sonya Christian is the President of Bakersfield College. She says, "We want our youngsters to get into the workforce sooner and be contributing citizens."

Which is why Bakersfield College and CSUB decided to create "Finish in 4."

"Do 60 units here, 60 units at CSUB and finish their degree in four years," said Horace Mitchell, the President of Cal State Bakersfield.

The idea is to eliminate the fat from the curriculum.

"We are the first in the state of California to have such a tight articulation of courses," Christian said.

This way, students complete only the required number of credits needed to graduate. 120 - No more, no less.

"I know many of the individuals at bc do have children and family and other responsibilities. so 15 units may be a little bit of a problem to juggle and manage," said Rhey Bongcaron, a nursing student in his fourth year at Bakersfield College.

The program requires 15 units each semester. Which means 5 courses at a time. For Bongcaron, a 15-unit course load while holding a job simply isn’t manageable.

"I am full time and that is 12 units and that was very hard on me," said Alena Venegas, another student who says she couldn’t manage more than four classes at a time.

Like anything, the program will require dedication. And ready or not, it's set to begin next school year. For those who are up to the challenge.

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