

Characteristics of First-Year Experience Students in Fall 2017: Results from SuccessNavigator[®] assessment

Executive Summary

- The majority of FYE students are women (71%); 60% are underrepresented minorities; 40% are first generation.
- Only 13% are not planning to work while attending Cal State Fullerton.
- 43% are planning to pursue a graduate or professional degree; 4% are planning to transfer out from Cal State Fullerton before obtaining a degree.
- The assessment of non-cognitive factors showed *test anxiety* and *sensitivity to stress* are higher among female students compared to the ETS normative sample.
- On average, the Summer Bridge cohort scored significantly lower than the Communications cohort on academic skills. In addition, the Summer Bridge and HHD cohorts scored significantly higher on commitment than the Compass Crossing cohort¹. Finally, the Summer Bridge cohort showed significantly higher social support than the MCBE and Compass Crossing cohort.

Sample Description

835 students were invited to participate in SuccessNavigator[®] and were given approximately one month to complete it. Of the 835 students, 686 (82%) completed the assessment, 11 (1%) started but did not finish, 111 (13%) did not participate and 27 (3%) finished but their responses were determined unreliable and were excluded from analyses because they finished the assessment too quickly.

The majority of participants were women (71%; see Figure 1). Approximately 60% were underrepresented minorities (i.e., 59% Hispanic, 1% Black; see Figure 2). Of the current participants, 11% were students in the Summer Bridge program, 13% in Health and Human Development, 11% in Business and Economics, 4% in Communications and 61% in Compass Crossing (Figure 3). With respect to parental educational background, 25% had at least one parent who graduated from college, and 40% were the first-generation students who came from a home where neither parent attended college (Figure 4). In addition, parents of 25% of the students have some college experience but do not have a four-year college degree. Therefore, 65% of the participants do not have a parent who earned a four-year college degree. Furthermore, 13% indicated that they were not planning to work for pay while attending Cal State Fullerton; 10% planned to work less than 10 hours per week; 52% planned to work between 10 to 20 hours; 18% planned to work between 20 to 40 hours (Figure 5).

¹ Undeclared freshman are automatically entered into the Compass Crossing Learning Community.

Figure 1. Gender breakdown (n = 686)

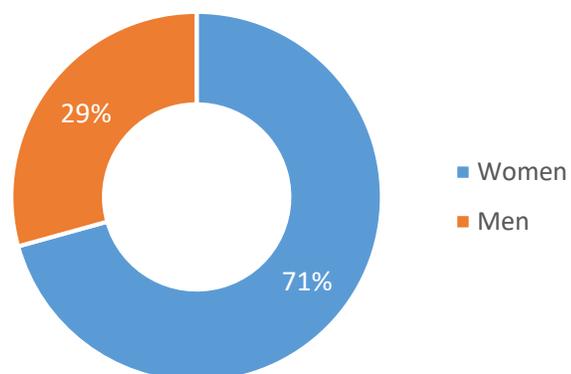


Figure 2. Ethnic/Racial background (n = 686)

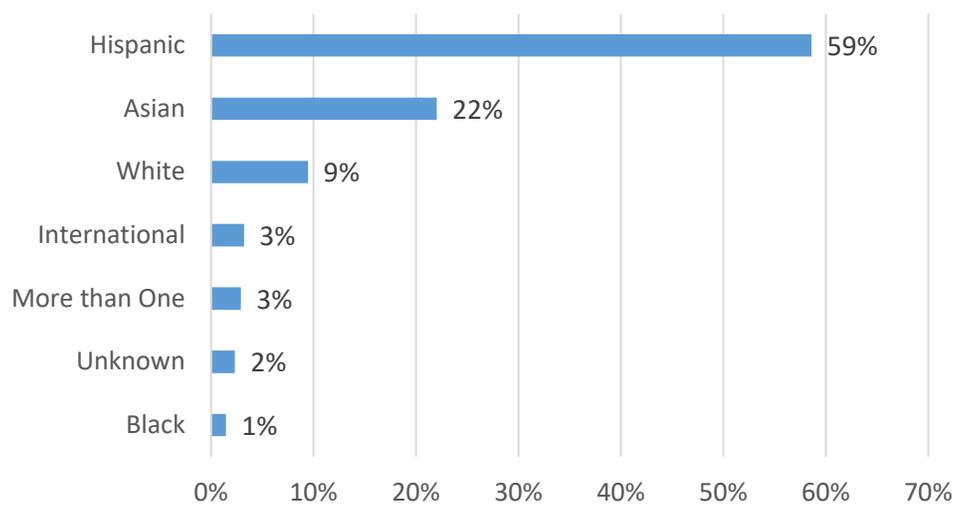


Figure 3. Cohorts (n = 686)

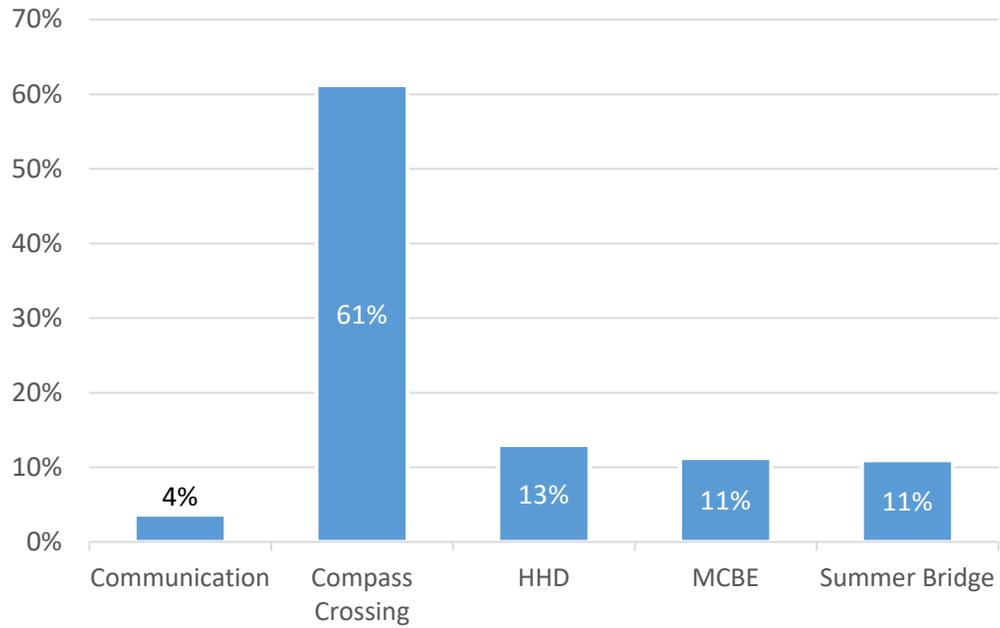


Figure 4. Parental educational background (n = 686)

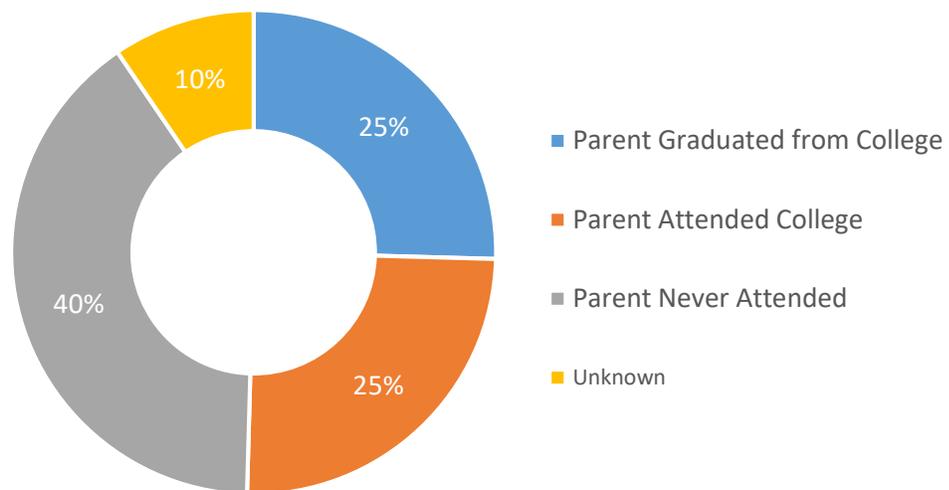
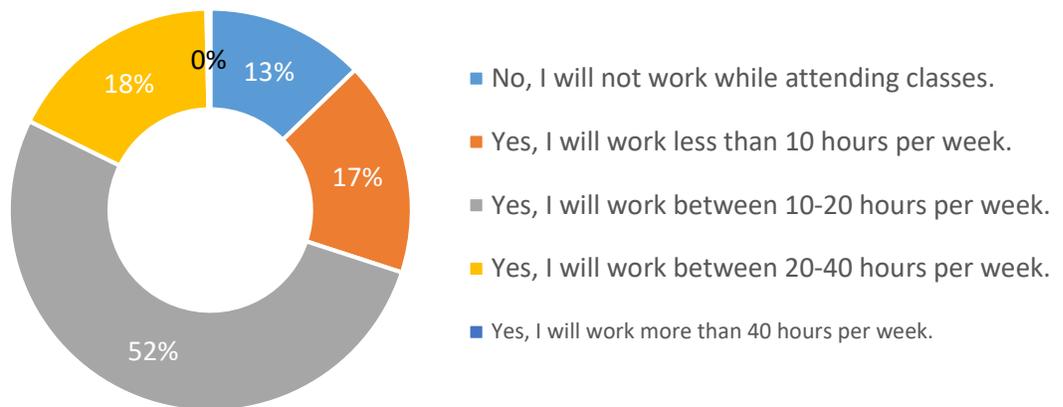


Figure 5. Employment plan while attending college (n = 643)



Educational Aspiration

When asked the primary reason for attending college, the majority (87%) reported preparation for career (Figure 6). The students are motivated to excel academically, with 43% responding they are planning to attain a graduate or professional degree (Figure 7). However, when asked whether or not they plan to transfer out of Cal State Fullerton, 49% responded *No*, 33% *uncertain* and 14% *Yes, after completing a degree* and 4% *before completing degree* (Figure 8).

Figure 6. Primary reason for attending college (n = 612)

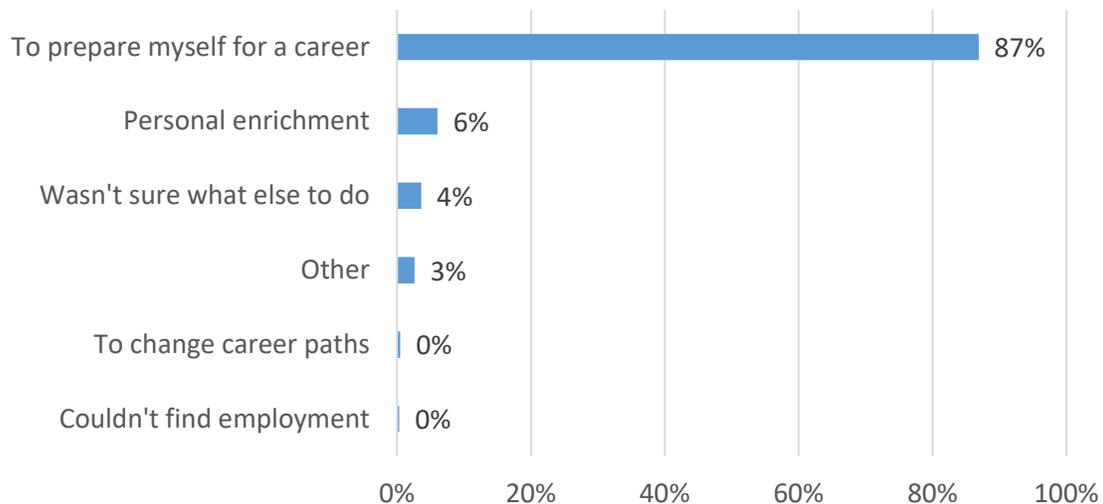


Figure 7. Expected level of educational achievement (n = 686)

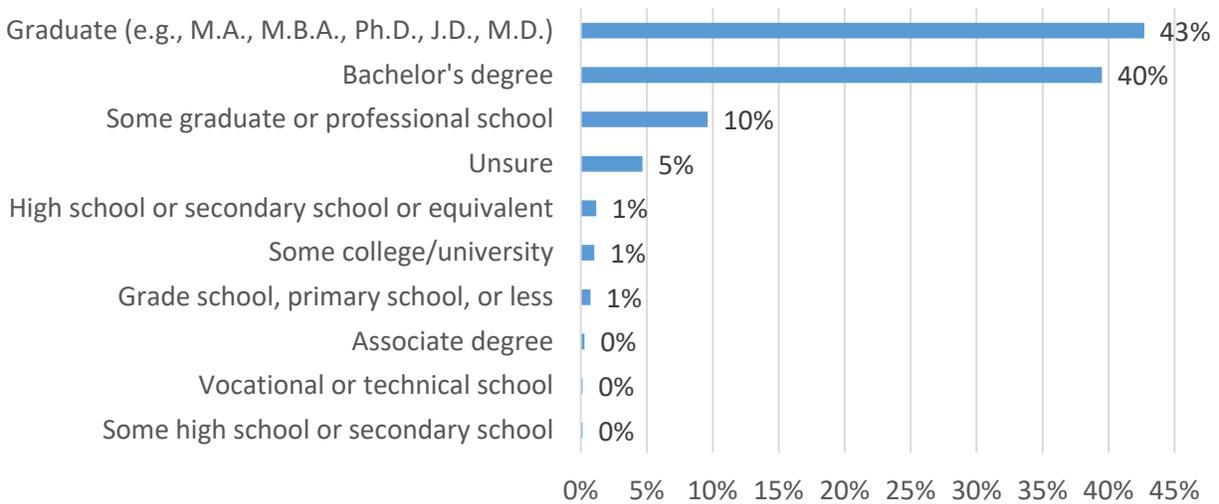
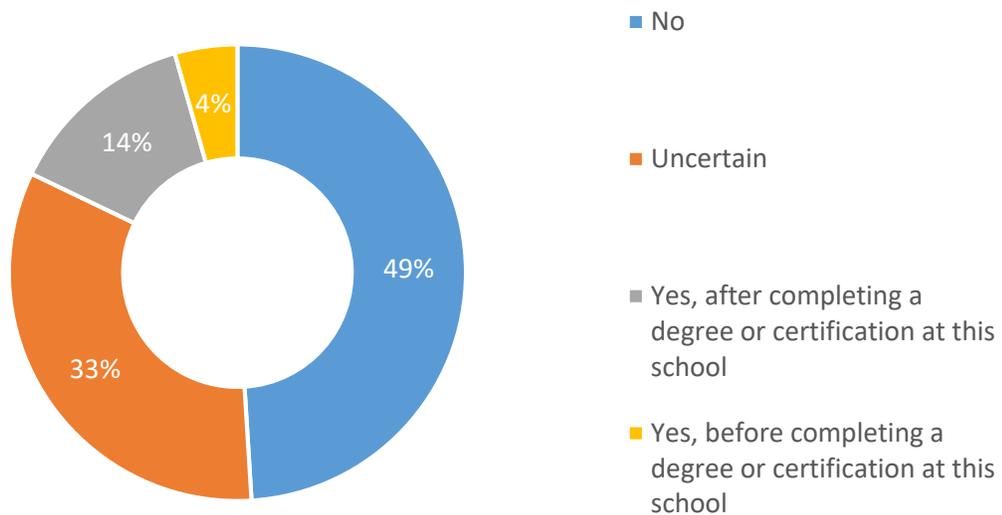


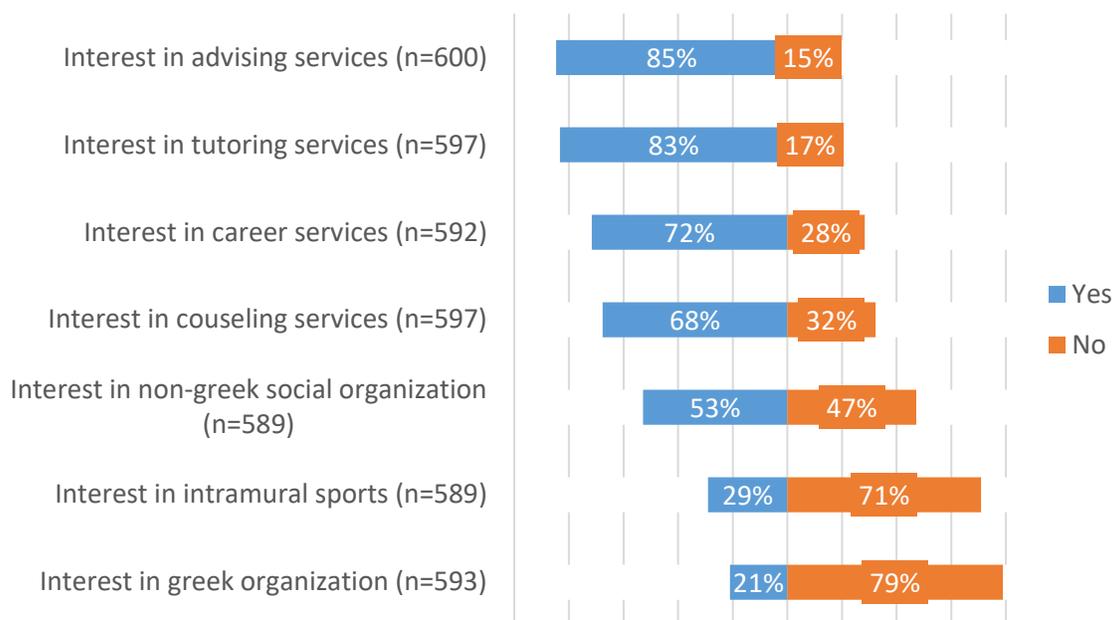
Figure 8. Plan of transferring out (n = 610)



Interest In Service

The students were also asked of their interest in utilizing services or participating in social groups at Cal State Fullerton. It was found that the majority of the participants were interested in utilizing advising (85%), tutoring (83%), career (72%) and counseling (68%) services on campus. Approximately half of the participants were interested in a non-Greek social organization (53%), while only 29% and 21% were interested in intramural sports or Greek organizations, respectively (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Interest in utilizing services or participating in social groups on campus



Non-Cognitive Skills

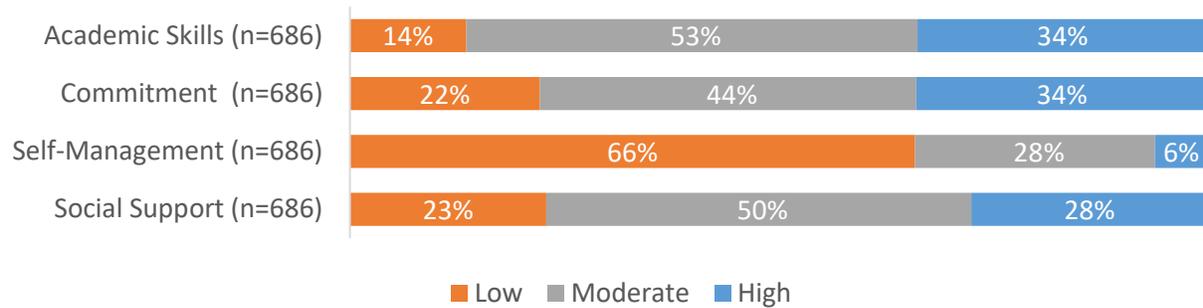
SuccessNavigator® assessed four general domains of non-cognitive factors:

- Academic skills – tools and strategies to succeed in the classroom
- Commitment – active pursuit toward an academic goal
- Self-management – reactions to academic and other stressors
- Social support – connecting with people and resources for student success

Each student is classified as low, moderate or high in each of the four domains relative to the ETS normative sample. Non-cognitive scores equivalent to the low 25th percentile of the normative sample are classified as low; the middle two quartiles are classified as moderate; the top quartile is classified as high.

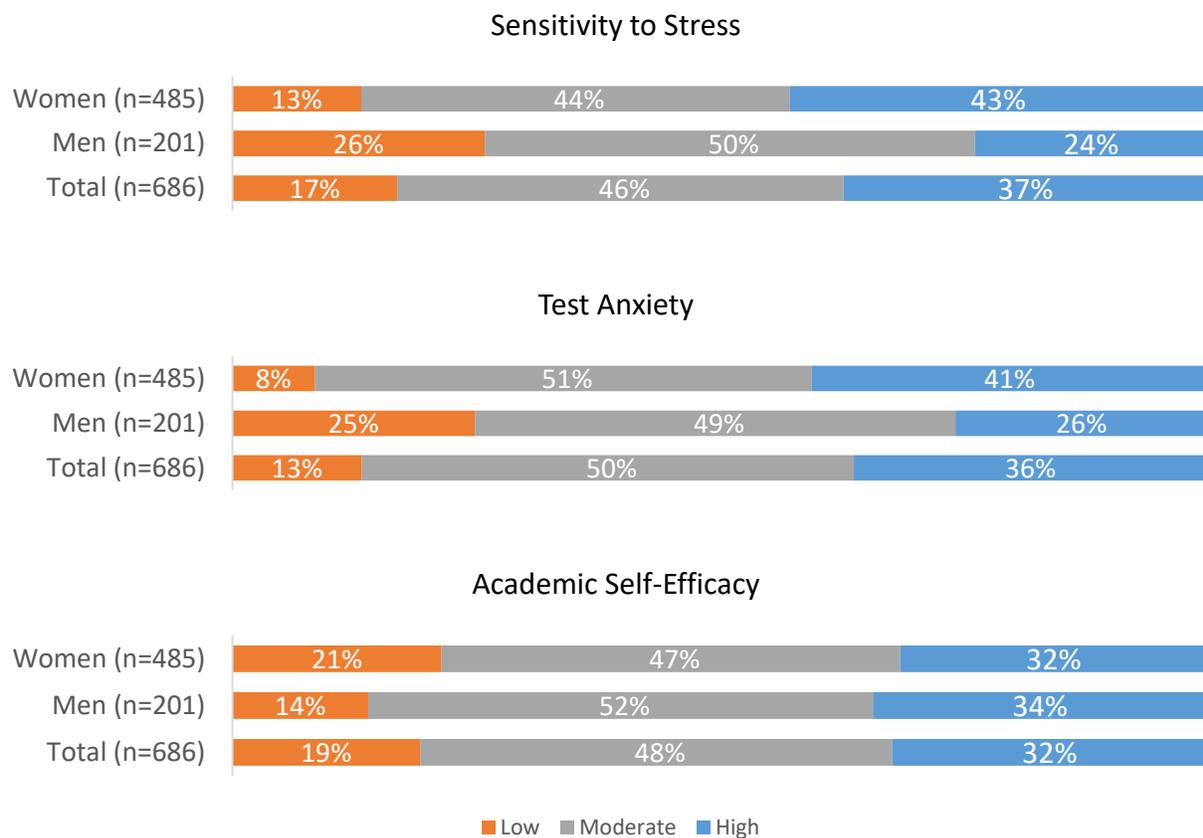
Compared to the normative sample, FYE students were classified as low in self-management skills. In other words, 66% of the FYE students scored equivalent to the lowest 25% of the normative sample in self-management skills (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Levels of non-cognitive domains



Because self-management was significantly low for our students, its subskills – i.e., sensitivity to stress, test anxiety and academic self-efficacy were further examined. It is clear that women exhibited greater sensitivity to stress and test anxiety than men (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Subskills of self-management by gender



When scores of non-cognitive factors by cohorts were compared, it was found that the Summer Bridge cohort scored significantly lower than the Communications cohort on academic skills. In addition, the Summer Bridge and HHD cohorts scored significantly higher on commitment than the Compass Crossing cohort. Finally, the Summer Bridge cohort showed significantly higher social support than the MCBE and Compass Crossing cohort (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Non-cognitive scores by cohorts

