Georgia State University

First-Year Student Expectations and Experiences
2016-2017

Office of Institutional Research

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of Georgia State University's 2016 Incoming Freshmen *Fall Expectation* Survey and the 2017 *Spring Experience* follow-up survey. The *Fall Expectation* survey investigates students' self-expectations in the areas of college preparation, college activity engagement, engagement with faculty and staff, time management, obstacles to academic success, and performance expectations. The *Spring Experience* survey looks at students' experiences over two semesters of college. This report examines whether first-year students' self-expectations correspond to their actual experiences at Georgia State.

The results presented in this report are based on responses from 1,056 students who completed the *Fall* 2016 incoming freshmen survey and 589 freshmen who participated in the 2017 *Spring* follow-up survey. The response rate was 32% for the *Fall Self-expectation* survey and 18% for the *Spring Experience* survey. Of the 1,275 *Fall* and *Spring* participants, 370 students took both *Fall* and *Spring* surveys. Findings are reported in four sections. Section I presents findings associated with the students who took both surveys in order to examine students' specific comparison data (paired group). Section II presents the findings from the general group (those who participated in the *Fall Expectation* administration as the *Fall* group and those who participated in the *Spring Experience* administration as the *Spring* group). Section III focuses on the findings on relationships between first-year students' expectations to transfer out and their enrollment status in Fall 2017 for the paired group and general group. Section IV summarizes the students' suggestions for improving their first-year experience in college and suggests future study.

Major Findings

According to the *Spring Experience* survey, first-year students were more prepared for writing clearly and effectively and thinking analytically in order to solve practical problems than they expected. On the other hand, first-year students expected to be more prepared for college in the areas of setting goals, organizing tasks, and meeting deadlines than they actually were in those areas.

Overall, students' Fall semester GPAs were significantly higher than their Spring semester GPAs.

While more than half of the entering freshmen thought their writing skills, math skills, and reluctance to ask for help might pose obstacles to their academic success, the *Spring Experience* survey findings indicated that first-year students were actually more likely to have obstacles in weak time management skills, lack of concentration, family responsibilities, and job responsibilities as obstacles to academic success. Students' higher levels of self-expectations for and actual experience with academic obstacles and personal obstacles were significantly associated with lower GPAs (Fall semester, Spring semester, and first-year overall).

While first-year students expected to generally keep up with their course assignments, the *Spring* findings indicated that they were significantly more likely to find themselves behind. If they fell behind, first-year students expected to seek help from faculty, academic support services, or their peers; however, the reality was the majority of those students who fell behind, most caught up on their own.

Academic dishonesty was another topic surveyed. In the *Fall Expectation* survey, incoming freshmen students believed that they would report if they witnessed academic dishonesty behavior in the classroom. However, the *Spring Experience* results indicated the majority of the students who had witnessed such academic dishonesty ultimately ignored it.

The majority of the first-year students expected to engage in various college activities and work on a research project with a faculty member during the academic year. Nevertheless, the *Spring Experience* results indicated only around half of the students participated in college activities, and most students did not engage in a research project with a faculty member during their first year in college. In addition, most students expected to discuss

career plans with a faculty member or seek advisement from a faculty or staff member; their actual experiences and initial expectations were met in this regard.

Forty percent of first-year students expected that they would work off campus, which was consistent with the *Spring Experience* findings.

The majority of the students indicated that they expected to like college, but after their first two semesters their enthusiasm for college significantly decreased.

Students indicating a "good chance" to transfer out had significantly higher Fall, Spring, and overall cumulative GPAs than other students indicating "generally no chance" or "moderate chance" to transfer out. The majority of the students indicating a "good chance" to transfer out were male and non-underrepresented-minority (non-URM) students.

During the first year in college, first-generation students were more likely than non-first-generation students to have personal obstacles to academic success. Non-first-generation students had higher participation rates in various student groups or clubs and athletic events.

Under-represented minority (URM) students were more likely than non-URM (White & Asian) students to engage in college activities.

Overview & Research Methodology

Development of the Survey

The primary reason for developing the survey was to better understand the incoming first-year students' self-expectations and their actual experience at Georgia State University; comparisons between their expectations and experience could be used to inform student policies and programs. The *Fall* and *Spring* questionnaires were designed to assess students' self-expectations and experience of their college preparation, participation in college activities, faculty and staff engagement, time management skills, academic performance, and obstacles to academic success.

Survey Administration

The Incoming First-Year Student Expectations Survey was administered to all incoming first-year students via Class Climate during August and September of 2016. The follow-up survey was administered in late March and April 2017.

Quantitative & Qualitative Analysis

Data used for analysis consist of three sources: surveys, data warehouse, and national clearinghouse.

Quantitative analyses of the data were performed by using SPSS. Statistical procedures included, but were not limited to, descriptive analyses, t-test, analysis of variance, correlation, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and regression analysis.

Qualitative analysis was conducted with ATLAS.ti, an open thematic coding tool. Qualitative data, comprised of a total of 255 code texts in the *Spring Experience* survey, were quantified in the analysis. Twenty variables were extracted and analyzed by using SPSS.

Sources of Error

While the response rates for the *Fall* (32%) and *Spring* surveys (18%) were low, these are typical undergraduate student response rates. In the paired group, females were overrepresented by 17 percentage points in the survey. In the general group, females were overrepresented by 12 percentage points. This is a general pattern found with undergraduate student surveys at Georgia State University. Respondent race demographics were representative of the 2016 incoming freshmen class.

Section I: Incoming First-Year student survey findings (Paired Group)

An overview of the demographics of students who took both the 2016 *Fall Self-expectation* and 2017 *Spring Experience* surveys is summarized (paired group).

Gender/Race/Ethnicity

Of the 370 students, 77% identified as female and 23% identified as male (Appendix A).

Of the respondents who reported a race, 40% identified as Black, 35% identified as White, and 14% identified as Asian. Thirteen percent of the students identified as Hispanic/Latino (Appendix B), and they were 5 percentage points overrepresented. Asian respondents were underrepresented by 4 percentage points and White students were overrepresented by 7 percentage points in the paired group.

Figure 1. Race (Paired Group, N=370)
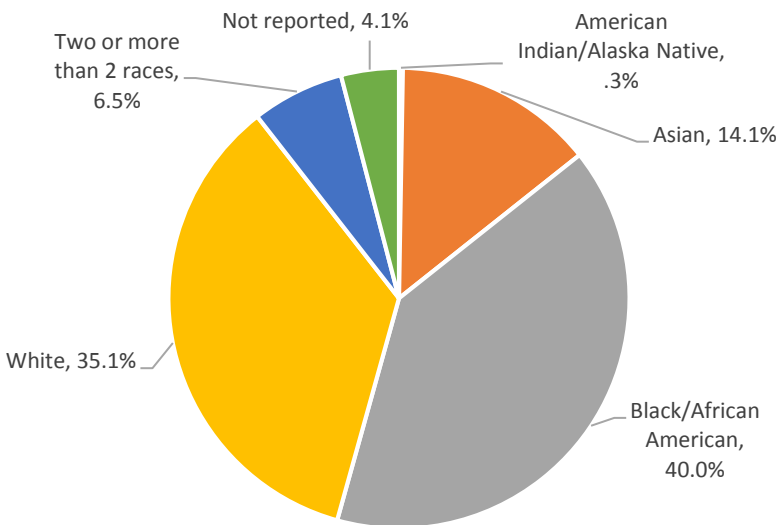
Paired Group Results

Paired group (Incoming First-Year Students, N = 370). These findings compare incoming first-year student self-expectations, as reported in the *Fall Expectation* survey, with students' actual experiences reported in the *Spring Experience* survey.
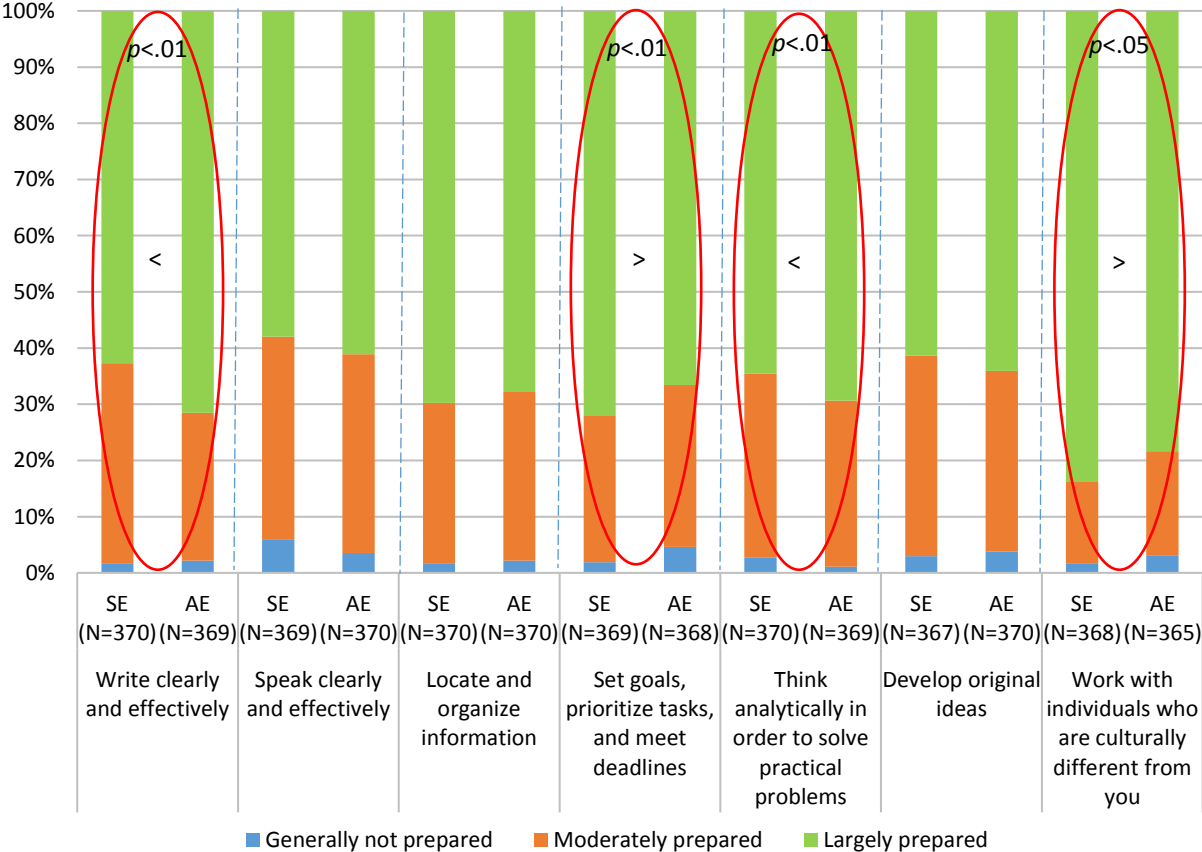
College Preparation

Students were asked to consider the rigor of college-level academic work and indicate how prepared they thought they were in seven areas. The response scale for college preparation is based on a six-point semantic differential scale where 1 = "Not at all prepared" to 6 = "Very prepared".

Results indicated that first-year students were significantly more prepared in writing skills and thinking analytically after two semesters than they had initially expected when entering college. On the other hand, first-year students were significantly less prepared in setting goals, prioritizing tasks, meeting deadlines, and working with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds after two semesters of college (Figure 2 & Appendix C).

Figure 2. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with College Preparation (Paired Group)

Fall Survey: Considering the rigor of college-level academic work, how prepared do you think you are to do the following?
Spring Survey: Considering your first year of college-level academic work, how prepared were you to do the following?

Notes. 1. SE=Self-Expectations; AE=Actual Experience. Scale range: 1 = Not at all prepared to 6 = Very prepared.
2. Significant differences indicate sginificant mean differences.

College Activity Engagement

College activity engagement investigates the first-year students' college activity engagement in eight areas, including social activities, academic involvement, and class-taking behavior. The response scale of college activities is based on a six-point semantic differential scale where 1 = "No chance" to 6 = "Very good chance" for the *Fall Self-Expectation* survey. The *Spring Experience* survey seeks to determine whether students engaged in the college activities and consists of two parts: a categorical scale (Yes/No) for six areas and a six-point semantic differential scale for three areas. Findings are illustrated in Figure 3, Figure 4, and Appendix D.

The Fall Expectation results indicated that most first-year students expected to engage in college activities when they entered the university, but the *Spring Experience* survey results revealed that students did not engage in activities to the extent they had expected. For example, while more than 90% of students believed that they would participate in student groups or clubs, only around 50% of respondents reported that they actually engaged in these activities by the end of two semesters. In addition, the *Spring Experience* results showed that the overwhelming majority of the students who had initially expected to socialize with someone from another race or ethnicity did indeed do so.

Figure 3. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with College Activity Engagement (Paired Group)

Fall survey: As an undergraduate student at GSU, what is your best guess as to the chances you will do the following?
Spring survey: Considering your first year of college, did you do of the following?
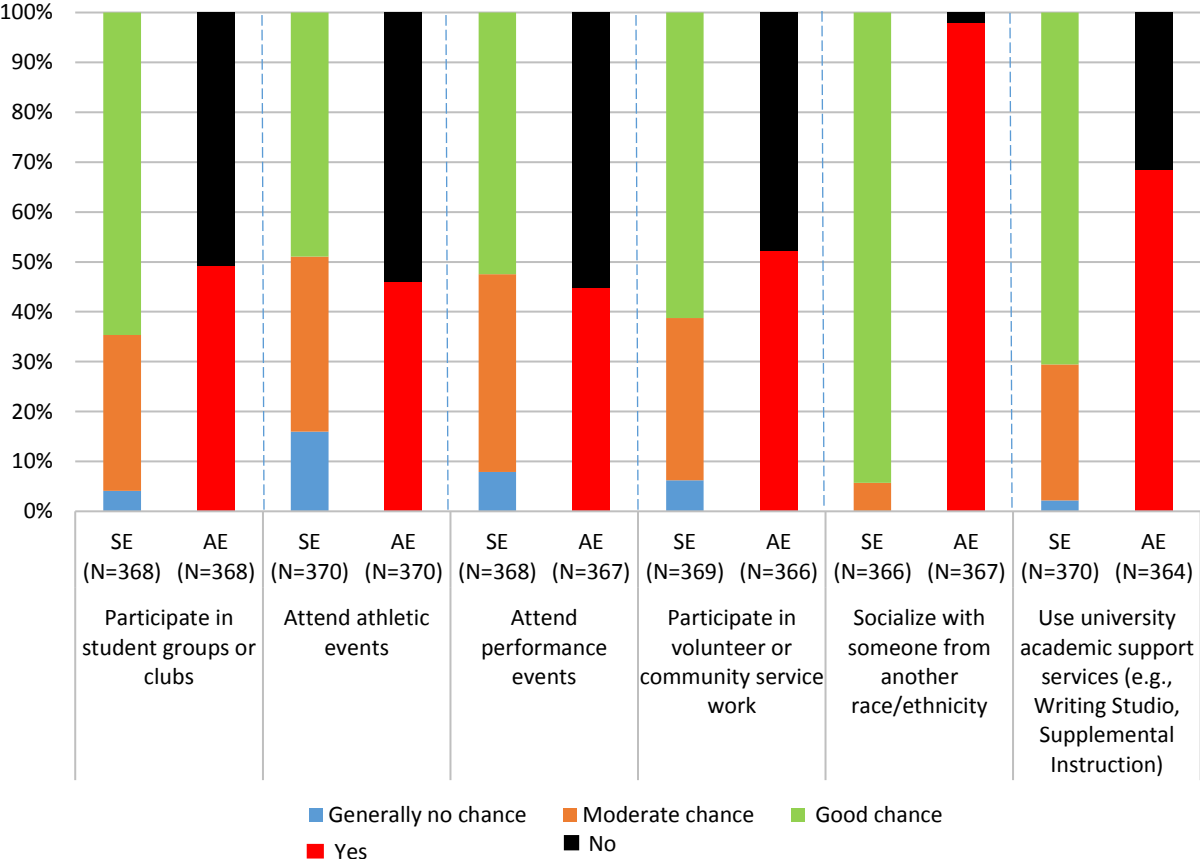
Notes. SE=Self-Expectations, AE=Actual Experience. SE scale range: 1 = No chance to 6 = Very good chance. AE: Yes/No.

In terms of perception of class workload, first-year students reported that they were significantly less likely to take classes on a part-time basis after two semesters than they initially believed when entering college (Figure 4 and Appendix D).

Figure 4. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Class-Taking Behavior and Transferring Out (Paired Group)
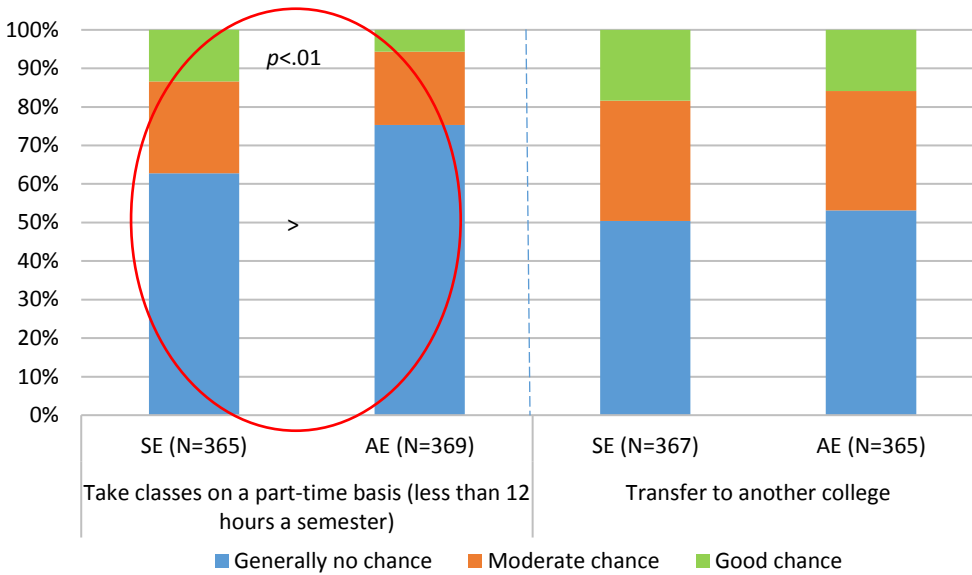
Notes.
1. SE=Self-Expectations; AE=Actual Experience. Scale range: 1 = No chance to 6 = Very good chance.
2. Significant differences indicate mean differences.

Faculty and Staff Engagement

Students were asked to consider how often they expected to engage with faculty and staff during their first year in college. The response scale of faculty and staff engagement is based on a six-point semantic differential scale, ranging from 1 = "Never" to 6 = "Very often" for the *Fall Expectation* survey. It is a categorical scale (Yes/No) in the *Spring Experience* survey.

Results indicated that while around 90% of the respondents expected to work with a faculty member on a research project, only around 18% of these students reported they did engage in this activity. While around 96% of the students expected to discuss career plans with a faculty member, just over 60% students reported they actually did so. A majority of the students reported that they sought advisement from a faculty or staff member, which matched their expectations when entering college (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Engagement with Faculty and Staff (Paired Group)

Fall survey: How often do you expect to do the following?
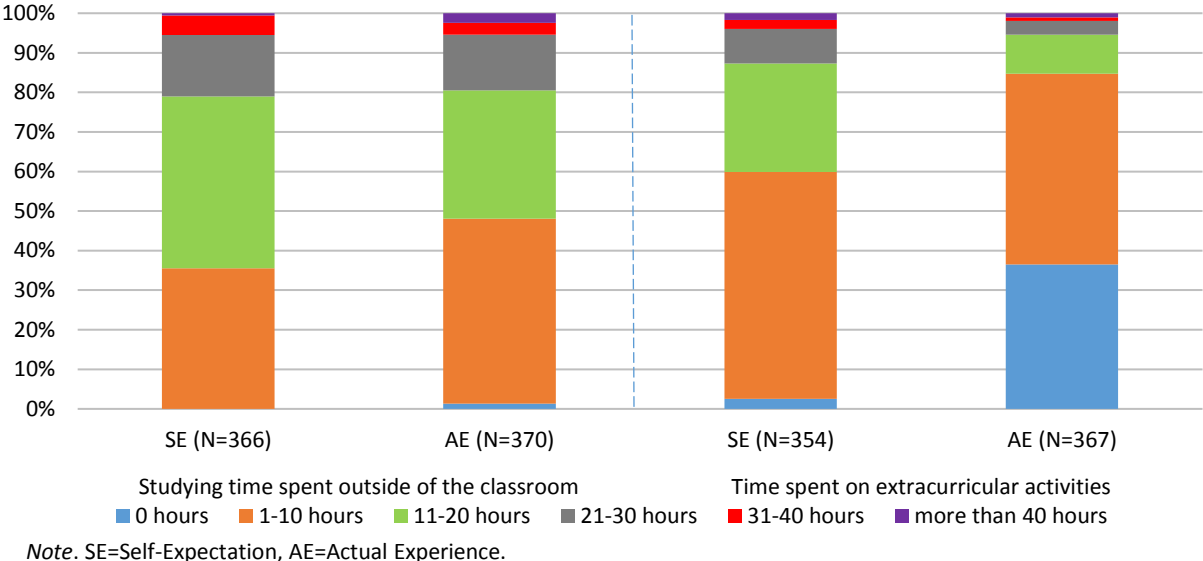*Spring* survey: Considering your first year of college, did you do any of the following?
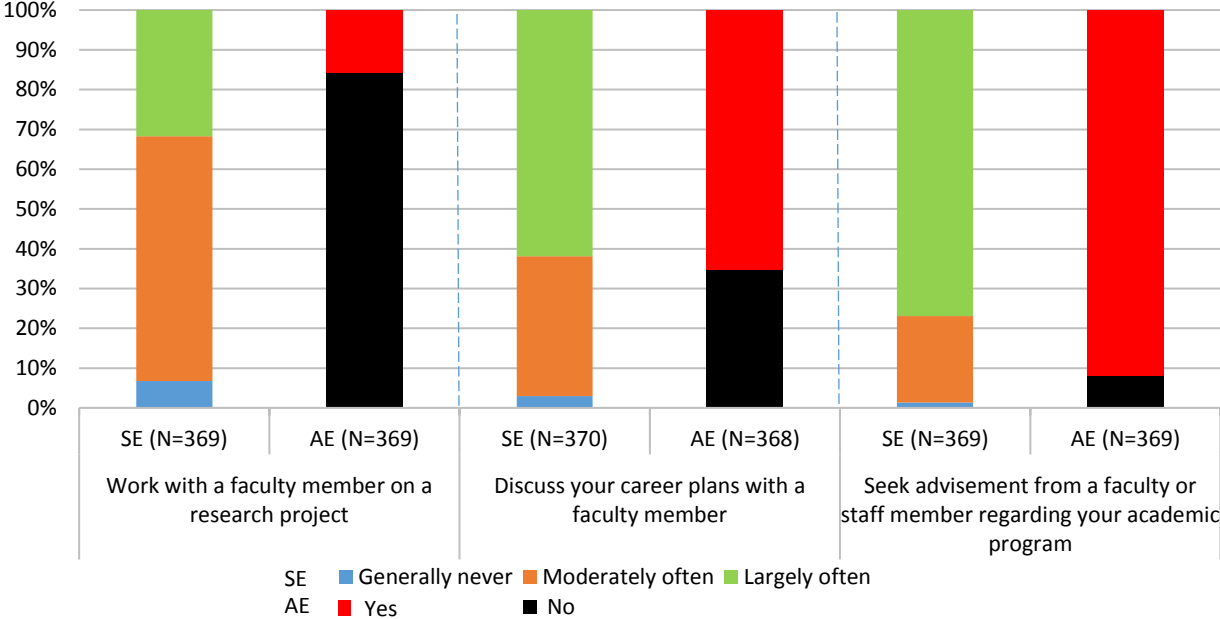
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Time Management

Students were asked to estimate the average amount of time per week they would allocate in studying outside of the classroom, preparing class assignments, participating in extracurricular activities per week, and employment off/on campus. Results from the *Spring Experience* survey indicated that over the course of two semesters, the majority of the students' actual studying time per week paralleled with their expectations. In addition, there were more students in the *Spring Experience* findings than those in the *Fall Expectation* findings, expecting to spend little to no time participating in extracurricular activities when entering the university (Figure 6).
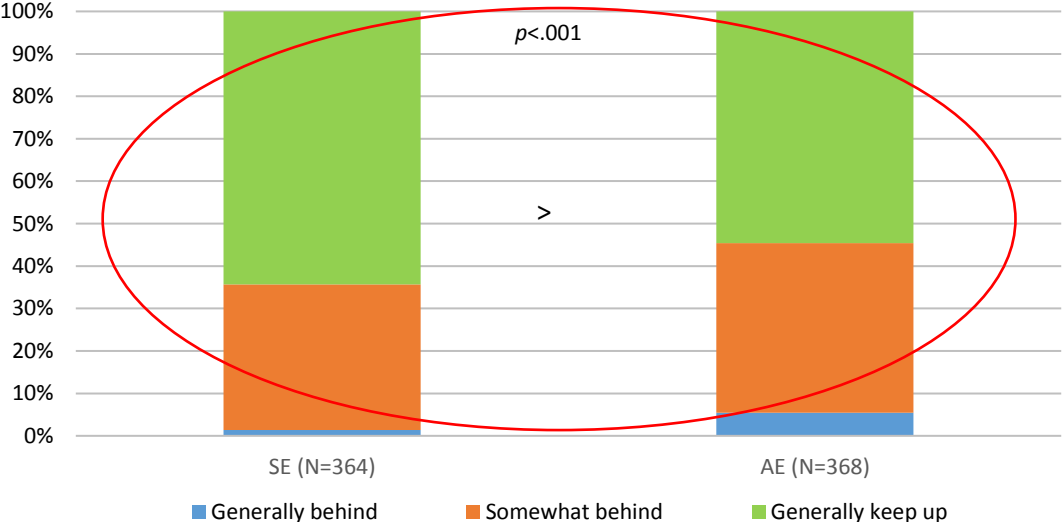
Figure 6. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Studying Time and Extracurricular Activity Time (Paired Group)

Studying time spent outside of the classroom   Time spent on extracurricular activities

■ 0 hours ■ 1-10 hours ■ 11-20 hours ■ 21-30 hours ■ 31-40 hours ■ more than 40 hours

Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

In terms of time management in studying, an important finding showed that first-year students fell significantly more behind in keeping up with class reading and writing assignments than they had expected when they entered Georgia State University (Figure 7 and Appendix E).

Figure 7. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Time Management of Assignments (Paired Group)

Fall survey: Considering your study habits, what pattern best describes the way you expect to manage class reading and wrting assignments?
Spring survey: Considering your study habits, what pattern best descirbes the way you managed class reading and writing assignments during the academic year?

■ Generally behind ■ Somewhat behind ■ Generally keep up

Note. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.
2. Significant differences indicate mean differences.

Employment off/on Campus

Approximately 40% of the first-year students expected to work off campus, which was consistent with the *Spring* findings (Figure 8). Although around 40% of the first-year students expected to work on campus, only around 15% did so (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Employment off/on Campus

Fall survey: Do you expect to be employed OFF/ON CAMPUS during your first year at GSU?
Spring survey: Were you employed OFF/ON CAMPUS during your first year at GSU?
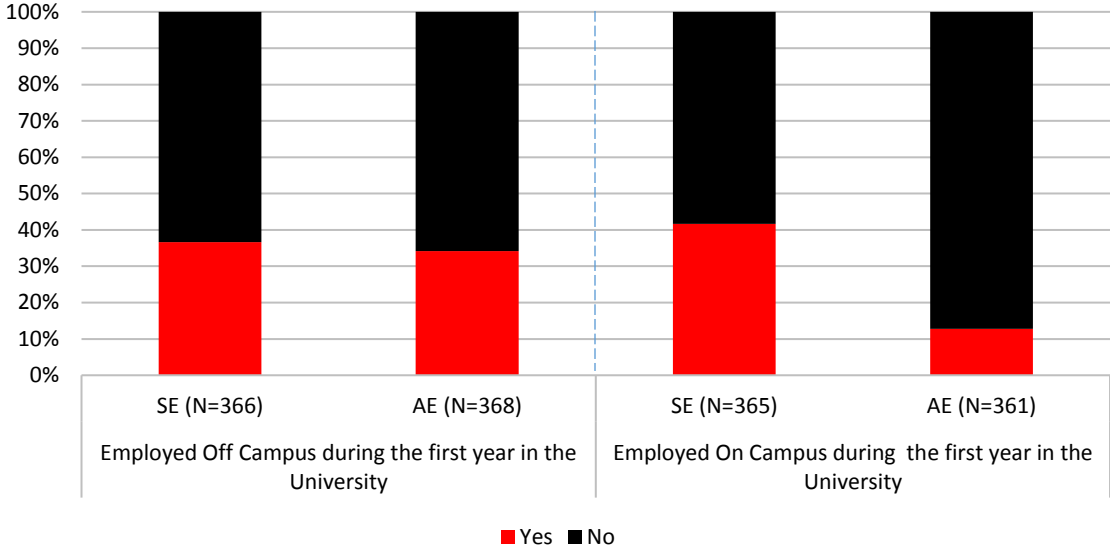
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Of the students who both initially expected to work and actually worked off campus, they worked more than they had anticipated they would coming into the university (Figure 9). Of the students who expected to work and actually worked on campus, they worked less than what they expected to (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Hours Worked off/on Campus (Paired Group)

Fall survey: About how mant hours a week do you expect to work?
Spring survey: About how many hours a week did you work?

Note. SE=Self-expectation, AE=Actual Experience.
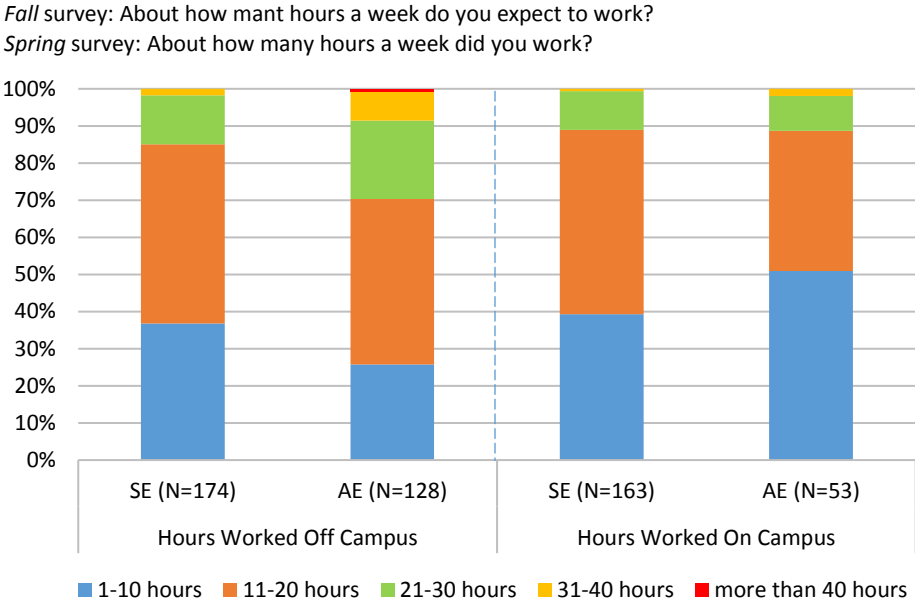
Performance

As noted in Figure 7, 51% of the students indicated that they fell behind in coursework. Although these students expected to seek help from faculty, academic support, or peers when falling behind (Figure 10), the *Spring Experience* findings indicated that the majority reported that they ultimately caught up on their own (Figure 11).

Figure 10. Expectations for Catching up Strategies When Falling behind in Coursework (N=368) (Paired Group)
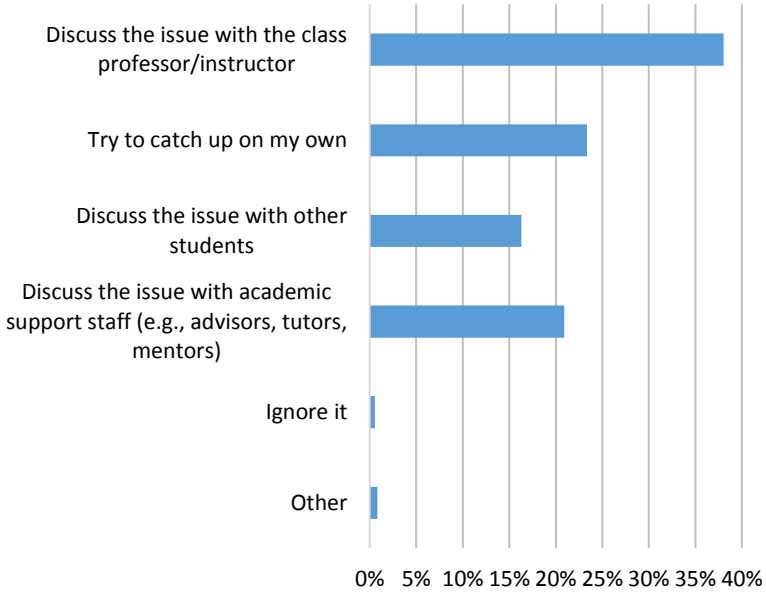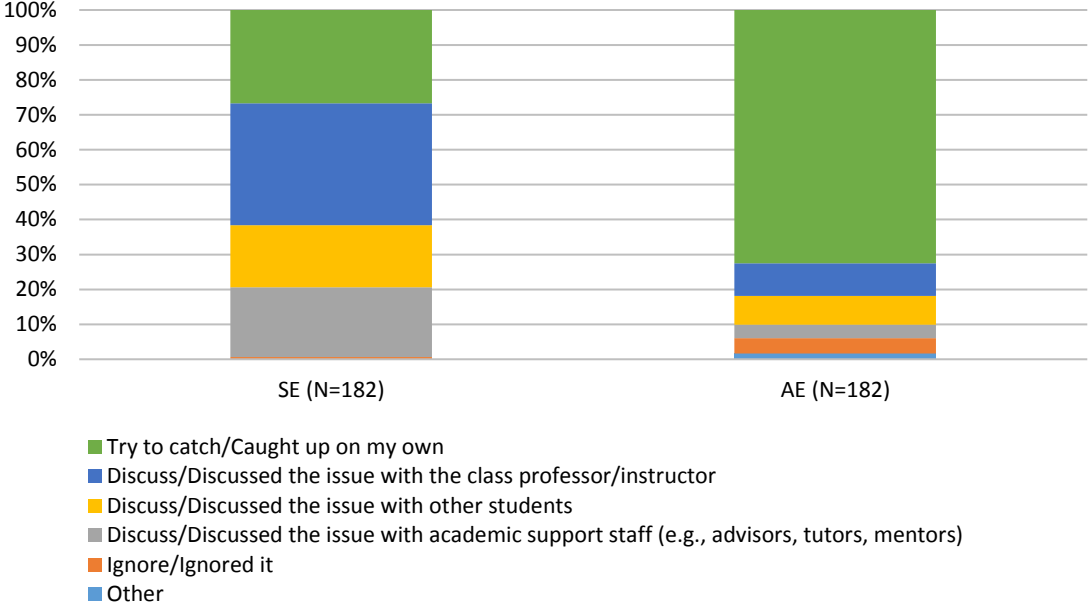
Figure 11. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Strategies When Falling Behind in Coursework (Paired Group)

Fall survey: If you find yourself falling behind in your class coursework, which of the following are you more likely to do?
Spring survey: Finding yourself behind in your coursework, which of the following did you do?

- ■ Try to catch/Caught up on my own
- ■ Discuss/Discussed the issue with the class professor/instructor
- ■ Discuss/Discussed the issue with other students
- ■ Discuss/Discussed the issue with academic support staff (e.g., advisors, tutors, mentors)
- ■ Ignore/Ignored it
- ■ Other

Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Academic Dishonesty

Of the entering freshmen, more than 60% indicated that they would report cheating behavior in the classroom by discussing with their professor/instructor, advisor, or peers. The *Spring Experience* survey results revealed that around 23% of the students reported that they had witnessed academic cheating behavior in the classroom, and a majority of those (70%) ignored the behavior (Figures 12 and 13).

Figure 12. Distribution of Whether or Not Students Witnessed Cheating Behavior in the Classroom after Two Semesters (N=368)

- ■ Yes ■ No
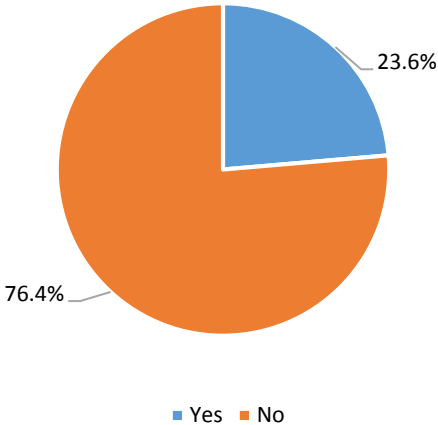
Figure 13. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Reactions When Witnessing Academic Dishonesty Behavior in the Classroom (Paired Group)
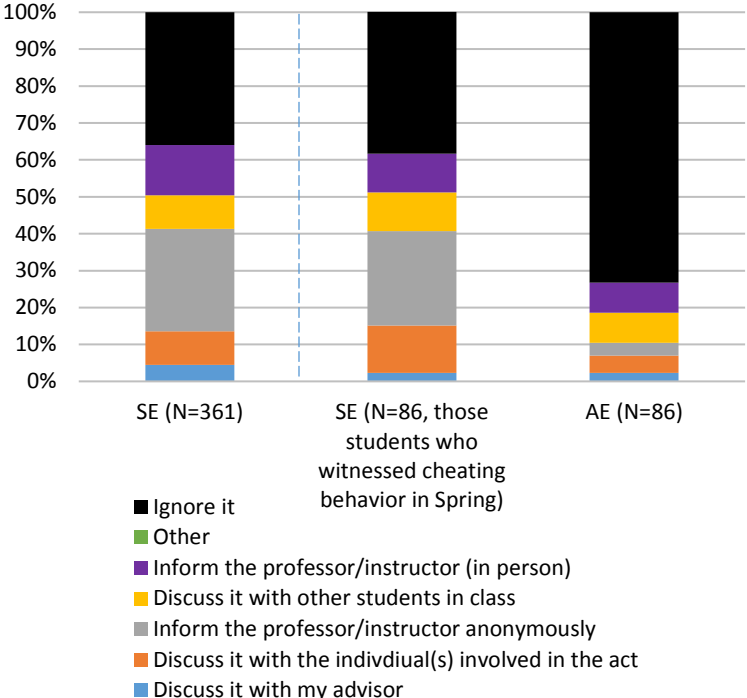
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Academic Performance (GPA)

There was no significant difference found between the Fall semester GPA (2016) and Spring semester GPA (2017) for the paired group (Figure 14 & Appendix F).

Figure 14. First-Year Student Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and Overall First-Year Cumulative GPAs (Paired Group)
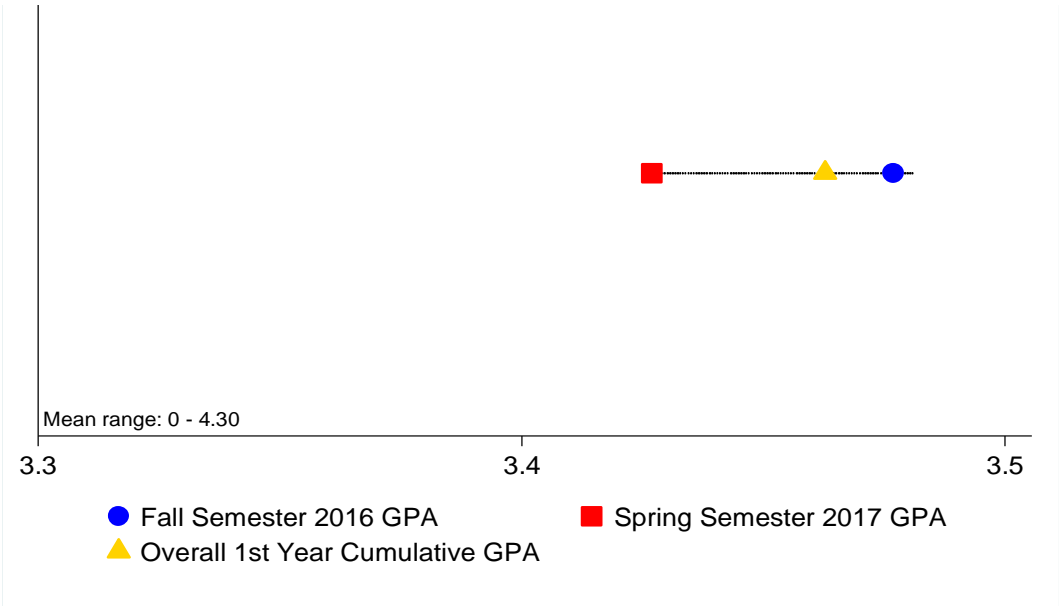
Obstacles to Academic Success

Students were given a list composed of potential academic and personal challenges and were asked to rate how likely these items could become obstacles to their academic success. The response scale was based on a six-point semantic differential scale where 1 = "Not at all likely" to 6 = "Very likely". The *Spring Experience* survey asked them to rate the degree to which the obstacles played a role in their academic success. The response scale was 1 = "No significant role" to 6 = "Very significant role". Descriptive analyses are summarized in Figure 15, Figure 16, and Appendix G.

While results indicated that first-year students expected weak writing skills, math skills, and job responsibilities to be obstacles to academic success, the *Spring Experience* survey revealed different results: lack of concentration, weak time management skills, reluctance to ask for help, and family responsibilities (all of which were initially significantly underrated challenges in the *Fall Expectation* survey) proved to be the major barriers to academic success.
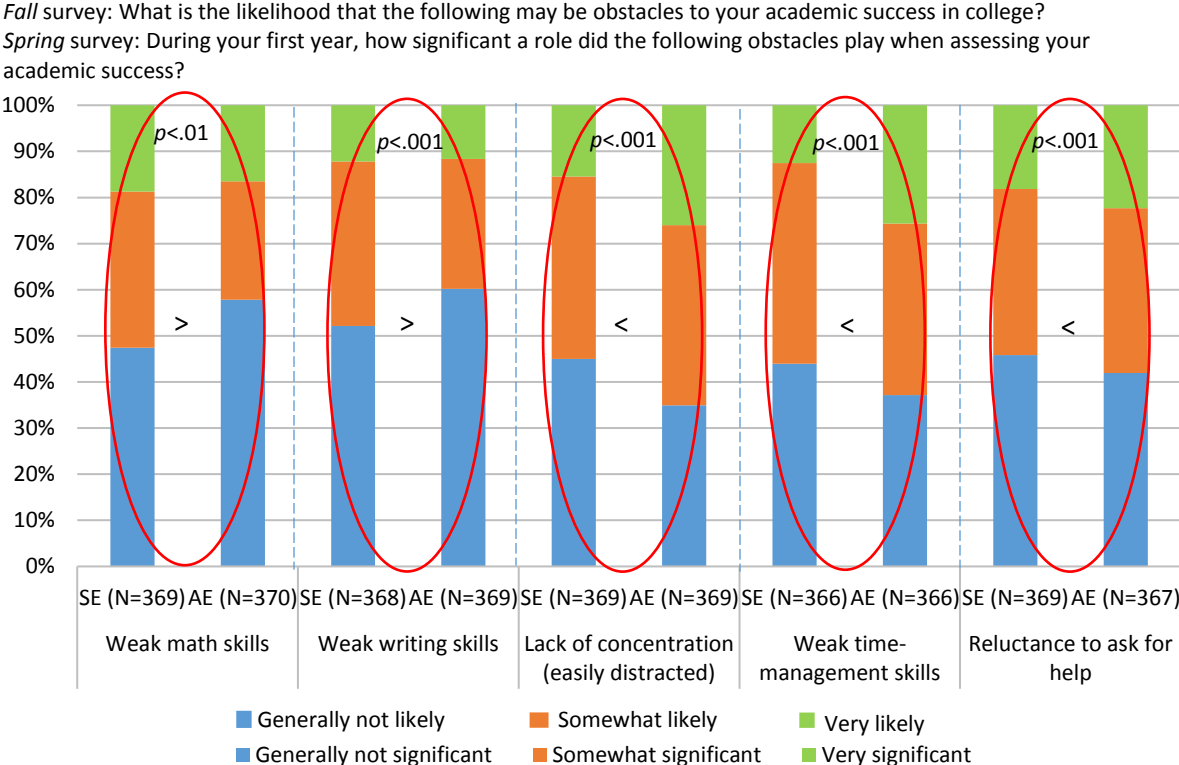
Figure 15. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Academic Obstacles to Academic Success (Paired Group)

Fall survey: What is the likelihood that the following may be obstacles to your academic success in college?
Spring survey: During your first year, how significant a role did the following obstacles play when assessing your academic success?

Notes. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience. 2. Significant differences indicate significant mean differences.

Figure 16. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Personal Obstacles to Academic Success (Paired Group)

Fall survey: What is the likelihood that the following may be obstacles to your academic success in college?
Spring survey: During your first year, how significant a role did the following obstacles play when assessing your academic success?

Notes. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience. 2. Significant differences indicate significant mean differences.

Advanced Degree

The *Fall Self-Expectation* survey results indicated that more than half of the first-year students expected to pursue an advanced degree after their baccalaureate degree (Figure 17). Such results support our direct data from the data warehouse regarding a pipeline study, especially for the URM students.

Figure 17. Highest Degree that First-Year Students Expected to Pursue
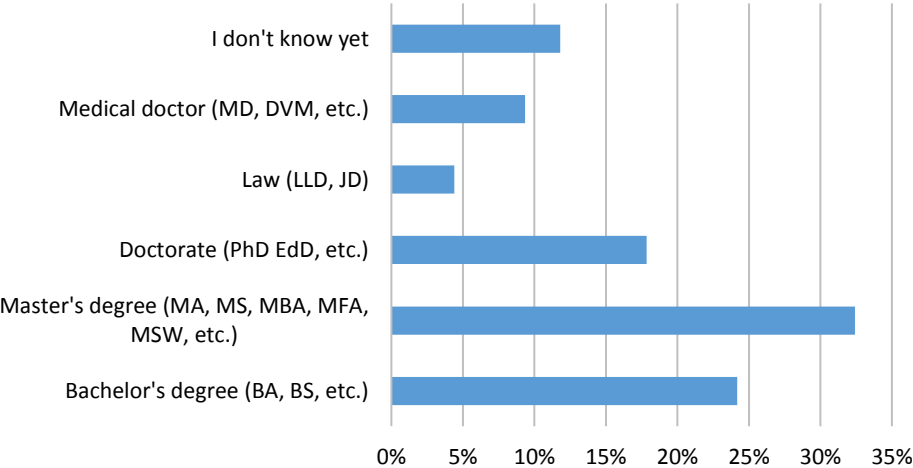
Liking College

Students were asked to consider their level of liking college. The response scale for the performance items consisted of a six-point semantic differential scale where 1 = "I won't like it" to 6 = "I'll really like it" in the *Fall Self-Expectation* survey and 1 = "I didn't like it at all" to 6 = "I really liked it" in the *Spring Experience* survey. Results indicated that when entering college, students expected to like college; however, by Spring semester they were significantly less enthusiastic about college (Figure 18 and Appendix H).

Figure 18. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Liking College (Paired Group)

Fall survey: How well do think you will like college?
Spring survey: How well did you like your first year of college?

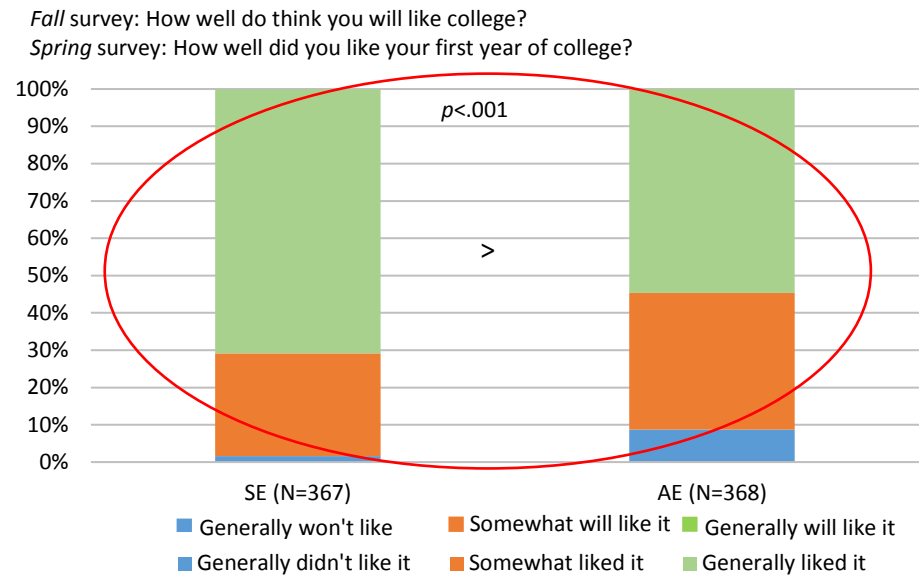*Notes*. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.
2. Significant differences indicate significant mean differences.

Advanced analysis results

Reliability

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to identify underlying structures in terms of subscales of self-expectations in the both the *Fall Self-Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys. The responses collected in the two surveys were used to determine factors in areas of college preparation, college activity engagement, engagement with faculty and staff, academic obstacles, and personal obstacles to academic success. Data results indicated that the reliability for each subscale of self-expectations and experience ranged from moderate to high. Results indicated that factor loadings were strong enough to explain the underlying structure of each subscale; therefore, these factors can be considered as representations for college preparation, college activity engagement, faculty and staff engagement, academic obstacles, and personal obstacles to academic success.

Table 1. *Factor Descriptives of First-Year College Student <u>Self-Expectations</u> for Their First-Year in College (Paired Group)*

	No. of Items	Mean (N/SD)	Alpha
College preparation	7	4.90 (363/.77)	.85
College Activity Engagement	7	4.51 (357/.77)	.71
Engagement with Faculty and Staff	3	4.68 (368/.86)	.73
Academic Obstacles to Academic Success	5	2.85 (365/.92)	.59
Personal Obstacles to Academic Success	5	2.91 (361/1.05)	.55

Notes.
1. College preparation score range: 1 = Not at all prepared to 6 = Very prepared, a higher score indicates more prepared;
2. College Activity Engagement score range: 1 = No chance to 6 = Very good chance, a higher score indicates a greater chance of engagement;
3. Engagement with Faculty and Staff score range: 1 = Never to 6 = Very often, a higher score indicates more often engaging with faculty/staff;
4. Academic obstacles to Academic Success score range: 1 = Not at all likely to 6 = Very likely, a higher score indicates a higher likelihood of academic obstacles to academic success;
5. Personal obstacles to Academic Success score range: 1 = Not at all likely to 6 = Very likely, a higher score indicates a higher likelihood of personal obstacles to academic success.

Table 2. *Factor Descriptives of First-Year College* Student <u>Actual</u> *College Preparation and Obstacles to Academic Success during the First-Year in College (Paired Group)*

	No. of Items	Mean (N/SD)	Alpha
College preparation	7	4.95 (361/.83)	.86
Academic Obstacles to Academic Success	5	2.91 (361/1.17)	.76
Personal Obstacles to Academic Success	5	2.72 (275/1.05)	.67

Notes.
1. College preparation score range: 1 = Not at all prepared to 6 = Very prepared, a higher score indicates more prepared;
2. Academic obstacles to Academic Success score range: 1 = Not significant role to 6 = Very significant role, a higher score indicates a more significant role of the obstacles to academic success;
3. Personal obstacles to Academic Success score range: 1 = Not significant role to 6 = Very significant role, a higher score indicates a more significant role of the obstacles to academic success.

Overall, the results indicated that first-year students reported they were significantly more prepared academically after two semesters than they expected to be when entering college (Figure 19), t (355) = 2.60, p <.01. No significant differences were found between self-expectations and experience in terms of academic and personal obstacles.

Figure 19. Factor Comparison between Self-Expectations and Actual Experience (Paired Group)
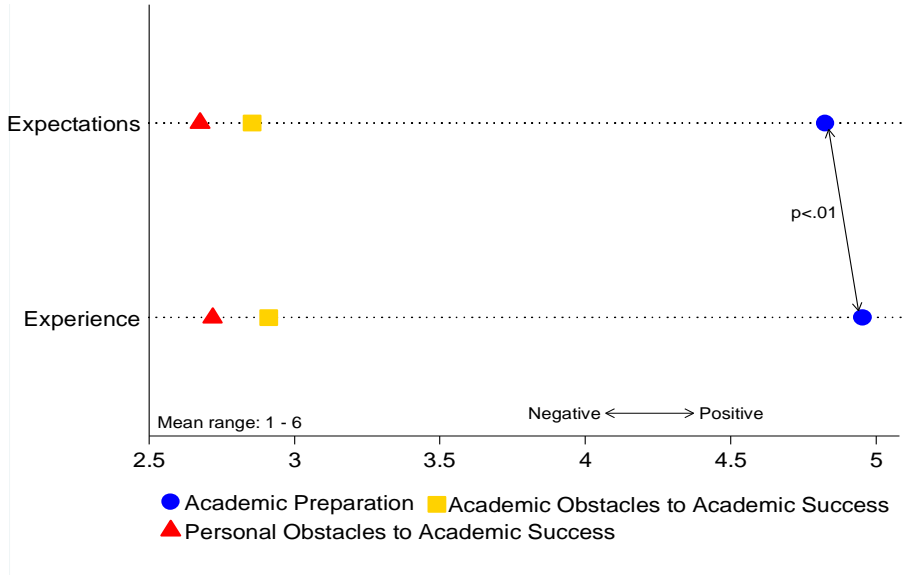
Demographics

Gender

The *Fall Self-Expectation* survey results showed that female students thought they were significantly more likely to have personal obstacles than male students when entering college; after two semesters in college, this was a reality (Figure 20). When entering college, female students expected a significantly better chance to participate in various college activities and significantly more often to engage with faculty and staff than their male peers. However, the *Spring Experience* survey only showed more females attended performance events when compared with males (e.g., music, art, plays), $\chi^2(1) = 4.98$, $p<.05$. That is, 48% of first-year female students engaged in various performance events, as compared to 34% of the male students.

There were no significant differences found in Fall semester GPAs, Spring semester GPAs, and overall first-year cumulative GPAs by gender.

Figure 20. Significant Differences between Self-Expectations and Actual Experience by Gender (Paired Group)
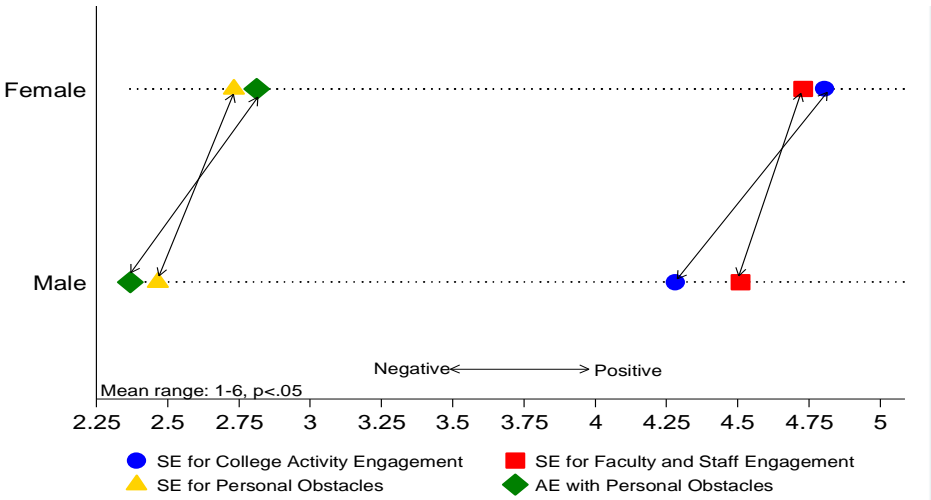
Note. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

First-Generation/Non-First-Generation

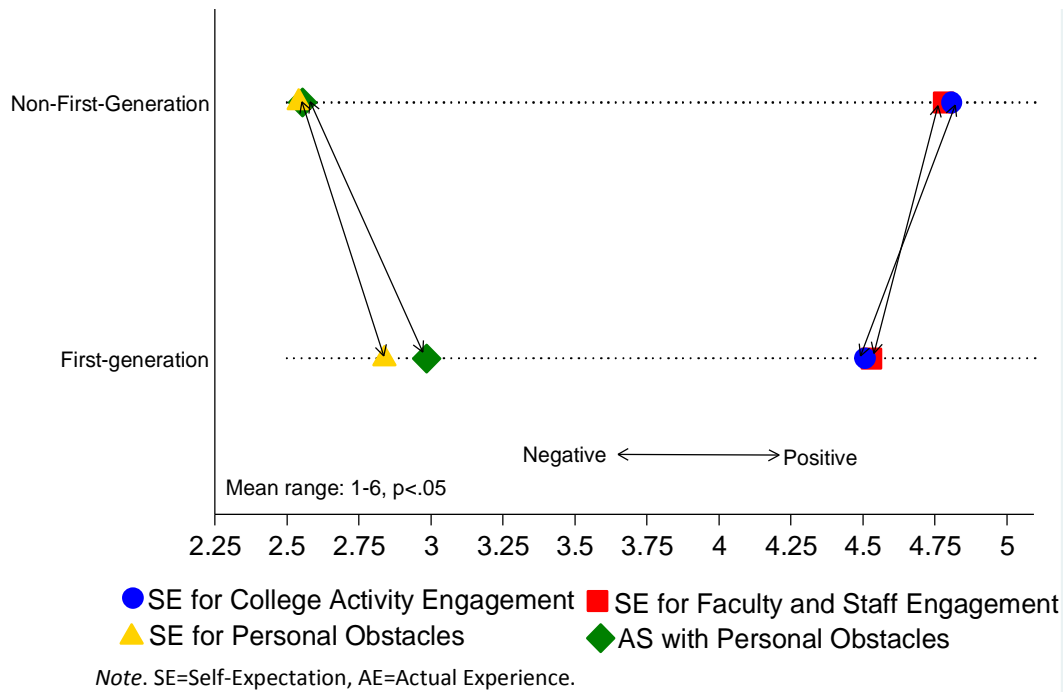The *Fall Self-Expectation* survey results indicated that upon entering college, first-generation students anticipated being significantly more likely to have personal obstacles than non-first-generation students, which was confirmed in the *Spring Experience* survey results (Figure 21 & Appendix I). First-generation college students expressed that they would be more likely than non-first-generation students to engage in a variety of college activities, with faculty working on a research project and discussing career plans, and seeing academic advisor when they entered college. However, the *Spring Experience* survey found, in fact, that non-first-generation students were more likely than first-generation students to participate in student groups or clubs, $\chi^2(1) = 4.15$, $p<.05$, and attend athletic events (e.g., football, basketball, soccer, etc.), $\chi^2(1) = 11.20$, $p<.01$.

In terms of GPAs, no significant differences were found in the Fall semester GPAs, Spring semester GPAs, and overall first-year cumulative GPAs by first-generation/non-first-generation student status (Appendix I).

Figure 21. Significant Differences between Self-Expectations and Actual Experience by First-Generation/Non-First-Generation Status (Paired Group)

Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

URM/Non-URM

The *Fall Expectation* survey results indicated that URM students expected a significantly better chance than Non-URM students to engage in college activities. These expectations were reflected in the findings of the *Spring Experience* survey (Figure 22 & Appendix J). The *Spring Experience* survey findings indicated that approximately half of the URM students compared to one-third of the Non-URM students engaged in various college activities. Particularly, the *Spring Experience* survey results indicated that URM students were more likely than non-URM students to attend athletic events, $\chi^2(1) = 7.81$, $p<.01$, attend performance events, $\chi^2(1) = 6.74$, $p<.01$, and participate in volunteer or community service work, $\chi^2(1) = 7.76$, $p<.01$ during their first-year in college.

Figure 22. Significant Differences between Self-Expectations and Actual Experience by URM/Non-URM Status (Paired Group)

Non-URM

p<.05

URM

Negative ←——→ Positive

Mean range: 1= No chance to 6=Very good chance

4.5   4.6   4.7   4.8
SE for College Activity Engagement

Note. SE=Self-Expectation.
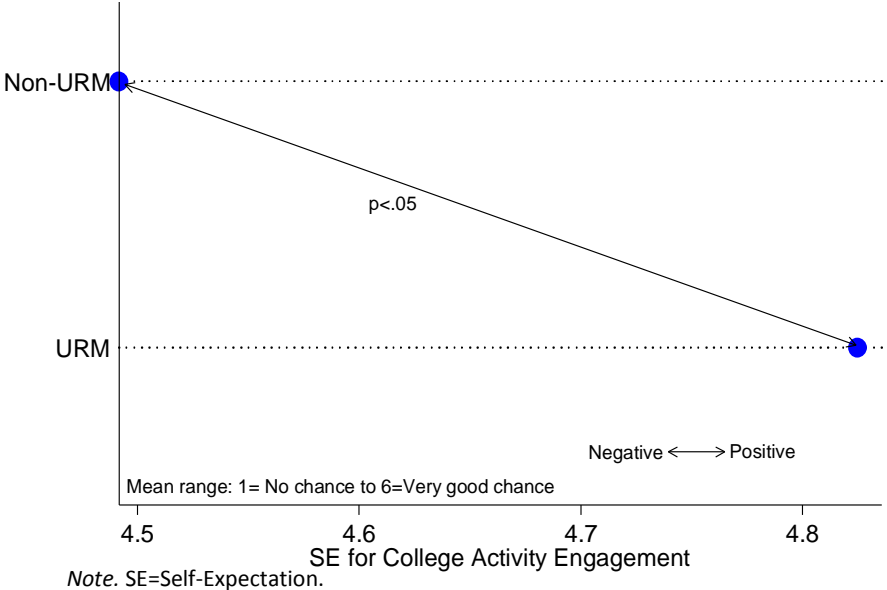
In terms of academic learning outcomes, Non-URM students had significantly higher average Fall semester GPAs, Spring semester GPAs, and overall first-year cumulative GPAs than URM students (Figure 23 & Appendix J).

Figure 23. Significant Differences in GPAs by URM/Non-URM Status (Paired Group)

Non-URM

URM

Mean range: 0 - 4.30 p<.05

3.3   3.4   3.5   3.6   3.7

● Fall Semester 2016 GPA   ■ Spring Semester 2017 GPA
▲ First-Year Overall GPA
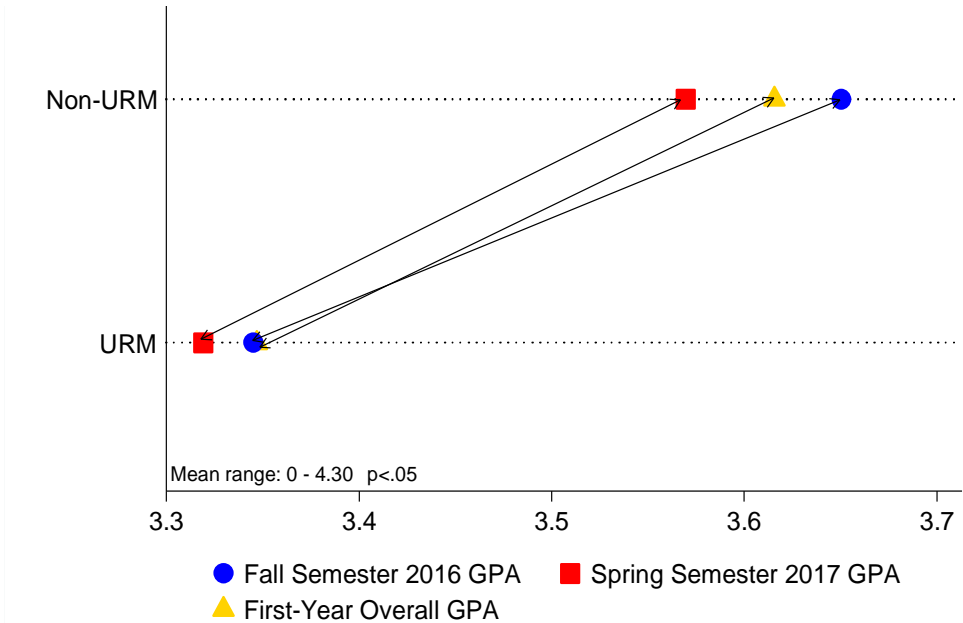
Relationships between Actual Obstacles and Academic Performance (GPAs)

Correlations were summarized between items for self-expectations and experience and students' learning outcomes (Appendix K). The *Spring Experience* survey showed that the URM status significantly negatively predicted first-year Fall semester GPA and the first-year overall cumulative GPA (Table 3). As summarized in Table 3, it was found that actual academic and personal obstacles significantly negatively predicted the students' first-year overall cumulative GPA. Results also showed that while the students' actual academic obstacles significantly negatively predicted their Fall and Spring GPAs, their actual personal obstacles significantly negatively predicated their Spring semester GPA. It is interesting to note that working with a faculty member on a research project was significantly negatively associated with student Fall GPA. First-generation student status was only significantly positively related to first-year overall cumulative GPA.

Table 3. *Summary of Multiple Regression for Actual Experience only (with demographics) Predicting Learning Outcome (GPAs) (Paired Group)*

	Fall semester GPA				Spring semester GPA				First-year overall GPA			
	B	SE	ß	VIF	B	SE	ß	VIF	B	SE	ß	VIF
URM	-.21**	.07	-.18	1.00	-	-	-	-	-.19**	.06	-.18	1.03
Academic obstacles	-.16**	.03	-.33	1.00	-.13**	.04	-.22	1.63	-.12**	.03	-.26	1.65
Personal obstacles	-	-	-	-	-.10*	.05	-.15	1.63	-.09*	.04	-.18	1.70
First-generation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.14*	.06	.13	1.06
Worked with a faculty member on a research project	-.23*	.09	-.15	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R²		.17				.12				.18		

Note. *: *p*<.05, **: *p*<.01. URM status and first-generation student status are dummy variables, URM = 1, first-generation = 1, and worked with a faculty member = 1.

Section II: Incoming First-Year Student Survey Findings (General Group)

This section presents the findings associated with this general group. There were 1050 students completing the *Fall Expectation* survey and 589 students completing the *Spring Experience* survey. Respondents of the paired group were included.

Gender/Race/Ethnicity

Of the 1050 respondents in the *Fall Expectation* survey, 73% identified as female and 27% identified as male (Appendix L). Of the 587 respondents in the *Spring Experience* survey, 73% identified as female and 27% identified as male (Appendix L).

Of the respondents who reported a race in the *Fall Expectation* survey, 40% identified as Black, 34% identified as White, and 18% identified as Asian (Figure 24). Thirteen percent of students identified their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino (Appendix M). Of the respondents who reported a race in the *Spring Experience* survey, 44% identified as Black, 33% identified as White, and 15% identified as Asian (Figure 25). Ten percent of students identified their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino (Appendix M).

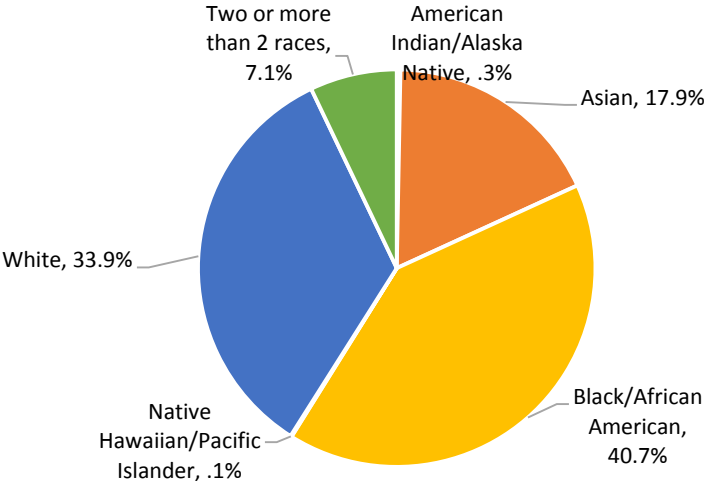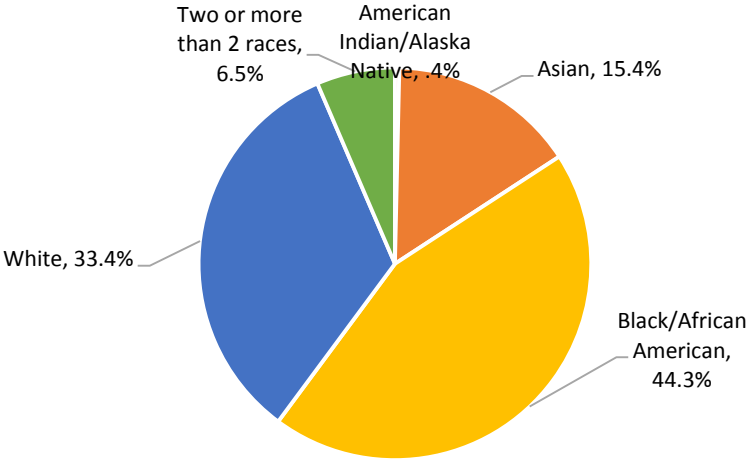*Figure 24.* Race (Fall *Expectation* 2016, General Group)

Figure 25. Race (Spring *Experience* 2017, General Group)

General Group Results

College Preparation

Results indicated that first-year students were significantly more prepared in writing after two semesters than they had expected to be when entering college. On the other hand, after two semesters, first-year students were significantly less prepared in setting goals, prioritizing tasks, meeting deadlines, and working with individuals who are culturally different from themselves than they had expected (Figure 26 & Appendix N).

Figure 26. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with College Preparation (General Group)

Fall Survey: Considering the rigor of college-level academic work, how prepared do you think you are to do the following?
Spring Survey: Considering your first year of college-level academic work, how prepared were you to do the following?
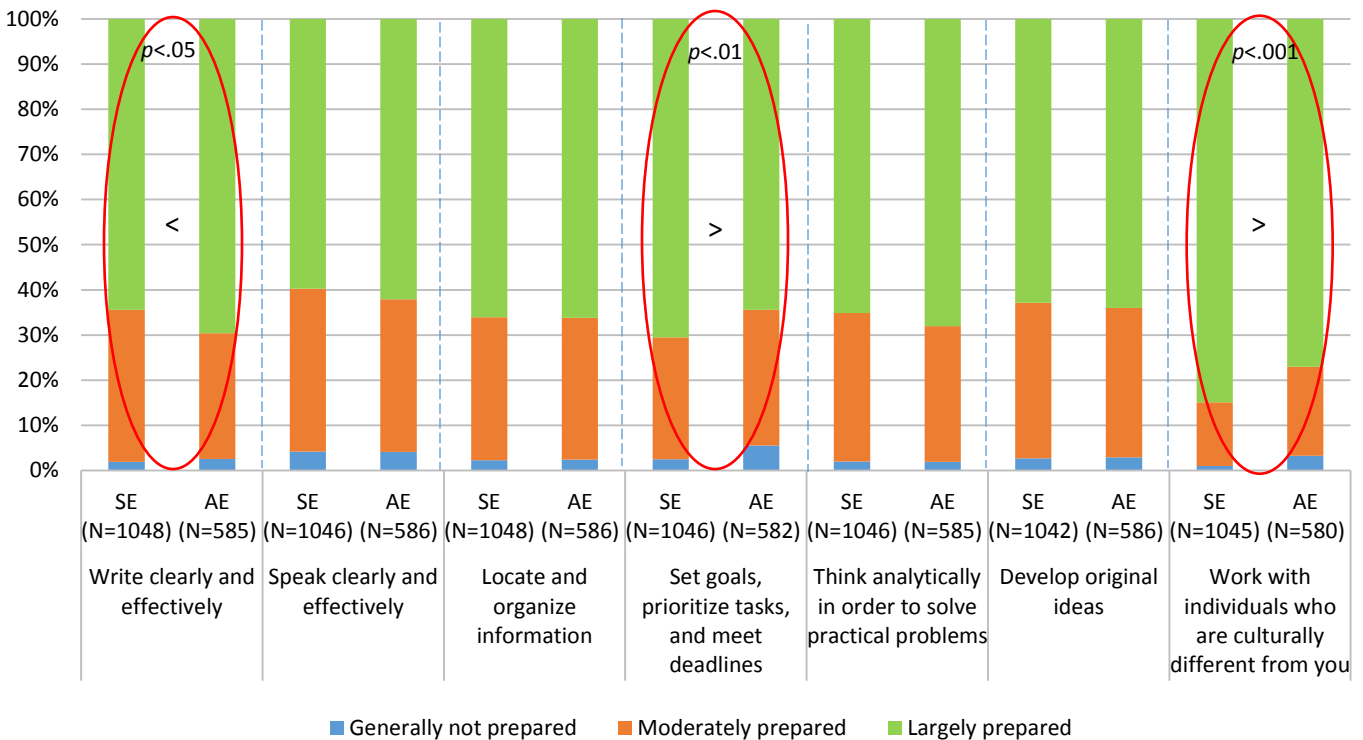
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

College Activity Engagement

The majority of the first-year students expected to get involved in college activities when entering college. However, most students did not meet their expectations by the end of the Spring semester (Figure 27). For example, while more than 90% of first-year students reported they would participate in student groups or clubs coming into GSU, only about 50% of the students reported they actually did get involved after two semesters.

Figure 27. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with College Activity Engagement (General Group)

Fall survey: As an undergraduate student at GSU, what is your best guess as to the chances you will do the following?
Spring survey: Considering your first year of college, did you do of the following?
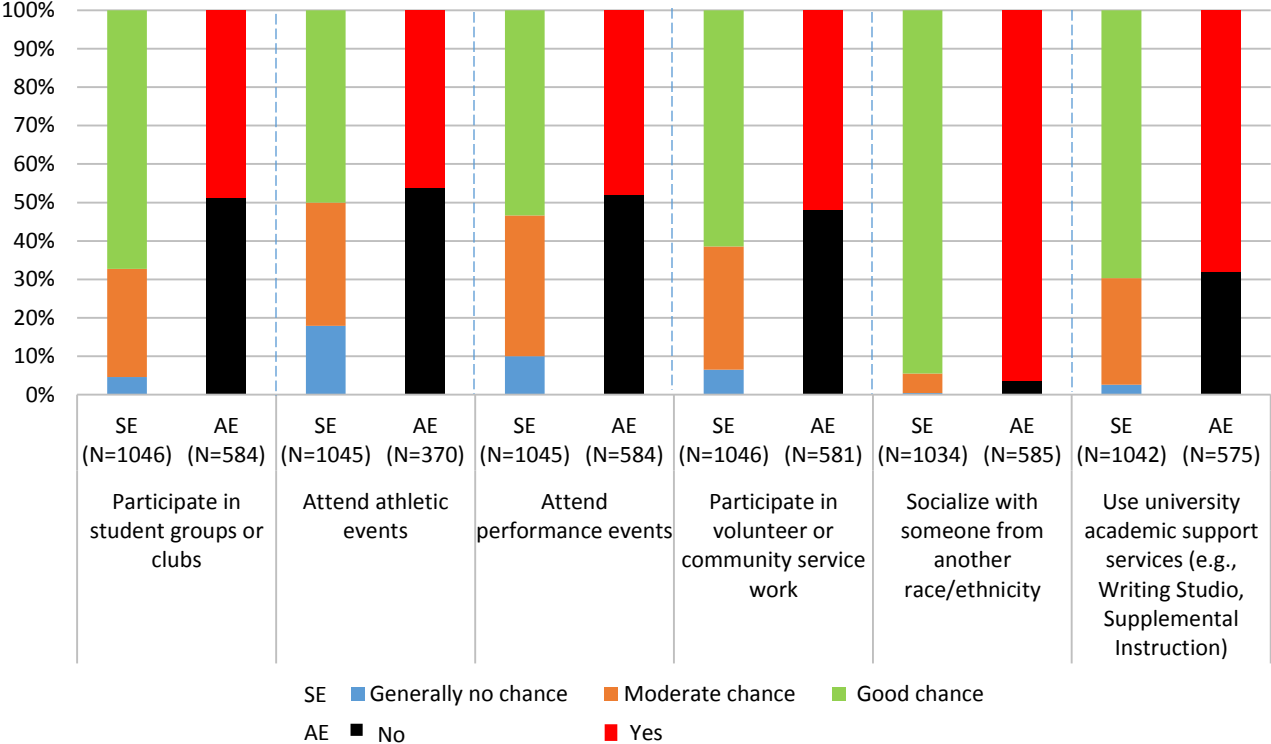
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Of the *Spring Experience* respondents who indicated they had experienced socializing with someone from another race/ethnicity, more than two thirds of the students reported they had "largely often" socialized with individuals from a different culture, while nearly 5% of them had "rarely" done so (Figure 28).

Figure 28. Frequency that Students Socialized with Some from Another Race/Ethnicity in the Spring Experience Survey (General Group)
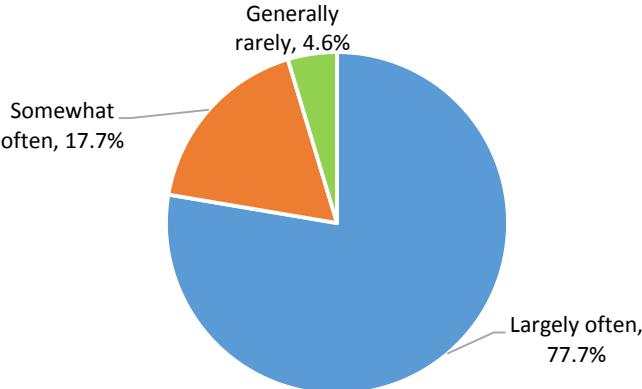
Similar to the findings for the paired group, the general group reported they were significantly less likely to take classes on a part-time basis after two semesters than they expected when entering college (Figure 29). Also, the general group students reported a significantly lower chance to transfer out than they believed they would at the beginning of the first semester (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Chances of Class-Taking Behavior and Transferring Out (General Group)
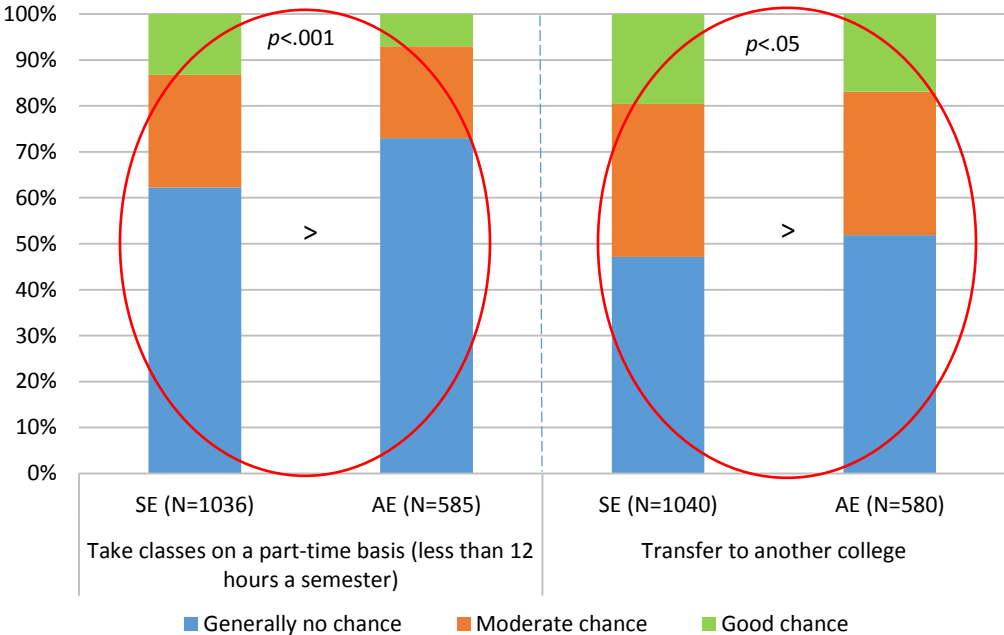
Notes.
1. SE=Self-Expectation; AE=Actual experience. Scale range: 1=No chance to 6=Very good chance.
2. Significant differences indicate mean differences.

Faculty and Staff Engagement

Results indicated that while around 90% of the respondents expected to work with a faculty member on a research project, only around 17% of these students reported they actually engaged in this activity for the general group. Similar to findings of the paired group regarding faculty and staff engagement, around 95% of the students expected to discuss career plans with a faculty member, whereas around 65% these students reported they did so. After two semesters, the majority of the students reported they sought advisement from a faculty or staff member, which matched their expectations when entering college (Figure 30).

Figure 30. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Faculty and Staff Engagement (General Group)
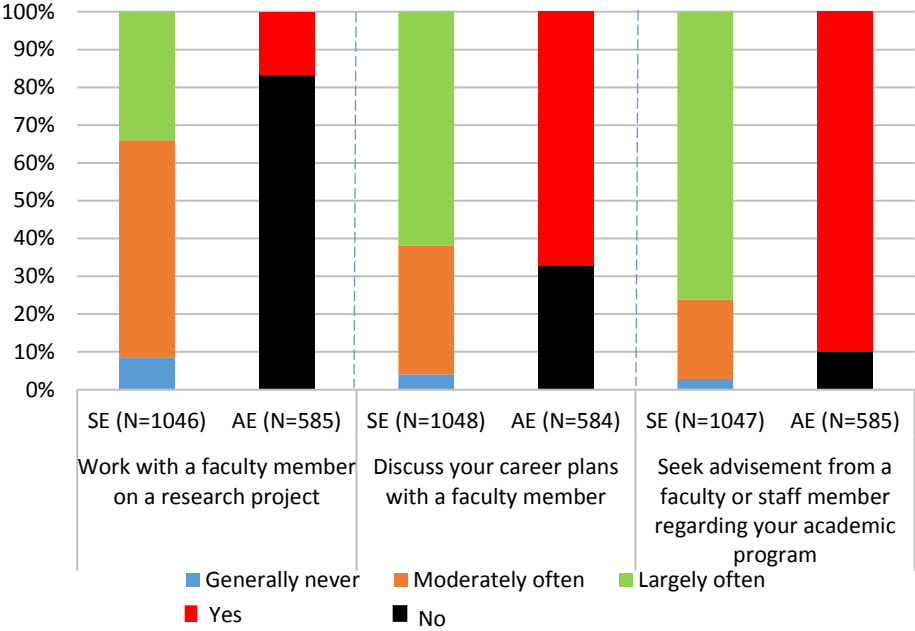
Note. SE=Self-Epectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Time Management

Identical to the findings for the paired group, the general group results indicated the majority of the students' actual and expected studying time per week matched over the course of two semesters. Also, a third of the students spent little or no time participating in extracurricular activities, though they expected to do so when entering the university (Figure 31).

Figure 31. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Experience with Studying Time and Extracurricular Activity Time (General Group)
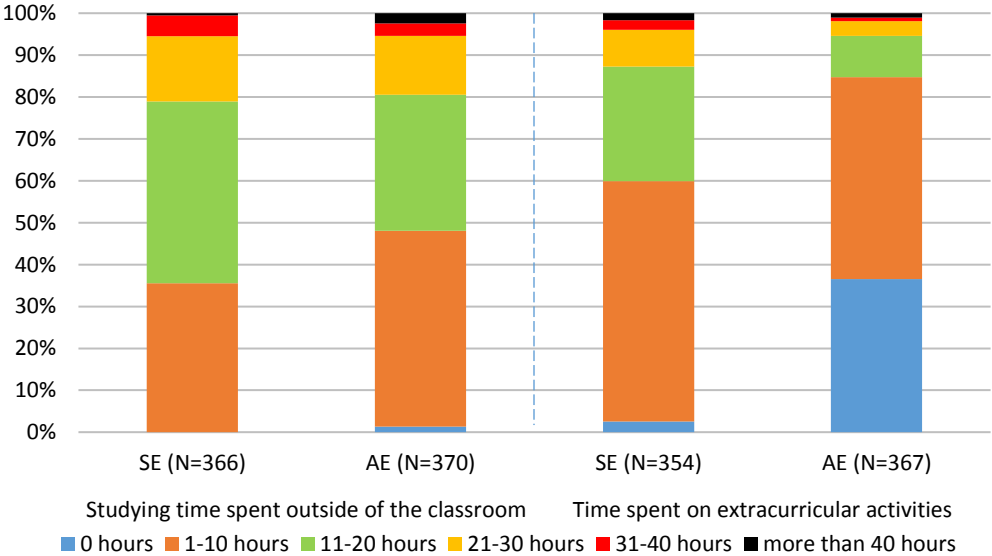
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Entering freshmen expected to generally keep up with their class reading and writing assignments, but by the end of the Spring semester, students reported that they were significantly more behind than they had expected (Figure 32). Descriptive analyses for these items are summarized in Appendix O.

Figure 32. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Time Management on Class Reading and Writing Assignments (General Group)

Fall survey: Considering your study habits, what pattern best describes the way you expect to manage class reading and writing assignments?
Spring survey: Considering your study habits, what pattern best descirbes the way you managed class reading and writing assignments during the academic year?
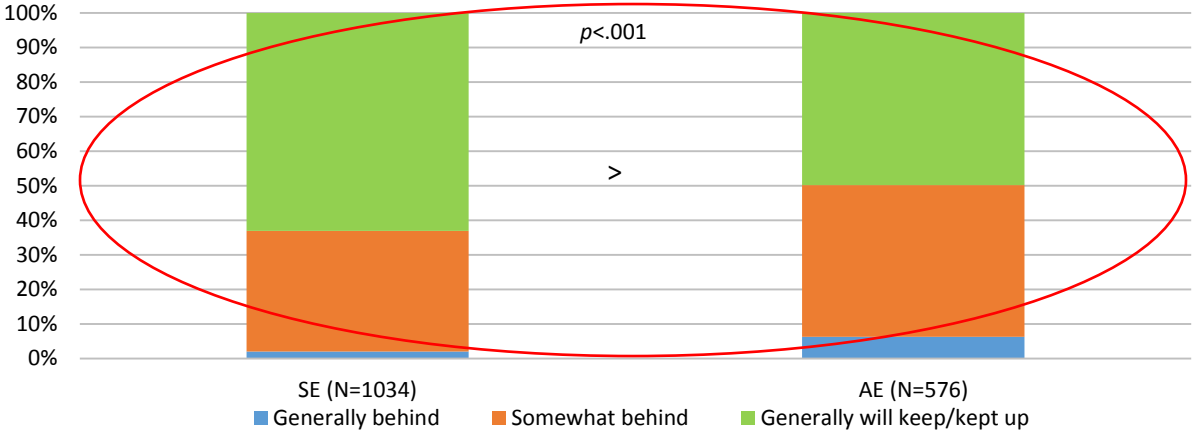
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Employment off/on Campus

Around 40% of the first-year students expected to work <u>off</u> campus, which was consistent with the *Spring Experience* findings (Figure 35). Although around 40% of the first-year students expected to work <u>on</u> campus, only about 12 percent did so (Figure 33).

Figure 33. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Employment off/on Campus (General Group)

Fall survey: Do you expect to be employed OFF/ON CAMPUS during your first year at GSU?
Spring survey: Were you employed OFF/ON CAMPUS during your first year at GSU?
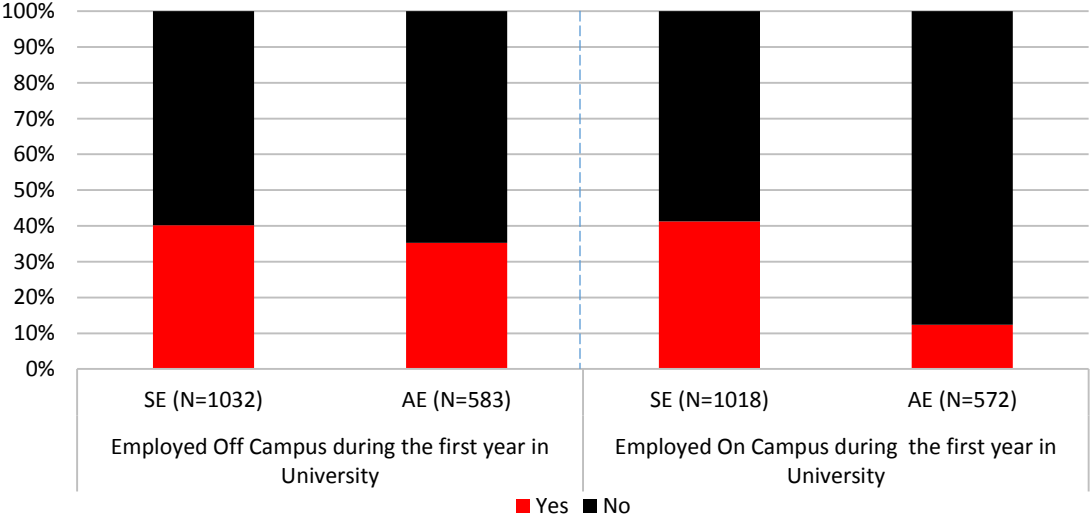
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Of those students who expected to work and actually worked off campus, they worked more hours than they had anticipated (Figure 34). Of those students who expected to work and actually worked on campus, hours worked matched their expectations (Figure 34).

Figure 34. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Experience with Hours Worked off/on Campus (General Group)

Fall survey: About how mant hours a week do you expect to work?
Spring survey: About how many hours a week did you work?
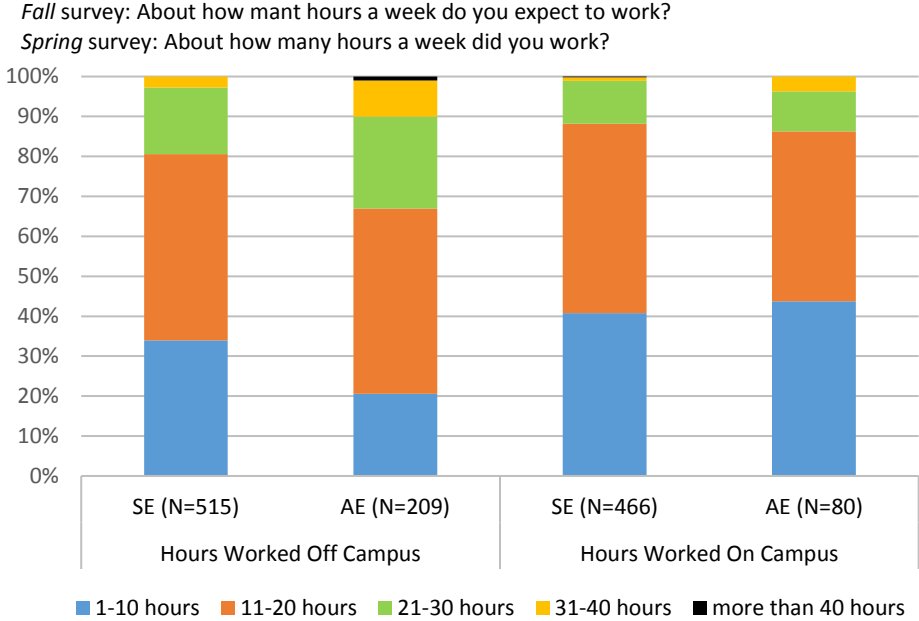
Note. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience.

Performance

As noted in Figure 32, students reported that they were significantly more behind after two semesters than what they expected to be when entering college. The *Spring Experience* survey found 54% of the students fell behind in coursework. While these students had expected to seek help from faculty, academic support, or peers in the *Fall Expectation* survey, the majority reported that they actually caught up on their own (Figure 35).

Figure 35. Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Catching up Strategies When Falling behind in Coursework (General Group)
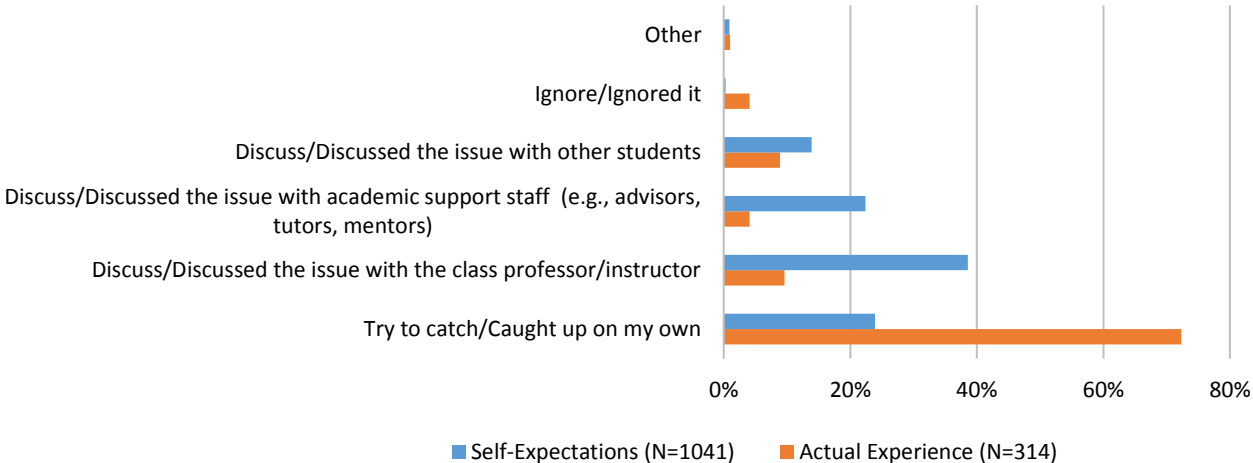
Academic Dishonesty

Of the entering freshmen, more than 60% indicated they would report cheating behavior in the classroom by discussing with their professor/instructor, advisor, or peers. The *Spring Experience* survey results revealed that about 23% of the students reported that they had witnessed academic cheating behavior in the classroom (Figure 36) and the majority of these students (75%) ignored the behavior (Figure 37).

Figure 36. Distribution of Whether or Not Students Witnessed Cheating Behavior in the Classroom after Two Semesters (General Group, Spring Respondents, N=581)
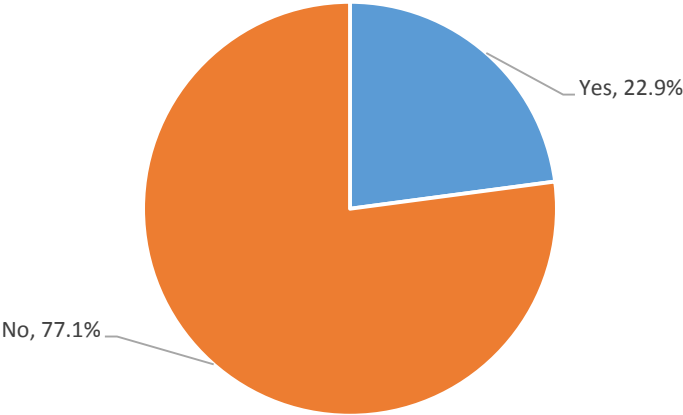
Figure 37. Comparisons between Self-Expectations of and Actual Reactions When Witnessing Academic Dishonesty in the Classroom (General Group)
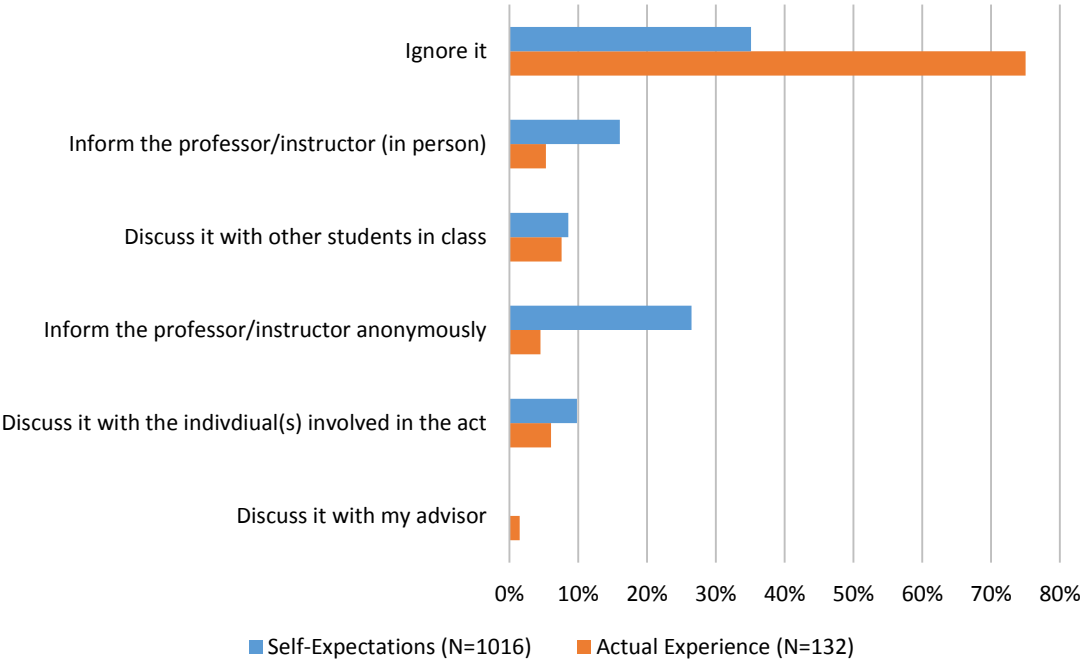
Academic Performance (GPA)

In terms of students' academic performance, the *Spring Experience* cohort had significantly higher GPAs (including Spring semester and first-year cumulative GPAs) than the Fall cohort (Figure 38 & Appendix P).

Figure 38. Comparison between the Fall Cohort and the Spring Cohort on First-Year Student Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and Overall First-Year Cumulative GPAs (General Group)
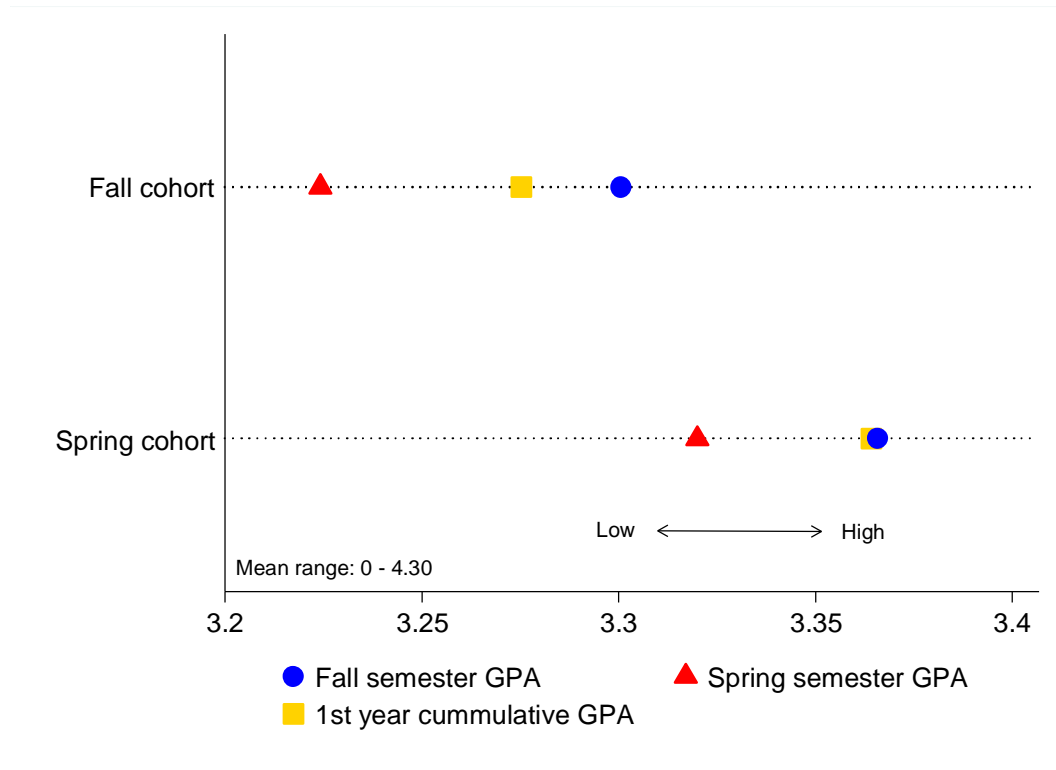
Obstacles to Academic Success

Study results showed that weak writing skills, math skills, and job responsibilities were not significant obstacles to academic success for the first-year students as they had initially expected. Rather, the *Spring Experience* survey results revealed lack of concentration, weak time management skills, reluctance to ask for help, and family responsibilities posed obstacles to first-year students' academic success. These obstacles were significantly underrated by students in the *Fall Self-Expectation* survey. Although feeling stressed did not significantly differ by semester, first-year students reported an overall higher level of "feeling stressed" as a personal obstacle to academic success than any other personal obstacles and academic obstacles (Figure 39 & Figure 40). Descriptive analysis of comparisons between self-expectations for and actual experience with obstacles to academic success are displayed in Appendix Q.

Figure 39. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Academic Obstacles to Academic Success (General Group)

Fall survey: What is the likelihood that the following may be obstacles to your academic success in college?
Spring survey: During your first year, how significant a role did the following obstacles play when assessing your academic success?

Notes. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience. 2. Significant differences indicate significant mean differences.
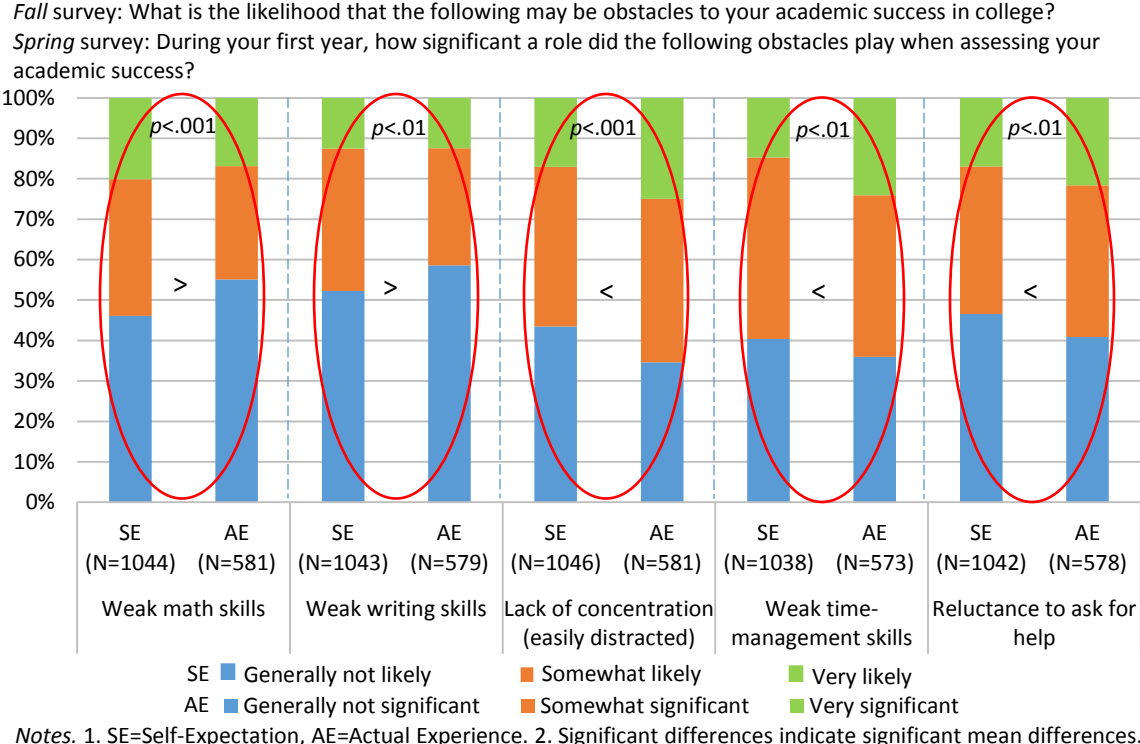
Figure 40. Comparisons between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Personal Obstacles to Academic Success (General Group)

Fall survey: What is the likelihood that the following may be obstacles to your academic success in college?
Spring survey: During your first year, how significant a role did the following obstacles play when assessing your academic success?

Notes. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience. 2. Significant differences indicate significant mean differences.
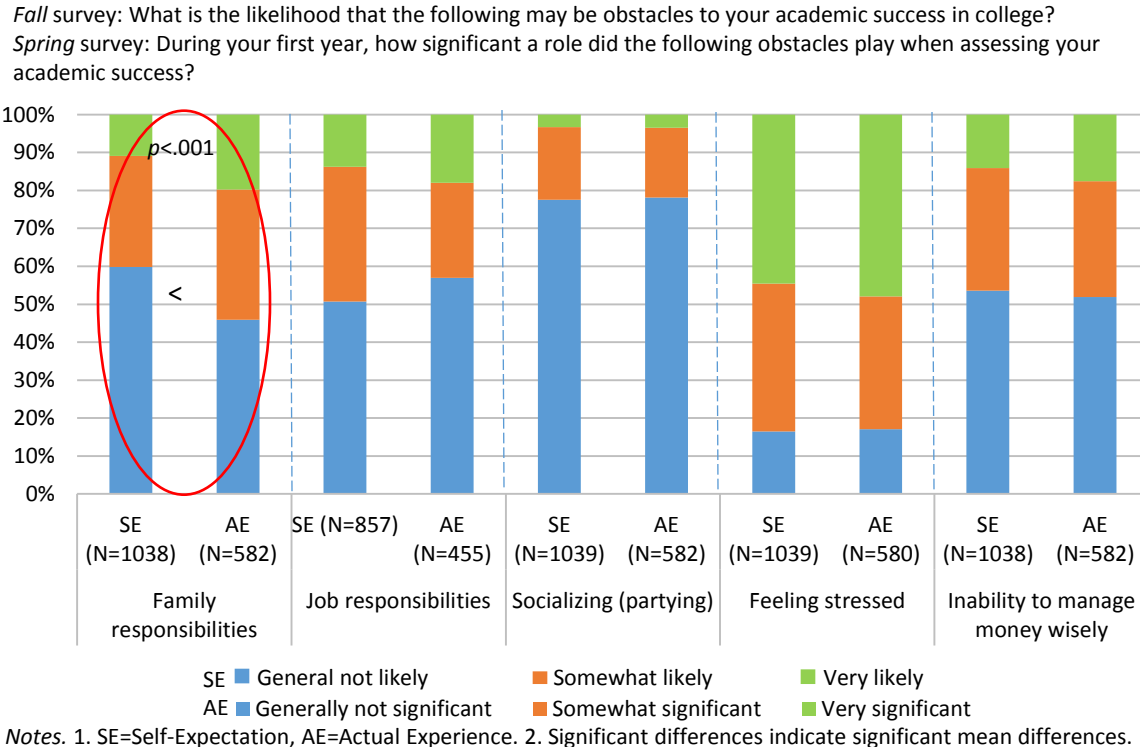
Liking College

Results showed that first-year students were significantly less enthusiastic about the college after two semesters than they expected to be when entering the college (Figure 41 and Appendix R).

Figure 41. Comparison between Self-Expectations for and Actual Experience with Liking College (General Group)
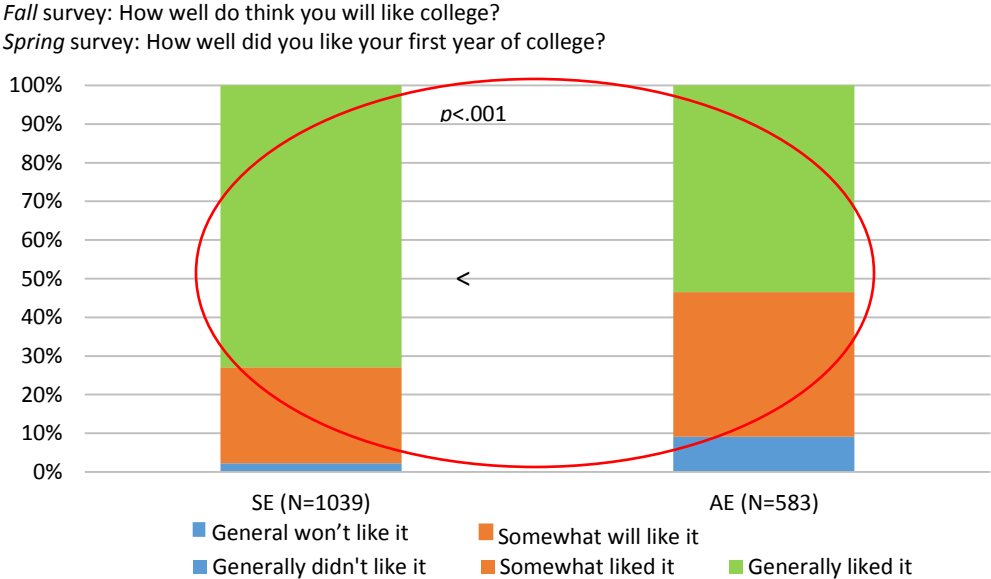
Fall survey: How well do think you will like college?
Spring survey: How well did you like your first year of college?

Notes. 1. SE=Self-Expectation, AE=Actual Experience. 2. Significant differences indicate significant mean differences.

Section III. Analysis on Chance to Transfer-Out Cohort

Chance to Transfer-Out (Paired Group)

Paired Group. Of first-year students who took both the *Fall Self-Expectation* and *Spring* Experience surveys, approximate 18% of the students reported a "good chance" to transfer out in the *Fall Self-Expectation* survey (Figure 42) and 16% of the students reported a "good chance" to transfer out in the *Spring* Experience survey (Figure 43).

Figure 42. Chance to Transfer-Out in Fall Self-Expectation Survey (N=365)
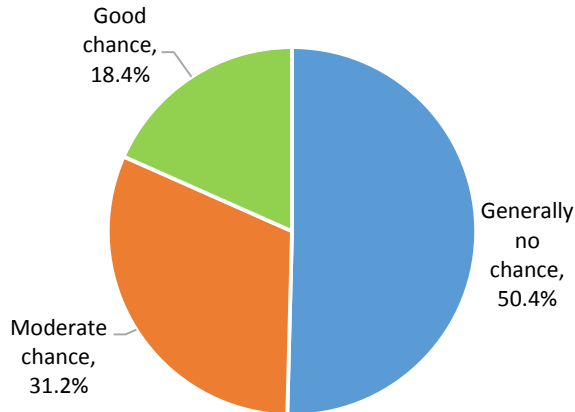
Figure 43. Chance to Transfer-Out in Spring Experience Survey (N=365)
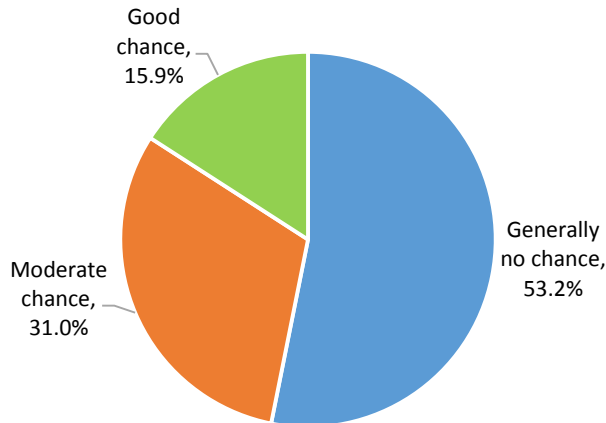
The results from both the *Fall Self-Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys revealed that first-year students indicating a "good chance" to transfer out had higher average GPAs in their Fall, Spring, and first-year overall cumulative GPAs than other two groups indicating a "lower chance" or "no chance" to transfer out (Figure 44 & Figure 45).

Figure 44. GPAs by Chance to Transfer Out in Fall Self-Expectation Survey
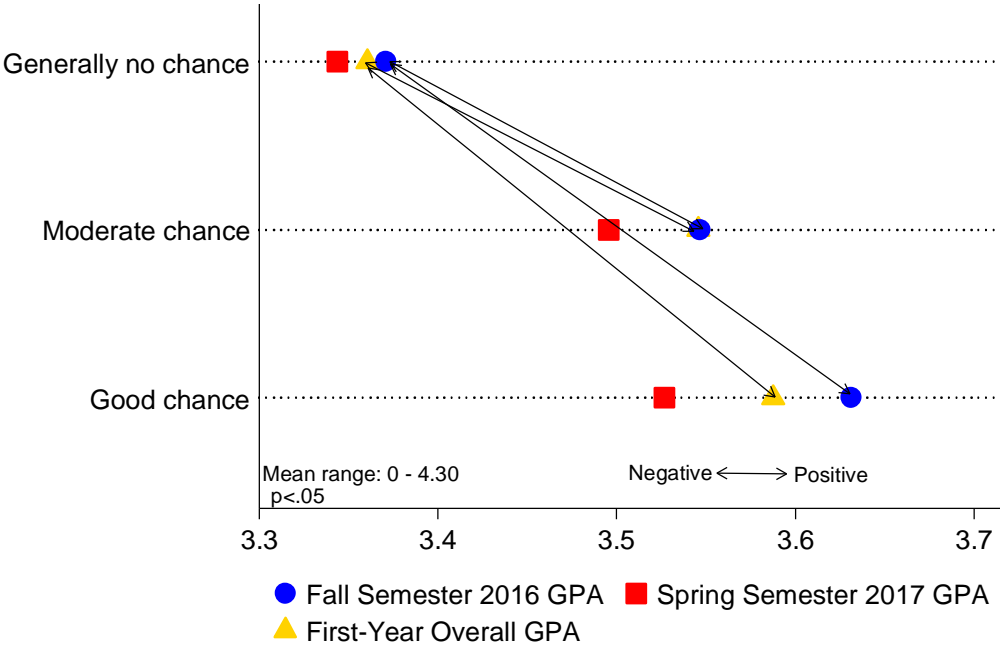
Figure 45. GPAs by Chance to Transfer Out in Spring Experience Survey
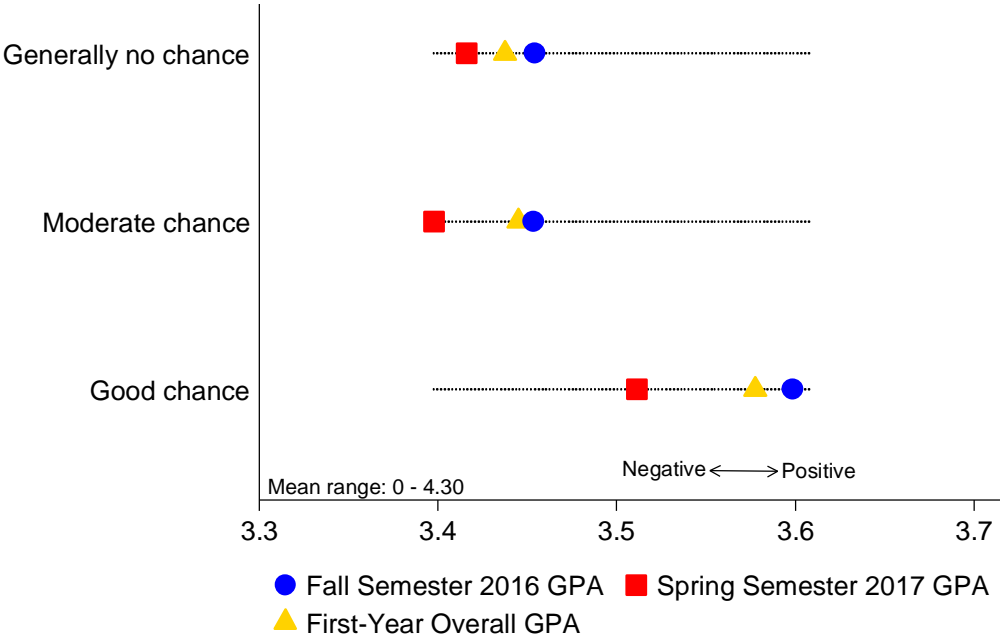
Study data also revealed that, of the students who indicated a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys (Table 4), the majority were male and Non-URM students. Further analysis showed that those students reporting a "good chance" to transfer out were significantly less enthusiastic about the college after two semesters than they were when entering the university.

Table 4. *Chance to Transfer Out by Responses to Self-Expectation and Experience Surveys (Observed Frequencies, Paired Group)*

		Chance to transfer out (*Spring Experience* Survey)		
		Generally no chance	Moderate chance	Good chance
Chance to transfer out	Generally no chance	127	45	10
(*Fall Self-Expectation*	Moderate chance	48	48	15
Survey)	Good chance	17	18	32

Analysis on Enrollment status of First-Year Students of Fall 2016 Cohort in Fall 2017 (Paired Group)

According to Table 4, of the 32 students who indicated a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys (paired group), 11 students (34%) did not return in the Fall semester of 2017. In addition, 21 students who indicated there was a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys were enrolled in Fall 2017. Of the 32 students who indicated a "good chance" to transfer out, the 11 non-returning students had higher average GPAs (including Fall, Spring, and first-year overall cumulative) than the 21 returning students (Figure 46 & Appendix S).

Figure 46. GPAs for Paired Group (Indicating a "Good Chance" to Transfer Out in both Fall Expectation and Spring Experience Surveys) by Enrolled Status in the Fall 2017
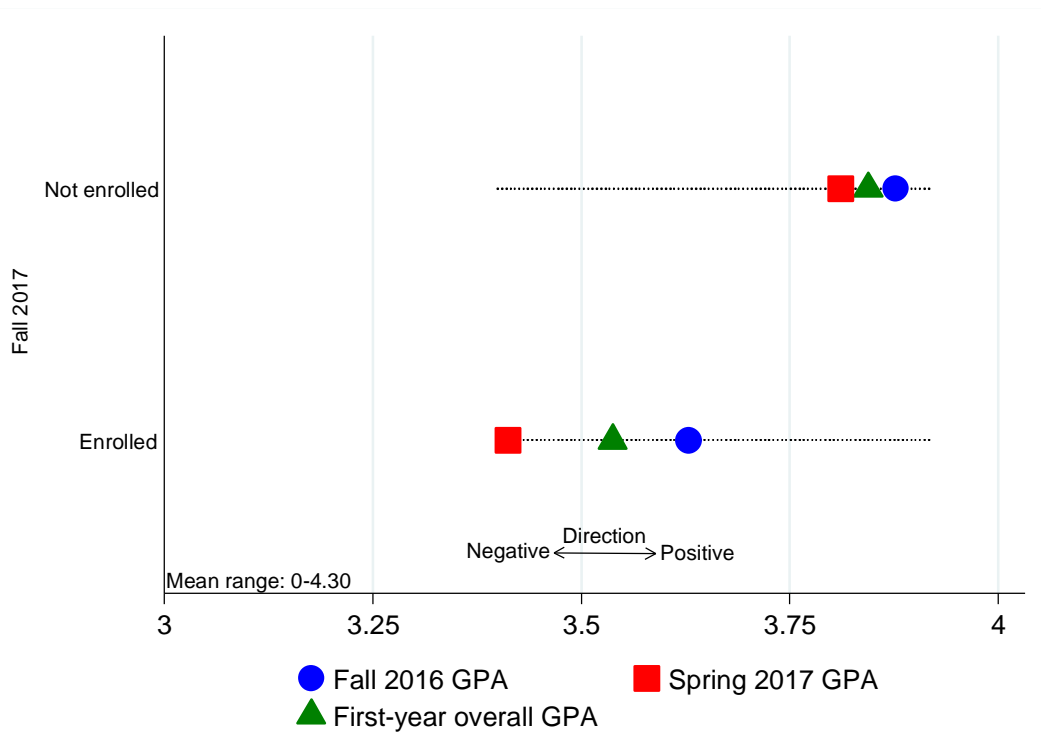
Coincidentally, the paired group also had a total of 32 non-returning students in the Fall 2017 semester regardless of the chance that they reported to transfer out. Of these 32 students, there were 11 non-returning students who indicated a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys (mentioned earlier) and 21 non-returning students who did not expected a "good chance" of transferring out did not come back in the Fall 2017 (Appendix T). Further analysis revealed that of the 32 students who did not return in the Fall 2017, the students who indicated a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys had the highest Fall, Spring, and first-year overall GPAs (GPAs were greater than 3.80). In

contrast, those students who indicated "generally no chance" in the *Fall Expectation* survey and a "moderate chance" in the *Spring Experience* survey had the lowest Fall, Spring, and first-year overall GPAs (GPAs were lower than 3.0) (Appendices U, V, & W). Students who indicated there was "generally no chance" in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Expectation* surveys had the second lowest Fall, Spring, and first-year overall GPAs (GPAs were lower than 3.0) (Appendices U, V, & W).

A figure was created to assist in the understanding of the paired group, which compared the cohort reporting a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall* and *Spring* surveys with the non-returning cohort in Fall 2017 reported above (Figure 47). There were 32 students who indicated a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys, as well as 32 students who did not return in the Fall 2017 semester (Figure 47). Eleven students indicated a "good chance" to transfer out in both the *Fall Expectation* and *Spring Experience* surveys and did not return in Fall 2017. Data from the national clearinghouse indicated 10 of the 11 students transferred to four-year non-GSU institutions.

Figure 47. Overlap of Students Who Indicated a "Good Chance" to Transfer Out and Non-Returning Students in the Fall 2017 (Paired Group)
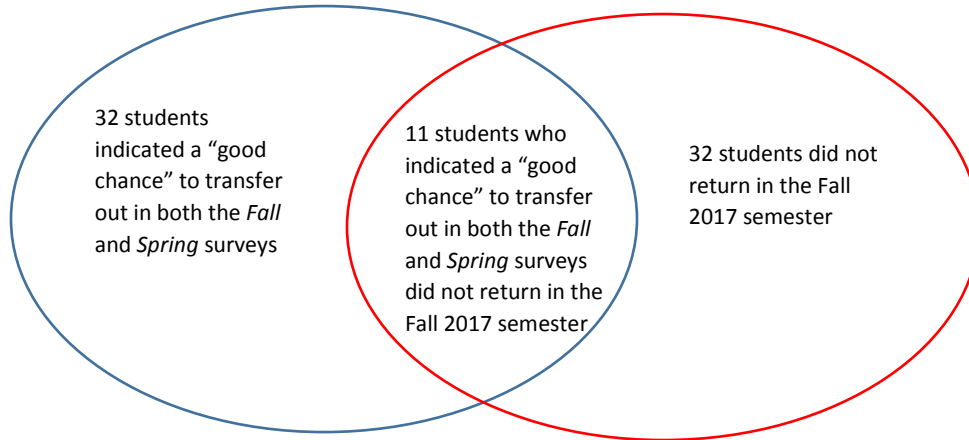
Analysis on Chance to Transfer Out in Fall 2016 Self-Expectation Survey Results and Enrollment Status in Fall 2017

Of the 1,037 respondents in the 2016 *Fall Expectation* survey, 131 (12.5%) of the students did not return in the Fall 2017 semester. Of the 131 non-returning students, 31% of the students indicated a "good chance" to transfer out in the *Fall Expectation* survey (Table 5). Overall, non-returning students did not differ from students enrolled in Fall 2017 in the areas of expectations for college preparation, college activity engagement, engagement with faculty and staff, academic obstacles, and personal obstacles. Yet, the non-returning students had significantly lower Fall, Spring, and first-year overall GPAs than their returning peers (Figure 48 & Appendix X). The majority of these non-returning students' average GPAs were lower than 3.0 (Figure 48).

Table 5. *Distribution of Non-Returning Fall 2016 Students (Not Enrolled in Fall 2017) by Chance to Transfer Out in Fall Expectation (General Group)*

Transfer out (Expected at the beginning of the first year)	Enrollment Status		
	Not enrolled (%)	Enrolled (%)	Total (N)
Generally no chance	35.2%	48.9%	485
Moderate chance	34.4%	33.4%	344
Good chance	30.5%	17.7%	198

Figure 48. Means and Standard Deviations of GPAs for Fall Expectation Survey Respondents by Enrolled Status in the Fall 2017
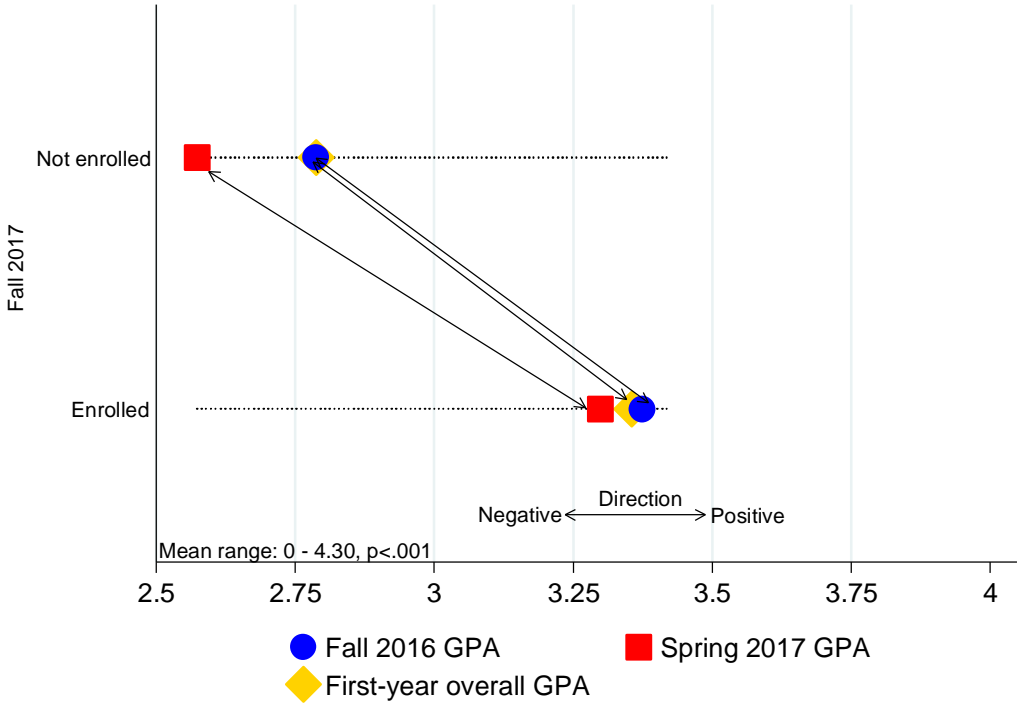
Section IV Students' Experience/Suggestions for Improving Their First-Year

Experience in College and Future Study

Qualitative Analysis on Comments in the Spring 2017 Experience Survey

After two semesters at Georgia State University, around 10% of the students reported having "a good experience" at GSU during their first year. Providing "more helpful or positive activities" ranks as first-year students' top concern as they transition and continue involvement in college (Figure 49). As displayed in Figure 49, informing them about various activities, class, resources, etc. would be beneficial to their first-year experience in college, followed by the first-year students' concerns with professional staff in areas of academic advisement and financial aid. Improving dining and housing are also important concerns for the first-year students.

Figure 49. Students' Experience/Suggestions for Improving Their First-Year Experience at GSU
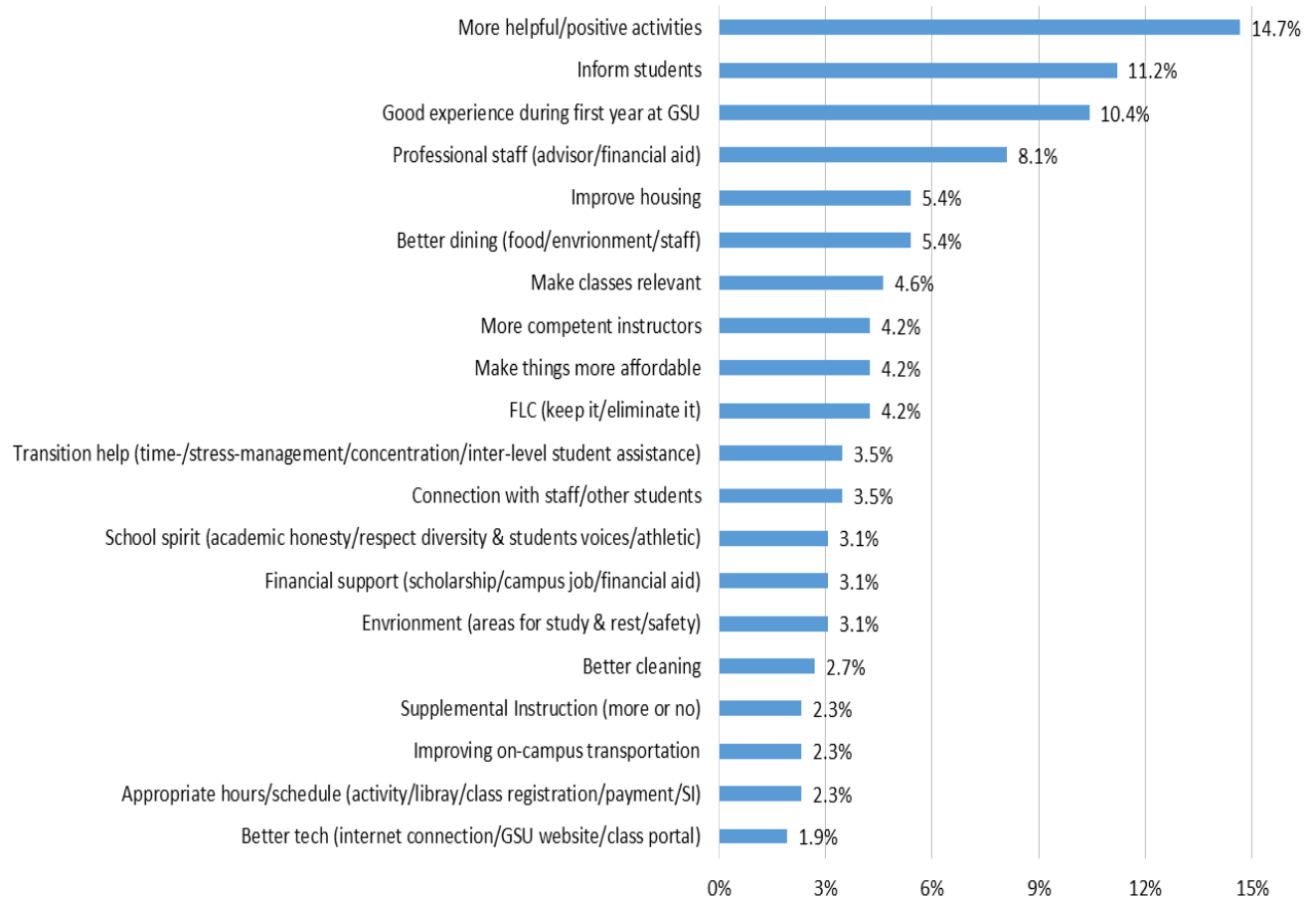
Future Study

Based on the findings reported above, we will follow up with the Fall 2016 cohort students, investigating the reasons that students did not use campus resources, participate in various activities, and engage with faculty and staff as often as they had initially expected. The follow-up study will explore their stressors and stress levels during their first year in college. This research is imperative for the university to relocate its resources in assisting students' needs. First-year student retention remains our main study interest. The follow-up survey will also explore the reasons as to why students chose to transfer out or in of GSU, as well as what changed the minds of students who had initially planned to transfer out during their first year at GSU.

Appendices

Appendix A. *Gender (Paired Group)*

	N	%
Female	282	76.2
Male	86	23.2
Not Reported	2	.5
Total	370	100.0

Appendix B. *Race/Ethnicity (Paired Group)*

	N	%	Valid %
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	.3	.3
Asian	52	14.1	14.6
Black or African American	148	40.0	41.7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	-	-
White	130	35.1	36.6
Two or More than 2 Races	24	6.5	6.8
Not Reported	15	4.1	-
Total	370	100.0	100.0
Hispanic/Latino	48	13.0	13.1
Non-Hispanic/Latino	318	85.9	86.9
Not Reported	4	1.1	-
Total	370	100.0	100.0

Appendix C. *Means and Standard Deviations of College Preparation for Fall 2016 Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Experience (Paired Group)*

	College Preparation					
	Fall 2016 Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Actual Experience		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Write clearly and effectively	4.83	1.01	363	5.04	1.04	361
Speak clearly and effectively	4.65	1.25	363	4.78	1.15	361
Locate and organize information	4.90	1.01	363	4.97	1.07	361
Set goals, prioritize tasks, and meet deadlines	5.04	1.00	363	4.87	1.21	361
Think analytically in order to solve practical problems	4.83	1.05	363	4.99	.99	361
Develop original ideas	4.71	1.11	363	4.82	1.14	361
Work with individuals who are culturally different from you	5.35	.93	363	5.20	1.12	361

Note: Scale range: 1 = Not at all prepared to 6= Very prepared.

Appendix D. *Means and Standard Deviations of Class-Taking Behavior and Transferring Out for Fall 2016 Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Experience (Paired Group)*

	Fall 2016 Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Actual Experience		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Take classes on a part-time basis (less than 12 hours a semester)	2.44	1.65	357	1.92	1.30	369
Transfer to another college	2.86	1.68	365	2.71	1.63	365

Note: Scale range: 1 = No chance to 6=Very good chance.

Appendix E. *Means and Standard Deviations of Study Habits for Fall 2016 Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Experience (Paired Group)*

	Study habits					
	Fall 2016 Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Actual Experience		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Pattern best describes the way of managing class reading and writing assignments	4.87	1.03	363	4.58	1.24	363

Notes:
1. Scale range: 1 = I'll almost always be behind to 6 = I'll almost keep up (*Fall* 2016 Self-expectation survey);
2. Scale range: 1 = I was almost behind to 6 = I almost always kept up (*Spring* 2017 Experience survey).

Appendix F. *First-Year Student Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and Overall First-Year Cumulative GPAs (Paired Group)*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Fall 2016	3.48	.59	367
Spring 2017	3.43	.69	367
1st year Cumulative	3.46	.55	369

Appendix G. *Means and Standard Deviations of Obstacles to Academic Success for Fall 2016 Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Experience (Paired Group)*

		Obstacles to Academic Success					
		Fall 2016 Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Actual Experience		
		Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Academic Obstacles	Weak math skills	2.90	1.58	369	2.57	1.69	370
	Weak writing skills	2.68	1.41	368	2.37	1.53	369
	Lack of concentration (easily distracted)	2.94	1.49	369	3.28	1.62	369
	Weak time management skills	2.86	1.39	366	3.25	1.65	366
	Reluctance to ask for help	2.87	1.57	369	3.08	1.66	367
Personal Obstacles	Family responsibilities	2.39	1.37	368	2.93	1.73	369
	Job responsibilities	3.70	2.85	368	2.49	1.77	280
	Socializing (partying)	1.66	1.04	368	1.65	1.09	369
	Feeling stressed	4.19	1.49	365	4.20	1.62	367
	Inability to manage money wisely	2.64	1.48	367	2.66	1.70	370

Notes: Scale range:

1. 1 = Not at all likely to 6 = Very likely (*Fall* 2016);

2. 1 = No significant role to 6 = Very significant role (*Spring* 2017).

Appendix H. *Means and Standard Deviations of Liking College for Fall 2016 Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Experience (Paired Group)*

	Fall 2016 Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Actual Experience		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Liking college	4.98	1.05	365	4.53	1.33	365

Notes:

1. Scale range: 1 = I won't like it to 6 = I'll really like it (*Fall* 2016 Self-expectation survey);

2. Scale range: 1 = I didn't like it at all to 6 = I really liked it (*Spring* 2017 Experience survey).

Appendix I. *Mean and Standard Deviations of Self-Expectations, Actual Experience, and GPAs by First-Generation/Non-First-Generation*

	Non-First-Generation			First-Generation		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
College preparation (expectation)	4.90	.78	219	4.75	.86	134
College activity engagement (expectation)**	4.81	.86	218	4.51	.99	136
Faculty and staff engagement (expectation)**	4.78	.85	218	4.53	.86	138
Academic obstacles (expectation)	2.79	.92	216	2.91	.93	137
Personal obstacles (expectation)**	2.54	.87	213	2.84	.87	137
College preparation (experience)	5.00	.79	214	4.92	.87	135
Academic obstacles (experience)	2.83	1.21	214	3.05	1.15	135
Personal obstacles (experience)**	2.55	1.06	163	2.98	1.00	102
Fall 2016 GPA	3.47	.62	220	3.50	.54	137
Spring 2017 GPA	3.42	.69	219	3.45	.69	136
First-Year overall GPA	3.45	.57	220	3.49	.52	137

Note. **: $p<.01$.

Appendix J. *Mean and Standard Deviations of Self-Expectations, Actual Experience, and GPAs by URM/Non-URM*

	Non-URM			URM		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
College preparation (expectation)	4.92	.76	157	4.76	.86	207
College activity engagement (expectation)**	4.49	.93	157	4.83	.89	208
Faculty and staff engagement (expectation)	4.69	.82	159	4.67	.90	208
Academic obstacles (expectation)	2.80	.91	158	2.89	.93	206
Personal obstacles (expectation)	2.61	.89	155	2.73	.89	205
College preparation (experience)	5.02	.82	158	4.89	.82	202
Academic obstacles (experience)	2.85	1.17	157	2.96	1.18	203
Personal obstacles (experience)	2.72	1.09	121	2.72	1.03	154
Fall 2016 GPA**	3.65	.56	159	3.35	.58	210
Spring 2017 GPA**	3.57	.67	158	3.32	.68	209
First-Year overall GPA**	3.62	.51	159	3.35	.55	210

Note. **: p<.01.

Appendix K. *Correlations between Self-Expectations and Actual Experience and GPAs (Paired Group)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. College preparation (expectation)	-								
2. Academic obstacles (expectation)	-.51**	-							
3. Personal obstacles (expectation)	-.37**	.53**	-						
4. College preparation (experience)	.43**	-.28**	-.17**	-					
5. Academic obstacles (experience)	-.22**	.36**	.26**	-.34**	-				
6. Personal obstacles (experience)	-.12	.25**	.42**	-.32**	.62**	-			
7. Fall 2016 GPA	.05	-.08	-.04	.15**	-.31**	-.24**	-		
8. Spring 2017 GPA	.04	-.07	-.08	.18**	-.29**	-.26**	.71**	-	
9. First-Year overall GPA	.06	-.09	-.07	.17**	-.32**	-.27**	.90**	.92**	-

Notes. **: *p*<.01.

Appendix L. *Gender (General Group)*

	Fall 2016			*Spring* 2017		
	N=1050	%	Valid %	N=587	%	Valid %
Female	758	72.2	72.7	405	69.0	72.7
Male	284	27.0	27.3	152	25.9	27.3
Not Reported	8	.8	-	30	5.1	-

Appendix M. *Race/Ethnicity (General Group)*

	Fall 2016			*Spring* 2017		
	N	%	Valid %	N	%	Valid %
American Indian/Alaska Native	3	.3	.3	2	.3	.4
Asian	179	17.0	17.9	86	14.7	15.4
Black or African American	408	38.9	40.7	247	42.1	44.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	.1	.1	-	-	-
White	340	32.4	33.9	186	31.7	33.4
Two or More than 2 Races	71	6.8	7.1	36	6.1	6.5
Not Reported	48	4.6	-	30	5.1	-
Total	1050	100.0	100.0	587	100.0	100.0
Hispanic/Latino	135	12.9	13.0	54	9.2	10.4
Non-Hispanic/Latino	903	86.0	87.0	464	79.0	89.6
Not Reported	12	1.1	-	69	11.8	-
Total	1050	100.0	100.0	587	100.0	100.0

Appendix N. *Means and Standard Deviations of* College *Preparation for Fall 2016 Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Experience (General Group)*

	College Preparation					
	Fall 2016 Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Actual Experience		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Write clearly and effectively*	4.83	1.02	1048	4.97	1.09	585
Speak clearly and effectively	4.70	1.18	1046	4.76	1.19	586
Locate and organize information	4.83	1.05	1048	4.90	1.10	586
Set goals, prioritize tasks, and meet deadlines*	4.96	1.06	1046	4.78	1.24	582
Think analytically in order to solve practical problems	4.84	1.03	1046	4.92	1.03	585
Develop original ideas	4.79	1.09	1042	4.81	1.12	586
Work with individuals who are culturally different from you*	5.40	.90	1045	5.15	1.12	580

Note: Scale range: 1 = Not at all prepared to 6 = Very prepared. *: $p<.05$.

Appendix O. *Means and Standard Deviations of Study Habits for Fall 2016 Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Experience (General Group)*

	Study habits					
	Fall 2016 Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Actual Experience		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Pattern best describes the way of managing class reading and writing assignments	4.81	1.04	1034	4.46	1.28	576

Notes:

1. Scale range: 1 = I'll almost always be behind to 6 = I'll almost keep up (*Fall* 2016 Self-expectation survey);

2. Scale range: 1 = I was almost behind to 6 = I almost always kept up (*Spring* 2017 Experience survey).

Appendix P. *Comparison between Fall Cohort and Spring Cohort on First-Year Student Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and Overall First-Year Cumulative GPAs (General Group)*

	Semester	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Fall Semester GPA	*Fall* Cohort	3.30	.80	1040
	Spring Cohort	3.37	.67	585
Spring Semester GPA	*Fall* Cohort	3.22	.90	1009
	Spring Cohort	3.32	.75	582
1st year Cumulative GPA	*Fall* Cohort	3.28	.76	1046
	Spring Cohort	3.36	.61	586

Appendix Q. *Means and Standard Deviations of Obstacles to Academic Success for Fall 2016 Cohort for Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Cohort for Actual Experience (General Group)*

		Obstacles to Academic Success					
		Fall 2016 Cohort for Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Cohort for Actual Experience		
		Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Academic Obstacles	Weak math skills	2.97	1.61	1044	2.61	1.68	581
	Weak writing skills	2.67	1.43	1043	2.43	1.55	579
	Lack of concentration (easily distracted)	2.96	1.49	1046	3.25	1.62	581
	Weak time management skills	2.99	1.41	1038	3.26	1.61	573
	Reluctance to ask for help	2.85	1.56	1042	3.10	1.65	578
Personal Obstacles	Family responsibilities	2.50	1.45	1038	2.90	1.69	582
	Job responsibilities	2.69	1.53	857	2.57	1.76	455
	Socializing (partying)	1.79	1.12	1039	1.70	1.18	582
	Feeling stressed	4.14	1.55	1039	4.20	1.61	580
	Inability to manage money wisely	2.67	1.50	1038	2.71	1.67	582

Notes: Scale range:
1. 1 = Not at all likely to 6 = Very likely (*Fall* 2016);
2. 1 = No significant role to 6 = Very significant role (*Spring* 2017).

Appendix R. *Means and Standard Deviations of Liking College for Fall 2016 Cohort for Self-Expectations and Spring 2017 Cohort for Actual Experience (General Group)*

	Fall 2016 Cohort for Self-Expectations			*Spring* 2017 Cohort for Actual Experience		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Liking college	5.05	1.05	1039	4.49	1.33	583

Notes:
1. Scale range: 1 = I won't like it to 6 = I'll really like it (*Fall* 2016 Self-expectation survey);
2. Scale range: 1 = I didn't like it at all to 6 = I really liked it (*Spring* 2017 Experience survey).

Appendix S. *Means and Standard Deviations of GPAs for Paired Group (Indicating "Good Chance" to Transfer Out in both Fall Expectation and Spring Experience Surveys) by Enrolled Status in Fall 2017*

	Enrolled Status in Fall 2017	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Fall Semester GPA	Yes	3.63	.57	21
	No	3.88	.44	11
Spring Semester GPA	Yes	3.41	.89	21
	No	3.81	.45	10
1st year Cumulative GPA	Yes	3.54	.58	21
	No	3.84	.42	11

Note. The means and standard deviations may not be representative due to lower N.

Appendix T. *Distribution of Non-Returning Fall 2016 Students (Not Enrolled in Fall 2017) by Chance to Transfer Out in Fall Expectation and Spring Experience Surveys (Paired Group)*

		Transfer out (Experienced by the end of the first year)			
		Generally no chance	Moderate chance	Good chance	Total
		Raw N %	Raw N %	Raw N %	N
Transfer out (Expected at the beginning of the first year)	Generally no chance	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	9
	Moderate chance	37.5%	12.5%	50.0%	8
	Good chance	-	8.3%	91.7%	12

Appendix U. *Fall 2016 GPA for Non-Returning Fall 2016 Students (Not Enrolled in Fall 2017) by Chance to Transfer Out in Fall Expectation and Spring Experience Surveys*

		Transfer out (Experienced by the end of the first year)								
		Generally no chance			Moderate chance			Good chance		
Fall 2016 GPA	Transfer out (Expected at the beginning of the first year)	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N
	Generally no chance	2.91	.75	3	2.60	.54	3	3.53	.27	3
	Moderate chance	3.32	.16	3	3.17	-	1	3.57	.13	4
	Good chance	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.90	.46	10

Note. The means and standard deviations may not be representative due to lower N.

Appendix V. *Spring 2017 GPA for Non-Returning Fall 2016 Students (Not Enrolled in Fall 2017) by Chance to Transfer Out in Fall Expectation and Spring Experience Surveys*

		Transfer out (Experienced by the end of the first year)								
		Generally no chance			Moderate chance			Good chance		
Spring 2017 GPA	Transfer out (Expected at the beginning of the first year)	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N
	Generally no chance	2.52	1.51	3	2.09	.56	3	2.98	.89	3
	Moderate chance	3.51	.67	3	3.01	-	1	3.40	.39	4
	Good chance	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.81	.45	10

Note. The means and standard deviations may not be representative due to lower N.

Appendix W. *First-Year Cumulative GPA for Non-Returning Fall 2016 Students (Not Enrolled in Fall 2017) by Chance to Transfer Out in Fall Expectation and Spring Experience Surveys*

		Transfer out (Experienced by the end of the first year)								
		Generally no chance			Moderate chance			Good chance		
First-Year Cumulative GPA	Transfer out (Expected at the beginning of the first year)	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N
	Generally no chance	2.71	1.00	3	2.34	.53	3	3.21	.66	3
	Moderate chance	3.42	.45	3	3.08	-	1	3.54	.15	4
	Good chance	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.86	.43	10

Note. The means and standard deviations may not be representative due to lower N.

Appendix X. *Means and Standard Deviations of Expectations and GPAs for Fall Expectation Survey Respondents by Enrolled Status in the Fall 2017*

Items	Enrolled Status	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
College preparation (Expectation)	No	4.92	.80	130
	Yes	4.81	.81	886
College activities (Expectation)	No	4.62	1.01	130
	Yes	4.70	.94	884
Faculty & Staff Engagement (Expectation)	No	4.76	.92	130
	Yes	4.64	.92	900
Academic obstacles (Expectation)	No	2.90	1.04	129
	Yes	2.89	.96	884
Personal obstacles (Expectation)	No	2.82	.95	129
	Yes	2.74	.95	874
Fall 2016 GPA***	No	2.79	1.28	131
	Yes	3.37	.67	906
Spring 2017 GPA***	No	2.57	1.44	104
	Yes	3.30	.78	902
First-year overall GPA***	No	2.79	1.17	131
	Yes	3.36	.63	906

Note. ***: *p<.001.*