

Sonoma State University

**PUERTA & EOP Belonging Survey
Fall 2019**

**PUERTA Student
Counseling Data Analysis
January 23, 2019-February 3, 2020**

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In the fall semester of the 2019-20 school year, Public Works and the PUERTA/EOP team created a feedback survey that was administered to PUERTA and EOP students who had attended the 2019 Summer Bridge program. The survey was also administered to the first cohort of PUERTA students from the 2018 Summer Bridge program but only a handful of the respondents were from 2018 (n=6) so responses for both PUERTA cohorts have been combined in this summary report. Only EOP students that participated in the 2019 Summer Bridge program were surveyed in Fall 2019.

The survey was designed to collect feedback about their first semester experience and the extent to which they were feeling or developing a sense of belonging in their campus community. The survey was also intended to probe into how student experiences of a sense of belonging might be influenced by various factors related to their developing sense of identity, particularly in relation to race/ethnicity, gender identity and financial circumstances.

In order to boost the response rate to the survey, it remained open through January 2020. In total, 152 responses to the survey were collected (68 PUERTA students and 84 EOP students). The response rate for this survey was fairly high. Of the 231 (156 EOP students attending the program in 2019, 84 or 54% responded. Of the 75 PUERTA students attending in 2019, we estimate that 62 or 83% responded in addition to the small handful of the first PUERTA cohort from 2018 that responded. Appendices include survey frequencies and open-ended responses organized by program.

Programs for historically underrepresented populations in higher education:

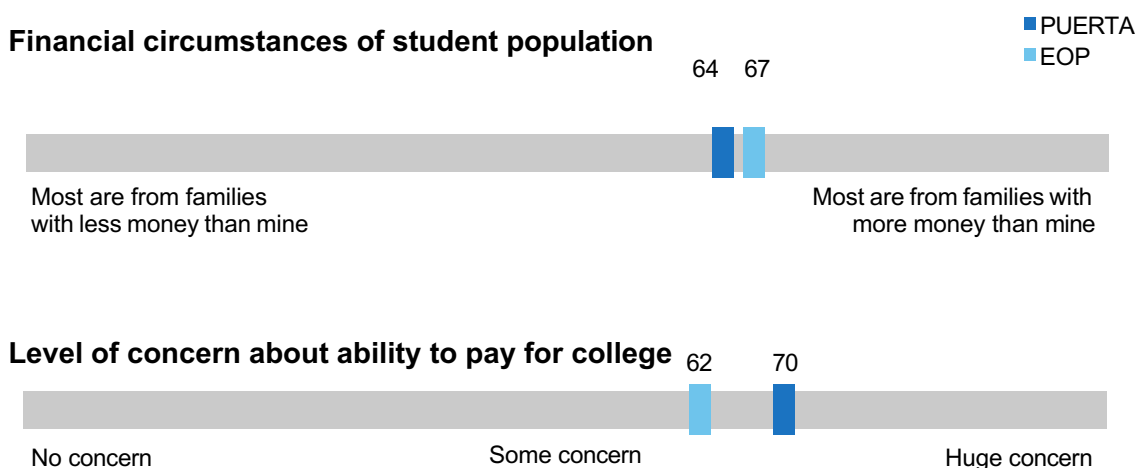
- **Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)** is designed to encourage the inclusion of low-income and educationally disadvantaged students into higher education.
- **Preparing Underrepresented Educators to Realize their Teaching Ambitions (PUERTA)** is designed to increase the number of Latinx students qualified to teach in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

About the Students

Most of the students responding to the survey were first year students (94%), attending school full time (98%), and students of color (92% Latinx). Note that most of the respondents (80%) were female, which is not representative of the participants in the two groups during the Summer Bridge programming. Seven out of ten respondents were living on campus (72%). Both groups of students responding to the survey indicated similarly that some or most of their friends at SSU are of the same race/ethnicity (55% most and 35% some). Students responding to the survey were also asked to compare their financial circumstances to that of the student population at SSU on a scale of 1 to 100, which 1

indicating “most are from families with less money than mine” and 100 indicating “most are from families with more money than mine.” On average, both groups rated SSU students as coming from families with MORE money (64 for PUERTA and 67 for EOP) (Figure A). Students were also asked to rate their level of concern about their ability to pay for college. PUERTA students were, on average, more concerned than EOP, ranking a little less than mid-way between “some” and “huge” concern (Figure A).

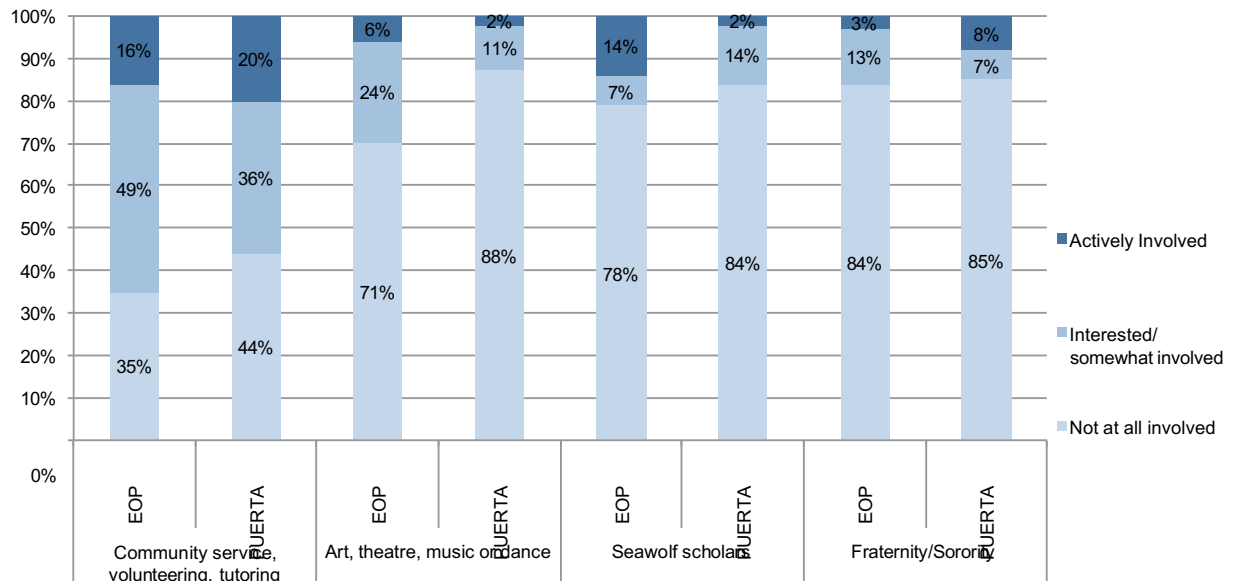
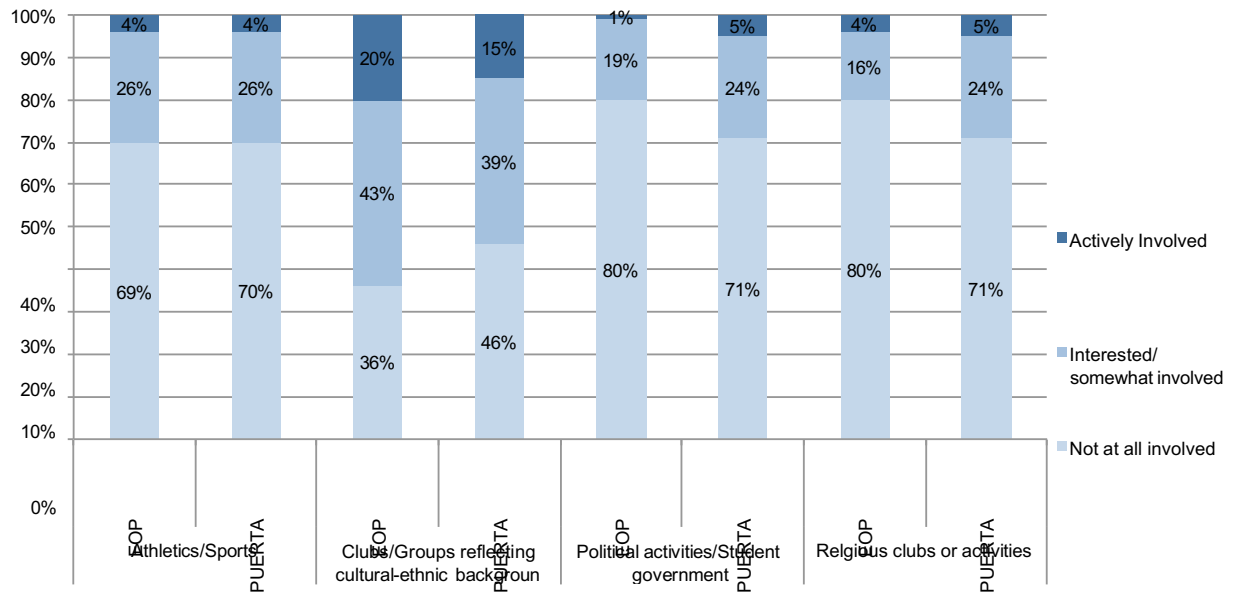
Figure A: PUERTA (n=51) and EOP (n=59/58) Student Perceptions of Financial Situation



Student Involvement in Campus Activities

Respondents were asked to identify their level of involvement in campus activities including (1) athletics/sports, (2) clubs or groups reflecting my cultural-ethnic background, (3) political activities or student government, (4) religious clubs or activities, (5) community service, volunteering and tutoring, (6) art, theatre, music or dance, (7) Seawolf Scholars, or (8) fraternity or sorority. Not surprisingly for this first year group, in general, most of the students indicated that they were “not at all involved” (ranging from a high of 84% for fraternity/sorority to 39% for community service, volunteering and tutoring across the two groups). The areas in which the most students indicated “interested or somewhat involved” were 41% for clubs or groups reflecting my cultural-ethnic background and 43% community service, volunteering and tutoring, which were also the two activities with the highest percentage of students indicating active involvement (18% for each choice). There were few differences between PUERTA and EOP students, though EOP students were somewhat more likely to indicate interest or active involvement in several of the activities though these were very small differences and the overall pattern was consistent across the two groups (Figures B and C).

Figures B & C: PUERTA (n=68) and EOP (n=84) Student Involvement in Campus Activities, Fall 2019



Developing Sense of Belonging and Identity on the SSU Campus

Students were asked a series of questions related to different aspects of their identity (gender, financial circumstances, and race-ethnicity) and the relationship to how comfortable they were feeling generally on campus and in relation to specific interactions such as with professors and contributing to class discussions, social and friend relationships, feeling like they fit in and access to supports on campus. When asked about general feelings related to SSU, student's financial circumstances were the most likely to make them feel uncomfortable or very uncomfortable on campus (for both groups) (42% across both PUERTA and EOP), compared to small percentages (10-12%) based on gender, sexual orientation, or religion. A sizable group, one quarter (25%), indicated that race/ethnicity made them uncomfortable or very uncomfortable on campus.

When asked about more specific aspects of student life on campus, higher proportions of both PUERTA and EOP students identified their financial circumstances as a factor in making it much more or more difficult in feeling comfortable socially on campus (47% of respondents), fitting in (40%), being included in informal activities with friends (38%), being taken seriously by professors (30%), finding like-minded friends (29%), and contributing to discussions in class (28%). Fewer respondents, however, indicated their financial circumstances made it much more or difficult to find academic support to do well at SSU (20%). When asked the same questions in relation to a student's racial/ethnic group, fewer respondents (though still sizable groups ranging from about a quarter to a third) indicated that it did make aspects of campus life difficult or much more difficult.

Though the impact of race/ethnicity and financial circumstances impacted various aspects of campus life when asked specifically about those factors, in general, sizable proportions of students in PUERTA and EOP were feeling positive about their experiences during the first semester of life at SSU. For instance, 84% agreed or strongly agreed that "students at this college are generally friendly," 81% agreed or strongly agreed "I can really be myself at SSU" and 76% feel they are "a member of the college community." Similarly, 85% would encourage others like themselves to attend SSU. However, there is some natural sense of alienation among the students as they try to fit into campus—with 49% agreeing or strongly agreeing that "I feel very different from most other students here."

In terms of interactions with professors, study groups and experiences in class, about three quarters of students indicating a general sense of belonging so far—84% agreeing or strongly agreeing that interactions with professors at SSU indicated they care how students are doing, 78% agreeing or strongly agreeing they would feel comfortable asking a professor for help, and 66% agreeing or strongly agreeing they feel comfortable

contributing to class discussions. Most students prefer to study on their own (85%) but over half (63%) agreed or strongly agreed they would find it easy to join study groups with other students if they wanted.

Respondents were asked about discrimination on campus, SSU's efforts to build community and other aspects of creating an inclusive environment on the campus, which indicate generally positive experiences but some level of concern among a fairly large proportion of students *if something were to happen* related to race/ethnicity or discrimination. For instance:

- Over half (54%) agreed or strongly agreed that people of “my race/ethnicity” have experienced discrimination on campus but 79% agreed or strongly agreed that the “college’s efforts at community building are effective.”
- Only 59% agreed or strongly agreed that if there were a racial incident at SSU, “I feel the college would react quickly and appropriately.”
- Students are evenly split in terms of how comfortable they are discussing racially sensitive topics on campus with members of other races/ethnicities (44% disagree and 39% agree).

Campus Advising

In order to assess the initial experiences of students at SSU in both PUERTA and EOP, students were asked about the advising they had participated in thus far. Nearly all students reported having met with an academic advisor (86%). About a third (35%) had met with a major advisor and 13% indicating meeting another kind of advisor. Only one student had not. Students had very positive feedback regarding their advisors, with 75% of students rating them as “very helpful” and 68% as “very accessible.” Students (77%) also indicated that advisors are “very interested” in their success and a third indicated they are “somewhat” (34%) or “very” (50%) active in seeking their support.

In addition to the data collected through the Belonging Feedback survey, PUERTA advising data was also downloaded and analyzed for the time period between January 23, 2019 and February 3, 2020. This would include advising provided to both cohorts of PUERTA students and did not include advising data related to the EOP students from Summer Bridge 2019 who were included in the survey results above. In total, PUERTA students accessed 342 appointments with PUERTA advisors at an average duration of 50 minutes. Mostly freshmen and sophomores participated in this counseling (72% of sessions). Advisors recorded that most of the appointments included a review of progress toward timely graduation (64% of sessions) and the review of ARR or “What-If” report (72% of sessions). Advisors recorded a holistic check-in of student well-being at nearly all sessions

(92%) and more than half of the sessions included a referral of the student to a Coordinated Care Network partner (56%). The following table provides information about the number and types of services provided during their sessions (Table 1). Registration, personal check in, general education, and probation were the top four types of services provided.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of Services Provided January 23, 2019 to February 3, 2020 (by type), 342 Advising Sessions

<u>Services Provided (N=388)</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>%</u>
Registration	90	26%
Personal Check In	58	17%
General Education	44	13%
Probation	44	13%
Other	28	8%
Academic Probation	27	8%
Mandatory Advising	24	7%
Major/Minor Exploration	17	5%
Credential Advising	14	4%
PUERTA Required Advising	10	3%
Financial Aid	7	2%
Teacher Major Pathways	6	2%
Explore or Declare a Major/Minor	4	1%
Graduation	4	1%
Career Exploration	3	1%
Degree Progress	2	1%
Post-Graduation Plans	2	1%
Class Assignment	1	0%
English/Math Requirements	1	0%
Graduate School	1	0%
Withdraw From Class	1	0%

Information downloaded from the SSU Advising system provided additional information about PUERTA group's experience with advising during this time period. In total, 140 individual students were provided with advising services, of whom most (39%) were freshmen or sophomores (34%) at the time of the advising session. PUERTA students seen in advising had an average cumulative GPA of 2.79, had an average of 2.5 appointments with an average duration of 122 minutes of advising. Table 2 provides a breakdown of PUERTA student majors as indicated through the advising system. Of the 140 students, 11 had two majors so there is a total count of 151 in the table. About one in

five (21%) are undeclared, followed by 16% majoring in Early Childhood Studies and 10% in Sociology.

Table 2: PUERTA Advising Data, PUERTA Student Majors (January 23, 2019 to February 3, 2020)

Majors (N=151)	Count	%
Undeclared	30	21%
Early Childhood Studies (BA)	22	16%
Sociology (BA)	14	10%
Spanish (BA)	11	8%
English (BA)	9	6%
Liberal Studies Hutchins (BA)	8	6%
History (BA)	7	5%
Kinesiology (BS)	6	4%
Mathematics (BA)	5	4%
Chicano & Latino Studies (BA)	4	3%
Crim & Crim Justice Studies (BA)	4	3%
Biochemistry (BS)	3	2%
Electrical Engineering (BS)	3	2%
Psychology (BA)	3	2%
Communication Studies (BA)	2	1%
Computer Science (BS)	2	1%
Music (BM)	2	1%
Theatre Arts (BA)	2	1%
Amer Multicult Studies (BA)	1	1%
Biology (BS)	1	1%
Business Administration (BS)	1	1%
Chemistry (BS)	1	1%
French (BA)	1	1%
Human Development (BA)	1	1%
Mathematics (BS)	1	1%
Physics (BS)	1	1%
Political Science (BA)	1	1%
Pre-Business Administration	1	1%
Pre-Human Development	1	1%
Special Major (BA)	1	1%
Statistics (BS)	1	1%
Womens and Gender Studies (BA)	1	1%