San Francisco State University

Fall 2017 First-Time Freshmen: Students who Left Survey
A Collaboration Between:
First-Year Experience, Institutional Research, & Developmental Studies

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I. Background & Literature

89% National first-year persistence rate for those who entered a 4-year institution on a full-time basis

Citation: https://nscresearchcenter.org/snapshotreport33-first-year-persistence-and-retention

79% SF State’s first-year, full-time persistence rate for the fall 2017 cohort

Citation: http://ir.sfsu.edu/content/student-outcome

10% Gap between the national average & SF State’s first-year, full-time persistence
I. Background & Literature

Five constructs identified in the literature as barriers to retention:

- Economic
- Societal
- Organizational
- Psychological
- Interactional

I. Background & Literature

What is the purpose of our survey collection?

To make informed decisions.

- Identify common factors which contribute to first-year students not retaining.
- Identify factors that can be impacted by the University.
- Increase awareness of these factors.

End goal: Address factors (as possible) and reduce loss of first-year students.
II. Data Collection

Training

• Trained 4 transition mentors & 1 FYE student assistant
• Reviewed & provided feedback to the script
• Reviewed and provided feedback to questions
• Tone of care needs to be a part of the process

Process

• Phone calls (x3)
  • Called during various times of the day
• No answer – Voicemail
• For all non-responses, followed-up with an email
III. SF State First-Year Students Who Left

939

Number of fall 2017 first-time freshmen who DID NOT return for their second year
III. SF State First-Year Students Who Left (n = 939)

**Sex**
- Females: 58%
- Males: 42%

**Age Group**
- 17 Years: 0.3%
- 18 Years: 76%
- 19 Years: 23%
- 20 Years: 1%
- 21 Years: 0.3%
III. SF State First-Year Students Who Left (n = 939)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Traditionally Underrepresented (URM)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Latino</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Traditionally Underrepresented = African American, American Indian, & Hispanic/Latino
III. SF State First-Year Students Who Left (n = 939)

Residence at time of application

- Northern California: 10%
- Central California: 8%
- Southern California: 37%
- San Diego: 9%
- Bay Area: 34%
- U.S. Outside of California: 2%
- International: 1%
III. First-Year Students Who Left (n = 939)

**Status**
- Full-Time: 87%
- Part-Time: 13%

**Housing**
- 51% of students were in SF State housing

**Top 10 Majors**
- Undeclared: 13%
- Pre-Nursing: 9%
- Biology: 7%
- Criminal Justice Studies: 5%
- Pre-Psychology: 5%
- Cinema: 4%
- Computer Science: 4%
- Bus Admin-Management: 3%
- Bus Admin-Marketing: 3%
- Political Science: 3%
- Other: 44%
IV. Response Rate

Phone and Email Response Rate (n = 285)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>41  (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>244 (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30.4% Response Rate

(285/939 = 30.4%)
V. Quantitative Results

Are you planning to return to San Francisco State? (n = 285)

- No: 156 (55%)
- Yes: 76 (27%)
- Undecided: 53 (19%)
Top reasons students indicated that they are **not** planning to return to SF State? (n = 156)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanting to be closer to home</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF State did not feel like your campus</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal issues</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of social connections</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class availability</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available housing</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of campus resources</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuting</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to progress in your major</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to see advisors</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top reasons students indicated why they are **taking a break** from SF State? (n = 130)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal issues</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family responsibilities</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanting to be closer to home</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuting</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available housing</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class availability</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career or military service/opportunities</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF State did not feel like your campus</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic difficulties</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Check all that apply response option (i.e., percentages do not sum to 100%).
V. Quantitative Results

Students **not** planning to return to SF State:
Financial breakdown (n = 61)

- Financial (high expenses/costs of living) - 93%
- Tuition too expensive - 16%
- Limitations of Financial Aid (Not qualifying, not enough) - 15%

Students **taking a break** from SF State:
Financial breakdown (n = 57)

- Financial (high expenses/costs of living) - 79%
- Limitations of Financial Aid (Not qualifying, not enough) - 23%
- Tuition too expensive - 5%
- Transportation - 2%

Note: Respondents could refer to multiple categories (i.e., percentages do not sum to 100%).
V. Quantitative Results

Is there something that SF State could have done differently that would have changed your decision to leave or take a break from SF State? (n = 285)

No: 185 (65%)
Yes: 100 (35%)
VI. Qualitative Results (n = 99)

Is there something that SF State could have done differently that would have changed your decision to leave or take a break from SF State?

Financial assistance: 20%

Increase outreach, resources & communication regarding campus services (e.g., advising, counseling, tutoring), deadlines & campus activities: 17%

Increase class availability: 16%

Note: Respondents could refer to multiple categories (i.e., percentages do not sum to 100%).
VI. Qualitative Results (n = 99)

Is there something that SF State could have done differently that would have changed your decision to leave or take a break from SF State?

Housing affordability 10%

Did not feel connected 9%

Housing issues 9%

Note: Respondents could refer to multiple categories (i.e., percentages do not sum to 100%).
VI. Qualitative Results (n = 99)

“I didn’t receive any scholarships and was really hoping that I could have received some to help me financially.”

“I would have liked SF State to be more communicative about programs, clubs, and resources on campus. It was difficult for me to know what the campus had to offer.”

“I needed to work… It would help if the cost of housing was lowered.”

“I was on the waitlist for housing and I did not have a plan to stay by the time classes started. I’m from Southern California so I didn’t have any other options.”

“More help with the college experience.”
Would you like assistance re-enrolling and/or links to resources that could assist you with re-enrollment?

51 Students successfully emailed links to resources that could assist them with re-enrollment.

42 Number of phone calls made to students to assist them with re-enrollment.

- Spoke to 17 students
  - 2 students already enrolled in Spring 2019
- Left 8 voicemails
- Could not reach 17 students
Thoughts?
Ideas?
Discussion.