

RESEARCH BRIEF

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AT FULLERTON COLLEGE



MARCH 2025

2024 Survey Inquiry Group Summary

By: Daniel Javier Berumen

In the summer of 2021, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) lead a group of managers, faculty, and staff through a review of various surveys that had been administered at the College. The intent of the group was to discuss findings and make recommendations to the College to improve the student experience and help inform institutional planning.

The group produced the [Report of Findings and Recommendations of the Fullerton College Survey Inquiry Group \(SIG\)](#) and shared it at various campus shared governance bodies in fall of 2021. Recommendations from the report were used to guide programmatic changes around campus cultural events, basic needs access, and first year/onboarding experiences.

After a [recommendation](#) from the Faculty Senate in March 2024, OIE organized a follow-up SIG for that summer in order to review survey data collected since fall 2021. The group met three times over the summer, with OIE leading presentations on the data, and encouraging time to discuss and reflect. At the end of the program, OIE sent out an exit survey to collect feedback from the group about the various data points that were shared. A list of participating members is available in Appendix A.

Four themes/broad recommendations to improve the experience for students at the College emerged from the data:

1. Continue critical basic needs supports
2. Increase connections in non-major and online courses
3. Improve messaging about harassment reporting
4. Identify ways to increase access to critical support services

Surveys Reviewed

The group reviewed a total of seven surveys administered between fall 2022 and spring 2024:

- [Fall 2022 Counseling Survey](#)
- [Fall 2022 Survey of Entering Student Engagement \(SENSE\)](#)
- [Spring 2023 Campus Climate Survey](#)
- [Spring 2023 Career Technical Education Outcomes Survey \(CTEOS\)](#)
- [Spring 2023 REAL College Basic Needs Survey](#)
- Fall 2023 Class Drop Survey
- [Spring 2024 Student Survey \(Fullerton College Results Only\)](#)

The surveys are a mix of internal and external surveys, with the majority being administered exclusively online. Reports for each survey are linked if they are available, and short summaries of these surveys are included in Appendix B.

Theme 1: Maintaining Basic Needs Support

Addressing Basic Needs for students has been a priority at the College since the first REAL College Survey was administered in [2018](#). Most notably, the College opened the Chris Lamm & Toni DuBois-Walker Food Bank, hired a Basic Needs Coordinator, and opened the Hornets Resource Center. When the campus re-opened after COVID-19 lockdowns, the College began providing free meals in its cafeteria for students. From spring 2022-spring 2024, the College enhanced its offerings by providing each student with a daily \$12 credit at the cafeteria.

In its reviews of survey results, SIG participants noted that some of the results for the spring 2023 REAL College Survey were slightly better than the results of the 2020 administrations (Table 1). Fewer respondents indicated food and housing insecurity than in previous years. That said, results were still alarming in regard to housing, as 50% of respondents indicated a housing insecurity.

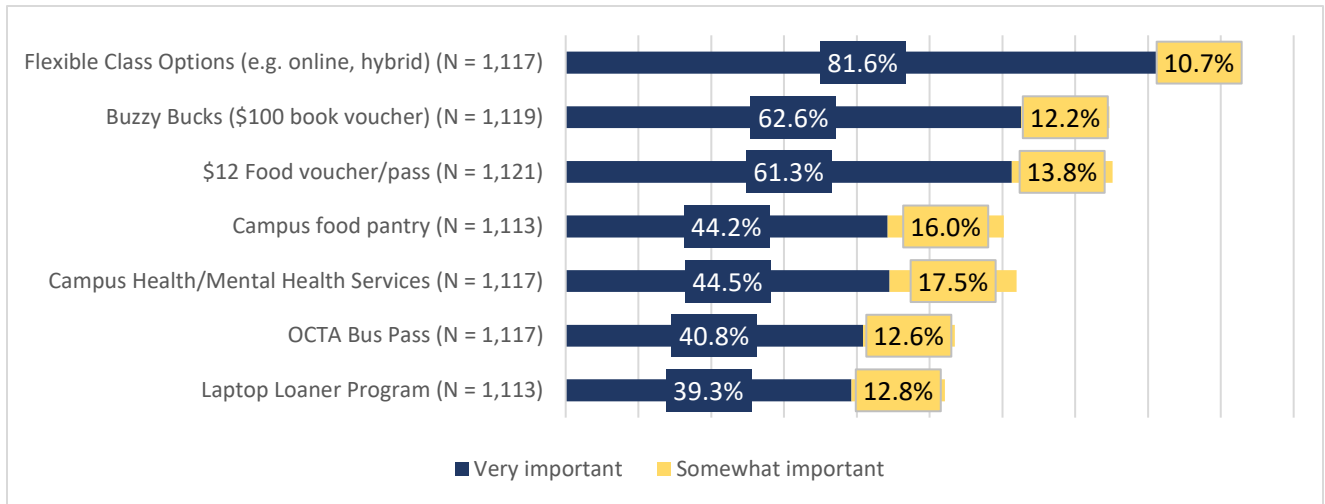
The group did note that the College has seen significant enrollment declines since spring 2020, and discussions centered on whether demographic changes at the College could be contributing to any positive results in the survey. Follow-up data shared with the group indicated that the proportion of all students at the College did not change significantly, and that the number of students receiving financial aid was actually higher in 2022-2023 (52%) than in 2020-2021 (48%).

Table 1. Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity by Year and Type

	FALL 2020 (N = 1,789)	SPRING 2023 (N = 808)
Any Insecurity	62%	59%
Food Insecurity	40%	35%
Housing Insecurity	53%	50%
Homelessness	13%	15%

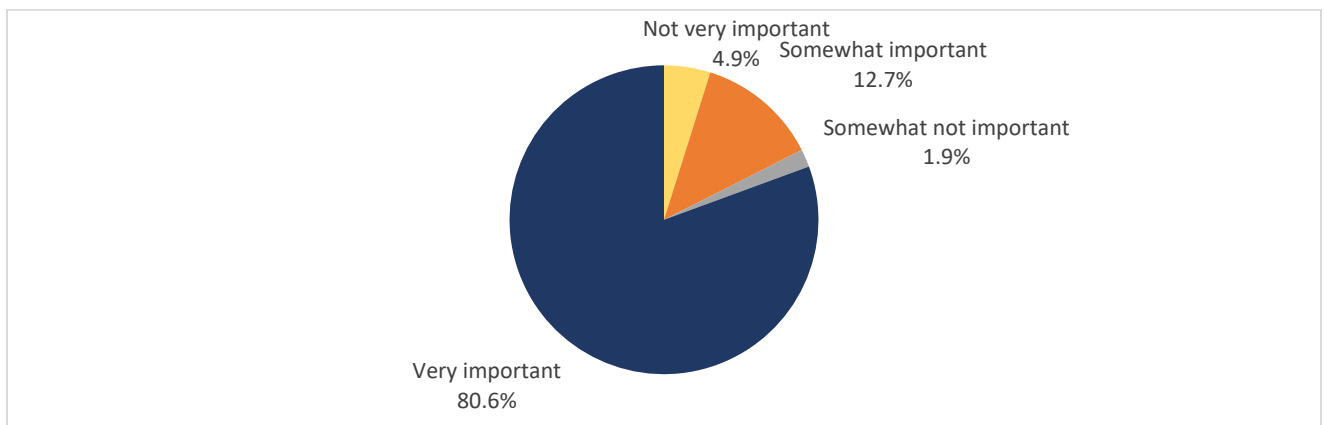
The group also reviewed the basic needs data collected during the spring 2024 term, through the *Annual Student Survey*. When students were asked how important several benefits were in their decision to enroll at the College, about 75% of respondents indicated that \$12 Food Voucher and the \$100 book voucher were very or somewhat important factors (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Importance of Benefits in Decision to Enroll at College



When asked how important the \$12 Food Voucher was in providing their primary meal of the day, about 81% of respondents indicated it was very important (Figure 2)

Figure 2. Importance of \$12 Food Voucher in Providing Primary Meal of Day



SIG Reflections

When SIG members were asked to reflect on the basic needs data shared, the \$12 food voucher was a common topic in their exit survey results. Many encouraged the College to continue the program in one way or another. For example, one respondent to the SIG exit survey noted:

If we can't maintain a cafeteria credit, I think we should still work to make sure students have no/low cost ready-to-eat food options. Establishing EBT in our cafeteria, having students in specific programs maintain a food credit (like how EOPS provides book funds for their students), or seeing if Sodexo can do meal deals sound like ways to start.

Overall, the group encourages the college to maintain key basic needs supports such as food and book vouchers and work to identify community partnerships to help address housing issues.

Theme 2: Increasing Connections in the Classroom

The group reviewed questions from multiple surveys that attempted to evaluate students' experience in the classroom. Of note were questions focused on students' sense of belonging in different classroom spaces as well as results from a survey administered when students drop their courses.

For the former, the group noted how students indicated the highest levels of belonging in classes within their major of study, with 79.45% selecting "I strongly belong" (Figure 3). While 78.8% of students indicated that they strongly belonged in classes taught in person, that rate was only 64.9% for online classes.

Another topic of discussion revolved on how students indicated higher levels of strongly belonging in classes taught by professors of color compared to classes taught by White professors. When this data is disaggregated by race/ethnicity (Figure 4), the differences are mostly attributed to students of color; 76.7% indicated they strongly belonged in classes taught by faculty of color compared to 64.1% in classes taught by white faculty.

Figure 3. Sense of Belonging by Class Type

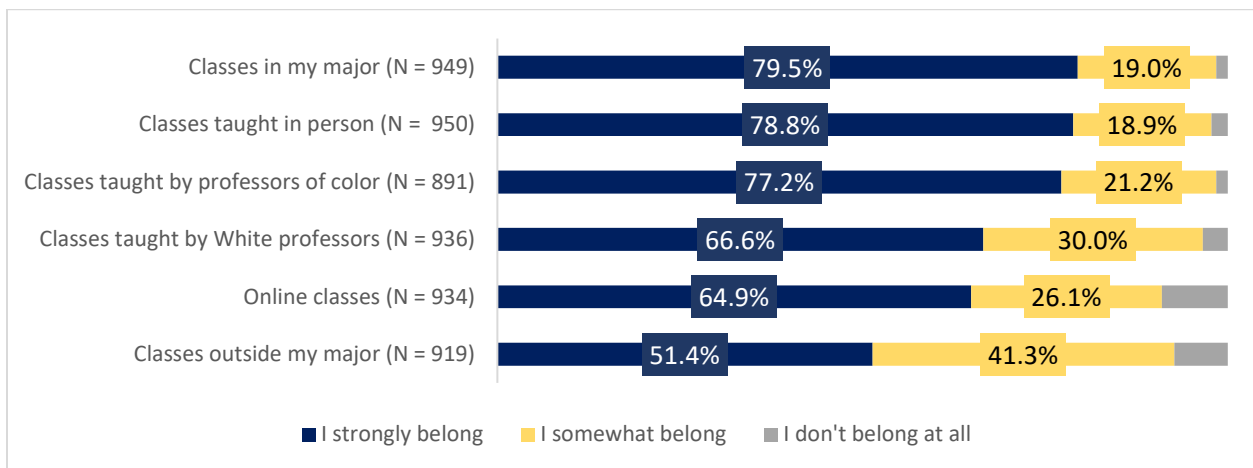
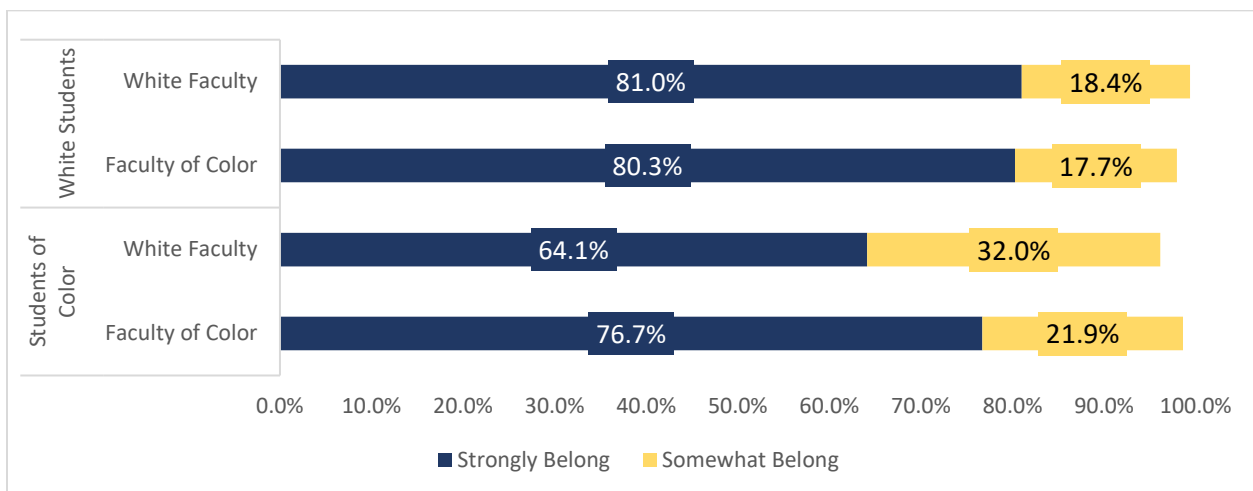


Figure 4. Sense of Belonging by Class Type and Race/Ethnicity



The group reviewed results from fall 2023 of the College’s “Withdrawal Survey”, a survey automatically administered when students withdraw from a course. Of the top five options selected, three highlighted the struggle students were having balancing classroom and other responsibilities (Table 2). About 26-27% of students indicated that they dropped courses due to academic struggles.

Table 2. Fall 2023 Top Reasons for Withdrawing from Course

Withdrawal Reason	Percent (N = 3,633)
Too difficult managing course load with other responsibilities	37.3%
Changes in work schedule, new job/internship	35.3%
Low grade	27.4%
Too difficult, unprepared academically	26.0%
Medical, personal or family issues	22.1%

A review of the open-ended questions by the OIE team confirmed the multiple-choice results. The most common themes included issues managing their time, the difficulty of the course, and sudden need to care for family. Of the 858 students that provided an open-ended response, about 11% indicated that one of the reasons they dropped the course was due to their faculty. In the vast majority of those faculty-related responses, the students felt their learning style conflicted with the teaching style of the faculty.

SIG Reflections

In their reflections on classroom related survey questions, SIG participants highlighted the issues around students’ sense of belonging in courses outside of their majors and in online courses. A few members suggested that the data supported further diversification efforts of employees as well as content:

I think it would be great if we could hire more full-time faculty, with an emphasis on hiring faculty with scholarship or other expertise related to serving students of color...I think we offer some really good robust training related to equitably serving students of color, so making sure faculty engage in these trainings is important too. We have to make sure people are aware of these learning opportunities and are encouraged in as many ways as possible to take them.

Other members suggested continued collection of student feedback on their classroom experiences, including qualitative studies around how to make classroom experiences more inclusive. Finally, some members indicated that the results of the drop survey suggest that students may need support on creating flexible schedules and managing their courseloads.

Theme 3: Gains in Campus Climate, But Increased Efforts Needed Around Harassment Reporting

After the 2021 SIG found that students of color were experiencing the campus differently from their peers, the College implemented various efforts to increase their sense of belonging in spaces outside of the classroom. The College increased its diversity and cultural programming in the quad and began opening various student centers targeted towards diverse student populations. OIE and the Diversity Advisory Committee administered a survey in spring 2023 to identify if any gains were made with these efforts.

While SIG members noted the small number of respondents, the results indicate that students of color feel they matter at similar, if not higher, rates than their white peers (Figure 5). Students also responded positively to the diversity efforts of the College (Figure 6).

Figure 5. Sense of Mattering in Campus Quad by Race/Ethnicity

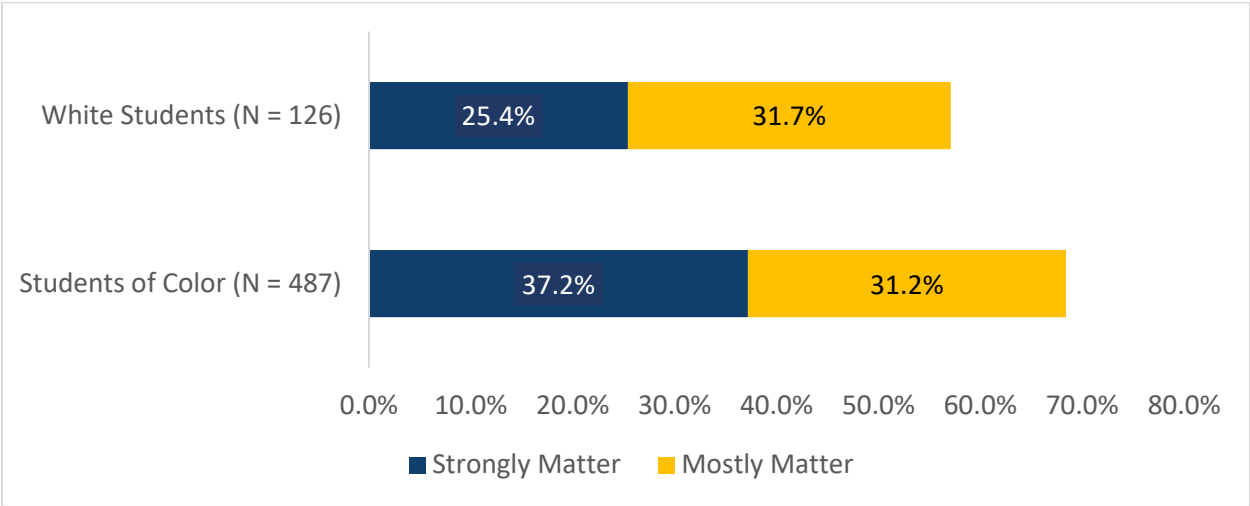
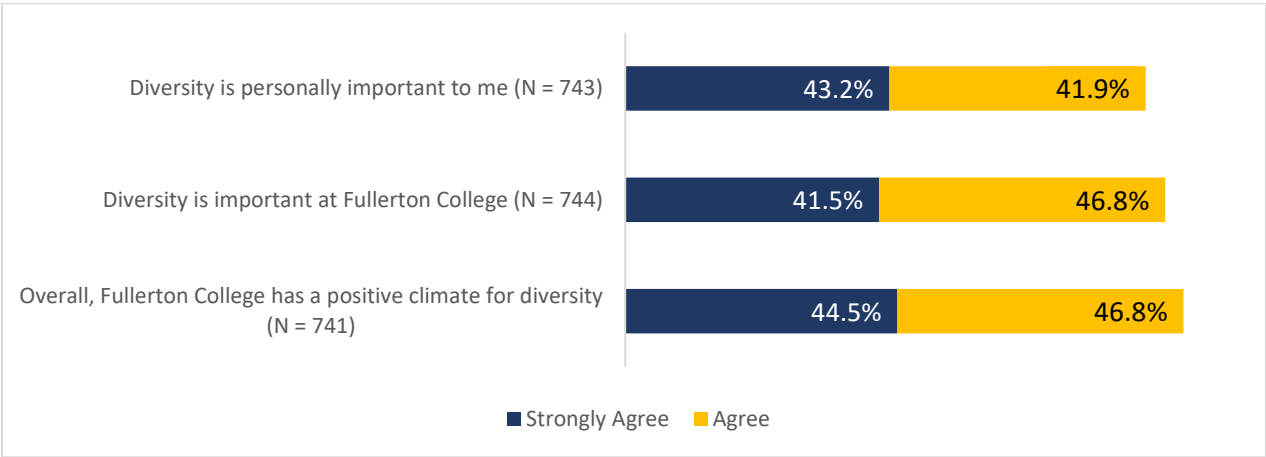
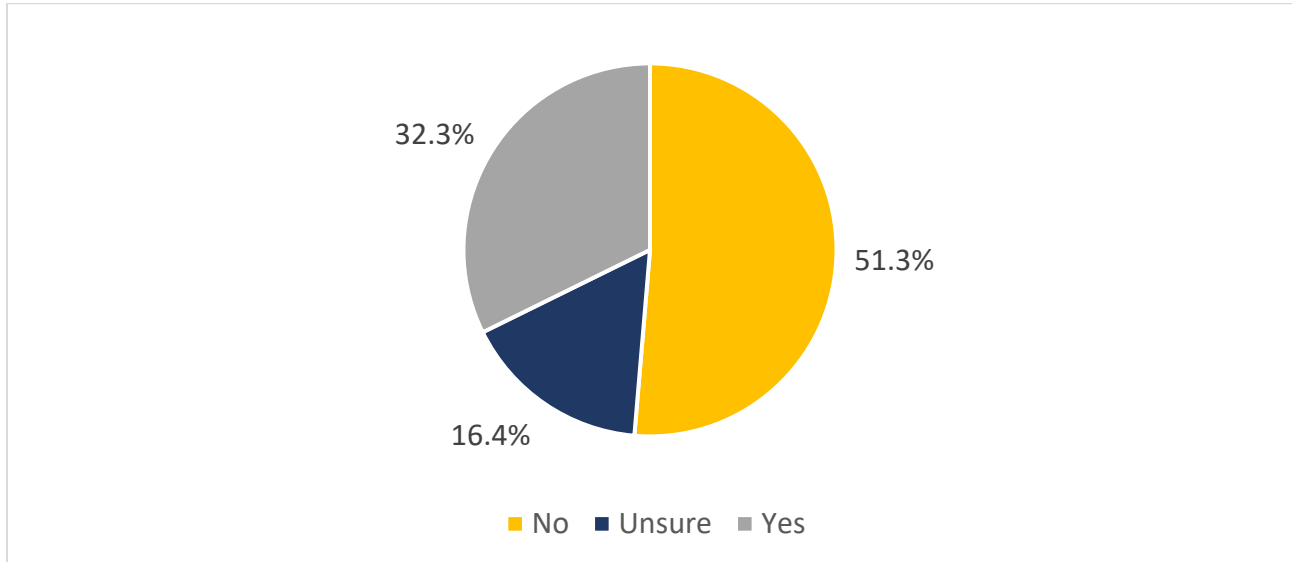


Figure 6. Students Perceptions about Diversity



That said, both the Diversity Advisory Committee and SIG members were concerned about results related to questions in the survey around sexual harassment. About 51% of students in the spring 2023 survey did not know where to report unwanted sexual contact on campus, and another 16% were unsure (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Know Where to Report Unwanted Sexual Contact on Campus (N = 635)



SIG Reflections

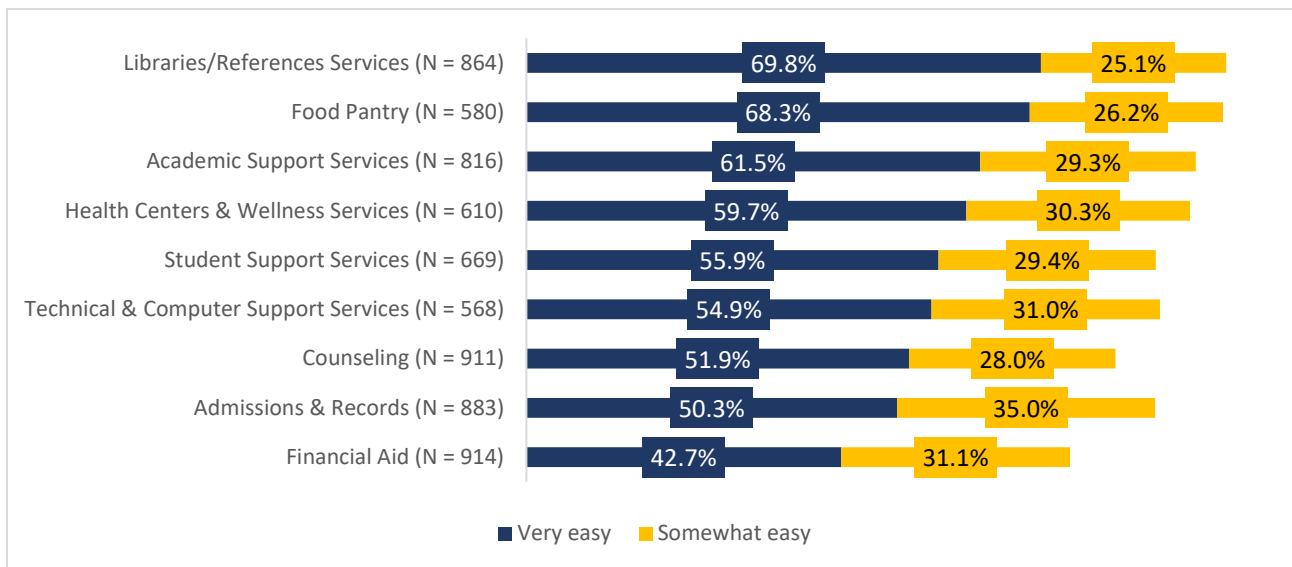
While SIG participants were encouraged by signs that students were experiencing a better campus climate in regard to belonging and diversity, they found the percentage of students unaware of where to report unwanted sexual contact as “alarmingly high”.

Participants recommended increased signage, more prominent links on the website, as well as organizing and advertising a program similar to the College’s Radical Care Services (RAD) which focuses solely on these issues.

Theme 4: Identify Ways to Increase Access to Critical Support Services

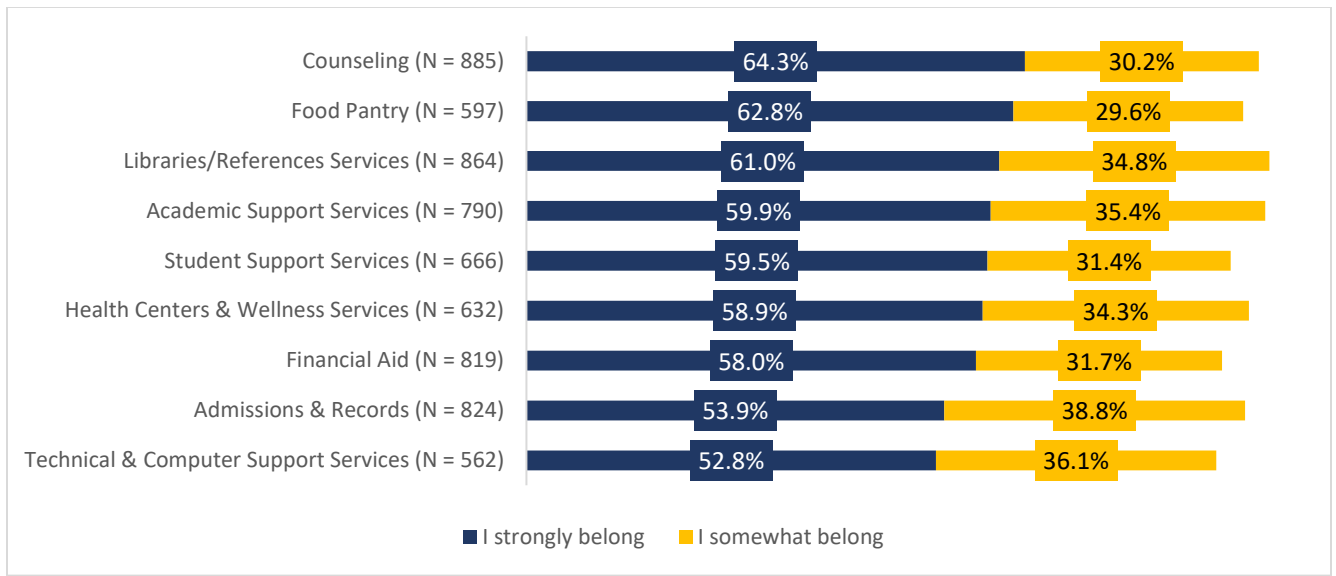
The team reviewed data from surveys that measured students' access to support services, including the Fall 2022 Counseling Survey. Of note was data from the Spring 2024 Student Survey that directly asked how easy it was for students to access a variety of services across campus. About 95% of eligible respondents indicated that it was very or somewhat easy to get help from someone at the Library and at the Food Pantry (Figure 8). Similarly high levels were identified for Academic Support Services (90.8%) and Health and Wellness Services (90.0%). Conversely, the team noted how three critical areas, Counseling, Admissions & Records, and Financial Aid had the lowest rates.

Figure 8. Ease of Getting Help From Someone



In both the Counseling and Spring 2023 Campus Climate Surveys, students indicated high levels of satisfaction with Counseling services. Figure 9 includes data from the Spring 2024 Student Survey that indicates how respondents rated Counseling as the support service where they felt the highest sense of belonging.

Figure 4. Sense of Belonging – Campus Offices/Services



SIG Reflections

The group included a number of student services professionals, and as such, the topic of Counseling showed up in a number of feedback results; as one respondent noted

It would be beneficial to see how to improve access, so more students can take advantage of the positive items pointed out once students were able to work with the counselors

Suggestions include providing additional resources and technological options to help ease access issues during peak periods. A few respondents suggested a review of policies, practices, and technology to identify if there are ways to ease the process for students to make appointments.

Appendix A: Summer 2024 Participants

OIE:

- Daniel Javier Berumen, Director
- Karina Corona, Research Analyst
- Michael Geick, Senior Research and Planning Analyst
- Megan Harris, Senior Research and Planning Analyst
- Kesha Shadwick, Administrative Assistant III

Faculty:

- Roman De Jesus, Earth Sciences/Sustainability Committee Co-Chair
- Danielle Fouquette, English/Accreditation Steering Committee Faculty Co-Chair
- Cynthia Guardado, English/Professional Learning Coordinator
- Naveen Kanal, Adjunct Instructor, Golf Coach
- Bridget Kominek, English/Faculty Senate Vice President
- Jeanette Rodriguez, Communication Studies/Faculty Senate President

Classified Staff:

- Alejandra Alvarado, EOPS Staff
- Carolina Santillan, Administrative Assistant II
- Annika Shellenbarger, Student Services Coordinator
- Kacie Simental, Student Services Specialist

Managers:

- Tyler Deacy, Sustainability Director
- Deniz Fierro, Interim Director, EOPS/CARE, CalWorks
- Jennifer Merchant, Director, Guided Pathways
- Kristine Nikkhoo, Director, Academic Support Programs
- Amy O'Daniel, Project Coordinator, ReEntry Program

Appendix B: Description of Surveys Reviewed

[Fall 2022 Counseling Survey](#): In the fall of 2022, the OIE worked alongside the Pathways Steering Committee and the Counseling Department, to assess students' experiences with counseling services at the College. OIE administered a survey online to all registered students between November 1, 2022 and December 16, 2022. A total of 642 students completed the survey. For reference, during the term, 18,417 students were enrolled at the College.

[Fall 2022 Survey of Entering Student Engagement \(SENSE\)](#): In the fall of 2022, OIE worked alongside Guided Pathways leadership to administer the SENSE survey in Math and English courses that first time students typically enroll. SENSE is designed to identify why some entering students persist and succeed and others do not. A total of 580 responses were collected from first time students. For reference, during the term, 3,913 first time students were enrolled at the College.

[Spring 2023 Campus Climate Survey](#): In the fall 2022 term, per a recommendation from Interim President Dr. Monte Perez, the Diversity Advisory Committee developed a student climate survey to be administered that spring. The survey attempted to collect data on how students were experiencing the campus. A total of 787 students participated in the survey. For reference, during the term, 16,616 students were enrolled at the College.

[Spring 2023 Career Technical Education Outcomes Survey \(CTEOS\)](#): The CTEOS tracks California community college CTE students' workforce outcomes. It is administered every year by Santa Rosa Junior College on behalf of the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO). For the spring 2023 administration, the survey was sent out to 2,402 Fullerton College students who ended their CTE coursework in 2020-2021. A total of 563 completed the survey.

[Spring 2023 REAL College Basic Needs Survey](#): In the Spring of 2023, Fullerton College (FC) participated in the California Real College Survey, a state-wide survey of student's basic needs in the California Community college system. The survey was adapted from the largest national survey of basic needs amongst college students with some additions made to reflect the unique characteristics and needs of the California community college population. The survey was administered online; 808 valid responses were collected for a response rate of 4.6%.

Fall 2023 Class Drop Survey: Originally developed in 2016-2017 by Faculty Senate and OIE, the survey is administered to students through the Banner system once they withdraw from a course. The survey was administered in Spring 2021 as a multiple-choice only survey, and open-ended questions were added in fall 2023. In fall 2023, 3,633 students completed the survey and submitted 8,567 responses. After a Faculty Senate workgroup was convened to review and update the survey; a new version was launched in fall 2024.

[Spring 2024 Student Survey \(Fullerton College Results Only\)](#): Was developed as a collaboration with the research offices at Cypress College, NOCE, and District Services. The survey was administered in late April/Early May across all three institutions. The survey was an attempt to create one survey that contained questions from various surveys administered in previous years. The topics included basic needs, campus climate, enrollment management, and sense of belonging. The invitation to the survey was sent to 18,251 Fullerton College students who were enrolled in the Winter/Spring 2024 term. A total of 1,171 students completed at least a part of the survey.