

Black Student Equity

Overcoming Barriers and
Providing Support

SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES
COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Acknowledgements

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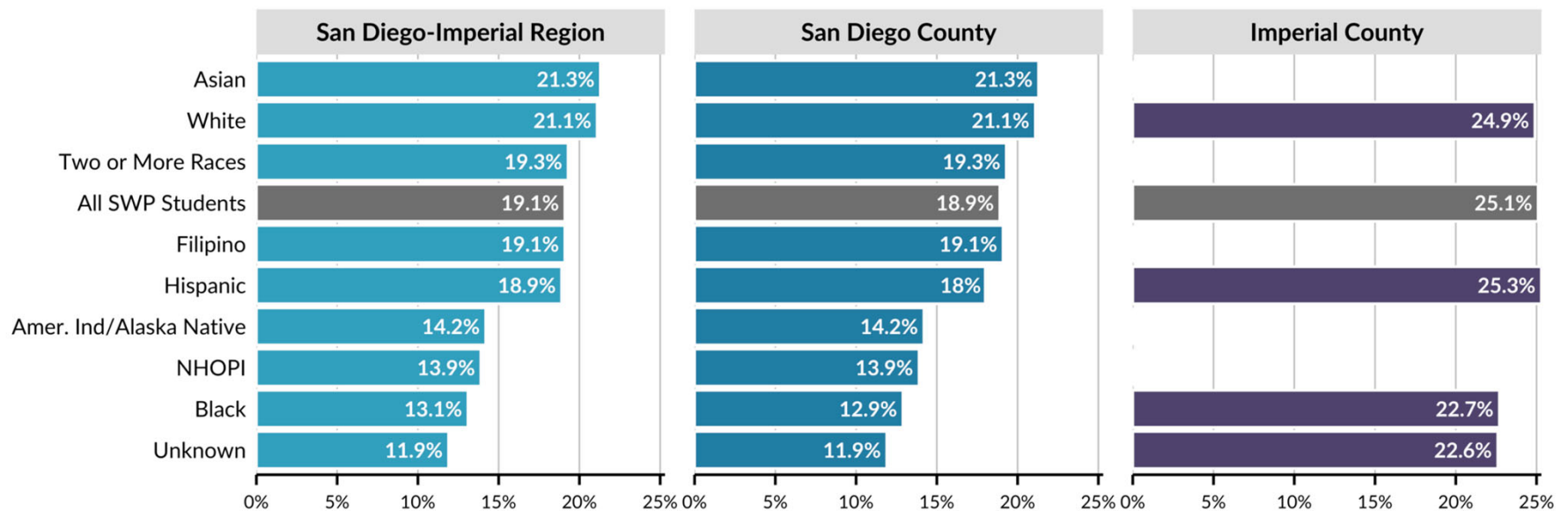
Priscilla Fernandez, Mod Research Consulting

San Diego Workforce Partnership

Black students are least likely to achieve 9+ CTE units...

Figure 3: Percent of SWP Students Achieving 9+ CTE Units by Race / Ethnicity and County

Among all Strong Workforce Program students, the proportion who successfully completed nine or more career education semester units in the selected year. Denominator is total count of students within subgroup.

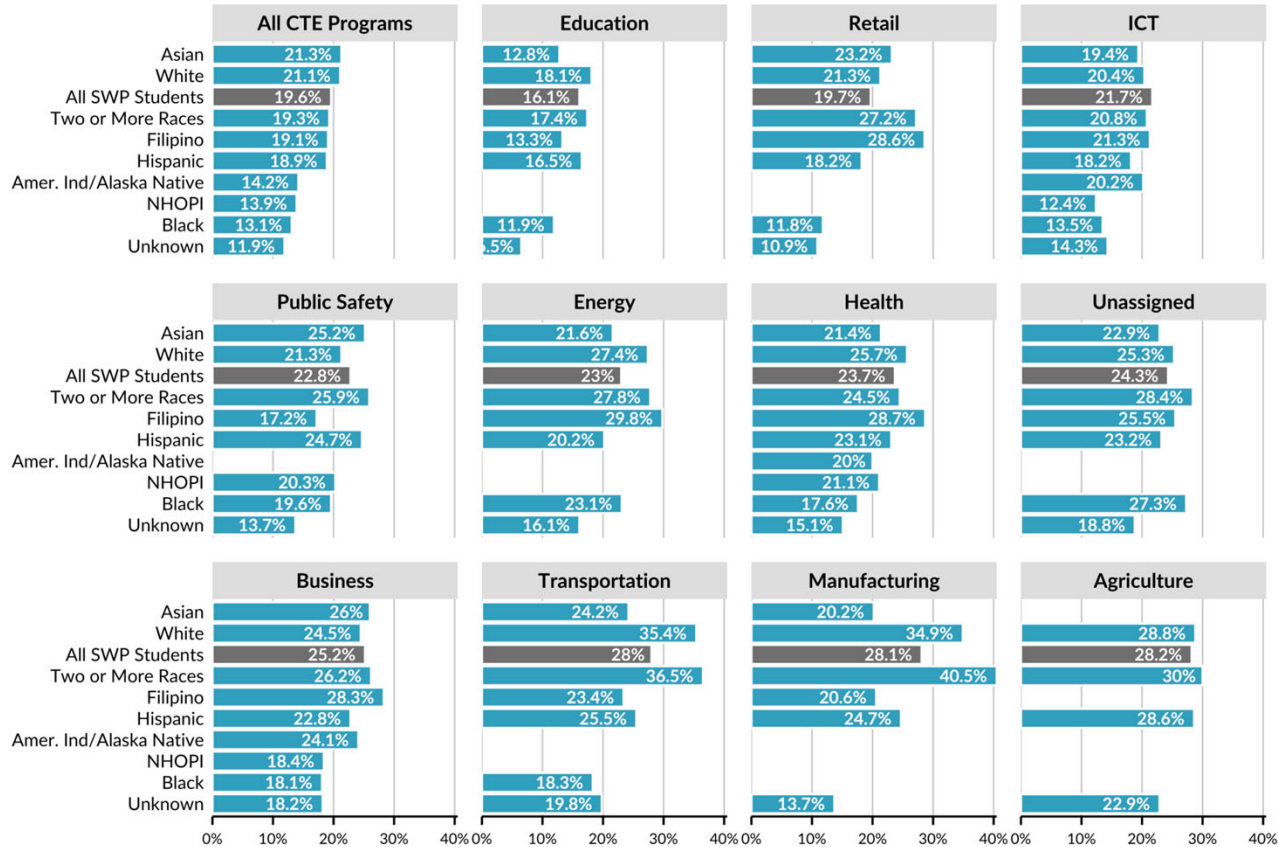


Source: Chancellor's Office Management Information System. Retrieved March 5, 2021 from CCCC LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program Dashboard.

Note: Calculations for regionwide and San Diego County do not include data from San Diego Continuing Education, and consequently may not match published values.

Figure 4: Percent of SWP Students in the San Diego-Imperial Region Achieving 9+ CTE Units by Race / Ethnicity and Program

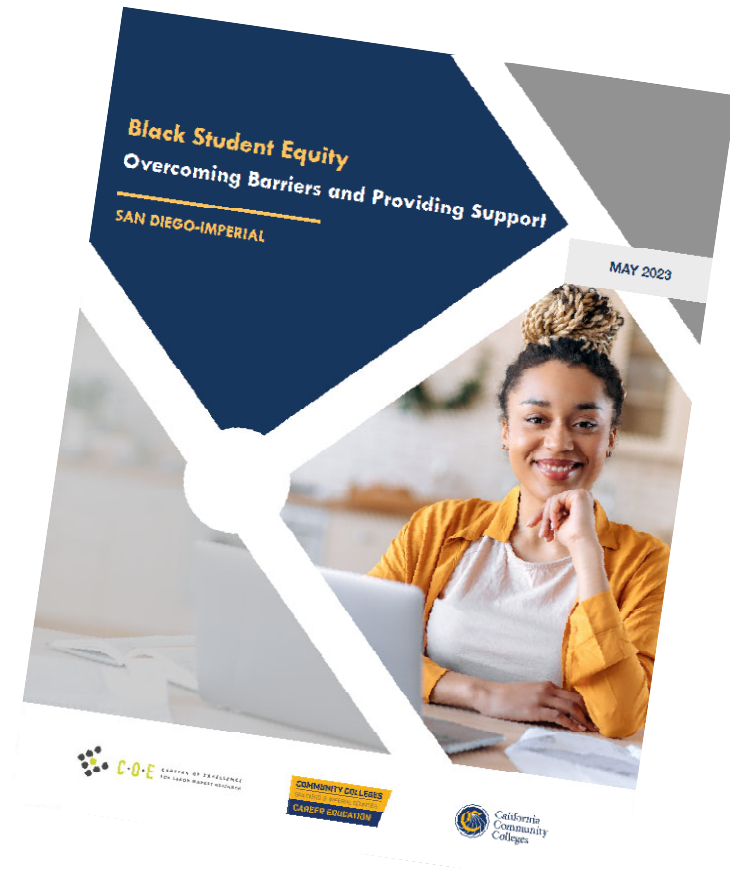
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Source: Chancellor's Office Management Information System. Retrieved March 5, 2021 from CCCCO LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program Dashboard.
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Two research questions:

- What should each of the region's community colleges provide in the classroom and on campus to retain Black students?
- What barriers prevent Black students from completing community college programs or courses?



Research Project

Commissioned San Diego Workforce Partnership to conduct research with current and former Black students

Between March and September 2022, 200 Black students identified by the colleges participated in:

- focus groups (n=46)
- survey (n=154)

Triangulated with faculty and staff interviews

Participant Overview

46 Focus Group Participants

Gender	%
Women	74%
Men	26%
Non-binary or Other	0%

Age	%
Younger than 25	23%
25-34	29%
35-44	23%
45-54	23%
55+	3%

154 Survey Participants

Gender	%
Women	64%
Men	27%
Non-binary, No response or Other	8%

Age	%
Younger than 25	8%
25-34	47%
35-44	25%
45-54	0%
55+	12%

Quick Write Reflection

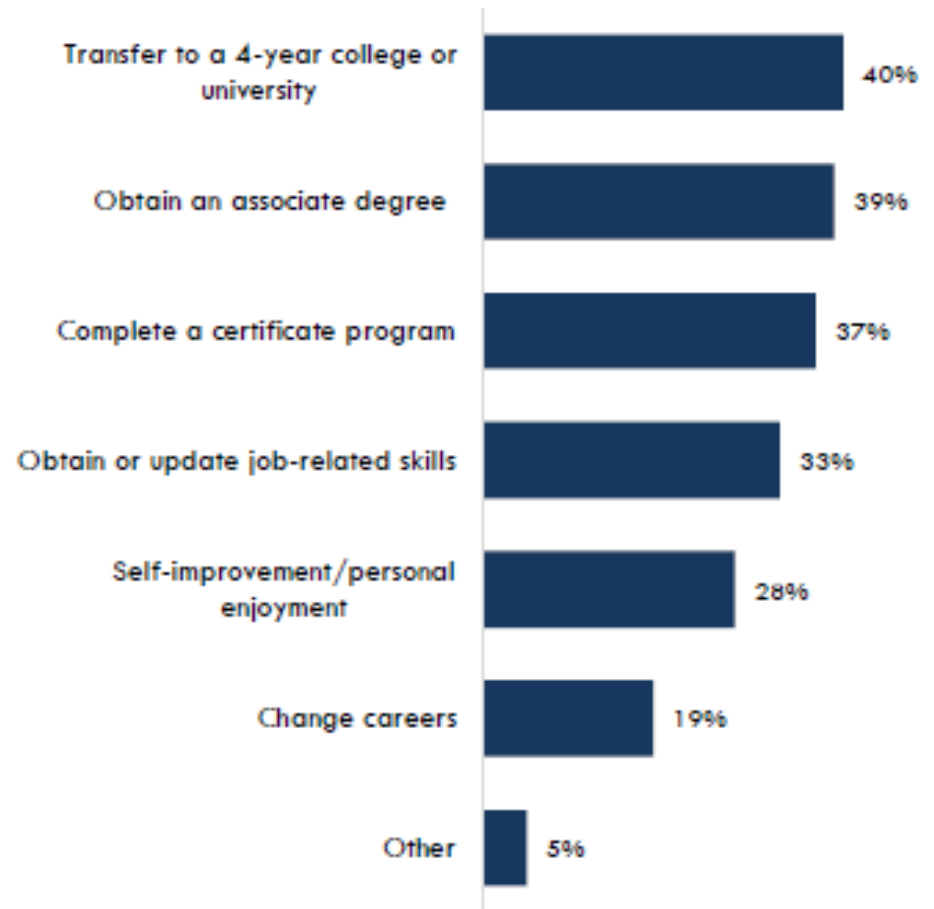
Take one minute for a quick write responding to this prompt:

What am I feeling about this report? What am I expecting the findings to be?

Findings

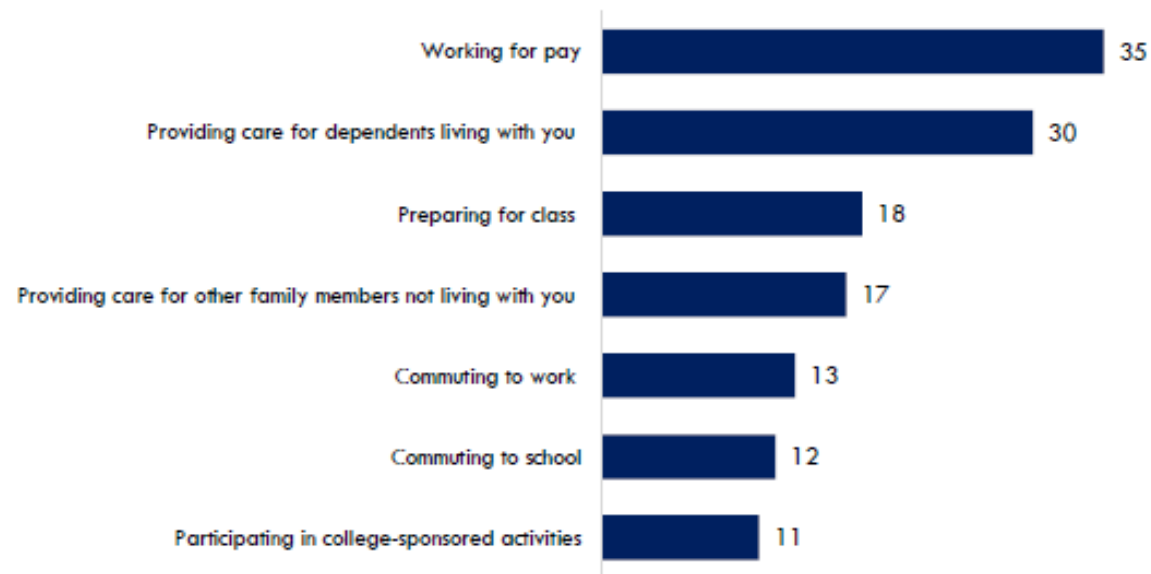


Student Motivations & Goals



“Community college was more affordable than just going straight to a Cal State. So it just gave me more time to figure out what I wanted to do exactly. And what field I wanted to get into.”

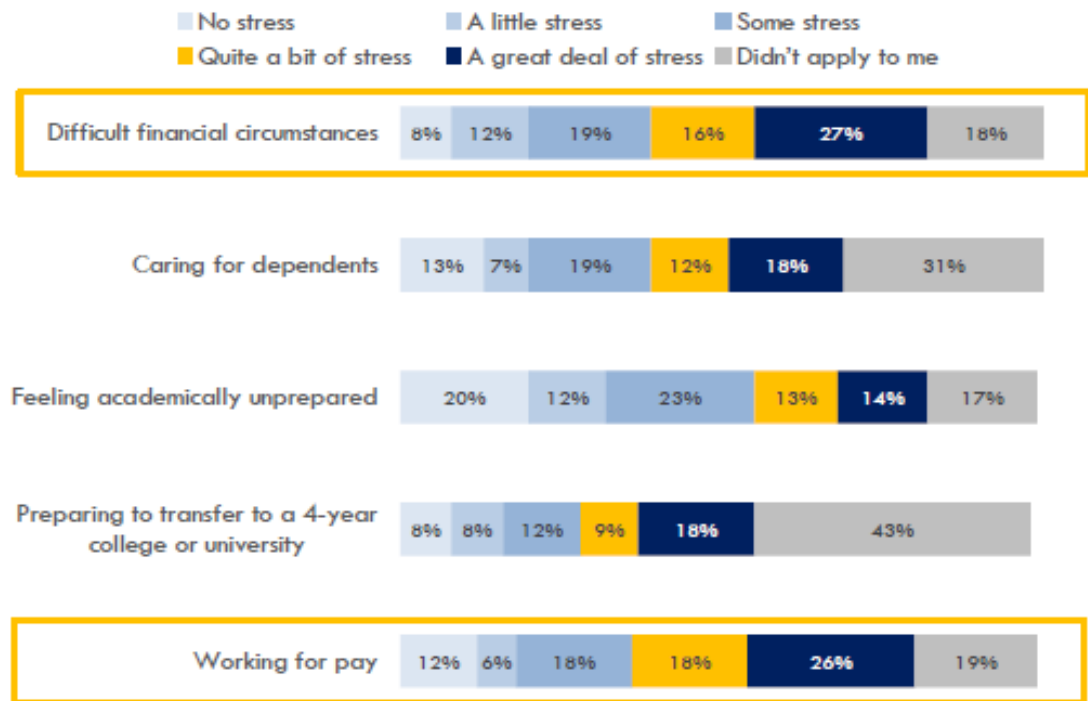
How Students Spend Their Week



Six Key Barriers

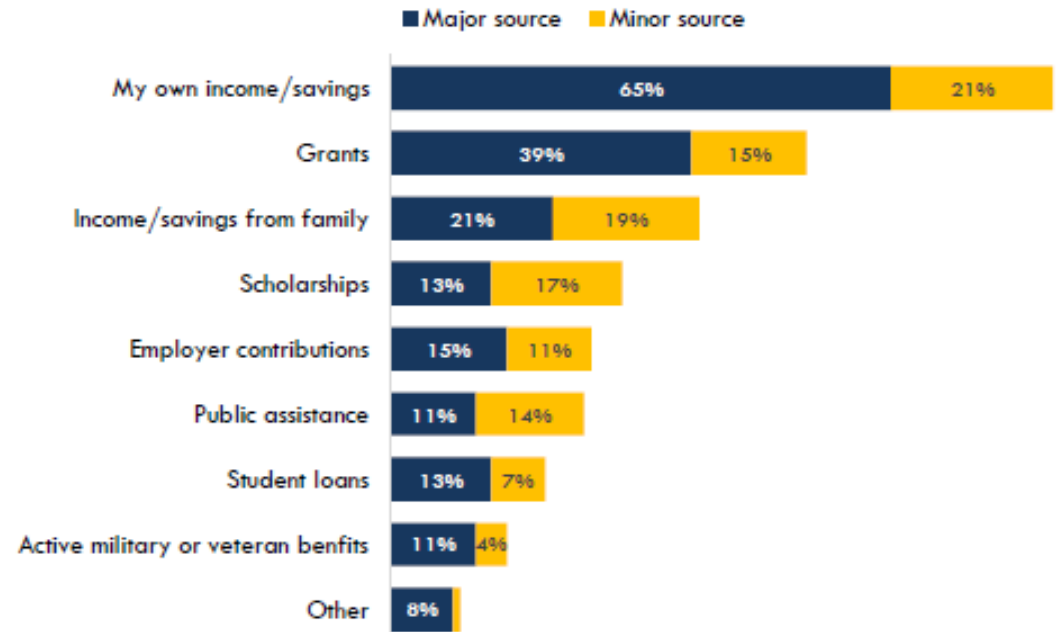
1. Finances
2. Caregiving
3. Residual impacts of COVID-19
4. Microaggressions
5. Fatigue and mental health challenges
6. Lack of guidance

Barrier #1: Finances

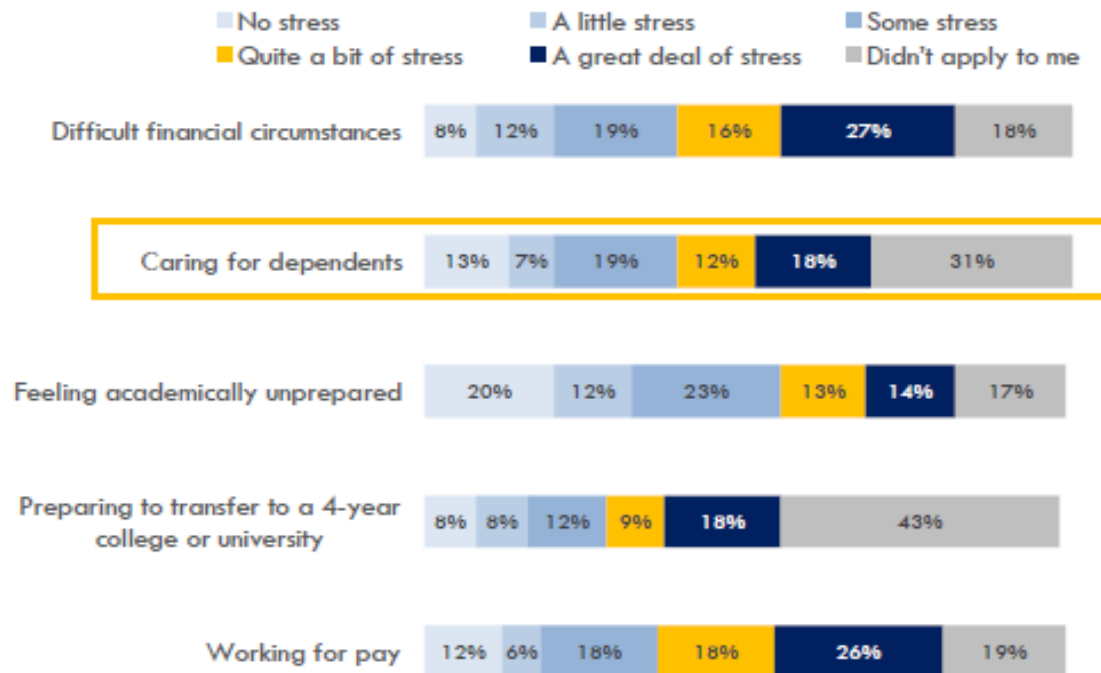


**“What really made me make
that decision [to drop out]
is that I lost my aid.
So I had to pay for classes,
which was like another thing
plus work at the same time.”**

Barrier #1: Finances

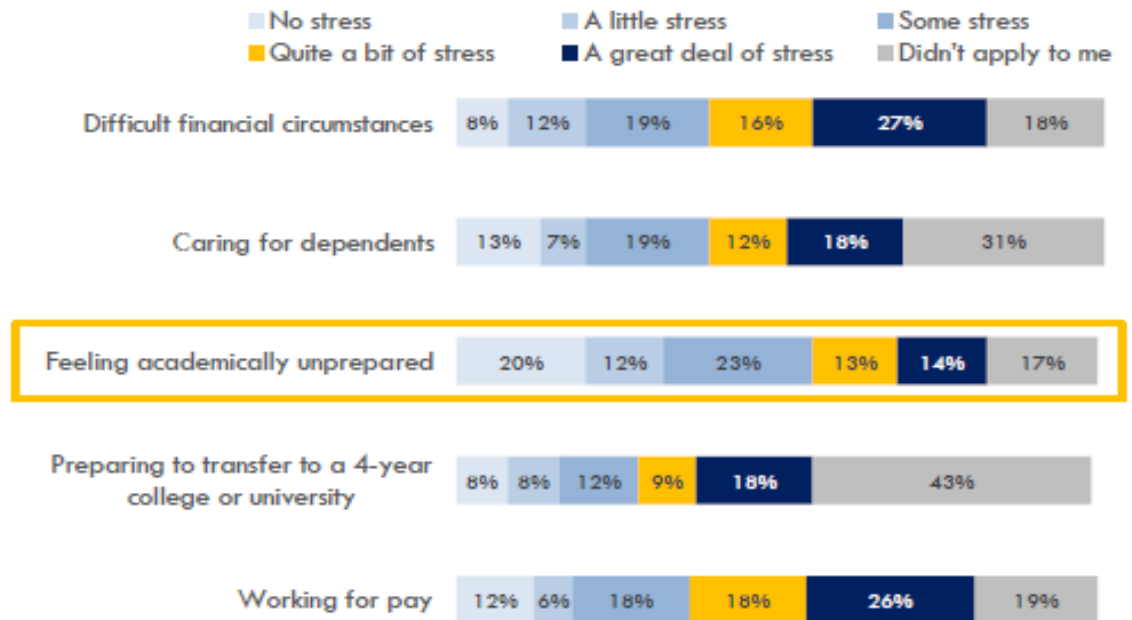


Barrier #2: Caregiving



“Who’s going to pick up my child for daycare who’s gonna watch my child after, you know, three o’clock from eight o’clock while I study or, that was a huge barrier.”

Barrier #3: COVID-19



“I felt like I lost a lot of exposure, by not being able to have access to quality labs ... trying to apply for jobs, it is very difficult for me to go on a job interview and speak with a potential employer and not have physical hands-on experience that I can relate to.”

Barrier #4: Micro- aggressions

“I was often the only, obviously, Black person in the class ... I was asked questions more than others. And I had to, often I would say, give my perspective as if I was speaking for all Black people. So that was pretty annoying.”

“One of the reasons I left was because I was feeling so much negativity there ... I try not to always go straight to be like, Is this because I’m Black? ... maybe it’s because I’m young, or maybe it’s because I’m a woman, or maybe because I don’t have enough experience. But when I felt like, Okay, this is because I’m Black, then I just try to advocate for myself or remove myself from the situation.”

Barrier #5: Fatigue & Mental Health

“And I think for me, my mental health issues have been a really big issue for me to overcome. So getting connected with health services, having the Black student support group available. I never even knew that they got free counseling sessions ... Until I had a meltdown.”

Barrier #6: Lack of Guidance

“I wasn’t really guided in the right direction. So I took many classes that I didn’t need to take. So I think ultimately, that’s why I quit going because it was just I felt like I was spinning in circles and getting nowhere.”

**“So trying to schedule things
around kids and a full-time job,
and just really, really wanting
to get more education.
And so that was a challenge ...
I want this class, but it’s only
available on this date this time.”**

Quick Write Reflection

Take one minute for a quick write responding to this prompt:

What are my initial thoughts about these barriers? Where have I observed these findings at my college?

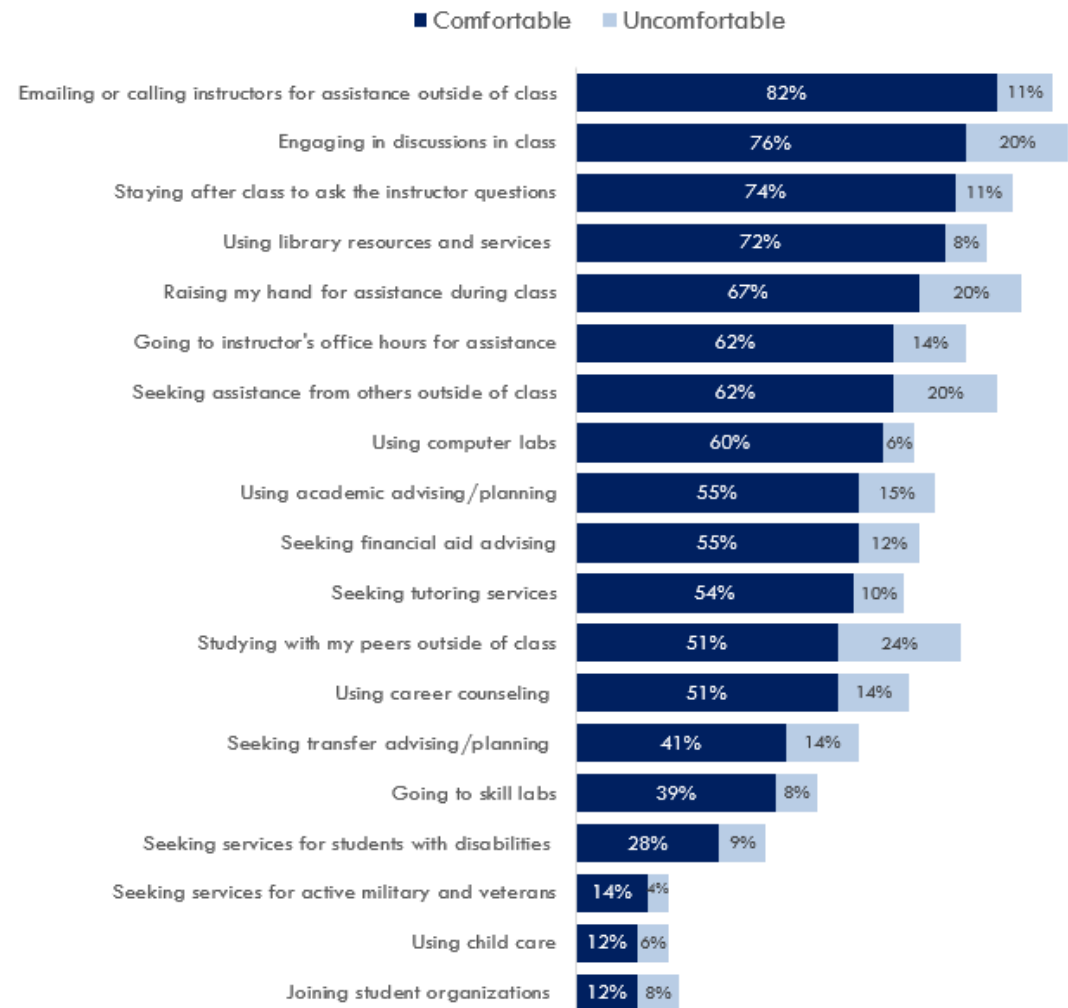
Two Support Factors

1. Supportive instructors
2. Student support services

Support #1: Encouraging Instructors

“I had one ... African American teacher. And she was in the Child Development department. Just the way she related to you and she, you know, some teachers like to tiptoe around the fact that you’re Black, and, you know, you are underserved. And she didn’t do that..”

Support #2: Support Services



“I actually had a good experience at [college]. It’s been great. And the times that I did disappear when just life in general got too much, I did have my counselor reach out to me because I was a part of Umoja.”

Quick Write Reflection

Take one minute for a quick write responding to this prompt:

What are my initial thoughts about these supports? Where have I observed these findings at my college? How are these related to the barriers?

Insights & Recommendations



Three Insights

1. Students Need Inclusive Learning Environments
2. Students Need Flexible Course Schedules for Adult Learners
3. Students Need Transformative Employment Opportunities

Students Need Inclusive Learning Environments

Increase equity-mindedness
and data literacy

Colleges should support local
integration of the Faculty
Institute

Create inclusive curriculum

Cultivate inclusive
pedagogy/andragogy

Increase representation in
the classroom

Quick Write Reflection

Take one minute for a quick write responding to one of these prompts:

1. How could colleges provide space for industry and employer partners to participate in race-conscious, equity-minded curriculum review and open educational resource creation?
2. What events and professional development opportunities could colleges expand access to that would help increase inclusive and anti-racist learning environments?
3. What would it look like for colleges to integrate work experience, apprenticeships, internships, mentorships, and other work-based learning through a lens of inclusion and equity-mindedness?

Students Need Flexible Schedules Designed for Adult Learners

Review local Career
Education program paths

Review local scheduling
practices

Quick Write Reflection

Take one minute for a quick write responding to one of these prompts:

1. What barriers exist that prevent flexible scheduling for CE programs? How might a college coordinate with its faculty to overcome these barriers in support of their students?
2. What strategies would need to be developed to reimagine course scheduling on behalf of Black students? Which stakeholders would need input?

Students Need Transformative Employment Opportunities

Educate industry and
employer partners

Empower race conscious
and equity-minded industry
and employer partners

Develop measurable
diversity and inclusion goals

Quick Write Reflection

Take one minute for a quick write responding to one of these prompts:

1. If you had access to race/ethnicity, gender, and age targets on the Center of Excellence's labor market briefs, how would your college use this information to create transformative employment opportunities?
2. How could the colleges develop shared strategies that identify and recruit race conscious and equity-minded industry/employer partners who pursue equitable hiring and talent management?
3. How could colleges establish an ecosystem of employers and external workforce development stakeholders that would be sustainable?

THANK YOU

**SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES
COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

