

Report

GBO student survey Fall 2020

October, 2020

Golden Bear Orientation provided new students with a sense of community and connection during a difficult time

UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES

Fall 2020 Golden Bear Orientation (GBO) was a fully remote experience. The COVID19 pandemic necessitated virtual orientation, even for those students who moved to campus. Of the 8,609 new students in Fall 2020, 78% (n = 6,736) responded to the survey. GBO was very different in Fall 2020 and the survey results showed that a smaller proportion of students attended events. Compared to Fall 2019 when 97% (n = 7,241) of surveyed students said they checked in to GBO and attended at least one event, this year 90% (n = 6,034) of respondents attended at least one event.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Student satisfaction with GBO overall remained high for both freshman and transfer students, despite the switch to remote programming. As shown in the graph below on the left, Fall 2020 freshman entrants somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement, “I was satisfied with the overall experience of GBO” at about the same rate as in the past. Compared to past years, a higher percentage of transfer students agreed that they were satisfied with the overall experience of GBO, which may be attributed to the flexibility of programming in Fall 2020.

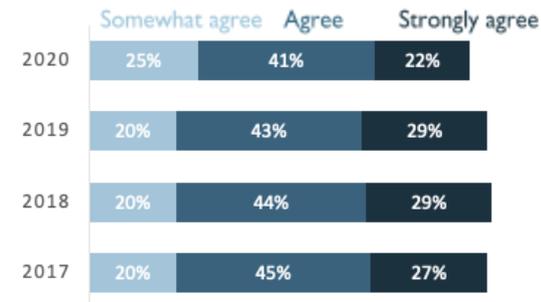
“I was satisfied with the overall experience of Golden Bear Orientation”



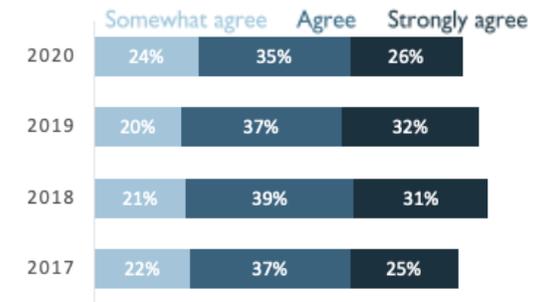
Compared to previous years, a lower proportion of freshman entrants somewhat to strongly agreed with the statement, “My transition to UC Berkeley has been smooth.” This may be due to the pandemic, which exacerbated or placed new financial strains, family obligations, and health issues on students. In addition, the uncertainty around Fall semester and remote instruction may have contributed to this finding. Even so, the majority of freshman entrants (88%, n = 3,762) and transfer students (86%, n = 1,345) agreed that they had a smooth transition.

“My transition to UC Berkeley has been smooth”

Freshman



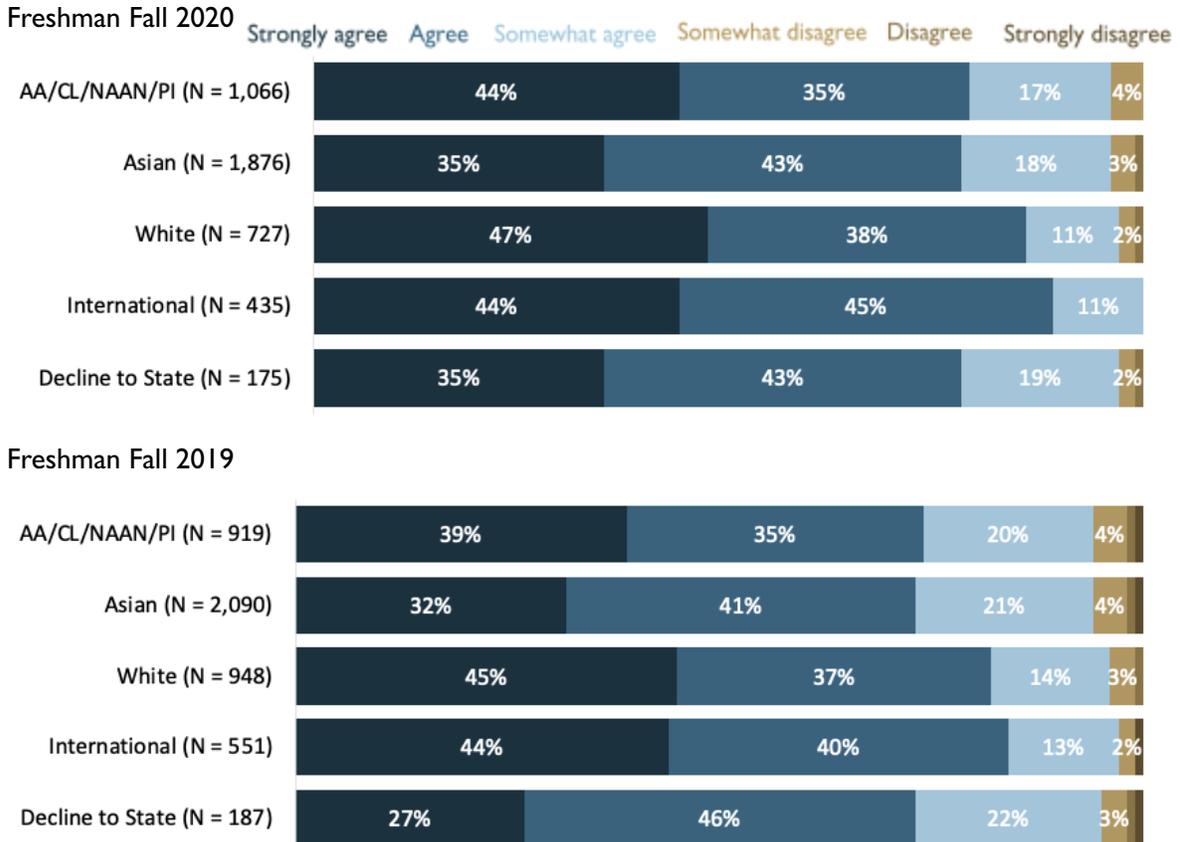
Transfer



BUILDING COMMUNITY

Sense of belonging among new freshman entrants has been at or above 95% since the first GBO in Fall 2017. Fall 2020 freshman entrants overwhelmingly agreed (97%, n = 4,135) with the prompt, “I feel I belong at UC Berkeley.” This is an increase over Fall 2019 when 95% (n = 4,454) reported this sense of belonging.

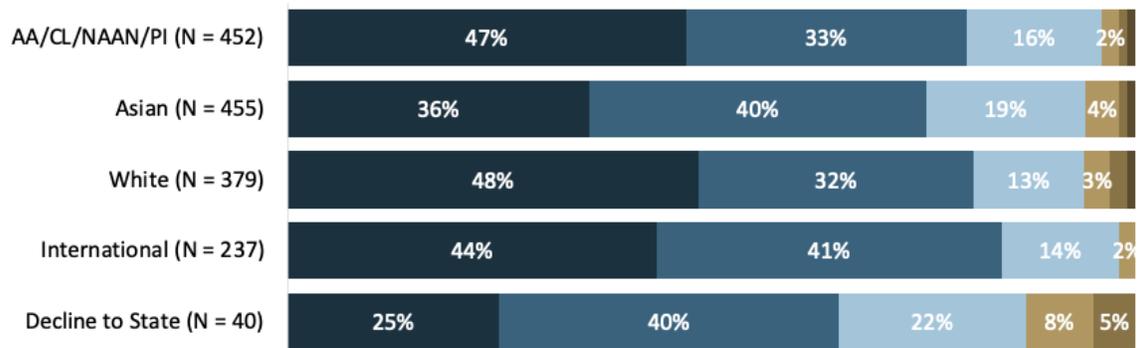
“I feel I belong at UC Berkeley”



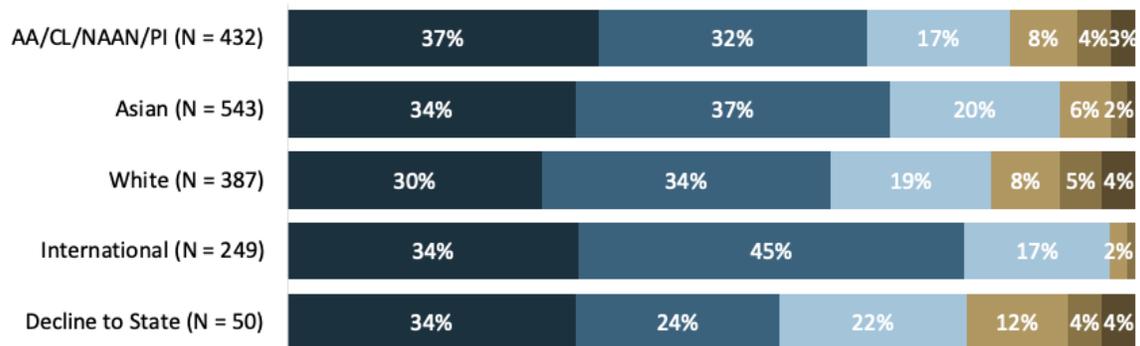
An already high sense of belonging for transfer students in Fall 2019 (92%, n = 1,534) increased to 95% (n = 1,486) in Fall 2020. Notably, agreement with the statement, “I feel I belong at UC Berkeley” increased 5 percentage points from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 for students who identified as Underrepresented Minority.

“I feel I belong at UC Berkeley”

Transfer Fall 2020 Strongly agree Agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

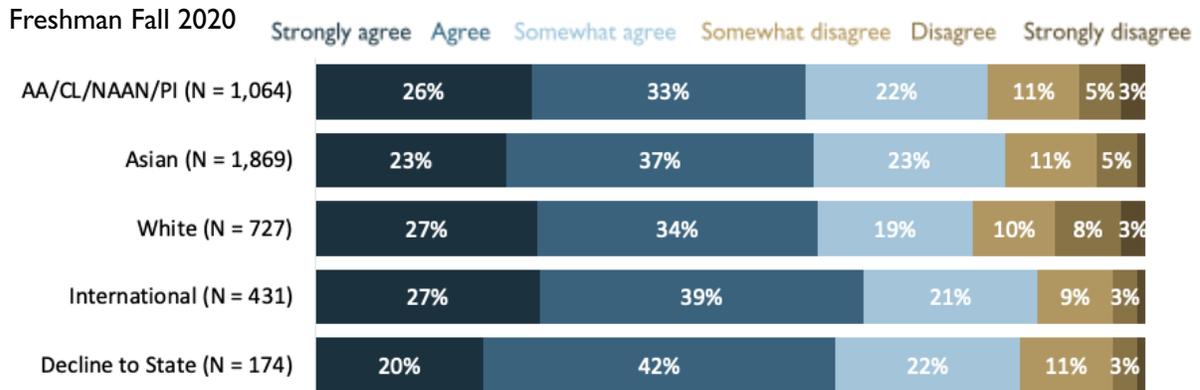


Transfer Fall 2019

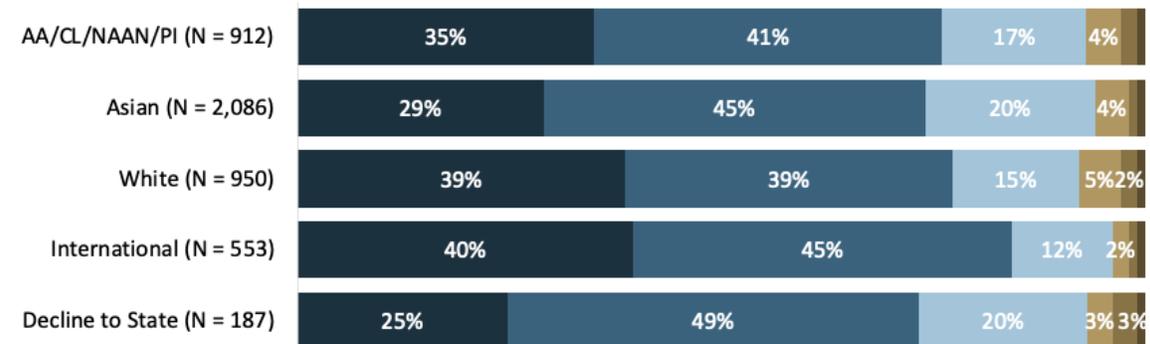


When asked if they had a group of peers to whom they feel connected, 82% (n = 3,506) of Fall 2020 freshmen agreed, compared to 94% (n = 4,399) in Fall 2019. This decrease was statistically significant for all racial/ethnic groups, for international students, and for those who declined to state their ethnicity and could be attributed to difficulties around making connections in a virtual environment.

“I have a group of peers I feel connected to”



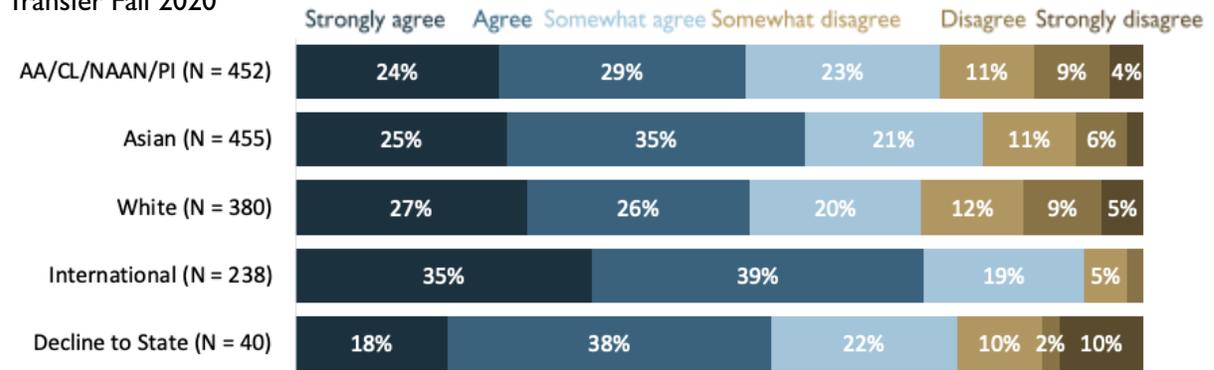
Freshman Fall 2019



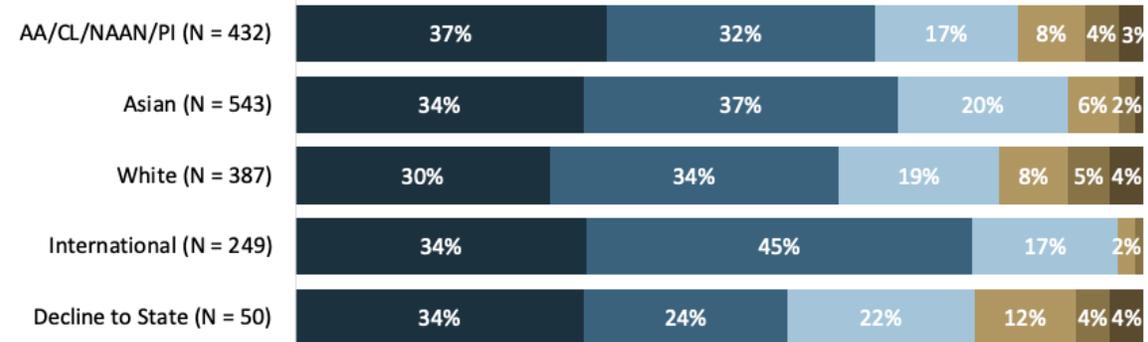
As with the freshmen, a lower proportion of transfer students in Fall 2020 (80%, n = 1,247) said they had a group of peers to whom they felt connected, compared to Fall 2019 (88%, n = 1,461). Particular losses were seen among Underrepresented Minority (11-point decrease), Asian (10-point decrease) and White (9-point decrease) students.

“I have a group of peers I feel connected to”

Transfer Fall 2020



Transfer Fall 2019



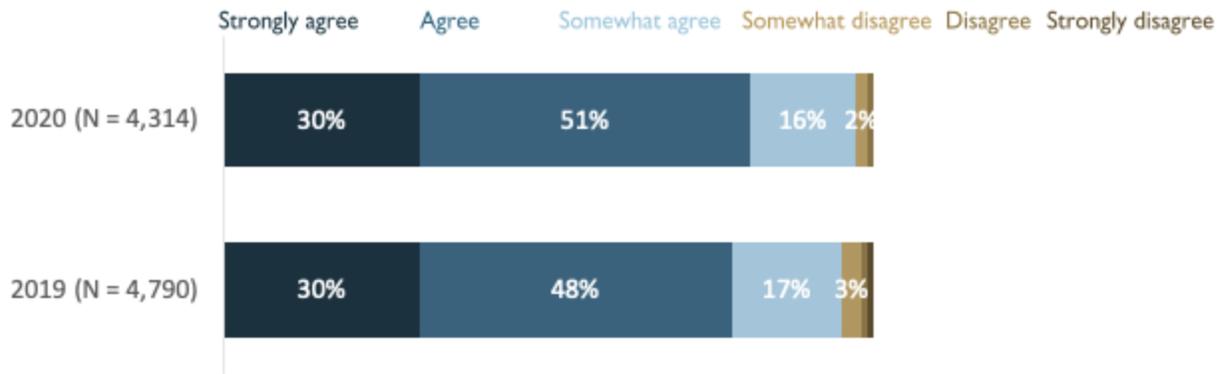
Over 1,500 new students moved to university-owned or university-affiliated housing in Berkeley and over 1,000 of these students responded to the survey. A greater proportion of students who lived in the dorms (90%, n = 985) had peers to whom they felt connected, compared to 80% (n = 3,768) of new students who did not live in the dorms.

ACADEMIC COLLEGE PROGRAMMING

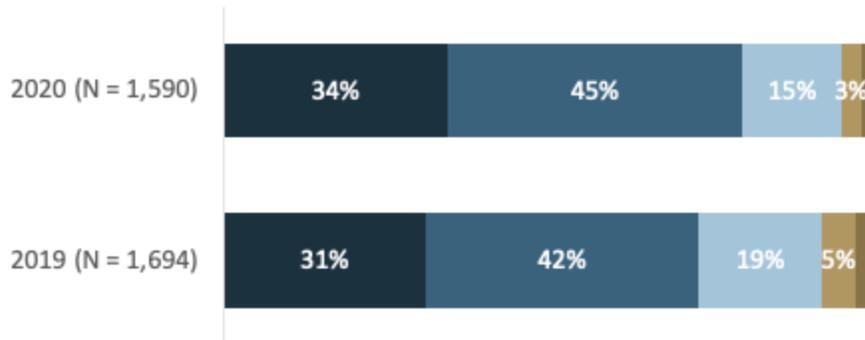
Satisfaction with the GBO experience provided by academic colleges remained extraordinarily high in Fall 2020. Ninety-five percent (n = 4,566) of freshman entrants were satisfied with their academic college's GBO programming in Fall 2019; this increased to 97% (n = 4,171) in Fall 2020.

Satisfaction with academic college, by entry status

Freshman



Transfer



Among transfer students, 95% (n = 1,504) were satisfied with their academic college's GBO programming, compared to 92% (n = 1,558) in Fall 2019. As with freshman entrants, satisfaction with academic college programming is very high.

Methodology and participation rates

The GBO survey was administered from August 26 to September 23, 2020. Of the 8,609 new students invited to participate in the survey, 78% (n = 6,736) completed or partially completed the survey. Ethnicity data were sourced from Cal Answers. The group of students categorized as AA/CL/NAAN/PI comprises students who identify as African American, Chicano / Latino, Native American / Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander.

Participation rates by select categories

	Count at Census	Count responded	% responded
Entry status			
Freshman	6,124	4,791	78%
Transfer student	2,483	1,945	78%
Gender			
Female	4,501	3,592	80%
Male	3,990	3,050	76%
Nonbinary	2	2	100%
Decline to state	116	87	75%
Ethnicity			
AA/CL/NAAN/PI	2,282	1,765	77%
Asian	3,259	2,641	81%
International	1,038	770	74%
White	1,689	1,297	77%
Decline to state	341	258	76%
College			
Chemistry	326	261	80%
Rausser Natural Resources	685	534	78%
Letters & Science	6,100	4,736	78%
Engineering	1,164	935	80%
Environmental Design	204	167	82%
Haas	130	103	79%

**Immediate Office - VC
Undergraduate Education**

New Student Services

GBO Steering Committee
VC Undergraduate Education
VC Student Affairs
VC Equity & Inclusion
Dean of Undergraduate Studies,
College of Letters & Science
Executive Associate Dean,
College of Engineering