

Report

Golden Bear Orientation survey results overview

February, 2018

In its inaugural year, Golden Bear Orientation achieved high student satisfaction. Survey results point to valuable lessons for the future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Golden Bear Orientation (GBO), the eight-day, in-person orientation for new undergraduate and incoming University of California Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) exchange students, was action packed and filled with a variety of events aimed at treating our new students as holistic individuals. Events were a mix of serious, thoughtful, emotional, spirited, active, academic, and community based. By taking place immediately preceding the start of the term, GBO was able to serve nearly all incoming undergraduate students, including low-income, out-of-state, international, and UCEAP students.

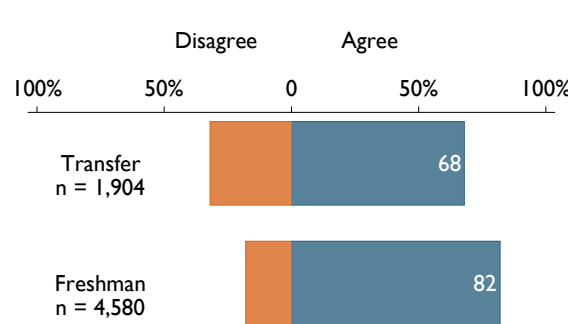
This briefing note will highlight the assessment conducted by New Student Services and the Office of Planning & Analysis of the student experience during GBO, focusing on three main areas: community building, academics, and Berkeley culture. These data will provide guidance as the program moves into future years.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

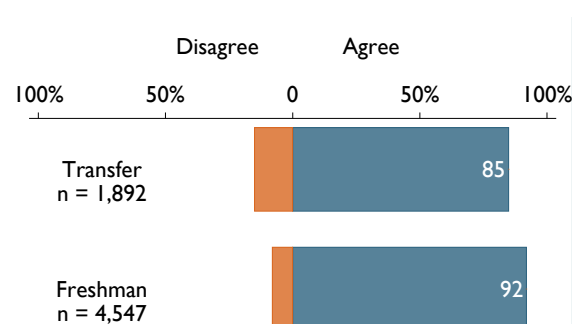
Students were satisfied with GBO overall and agreed that they had a smooth transition. As shown in the graph below on the left, the majority of respondents somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement, “I was satisfied with the overall experience of GBO,” with freshman entrants significantly more likely (82%, n = 3,758) than transfer students (68%, n = 1,299) to have agreed.

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“I had a great time getting to know students and the campus. I would have been completely lost on my first day of class without this orientation.”

Satisfaction with overall GBO experience



Smooth transition

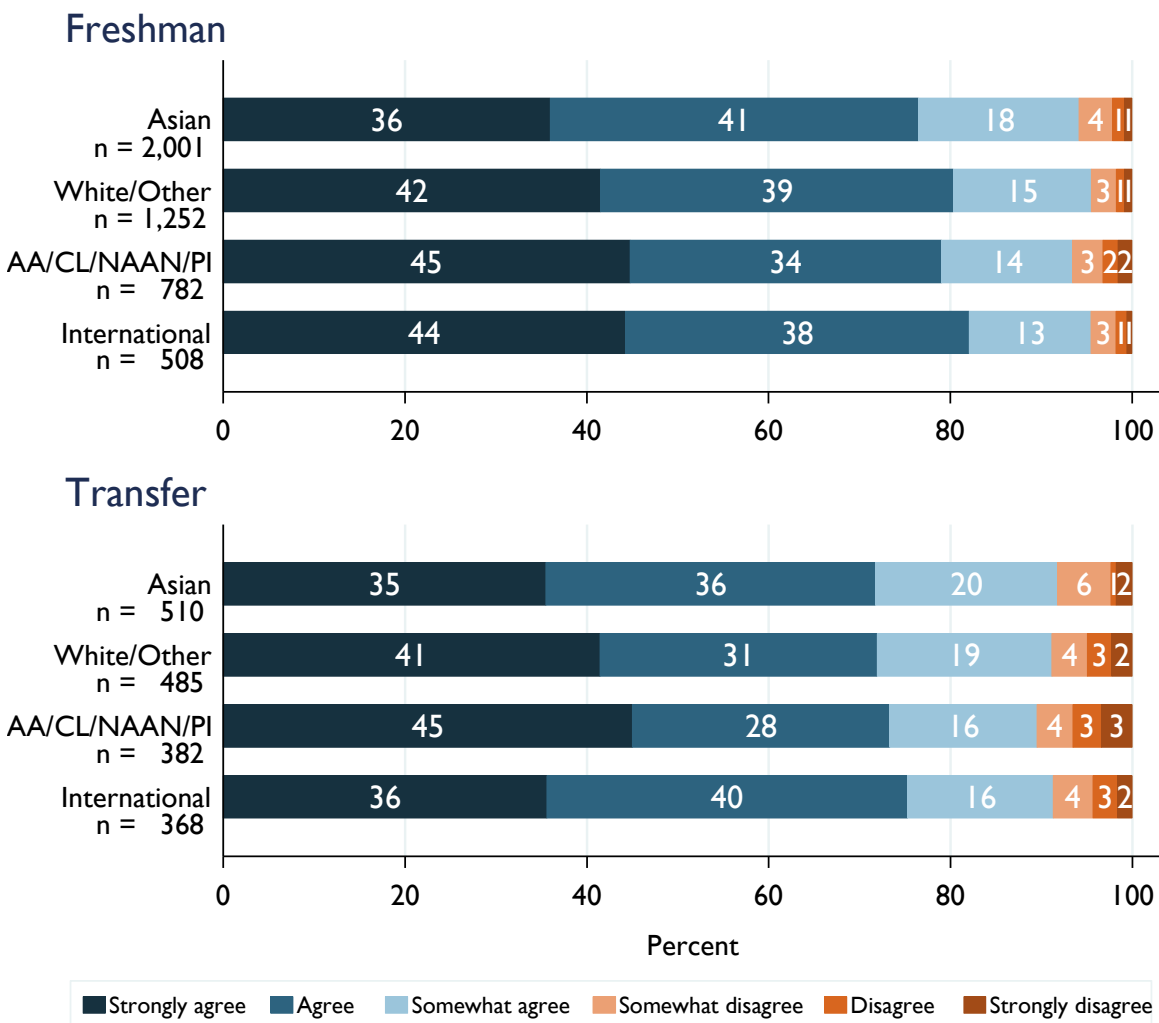


Ninety percent of respondents (n = 5,770 freshman entrants and transfer students, results shown for each group) somewhat to strongly agreed with the statement, “My transition to UC Berkeley has been smooth.” The graph on the previous page shows that a significantly greater proportion of freshman entrants (92%, n = 4,165) than transfer students (85%, n = 1,605) agreed to this statement.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

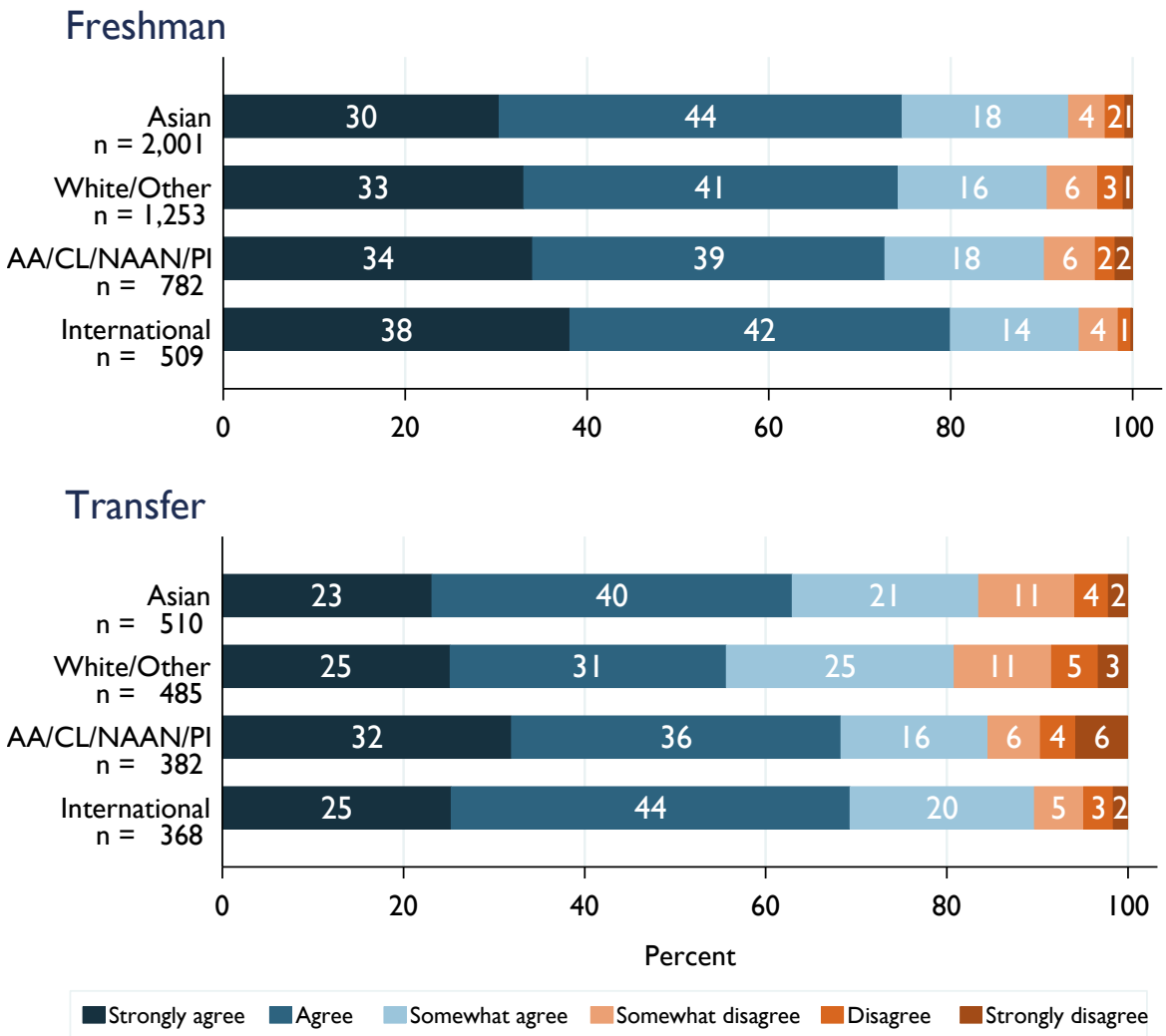
GBO successfully encouraged community building among new students. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with the prompt, “I belong at UC Berkeley.” Examining community questions by ethnicity gives insight into the varied experiences of new students. African American, Chicano/Latino, Native American / Alaskan Native, and Pacific Islander students were grouped together for these analyses. White students are grouped with those who declined to state their ethnicity. Within each ethnicity and within international students, significantly greater proportions of freshman entrants compared to transfer students somewhat to strongly agreed that they felt they belonged at UC Berkeley. Differences among ethnic groups were not statistically significant.

Belonging by entry status and ethnicity



Respondents made strong connections during GBO. As with the previous results, a significantly greater proportion of freshman entrants compared to transfer students, agreed that they felt connected to a group of peers. Freshman entrants were significantly more likely than transfer students to agree to this statement within the categories Asian, White/Other, African American / Chicano/Latino, Native American/Alaskan Native, and Pacific Islander and international students.

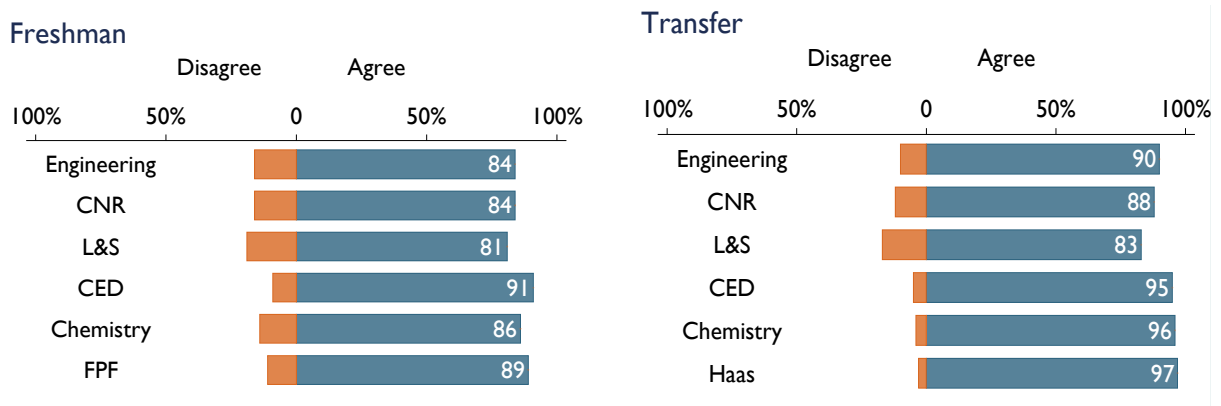
“I have a group of peers I feel connected to,” by entry status and ethnicity



ACADEMIC COMPONENTS

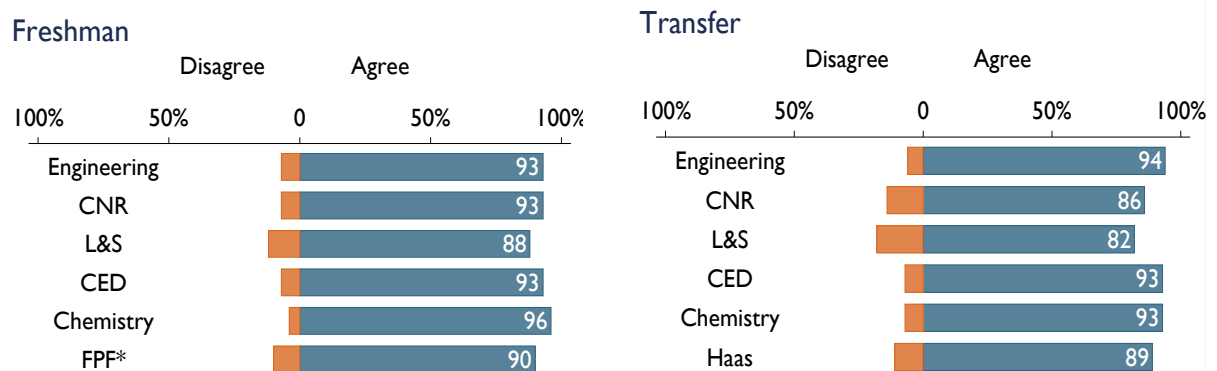
New students made the academic connections and support necessary for first-year success. As shown in the graphs below, across all entry colleges and among transfer and freshman entrants, over 80% of respondents were satisfied with their first-term schedule. Fall Program for Freshmen (FPF) is part of the College Letters & Science, but treated as its own category in these analyses. In the College of Chemistry, a significantly higher proportion of transfer students than freshman entrants were satisfied. In related analysis (not shown), 93% of respondents (n = 5,966) somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement, “I feel comfortable reaching out to faculty, staff, student leaders.” There were no significant differences by entry status or entry College.

Satisfaction with first-term schedule by entry status and entry College



The majority of respondents (88%, n = 5,767, results shown by entry status and entry College) agreed with the statement, “I feel like a member of my college community.” However, a significantly larger proportion of freshman entrants (90%, n = 4,147) than transfer students (85%, n = 1,620) agreed. These significant differences by entry status were also found in the College of Letters and Science and the College of Natural Resources.

“I feel like a member of my college community,” by entry status and entry College

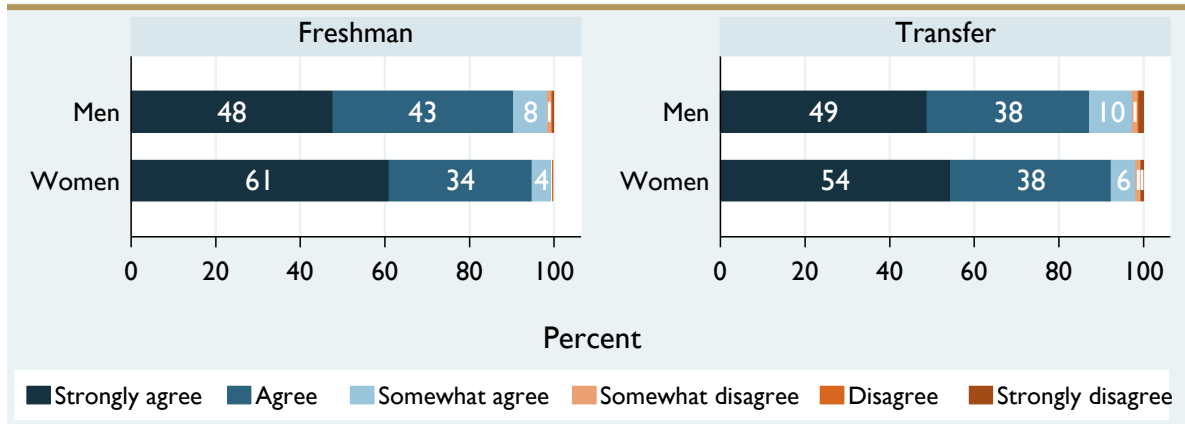


*In a separate question, 95% of FPF respondents agreed with the statement, “I feel like a member of the FPF community.”

BERKELEY CAMPUS CULTURE

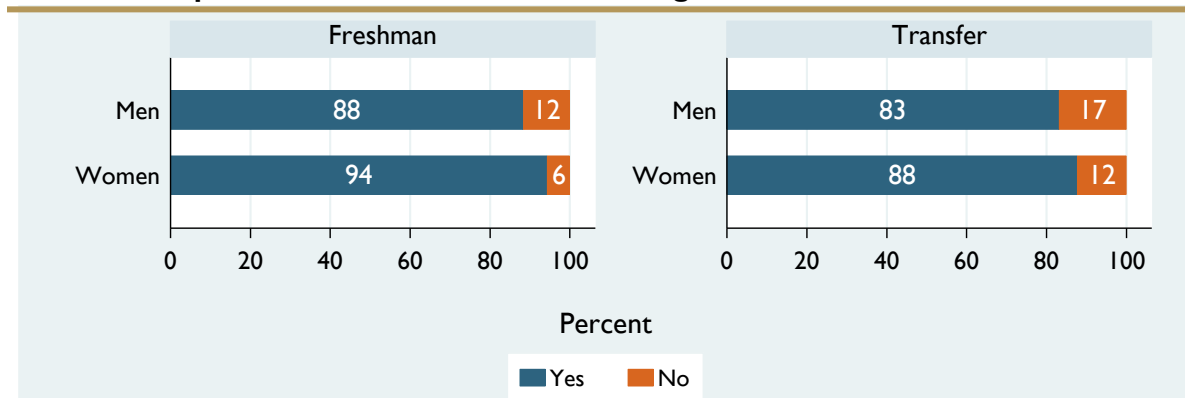
In the Bear Territory program, participants engaged with critical aspects of the UC Berkeley campus culture: diversity and inclusion. After attending Bear Territory, 99% (n = 6,408, results broken out by entry status and gender below) respondents agreed with the prompt, “I understand that different identities exist within the UC Berkeley community.” Results by gender and entry status are shown below.

“I understand that different identities exist within the UC Berkeley community,” by entry status and gender



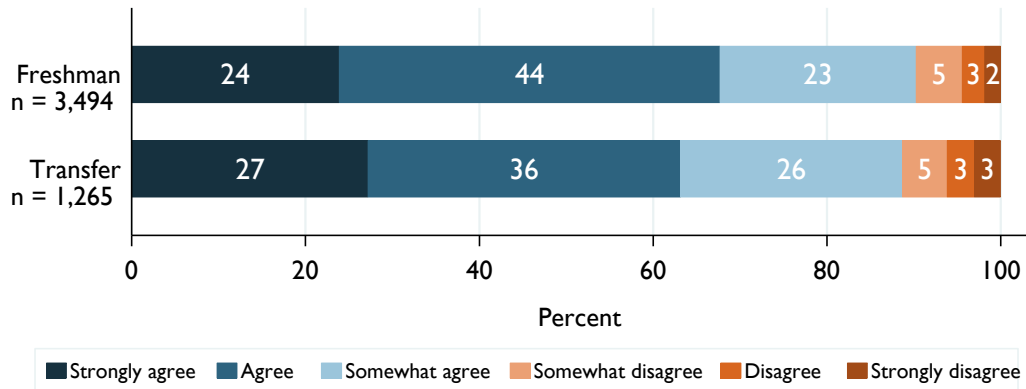
Bear Pact programming gave participants resources and strategies to handle situations involving sexual consent, sexual violence, drinking, and mental health issues. Sixty percent (n = 2,793) of freshman entrants and 36% (n = 718) of transfer students reported encountering the drinking / party culture between arriving on campus on August 14 and completion of the survey, up to October 17, 2017 (results not shown). The graphs below show that, of those who encountered drinking / party culture, 92% of freshman entrants (n = 2,560) and 85% (n = 612) of transfer students applied strategies learned in Bear Pact to minimize the effects of drinking.

Applied strategies learned in Bear Pact to minimize the effects of drinking, by entry status, for respondents who encountered drinking



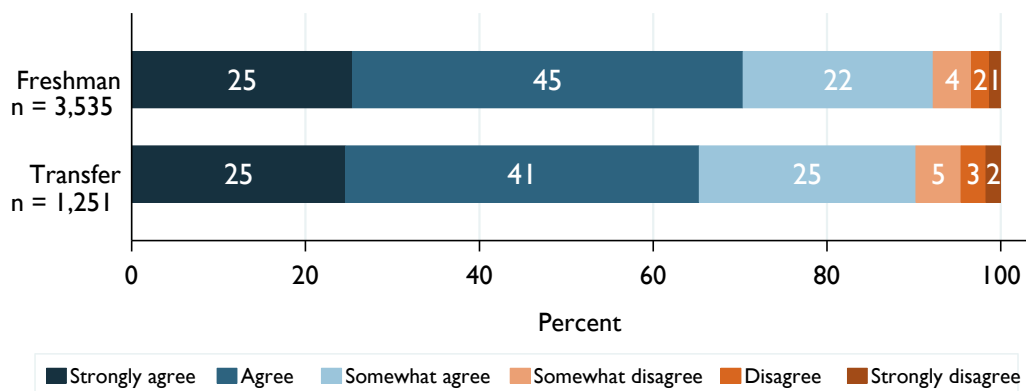
The Failing Forward presentations encouraged new students to see opportunities in setbacks. Faculty, staff, and alumni candidly spoke about their failures, and their resilience in the face of adversity. These presentations resonated with new students. As shown in the graph below, 90% (n = 3,154) of freshman entrants and 89% (n = 1,122) of transfer students learned strategies for resilience during the Failing Forward sessions.

“Failing Forward helped me see how to be resilient through failure,” by entry status



My Golden Years presentations were an opportunity for new students to get an in-depth look at the lived experiences of current UC Berkeley students. These monologues were intended to encourage new students to consider significant college life issues, assuage concerns, and make students aware of resources. As a result of attending My Golden Years, 92% (n = 3,260) of freshman entrants and 90% (n = 1,129) of transfer students were aware of resources to support their transition to UC Berkeley.

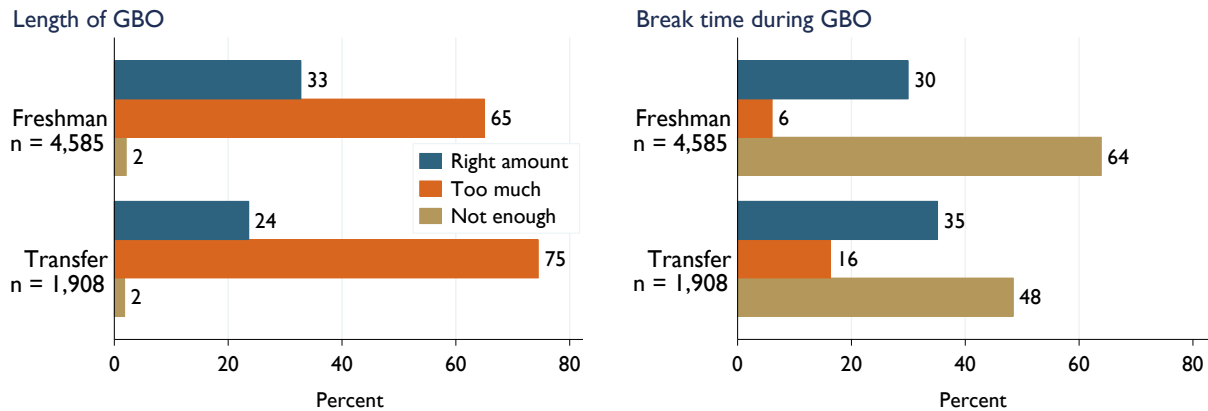
“My Golden Years made me more aware of resources available to support my transition” by entry status



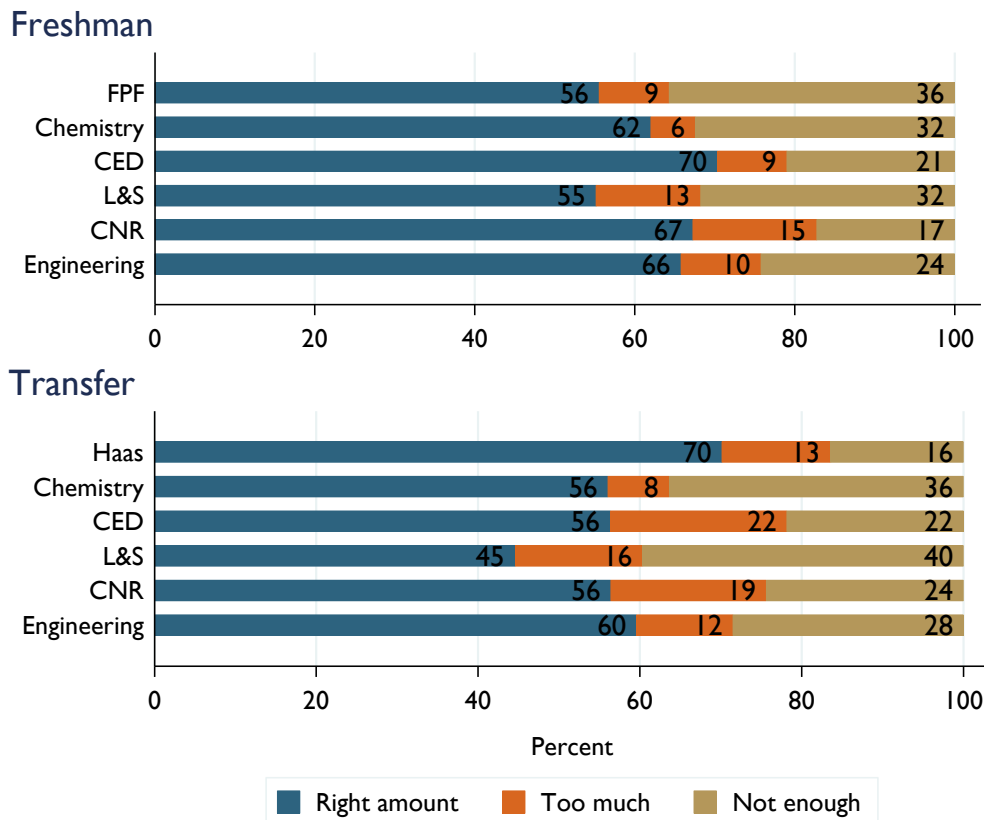
TIMING OF GBO

Over two-thirds (68%, n = 4,405) of respondents thought GBO was too long (results shown by entry status). Furthermore, one-third of freshman entrants (33%, n = 1,504) and almost one-quarter of transfer students (24%, n = 451) thought it was the right amount of time (graph below, on the left). The graph below and on the right shows that while 64% (n = 2,931) of freshman entrants thought there was not enough break time / down time, this figure was 48% (n = 925) for transfer students.

Assessment of timing, by entry status



Assessment of College programming timing, by entry College and entry status



New students attended programming by their entry College. Their perception of the amount of time dedicated to College programming varied by College. Programming offered during this time was customized by each College; examples include a welcome from the Dean, review of College requirements, academic advising, and community building. The graphs on the previous page display the variance by entry College and entry status. While the majority of students thought the right amount of time was spent on College programming, 40% (n = 591) of transfer students in the College of Letters & Science felt that they did not have enough time.



In its inaugural year, GBO successfully served over 9,000 new UC Berkeley students, including populations who may not have been able to easily participate in orientation in the past, such as low-income, out-of-state, international, and incoming UCEAP students. According to survey results, GBO met many of its goals for new students: welcome students into the scholarly and social community, understanding academic requirements, connecting with University and College resources, and engaging with the campus cultural community. Results from the survey will be used to inform future programming.

Methodology and response rates

The GBO survey was administered by the Office of Planning & Analysis from August 24 to October 17, 2017. Ethnicity data were sourced from Cal Answers. The group of students categorized as AA/CL/NAAN/PI students comprises African American, Chicano / Latino, Native American / Alaskan Native, and Pacific Islander students.

Response rates by select categories

	Count	Rate
Entry status		
Freshman	4,881	78%
Transfer student	2,066	74%
Gender		
Female	3,783	80%
Male	3,127	74%
Decline to state	37	65%
Ethnicity		
Asian	2,672	80%
AA/CL/NAAN/PI	1,276	78%
International	941	76%
White/Other	1,888	75%
College		
Chemistry	259	81%
Natural Resources	450	78%
Letters & Science	4,398	77%
Fall Program for Freshmen	780	78%
Engineering	840	77%
Environmental Design	149	75%
Haas	71	63%

GBO attendees who were invited to participate in the survey (N = 9,027) had an extraordinary response rate of 77% (n = 6,947, including completed and partial survey responses). The table above presents response rates for various groups. Freshman entrants responded at a higher rate than transfer students. Female students had a higher response rate than male students.

Requests for additional analysis should be directed to OPA staff at opa@berkeley.edu.

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GBO Steering Committee

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