

Factors That Affect South East Asian Student Academic Success at FCC

A Qualitative Research

INTRODUCTION

This qualitative research study was conducted as a result of goals identified in the Fresno City College (FCC) 2015 Student Equity Plan. Campus-based research in the plan revealed achievement gaps in transfer for Southeast Asian students. According to, Xiong and Wood (2016), Southeast Asian refers to “students of Hmong, Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese descent” (p. 452). A part of the strategy to close this gap included the development of deeper inquiry methods to identify ways to support students in order to close achievement gaps. Specifically, the plan (E.1) indicated a need to conduct research with students to help alleviate potential barriers at FCC that affect their academic success. In addition, the FCC 2015 Student Equity Plan asks for qualitative data to be collected as part of the plans evaluation process.

To begin understanding the Southeast Asian student experience at FCC and assist the campus with addressing the goals of the Student Equity Plan, four focus group sessions in fall 2016 and spring 2017 were conducted using questions from the RP Groups *Student Support (Re)defined*. The sessions began with an overall question regarding what helped students to be successful at the college followed by questions related to the following six success factors (see Appendix A for exact wording):

- **Connected** – creating connections between students and the institution and cultivating relationships that underscore how students’ involvement with the college community can contribute to their academic and personal success
- **Directed** – helping students clarify their aspirations, develop an educational focus they perceive as meaningful and develop a plan that moves them from enrollment to achievement of their goal
- **Engaged** – actively involving students in meaningful and authentic educational experiences and activities inside and outside the classroom
- **Focused** – fostering students’ motivation and helping them develop the skills needed to achieve their goals
- **Nurtured** – conveying a sense of caring where students’ success is important and expected
- **Valued** – providing students with opportunities to contribute to and enrich the college culture and community

RESEARCH QUESTION

In reflecting on the six factors of success, what supports, both inside and outside the classroom, do current Southeast Asian students identify as important to their success as community college learners?

METHODOLOGY

With the assistance of the Student Equity Coordinator and United Southeast Asian-American Academic Program USEAA counselors, announcements were made in classes and at student club meetings of the opportunity to participate in the focus groups. A total of 26 students participated in the sessions. There were 14 males, 10 females, and the groups included all age

categories, athletes, students with disabilities, a broad range of majors, and students receiving and not receiving financial aid¹. In each of the focus groups, the session started with a question about the most important factor to their success (overall), and was followed by a series of questions grouped by the six success factors (connected, directed, engaged, focused, nurtured, and valued). At the end of each session, they were provided with a short form that asked them to identify the three factors that are most important to their success (Appendix B).

ANALYSIS

The sessions were recorded and a contracted service was used to transcribe the recordings. The responses were first sorted by the order in which the factor questions were asked (overall, connected, directed, engaged, focused, nurtured, and valued). The participant responses often discussed multiple factors at the same time, and the responses were coded into categories using the RP Groups *Student Support (Re)defined* definitions of the factors.

In addition, open coding was used to further identify categories. In “Qualitative Research; a Guide to Design and Implementation” (Merriam, 2009, pg. 204) the author suggests that while coding, researchers should “think of yourself as having a conversation with the data – asking questions of it, making comments to it, and so on”. As the coding progressed, one additional category emerged, supports to success. Supports to success was further coded with sub-categories; self, faculty, counselors, academic support, special programs, clubs/peers, family, and community.

At the end of each session, participants completed a form in which they identified what they considered as the three most important factors. The ratings were compiled and a frequency analysis was used to identify the top three factors.

FINDINGS

Discussion of the findings is divided into two sections, Three Most Important Factors and Supports to Success. The students had many similar positive and negative comments regarding the supports to success. Quotes were selected across sessions and from multiple students. Each quote is followed by an identification of the session, gender, and factor (i.e. “1-F-Valued” indicates session one-female-factor).

THREE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS

In addition to the focus questions, at the end of each session, students were asked to select and rate the three factors they thought were most important to their success (see Appendix C). Two factors, Directed and Connected, received the same top ranking with 23% of the students selecting these as first choice. Directed was also selected as the top ranking for second choice with 23% of students selecting this factor. The third factor, Nurtured, was selected by 19% of the students as their first choice and 38% as their third choice. Student’s reflections on the top three factors often describe relationships and external factors that were perceived to influence their ability to be successful.

¹ Gender was collected with observation in the focus groups by the research team and all other demographic data were collected based on the conversations in the focus groups.

Directed

Students selected Directed as the top ranking for both their first and second choice. Students commented on the influences from high school and family. Some students expressed a conflict between their personal goals and parental expectations. Having a career that would support financial stability was also important to the students.

“...**at my high school**... they take senior projects on their future chosen career. That kind of helped me because **I didn't know what I was doing at first...he said I should go into Computer Engineering...I just set my goal to that.** And also **my parents, they do everything for you just to go to school, so I want to go to school just to kind of achieve that goal and help them back, too.**” (1-M-Directed)

“My goal is to be a CPA, and the fail rate for that exam is 80 percent the second time, but I'm confident I could make it because I don't have a backup plan. **It's either CPA or bust.** I decided on that goal because **it's a safe, secure job regardless of the economy.** People will always need accountants. **The people that helped me identify this goal were my family, and my algebra two teacher...**” (2-M-Directed)

“I think when I'm deciding my major, **it's really hard because you decide between doing what you want to do, but also, what will help you in the future, money-wise.** You don't want a career where you're not making enough to support yourself, and if you want a family, to support your family in the future.” (3-F-Directed)

“My middle school band director, and also my high school teacher, they inspired me because they're such great musicians...**I'm gonna be the first person in my family to ever major in music...**Because my mom, **my parents do support me, but they don't believe that majoring in music will make a lot of money.** Because **they wanted me to become a pharmacist, or a doctor, or lawyer.**” (4-F-Directed)

“As of right now, **I don't feel like I have an educational goal,** mainly because **I really haven't figured out if I really want to major in business administration yet. It's just something I'm familiar with because my mom.** Well, she didn't go to college, but **she's into the business field.** And I've always grown up around it and it's just something that's really familiar to me.” (4-M-Directed)

“**My major is in the medical field.** But, **I'm still indecisive.** I kind of grew up on that, with **my parents.** Because **they tell us that's where stability is, that's where the money is.**” (4-F-Directed)

Connected

Students also ranked Connected as their first choice. Participating in clubs and working in groups were identified as a means for students feel connected.

“...there's clubs and stuff, like **if they were more involved...active into clubs, they'd probably do better**, you know because they actually have like clubs to help you out...” (1-M-Connected)

“I feel like...some students,...**a freshman coming in...you're kind of like nervous to talk to new people**...if we have other people to go up to those type of people and talk to them...**get them to join their club...get them active.**” (1-M-Connected)

“**I was in the chamber choir. It was music that drew me in and connected me to the college.** We all come from different backgrounds, but with music we share the same feelings, students and professors. It brings us all together.” (2-M-Connected)

“I think some students don't feel connected to the college because...**their parents would say, 'Oh, you should go to college right away, so you can finish within a certain amount of time.'**...**they don't want go to college...they're forced to.** ...some students like to take a year off, or a semester off because they feel like they're not ready to start college right away. I think it could also be the reason why they don't feel connected to the college because **they're not ready.**” (4-F-Connected)

“**I didn't know what I was doing**, and I was just looking for an English class, and then **they told me about the USEAA program...and I really enjoy it and I feel connected.**” (4-F-Connected)

Nurtured

Nurtured was selected by 73% of the students as one of their top three choices. Interacting with faculty and counselors was considered important for students to feel nurtured.

“...teachers probably are trained, but I was thinking **maybe if the teachers were trained every semester or year** or so, **how to interact with the new generation of students** because with every generation **there's like a different way of how you should interact.** With the older people, the way they talk is clearly different from the newer generations...” (1-M-Nurtured)

“**Instructors, they are in charge of your grades**, they could see **if you're low or high**; so I feel if the instructor could have a system on the computer that notifies you that the student's, like, low in grades, **for him to talk to the student one-on-one, and like, 'Why are you failing, what's happening, if anything's wrong'.**” (1-M-Nurtured)

“First year of college, you're told you're on your own, but **it helps to have a counselor to guide you.**” (1-F-Nurtured)

“When I joined the **Asian American club, my advisors nurtured and helped me succeed in my studies.**” (2-F-Nurtured)

“I think some instructors, they're already **reminding you their office hours.** And their always like, yeah, I'll be open today if you guys want to come. And some, they'll just mention it at the beginning of the semester, and then that's it. So **when they continue to remind you that my office hours is open, I think that makes students more comfortable to go in,** because **it shows that they're willing to help you,** and they're **making time for you.** And I think most of the faculty, they're pretty good about helping students.” (3-F-Nurtured)

SUPPORTS TO SUCCESS

Self

Students reflected on personal responsibility and being independent. The students commented on feeling stressed and pressured to be successful.

“Every student has a different agenda when they come to college. For the ones that don't feel connected, **I don't think they're putting enough time into it.** I think Fresno is doing a great job connecting with students... **it's just up to students if they want to get connected.**” (2-M-Connected)

“I think **it's the attitude of the students.** If you wake up every day with a positive attitude, and **you tell yourself alright I'm gonna learn something new today... regardless how boring the professor is,** if you have that positive mindset that you're gonna learn something out of it, or you might gain a new piece of knowledge... it'll change the way you see things in college.” (2-M-Engaged)

“I think **it's based on yourself as an individual.** Because **we have the freedom to come to school and make our own schedule,** and just being a part of college. A lot of people just ...don't come with an open mind. They come very narrow-minded.” (3-F-Engaged)

“So one thing I learned being here from the first semester is that on the first day, **it's very important to pay attention to the syllabus...**But if you don't agree with the syllabus, you look at how many exams there are, how many essays we're gonna write for the semester, then it's best not to take that class, because that's exactly what you're gonna do throughout the whole semester...I know **some days I come into class, and I didn't read the chapter, or I'm behind...that's my fault** for falling behind, and **I should stay on top of my tasks.** Because it was already clear from the beginning how their classes are already” (3-F-Engaged)

“I guess, **I kind of feel insecure** because, oh, **my work wasn't good enough.** But **you put your heart into it** and you **did as much as you can.** It's not appreciated, because **there's someone better than you.**” (3-F-Valued)

“I think **our generation is just very competitive** when it comes to **jobs, impressing your parents, classes.**” (4-F-Valued)

"I know why **they're not engaged, because it's too much work**...There's **too much stress**...college is like a **fast pace, either you get it today, or you fail tomorrow**...But in high school if you don't get it today there's always tomorrow."
(4-M-Engaged)

Faculty

Faculty were discussed repeatedly as a positive and negative influence when students reflected on engagement. Students described the effectiveness of enthusiastic or passionate presentation of course content and faculty recognizing students individually. Students also commented on the effect of class size.

"I know that for me personally, when I've had classes that I felt like...that the class meant a lot to me is when **the teacher would value me as a student**...some classes are really big, 200-plus students where the teachers don't have time to personally encourage or talk to you...where the teacher, you know, **they know me by name and they encourage me and they ask me if I need help and they watch me progress**, I feel I could do way better because there's, like the mentoring, kind of, feeling where **they actually care about my progression in school**." (3-M-Connected)

"**Some professors are monotone and boring**. I had a professor who's a really nice guy, but I fell asleep because I didn't understand him. When **he gave a presentation, I dozed off. I passed, but it wasn't fun**." (2-M-Engaged)

"I think students are engaged when he or she is **teaching more passionately**. When you're teaching about something you wanna teach, **it gets the students to be more interactive**, and excited. I wasn't all about art, but I'm in art right now, and the way she talks, **she's so knowledgeable and passionate** about her job. It makes me more awake in the class." (2-M-Engaged)

"The professor needs to **engage with the students** not by just lecturing, but **asking questions and making us talk and make debates**. My professor is good, he engages, but a lot of teachers are boring. You gotta engage with students." (2-F-Engaged)

"Yeah, **my professor doesn't like to interact with students**. There are a lot of **students that ask questions during the lecture, but she just gives a real quick answer, and goes back to lecturing**." (2-M-Engaged)

"...my **PolSci class is really big**, and the way he helps us understand material, he **relates it to current events, so that helps**. But in our **English class**...we're reading this book...what she does to help us engage, **we sit in a circle and kind of have a book club kind of thing**...she **asks us questions, like how do we relate to the character of the book?**" (3-F-Engaged)

"Sometimes **when the class is smaller**, I feel it's much **easier for the professor to get to know the students**...they **interact** with the students...with the **bigger class** it's just too many students, they **can't really get to know us**. I feel like it's **harder** for them **to teach a bigger class**, than a smaller class." (3-F-Engaged)

Counselors

Students commented on both negative and positive aspects of the role of counseling. The importance of a Student Education Plan (SEP) was discussed often and how it supports their ability to be successful.

" I think how the counselors help make **the education plan**, that **helped out a lot**. That helped me know what I need to take because **I don't want to take unnecessary classes to get me off track.**" (1-M-Focused)

" I feel like **USEAA** has played a huge part for me in college. Having **our own personal counselors**, they actually **helped us understanding the learning process of the SEP**, our educational plan. Because I feel in general that a lot of the students don't understand the educational plan. And when you don't understand the planning, you don't know how to navigate yourself through college, because **there's so many courses that is presented to us**, but **we don't know which one are the ones that we're supposed to take.**" (2-F-Overall)

"From my experience, my first year of college, I went to the counseling office. I felt like **some of these counselors, they just tell you, "All right, here's what you need to do, and this is the class you need."** That's it. And then **they're just kind of like, okay, that's it.**" (2-M-Connected)

"You have to wait just to see a counselor...**they're just trying to do something quickly, and get you out of there.**" (4-M-Nurtured)

"I'd say that the important thing for me is the counseling help because at first before I took a semester off because I really wanted to find myself in some sort of way. **I thought that if I took a semester off, I'd figure out what I wanted to be**, and what I wanted **to do with my life**, what **career I wanted** to find. **Throughout that semester, I couldn't really discover what I really wanted to do.** But **with the counseling's help, they put a plan for me.** And if I ever have to change my major to a different plan, I can always go back. I guess as of right now the **most important thing** that has ever happened to me is **the educational plan that counselors have given me.**" (4-M-Overall)

Academic Support (Tutorial/PASS)

Student expressed an appreciation of academic support using the Tutorial Center and Pass Program.

"It's really hard for me because the **first semester** I took here at Fresno City was **an online class**, but **I didn't know what I was doing** and when I went to Blackboard, **I didn't know how to post, I didn't know how to do discussion, I didn't know none of that.** I had to come to **tutorial**, so they could **show me how to do that.**" (1-F-Overall)

"I think **tutorial centers helped a lot**, because I have a **disability**. I have a really hard time writing, so having extra help from tutorial helps out a lot and the **disabled center offers extra time** on tests and that's helped me a lot because I

have such a hard time understanding and learning. So I agree for sure that the tutoring center helps out.” (1-M-Overall)

“The **PASS tutoring** sessions, it helps me get the hours in, and I get to **focus on my work.**” (3-M-Focused)

“...if you don't make something mandatory or a requirement, then we tend to not do it. We're required to go to **PASS** to do our homework...that kind of helps me to stay on task and prioritize what I should do, and my homework for the week. I think that really has helped me...” (3-F-Focused)

Special Programs

Students expressed the importance of special programs and the impact on their progress and achievement.

“I'm in the **USEAA** program, and **EOPS**...my counselor's helping me to get out of here fast, and transfer to a four year college.” (2-M-Overall)

“...my first year here, I was enrolled into USEAA...I feel like that's very important...in all your other classes, **you don't technically make friends**...because you go in there sit, you do your work, teachers lecture...it's hard to even have a conversation with the people around you...**you're all by yourself**...but when you're in a program, you feel connected, and you feel that **everyone is on the same page**...you have support...not just from the professor, but also from the peers around you...I feel like USEAA has played a huge part for me in college. (3-F-Overall)

“I'm in another program, it's called **Trio**...you also have your own personal counselors and guidance...it's also a good program because **they're always sending out emails**...if you're applying to transfer, then you should do it by this deadline...if you want to apply for a scholarship, this is how you do it, or come in and set up a meeting...they're open to us whenever we want...we just set up a meeting...**we meet with the same counselors.** So I think Trio has also helped me.” (3-F-Focused)

Clubs/Peers

Students mentioned the importance of clubs in each session. They also discussed how peers and group activities contributed to their academic success.

“...when I feel connected is when we're doing group work because, I like to **socialize** with my neighbor and maybe some people, they don't like that, but to me, when you socialize and you **exchange numbers** and, you know, hey, can we **get together for study time**, or maybe, you know, I'm not really familiar with this chapter, can we just kind of like, you know, go over it and stuff, so that's how I feel really connected.” (1-F-Connected)

“For me, there's so many students, I feel like another face in the crowd. But, I joined the **Asian American club.** They made me feel more connected and helped me.” (2-F-Connected)

“... when I took **Asian American Studies**, he notified us that he had a **club**...I was like, oh...I would **love to be really involved** and see what's going on...it's **good for my resume** and stuff like that...after getting to know them, I started to see how great it was...**it's just a fun place to be in**...it's really a **cool connection**.” (3-F-Valued)

“I'm taking **Group Communication**, and when I was placed in a group, that's when I was like, familiar with everybody. **I met new people** that I didn't know and I **got familiar with the whole crowd**.” (2-M-Connected)

Family

Students discussed family often and their influence on student success. Stress related to parents was mentioned when students reflected on educational goals and high expectations.

“**How I stay focused** was how **my parents always nagged at me**...my **brothers and sisters** always nagged at me, **always on me to do my best**. I have seven brothers and sisters, and they just tell me, they used to come here for like two or three years and then they stopped coming. And they tell me the things to not do and the things to do because, you know, I might go through the same things that they do, and just quit college, you know.” (2-M-Focused)

“...my **parents and my relatives obviously**, they have **high standards for us**, they're like, “**I want you to be a doctor, a lawyer**,” whatever.” (3-F-Directed)

“...**my parents**, they're really old, they always **work long hours** just to take care of us. I have five siblings, so there's a lot of us...**they didn't go through college**, and they just think that **I should do better**, that I should really **manage my time**, how I **socialize**, and **where and when and how I study**...**You always want to show them your best all the time**...that's what **really isolates**, because I really show my best but **I'm always struggling**...**I try my best to have the good side with my parents and never the bad times**.” (3-F-Directed)

“**My major is in the medical field**. But, **I'm still indecisive**...coming from our **background**, they **expect us** to be in some type of **medical field**, like **doctors, nurses**, and stuff. I kind of grew up on that, with my parents. Because they tell us that's where **stability is**, that's where the **money is**. So, basically, I feel like there is a lot of jobs that you can go towards. But, I feel like that was my main focus. While **working in the hospital**, I feel as though **maybe it's not for me**. I kind of want to **try something different**, but I just **don't know where to go or where to start** because I'm so used to the medical field.” (3-F-Directed)

“It's like sometimes, **we don't want that path, we want our own path**. They (**parents**) **stress us out** like that too, sometimes. So we just gotta deal with it. **We don't tell them we're stressed, we keep it to ourselves**. Because we don't want them to see us like that. **They'll say, oh, you're a failure**.” (4-M-Nurtured)

Community

Students talked about the importance of community when discussing the factors valued and directed. The Hmong students expressed the impact of feeling connected to their community through language, the arts, and family.

“Ever since I was a kid, I wanted to work with the community because, uh, I was a part of the Boy Scouts Association and we would always work in the community and I really enjoy doing that, so I kind of wanted my career to be something that I did for the community. **At first I wanted to be a Hmong translator, but, I saw how my - the teachers affected the kids**, like how much they learned from the teachers, like not only school wise, but **character-building-wise**, as making you a better person, so **I wanted to do that**, I wanted to **be a teacher**, so that I can not only teach, but maybe **make a difference in some of the kids lives**. Because, like, I didn't grow up like really having parents around, so I looked up to the teachers, to teach me, you know, like how to be a man, or how to treat people.” (1-M-Directed)

“There's a **big community of us Hmong people here in Fresno City**, and I mean, you know, we could talk, we could chat, but you know, the big impact in **this generation** now because some of them, they cannot speak it at all, they **only speak English**, some of them, they could speak but **they cannot write or read Hmong**. So if there is, um, gonna be like **more Hmong class here in Fresno City, would really benefit us**” (1-F-Valued)

“Like **in Minnesota**, I notice that a lot of them are **very interactive and involved in like Hmong music**, there's a lot of people that are influenced by music, and it seems like... **people from here, they go to Minnesota because of it**...we don't have that, you know, because our community, we don't take it seriously like they'll do...**maybe we should have more emphasis on ourselves**...I feel like **there's a lot of talent, but there's nowhere to go and express that**, so I think **Fresno City would be another place, another great place to be valued in that way.**” (1-M-Valued)

“I think when you do something like **community service**, you should **feel valued** because **you did something good for the community and yourself.**” (2-M-Valued)

“For Hmong people it's like “Hmoob Hlub Hmoob”, **Hmong people should love Hmong, you should always help your fellow Hmong. There's a song about it.**” (4-M-Valued)

“It's because I feel like **I wanted to help students**. I wanted to help, **because education is really important**. And I also want to help and **give back to the community**, to help them understand. Because I feel the **values that we have in our Asian families**, all **our parents want us to be succeed**. They want us to be successful, no doubt about it. And I

think they all agree that **education is the best way to go in life**. But sometimes, they don't understand or they don't know how to support us. And so, I feel strongly that maybe that's something that I can do, or **I can help and give back to the community in the future**. So that's what motivated me to become a counselor.” (2-F-Directed)

“I feel like **whenever I do community service, I feel valued**. I guess it's kind of a self-value thing, "I'm doing something out of the goodness of my heart," And I feel good, even if nobody else feels good about it.” (4-F-Valued)

“**The culture's starting to fade**, because **we're not as organized** as we used to be. **We don't have a country of our own**.” (4-M-Valued)

RACIAL INEQUITIES

To assist in explaining the racial inequities voiced by the students, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used as a framework for reflection and analysis. In Critical Race Perspectives on Theory in Student Affairs, Patton, McEwen, Rendón, and Howard-Hamilton (2007) provide a theoretical framework which may be used to “illuminate racial inequities and hierarchies and to transform colleges and universities”.

MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

CRT explains “racial micro-aggressions or subtle insults (verbal, nonverbal, and/or visual) directed toward people of color, often automatically or unconsciously” have an impact on students. One student perceived a difference in how she was treated when meeting with counselors.

“**I met with a few counselors, I'm not trying to be racial or biased** about this, but um, I met with a few ... and **they just gave me a really quick description of what courses to take**...they said that you need to take this, this, and this class... **this previous counselor**...she **happened to be Asian**...she always gave, like every time we talked about a certain subject...**she gave me the better outcome**...if you take this class because you can, if you feel like you want to change your major then you can take this class because it'll count for both of them just in case you change your mind later on. So I found that for me, **I was more motivated because I felt like I have a better understanding of classes to take**. So now that, like, I met her, I do plan on going back to her again, just in case I do change again, um, but that has helped me and made me stay more focused ...Because you know, **before, the other counselors, I wasn't really clear about what they were saying**.” (2-F-Focused)

CONCLUSION

In reflecting on the six factors of success, Southeast Asian students identified ‘directed’, ‘connected’, and ‘nurtured’ as most important to their success at FCC. The factors identified by Southeast Asia students as important to their academic success can be used to inform decisions when determining planning not only for the Student Equity Plan, but also for other institutional plans. Using this qualitative data with other institutional data (Institutional Effectiveness Index, Equity data, CCSSE, etc.) will strengthen our ability to provide evidence to guide decisions. What other questions should we be asking our students? What questions should we be asking of ourselves?

As FCC continues to grapple with the inequities experienced by Southeast Asian students and other disproportionately impacted groups as identified by campus research, it is important to reflect on our strengths so we can prioritize and scale up activities that qualitative and quantitative data support. It is recommended to use this report to engage student support stakeholders such as faculty, counselors, student services professionals, administrators, staff and students in conversations about these findings. It is important to reflect and begin dialogue on how to foster a conducive learning environment that promotes students' academic success.

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Appendix A

STUDENT EQUITY FOCUS GROUP AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Purpose
3. Protocol
4. Conduct Question & Answers
5. Rap-up



the Research & Planning Group
for California Community Colleges

STUDENT SUPPORT (RE)DEFINED

Focus Group Questions

Success	Question(s)
OVERALL	1. What is the most important thing that has happened to you at the college that has helped you be successful as a
CONNECTED	2. Our research suggests that students who feel connected to their college are more likely to be successful. Still, some students don't feel connected to their college. <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Why do you think that is the case? Why do some students not feel connected to the college?b. What can a Fresno City College do to make students feel connected?c. Tell me about a time when you felt strongly connected to the college.

Success	Question(s)
DIRECTED	<p>3. Our research suggests that students who have a clear educational goal are more directed and more likely to be successful? Do you have a goal for your education?</p> <p><u>If response is yes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is your goal? When did you decide on this goal? b. Who or what helped you develop the goal? <p><u>If response is no:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. What do you think you need to develop a goal?
ENGAGED	<p>4. Our research suggests that students are more likely to be successful if they are actively engaged in college inside and/or outside of class and feel they are really learning something. Still, some students don't feel engaged in this way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Why do you think that is the case? Why do some students not feel engaged, not feel they are learning something? b. What can Fresno City College do to make students feel engaged? <p><i>Tell me about a time when you felt strongly engaged during your time at this college.</i></p>
FOCUSED	<p>5. Our research suggests that students who stay focused on their goal are more likely to be successful. What has the college done or could it do to help you stay focused so you can achieve your educational goal?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What helps or has helped you stay focused?
NURTURE D	<p>6. Our research suggests that students are more likely to be successful if they feel nurtured – that somebody wants them to succeed and helps them do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What can Fresno City College do to make students feel that somebody wants them to succeed and helps them do so?
VALUED	<p>7. Our research suggests that students are more likely to be successful when they feel valued and that they are contributing something to the college community, for example by being in a club, serving as a tutor or mentor, providing community service, participating or leading in student government or clubs, or playing sports. Still, some students don't feel valued in this way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Why do you think that is the case? Why do some students not feel valued? b. What can Fresno City College do to make students feel valued?
RATING SHEET	<p>8. At this time, we have one final question for you. Of the six factors that we have found help increase student success, which ones are most important to you? Think through each factor and find the three that you think are most important to YOUR own success. Once you have decided on your top three, give the one that is most important to you a “1” – second most important a “2, and third most important a “3.” Then write in the space at the bottom of the page a few sentences to explain why you chose the factor you rated number one to be the most important for you.</p> <p>Thank you all so much for your participation and help with our research.</p>

Appendix B



WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR SUCCESS AS A STUDENT?

Here are six different ways you may feel as a college student – or wish you felt as a college student. We would like to know how important you think they are to your success as a student.

Please think about each one and then do the following:

1. Pick the three that you think are most important to your success.
2. Mark these three with a 1, 2 and 3 to indicate their order of importance to you. For the item that you marked with a "1" please indicate below the table, why you chose this item as the most important.

	<i>Rating</i>
Connected: You feel connected to the college	
Directed: You have a goal and you know what to do to achieve it	
Engaged: You listen and participate in class and participate in extra-curricular activities	
Focused: You stay on track – keeping your eyes on the prize	
Nurtured: You feel somebody wants you to succeed as a student and helps you succeed	
Valued: You feel that what you have to contribute to the college is valued	
<i>Why did you choose this item as the most important to your success?</i>	

Appendix C

Results - What is most important to your success as a student?

Session	Connected	Directed	Engaged	Focused	Nurtured	Valued
1-1				3	2	1
1-2	2	3				1
1-3				3	1	2
1-4		3		1	2	
1-5			2		1	3
2-1	2		1	3		
2-2		1	2		3	
2-3				1	3	2
2-4		1	2		3	
2-5		2		1	3	
2-6	1		2		3	
3-1		1		2	3	
3-2		1	3	2		
3-3		2	3		1	
3-4	2	1			3	
3-5	1	2			3	
3-6		2	1	3		
4-1		3			1	2
4-2	3	1		2		
4-3	1	2		3		
4-4	1				3	2
4-5	1	3			2	
4-6	2	3	1			
4-7		2			1	3
4-8	3				2	1
4-9	1			2	3	
N	12	17	9	12	19	9
Percent	46%	65%	35%	46%	73%	35%
1st Choice	6	6	3	3	5	3