

Focus group guide

The focus groups we conduct with students are designed to help us understand their experience in our department and major, especially with respect to their interactions with course staff (tutors and TAs) and with class logistics in their first year. The questions below are intended as a starting point for discussion of these experiences. Not all questions will apply in every focus group, and especially the follow-up questions (“Why?” and “What about later on...”) may not need to be asked in all cases. Sessions are targeted to be approximately 45 minutes, and we will wrap up questions when this time approaches. The goal is to gain an understanding of the experiences of marginalized students in CSE

- A. Introductions, reminder of study purpose and consent forms (audio recording and participation)
- B. Background
 - a. Did you have any programming experience before starting at university? What was it?
 - b. What CSE courses did you take in your first year?
- C. First year programming assignments
 - a. Where and how did you complete most of your programming work in your first year? At home, in the CSE labs, somewhere else on campus? Why? Did you use your own computer or University-provided computers? What about later on in your time as a student?
 - b. In your first year, did you feel like you usually knew what was being asked of you when completing programming assignments? What about later on in your time as a student?
 - c. In your first year, what sorts of things did you do when you needed a clarification or didn't understand something about a programming assignment? What about later on in your time as a student?
 - d. Were there any times where you spent a lot of time on something related to a programming assignment that you think is easy or simple now?
- D. First year faculty & staff interactions
 - a. In your first year, what was your usage of the queue for tutors in the CSE labs like? Did your usage differ across classes? Why? What about later on in your time as a student?

- b. In your first year, what was your usage of message boards like Piazza like? Did your usage differ across classes? Why? What about later on in your time as a student?
- c. In your first year, what was your use of office hours for the instructor and/or TAs like? Did your usage differ across classes? Why? What about later on in your time as a student?
- d. In your first year, did you feel like the faculty and staff cared about your success? Why? What about later on in your time as a student?

E. Sense of belonging and inclusion

- a. In your first year, did you feel welcomed into and a part of the CSE community? Why? What about later on in your time as a student?
- b. In your first year, did you have friends that you could talk to or ask questions about CSE courses and coursework? What about later on in your time as a student?
- c. In your first year, did you consider leaving the CSE major? What about University? Why? What about later on in your time as a student?
- d. In your first year, if there was a cohort of students with shared identities in your first year as a CSE major, how would that have improved your experience as a Black/Latino student?