

Pilipinx Educational Attainment Survey (PEAS)

Rebecca Suen, Elsa Mai, Stephanie Chung

Background

First-generation students are first in their families to attend college. Challenges that first-gen students often face include issues with family support, which may lead to psychological, academic, financial, and social challenges; subsequently, “about one in three [first generation college students] leave college within the first three years” (mghclaycenter.org). Given that college has been historically barred by racial and economic factors, this issue also disproportionately affects students of color, and students facing financial difficulties. According to the University of California website, 39% of UC undergraduates are first-generation. In addition, the Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk discusses how Pilipinx youth in the U.S. face issues with educational attainment, resulting in fewer postsecondary educational opportunities. Recently, according to the Daily Bruin, there have been declines in student retention rates for minority students at UCLA, including Pilipinx and first-generation college students(<https://dailybruin.com/2020/09/22/decline-in-uc-underrepresented-students-retention-rates-highlights-inequities>).

Objectives

The project aims to amplify the voices of first-generation Pilipinx college students. Through this project, we hope to highlight these students’ stories, and concerns these students may have at UCLA. For this project, we will focus on how family support affects first-generation Pilipinx college students’ educational success. This includes how family support can influence logistical, financial, emotional factors for first-generation Pilipinx students—ultimately affecting these students’ ability to apply for college, and succeed in higher education.

Community methods

We plan to work with programs that aim to provide various resources that are specific to the needs of first-generation Pilipinx college students at UCLA. Samahang Pilipino Education and Retention (SPEAR) at UCLA and the Academic Advancement Program (AAP) at UCLA are programs we hope to partner with. We plan to provide our mapplication to these organizations so that they may provide resources to first-generation students. We will also directly survey first-generation Pilipinx students at UCLA about their experiences in attaining higher education, and empower them by raising awareness of the unique community conditions they face through

the promotion of resources and programs that aim to support the first-gen Pilipinx student community.

User Stories

“As a first-gen student from a low-income community, financial support from my family is my biggest concern in terms of achieving higher education. I want to share my experience as a first-gen Pilipinx student and raise awareness about the struggles specific to the first gen Pilipinx community.

“As a first-gen transfer student at UCLA, I did not feel that I had the resources and preparation necessary for a smooth transition from community college. After learning about SPEAR’s services and other retention projects on campus that outreach to high school and community college students, I hope that my experience can provide insight into community conditions that most first-gen students face and be implemented into SPEAR’s programming.”

Potential Survey Questions

Background questions:

- Do you identify as Pilipinx?
- Do you identify as a first-generation college student?
- Where is your hometown?

Questions:

- Do you feel that you received support from your parents?
- How has family support (or lack thereof) affected your success in college?
- How has family support affected your ability to apply for college?

Long-term impact

Our goal for this project is to raise awareness about the importance of family support—a barrier many first-generation Pilipinx students encounter when pursuing higher education. We hope that the data collected can provide more insight on the community conditions relating to family support that many first-gen Pilipinx students face, and share our findings with SPEAR to uplift first-generation Pilipinx students by creating and bringing more resources that are more accessible to family members to help them better understand the college process (ie: pamphlets in foreign languages). Our map could also potentially be used to provide data and identify first-gen Pilipinx communities that could benefit from greater involvement from programs working towards educational attainment and aiding families with support. Students can also point out what struggles they face, and what kind of support they might want to receive. SPEAR can then use this data to work towards providing resources or raising awareness about resources

catered towards first-generation students, or catered towards family members to help them better provide support for students.