



OFFICE OF ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) Undergraduate Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DECEMBER 2022

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

Student Experience in the Research University (SERU)

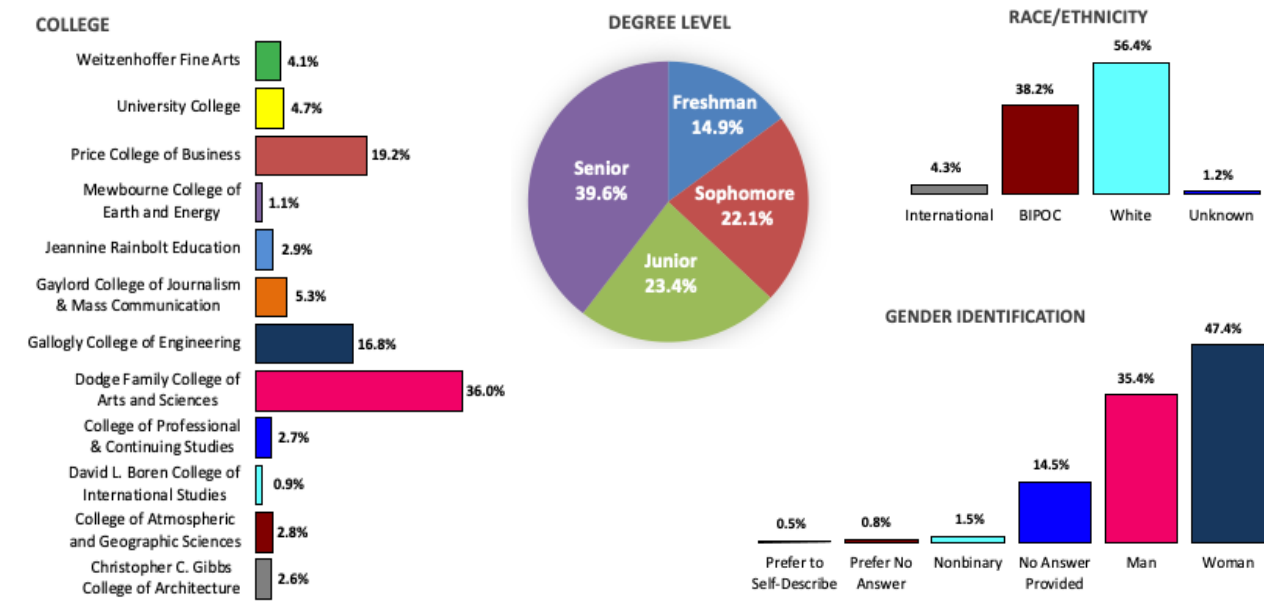
Executive Summary of Key Findings

Background

The University of Oklahoma is a part of the *Student Experience in the Research University (SERU)* Consortium, which includes most of the *Association of American Universities (AAU)* members. The undergraduate SERU survey was administered at OU Norman Campus for the first time in spring 2022 to gather information from degree-seeking undergraduate students on student engagement, both curricular and co-curricular, and to provide information to help administrators, faculty, staff, and student leaders improve the student experience. The purpose of this report is two-fold: (i) To highlight key OU institutional findings based on the major themes of the survey and (ii) To share comparative findings between OU and other institutions which took part in the 2022 undergraduate SERU survey.¹

A total of **19,324** OU undergraduate students were invited to take the survey between April 20, 2022, and June 17, 2022. Of those invited, **6,276** responded for an overall response rate of **32.5%**. As shown in Figure 1 below, the top three colleges representing a majority of the overall responses (72%) were 1) Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences (36.0%), 2) Price College of Business (19.2%), and 3) Gallogly College of Engineering (16.8%). Seniors had the highest response rates (39.6%), followed by juniors (23.4%), sophomores (22.1%), and then first-year students (14.9%). The sample was also nationally representative in terms of race/ethnicity, with 56.4% White, 38.2% BIPOC², and 4.3% International students that were sampled.

Figure 1
SERU Summary of Respondents³



¹ The current data from other participating institutions exclude data from the University of California schools. Once the data becomes available, this report will be updated.

² Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

³ Analysis of Fall 2021 OU Fact Book confirms that respondents of the SERU survey were generally representative of the undergraduate student population.

Institutional Satisfaction

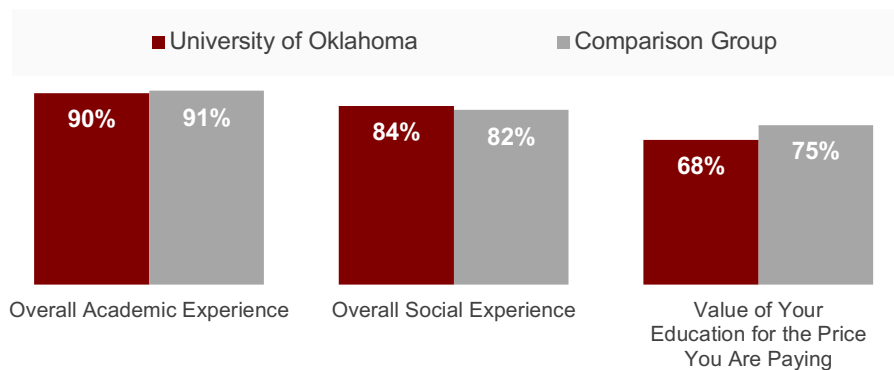
Institutional Satisfaction: Students were asked the extent to which they are satisfied with the institution vis-à-vis their *overall academic experience*, *overall social experience*, and *the value of education for the price they are paying*. The results show that, on average, 90% of students are satisfied⁴ with their overall academic experience, 84% are satisfied with the overall social experience, while only 68% are satisfied with the value of education for the price they are paying. A further examination of the data reveals the following:

- Seniors had the highest ratings of satisfaction for the overall social experience (86%) and value of education for the price they are paying (71%) while sophomores, juniors, and seniors tied for the highest ratings of satisfaction with their overall academic experience (90%).
- International students had higher ratings of satisfaction for value of education for the price they are paying (74%) than domestic students (68%).
- Non-First-Generation students had higher ratings of satisfaction for all three items compared to First-Generation students.

Institutional Satisfaction - OU vs. Comparison Group: As shown in Figure 2, overall, OU had similar ratings of satisfaction across these three items compared to other Institutions that participated in SERU.

- OU had a marginally smaller ratings for *satisfaction with overall academic experience* (90%) than the comparison group (91%).
- When it comes to *satisfaction with overall social experience*, OU had higher ratings (84%) than the comparison group (82%).
- OU had lower ratings for satisfaction with *value for your education for the price you are paying* (68%) than the comparison group (75%).
- There were some observed differences in satisfaction ratings for the item *value of your education for the price you are paying* across the variable *Year in School*:
 - **First-Year:** OU = 65%; Comparison Group = 76%
 - **Sophomores:** OU = 67%; Comparison Group = 76%
 - **Juniors:** OU = 68%; Comparison Group = 73%
 - **Seniors:** OU = 71%; Comparison Group = 76%

Figure 2
Institutional Satisfaction - OU vs. Comparison Group



⁴ Answered either *somewhat satisfied*, *satisfied*, or *very satisfied*.

Sense of Belonging

Sense of Belonging: Students were asked the degree to which they agreed with three specific statements related to aspects of belongingness. The results show that among the respondents, 80% agree with the item *"I feel valued as an individual at this campus"*, 85% agree with the item *"I feel that I belong at this university"*, and 84% agree with the item *"Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at this university"*. Additionally, on average, over 80% of students at all levels (*First Year, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior*) agree with all the three items - indicating a strong sense of belonging at OU. Despite these findings, there are instances of variability among groups with respect to how they agree. Below are a few examples:

- Historically underrepresented students (i.e., African American students, Hispanic Students, Asian Students, and International Students) were less likely to agree with the items *"I feel valued as an individual at this campus"* and *"I feel that I belong at this university"* than White respondents. In addition, Hispanic Students, American Indian Students and White Students were more likely to agree with the item *"Knowing what I know now, I would still enroll at this university"* than either Asian Students or African American Students.
- Respondents who identified as Straight were more likely to agree with each of the above three statements than those who identified as LGBTQIA+.
- Among the "Metamajor" categories, students in Social and Behavioral Sciences and Human Sciences, were less likely to agree with the item *"I feel valued as an individual at this university"* than students in all the other Metamajors.

A closer review of findings in Figure 5 (see page 6) shows differences by college and selected demographics:

- The College of Professional & Continuing Studies had the highest ratings of agreement for the items *"I feel valued as an individual at OU"* (93%), *"I feel that I belong at OU"* (93%), and *"knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at OU"* (92%).
- The Gallogly College of Engineering and the College of Atmospheric & Geographic Sciences tied for the lowest agreement ratings for the item *"I feel valued as an individual at OU"* (76%); The Gallogly College of Engineering and Mewbourne College of Earth & Energy tied for lowest agreement ratings for the item *"I feel that I belong at OU"* (82%); Weitzenhoffer College of Fine Arts had the lowest agreement ratings for the item *"knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at OU"* (79%).

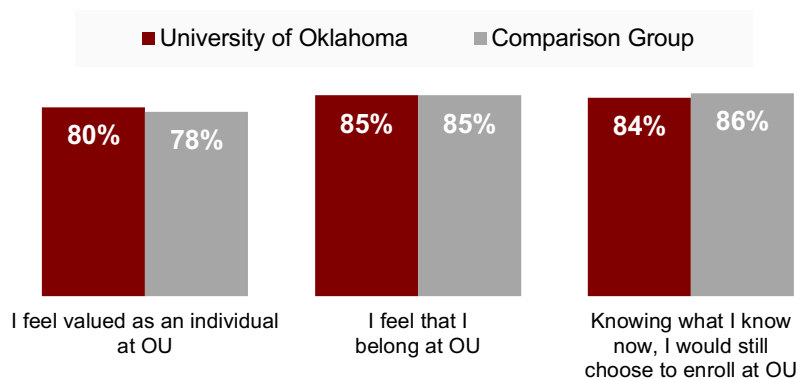
Sense of Belonging - OU vs. Comparison Group: As reflected in Figure 3, overall, OU had similar or more favorable ratings of belonging across these three items compared to other Institutions that participated in SERU:

- OU had higher ratings of agreement for *I feel valued as an Individual at this campus* (90%) than the comparison group (78%).
- There was no difference in ratings of agreement with the statement *I feel that I belong at University* between OU (85%) and the comparison group (85%).
- OU had slightly lower ratings for agreement with *Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll at University* (84%) than the comparison group (86%).

In addition, there were some observed differences in levels of agreement for items pertaining to Sense of Belongingness for International Students:

- *I feel valued as an Individual on campus*: OU = 83%; Comparison Group = 89%
- *I feel that I belong at University*: OU = 80%; Comparison Group = 88%
- *Knowing what I know now, I would still choose to enroll...*: OU = 79%; Comparison Group 87%

Figure 3
Sense of Belonging - OU vs. Comparison Group



Academic Engagement

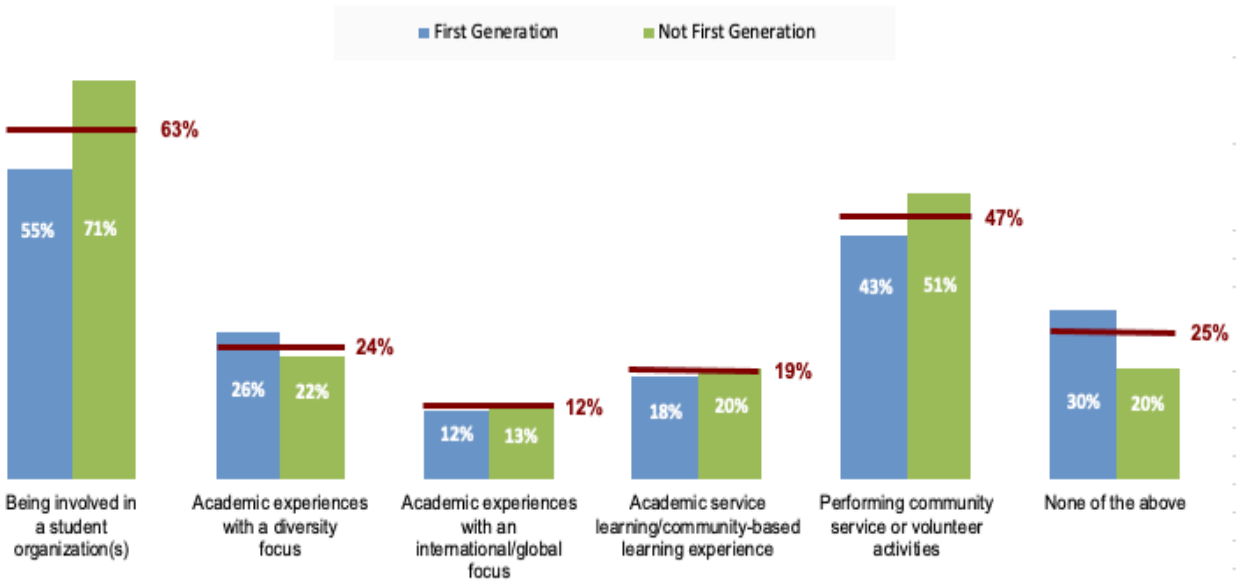
Academic Effort: Respondents were asked to select various engagement activities they took part in during the preceding academic year. Results show that the top three reported engagement activities were: 1) *participated in a class discussion* (79%), 2) *had a class where the professor knew or learned your name* (75%), and 3) *increased academic effort due to the high standards of a faculty member* (67%). Alternatively, the lowest three engagement activities were: 1) *found your courses so interesting that you did more work than was required* (38%), 2) *studied with a group of classmates outside of class* (52%), and 3) *communicated with the instructor outside of class about issues/concepts derived from a course* (53%).

Academic Effort - OU vs. Comparison Group: Most of the Items regarding academic effort yielded similar results between OU and the comparison group, where differences were < 5% (see details in Figure 6). However, there were three Items with the biggest differences between groups, with OU scoring at least 8% higher than the comparison group in frequency of these engagement activities: 1) *Had a class In which the professor knew or learned your name* (OU = 75%; Comparison Group = 64%), 2) *Communicated with the Instructor outside of class about Issues/concepts derived from a course* (OU = 53%; Comparison Group = 43%), and 3) *Made a class presentation* (OU = 61%; Comparison Group = 53%).

Educational Experience

Community-Based Learning Experiences: Sixty-six percent (66%) of students responded that they were involved in a student organization(s). There was an observed difference between first-generation (FG) and non-first generation (NFG) students, where FG students had 55% involvement in student organization(s), compared to 71% NFG student involvement. When asked about performing community service or volunteer activities, 48% of overall respondents reported participation in this, with 51% NFG participation compared to 43% of FG students - see Figure 4.

Figure 4
“Which of the Following Experiences, Activities, or Programs are you Currently Doing or Have Completed?”
 Comparison of First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students

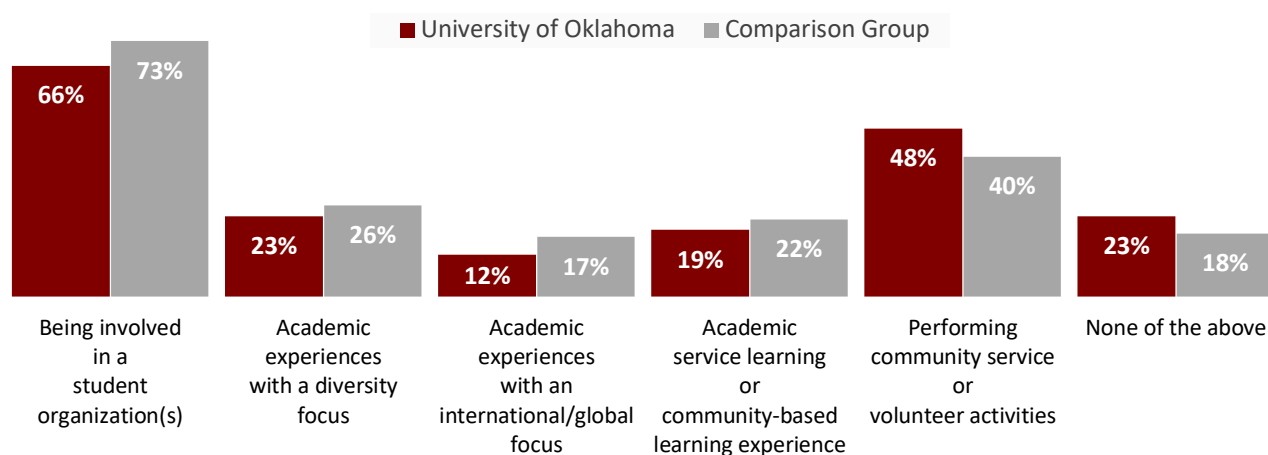


Note: Values in **crimson** denote the average score for the overall sample.

Community-Based Learning Experiences - OU vs. Comparison Group: As shown in Figure 5 below, most of the items regarding community-based learning experiences yielded similar results between the overall OU respondents and the comparison group, where most differences were < 5%. The three items with the biggest differences in participation between OU and the Comparison Group were: 1) *Performing community service or volunteer activities* (OU = 48%; Comparison Group = 40%), 2) *Being Involved In student organizations* (OU = 66%; Comparison Group = 73%), and 3) *Academic experiences with an International/global focus* (OU = 12%; Comparison Group = 17%).

Figure 5

Community-Based Learning Experiences - OU vs. Comparison Group



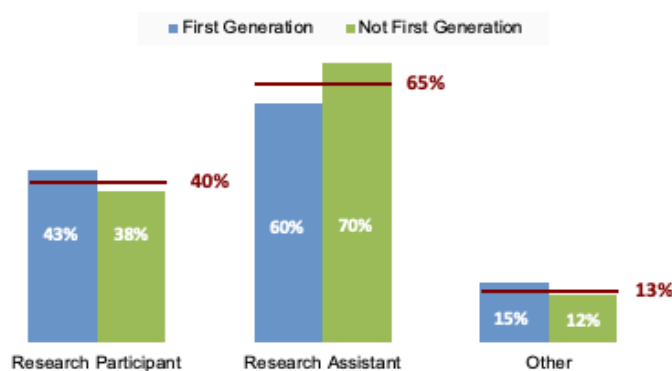
Research Experience – Types: The top three types of scholarship, research, and creative activities completed by respondents were: 1) research project/paper as part of your coursework (74%), 2) a creative project as part of your coursework (67%), and 3) at least one research methods class (42%). Alternatively, the three lowest scholarship, research, and creative activities completed by respondents were: 1) assisting faculty with their creative project (11%), 2) at least one small research-oriented seminar with faculty (17%), and 3) assisting faculty in conducting research (17%).

Research Experience – Roles: Of those that indicated they are assisting/have assisted faculty with research (n = 967), 66% participated as a research assistant and 39% as a research participant. NFG students were more likely to serve as a research assistant (70%) compared to FG students (60%); whereas FG students were slightly more likely to serve as a research participant (43%) than NFG students (38%) – see Figure 6.

Figure 6

“You Indicated That You Have Assisted Faculty w/ Research. Which of the Following Best Describes the Nature of That Assistance?”

Comparison of First-Generation and Non-First-Generation Students

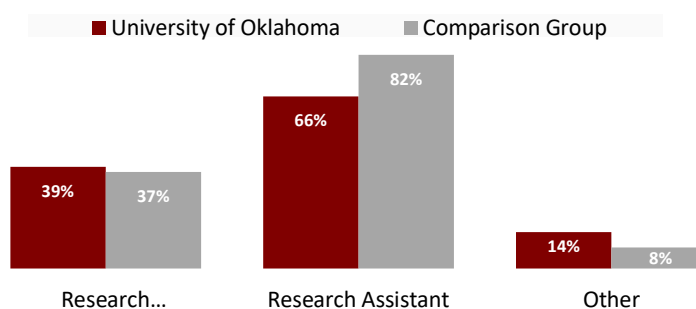


Note: Values in **crimson** denote the average score for the overall sample.

Research Experiences, Types & Roles - OU vs. Comparison Group: The observed frequencies in the types of research experiences between OU and the Comparison Group were similar across most Items (i.e., 4% or less). The only discrepancy more than 5% was observed for frequency of doing a *research project/paper as part of your coursework* (OU = 74%; Comparison Group = 67%).

Participants that indicated they *are assisting/have assisted faculty with research*, the number of those who served as a *research participant* were marginally higher for OU (39%) than the Comparison Group = (37%). The biggest difference was found for serving as a research assistant, where OU had lower participation in this area (66%) compared to the Comparison Group (82%). See Figure 7.

Figure 7
Research Experiences, Types & Roles - OU vs. Comparison Group



Campus Climate

Climate for Diversity: Students were asked to what extent they agreed that they are respected at the university in light of various demographics. Most respondents agree with several statements about being respected at the university according to their race/ethnicity (89%), socioeconomic status (85%), gender (90%), religious beliefs (88%), political beliefs (80%), sexual orientation (91%), immigration background (85%), and those with a disability condition (81%). However, in-depth review of data for some of these variables reveals that historically underrepresented students reported feeling less respected than majority groups at OU. Below are examples.

- 95% of White respondents chose the “somewhat-strongly agree” in response to the item about *students of their race/ethnicity being respected* at OU, compared to 78% of Hispanic respondents, 83% of Asian respondents, 59% of African American respondents, and 80% of international respondents.
- 94% of male respondents chose “somewhat-strongly agree” to the statement *“students of my gender are respected at this university”* compared to 89% of female respondents and 58% of non-binary gender-identity respondents.

Climate for Diversity - OU vs. Comparison Group: Most of the observed responses in this section were similar between OU and the Comparison Group, with nearly all differences being 4% or less. The biggest observed difference pertained to agreement with the statement *students of my socio-economic status are respected at this university* (OU = 85%; Comparison Group = 90%).

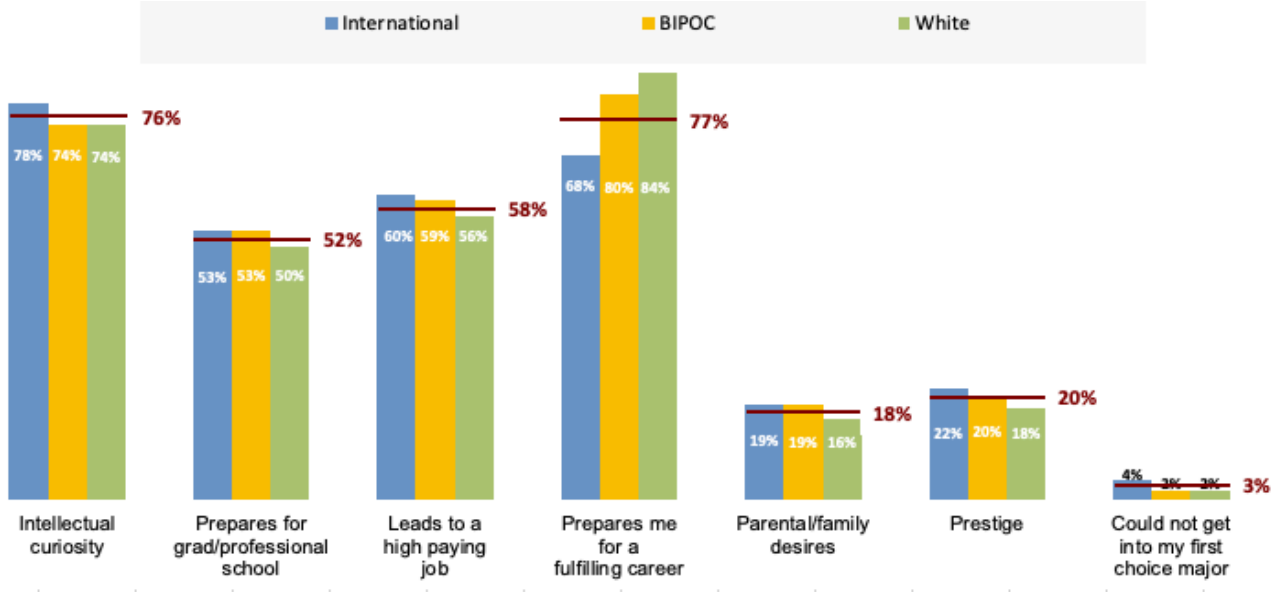
Overall Climate: Ninety percent of respondents agree that OU Norman is a welcoming campus; 84% agree they feel comfortable with the climate for diversity and inclusiveness at OU; 85% agree that they feel comfortable with the climate for diversity and inclusion in their major and 87% agree that they feel comfortable with the climate for diversity and inclusion in their classes. Despite these results, further review of data for some of these variables reveals differences among various groups. For example, 87% of respondents who identify as Straight agree that they feel comfortable with the climate for diversity and inclusiveness at OU compared to (74%) of respondents who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Overall Climate - OU vs. Comparison Group: This area yielded no observable differences larger than 1% across all Items. That is, OU and the Comparison Group had nearly identical levels of agreement with statements concerning the overall climate at their Institution.

Major Evaluation

Determination of the Major: When asked which factors were important in their deciding on their major, respondents’ top three selected factors regarding major declaration were: 1) *prepares me for a fulfilling career* (82%), 2) *intellectual curiosity* (74%), and 3) *leads to a high paying job* (57%). A closer look at the data revealed that international students considered intellectual curiosity to be the top factor in determining a major (78%) compared to BIPOC or White students (both 74%). Additionally, International students did not consider “*prepares me for a fulfilling career*” to be as important of a factor (68%) compared to White (84%) or BIPOC (80%) students) – See Figure 8.

Figure 8
 “Which of the following factors very important to you in deciding on your major?”
 Comparison of Racial/Ethnic Groups (3 Categories)



Note: Values in crimson denote the average score for the overall sample.

Determination of the Major - OU vs. Comparison Group: OU and the Comparison Group had similar levels of selecting the factors most Important to them in deciding their major. All differences between both groups across all Items were 4% or less.

Satisfaction with Academic Experiences – Quality of Instruction: Eighty-eight percent (88%) of respondents are satisfied with the *quality of faculty instruction*; 84% are satisfied with the *quality of instruction by teaching assistants/graduate student instructors*. No differences above 5% between racial/ethnic respondent groups, FG and NFG students, or student classification (i.e., year in school) were observed.

Satisfaction with Academic Experiences – Quality of Instruction, OU vs. Comparison Group: The Comparison Group demonstrated marginally higher ratings of satisfaction with quality of faculty Instruction (OU = 88%; Comparison Group = 90%) and quality of Instruction by teaching assistants/graduate student Instructors (OU = 84%; Comparison Group = 87%).

Satisfaction with Academic Experiences – Academic Advising: While data shows that, on average, 82% of the respondents were satisfied with their *access to academic advising*, a close review of the data indicates that first year students had the higher percentage of satisfaction with access to academic advising (84%) compared to seniors who reported the lowest percentage of access (81%). Seventy-eight percent of respondents reported satisfaction with the quality of academic advising. The first-year students, sophomores and juniors tied (79%) regarding their satisfaction with the quality of academic advising compared to seniors who reported two percentage points lower (77%).

Satisfaction with Academic Experiences – Academic Advising, OU vs. Comparison Group: Observations were similar between OU and the Comparison Group levels, with 78% of OU students being satisfied with the quality of academic advising compared to 77% In the Comparison Group. Further, satisfaction levels for access to academic advising were equal between the two groups at 82%.

Skills Development

Respondents indicated that their levels of proficiency for all eight given skillsets have increased since they started at OU: (1) analytical and critical thinking skills (72% to 95%), (2) ability to be clear and effective when writing (71% to 92%), (3) ability to read and comprehend academic material (68% to 92%), (4) quantitative skills (61% to 75%), (5) understanding your field of study/major (47% to 91%), (6) oral communication skills (61% to 87%), (7) leadership skills (64% to 85%), and (8) library and online information research skills (54% to 86%).

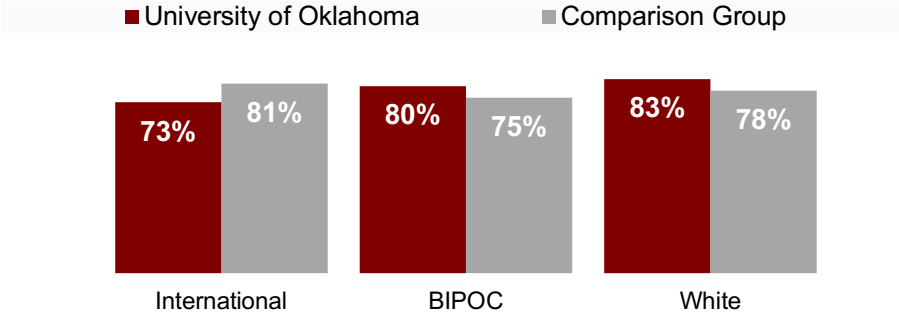
OU vs. Comparison Group: Levels of Increased proficiency across all factors were nearly identical for OU and the Comparison Group. That is, all rated levels of proficiency now compared to when the students started did not differ with more than 3% between OU and the Comparison Group.

Health & Wellness

Personal Safety: Eighty-two percent (82%) of OU respondents agreed with the statement *Overall, I feel safe from crime and violence on campus*. A closer look at the racial/ethnic breakdown of this data indicated that White students feel safer (83%) than BIPOC (80%) and International (73%) students. In addition, while Figure 9 below shows higher levels of agreement (more than 5% points) with the above

statement for OU’s White and BIPOC respondents compared to similar groups in the comparison group, data shows much lower levels of agreement (by 8% points) with the same statement among OU’s respondents who identified as international students in comparison to similar population in the Comparison Group.

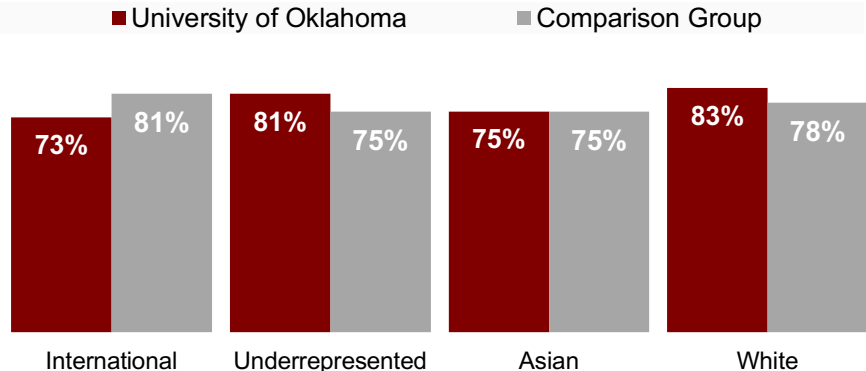
Figure 9
“Overall, I feel safe from crime and violence on campus”
% Somewhat Agree, Agree, or Strongly Agree
 Comparison of Racial/Ethnic Groups (3 Categories) between OU and the Comparison Group



Further, in light of the increase in hate crimes against the Asian community in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is worth noting that 75% of Asian students (traditionally grouped into either BIPOC or International students) agreed that they felt safe from crime and violence on campus. The same proportion of Asian students is reflected in the Comparison Group. See Figure 10.

While findings in Figure 10 also show higher levels of agreement with the above statement among OU’s White and other Underrepresented populations compared to similar populations in the Comparison Group, data shows lower levels of agreement among OU’s International Students in comparison to international students in the Comparison Group.

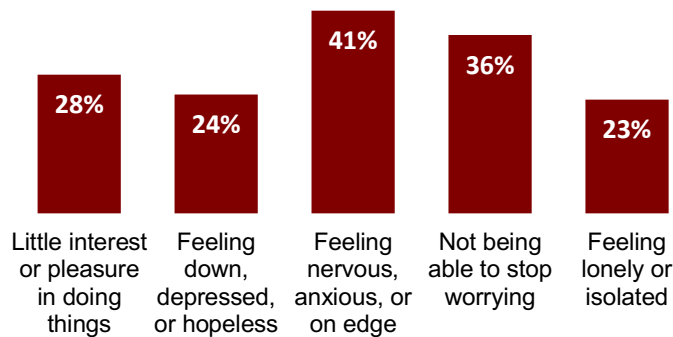
Figure 10
“Overall, I feel safe from crime and violence on campus”
% Somewhat Agree, Agree, or Strongly Agree
 Comparison of Racial/Ethnic Groups (4 Categories) between OU and the Comparison Group



Anxiety, Depression, & Isolation: Students were asked to report how often, over a period of two weeks prior to the survey, they were bothered with various aspects of their mental health (e.g., feeling down, having little interest in doing things). They were asked to specify whether the feelings they reported prevailed for more than half the days or nearly every day during the fortnight. Findings show that 28% reported having little interest or pleasure in doing things; 24% felt down, depressed, or hopeless; 41% felt nervous anxious, or on edge; 36% were unable to stop worrying; 23% felt lonely or isolated – see Figure 11.

Figure 11

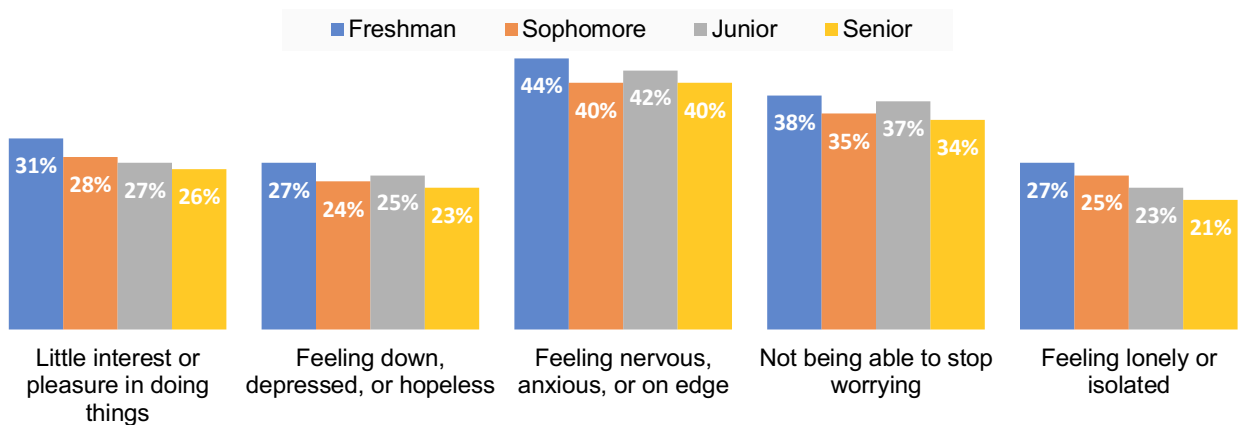
“Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?”
All Participants



A closer look at the data show that First-Year (freshman) students report more indicators of anxiety and depression than sophomores, juniors, and seniors across all five of these well-being items – see Figure 12.

Figure 12

“Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?”
Comparison of Students by Year in School

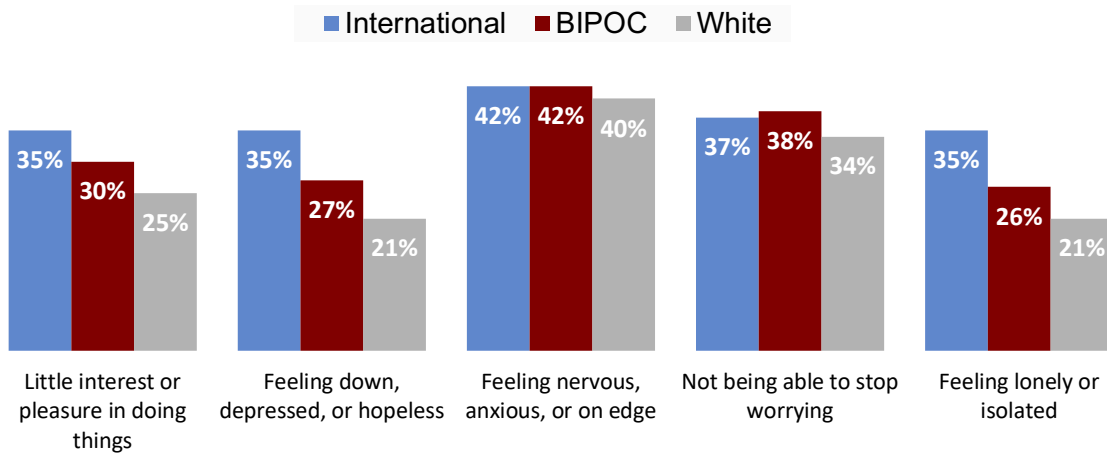


Finally, International and BIPOC students had higher observed percentages across all five of these mental health problem indicators than White students – see Figure 13.

Figure 13

“Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?
...more than half the days or nearly everyday

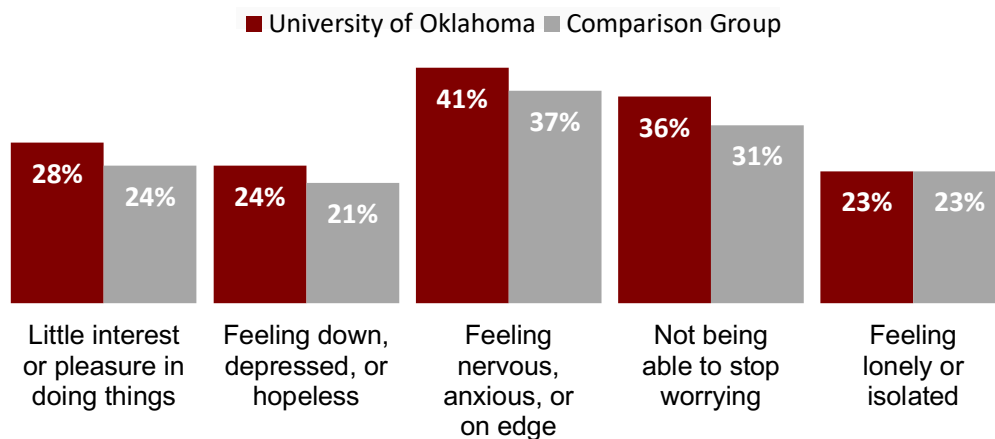
Comparison of Racial/Ethnic Groups (3 Categories)



Anxiety, Depression, & Isolation - OU vs. Comparison Group: As shown in Figure 14 below, OU had slightly higher frequencies of selecting more than half the day or nearly every day across four out of five mental wellbeing indicators: 1) Little Interest or pleasure In doing things (OU = 28%; Comparison Group = 24%), Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless (OU = 24%; Comparison Group = 21%), 3) Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge (OU = 41%; Comparison Group = 37%, and 4) Not being able to stop worrying (OU = 36%; Comparison Group = 31%). The item of Feeling lonely or Isolated had identical scores between OU and the Comparison Group (23%).

Figure 14

“Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?”
 All Participants – OU vs. Comparison Group



Plans & Aspirations

Post Completion Plans: Over a third (36%) of respondents plan to enroll in graduate or professional school upon graduation; 44% plan to work full-time; 1%-3% are planning to pursue a variety of other areas post-graduation (e.g., serving in the armed forces, taking a year off, start own company/organization, paid/unpaid internships). Although it is not a large difference, more sophomores plan to enroll in graduate or professional school upon graduation (41%), than freshman (35%), juniors (36%), or seniors (33%).

Post Completion Plans - OU vs. Comparison Group: All Indicators of aspirations post-degree were Identical or nearly Identical (i.e., < 2%) between OU and the Comparison Group. That is, there were no differences between these two groups of respondents and their observed Indicators of future educational or career plans.

Highest Degree Expected: When asked about the highest academic degree/credential they eventually plan to earn, nearly one-third (31%) of respondents plan to earn a bachelor's degree; 15% plan to earn a master's degree; 10% plan to earn a PhD or EdD; 7% plan to earn an MD; 5% plan to earn a law degree (LLB or JD); 3% plan to earn a medical doctorate other than MD (DO, DDS, DVM, etc.).

Highest Degree Expected - OU vs. Comparison Group: Thirty-one percent (31%) of OU respondents indicated that the bachelor's degree is the highest academic degree/credential they eventually plan to earn, compared to 23% of the Comparison Group. All other degree/credential plans (e.g., Master's, doctorates) were Identical or nearly identical between OU and the Comparison Group.

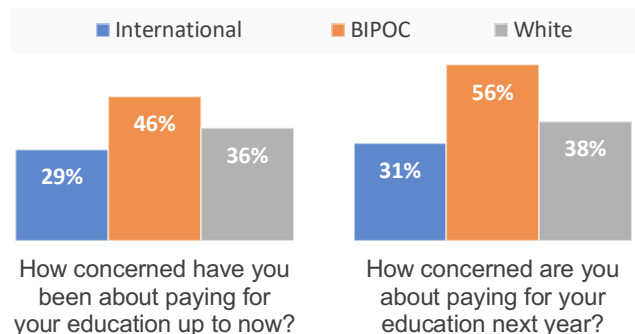
Cost of Attendance

Financial Concerns – Experienced and Anticipated: Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents indicated they have experienced being concerned or very concerned about paying for their undergraduate education. More BIPOC students (46%) have experienced these financial concerns compared to White (36%) or International (29%) students (See Figure 15). When it comes to anticipating financial concerns, 42% of respondents said they are concerned or very concerned about paying for their undergraduate education next year. Half of the BIPOC respondents (50%) anticipate these concerns about paying for their education next year compared to White (38%) and International (31%) respondents.

Figure 15

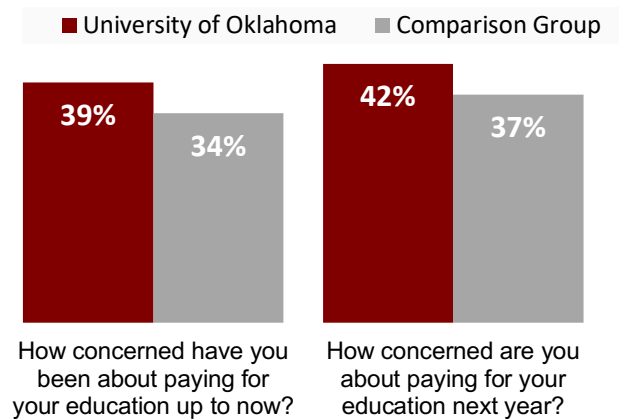
“How concerned have you been about paying for your education up to now/next year?”

Comparison of Racial/Ethnic Groups (3 Categories)



Financial Concerns - OU vs. Comparison Group: OU students had higher reports of concern about paying for their education up until now (39%) and next year (42%) than the Comparison Group (34%, 37%, respectively).

Figure 16
Financial Concerns - OU vs. Comparison Group



Conclusion

This report centered on the key findings from the spring 2022 administration of the SERU undergraduate survey as represented within the Tableau dashboards. The primary intent was to illustrate not only the overall representation of the responses for OU students as well as students in the Comparison Group, but also to provide insights regarding how students belonging to different demographic groups responded in relation to others. Specifically, the comparisons made between racial/ethnic categories, year in school, and first-generation and non-first-generation students revealed several observable differences across multiple institutional factors captured by the SERU survey. These factors touch on a variety of areas related to campus perceptions and involvement (e.g., satisfaction, academic/research engagement, major determination), in addition to their individual well-being as a student (e.g., anxiety, depression, personal safety).

The overall results, both OU's and comparison between OU's findings and results from the participating institutions, were quite favorable, with a majority of the respondents being either satisfied or in agreement with the provided items. However, a more focused view within the respondents revealed that there are certain groups that are a bit more challenged than others when it comes to their educational experience. Although these summarized findings are just a small selection of the wealth of knowledge afforded by SERU, they helped reveal potential areas for improvement that would be critical to discuss and explore with the intent of making data-driven decisions on how to enhance the overall student success and experience at OU.