

Fall 2021

A Profile of Sophomore Inquiry Students Fall 2021

Portland State University. University Studies Program

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A Profile of Sophomore Inquiry Students Fall 2021

Assessment & Research Report
University Studies Program, Portland State University
Rowanna Carpenter* & Osman G. Tanrikulu

In order to better understand the students who enroll in Sophomore Inquiry (SINQ) courses and begin to identify areas where they may need support, University Studies (UNST) began collecting and compiling data on these students. This report presents a profile of SINQ students from Fall 2021. It presents an overview of all students enrolled in SINQ during Fall 2021 and then summarizes information from the Prior Learning Survey. It is organized around three areas that contribute to student success: academic preparation and concern; financial and physical wellbeing; and connectedness to campus.

Data Sources:

PSU Data Warehouse: PSU Office of Institutional Research and Planning 4th week student data file, includes demographic and enrollment data for all Fall 2021 SINQ students.

Prior Learning Survey: Survey administered during weeks 1 and 2 of Fall term. 773 students responded to the survey (41.2% response rate).

OVERALL PROFILE (For all SINQ students, N=1877)

Academic Profile

New students: 33.7% of SINQ students were new to PSU during Summer and Fall 2019. The rest began at PSU prior to Summer 2021.

Full-time status: 91.2% of SINQ students were enrolled at PSU as full-time students.

Class level: Only 54.8% of SINQ students were sophomores. 29.6% were freshmen, 11.8% were juniors and 3.7% were seniors.

Transfer: 37.4% of SINQ students transferred to PSU from another institution.

Major: 7.1% of SINQ students have not decided on a major yet. 92.9% have decided on a major. Psychology, Business Marketing, Biology, Computer Science, Pre-Clinical Public Health Studies, Business Management & Leadership, and Criminology & Criminal Justice were the most sought-after degrees by sophomore inquiry students.

Demographic Profile

Gender: 58.9% of SINQ students were female, 41.0% were male

Ethnicity: 0.6% were Native American, 11.3% were Asian, 5.0% were Black, 24.1% were Hispanic/Latino, 3.9% were International Students, 9.1% report multiple ethnicities, 0.7% were Pacific Islander, 42.8% were White.

Age: 61.1% of SINQ students were 20 years or younger, 27.9% were between 21 and 25, and 11.0% were older than 25.

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PRIOR LEARNING SURVEY RESPONSES (N=773)

ACADEMIC PROFILE

Academic Experience

UNST Courses: Some SINQ students had completed other parts of the University Studies program:

FRINQ	Senior Inquiry	SINQ	Junior/Upper Division Cluster	Capstone
65.5%	8.0%	21.5%	5.0%	1.4%

Writing Capability:

- Students were asked to rate themselves honestly at each of the following (1= Need much improvement, 2= Need some improvement, 3= Average, 4= Strong, 5=Very strong).

Activity	Mean	% Strong & Very Strong
Generating a thesis for a writing assignment	3.12	35.3
Using a writing process that involved revising one or more drafts	3.24	40.3
Writing a paper using proper citation of sources	3.26	42.3
Integrating ideas or information from multiple sources	3.53	55.4
Finding appropriate information for a research assignment	3.48	49.1
Overall rating of academic writing ability	3.32	42.3

Academic Plans

PSU Plans: 94.4% of SINQ students planned to earn a bachelor's degree from PSU.

Degree Plans: For 48.6% a bachelor's degree was the highest degree they intend to earn.

Certainty of Major: 77.5% of SINQ students are sure or very sure about their chosen major.

Immediate Education Plans: 97.5% of SINQ students felt that they have immediate educational plans, and 2.5% were unsure at the time of the survey.

FINANCIAL PROFILE

Work Hours: 44.8% of students planned on working 1-20 hours a week, 36.9% planned to work more than 20 hours per week this academic year, and 18.3% planned not to work at all. 9.4% of students will work at least some of their hours on campus.

Financial Aid: 80.1% were receiving some form of financial aid to help with college expenses.

Financial Concern: 34.7% listed financial issues as their top concern as they start the year. 17.1% expressed a major concern about finances; they are worried they may not have enough money to finish school.

Students expressed agreement with the following questions about their finances

Question	% Somewhat Agree or Strongly Agree
I feel prepared financially to meet an emergency (car repairs, medical bills, etc.)	36.2

Students were asked about their housing and food insecurity over the last 12 months

Question	% Yes
In the past 12 months, have you worried about whether you would run out of food before you had money to buy more?	18.7
In the past 12 months, have you worried about whether you would be able to pay your rent or mortgage, or have a place to stay?	28.5

CONNECTEDNESS

Housing: 21.0% lived on campus.

Students were asked how often they have done the following in their most recent year in college

Question	% Sometimes or Often
Met with an academic advisor	62.8
Met with a professor during office hours	40.4
Discussed career plans or goals with a professor	31.4

STUDENT PROFILE

Prior Activity: During the last school year, 49.2% of SING students were attending PSU, 15.9% were working, 15.5% were attending a community college, and 8.0% were attending a high school.

First Generation Status: For 49.2% of students, neither parent had completed a bachelor's degree.

Home Language: 37.7% reported speaking a language other than English at home.

Care for Dependents: 15.2% had at least part-time responsibility for dependents.

Balancing School and Home Life: 54.2% reported they sometimes have a hard time balancing family and school responsibilities, 11.6% often find it hard to balance family and school responsibilities, 34.2% do not have this issue at all.