

# ASPIRE ANNUAL REPORT & EVALUATION

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ASPIRE  
2018 - 2019





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Executive Summary is a comprehensive summary of the annual report and an assessment of the ASPIRE program from October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019. Utilizing multiple methods, this report reviews and analyzes the data and assessments from the Asian American Pacific Islander Retention & Education (ASPIRE) program at San Francisco State University (SFSU). The ASPIRE program was created to help address the unmet needs of high-need AA&PI students and increase their Fall to Fall retention and graduation rates.

To date, ASPIRE has met and exceeded all the desired outcomes described in the grant including the following:

- 1,102 students participated in learning communities and linked courses
- 14 faculty participated in the faculty learning community
- 16 peer mentors participated as peer mentors
- 1,802 students participated in peer led study circles
- 1,421 students participated in the non-cognitive workshops and events
- 10,837 AA&PI students were sent emails for continual broad dissemination of information
- 77 students were screened and 64 students were recommended for learning disabilities testing

**Citation: Desai, R., Loi-On, L., Daus-Magbual, A., and Yoo, G. (January 2020). 2018-2019 ASPIRE Annual Report & Evaluation. Retrieved from: <https://aapi.sfsu.edu/research-presentations>**

Major milestones have included the institutionalization of various positions including the hiring of Levalasi Loi-On, Student Success Coordinator in Asian American and Pacific Islander Student Services, Ponipate Rokolekutu, Assistant Professor in Critical Pacific Islands and Oceania Studies and continual institutionalization of the Director and Educational Psychologist positions in Years 4 and 5. There is evidence of an ASPIRE effect when it comes to students' connection to the SFSU campus and the local community. Some key findings from the assessment include the following:

- Compared to ASPIRE students and those that did not participate in ASPIRE activity, ASPIRE students were more likely to know about on-campus resources to support academic and/or personal issues; feel comfortable seeking out on-campus resources; feel a sense of community at SFSU; and feel a sense of belonging at SFSU
- ASPIRE faculty have responded that they have an increased capacity to serve high-need AA&PI students and students with disabilities.
- Students described being better able to connect with peer mentors, and faculty found that having peer mentors in the class helped them connect better to students.

This 2018-2019 evaluation report provides a formative and summative assessment of all activities. As they enter year 4, the ASPIRE team needs to consider a tracking system of all students as this will provide a summative assessment of ASPIRE, particularly to understand the impact of ASPIRE programs and services on retention and graduation rates. Overall, ASPIRE is innovative and is on track to supporting high need AA&PI students.



# SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1899 as a teachers college, San Francisco State University (SFSU) remains united as a community of learners with passion for academic excellence, intellectual discovery, creative and critical inquiry, and educational equity. The University maintains a proud history of commitment to social justice and opposition to oppression and marginalization, which lives on through the work, scholarship and community engagement of its students, faculty, staff and alumni. Located in San Francisco, SFSU is part of the 23-campus California State University (CSU) system and is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In addition to WASC accreditation, SFSU also maintains specialized accreditation for 28 programs. The University awards bachelor's degrees in 126 areas, master's degrees in 103, and a doctorate in educational leadership.

San Francisco State University is unique in that it is the birthplace of Ethnic Studies and has been home to the only College of Ethnic Studies in the nation since 1969. Ethnic Studies plays a critical role in SFSU's history and legacy of promoting social justice and equity. The university serves approximately 30,000 students annually.

Within the College of Ethnic Studies, the Asian American Studies (AAS) department for over 50 years has furthered the understanding of the histories and cultures of Asian Americans (AA) and the various identities and experiences of AA communities. Most recently, Pacific Studies courses have been offered since 2017 and the development of a Critical Pacific Islands & Oceania Studies minor in 2019.

## AA&PI Context of SFSU

SFSU is an important institution in the region and a key contributor to the education of California's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AA&PI) population, as well as students who are high-need, low-income and

underrepresented in higher education. The Asian American & Pacific Islander Retention and Education (ASPIRE) program has been developed to address the needs of over 1700 high-need students that identify as or experience:

- Low-income
- First generation college student
- Pacific Islander (PI)
- Filipina/o/x
- Cambodian
- Laotian
- Vietnamese
- Barriers to high-need AANAPI and low income student success: Academic barriers (writing / composition), non-cognitive skills, learning disabilities, and financial pressures





# WHAT IS ASPIRE?

The **Asian American and Pacific Islander Retention and Education (ASPIRE)** program aims to improve and expand SFSU's capacity to serve high-need AANAPI and low-income degree-seeking undergraduate students, improve the learning environment, and strengthen academic outcomes by increasing student engagement and enhancing cognitive and non-cognitive skills.

This is done through a partnership between Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM) and the College of Ethnic Studies (COES). The three goals for this program is to provide the following 1) broad dissemination of information along with targeted support to high need AA&PI's with a particular focus on AA&PI's with learning differences; 2) create, build and sustain an AA&PI Student Learning Communities and 3) Faculty Learning Communities. This grant has opened up an opportunity to institutionalize long term services for Asian American and Pacific Islander Students at SFSU through the development of the first ever Asian American and Pacific Islander Student Services department housed in SAEM Division of Equity and Community Inclusion (DECI) and the hiring of an inaugural Director for the department. The partnership also extended to colleagues in SAEM Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) with the hiring of an ASPIRE Educational Psychologist to address the needs for ASPIRE students with learning differences.

The ASPIRE Advisory Board was created to support the development of the program and to make sure they are on track with our outcomes. The ASPIRE Advisory Board consists of a PI and CO-PI, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Director of AA&PI Student Services, Director of Counseling and Psychological Services, Assistant Vice President of Division of Equity and Community Inclusion, Professors in Asian American Studies and Race and Resistance Studies.

# ASPIRE FRAMEWORKS

ASPIRE has developed a framework that is rooted in the pillars of Ethnic Studies to provide Access, Relevance and Community. ASPIRE centers the stories and experiences of AA&PI students, faculty and staff to respond to the issues that they face on a regular basis.

ASPIRE is organized around annual themes that reflect the framework of the P's: **Purpose, Pathways, Pipeline, Praxis, and Presentation.**

In addition to these themes, they operate based off of culturally-relevant and community-responsive practices including:



- **Valuing Cultural Knowledge:** Teach ethnic studies that put students, their histories, and their current stories at the center of the curriculum.
- **Student Voice:** Include students in the development of curriculum and programming.
- **Authentic Relationships:** Develop caring and long-lasting relationships between students, teachers, staff, administrators, families, and communities.
- **Community Involvement:** Collaborate with school staff, faculty, and administrators, along with families and community organizations to ensure the well-being of students through services, mentoring, and advising.

## ASPIRE FOCUSES ON THREE QUESTIONS POSED BY DR. DAWN BOHULANO MABALON:

- WHO AM I?
- WHAT IS THE STORY OF MY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY?
- WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE A POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE WORLD?

# METHODOLOGY

This report is an annual report for 2018-2019 that describes our programs and numbers reached. In addition, this report also serves as an evaluation of our services and programs. As part of the annual report, the ASPIRE team has been conducting evaluations, including annual surveys of AA&PI students, pre-surveys and post-surveys to students involved in ASPIRE learning communities and linked courses, evaluations of events and workshops, monthly updates from peer mentors, and annual surveys of faculty involved in faculty learning community.

To ensure a comprehensive assessment of the ASPIRE program, this current evaluation report answers the following questions:

- To what extent has ASPIRE increased service and support to high-need AA&PI students and those with learning disabilities?
- To what extent has ASPIRE succeeded in improving the learning environment and increasing engagement of target students?
- To what extent has ASPIRE increased targeted student outcomes?
- To what extent do gaps exist in the features of the ASPIRE program? In what ways are students' needs not served?
- What resources and/or steps are necessary to fill the gaps and meet students' needs?

The ASPIRE program was evaluated using multiple methods. ASPIRE has been conducting evaluations, including annual surveys of AA&PI students, pre-surveys and post-surveys to students involved in ASPIRE learning communities and linked courses, evaluations of events and workshops, monthly updates from peer mentors, and annual surveys of faculty involved in faculty learning community. Per the site visit of Pearson Owens from the Department of Education in Spring 2019 (Owens, 2019), Owens' final recommendation was to hire an external evaluator to collect qualitative and quantitative data and to provide assessments of the project.

In Summer 2019, an evaluator, Dr. Maharaj Desai, was hired to begin to review all survey evaluations listed above. Dr. Desai was selected as he has experience with the development and evaluation of educational programs directed at Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. He also has been trained in both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Additionally, focus groups with faculty and peer mentors were also held during the Fall 2019 semester.

**Table 1. ASPIRE Participation, 2018-2019**

Participation in ASPIRE Programs and Services	n
Students receiving screening and/or testing	77
Students participating in workshops	1,421
Peer Mentor project	16
Students participating in mentor-led study circles	1,802
Mass email distribution	10,837
Faculty participation in Learning Communities	14

**Table 2. ASPIRE Assessments and Evaluations, 2018-2019**

Evaluation Method	n	Timeline
<p><b>ALL AA&amp;PI STUDENTS</b></p> <p>2019-2020 SFSU All AAPI Student Online Survey</p>	1491	September 2019
<p><b>ASPIRE LEARNING COMMUNITY STUDENTS</b></p> <p>Spring 2019 ASPIRE Learning Community Pre-Survey</p> <p>Spring 2019 ASPIRE Learning Community Post-Survey</p> <p>Fall 2019 ASPIRE Learning Community Pre-Survey</p> <p>Fall 2019 ASPIRE Learning Community Focus Groups</p> <p>Fall 2019 ASPIRE Learning Community Post-Survey</p>	<p>30</p> <p>125</p> <p>260</p> <p>224</p> <p>105</p>	<p>January 2019</p> <p>May 2019</p> <p>September 2019</p> <p>October 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>
<p><b>ASPIRE PEER MENTORS</b></p> <p>Fall 2018 ASPIRE Peer Mentor Online Survey</p> <p>Spring 2019 ASPIRE Peer Mentor Online Survey</p> <p>Fall 2019 ASPIRE Peer Mentor Focus Group</p>	<p>39</p> <p>30</p> <p>260</p>	<p>December 2018</p> <p>May 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>
<p><b>ASPIRE FACULTY</b></p> <p>Fall 2018 ASPIRE Faculty Online Survey</p> <p>Spring 2019 ASPIRE Faculty Online Survey</p> <p>Fall 2019 ASPIRE Faculty Focus Group</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6</p> <p>8</p>	<p>December 2018</p> <p>May 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>

# KEY FINDINGS

The findings of this annual evaluation report is divided by sections including by the three comprehensive and complementary activities:

- Broad dissemination of information and targeted support to high-need AA&PIs
- Student learning communities with culturally-relevant and community-responsive practices, linked courses and peer mentors
- Faculty development and faculty learning communities

## BROAD DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND TARGETED SUPPORT TO HIGH-NEED AA&PIs

A key component of ASPIRE as outlined in the AANAPISI grant proposal is the broad dissemination of information to high-needs AA&PI students. The AA&PI Student Services Director sends out mass emails to all AA&PI identifying students (approx 10,550 students) at the beginning of each semester (Spring, Summer, and Fall). In total, the number of AA&PI students who receive emails at the beginning of each summer total about 10,550 students. Additionally, there are weekly emails sent to students enrolled in ASPIRE linked courses from previous semesters starting from Fall 2018. These emails are sent starting the second week through the end of the semester and contain information about important deadlines and various events, resources, and workshops available on campus.

In Spring 2019, weekly emails reached 839 students. In Fall 2019, the weekly emails reached 1,193 students. ASPIRE utilizes MailChimp so that they can see how many students are actually reading these emails and, on average, 41% of recipients engage with the weekly emails. Student learning communities with culturally-relevant and community-responsive practices, linked courses and peer mentors.

### **Annual AA&PI Survey**

Each year beginning in 2017, first-year AA&PI San Francisco State University students were invited via email to complete a survey on their experiences as AA&PI students. Students were notified that their responses would help improve existing programs and services. The students were asked questions about their interactions with faculty, SFSU's social environment, and their sense of belonging at SFSU.



## Background of Respondents

AA&PI Students Frequency of Supportive Campus Interactions, Fall 2019, n=1491

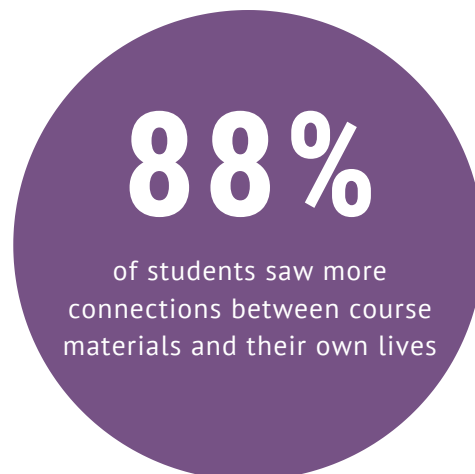
- 68% felt comfortable talking to faculty at the end of class
- 70% felt comfortable asking questions during class
- 57% felt comfortable visiting faculty during office hours
- 74% felt comfortable discussing class-related issues by email

AA&PI Students Perception of ASPIRE's Campus Impact, Fall 2019, n=497

- 71% felt more comfortable talking in class and talking with a faculty outside of class
- 88% saw more connections between course materials and their own life

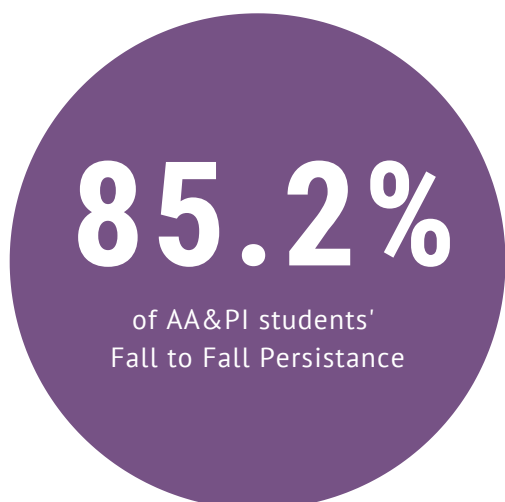
# IMPACTS OF ASPIRE

AA&PI Students Perception of ASPIRE's Campus Impact, Fall 2019, n=497



AA&PI Students Experience of Supportive Campus Environment, Fall 2019, n=1491

- 87% felt that faculty care about their students
- 67% felt that students care about their classmates
- 81% of ASPIRE students have made personal friendships with other students in class, in comparison to 73% of non-ASPIRE students
- 75% of ASPIRE students know about on-campus resources to support academic and/or personal issues, in comparison to 69% of non-ASPIRE students
- 74% of ASPIRE students feel comfortable seeking out on-campus resources, in comparison to 66% of non-ASPIRE students
- 71% of ASPIRE students feel a sense of community at SFSU, in comparison to 65% of non-ASPIRE students
- 78% of ASPIRE students feel a sense of belonging at SFSU, in comparison to 72% of non-ASPIRE students



## FALL TO FALL PERSISTENCE

The percentage of San Francisco State University wide - is 78% compared to 85.2% of AA&PI students on campus.

## **Identification and Support for Students with Disabilities**

The ASPIRE Educational Psychologist serves as part of a cohesive, collegial team dedicated to providing effective advocacy for students at SF State and assisting students with their agency, self-determination and empowerment as they pursue their educational goals.

The Educational Psychologist (EP) has primary responsibility for performing psychoeducational assessments, recommending effective learning strategies, and assisting with coordination of programs to support Asian American and Pacific Islander (AA&PI) and high-need students' academic achievement, social integration, persistence, and graduation.

The Educational Psychologist conducts Learning Disability (LD) testing based on the California State University criteria. When students are referred for testing to determine if they have a learning disability, they are asked to complete an LD questionnaire that involves questions regarding health and development, family background, school history, and learning challenges. In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2019, there were a total of 77 students who completed an LD questionnaire.

After students complete the LD questionnaire, they are then contacted to schedule an initial appointment with the Educational Psychologist (EP). When students present for the initial appointment, students are asked to share more about their educational experience from K-12, their college experiences, and what their learning concerns are. If students present for the first time to Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (and have not been seen by a counselor within the past school year), the EP will also complete an intake process that all students who access CAPS services receive. The EP then shares what the testing process entails and will determine if LD testing is appropriate. After the initial meeting, the EP will schedule testing appointments for the student to begin the testing process. There were a total of 50 students that completed testing entirely. Of those 50 students, 62% were eligible under the California State University Learning Disability criteria. These students were recommended accommodations and to seek services through Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC). 38% of the students who completed testing entirely did not meet the eligibility criteria.

## **Non-Cognitive Workshops and Events**

This project has implemented strategies to cultivate a sense of belonging and social and academic integration on campus. A number of studies on student retention and persistence have noted the importance of a sense of belonging in maintaining year-to-year attrition (Ishler & Upcraft, 2005; Logan, 2017; Olbrecht, 2016). ASPIRE's non-cognitive workshops and events help cultivate that sense of belonging within individual students and in the AA&PI student community more broadly. ASPIRE offers workshops and events on a variety of campus and cater to intersectional AA&PI identities and experiences.

We have had 14 workshops and 10 events between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019.

In Fall 2018 (October 2018-December 2018), the number of students who attended the following included: 154 students at Non-Cognitive Workshops and 367 at Non-Cognitive Events. In Spring 2019 (February 2019-May 2019), the number of students who attended the following included: 92 students at Non-Cognitive Workshops and 568 at Non-Cognitive Events. In Fall 2019 (September 2019), the number of students who attended the following included: 29 students at Non-Cognitive Workshops and 211 at Non-Cognitive Events.

In total between October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019, the number of students who attended the following included: 275 Students at Non-Cognitive Workshops and 1,146 Students at Non-Cognitive Events.

## Table 3. ASPIRE Workshops & Events, 2018-2019

### Fall 2018 Workshops

- Student Services Workshop
- ASPIRE Scholarship Workshop
- Self-Care as Resilience
- ASPIRE Advising
- Pilipinx Radical Imagination Reader

### Fall 2018 Events

- Get the Scoop Mixer
- Pacific Islander Student Mixer
- Remembering Dr. Mabalon

### Spring 2019 Workshops

- Vegan Tofu Soup Making Workshop
- Talanoa Space
- Financial Literacy Workshop
- Time Management Workshop
- ASPIRE Music Session
- Grad School Info Session
- Laughing Yoga Workshop

### Spring 2019 Events

- Spring Open House
- A Conversation with MacArthur Fellows Viet Nguyen & An-My Le
- AA&PI Queer Mixer
- AA&PIs For Ethnic Studies
- SFUSD Ethnic Studies Summit

### Fall 2019 Workshops

- Homesick in SF
- Building a Queer AA&PI Community
- Scholarship Writing

### Fall 2019 Events

- Gatorfest Open House
- ASPIRE Welcome Mixer
- Pacific Islander Welcome Night

Between October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019, ASPIRE had 1,421 participants attend non-cognitive workshops and events. These workshops are in response to feedback that faculty and peer mentors received from students. They partnered with departments and divisions across campus to help address students' needs. The beginning of Fall 2018 featured mixers for Pacific Islander students and students living in the ASPIRE Living Learning communities - a partnership with Residential Life. Throughout Fall 2018, workshop topics included mental health, scholarship opportunities, and campus advising services. ASPIRE also held larger campus wide events including a book talk for the Pilipinx Radical Imagination Reader and a campus and community-wide gathering remembering Dr. Dawn Mabalon. In Spring 2019, these non-cognitive events broadened to include topics such as financial literacy, time management, graduate school applications, supporting queer AA&PI and Southeast Asian students, music, yoga, and vegan eating. The beginning of Fall 2019 featured an AA&PI Welcome Back mixer, a gathering for Pacific Islander students, and a celebration for the 50th Anniversary of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University. In Fall 2019, we also offered workshops on building a queer AA&PI community and homesickness in college.



# STUDENT LEARNING COMMUNITIES WITH CULTURALLY-RELEVANT AND COMMUNITY-RESPONSIVE PRACTICES, LINKED COURSES AND PEER MENTORS

Considerable research has examined the potential of Learning Communities (LCs) for increasing postsecondary students' academic achievement and retention (Johnson, 2001; Russ, 2010). Studies have shown that there are higher rates of academic achievement, as well as significantly higher rates of social and academic integration for LC students compared to students who did not participate in the LCs (Johnson, 2001; Russ, 2010).

Like research that demonstrates the efficacy of learning communities, ASPIRE's learning communities were designed to give students extra support and additional exposure to AA&PI studies. Students in the LCs are part of a cohort, or learning community. The focus is a learning community of students within AA&PI studies that offers co-curricular activities through ASPIRE; one on one meetings with professors, participation in study circles and one on one meetings with ASPIRE peer mentors. All courses in AA&PI studies will fulfill GE graduation requirements for all majors at SFSU. Faculty teaching in AA&PI LCs are regularly trained to focus on needs and supports. Students also have the one-on-one support from the Asian American and Pacific Islander Student Services office.

The AA&PI LC aims to provide students with an empowering learning community through GE courses in AA&PI studies to gain units for graduation.

Since Spring 2017, the ASPIRE LCs have served 1,921 students across 47 courses. Between Fall 2018 and Fall 2019, AA&PI LC served a total of 1,102 students across 26 courses. The focus of all the courses is to build a learning community, introduce campus and community resources that could help students succeed in SFSU, and support each student 1:1 with the needs they have outside of the course.



**Table 4. ASPIRE Learning Community and Linked Courses by General Education**

Semester	Course Title	GE Req Fulfilled
FALL 2018	AAS 101: First Year Experience	A1: Oral Communication
	AAS 210: History of Asians in the U.S	D2: Social Sciences, U.S. History
	AAS 213: Asian Americans & American Ideals & Institutions	D3: Social Sciences
	AAS 218: Asian American Culture	C2: Humanities
	AAS 350: Filipina/os in the United States	UD-D: Social Sciences
	AAS 353: Filipina/o American Identities	UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
	RRS 103: Intro to Pacific Studies	D2: Social Sciences, US History
	RRS 303: Health & Wellness Among Pacific Islanders	UD-B: Physical Life Science
SPRING 2019	AAS 101: First Year Experience	A1: Oral Communication
	AAS 110: Critical Thinking & the Asian American Experience	A3: Critical Thinking
	AAS 210: History of Asians in the U.S.	D2: Social Sciences, United States History
	AAS 211: Contemporary Asian Americans	D1: Social Sciences
	AAS 212: Asian Americans and Mass Media	C1: Arts
	AAS 216: Introduction to Asian American Literature	C2: Literature
	AAS 218: Asian American Culture	C2: Humanities
	AAS 360: Koreans in the United States	UD-D: Social Sciences
	AAS 510: Asian Americans in California	UD-D: Social Sciences
FALL 2019	AAS 101: First Year Experience	A1: Oral Communication
	AAS 106: Asian American Activism	E: Lifelong Learning Develop
	AAS 108: Asian American Artistic Explorations: Creativity, Identity, and Community	E: Lifelong Learning Develop
	AAS 218: Asian American Culture	C2: Humanities
	AAS 323: Chinese American Identities	UD-D: Social Sciences
	AAS 360: Koreans in the United States	UD-D: Social Sciences
	AAS 372: Vietnamese American Literature	UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
	RRS 303: Health & Wellness Among Pacific Islanders	UD-B: Physical Life Science

After finishing the LC, students will have completed 33 units by participating in a learning community, 27 of which will fulfill SFSU generation education requirements. All 33 unit courses can also fulfill a major in AA Studies, allowing students to easily double major if they have an interest in the subject matter.

Over the course of three years, these courses have been part of a curriculum designed to support first-year students and those continuing on with their education. In the first semester, AAS 101: First Year Experience in Asian American Studies is a course that fulfills Area A3: Oral Communication. This course was developed by the ASPIRE Student Service Director, Dr. Arlene Daus-Magbual, and was piloted in the 2018-2019 school year. In 2018-2019, ASPIRE offered an AAS 101: First Year Experience course during Fall 2018, Spring 2019, and Fall 2019, which was held twice a week and taught by Director, Arlene Daus-Magbual. The course had 48 students each during Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 and had 49 students during Fall 2019. The focus of the course was to build a learning community, introduce campus and community resources that could help students succeed at SFSU and support each student 1:1 with needs they have outside of the course. In addition, they offered linked courses in Asian American Studies and Race and Resistance Studies for students to continue in fulfilling their general education with courses that offered curricular peer mentoring, study circles, and support from faculty who had been involved in faculty learning communities.



We served a total of 1,102 students in 26 classes between Fall 2018 and Fall 2019. Students in our ASPIRE LCs were emailed a pre-survey in the first 3 weeks of the semester as well as a post-survey in the last week of the semester by their instructors. Some of the survey questions included:

- How often did you experience a sense of community at SFSU?
- How often did you experience campus services outside of the classroom?
- How often did you experience support for studying?
- How often did you experience support for career planning?
- How often did you experience support for time management?
- How often did you experience support for learning styles/differences?

**Table 5. Pre & Post Surveys of ASPIRE Learning Communities / Linked Courses, Spring 2019 & Fall 2019**

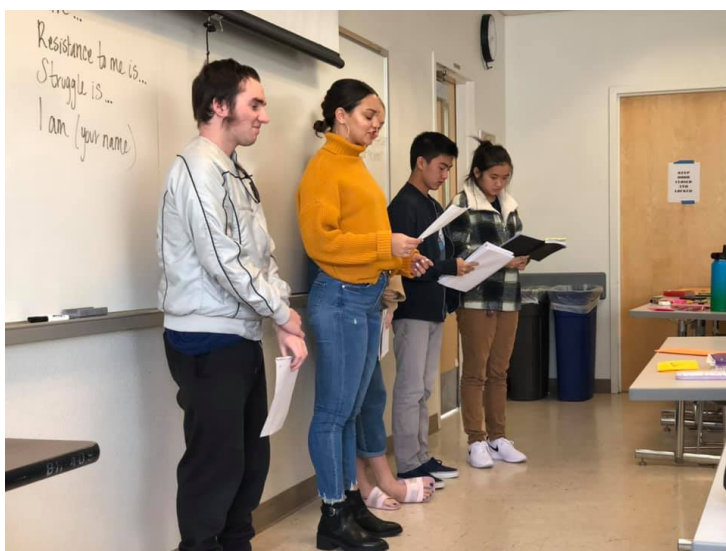
	Prior to ASPIRE learning community/linked courses	Post ASPIRE learning community/linked courses
<b>Spring 2019</b>	<b>n=30</b>	<b>n=125</b>
Sense of Community	97%	98%
Seek Campus	77%	90%
Services Support for Studying	63%	79%
Support for Career planning	63%	89%
Support for Time Management	57%	94%
Support for Learning Differences	63%	92%
<b>Fall 2019</b>	<b>n=260</b>	<b>n=105</b>
Sense of Community	85%	98%
Seek Campus	86%	97%
Services Support for Studying	84%	92%
Support for Career planning	74%	92%
Support for Time Management	72%	86%
Support for Learning Differences	73%	90%

Over the Fall 2019 semester Levalasi Loi-On and I conducted focus groups with current ASPIRE students, peer mentors, and members of the faculty learning community. We conducted focus groups with 224 of the 235 students enrolled in ASPIRE linked courses during the Fall 2019 semester. Focus groups were conducted in the nine ASPIRE classes over a 2 week period in October and responses were analyzed and coded for themes. After analyzing the post surveys from Fall 2018, Spring 2019, and Fall 2019 in addition to results from these focus groups with ASPIRE linked courses from Fall 2019, we found the following themes:

- *Engaging Pedagogy*
- *Fostering Community*
- *Perceptions of Support / Connection to Resources*

## ENGAGING PEDAGOGY

Students overwhelmingly described enjoying their ASPIRE courses more than their other courses because their ASPIRE courses are more engaging and relevant to their lives. Students also described being more willing to participate in class discussion working more collaboratively in their ASPIRE classes than their non-ASPIRE classes. One student even described the ASPIRE linked courses as more engaging than their other non-ASPIRE courses within the Asian American Studies department.



**"I DON'T FEEL STRESSED COMING TO CLASS. I WANT TO COME TO CLASS AND TALK TO MY PEERS, COMMUNITY, LEARN SOMETHING."**

**"WE WORK TOGETHER INSTEAD OF INDIVIDUALLY."**

*"Blew my mind. I never had a class that actually focuses on topics and experiences more than on just individual achievement."*

*"Being able to speak about topics that anger us. No one shuts you down here. We can share our views without fear."*

*"Almost nothing like any of my other classes (structure, criteria, learning outcomes, seating arrangements). Most SFSU classes are lecture heavy, assignments, tests."*

*"This class gives me a sense of identity. I learned about my family. This class allowed me to learn so much about my grandma. I'm thankful for that."*

*"This class contextualized the world now and why things are the way they are. I learned that the things we have now came through struggle."*

*"I feel so much more open and comfortable with talking to my peers"*

*"I felt more involved outside the classroom"*

*"I feel more open and vulnerable about myself. I also feel more outspoken, motivated, and determined to do better in academics and real life".*

*"Learned a lot inside the classroom that I can apply to everyday life."*



## FOSTERING COMMUNITY

Students expressed having a stronger sense of community in their ASPIRE linked courses than in their other classes or even in their majors. They described the way that community-building is infused in the ASPIRE courses which allows them to have genuine dialogue with more peers than they normally do in other courses. Furthermore, they describe the sense of community as positively impacting their educational experiences in the class.

**"I'VE BEEN ABLE TO GROW IN MANY WAYS. ONE BEING THAT I FEEL ACCEPTED IN A COMMUNITY AND HAVING THAT PLACE WHERE I BELONG GIVES ME MORE MOTIVATION AND CONFIDENCE TO PURSUE MY PASSIONS AND EDUCATION."**

*"Class is more like a community. We actually talk to each other. In other classes students are all on their phones, here we are really talking to one another."*

*"Campus should be more like ASPIRE and create a better sense of community where engagement doesn't feel forced. More welcoming & makes students think more."*

*"I have also found a community in ASPIRE which has affected my life greatly because of all the close bonds I have made."*

*"ASPIRE has greatly improved the connections I have on campus. I feel that it has helped me become much more involved in campus activities and I have met many different people through ASPIRE that I have become great friends with."*

*"It provides me a sense of belonging since I was able to see people that looked like me and with that have different opinions on certain topics which was good since I was able to see multiple point of views."*

*"A sense of community. I've been at SFSU for 3 years now, and this is the year I've felt I belonged."*

*"I feel like I learned a lot about connecting with other students especially being a transfer and feeling left out of on campus activities."*

*"I gained most of my friends, I have a heightened sense of agency regarding activism for my ethnic identity and the rest of my identity facets, and more of a sense of belonging to SFSU as a gator."*

*"I received such a loving and welcoming community that I know I can go to whenever. I know more about the events going on campus as well."*

*"I received a sense of community and solidarity among the many different communities around campus. There were always services and things offered to better our life on campus and off campus."*

*"Since I am kind of shy when meeting new people it is hard for me to make new friends. While in ASPIRE I made many new friends that I would have never imagine could have happened."*

*"Helped me to become more open with getting help and reaching out to my mentor and professors."*

*"I think I received a place to feel safe in, even if I'm not in ASPIRE classes next year, I feel like I have a professor that will be there for me if I need to talk about something."*

*"Getting to know people in the class was nice/group work. SFSU is known for being a commuter campus and through taking an ASPIRE course it put a lot of people out there to actively get to know one another which was nice. The social aspect was definitely something different from other courses I've taken."*

*"A deeper connection with professors, peer mentors, and just peers in general."*

*"The aspire linked course has created a community that I can feel a part of even though my ethnicity may be different."*

*"It gave me a sense of community that I wasn't able to find in my previous years of being a student at SFSU."*

## PERCEPTIONS OF SUPPORT / CONNECTION TO RESOURCES

Students asserted that they learned more about support services available on campus through their ASPIRE learning community than in other classes or venues on campus. While support services or access to resources are often underutilized by AA&PI students, ASPIRE students described feeling more confident about knowing what resources are available and actually using them, in addition to study circles being one of the most useful resources for them on campus.

**“HAVING THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE AND THEM ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT THEM MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE SOMEWHERE TO GO AND MAKES US FEEL INVOLVED.”**

*“It helps students navigate school. Because of ASPIRE’s interaction I go to events that I wouldn’t go to and experience different things”*

*“Campus [SFSU] is not good at sharing the info with everyone. Students don’t know about resources available on campus. There are too many flyers on campus”*

*“I was made aware of a lot of on-campus sources! I also got a lot of help with advising for my schedule. This honestly made me less stressed out and I appreciate all of the help. Finally, I was made aware of important issues in the AA&PI community that aren’t really talked about.”*

*“I was able to meet many people who offer services like aid scheduling classes, mental health/counseling help, and career help.”*

*“I remember hearing about CARP services through ASPIRE and actually going there for help. It was a good start on getting help with reading assignment but ultimately I was in charge of getting serious about finishing my readings. By attending CARP services I was really challenge to specify my specific needs and questions surrounding reading assignment.”*

*“Before this class, I honestly did not know about ASPIRE. I’m glad that I have other options for me outside of the normal student services on campus.”*

*“I like that it harbors a safe environment dedicated for student success. Our campus is notorious for being an anti-social commuter school so it was nice to see aspire change my impressions of this school.”*



**“THE BENEFITS I RECEIVED FROM MY PARTICIPATION IN THE ASPIRE LEARNING COMMUNITY WOULD BE THE KNOWLEDGE OF DIFFERENT RESOURCES ON CAMPUS LIKE WHERE TO SEND SOMEONE YOU KNOW THAT NEEDS RESOURCES FOR A LEARNING DISABILITY OR NEEDS RESOURCES AND INFORMATION ABOUT DACA AND INFORMATION ON HOW TO HELP SOMEONE YOU KNOW WHO IS UNDOCUMENTED.”**

*“I found out many resources that are available to me that I had never heard of before.”*

*“It gave me a more positive impression of SFSU. I originally wanted to transfer, but this class changed that.”*

*“This class gave me a better sense of what SFSU stands for. This class actually delivered those promises.”*



## PEER MENTORING

Multiple sources of data illustrate the benefits of peer mentorship in classrooms. According to Rieske and Benjamin (2015), peer mentors in the classroom provide “meaningful peer-to-peer interactions,” increase students’ sense of belonging and connection to the university, help first-year students transition into university life, facilitate student engagement, refer students to campus resources, tutor students, and develop educational programming (Rieske and Benjamin, pp. 69-72). In another study, Morales, Ambrose-Roman, and Perez-Maldonado (2015) report that mentees not only increased interaction with a university program but also increased interaction with university support resources in general (writing centers, university events, meetings with faculty, etc.), which was particularly surprising given the university’s status as a “commuter institution” (p. 131). The peer mentorship program mitigated mentees’ sense of “otherness” and isolation and also “lessened the distinctions between the students’ home worlds and their school worlds” (Morales, et. al., 2015, p. 132). The peer mentorship program thus represented a “vital” transition in students feeling more

engaged with their academic lives (Morales, et. al , 2015, p. 132). In the vein of the studies listed, the ASPIRE linked courses are supported by undergraduate peer mentors who work with faculty. ASPIRE trains and supports 10 peer mentors each year. Peer mentors serve as an intermediary between the faculty and students in the hopes that students who have difficulty approaching a teacher will be more comfortable approaching a peer that has a working relationship with their faculty. These peer mentors met with ASPIRE staff and their assigned faculty partners weekly. They also attended each class session as well as their assigned study circle times. Additionally, some peer mentors had to meet with individual students outside of the assigned study circle times.

Between Fall 2018 and Fall 2019, 16 peer mentors were trained. Peer mentor trainings included discussing strategies for student success, peer support, wellness, academic support, and planning for non-cognitive events. Peer mentors have also participated in professional conferences such as the Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE) in Oakland, CA.

Both students and peer mentors described multiple benefits of having peer mentors in ASPIRE classes. 45-minute focus groups were conducted in all 8 ASPIRE linked courses during the middle of the Fall 2019 semester. Students described feeling more comfortable approaching a peer mentor and described seeing the relationship between the peer mentor and faculty as an indicator of whether they could approach their instructor or not. Overall we found the following themes:

- *Students Are Better Able to Connect with Peer Mentors*
- *Peer Mentors See Themselves Differently*
- *Faculty Being Better Able to Engage with Students*

### ***Students Are Better Able to Connect with Peer Mentors***

Students described having peer mentors in their ASPIRE linked classes as having a positive effect because they found it easier to connect with a peer their age. Students also described seeing peer mentors as more approachable and also that they felt less guilty about "bothering" a peer mentor to get help. They shared that speaking to a peer mentor first made them feel more comfortable approaching their professor. Students also really appreciated the regular reminders and check-ins from their peer mentors that helped them feel like part of a community.

Some of the quotes that students shared regarding peer mentors include:

*"The benefits I gained were having a mentor whom I feel comfortable talking to about my ideas that I was too shy to share in class. As well as someone whom I can turn to once I sign up for minoring in AAS."*

*"Peer mentors provide hands on help outside of the classroom."*

*"Peers who are in my classrooms also see me on campus outside of class, and I think Peer Mentorship helps build a sense of overall community on campus for those who are in the program."*

*"To learn from someone who looks like me. Someone who understands the same struggles as my peers and I when we were growing up."*

*"It's nice to have mentors that are in the class who can understand what students are going through and help keep them on track."*

*"They feel like genuine friends"*

*"I was able to check in with a peer mentor about struggles in class and about the semester."*

*"It's easier to connect with my peer mentor because she is a student. I'm not afraid to approach her."*



***"I WISH EVERY CLASS WOULD HAVE A PEER MENTOR. STUDENTS FEEL INTIMIDATED TO GO TO A PROFESSOR. A PEER MENTOR AS A FIRST CONTACT IS SAFER BECAUSE STUDENTS DON'T WANT TO 'BOTHER' THE PROFESSOR."***

## Peer Mentors See Themselves Differently

Aside from the benefits to the ASPIRE students, the peer mentor program also has direct benefits on the peer mentors themselves. Peer mentors described their experiences in ASPIRE as transformative in that they begin to see and imagine more for themselves. The experience has shifted their perspectives and is also challenging Model Minority stereotypes of AA&PI students as passive and not "leadership material." This is directly aligned with the grant objective that states peer mentors will: receive professional development; develop coaching skills and leadership skills; build authentic relationships; and help to create a strong community for students.

*"Prior to this program, I had a difficult time considering myself a leader. I have learned significant lessons in providing community for others as well as providing for my community."*

*"Being a Peer Mentor has affected me by pushing me to be a better student. I think my role as a Peer Mentor is to both be an example of how a student navigates school while also learning and supporting others. This has made me a better student by figuring out ways I navigate my own experience with the intention of learning skills I can share with others."*

**"BEING ABLE TO INTERACT WITH STUDENTS HAS ALLOWED ME TO WIDEN MY NETWORK, AND HAS HELPED ME REALIZE THE JOY IN WORKING FOR AND WORKING WITH MY COMMUNITY. I HAVE SHIFTED MY PERSPECTIVE ON MY STUDIES, AND FEEL MORE DETERMINED TO SUCCEED, NOT JUST FOR MY OWN GAIN BUT TO HELP OTHERS AS WELL."**

## Faculty Being Better Able to Engage with Students



**"STUDENTS PERCEIVE MY PEER MENTOR AND I AS A TEAM. I FEEL LIKE AS A FACULTY MEMBER I BENEFITTED THAT THEY COULD RELATE TO THE TEAM."**

In addition, to the benefits to ASPIRE students and peer mentors, faculty also described how having peer mentors in their classes helped them better engage with their students. Faculty found that students were seeing the faculty-peer mentor groups as teams and a positive association with a peer mentor equated to a more positive association with the faculty member. Also, students would be encouraged and motivated to engage with faculty by their peer mentors. Additionally, some faculty would attend study circles to do their own work and students mentioned enjoying seeing faculty in that space and watching their informal interactions with the peer mentors and students.

*"Building that connection with the professor is something I found really helpful. Because when you are on the same page as your professor, it makes the community circles and class lively and fun. Everything just clicks better and makes the experience smoother."*

*"Overall, the peer mentor program is great. Not only am I able to support AA&PI students on campus, but I am also able to be supported by folks working in ASPIRE."*



## STUDY CIRCLES

Between October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019, 1,802 students participated in peer led study circles. Study circles are held four days a week from 11AM-4PM. Students in linked courses are required to attend at least one study circle per semester per class. Peer mentors are available during the study circles to provide one-on-one support to students. Study circles cultivate collaboration between students who are able to discuss course readings and prepare for assessments together. Additionally, the study circles are available to all students, which builds community across ASPIRE linked courses and AA&PI-identifying students on campus. The study circles also provide another physical study space for students on campus.

The numbers of students who attended study circles are as follows:

- 662 students in Fall 2018 (Oct 2018-Dec 2018)
- 958 students in Spring 2019 (Feb 2019-May 2019)
- 182 students in Fall 2019 (Sep 2019)

In total, we had 1,802 students participate in study circles between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019.

*"Study circles are a safe space. They try to make the study session feel like home. You don't find that anywhere else."*

*"The core group that consistently comes to the study circle...they are the ones that open up to the instructor the most."*

*"The thing that benefits me the most is a space to study because the library is full most of the time."*

*"I was able to find a community full of like-minded people. Everyone here is very welcoming even if I don't know them. The peer mentors always greet me with a smile whenever I come to the study circles."*

*"I learned of a new place I can go to for studying when the library is too crowded or loud or distracting."*

*"Study circle really helped me get my stuff done even just for an hour."*

*"There were times where I needed a class to study and the ASPIRE tutoring [study circle], was there for me to focus"*

*"Community circles give you a place to go and do work. Not crowded like the library that's too crowded to study."*

**"I THINK THE STUDY CIRCLES ARE A POSITIVE CONSISTENT SPACE THAT CURRENT AND PAST ASPIRE STUDENTS CAN GATHER TO STUDY, LEARN, AND CONNECT WITH OTHER PEOPLE FOR RESOURCES AND A SENSE OF COMMUNITY."**

# FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITIES

A critical strategy within the ASPIRE program involves increasing the capacity of faculty to recognize and appropriately respond to AA&PI students who would benefit from academic and/or non-cognitive support. Bjorklund, Parente & Sathianathan (2004) examined the relationships between faculty teaching practices, classroom climate, and students' perceptions of their gains in communication skills, problem-solving skills, occupational awareness, and academic competence. The study found that increasing faculty interactions and providing constructive feedback improved students' academic and non-cognitive skills. ASPIRE's faculty professional development will help faculty broaden learning to include experiences of underrepresented AA&PI into the curriculum; refocus learning efforts to meet required learning outcomes while also accommodating high-need/AA&PI populations; and increase the academic and career advising ability of faculty to include cognitive and non-cognitive supports.

Since Fall 2018, a total of 14 faculty from the College of Ethnic Studies have participated in the ASPIRE Faculty Learning community. In addition, there are Summer & Winter faculty workshops that are open to the larger Asian American Studies and Race Resistance Studies faculty.

Percentage of ASPIRE Faculty with Increased Knowledge and Capacity in Teaching High Need AA&PIs & Non-Cognitive Supports by Semester: Fall 2018 to Fall 2019, n=24

- 92% of faculty increased their knowledge of research on supporting AA&PI students facing retention and graduation issues
- 100% of faculty increased their knowledge of research on supporting AA&PI students facing learning differences
- 96% of faculty increased their knowledge of research on supporting AA&PI students facing mental health issues
- 92% of faculty increased their knowledge of research on supporting AA&PI students with writing difficulties
- 100% of faculty increased their knowledge of on-campus resources for students facing learning differences, mental health issues, and other non-cognitive challenges
- 96% of faculty increased their knowledge of on-campus resources for students with writing difficulties
- 100% of faculty self-reported increased capacity to serve high-need AA&PI students



**Table 6. Percentage of ASPIRE Faculty with Increased Knowledge and Capacity in Teaching AA&PIs & Non-Cognitive Supports**

	Fall 2018 n=7	Spring 2019 n=9	Fall 2019 n=8	Total Mean n=24
Knowledge of Research on supporting AA&PI students facing retention and graduation issues	86%	100%	88%	92%
Knowledge of Research on supporting AA&PI students facing learning difficulties	100%	100%	100%	100%
Knowledge of Research on supporting AA&PI students facing mental health issues	100%	100%	88%	96%
Knowledge of Research on supporting AA&PI students with writing difficulties	86%	100%	88%	92%
Knowledge of On-Campus Resources for Students facing learning differences	100%	100%	100%	100%
Knowledge of On-Campus Resources for Students facing mental health issues	100%	100%	100%	100%
Knowledge of On-Campus Resources for Students with Writing Difficulties	86%	100%	100%	96%
Knowledge of On-Campus Resources for Students with Other Challenges (housing, financial aid, immigration, etc.)	100%	100%	100%	100%
Referred Students to On-Campus Resources for Learning Differences	71%	100%	88%	88%
Referred Students to On-Campus Resources for Mental Health Issues	71%	89%	75%	79%
Referred Students to On-Campus Resources for Writing Difficulties	71%	100%	100%	92%
Referred Students to On-Campus Resources for Other Challenges (housing, financial aid, immigration, etc.)	86%	78%	88%	83%



After each faculty learning community, ASPIRE conducted surveys after each semester which also asked open-ended questions. In the survey, we asked questions about the impact and utilization of Faculty Learning Community trainings in the classroom, suggestions for future trainings on specific content areas, and suggestions for trainings to support students with high needs in the classroom.

We also conducted focus groups. These were the three major themes:

- How ASPIRE helped to increase faculty capacity to serve high-need AA&PI students.
- How ASPIRE helped to increase faculty capacity to serve students' non-cognitive skills.
- How ASPIRE faculty learning community improved pedagogies on writing and caring for students.

## Impact and Utilization of Faculty Learning Community Trainings

Faculty responses to surveys and focus groups indicated that ASPIRE's Faculty LC is having a positive impact on the their' effectiveness in servign high-need AA&PI students. They mentioned the benefits of the ASPIRE faculty trainings on their pedagogical praxis which makes them more highly qualified educators. Additionally, they described specific tools from the trainings that helped them better meet students cognitive and non-cognitive needs. The adjunct faculty further described the experience as the only sense of community they were able to find as non-tenure track faculty on a college campus. This community motivated them to want to further develop and improve their pedagogical praxes.

*"My ASPIRE mentor is critical to my classroom infrastructure and core to relational pedagogy. I have utilized study circles and prioritized 1:1 teacher / student check-ins. I have referred a handful of students to ASPIRE appointed psychologist."*

*"In general, I am now creating my classes as more 'student-centered' as opposed to my old school practice of teaching with a mostly teacher centered approach that usually took into account grading, administrative work, following all the university rule, and then lastly, student needs. I am spending more time in and out of class listening to, guiding and building relationships with our students. I am consciously challenging myself to break out of the 'banking model' of schooling that I've been accustomed to, and creating more project based and hands on in-class exercises to make the learning more meaningful, relevant and fun for all of us. I am taking more classroom time to talk about diversity of learning approaches, how my assignments and assessments are tied to our course learning objectives, and what MY TEACHING GOALS ARE to be as fully transparent and HUMAN as I can be with the students."*

*"I have had students take learning style surveys to help them better understand different learning styles and reflect on their own learning and studying strengths and practices. I think use that to encourage more cohesive group work, as students are more aware of what their own strengths and contributions to the group can be, and are also mindful of the fact that their group members may have different strengths and learning styles."*

*"I have learned so many ways to engage students in the classroom and worked on getting better each semester."*

*"I have used multiple active learning strategies shared by my colleagues and also shared by our facilitators. These strategies have helped me to engage my students in diverse ways."*

*"I have been able to incorporate aspects of writing tools and exercises for my students. I feel that also bringing in aspects to help develop emotional intelligence and reflective skills have also helped my students grow as people."*

*"The most relevant workshop has been the PI studies training. It was a full day, but I wish it was 2. It makes me rethink what 'inclusivity' looks like in the classroom, as well as the dangers of canonization in an interdisciplinary field"*

**“HAVING DRAFTED A TEACHING STATEMENT WAS POWERFUL AND HOWEVER ITERATIVE IT IS YEAR TO YEAR, I AM MINDFUL NOW IN EXECUTING IT IN ACTION AND INTENT.”**

## **Suggestions for Future Faculty Learning Community Trainings**

As faculty further hone their craft in the LC, they begin to spot more areas in which they need further development to better serve high-need AA&PI students. The responses from the end of the semester surveys indicate both the level of engagement of faculty in the process of collective inquiry and their new understandings of the blindspots in serving high-need AA&PI students in the AAS and RRS departments.

*“Trainings that are led by academic experts / researchers, or more engagement with other faculty members from the AAS Department, as well as possibly other educational practitioners and educators from other campuses would be helpful to support the teaching of under-represented AA&PI experiences for faculty.”*

*“I would love to learn about the South Asian American Experience.”*

*“Loved the PI workshop we had early in the semester. I think it is a necessary one every semester / year for new faculty to understand never to conflate the experiences of AA and PI folks (particularly addressing this idea to those of Filipino descent).”*

*“I would love to feel more informed about SE Asians to be able to include more in my curricula. I think an approach that could connect the experiences of different ethnic/marginalized groups through the common history of militarization and/or colonization would be powerful.”*

*“I'd appreciate trainings on engaging students with learning disabilities in the classroom. I feel equipped to work with and refer students for services but I could benefit from a conversation about how various learning disabilities manifest in the classroom and how to support students in the moment.”*

*“I've found the ASPIRE Faculty iLearn page to be very helpful with providing many and most of the resources that have been useful to share with students in the classroom who may have high needs. One training that might be helpful would be to have folks who work with DSP come to talk and share experiences and strategies for working with students with learning disabilities - a topic I felt like I could have learned more about.”*

*“I would love trainings that include the peer mentors on strategies for us to support students together, ie examples of how faculty and peer mentor can work together to structure support for a writing assignment.”*



## Changes to Probation, Units, Retention, Graduation

Currently, ASPIRE's goals for probation, units, retention, and graduation are based off of SFSU's total student population. While, those numbers do not show improvement, the six-year graduation rates for AA&PI students and high-need AA&PI students are significantly higher than the total university average. The four-year graduation rates are slightly lower for high-needs AA&PI students and just about the same for AA&PI students.

**Table 7. Academic Probation at the End of First Term**

Cohort	High Need API			API			Total FTFTF		
	Cohort	#	%	Cohort	#	%	Cohort	#	%
Fall 2015	828	66	8.0%	1,1019	79	7.8%	4,081	438	10.7%
Fall 2016	748	78	10.4%	894	90	10.1%	3,531	437	12.4%
Fall 2017	766	100	13.1%	913	120	13.1%	4,084	717	17.6%
Fall 2018	778	90	11.6%	984	117	11.9%	4,066	677	16.7%

**Table 8. SFSU Credits Earned in First Term**

Cohort	High Need API		API		Total FTFTF	
	Cohort	Mean	Cohort	Mean	Cohort	Mean
Fall 2015 - Units Taken	828	13.19	1,019	13.22	4,081	13.12
Fall 2015 - Units Earned		11.66		11.75		11.20
Fall 2016 - Units Taken	748	13.53	894	13.54	3,531	13.36
Fall 2016 - Units Earned		11.67		11.76		11.27
Fall 2017 - Units Taken	766	13.74	913	13.81	4,084	13.46
Fall 2017 - Units Earned		12.09		12.17		11.25
Fall 2018 - Units Taken	778	13.93	984	13.99	4,066	13.80
Fall 2018 - Units Earned		12.90		12.93		12.34

**Table 9. Four-Year Graduation Rate**

Cohort	High Need API			API			Total FTFTF		
	Cohort	#	%	Cohort	#	%	Cohort	#	%
Fall 2012	872	174	20.0%	1,070	226	21.1%	3,756	810	21.6%
Fall 2013	864	178	20.6%	1,052	234	22.2%	3,550	788	22.2%
Fall 2014	839	193	23.0%	997	237	23.8%	3,630	903	24.9%
Fall 2015	828	194	23.4%	1,019	253	24.8%	4,081	982	24.1%

**Table 10. Six-Year Graduation Rate**

Cohort	High Need API			API			Total FTFTF		
	Cohort	#	%	Cohort	#	%	Cohort	#	%
Fall 2010	787	457	58.1%	1,007	599	59.5%	3,609	1,919	53.2%
Fall 2011	774	497	64.2%	940	604	64.3%	3,469	1,859	53.6%
Fall 2012	876	528	60.3%	1,077	664	61.7%	3,756	2,062	54.9%
Fall 2013	864	532	61.6%	1,052	655	62.3%	3,550	2,006	56.5%



# RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations from the evaluation of data collected by the ASPIRE team and the evaluator's qualitative collection and analysis of interviews and focus groups, ASPIRE team with students and faculty include the following:

- ASPIRE peer mentors have played a crucial part in the success of the AA&PI learning communities. Student, peer mentor, and faculty respondents have emphasized the need for peer mentorship to continue even after the grant ends in Fall 2021. The PD/PI and Co-PI should continue to locate partners across the campus to identify ways to institutionalize peer mentoring for first-year students.
- There needs to be more work done to track the progress of students in ASPIRE. The PI and Co-PI should work on gaining access for the ASPIRE team to track student progress. Currently SF State is exploring access to Navigator. Navigator is a student success platform being used at over 200 US higher education institutions and being implemented throughout the CSU system. Navigator is an online tool to connect undergraduate students to faculty, staff and campus resources. Through this tool, users can raise early alerts for students, create a kiosk system, initiate proactive advising campaigns and innovatively help students graduate on time.
- Study circles are a valuable space for students, peer mentors, and faculty. Students indicated that the current space is even sometimes filled to capacity as is. There is a need to secure a permanent space for study circles that will continue past the end of the grant in Fall 2021. If possible, it is recommended to find a space that is larger than the current space in EP 100.
- The Faculty Learning Community creates a community of collective inquiry that faculty (adjunct faculty in particular) have found to be extremely useful. There should be continued support through a Faculty Learning Community even after the grant ends.

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