

*They or their ancestors came
from thousands of different regions around the world...
from islands or mainlands, some a part of the United States, others another continent.*

*They are a people with different histories and cultures,
who have forged so many different lives here.*

Listening to Asian American and Pacific Islander Students

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**Listening to
Asian American and Pacific Islander Students...**

“Here at CSUS the college is diverse with many people of different culture whether its race or ethnicity and I feel comfortable and welcomed. No matter the age I get to meet different people and it helps me network through college so far.”

—I am a Asian female student and currently 18 years old turning 19 this year. With the challenges of being the first in my family to go to college, I am new to this experience of college.

“In being a young Asian woman on the CSUS campus, I don’t feel out of place. This is a very diverse campus where the gender ratio also seems very evenly split.

I really like that most of my instructors, since my first semester here have taken the time to learn and remember my name. Also, class sizes are small enough where you can run into the same faces on campus.”

—20 yr old, female, Asian (Jr.)

“Easy to fit in, everyone is welcoming. The academics aren’t too strenuous and everything is reasonable.”

—Vietnamese American

“I feel amazing being a first time student from Marysville, a little town up in the north.

I don’t like how I have to figured everything for myself.”

—I am Hmong and first generation family.

“I honestly am able to embrace my culture here. I am active in a filipino club and even aside from that I feel welcomed. It isn’t difficult, in fact I learn more about my culture here.

I would like to share that being involved in organizations or clubs that are affiliated with your roots is an amazing experience. I recommend everyone to be involved. It has made my first year of college worthwhile.”

—Filipino/female/19 years old

“great Asian American student unity & organization on campus.”

—Japanese American

“My experience has been alright. There is diversity, but there does not seem to be a lot of Vietnamese on campus. Culturally it does not appear to be visible to the public as much as the other ethnic groups.”

—Vietnamese/Female/21/3rd year

“I feel welcomed and feel obligated to be learning here at this university.”

—Asian American, 18.

“Sometimes people come up to me and ask me what ethnicity I am and I tell them that I am Hmong, they ask me where is that from? I tell them that we don’t have a country but we are from China and Laos.

There are many different ethnicities on campus and I see it everywhere I walk to. Im not afraid to show who I am to the world, I am proud as a Hmong Woman....”

—I am a female student, my ethnicity is Hmong. I am a first year at the age of 18. I am an average height.

“As a Chamorro, I feel that not only my culture but all Pacific Islanders are not represented enough. We tend to be grouped w/Asians; however, we are very different culturally.”

—Chamarro (Pacific Islander)/Filipino, Catholic, 1st year

“I think CSUS is a very diverse college with all different ethnicity and meeting new people is a good thing.”

—I am lu-Mien American. I am 19 years old. I live in Sacramento, California all my life. My parents were born and raised in Thailand, they came to the United States in the mid 1980s. I have 4 siblings. Im the first in my family to go to college.

“I see that there are a lot of Hmong people who attend CSUS. I am happy to also represent who I am when in class. I also like the fact that everyone is so diverse...which makes me comfortable. ☺”

—Hmong

“Students need to read and study to prepare for class. You have to be self-reliant.”

—25 yr old Laotian female, transfer student

“Being a Chinese male student here, I feel like the campus does not take into consideration the Asian Culture what I mean by this is that being a part of this generation, which Asian countries (like China & Japan) are dominating the economy & CSUS has failed to notice that. Evidently, there is an underwhelming amount of classes regarding/relating to the above cultures that are offered here on campus.”

—19, 1st year, Male, Chinese

“Being a Filipino here is actually interesting. I love meeting fellow students who are also Filipino. I think that my ethnicity bring uniqueness to the school.”

—Filipino

“I have my good and bad days but honestly, I do not really think of my ethnicity when doing school work. However, when I do, I try not to be overwhelmed by the numbers of people like me who graduate and who do not. I want to go far in life”

—Tongan American, 19 years old, from Sacramento California, second out of six children, first generation female student, low-middle income, jobless

“Because I was born in the Philippines I have a very different perspective than a lot of other people. I am not entirely ‘FOB’ but I’m not completely Americanized either. I’ve learned to stay rooted with my culture, but at the same time, I learned the norms of Americans. That being said, the diversity of the campus reinforces who I am as an individual. I’m exposed to different kinds of backgrounds, so I know to be appreciative of my own when I see others in distress.

I’ve become more appreciative of how supportive my family is because I’ve met so many who don’t even acknowledge them.”

—20 year old filipina in her 3rd year in Sac State

“The challenge of being the first person in the family to go to college is that nobody tells me what college is like. So often time, I have to find out the information by myself.”

—Im Chinese and I was born in Hong Kong. Im 18 years old. Im the first person in my family to go to college.

“There are many clubs and activities here that are very interesting, but I can’t join any because they sometimes have requirements like meeting and event you have to attend, which for me who has a responsibility to take care of my younger siblings can’t join any club activities.”

—Hmong, 1996, restriction

“I feel I fit in well with the student body as a whole because every ethnicity is well-represented.

I have been rushed every semester to join Asian sororities and one time by a Caucasian sorority which was strange to me but also appreciated.

The campus is a fun place to be on. Each department has its own activities to participate in. Faculty & staff are always helpful and supportive.”

—female – 24 – Asian

“I feel very comfy. There is a high population of Hmong in this university. I experience a lot of friendly conversations. The FCP Program and the Hmong clubs has helped me.”

—Hmong

“CSUS is culturally diverse so I feel comfortable. Being a first year, it’s harder to get the classes I need. It has made me realize that I will be here for a while.

You will find a place to fit in if you make the effort.”

—Filipino, male, young, first year

“I joined a great program called FCP.

(I like) Getting all the help that I need.”

—Hmong American female student, age 18

“I think it’s awesome to be this race and going to college. I love sharing my culture with other types of races. It makes me proud to be Filipino.

When I entered Sac State I didn’t know anything about my culture. I didn’t know the common stereotypes or anything. I decided to join Samahung Pilipino to meet new people. In my two years of joining that club, I’ve learned a lot about the culture. I even participated in traditional dances. That club made me a better person.

Meeting the people in my classes and my club, it made my experiences more enjoyable at Sac State.”

—Filipino

“CSUS so far has open my eyes. At least the classes has.

I think that it’s not Sac State, it’s college in general. College isn’t for me. I feel too pressured by everything, not having a major, don’t know what to do with my education life. I want to be successful, but college isn’t the answer right this moment.”

—a Hmong girl at the age of 18

“I would like to be able to share that college isn’t too like high school but doing best is the key to success in all my class.”

—Asian, Male, 1996

“I believe that the challenge that I first faced was the transportation and time managements.

I feel like it was a challenges going into a diverse place where many cultures gathered around. I think that there was sometimes that was very fun when every students gathered together and shared their own experienced together.

I think that the most influencial experiences that I faced was managing my times with school, friend and family.”

—I am a first generation Hmong American girl in my family attending California State University of Sacramento. I am 18 years of age

“people expect a little bit more of you”

—18 years old, female, Vietnamese

“A lot more responsibilities than most young girls. We are more pressured at many things, including our personal lives. However, not all Asian parents are like this.”

I would like to share the freedom that is here. At CSUS we are allowed to make our own choices.

I like the campus itself. It makes me feel really peaceful. The services and professors are all so nice and helpful as well.”

—Asian

“I’m the first one in my family to go to college so I never had the stories/past experiences to look back on from my siblings.”

—Female, Filipino, 23 years old, graduating senior

“It is interesting to compare how I am viewed & treated in comparison to my counter parts. I also learn a lot from the diverse cultures around me.

I have noticed in my social work groups at school how I am 95% of the time the only Indian and the 5% there is another Indian we are complete opposites.”

—A 21 year old East Indian Male

“Being Asian, we are seen as the smart ones. The ones that have everything figured out already. We are pressured to do well because of our ethnicity.”

—21, Chinese, Male

“It has been an okay semester here. I feel that there are a lot of clubs and organizations that make everyone feel welcomed.”

—19 yrs old, Filipino

“It is tough because I don’t have much support/resources. I also have financial issues. I also have to take care of the family which makes it difficult in college.

Not a lot of things have worked out for me at all at CSUS.”

—Hmong American, Age 18

“Its very nice to see that there is a community of Hmong students at Sacramento State. There is even a Hmong University Student Association club on campus that reaches out in the community.”

—Female, Hmong, 19 years old and a Freshman new to college

“It is at times frustrating. Many times professors assume because of my race I am stereotypically shy. I believe this makes it more awkward to deal with or get to know me. I understand this behavior may not be intentional however I feel there can be something done about this.”

—Asian

“Its great here at CSUS because there are many other students who are hmong as well. I can get along with people in my culture without any difficulties.

There are a lot of options here. I love the open space and I can be myself.”

—I am a Hmong girl born in the US. I am 19 years old.

“I feel like any other student here on campus. I don’t feel like I get different treatment from others because of that perspective. I feel very welcome.

Our campus is very diverse and welcoming to different cultures. I feel very lucky and blessed to go to this school because I know in other parts of the country, it is not the same case.

I like all of my professors and the staff that I have come across. Everyone is very helpful and I feel like this school is gearing me in the right direction for graduation.”

—Filipino American Female

“I don’t feel a huge difference being a Filipino student here. Coming from San Francisco, I do notice a difference in demographics – being that there is a higher concentration of the Caucasian population. But it personally doesn’t affect me personally nor hinders my ability to do well academically.

I have met a few people on campus that are also Filipino. And it seems like they are the people who I’ve maintained contact with, despite not having classes together, I’m not sure if it’s because I want to share a sense of community with them or simply because I’m interested in maintaining a friendship with them.”

—Filipino, 20 years old

“Going to college is a must. Therefore, I want to do my best and succeed.”

—female, 19 years old, hmong

“It seems that Asians are viewed as the smarter groups in campus, although that does not impact me greatly.

The resources for help when needed are always emphasized and available.”

—Asian American – 18 – New to College

“Its great being a student at CSUS. Great staff/faculty that are always willing to help. A ton of extra curricular activities to participate in. A ton of assistance for students who need it such as tutoring. So many opportunities!”

—First Generation, Low-Income, Asian-American, Vietnamese, Female, 18

“I’m feeling comfortable in this campus, and I can always find the same ethnic group if I want to.

If I needed help I can always find someone to help me. Everyone is friendly.”

—21 years old Asian female.

“I think it’s great to be a student with this culture. Education hold a very important part in our lives and especially our parents. So, we strive to excel no matter what.”

—Asian Indian (east Indian/Punjabi) 23 years old female

“I fit right in. There are so many Asians.... I am not as smart as the rest of them.”

—Vietnamese

“Being a student with my perspective (stated below) is not very tough. I feel like I have just as much opportunity as everyone else & I believe Sacramento State offers programs & clubs to make students more comfortable.

The professors throughout my time here have been extremely helpful and knowledgeable. Additionally, the clubs and extracurricular activities are an added bonus.”

—22 yrs old, in her fifth year here, Filipino, Female, has terrible eye sight, nut allergy

“It’s a bit more challenging being the first in my family to attend college. At first it was hard seeing other more seasoned college students take the classes they need, study a specific way, and work the college system. As I got older and took more classes, reached out to campus organizations it got easier, but I felt I had to LEARN it on my own.

Being Laotian and having a collective culture, my family always taught selflessness, love, acceptance, and open minded. Coming specifically to Sac State and its diverse cultures helped me understand other people and they’re backgrounds. It was tough at first because my beliefs and values were challenged, but in the end I became a more understanding person.

You won’t find better culture and diversity than at Sac State. There’s so many beautiful and amazing people on campus, with most people being adaptable. There’s great organizations that reach out to help others, as well as programs to help students with various challenges. I feel as if some students and teachers sometimes overlook the background/cultures in their classes. The writing styles and communication styles differ and we need to be more adaptable.”

—21 years old, Laotian, first generational.

“It’s very easy to blend in. I do not stand out nor fade in to the back. It is easy to make friends.”

—Asian, 20, Male

“It’s fun. Do have some friends that I hang out with which is nice & makes the experience more enjoyable.”

—South-East Asian, Early 20’s

“I am Asian, so when I look for friends here, I reach out to people who have the same ethnicity as me. It’s very easy to make friends at CSUS no matter the different in ethnicity or race.”

—Male Asian 25

“It’s stressful.”

—Filipino, Female, 23 years old

“It gets pretty hard to sometimes admit that I don’t understand a material. I feel as if like other students expect me to already know the material.”

—an Asian American

“Well, to be honest, it is quite hard being able to attend Sacramento State because of the help that I did not receive from my family due to them not having further education.

I would love to share my experience in Sacramento State, the HUSA club which is the Hmong club. It is a fabulous club that would not leave you feeling left out.”

—First year of Sacramento State University of the age of 18 years old. I am an Asian American that has a Chinese and Hmong cultural background. I am a Bilingual first generation female student that is focusing on helping out my family in the future.

“To be a student here at Sac State means so much to me because there is hardly any good education provided in the Pacific Islands.

I like how there is so many different types of students collaborating, especially to me.

The classes here are very education & they suit my needs to pursue the career I plan to have. Some classes can be too difficult to comprehend as to what the professor was trying to teach.”

—Pacific Islander/Nicaraguan & 22 yrs old

“Nothing different than average.”

—Filipina 4th year 21 yrs

“Very high standards, coming from Asian descent. Minimal room for mistakes.”

—Asian female

“Being Japanese gives me a completely different perspective. I’ve had to learn how to be an ‘American’ by speaking without raising my hand or be extremely talkative, just so I won’t miss any participation points.”

—Male, 25, Japanese, Senior

“Different, the university is very diverse and being a first year is a completely new experience”

—Filipino, 18

“It is hard to step out of the sphere you are placed in from the perspective of other people.”

—Asian, Hmong, 21, Female

“Being the first generation college student is intimidating! Passing all classes is a struggle. College is stressful! College gave me a high blood pressure as a Christmas gift. ☹️ I hate squirrels!!! But they are cute!

(I don’t like that) Grade matters more than knowledge!”

—Pacific Islander – 19 years old!

“Sac State community is awesome!”

—Asian American Senior

“The professors I have encountered are absolutely amazing.”

—Soon to be nineteen year old Chinese female.

“It’s cool, there aren’t many Chinese people in the Sacramento region/sac state that I know. There are more of different Asian ethnicities—cool to meet a fellow Chinese person.

I felt connected to the Chinese pottery soldier/warrior that was on the 3rd floor of the library. I’m pretty Americanized so I acknowledge my ethnicity but at sac state, I’m another individual/student pushing through college. These past years at sac state have been good but I did struggle a lot in...two classes. It changed my perspective on how to go about life—perseverance.”

—a female Chinese American that is 23 years old.

“There is plenty of resources given to students. I like how open the campus is to my needs. I learn a lot of information going to this school.

I like that there are plenty of resources such as clubs, library, arc and union. I like the constant help I get from the people at this school.”

—Asian, male, 21

“It’s different because the school is really dominated by white people. I had to deal with Asian stereotypes and racial slurs.”

—Filipino/male/20

“What its like to be a student with my demographic background is free. I don’t feel judged and I feel fairly equal to everyone regarding opportunities.”

—Asian; Male; 19; Heterosexual

“Based on my culture, I seem perfectly fine academically on campus and it does not affect my environment. Whether it be in a classroom or not. CSUS is a friendly and approachable campus.”

—18, Guamanian

“I get my work done.”

—Filipino Male 21

“The Full Circle Project. I think I would be really depressed w/o it. I’ve made maybe one friend who’s not from FCP but at least a dozen FCP friends. FCP has really made my college experience a good one.”

—male, 19, Chinese

“There’s nothing particular I like to share other than my race & cultural background. It is both a challenge, and something that you embrace because the goal is not to always fit in. You should be your own person and fit out.”

—Asian Indian

“It’s nice because there are a number of students on campus who are also the same ethnicity as I am.

I guess I would like to share the same background, similarities, and possibly learn more about my culture.”

—Filipino (Asian)

“Pretty decent. I get to know my culture’s language and learn about where my roots came from and compare it to my experience born and raised here in the U.S.

The college life is wild: crazy parties, wild sex, and excessive drinking. These things are completely different from what I learned about my culture. I’m suppose to be a conservative female, learning how to be an obedient wife for my future husband....”

—22, Vietnamese Female, 2nd generation, born in U.S.A.

“In my culture we have a lot of responsibilities, not that other people don’t, but as a girl from my culture there are a lot of things that are expected from us. Whether its education, job, housework, babysitting and etc.... So our education is very important and over here at Sac State we must really focus.

Focus on your education and manage your time. It is very important to succeeding when your such a busy student.

I like that as students we are able to choose our schedule to work with our time. We are all so busy so its nice to be able to make our time fit with one another.”

—Hmong

“I see a very large Asian demographic at Sac State...it’s really awesome to see. I like to push myself here at Sac State.

Although I may not like the work, I strive to push through the challenges.”

—20 yrs old, Filipino-American

“easy. The school is fun and relaxing. I’m learning a lot.

The honors program is a great program with wonderful teachers who care about us.”

—an Asian American female

“Being Hmong and a student here at CSUS, my parents expect a lot from me.

What I love about CSUS is that all staff are friendly and always open to help the students, even if it’s not related to the class.”

—Hmong

“I like the new friends that I have made here that are not Chinese because in every year I have always made Chinese friends. I like the campus and the numerous clubs.”

—Chinese

“Being a student who is Hmong and is a first generation college student, there are a lot of pressure to do well and graduate college with a degree and have a career set.

The experience I would like to share is me being a member of EOP and HUSA. Being in EOP and HUSA has made me felt more connected to the campus and as if I’m really a student and isn’t just a student who comes in go for class.”

—Hmong and first generation college student

“As a female Hmong student here at CSUS, the challenge is to not please anyone such as siblings, relatives, especially my parents, but myself and do the best that I know I can; not what they think I can or should do.

CSUS had more of my peers that gives me the motivation to socialize and be a part of a group.”

—22-yr-old female, Hmong, transfer student

“I feel like I am a minority in Sacramento State. With my race, I feel like nobody gives me a chance to speak out for when I have to say something. Asians are known as the ‘silent’ ones.

I’m not very fond of this school and especially some of the people here. There is a number of people whom I don’t want to be around. I liked meeting people who’s personality is compatible with mine.

What has worked for me so far at Sac State is if I have a problem, I can go to somebody for advice/help.

I did not like how some students do not know how to follow strict rules. Is it too hard to follow an organization’s rules?”

—Asian Pacific Islander

“college is lonely”

—Chinese male age 25 straight

“In the Hmong culture, it is a collectivistic culture in which we Hmong people must invest our time for family gatherings/events as well as invest time in our academics, job, family roles, and in some cases, not in ourselves.

Fortunately, professors cancel class or make it not mandatory for students to fly home for break. Very thoughtful.

(I like) thoughtful, passionate, caring professors.”

—Hmong, New to College, 18 yrs old, female, straight, wears glasses

“The only issue, not bad or good, is I am perceived Filipino as I am dark-skinned. Otherwise, normal. I feel like my professors treat everyone equally. I feel normal, but I do feel at times challenged in a good way.”

—Cambodian/Laocean, 19

“Stereotype of graduating already and obtaining a high GPA. Pressure to get good grades and graduating semesters ago. Also feel good that I’m not married with kids; prefer to get education first. Thankful and appreciative.

I feel comfortable among my peers.”

—Asian, Hmong, 23

“I see college as a serious and competitive place where priorities must be wisely considered. Choosing the right classes and even the places to study should be well thought out.

It has been a non-stressful experience; well going through though my classes on a daily basis. However, when looking at the competition in my field of study, as well as costs, the stress factor kicks in.

The professors that I’ve had thus far have all been helpful and caring towards my education.”

—18 year old Filipino

“It is welcoming and warm environment

I would like to share my culture to more people and connect with different cultures.

It’s a good environment.... I enjoy it”

—23 Vietnamese

“Chinese people are treated normal here.... If I was white, it would make no difference.”

—Chinese

“I feel very safe and accepted for who I am.

The Samahang Filipino Club helped me make friends with other Filipinos.”

—Female, 19 y.o., Filipino

“To be Hmong and attend CSUS is actually an advantage, I think because there are other Hmong students here and successful Hmong organizations here that can help me succeed.

I’ve has a relatively enjoyable year here at CSUS and am looking forward to the future.”

—Hmong, 19 years old, Financially Challenged

“There is not challenge. I am invincible. I take on new challenges everyday & obliterate it. Bring it on!”

—Vietnamese

“Being a student with the perspective of a first generation Hmong student who is 19 years old, I feel welcomed and glad that I came to Sacramento State University.”

—I am a first-generation female Hmong student who is 19 years old.

“With being Indian, there comes a lot of expectation. From your family with having good grades, a stable job or with starting your life. Many Indians often go into the medical field, computer science or business. So I have also noticed that my parents want me to try my hardest at school no matter what the case.

I haven’t experienced that much within my perspective, being a first year and all but I have seen that my judgement of Indians are correct.

Everything has been going good so far. Thank you”

—Indian, female, nursing major, 18

Asian American and Pacific Islander Students

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders comprise almost 6% of the United States population, over 18 million, and they are the fast growing racial group in the nation, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, which uses close to 50 different ethnic categories for data collection.

Asian Americans, “people with origins in the Far East, Southeast Asia and the Indian Subcontinent,” may be: Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Indian, Indo Chinese, Iwo Jiman, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Malaysian, Maldivian, Nepalese, Okinawan, Pakistani, Singaporean, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, Thai, Vietnamese, Other Asian. They may use the broader term, Asian American, or may prefer more specific reference to their country or ethnicity of origin or ancestry. This may include any of the above, including variations thereof (such as Pilipino, Korean) and still others (such as Mein, Indonesian, Mongolian, Tibetan).

Pacific Islanders are “people having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or the Pacific Islands.” There are over 20,000 Pacific Islands, grouped in three regions broadly known as Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia. Pacific Islanders may be: Carolinian, Chamorro, Chuukese, Fijian, Guamanian, I-Kiribati, Kosraean, Mariana Islander, Marshallese, Native Hawaiian, Ni-Vanuatu, Palauan, Papua New Guinean, Pohnpeian, Saipanese, Samoan, Solomon Islander, Tahitian, Tokelauan, Tongan, Yapese, Other Polynesian, Other Micronesian, Other Melanesian. They may use the broader term, Pacific Islander, or one the three main regional terms, or may prefer more specific reference to their country or ethnicity of origin or ancestry, which may include any of the above and still others not listed (such as French Polynesian or Māorian).

California is home to the largest Asian American and Pacific Islander combined population in the country, and when separated, the largest Asian American population (about 6 million) and the second largest Pacific Islander population (almost 350,000) nationally, as well.

The largest Asian American groups in the state are: Filipino, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, Korean, and Japanese. The largest Pacific Islander groups in California are: Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, followed by Fijian and Tongan.

In Higher Education in the State

The State of Higher Education in California: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, put out by the Campaign for College Opportunity, is the first of its kind to look at numbers beyond the broad categories of Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander in higher education in the state in order to get a more full and accurate picture of the more specific ethnic groups.

The report provides a number of findings in its analysis of data, beginning with this: More than one in seven Californians are either Asian American or Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (NHPI) and the Asian American NHPI population is currently the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the state.

College Entrance

There are about 60,000 Asian American freshmen in higher education in the state.

Asian American First-Time Freshmen Enrollment:

- 47% at California Community Colleges
- 18% at California State Universities
- 22% on University of California campuses
- 7% at private nonprofit colleges
- 6% at for-profit colleges

There are about 10,000 Asian American first-time freshmen in the CSU system (17% of the total freshmen cohort).

Breaking the data down further into the largest Asian American groups in the state in terms of their enrollment in the CSU system shows:

- Filipino: 26.9% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population
- Chinese: 18.8% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population
- Vietnamese: 16.8% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population
- Indian: 6.6% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population
- Korean: 5.1% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population

There are almost 20,000 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander freshmen in higher education in the state.

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NHPI) First-Time Freshmen Enrollment:

- 55% at California Community Colleges
- 11% at California State Universities
- 7% on University of California campuses
- 8% at private nonprofit colleges
- 19% at for-profit colleges

There are over 200 Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander first-time freshmen in the CSU system (0.4% of the total freshmen cohort).

Breaking the data down further into the largest NHPI groups in the state in terms of their enrollment in the CSU system shows:

- Native Hawaiian: 0.2% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population
- Samoaan: 0.4% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population
- Guamanian/Chamorro: 0.2% CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population
- Fijian: 0.6% of the CSU Asian American NHPI Freshman Population

Transfer

Over half of Asian American students (60%) transfer to a four-year institution from a community college within six years. More than half of Asian American students transfer into the CSU system (56%) with the remainder transferring to UCs (26%) or to private nonprofit colleges (12%) or for-profit colleges (5%).

Over a third of NHPI students (39%) transfer to a four-year institution from a community college within six years. About a third of NHPI students transfer into the CSU system (34%) with the remainder transferring to UCs (10%) or to private nonprofit colleges (34%) or for-profit colleges (22%).

Completion

While almost half of all Asian Americans, as a group, hold a college degree or higher (49%) when looking at the data closer, you can see the real range in educational attainment rates, a 60 point difference.

Below are the numbers broken down, with inclusion of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, as well.

Percent of the Population (25 years old and up) who Hold a Bachelor's Degree in California:

70%	Indian
63%	Malaysian
58%	Bangladeshi
56%	Korean
56%	Pakistani
52%	Chinese
51%	Japanese
49%	Sri Lankan
47%	Filipino
46%	Thai
44%	Indonesian
29%	Vietnamese
24%	Native Hawaiian
16%	Cambodian
13%	Hmong
12%	Guamanian or Chamorro
12%	Samoa
10%	Laotian

with the average for the state at 31% and white Californians at 40%, for comparison.

When data is broken down in similar fashion for other areas of educational paths and progress rates, the numbers then are also wide-ranging.

The report summarizes its findings:

We find great variability within Asian American communities in terms of college-degree attainment, enrollment in four-year universities, and graduation in comparison to many Southeast Asian Americans. And while some Asian American groups have better educational outcomes than others, each group faces unique and pressing challenges that affect access to and success in higher education.

NHPI students, for example, have lower graduation rates in all three systems of higher education in the state, compared to the average of all students. Indeed, NHPI students, as well as Southeast Asian American students, “tend to have educational outcomes closer to those of Latinos and Blacks, yet higher education conversations around underrepresented minority groups often exclude Southeast Asian American or NHPI students.”

The reasons for the disparity in college enrollment and graduation are many, but key reasons documented include:

Financial Difficulties

While some Asian American and NHPI groups do well socioeconomically, others do not. The percentage of youth living in poverty in California is higher for those who are Hmong (42%), Cambodian (33%), Laotian (30%), and Tongan (25%), all rates above the state's average (23%) or that of White youth (11%) for comparison. Another factor in financial difficulties in terms of college costs is the changing and confusing nature of citizenship status for the different island regions and financial aid requirements. Some students may not realize that they still qualify for federal and/or state financial assistance with college. For example, natives of American Samoa, as American nationals, qualify for federal financial aid, and undocumented students may qualify for state financial assistance and in-state lower tuition fees.

Lack of College Readiness

Children and teens from low-income families typically attend lower academic quality schools in terms of staffing and funding, resulting in lower academic preparation and college readiness. Coming into college, this makes them more likely to need remediation classes, which puts students at risk of longer graduation time frames—or not graduating at all. In the CSU system, Hmong freshmen are the most likely to need remediation in English, math, or both (73%), followed by the next NHPI and Southeast Asian freshmen groups: Samoan (55%), Fijian (54%), Cambodian (45%), Thai (44%), and Laotian (44%) students, all higher rates than the average freshman (42%).

Language Difficulties

More AAPI children are foreign-born, but even when not, simply having a parent who speaks a different language at home will typically impact the child's language-acquisition skills. About 77% of Asian Americans and 51% of NHPIs in the state speak a language other than English at home, and 35% of Asian Americans and 13% of NHPIs are Limited English Proficient, a rate higher than for Latinos in California. Less proficiency in English-speaking puts the student at risk of not graduating from high school, not going to college, and, when in college, not graduating in the same time frame as their peers or even at all.

Lack of "College Knowledge"

Many AANHPIs are first generation college students, making the path to and in college more difficult without that knowledge of college of their parents who have not themselves earned their degree. The AANHPI groups with freshmen in the CSU system who are the first in their family to attend college are: Hmong (85%), Laotian (85%), Samoan (83%), Fijian (82%), Cambodian (76%), Vietnamese (71%), and Chinese (64%), all higher than the average of all freshmen in CSUs (59%).

[For further information, please see

[The Campaign for College Opportunity, *The State of Higher Education in California Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders \(2015\) \(PDF\)*](http://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-State-of-Higher-Education_AANHPI2.pdf)

http://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-State-of-Higher-Education_AANHPI2.pdf]

At Sacramento State

The last *Sacramento State University Fact Book* (Fall 2016) reports the following with regard to Asian American and Pacific Islander students at this institution:

Asian Students

807 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled (21.5% of entering First-Freshmen)
 615 Undergraduate Transfer Students Enrolled (15.9% of entering Transfer Students)
 5,816 Students Enrolled (20.9% of all Undergraduate Students enrolled)

Pacific Islander Students

36 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled (1.0% of entering First-Freshmen)
 24 Undergraduate Transfer Students Enrolled (0.6% of entering Transfer Students)
 216 Students Enrolled (0.8% of all Undergraduate Students enrolled)

In 2010, Sacramento State was first designated an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPI) Serving Institution, becoming one of 14 CSU campuses to meet the criteria for this status of at least 10% enrollment of AANAPI undergraduate students and at least half of degree-seeking students low-income.

In 2011, Sacramento State launched the Full Circle Project, a support program funded by the U.S. Department of Education for Asian American and Pacific Islander students at risk in terms of college retention and graduation. Since its inception, the Full Circle Project has received national recognition as a model program for underrepresented AAPI populations. Project Director Timothy Fong has stated that “People have images that Asians are doing well in education, but what is important and is not (noticed) is that there are certain Asian-Pacific Islander groups that have problems in higher education.” University President Robert S. Nelsen has noted that “This investment in our students is an investment in our nation’s future as we continue to become an even more multicultural nation.”

In 2016, the publication *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* rated Sacramento State as one of the nation’s top producers of minority graduates in the year, and Asian American students had a great impact on these results.

The State of Higher Education in California: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders notes that 25% of all bachelor’s degrees conferred to AANHPI students in 2010 were from AANAPI serving institutions.

With regard to this institution, the report also says that Sacramento is one of the top five counties for NHPI population, the third largest at close to 30,000. Research also suggests that the Sacramento region, along with Fresno, have experienced the greatest growth of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the state.

What We Can Do

As educators at an AANAPI Serving Institution, there is much we can do to increase our students' success, including understanding the student's cultural background and the experience of being an AAPI student of color.

Understand the Student's Culture

There is no one, monolithic AAPI culture as the dozens of ethnicities stated at the start of this work can attest. Consequently, there are many differences in place of origin or ancestry, race, histories, language, migration experiences, immigration status, acculturation level, socioeconomic level, and generation, creating a variety of cultural values, beliefs, customs, and traditions.

There are broad differences, however, that can be drawn between AAPI culture and the larger U.S. culture. The following values and communication norms are those shared by many Asian and Pacific Islander cultures, to varying degrees.

Family and Honor

A central cultural value is *family*, the most important thing in life, and this means immediate family, as well as all extended family members. Children are taught at a young age to put family first, creating strong bonds and sense of loyalty, duty, and devotion. With this come related values, one of which is *respect for elders*, veneration of those older for the wisdom of their years and the accompanying responsibility to care for them when they can no longer care for themselves. This means that often grandparents, great-grandparents, older aunts and uncles, all may be living with the family. These family values mean AAPI students typically have a large support system as they enter and progress through college.

Family honor is the need to maintain family name. This requires propriety in conduct and nobility of nature, because children are seen as the extension of parents and, thus, all they do reflects on the family. For many AAPI cultures, academic achievement is a key means to uphold family honor. This may be a great source of motivation, but also cause a tremendous amount of pressure to succeed for the student, either from parents who are really on their child in terms of achievement and graduation, or that the student places on him or herself, in not wanting to dishonor or disappoint the family. Sometimes it is both. Being the first in the family to attend college adds to the pressure, as does immigration background, where some students growing up may have often heard the stories of how family members came over to this country and struggled and sacrificed for future generations to make a better life for themselves.

These values may conflict with one another and school. Family pressures can pull the students away from the campus or their coursework to come home and spend time with family, care for younger siblings, do chores around the house, or work outside the home to contribute to family finances. Those in multilingual families may also be needed to assist parents and other older family members in interpreting in various errands and household tasks (e.g., mail, bills, taxes, form completion, shopping, medical and dental appointments). This may result in less time to

study for exams or write papers, and students will sometimes need to drop everything to help out family, including going to class or finishing assignments due. Then, too, many celebrations and events that may take just a few hours or one day in American culture can take a few days to a whole week in AAPI cultures, and to not attend would be unthinkable (e.g., weddings, funerals, holidays).

For all of these reasons, students may be absent or late to class, not do well or at all an assignment, and have less time to take advantage of campus support services, student study groups, faculty office hours, internships, career fairs, graduate informational sessions, and other college life activities and organizations. This may put students in a bind, caught between the need to put family first and the need to study, especially so as to not shame the family through lower academic performance. Research shows the real difficulty for AAPI students in family obligations competing with academics, so strong is the pull of family who, oftentimes, don't fully understand the demands of college or need to access campus resources and participate in extracurricular activities, or protective parents who worry about their child's safety on campus, especially later in the day.

Collectivism and Peace

Closely related is the cultural value of collectivism, an emphasis on one's family and other groups over the self, placing a premium on putting the collective's needs and goals before that of the individual. This importance placed on the greater good of the group means that the student's need for time to study may at times conflict with duty not only to family, but also to other groups, the larger clan, and community as a whole. The collectivistic "we before me" mindset is one held by the great bulk of world populations, but stands in direct contrast to American individualism, which reverses the order, placing a premium on self-autonomy and expression, personal needs and goals, and individual freedom and rights. With collectivism come related values:

Conformity means adherence to the family's strong hierarchal structure and social order and expectations. This means that what the parents say goes at all times, and that all other authority figures need be obeyed, cultural traditions and customs observed, gender roles abided by, and the rules for age respected. Conformity brings stability, a sense of order and security. For some, however, conformity may at times be difficult. Young adults socialized in the U.S. may feel at odds with their American peers, and may question the authority of their parents, the ways of their cultural background, or the traditional gender roles or generational rules, which may cause turmoil for the student or family. In academia, conformity to social order values would require deference to faculty and other college employees in acknowledgement of place and position, and a need for greater formal structure and hierarchal power in classroom authority, all at times at odds with the informality of some of their peers or instructors. The student may also be hesitant to ask a question, make a request, or express a concern regarding classroom or campus processes or policies, so as not to be seen as impolite or stepping out of place, or be reluctant to engage in critical analysis of lecture content, course readings, and assignments for this same reason.

Harmony is the need to preserve peace in groups and interactions. Cooperation is emphasized and conflict minimized or avoided, in contrast to the competitive norm and tendency to address conflict head-on in the larger American culture. This means not bringing up or expressing only

very indirectly something with which you disagree, or being conciliatory and accommodating when another person has a disagreement with you. In the academic setting, the cultural value of harmony might make contests or debates with classmates uncomfortable. Any doubts or disagreement with faculty, staff, or classmates may be expressed very indirectly or not at all, to preserve harmony at the time, which can often result in the student's needs and concerns left unaddressed in the longer-term.

Humility is the value of showing personal modesty at all times, of even downplaying or being self-deprecating of one's achievements, because self-promotion would run counter to the collective and related need for conformity and harmony. Humility stands in contrast to the larger American society's practice of stating one's accomplishments freely in conversations, introductions, interviews, and other types of interactions, to make a good first impression or promote self-image. Humility also means that standing out for any reason, including public praise from an instructor or staff member, may be uncomfortable for some students.

Shared Norms of Communication

Communication norms shared by many AAPI cultures include the following:

Indirect Manner of Speaking

In many AAPI cultures, people have a more indirect style of speaking than the more direct style of the American culture. This might be shown in a more roundabout manner of making a request, tentatively expressed opinion, or subtle way of indicating "no," all of which might be missed or misinterpreted by those accustomed to the more direct style of "speaking plainly" and engaging in "straight talk." The indirect manner is conducive to maintaining group harmony and cohesion, by not imposing one's wishes or differences of opinion directly on others, and is readily understood in the collectivistic cultures where everyone is familiar with the norms and practices of the larger groups and can "fill in what is not said" through contextual cues of the situation at hand, people involved, and cultural norms operating in a given interaction.

Lower Eye Contact

While the overall American culture sees sustained and direct eye contact as a sign of honesty, respect, and attentiveness, many AAPI cultures would view this type of eye contact as inappropriate, rude, disrespectful, threatening, or offensive. Less eye contact may be mistakenly seen as the AAPI student being less engaged in a conversation or being less prepared for a presentation for a class or campus function.

Greater Silence

While Americans typically place a premium on talk, many AAPI cultures value silence and devalue speaking. Quietness in such cultures may be variously viewed as a sign of self-modesty, respect for the other while listening, due consideration of what was said before responding, reflection on a topic before speaking, and connection with others on a deeper level than talk can achieve. Sometimes, however, silence may be misinterpreted, as aloofness in relations with others, when the very opposite may be the case, or, in the classroom setting, as the student not being prepared to contribute to discussion or collaborative work.

Differences in Communication Norms

In addition to shared cultural values, there will also be variation amongst AAPI cultures in communication norms, including in the following areas:

Emotion

Members of some Pacific Islander cultures readily share feelings, while many Asian cultures' norm is to contain emotional expression.

Voice

Many Pacific Islander cultures show greater vocal expressiveness and range of volume and most Asian cultures less so.

Body Language

Many Asian cultures commonly display less facial expression, smiling, and gestures than the American culture, while Pacific Islander cultures show more variability in norms for these forms of nonverbal communication.

Space and Touch

Many Asian cultures engage in far less touch and require more space between the people communicating, while members of some Pacific Islander cultures may use more touch and require less personal space between themselves and others.

Time

Some Asian cultures place emphasis on the future and long-term planning, seen in prioritization of scheduling and attention to time management. Many Pacific Islander cultures, in contrast, place greater emphasis on the present, living in the moment, and/or were socialized to view time as more flexible, where sometimes the circumstances and relationships at hand are more important than deadlines or punctuality.

Views of Classroom Practices

Class Discussion

Some Asian American students might not be comfortable participating in class or group discussions. If you are from a culture where you were taught that one shouldn't assert oneself or directly promote one's opinion, then attempting to seize the conversational floor might be very difficult. If you are from a culture where silence or listening is valued, then speaking up may be hard, especially in a more public forum. Some students who are multilingual may also be hesitant to contribute because they feel a little shaky in their English speaking and/or comprehension skills. When students' grades are tied to vocal class participation, the pressure may rise.

Collaborative Learning

Students from some AAPI cultures might not understand or appreciate the value of classroom discussion or group work to learning (in contrast to the instructor lecturing) in terms of deeper engagement with the material, more active learning, and greater exposure to different perspectives on the topic at hand. When individual grades are tied to group work, this may increase unease or even frustration, especially when some student backgrounds emphasize academic success. Pacific Islander students, on the other hand, often welcome and thrive in collaborative learning, as well as in class discussion.

Understand the Challenges of Being an AAPI Student of Color

Many may not fully understand the stereotypes and bias Asian American and Pacific Islander American students often face in society and college life, called the “invisibility in discussions of race and racism” and “denial of racial reality” by racial microaggressions expert Derald Wing Sue and colleagues. These researchers have identified several broad themes microaggressions take in the lives of AAPI people, including the two above which speak to this.

A report by the National Commission on Asian American Pacific Islander Research in Education, *The Racialized Experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander Students*, looks at the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) student experience at the University of California, Los Angeles, in comparison to White, Black, and Latino students. The study found: AAPI students are less than one percent away from the percentage of Black students, the highest of the groups who reported hearing students, staff, or faculty express negative or stereotypical views about racial groups. AAPI students were also on par with Black students for the lowest level of sense of belonging at the institution, and AAPI students reported the lowest of all groups in satisfaction with the academic experience. In sum:

The common misperception that AAPIs are the most highly satisfied students across America’s college campuses is in large part due to the misunderstanding that AAPIs do not have racialized and minoritized experiences or encounter racial discrimination on campus. As this report points out, however, that narrow understanding of the AAPI student experience is far from true.

These findings are consistent with other studies showing the racial comments and bias encountered by AAPI students at their postsecondary institutions, the report observes.

Other common types of microaggressions encountered by AAPI students include Assumptions of Sameness, Foreign-ness, and High Achievement, according to Wing and colleagues.

Assumption of Sameness

This is another common type of microaggression encountered by AAPIs. Called the “invalidation of interethnic differences,” this refers to “the claim all Asians look alike,” speak the same language, or have the same cultural beliefs, traditions, and customs. Often, the assumption made is one must be Chinese or Japanese, when, as previously noted, there are dozens of Asian countries and hundreds of Pacific Islands from which AAPI students or their ancestors may have come. Another report by the National Commission on Asian American Pacific Islander Research, *Asian American and Pacific Islanders: Facts, not Fiction: Setting the Record Straight*, debunks three major myths in the American public. One such myth is the mistaken notion of homogeneity, and the report discusses the great diversity of AAPI peoples in terms of (1) ethnicity, (2) language, (3) immigration histories, and (4) economic, social, and cultural capital.

To assume sameness diminishes the individuality of the person and the uniqueness and worth of their ethnicity, which is why it is termed a microaggression. There are other harmful effects, as well.

Using the broad category of “Asian” in the general public and “AAPI” in research and scholarship allows greater ease of reference, but also contributes to this notion of sameness unless care is taken to acknowledge the great number of different ethnicities.

Many are beginning to call such terms into question, including the study referenced above and the study discussed earlier, *The State of Higher Education in California: Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders*. Both studies cite the need to disaggregate research—to separate the different AAPI groups in data collection and study, so great are the differences in cultures, demographics, educational needs and outcomes, and more—because the usual, narrow research focus impairs full and accurate understanding of these peoples.

The former Obama administration, in its White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, called this “a key civil rights issue for the AAPI community,” in that “lack of disaggregated data prevents federal, state, and local governments from understanding the civil and social needs of specific AAPI communities,” and meeting those needs.

Assumption of Foreign-Born

The misconception is that all AAPI students are international students or were born in or recently came from another country, when statistically this will only be the case for some. The frequent microaggression encountered in this regard is the question “Where are you from?” and, if hearing an American town or state in answer, pressing the issue with “No, where are you *really* from?”

The majority of students were born here or brought here at a young age, making this the country they have grown up in and the only country they have really ever known. For some, their prior generations may have lived in the U.S. longer than that of the questioner. This is called the “alien in own land” microaggression, because it can carry the assumption that all AAPI people must be foreigners, or make someone feel like a perpetual stranger in their own country, not American, and, therefore, not belonging. As well-intentioned as the questioner may be in genuinely wanting to learn more about another person, the encounter may be experienced by the AAPI student as troubling, sad, or insulting. The consequences in perpetuating such a stereotype in society of “never full or real American, always the foreigner” can range from reluctance for others to interact with someone who is AAPI, exclusion, and rejection to discrimination, xenophobia, and hate crimes.

Closely related to both of the foregoing microaggression themes of AAPI sameness and perpetual foreign-ness are assumptions regarding language. One assumption is that all AAPI Americans are multilingual, when many are not. Another common assumption is that those who are multilingual must speak Chinese or Japanese, when there are over a hundred AAPI languages, including the languages with the names of the many AAPI ethnicities stated previously and even more, such as Tagalog, Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, Telegu, Tamil, Formosan, Ilocano, Marathi, Kannada, Visayan, Sinhalese, Malay, and Cebuano, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Both assumptions regarding language may well prove frustrating or be seen as offensive for some. Telling an Asian American “*you speak English so well*” or “*I don’t hear an accent*” or “*can you teach me how to say ___ in your language?*” can carry the assumption that all people of Asian descent are recent immigrants to the country and learning the language, when many have been in the country for generations, and may not know any other language than English. For those who are immigrants, compliments on language proficiency may be seen by some as “othering,” being relegated to a group other than, even less than, the societal group held as the norm.

Assumption of High Achievement

This is another frequent stereotype, referred to as the “model minority,” and this may be the one with the greatest impact for AAPI students in college life.

In the book *The Color of Success*, historian Ellen Wu traces the development of the model minority stereotype. She notes that in the late 1800s up to about the 1940s, Asian Americans were viewed as poor, uneducated laborers or seen as the sinister “yellow peril” and discriminated against, including immigration bans on Asians and limitations to citizen rights codified in past federal law, and imprisonment of Japanese American citizens and immigrants in camps throughout the nation for most of World War II, even as Japanese service members fought in the American armed forces. Beginning in the 1950s, however, the glorification of Asian Americans as a group who work hard, don’t complain, and don’t get into trouble rose into the public consciousness, and in the mid-1960s the term “model minority” was introduced, solidifying the portrayal of Asian Americans as industrious, intelligent, law-abiding citizens, with obedient and respectful children and good family values.

Wu analyzes the many political and social factors that contributed to the model minority notion, including the Asian American community’s desire to reverse negative perceptions and cast themselves in a more positive light and the interests and concerns of the U.S. government and American society in the Civil Rights and Cold War era. She and other scholars have argued that by lauding Asians as a minority who had assimilated well into American society and succeeded, doing so without complaint at discriminatory practices, the implicit message sent to other minorities, especially African Americans, was “if they can do it, so can you, and without political protest.” The comparison is invalid for a number of reasons, one being that the former group largely voluntarily migrated to the country rather than being taken forcibly from their homeland and enslaved for centuries. The model minority notion, nonetheless, took hold in the American public and served to drive a wedge between Asian Americans and other minority groups and cause ill will thereafter. Asian Americans were held as the exemplar for other minorities—of success despite discrimination and racial bias, and without protest or riot.

In an interview, Wu says, “My book stops in the late 1960s, but what I think has happened since then is that the model minority stereotype story has actually shifted away from the original ideas.... We now fixate more on education. There’s the image of the tiger mom focused on getting her kid into Harvard.” The high-achieving—even over-achieving—AAPI student is the view widely held in present day, and is reflected in assumptions that all AAPI students always excel in all subjects, particularly math, science, and technology.

The model minority conceptualization may seem benign, and, for some, may well serve as a valuable source of motivation. Indeed, some AAPI groups have the highest educational attainment and higher than average financial earnings of Americans.

There are, however, also myriad documented negative consequences personally, academically, professionally, and societally.

Consequences to Personhood

The model minority stereotype can take a great toll, beginning in childhood. Along with the model minority mindset comes stereotypes that all AAPI youth do is study to achieve top notch grades, and at the expense of social life and social interaction skills. They may

have been resented by some classmates in grade school for getting good grades, called “geeky” or “nerdy,” and seen as quiet and passive, making bullying also likely for some. If they grew up with parents pushing high grades, then home life may have sometimes been difficult. In grade school and then in college, the pressure from others and self to achieve may be intense, causing stress, worry, exhaustion, loneliness, and sometimes depression, anxiety, and even suicidal thoughts.

The cost to those who fail to meet the high academic performance expectations—who get good or average grades, or lower—may be embarrassment, shame, lower self-esteem, never feeling good enough, and family disappointment or tension. Moreover, being able to share such feelings with someone may not be an option, because the cultural value of family honor meant you wouldn’t want to self-disclose family strife and any cultural norm of emotional restraint would likewise discourage you from confiding in others or seeking psychological counseling during difficult times.

Consequences to Academics

Academically, peers’ and professors’ high expectations may feel terribly daunting and oppressive, even for those students who meet or exceed them. AAPI students may come to feel or be made to feel “one dimensional,” being seen by others primarily or solely in terms of their academic achievement.

The model minority stereotype also makes it hard to admit fault, failure, or weakness in academia. Students who need academic assistance to improve grades may be reluctant to seek it, and those who do seek help may regret it when met with others’ surprise or disappointment in reaction. Struggling students also have lower likelihood of being identified as such and, thus, assisted when faculty don’t always see past the model minority myth.

Educational and career paths might also be impacted. Students may find themselves going into majors that do not truly interest them or pursuing internships and other campus opportunities to satisfy model minority expectations more than any real passion.

Consequences to Career

Professionally, the costs of the model minority myth on AAPI employees have been well-documented, and is called the “bamboo ceiling.” Just as the “glass ceiling” limits women from proportionate numbers in top executive and management positions in the country due to gender differences and sexism, the bamboo ceiling refers to the same phenomenon: The disproportionately lower numbers of AAPI people in top organizational positions—despite higher educational achievement for many—attributed to cultural and racial factors.

AAPI employees often are pigeon-holed to and kept in more of the positions in math, science, and technology sectors, and have to work longer and harder to stand out from their other-race colleagues who are not set against the high bar of the model minority stereotype. The cultural tendencies of some, and the societal expectations that, AAPI employees are quiet, humble, and non-assertive mean that they may not be viewed as having leadership potential in an American workforce where getting ahead is seen as

synonymous with just the opposite—speaking up, self-promotion, and assertiveness. These latter qualities are correlated with leadership selection and emergence, who is chosen or seen as leader—but not necessarily linked to leadership effectiveness, who actually is a good leader once in that position.

Consequences to Society

The societal effects of the model minority stereotype are serious. The model minority myth serves to highlight the successes of some AAPI groups when, as discussion in this work and elsewhere show, there is great range in educational and financial achievement in the dozens of different AAPI ethnicities. Ultimately, this means that those groups who struggle in our society are less recognized as doing so, and, therefore, have less resources available to them. People in need go without or with less, and our nation’s workforce and citizenry don’t reach full potential.

The model minority myth also serves to promulgate the mistaken conclusion that a people faring so well in society must not be experiencing racial bias or discrimination which, again discussed in this work, would not be the case at all, and brings us right back to the first of the most common of microaggressions faced by AAPI students described in this work—that they do not face racial discrimination or bias, when the unfortunate reality is that they do. For this reason, the terms “invisible minority” or “forgotten minority” are sometimes used.

The peril is that some AAPI students might themselves minimize or feel that they can’t seek redress when encountering bias because others will minimize or discount their racialized experiences. Furthermore, societal failure to recognize racial injustices in the lives of AAPI people means that social reform and justice are slower to come.

All told, when AAPI students are made to feel by society all the same, all foreign, and all high achievers, there are myriad and detrimental consequences, most long-unrecognized by the larger American society.

As faculty and staff, the one thing we can do on a daily basis is to see our AAPI students as utterly unique individuals, seeing each for all they are, and for some students, helping them to see they are much more than just their accomplishments, as they are indeed.

(For further information on the common microaggressions faced by AAPI students, please see [“Racial Microaggressions and the Asian American Experience” \(PDF\)](#)

by Derald Wing Sue, Jennifer Bucceri, Annie I. Lin, Kevin L. Nadal, and Gina C. Torino,
http://www.oregoncampuscompact.org/uploads/1/3/0/4/13042698/racial_microaggressions_and_aa_experience.pdf
 as well as

[The Racialized Experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander Students, and Asian American and Pacific Islanders: Facts, not Fiction: Setting the Record Straight, by the National Commission on Asian American Pacific Islander Research in Education,](#)
<http://care.gseis.ucla.edu/care-reports/>)

Campus Resources

Below begins a section listing some of the many campus services specifically geared to AAPI students and underrepresented students, and in the section to follow you will find a list of resources for multilingual students.

Full Circle Project (FCP)—

Assists Asian American and Pacific Islander students through their college careers, with services that include: First Year Experience courses and learning community courses, academic advising, personal counseling, tutoring, mentoring, leadership development and service learning opportunities, and cultural enrichment activities.

Location: Library 1000

Phone: (916) 278-5172

[FCP Website](https://www.csus.edu/center/full-circle-project/) <https://www.csus.edu/center/full-circle-project/>

Project HMONG (Helping Mentor Our Next Generation)—

Strives to ensure the academic, career, and life success for Hmong and other underrepresented students by building a community of mentors and peers, and offering support, guidance, and encouragement, while promoting positive character development.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-5877

[Project HMONG Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/project-hmong.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/project-hmong.html>

First Generation Institute (FGI)—

Offers workshops, speakers, and more to increase awareness and skills needed to progress from first generation students to first generation professionals, helping to increase academic success and degree-to-work readiness.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[FGI Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/first-generation-institute.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/first-generation-institute.html>

Dreamer Resource Center (DRC)—

Helps undocumented students and students with mixed-status families to overcome challenges that get in the way of academic, personal, and professional excellence. Services include financial and academic guidance, support, events, a free legal Immigration Clinic, a Dream Connections support group, the Dream Leader Internship Program, DRC Student Emergency Grant, a Dreamer Experience Seminar to help students navigate college life as an undocumented student, and more.

Location: River Front Center 1022

Phone: (916) 278-7241

[DRC Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/dreamer-resource-center/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/dreamer-resource-center/>

Student Academic Success and Educational Equity Programs (SASEEP) Office—

Encourages and supports students in persisting toward their educational goals to ensure the success of all students on campus while closing the achievement gap. The office has an “open door” policy—students may come on in or call.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[SASEEP Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/>

DEGREES Project (Dedicated to Educating, Graduating, and Retaining Educational Equity Students)—

Connects students, with a focus on underrepresented students, with a variety of resources to promote their success in college, including: early intervention, academic advising, graduation support, mentoring, and referral to other valuable campus resources. Students and faculty may look on the website listed below to find DEGREES Project Advisors and Coaches and their contact information for emailing, calling, dropping by, or making an appointment to meet.

Location: Lassen Hall 2302

Phone: (916) 278-7017

[DEGREES Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/>

Extended Opportunity Program (EOP)—

Supports incoming freshmen and transfer students from disadvantaged economic and/or educational backgrounds by providing services that include: academic advising, personal counseling, tutoring, financial aid advising, course placement and planning, learning communities, and more.

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[EOP Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/educational-opportunity-program/) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/educational-opportunity-program/>

Faculty Student Mentor Program (FSMP)—

Offers academic and personal support to students from traditionally low-income communities through mentoring in the discipline of choice, as well as opportunities to meet other students with similar academic, cultural, and social interests. FSMP also provides assistance with study skills, time and stress management, course and major selection, and more

Location: Lassen Hall 2205

Phone: (916) 278-6183

[FMSP Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/faculty-student-mentor.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/retention-academic-success/faculty-student-mentor.html>

College of Education Equity Program Office—

Provides advising and resources for those interested in a career in education and who are from specific student groups, such as financial aid and work study candidates, Cal Grant recipients, individuals that are first in family college students, and multilingual/multicultural learners. Services include: academic advising, mentoring, assistance with scholarships and applications, and more.

Location: Eureka Hall 437 (inside the College's Student Success Center)

[Educational Equity Program Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/education/student-support/equity-office.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/education/student-support/equity-office.html>

MESA Engineering Program (MEP)—

Offers students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds support to increase their success in their engineering or computer science studies, including: counseling, academic advising, tutoring, workshops, mentoring, opportunities for community service, a network of peer support, and a study center.

Location: Santa Clara Hall 1207

Phone: (916) 278-6699

[MEP Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/engineering-computer-science/mesa-engineering-program/) <https://www.csus.edu/college/engineering-computer-science/mesa-engineering-program/>

CSU-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (CSU-LSAMP) at Sacramento State—
Strives to increase participation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors and help students to advance their education to a graduate program with services that include: one-on-one advising, research opportunities, graduate school preparation, workshops, guest speakers, and support to attend local, regional, and national conferences. Students who apply must belong to an underrepresented group in STEM fields, including any of the following: African American, Latino, Native American, and South Pacific Islander students, and first generation college students, students with disabilities, and students whose families live below the poverty line.

Phone: (916) 278-6519

[CSU-LSAMP Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/louis-stokes-alliance-minority-participation.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/louis-stokes-alliance-minority-participation.html>

RISE Program (Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement)—

Offers a research training program designed to cultivate talented undergraduate students interested in pursuing biomedical research careers, and help them become more competent in their scientific disciplines, confident in their laboratory skills, and resilient to adversity in the classroom and lab settings. The program provides support for hands-on research opportunities at Sac State or the UC Davis Medical Center or main campus, and career-enhancement opportunities to help students become competitive for admission to PhD programs in the biomedical fields. Students who apply must belong to an underrepresented group, including any of the following: African American, Latino, Native American, and South Pacific Islander students, and first generation college or educationally disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students whose families live below the poverty line.

Phone: (916) 278-6519

[RISE Website](https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/research-initiative-scientific-enhancement.html) <https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/center-science-math-success/research-initiative-scientific-enhancement.html>

Graduate Diversity Program—

Provides assistance in the form of financial, academic, and community support to disadvantaged and underrepresented students who want to pursue graduate level work.

Location: River Front Center 203

Phone: (916) 278-3834

[Graduate Diversity Program Website](https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/graduate-diversity/) <https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/graduate-diversity/>

McNair Scholars Program—

Offers a two-year program designed to prepare students for doctoral program admission and study. Selected students must be juniors or seniors who are the first in their families to go to college, and who meet federal low-income guidelines or are a member of a traditional underrepresented group in graduate education (African American, Hispanic/Latino, Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaskan Native).

Location: River Front Center 203

Phone: (916) 278-5118

[McNair Scholars Website](https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/mcnair-scholars-program/index.html) <https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/mcnair-scholars-program/index.html>

For Multilingual Students or Students Wanting Help with Academics

Peer and Academic Resource Center Workshops and Individual Tutoring (WIT) —

Offers tutoring to students, including multilingual students, to help with assignments and homework in their classes. Students may go online, call, or come by for further information, availability hours, and appointments.

Location: Lassen Hall 2200

Phone: (916) 278-6010

[Peer Advising & Tutoring Website](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/peer-advising-tutoring.html) <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/peer-academic-resource/peer-advising-tutoring.html>

University Reading and Writing Center (URWC)—

Provides encouraging one-on-one peer tutoring for students, including multilingual students wanting help with reading and writing at any point in the process, including planning, organizing, developing, and revising a paper to understanding difficult texts. Students are welcome to come in with reading and writing assignments for any course in any academic discipline and learn how to become a more confident writer or reader. Students may come by during the drop-in hours posted (website/at Center) for a single session of tutoring, or may make a session appointment or regular weekly standing tutoring appointments for the semester.

Location: Calaveras Hall 128

Phone: (916) 278-6356

[URWC Website](https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html) <https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html>

Smarthinking—

Provides online tutoring that enables students to get the help they need 24-hours a day, seven days a week, in many subject areas, one of which is English for Speakers of Other Languages, to help students to strengthen their English skills. A tutorial for how to access and use this online tutoring service is there on the website.

[Smarthinking \(PDF\)](https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/_internal/_documents/degrees-smarthinking.pdf) https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/degrees-project/_internal/_documents/degrees-smarthinking.pdf

English Department—

Offers a number of English courses specifically geared to multilingual students. Please note that any English course listing with an “M” (meaning multilingual) following the number of the course will be taught by an instructor skilled in working with multilingual students.

[Website for Sacramento State Catalog Course Listing](https://catalog.csus.edu/) <https://catalog.csus.edu/>