LATINX/HISPANIC STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND OUTCOMES AT CSUN

Latinx/Hispanic students make up the largest racial/ethnic group at CSUN (57% of the undergraduate population in Fall 2022). This report aims to better understand the demographic profile and academic outcomes among Latinx/Hispanic students at CSUN, both collectively as a pan-ethnic group, and by national origin groups.

Key Findings

1. **As a whole, Latinx/Hispanic students are more likely to come from first-generation college backgrounds (87.3%) and to be Pell recipients (68.9%) than the CSUN undergraduate population as a whole (69.8% first-generation, 57.4% Pell),** but this varies quite widely by regional origin group, with students from Guatemalan and Salvadoran heritage most likely to be first-generation and to be Pell recipients.

2. **As an aggregate, Latinx/Hispanic FTF and FTT have a lower first-year GPA (2.53 FTF, 2.86 FTT) than the campus average (2.63 FTF, 2.92 FTT).** This varies by regional origin group, with the highest first-year GPA among students of South American heritage for both FTF and FTT.

3. **First-year retention rates for Latinx/Hispanic FTF and FTT (76.2% FTF, 85.2% FTT) are similar to the campus averages (78.1% FTF, 85.3% FTT).** Retention is highest among FTF and FTT of South American heritage.

4. **Among Latinx/Hispanic FTF, both 4- and 6-year graduation rates (13.7% 4 year; 49.3% 6 year) are only a few percentage points below the campus-wide averages (16.9% 4 year; 53.0% 6 year).** When disaggregated to regional groups, FTF of Caribbean heritage had the highest 4-year graduation rates while FTF of South American heritage had the highest 6-year graduation rates.

5. **Graduation rates for Latinx/Hispanic FTT (38.1% 2 year; 75.9% 4 year) are very similar to the campus-wide averages (36.2% 2 year; 75.9% 4 year).** There is very little variation in 2-year graduation rates by regional group. For 4-year graduation rates among Latinx/Hispanic FTT, students of South American heritage had the highest rates (78.0%).

6. **The majority of students classified as Latinx/Hispanic using the federal classification guidelines express a preferred identity of Latinx/Hispanic, but this preference varies by regional group,** with the strongest preference for this label among those of Salvadoran and Guatemalan heritage and least strong among those of Caribbean heritage.

OVERVIEW

The current report examines demographic characteristics and academic outcomes among Latinx/Hispanic students at CSUN, both collectively as a pan-ethnic group and by national origin groups. Specifically, the report seeks to address the following questions:
1. What is the demographic profile of Latinx/Hispanic undergraduate students at CSUN?
2. What do academic outcomes look like for CSUN Latinx/Hispanic undergraduate students?
3. How does further disaggregation to national origin groups help us to better understand CSUN Latinx/Hispanic students' demographics and academic outcomes?

Defining Latinx/Hispanic

Latinx/Hispanic students are the largest racial/ethnic group at CSUN—comprising 57% of the undergraduate population in Fall 2022 (18,313 out of 31,957 students).

There are many terms that are used to denote this population, including (but not limited to): Hispanic, Latinx, Latine, Latina/o, Latin@, Chicana/o, and Chican@. In this report we use "Latinx/Hispanic" to be inclusive of the regional variations in the use of these terms in the U.S., as well as to recognize commonalities in histories of colonization. Further, we utilize "Latinx", rather than the more common "Latino", as a gender neutral term that is more inclusive of LGBTQIA+ communities.

We acknowledge that notions of race, ethnic, and national identity labels carry political, social, and familial meanings that can be controversial. Most importantly, we recognize the limitations and imperfections of any label applied to such a diverse group.

This report aims to better understand the demographic profile and academic outcomes among the Latinx/Hispanic student population at CSUN by disaggregating to major national origin groups. In particular, we have disaggregated to the national origin groups as captured by the CSU system common application form (Cal State Apply)[1] during the period spanning from Fall 2009 to 2021[2]

Disaggregated Latinx/Hispanic national origin groups captured by Cal State Apply (with regional groupings)

Mexican (MEX)

Salvadoran (SAL)

Guatemalan (GUA)

Caribbean (CAR): Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican

Central American (CEN): Costa Rican, Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American

South American (SOU): Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Peruvian, Paraguayan, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American

Other (OTH): Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified

[1] Some Latinx/Hispanic national origin groups may not be represented in this brief because of the limited options provided in the CSU system common application form.

[2] Note that the federal guidelines for gathering race/ethnicity data changed in 2009, which had significant impact on how the Latinx/Hispanic population is defined. For this reason, this report includes an examination of the data only back to 2009.
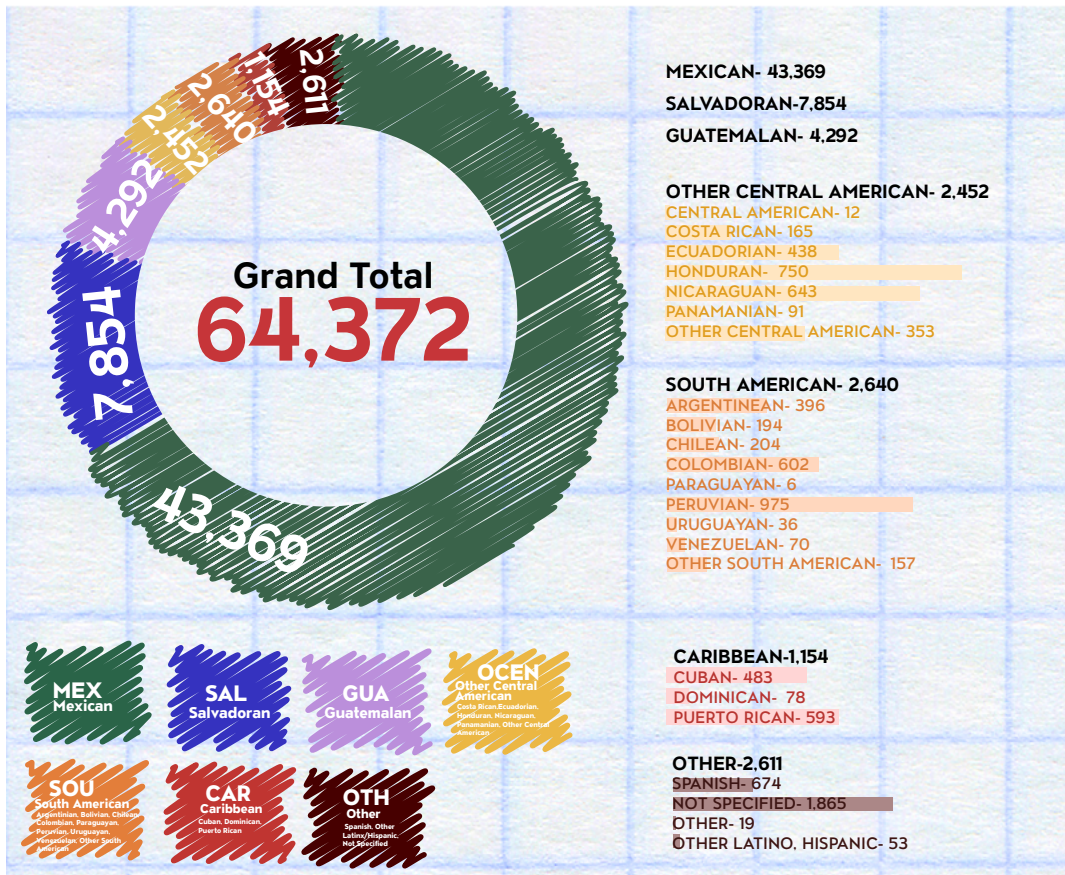
DATA

This report utilizes a dataset compiled by the CSUN Office of Institutional Research which contains detailed student information for new incoming undergraduate cohorts (first-time freshmen and new transfers) from Fall 2009 to 2021[3]. The dataset includes student demograhpic characteristics (e.g., parent education,gender, race/ethnicity) and academic outcomes (e.g., first-year CSUN GPA, retention, graduation). After filtering for only Latinx/Hispanic-identifying students who are not international (F and J visas)[4], the dataset includes 64,372 students. Disaggregated race data for specific Latinx/Hispanic national origin groups were available as captured by the CSU system common application form (Cal State Apply)[5]

DEMOGRAPHICS

Data on Latinx/Hispanic students is commonly presented as a single group, without further disaggregation to national origins. This can conceal important differences between national origin groups, both in terms of experiences as well as student outcomes. Therefore, in the following section, demographic characteristics for Latinx/Hispanic students are further disaggregated to examine diversity within this group.

New Undergraduate Latinx/Hispanic Enrollment Total: 2009-2021

Grand Total
64,372

MEXICAN- 43,369
SALVADORAN-7,854
GUATEMALAN- 4,292

OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN- 2,452
CENTRAL AMERICAN- 12
COSTA RICAN- 165
ECUADORIAN- 438
HONDURAN- 750
NICARAGUAN- 643
PANAMANIAN- 91
OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN- 353

SOUTH AMERICAN- 2,640
ARGENTINEAN- 396
BOLIVIAN- 194
CHILEAN- 204
COLOMBIAN- 602
PARAGUAYAN- 6
PERUVIAN- 975
URUGUAYAN- 36
VENEZUELAN- 70
OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN- 157

CARIBBEAN-1,154
CUBAN- 483
DOMINICAN- 78
PUERTO RICAN- 593

OTHER-2,611
SPANISH- 674
NOT SPECIFIED- 1,865
OTHER- 19
OTHER LATINO, HISPANIC- 53

MEX Mexican
SAL Salvadoran
GUA Guatemalan
OCEN Other Central American Costa Rican,Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American
SOU South American Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezualian, Other South American
CAR Caribbean Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican
OTH Other Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified

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[3] Because we are looking at student outcomes, we include only those cohorts for which we have at least 1 year of academic data at the time this report was written.

[4] Research suggests demographics and outcomes between US-born Latinx/Hispanic students and international Latinx/Hispanic students are not similar because of different backgrounds and experiences.
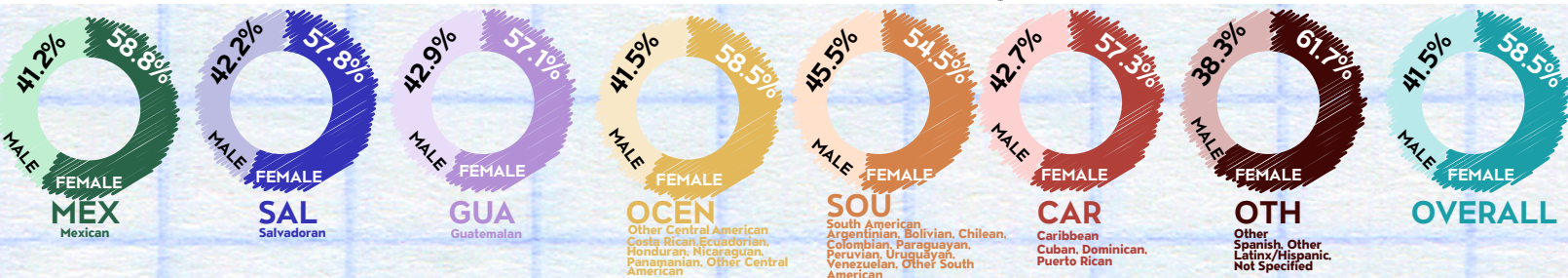
[5] Other options available to CSU applicants varied from year to year; because some of these were not consistent, we have excluded those options that were not offered for most of the years under study in the remainder of this report.

Gender

As with most race/ethnic groups at CSUN, female-identifying students make up the majority of Latinx/Hispanic students (58.5%). Note that, until very recently, the CSU application only offered applicants the choice of two gender identity options; we recognize that this variable has therefore historically lacked in information to contextualize experiences outside the binary.
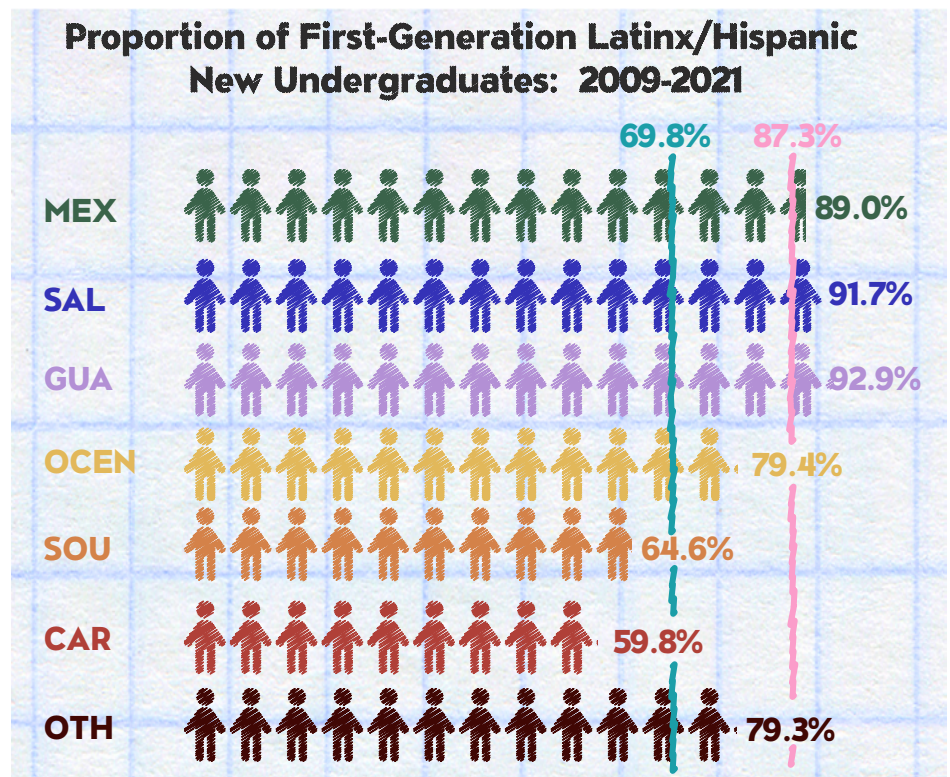
When disaggregated by regional groups, there is little variation in gender distribution, but female- and male-identifying students are most evenly distributed among students of South American heritage (54.5% female vs. 45.5% male), whereas the Other Latinx/Hispanic heritage group has the largest proportion of female-identifying students (61.7%).

Gender Distribution of New Latinx/Hispanic Undergraduates: 2009-2021

|	MALE	FEMALE
MEX Mexican	41.2%	58.8%
SAL Salvadoran	42.2%	57.8%
GUA Guatemalan	42.9%	57.1%
OCEN Other Central American (Costa Rican, Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American)	41.5%	58.5%
SOU South American (Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American)	45.5%	54.5%
CAR Caribbean (Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican)	42.7%	57.3%
OTH Other (Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified)	38.3%	61.7%
OVERALL	41.5%	58.5%

First-Generation College Students

As a whole, Latinx/Hispanic students are more likely to come from first-generation college[6] backgrounds (87.3%) than the CSUN undergraduate population as a whole (69.8%). When disaggregated by regional groups, there is a wide range in the proportion of first-generation students: whereas students of Caribbean and South American heritage are less likely than the overall CSUN undergraduate population to come from first-generation backgrounds (59.8% and 64.6%, respectively), over 90% of students from Guatemalan and Salvadoran heritage (92.9% and 91.7%, respectively) come from first-generation backgrounds.

Proportion of First-Generation Latinx/Hispanic New Undergraduates: 2009-2021

CSUN Average: 69.8%
Latinx/Hispanic Average: 87.3%

MEX	89.0%
SAL	91.7%
GUA	92.9%
OCEN	79.4%
SOU	64.6%
CAR	59.8%
OTH	79.3%

MEX Mexican | **SAL** Salvadoran | **GUA** Guatemalan | **OCEN** Other Central American (Costa Rican, Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American) | **SOU** South American (Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American) | **CAR** Caribbean (Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican) | **OTH** Other (Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified) | **LATINX/HISPANIC** Average | **CSUN** Average

[6]In this report, we define first-generation college student as someone whose parent(s) did not complete a college degree.

Proportion of Pell Grant Recipients Among Latinx/Hispanic New Undergraduates: 2009-2021

57.4% 68.9%

MEX	69.2%
SAL	74.0%
GUA	75.8%
OCEN	65.5%
SOU	54.4%
CAR	48.6%
OTH	64.5%
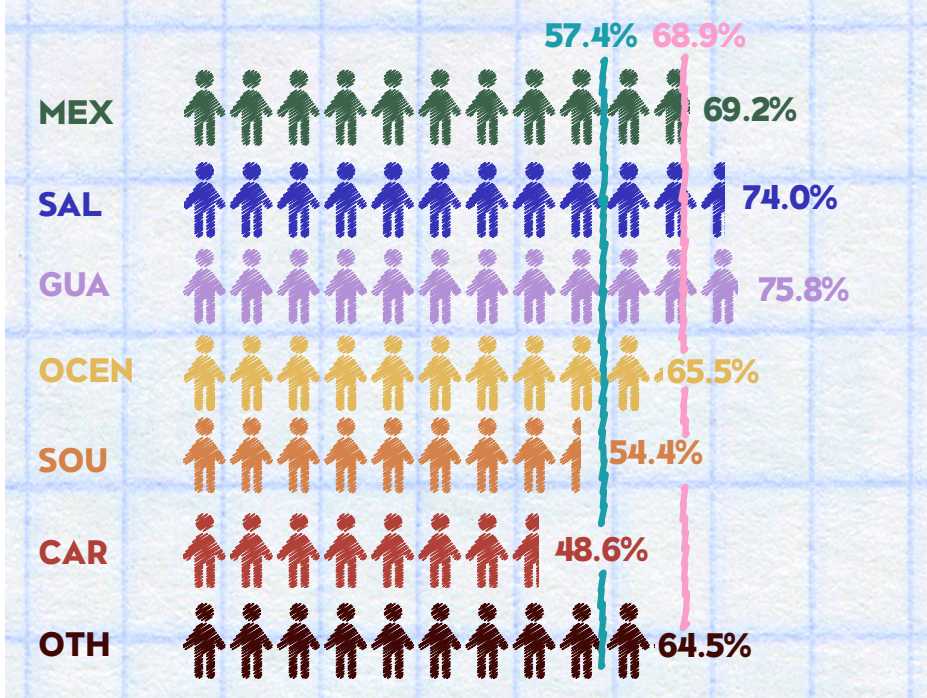
Pell Grant Recipient Status

Pell Grant recipients[7] make up a larger proportion of Latinx/Hispanic undergraduates (68.9%) than the CSUN undergraduate population as a whole (57.4%). Disaggregating by regional origin group again reveals a wide range of experiences, from fewer than half of students of Caribbean heritage (48.6%) who are Pell Grant recipients, to three-quarters of students of Salvadoran and Guatemalan heritage (74.0% and 75.8%, respectively) who are Pell Grant recipients.
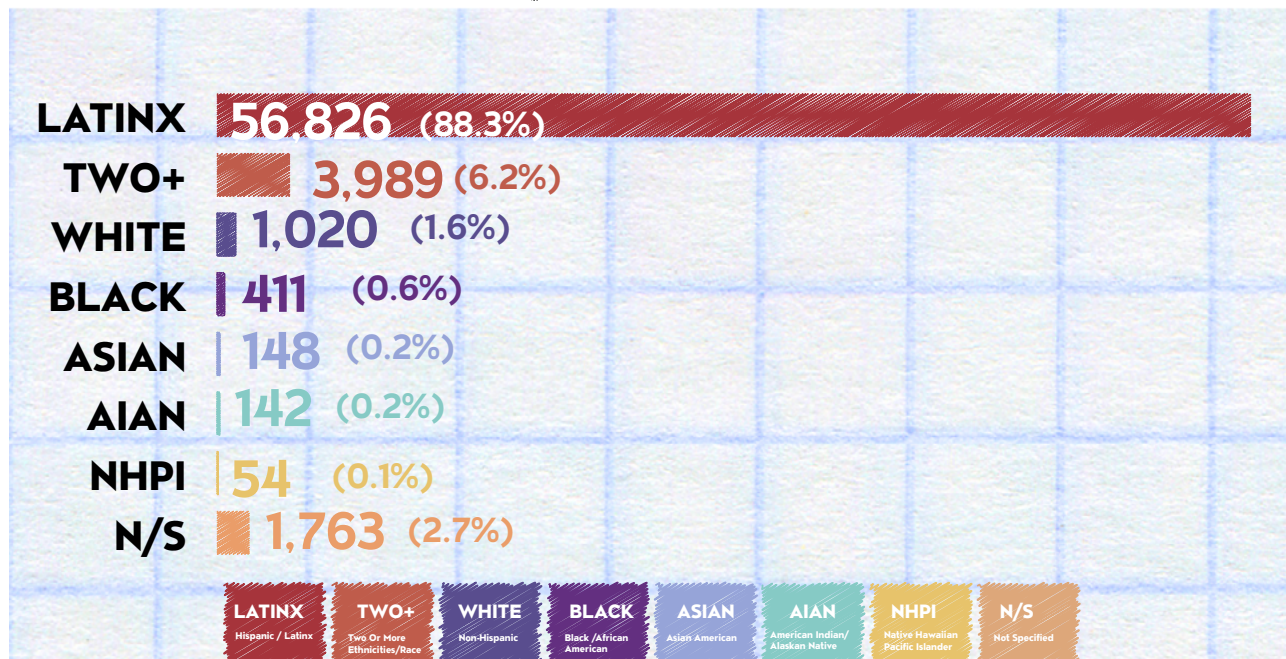
Preferred Racial/Ethnic Identity

To meet federal reporting requirements (i.e., the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, or IPEDS), the CSU application includes the required two-question series to gather race/ethnicity data: 1) "With regard to your ethnicity, do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino?", followed by 2) "Regardless of your answer to the question above, please select below one or more of the following groups in which you consider yourself a member", with response options: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, White, Decline to State, or None of the Above. Per federal guidelines, if a student answers "Yes" to question #1, they are classified as Latinx/Hispanic, regardless of how they might respond to question #2. The CSU application includes a third race/ethnicity question, separate from the federally required questions, "California State University often needs to report ONLY ONE summary race/ethnicity description for a person. Please select your reporting preferences", with the following options (respondent may only choose one): American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, White, Two or More Races/Ethnicities, or Decline to State.

Because the first set of race/ethnicity questions use the response to the Hispanic/Latino question as the overriding identifier, it could classify individuals who do not personally identify as Latinx/Hispanic as such. For example, someone who checks yes to question #1 and also identifies as Black in question #2 might actually identify as Black or African American, but would not be identified as such using the federal reporting guidelines. In this example, using the third race/ethnicity question would be a better way to classify the race/ethnicity of this individual.
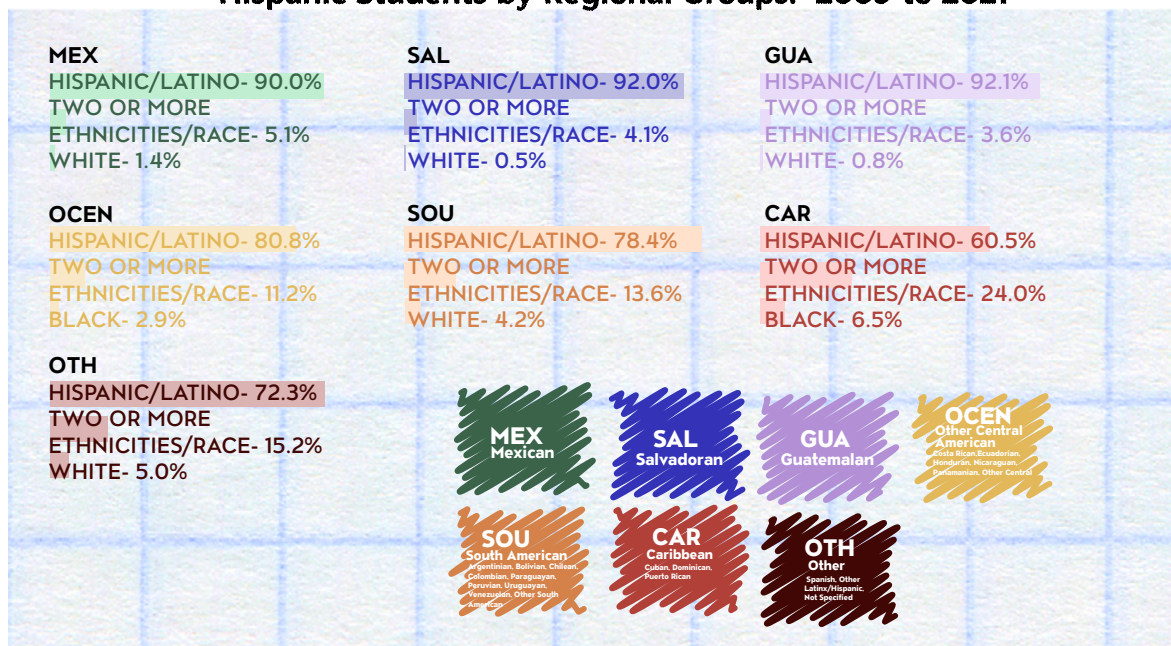
In order to better understand this and similar cases, we examined the "preferred racial/ethnic identity" (i.e., response to the third question) of new students in group under study in this report.

[7] Pell grant recipient status is a proxy to low-income status; over half of Pell grants go to students whose families make less then $20,000 annually.

Preferred Racial/Ethnic Identity of New Latinx/Hispanic Undergraduates: 2009 to 2021

LATINX 56,826 (88.3%)

TWO+ 3,989 (6.2%)

WHITE 1,020 (1.6%)

BLACK 411 (0.6%)

ASIAN 148 (0.2%)

AIAN 142 (0.2%)

NHPI 54 (0.1%)

N/S 1,763 (2.7%)

LATINX	TWO+	WHITE	BLACK	ASIAN	AIAN	NHPI	N/S
Hispanic / Latinx	Two Or More Ethnicities/Race	Non-Hispanic	Black /African American	Asian American	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Not Specified

Top 3 Preferred Racial/Ethnic Identities of New Latinx/ Hispanic Students by Regional Groups: 2009 to 2021

MEX
HISPANIC/LATINO- 90.0%
TWO OR MORE ETHNICITIES/RACE- 5.1%
WHITE- 1.4%

SAL
HISPANIC/LATINO- 92.0%
TWO OR MORE ETHNICITIES/RACE- 4.1%
WHITE- 0.5%

GUA
HISPANIC/LATINO- 92.1%
TWO OR MORE ETHNICITIES/RACE- 3.6%
WHITE- 0.8%

OCEN
HISPANIC/LATINO- 80.8%
TWO OR MORE ETHNICITIES/RACE- 11.2%
BLACK- 2.9%

SOU
HISPANIC/LATINO- 78.4%
TWO OR MORE ETHNICITIES/RACE- 13.6%
WHITE- 4.2%

CAR
HISPANIC/LATINO- 60.5%
TWO OR MORE ETHNICITIES/RACE- 24.0%
BLACK- 6.5%

OTH
HISPANIC/LATINO- 72.3%
TWO OR MORE ETHNICITIES/RACE- 15.2%
WHITE- 5.0%

MEX Mexican

SAL Salvadoran

GUA Guatemalan

OCEN Other Central American
Costa Rican,Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central

SOU South American
Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American

CAR Caribbean
Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican

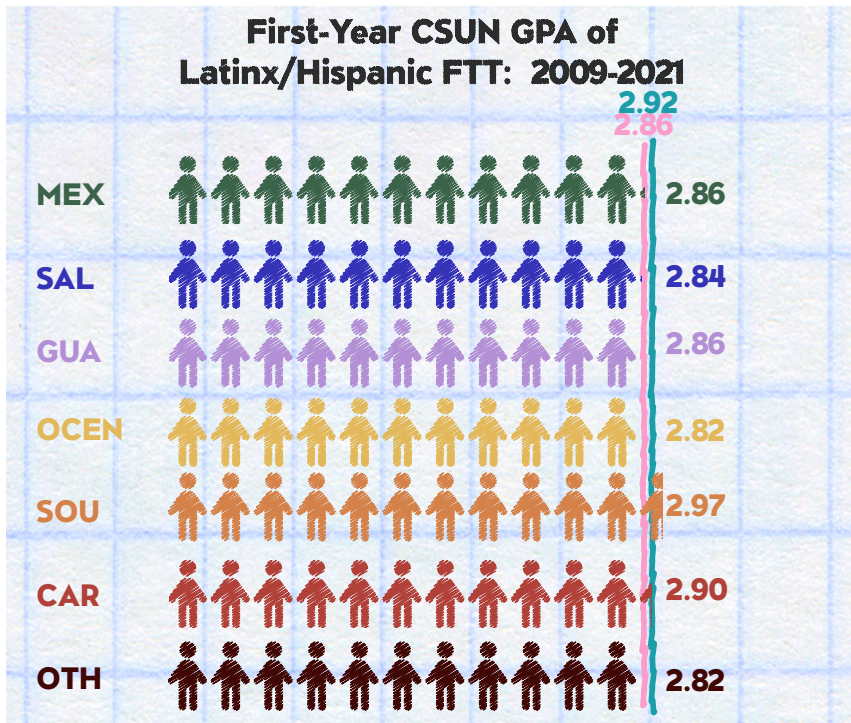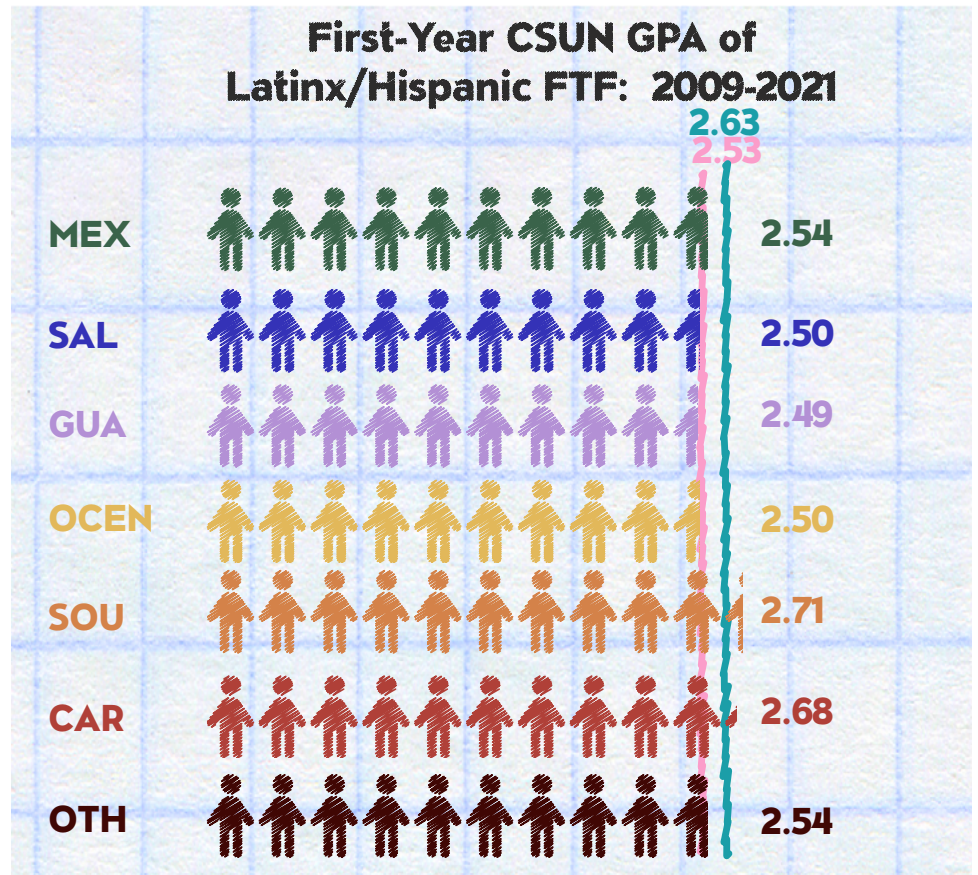**OTH** Other
Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified

An overwhelming majority of students who are classified as Latinx/Hispanic using the federal definitions indicate that this is their preferred identity (88.3%). The next most common preferred identity is "two or more ethnicities/races" (6.2%). When these data are disaggregated further to regional groups, Latinx/Hispanic is the top preferred identity within all regional groups, but this preference ranges from 60.5% among those of Caribbean heritage to 92% among those of Salvadoran and Guatemalan heritage. For most groups, the second and third preferred identities are multirace and White (in that order), with the exception of students of Central American and Caribbean heritage, among whom the third-ranked preferred identity is Black or African American.

ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

In order to further understand the Latinx/Hispanic student population at CSUN, we examined their academic outcomes. In particular, we analyzed data on first-year GPA, retention rates, and graduation rates among Latinx/Hispanic first-time freshmen (FTF) and first-time transfers (FTT) who first entered CSUN between Fall 2009 and 2021.

First-Year CSUN GPA: First-Time Freshmen (FTF)

As an aggregate, the first-year CSUN GPA of Latinx/Hispanic FTF (2.53) was lower than the campus average for FTF (2.63). Further disaggregated data reveal the wide range of first-year GPAs among Latinx/Hispanic FTF, ranging from 2.49 among FTF of Guatemalan heritage and 2.50 among FTF of Salvadoran and Other Central American heritage to 2.71 among those of South American heritage.

First-Year CSUN GPA of Latinx/Hispanic FTF: 2009-2021

CSUN Average: 2.63
Latinx/Hispanic Average: 2.53

Group	GPA
MEX	2.54
SAL	2.50
GUA	2.49
OCEN	2.50
SOU	2.71
CAR	2.68
OTH	2.54

Legend:
- MEX — Mexican
- SAL — Salvadoran
- GUA — Guatemalan
- OCEN — Other Central American: Costa Rican, Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American
- SOU — South American: Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American
- CAR — Caribbean: Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican
- OTH — Other: Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified
- LATINX/HISPANIC Average
- CSUN Average

First-Year CSUN GPA of Latinx/Hispanic FTT: 2009-2021

CSUN Average: 2.92
Latinx/Hispanic Average: 2.86

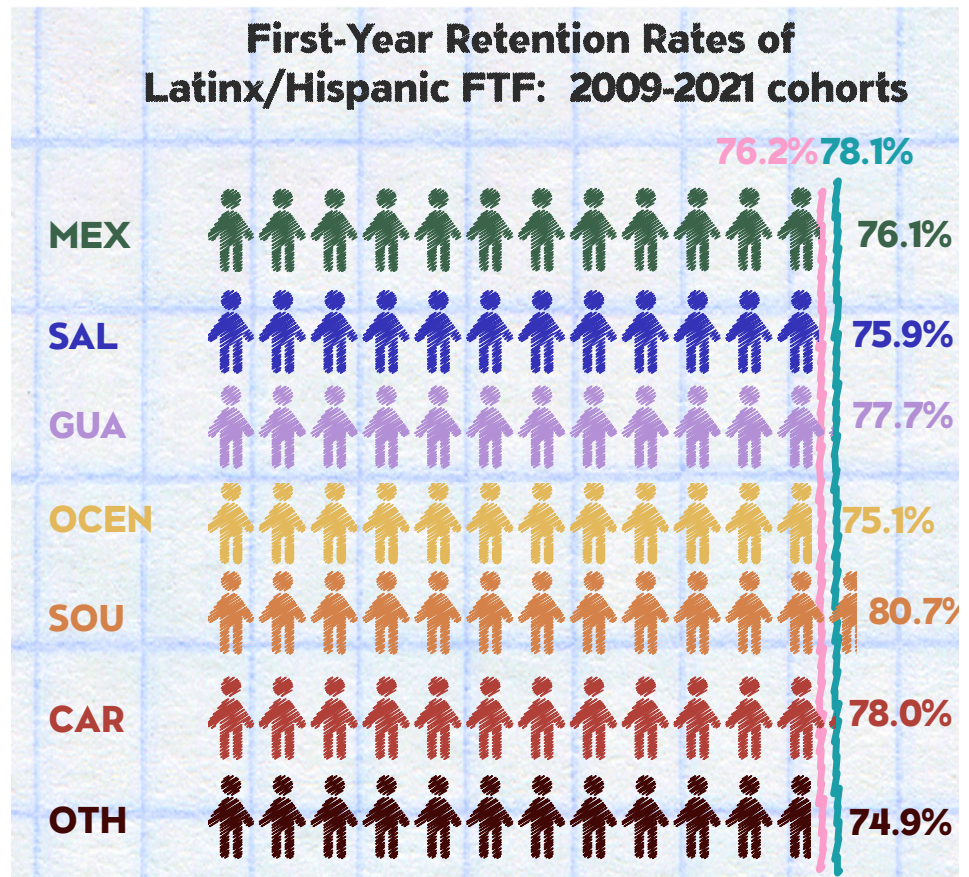| Group	GPA
MEX	2.86
SAL	2.84
GUA	2.86
OCEN	2.82
SOU	2.97
CAR	2.90
OTH	2.82

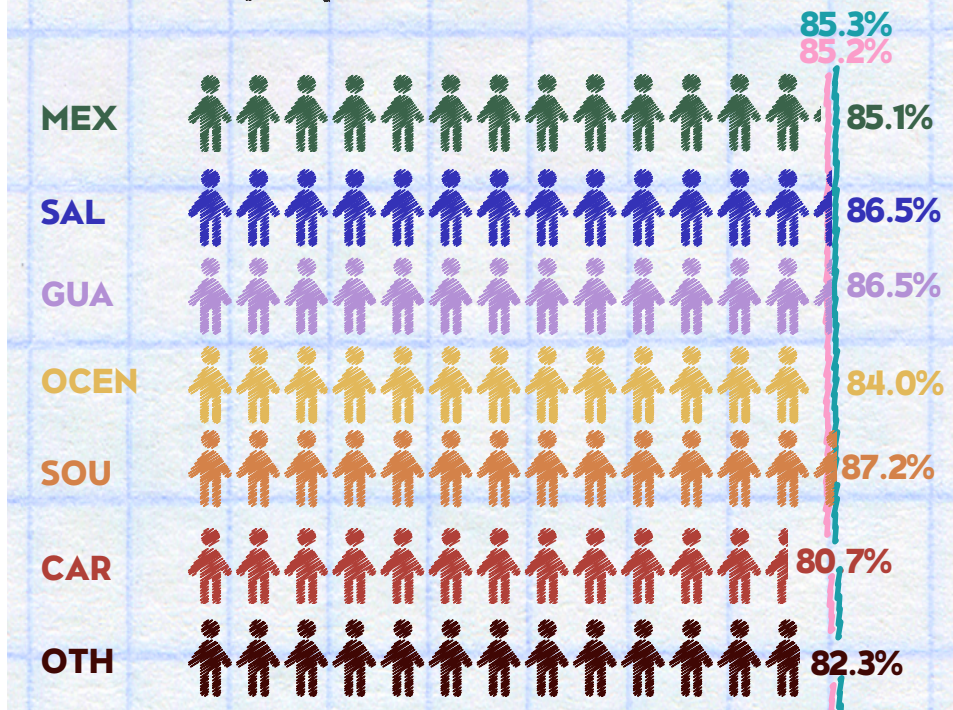## First-Year CSUN GPA: First-Time Transfers (FTT)

Similarly, Latinx/Hispanic FTT have a lower first-year GPA, on average, as compared with the campus average (2.86 vs. 2.92), but the gap is smaller than among Latinx/Hispanic FTF. As with FTF, FTT of Other Central American heritage (as well as those of Other Latinx/Hispanic heritage) have the lowest first-year GPA (2.82), while those of South American heritage have the highest (2.97).

Retention Rate: FTF

Latinx/Hispanic FTF re-enroll in their third term (i.e., first-year retention rate) at rates similar to that of the campus average (76.2% vs. 78.1%). Disaggregated data indicate similar rates of retention among the regional groups, with FTF of Other Latinx/Hispanic heritage (74.9%) showing the lowest rates of retention and those of South American heritage (80.8%) experiencing the highest rate.

First-Year Retention Rates of Latinx/Hispanic FTF: 2009-2021 cohorts

76.2% 78.1%

	Rate
MEX	76.1%
SAL	75.9%
GUA	77.7%
OCEN	75.1%
SOU	80.7%
CAR	78.0%
OTH	74.9%

MEX Mexican
SAL Salvadoran
GUA Guatemalan
OCEN Other Central American Costa Rican, Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American
SOU South American Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American
CAR Caribbean Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican
OTH Other Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified
LATINX/ HISPANIC Average
CSUN Average

First-Year Retention Rates of Latinx/Hispanic FTT: 2009-2021 cohorts

85.3%
85.2%

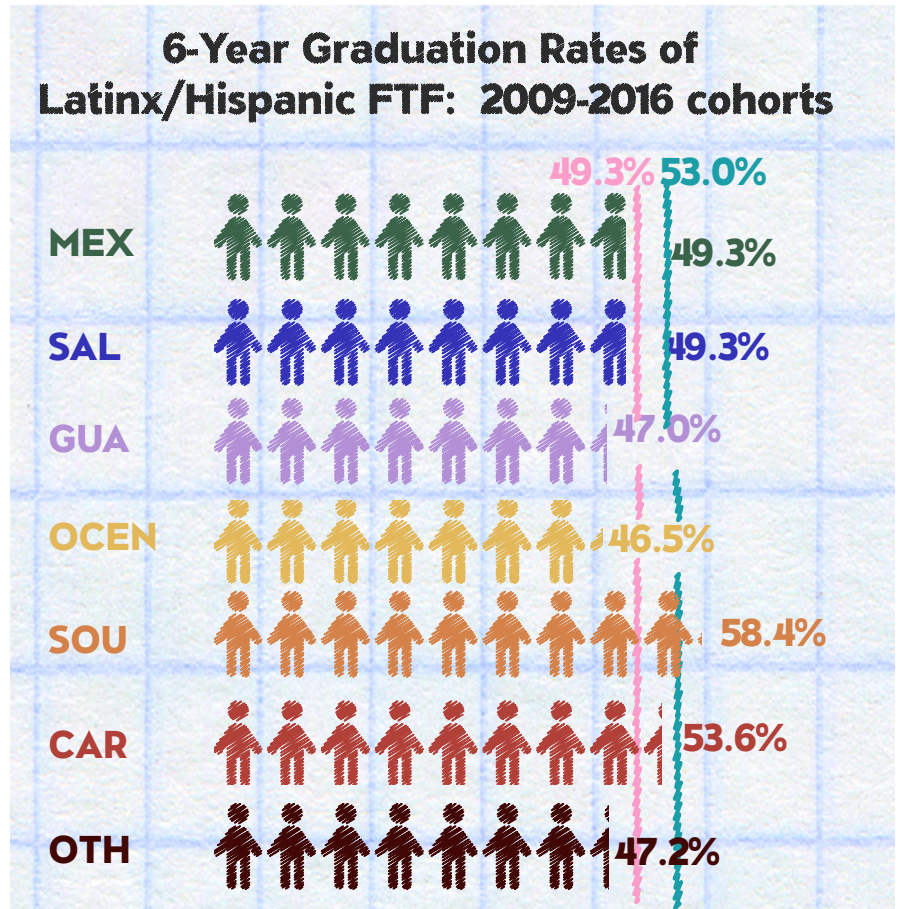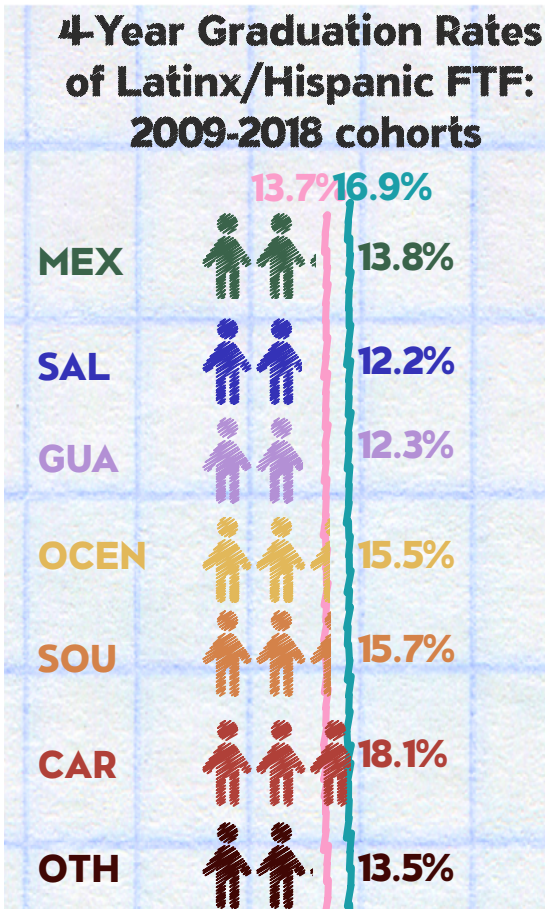|	Rate
MEX	85.1%
SAL	86.5%
GUA	86.5%
OCEN	84.0%
SOU	87.2%
CAR	80.7%
OTH	82.3%

Retention Rate: FTT

First-year retention rates for Latinx/Hispanic FTT are virtually identical to the campus average (85.2% vs. 85.3%). As with FTF, FTT of South American heritage have the highest rates of retention (87.2%), but the lowest retention rates among Latinx/Hispanic FTT are for those of Caribbean heritage (80.7%).

Graduation Rates: FTF

Among FTF, we typically track 4- and 6-year graduation rates. Latinx/Hispanic FTF have 4-year graduation rates that are only a few percentage points below the campus average (13.7% vs. 16.9%). The further disaggregated data reveal that the regional groups do not vary too much on this metric. Interestingly, though FTF of South American heritage had the highest first-year retention rates, it is the FTF of Caribbean heritage who have the highest 4-year graduation rates (18.1%). When it comes to 6-year graduation rates, Latinx/Hispanic FTF are also only a few percentage points below the campus average (49.3% vs. 53.0%), with FTF of South American heritage showing the highest rates (58.4%).

4-Year Graduation Rates of Latinx/Hispanic FTF: 2009-2018 cohorts

13.7% 16.9%

MEX	13.8%
SAL	12.2%
GUA	12.3%
OCEN	15.5%
SOU	15.7%
CAR	18.1%
OTH	13.5%

6-Year Graduation Rates of Latinx/Hispanic FTF: 2009-2016 cohorts

49.3% 53.0%

MEX	49.3%
SAL	49.3%
GUA	47.0%
OCEN	46.5%
SOU	58.4%
CAR	53.6%
OTH	47.2%

MEX Mexican

SAL Salvadoran

GUA Guatemalan

OCEN Other Central American
Costa Rican, Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American

SOU South American
Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American

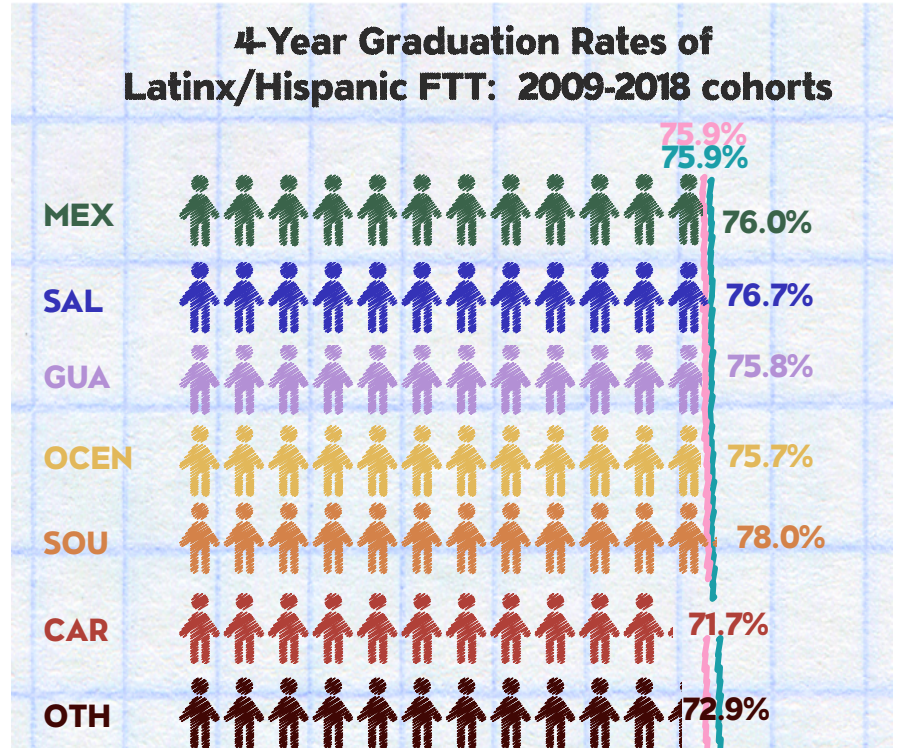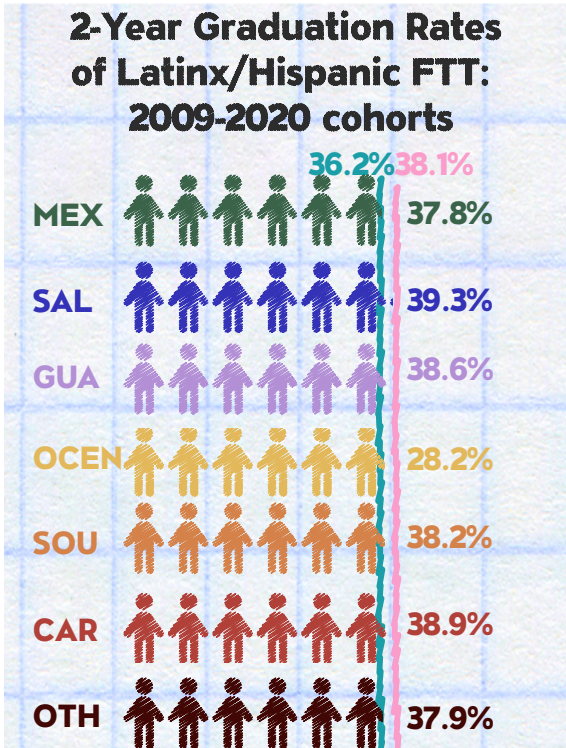**CAR** Caribbean
Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican

OTH Other
Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified

LATINX/HISPANIC Average

CSUN Average

Graduation Rates: FTT

Among Latinx/Hispanic FTT, 2-year graduation rates are above the campus average (38.1% vs. 36.2%) while 4-year graduation rates are right at the campus FTT average (75.9%). Further disaggregating the 2-year graduation rates by regional groups reveals very little variation, with less than a 2 percentage point difference between the lowest (37.8% for Mexican heritage FTT) and highest (39.3% for Salvadoran heritage FTT) groups. There is a slightly wider range among the regional groups for 4-year graduation rates, with just over a 6 percentage point difference between the lowest (71.7% for Caribbean heritage FTT) and highest (78.0% for South American heritage FTT).

2-Year Graduation Rates of Latinx/Hispanic FTT: 2009-2020 cohorts

Group	Rate
36.2%	38.1%
MEX	37.8%
SAL	39.3%
GUA	38.6%
OCEN	28.2%
SOU	38.2%
CAR	38.9%
OTH	37.9%

4-Year Graduation Rates of Latinx/Hispanic FTT: 2009-2018 cohorts

Group	Rate
75.9%	75.9%
MEX	76.0%
SAL	76.7%
GUA	75.8%
OCEN	75.7%
SOU	78.0%
CAR	71.7%
OTH	72.9%

MEX Mexican

SAL Salvadoran

GUA Guatemalan

OCEN Other Central American
Costa Rican, Ecuadorian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Other Central American

SOU South American
Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Colombian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, Other South American

CAR Caribbean
Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican

OTH Other
Spanish, Other Latinx/Hispanic, Not Specified

LATINX/ HISPANIC Average

CSUN Average

TAKEAWAYS

Any racial/ethnic grouping can be problematic for a number of reasons, including its oversimplification of individuals' experiences. Because federal reporting guidelines dictate that an individual who has any Latinx/Hispanic heritage be classified as such, no matter the other identities they might have, this ethnic grouping in particular can mask a wide variety of experiences. In fact, responses to the "preferred identity" racial/ethnic identity question on the CSU application indicate that more than 1 in 10 applicants whom the federal guidelines classify as Latinx/Hispanic actually identify otherwise. Further, examining these data by regional group indicates that those other identities can vary by specific Latinx/Hispanic heritage - for example, Black/African American identity emerges in the top 3 among students of Central American and Caribbean heritage whereas White identity emerges in the top 3 among the other groups (in both cases, second to Latinx/Hispanic and multirace).

Further disaggregating the data on Latinx/Hispanic students helps us to understand areas in which there is wide variation in experiences and/or outcomes and other areas in which experiences/outcomes are pretty similar across regional groups. We recognize that these regional groupings, while helping to discern patterns in the data, can themselves mask variation within regional groups (see Addendum for data additionally disaggregated by national origin).