

San José State University

## **Why Do Students Leave?**

A study of student departure from San José State University

Lisa Oliver, Ph.D.  
Faculty-in-Residence  
Student Academic Success Services

Marcos Pizarro, Ph.D.  
Faculty-in-Residence  
Chican@/Latin@ Task Force

Michael Cheers, Ph.D.  
Faculty-in-Residence  
African American Task Force

Rona Tamiko Halualani, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Communication Studies

# Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <u>Executive Summary</u> .....                                      | 3  |
| <u>Introduction</u> .....   | 5  |
| <u>Method</u> .....   | 6  |
| Records Analysis.....   | 6  |
| Phone Survey.....   | 6  |
| Online Survey.....  | 7  |
| Online Focus Groups.....  | 8  |
| Data Analysis.....  | 9  |
| Quantitative.....   | 9  |
| Qualitative.....  | 9  |
| <u>Results</u> .....  | 11 |
| Quantitative Analysis.....  | 11 |
| Records Analysis.....   | 11 |
| Stayers vs. Leavers.....  | 11 |
| Academic History of Stayers and Leavers.....                        | 13 |
| Phone Survey Analysis.....  | 15 |
| Classifying Stopouts vs. Dropouts.....                              | 17 |
| Reasons for Leaving SJSU.....                                       | 25 |
| Online Survey Analysis.....   | 29 |
| Characteristics of Online Surveyed Stopouts vs. Dropouts..          | 30 |
| Reasons for Leaving SJSU.....                                       | 33 |
| Qualitative Analysis.....   | 36 |
| Open-Ended Survey Items.....  | 38 |
| Telephone Open-Ended Survey Analysis.....                           | 38 |
| Online Open-Ended Survey Analysis.....                              | 44 |
| Online Focus Groups.....  | 48 |
| Demographics.....   | 48 |
| Key Themes.....   | 49 |
| <u>Discussion</u> .....   | 56 |
| <u>References</u> .....   | 59 |
| Appendix A: Phone and Online Survey.....                            | 60 |
| Appendix B: Email Sent to Online Survey Potential Participants..... | 72 |
| Appendix C: Email Sent to Initial Phone Contacted Individuals.....  | 73 |
| Appendix D: Specific Online Focus Group Questions.....              | 74 |
| Appendix E: Primary Ethnicity and First Generation by Cohorts.....  | 75 |
| Appendix F: Stayers and Leavers by College and Major.....           | 76 |
| Appendix G: Open-Ended Survey Tables.....                           | 84 |
| Appendix H: All Tables and Figures.....                             | 93 |

## Executive Summary

The goal of this study was to learn more about the experiences of SJSU first-time freshman undergraduate students (with an emphasis on underrepresented, first-generation students) who have either stopped out, dropped out, or are persisting at a different institution so that their experiences may help to support the success and retention of current and future undergraduate students at SJSU.

First-time freshman undergraduates who began enrollment at SJSU Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014 and did not enroll in classes Spring 2015 were included as participants.

The study consisted of 3 components: 1) a comparison of demographic and academic characteristics of students who stayed at SJSU with students who left SJSU (stayers vs. leavers), 2) a phone survey of a sample of individuals who are no longer enrolled at SJSU plus an online survey of a sample of individuals who are no longer enrolled at SJSU, and 3) online focus groups with individuals who are no longer enrolled at SJSU and were willing to share more about their experiences while attending SJSU.

Key findings included the following:

- From the three cohorts (Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014), there were a total of 8,894 first time college freshman. 14% (n=1,279) did not enroll Spring 2015. Of those students who did not enroll Spring 2015, 47% (n=600) were in good academic standing.
  - Fall 2012 cohort included 2,918 individuals. 22% (n=638) did not enroll Spring 2015 with 48% (n=306) of those in good academic standing.
  - Fall 2013 cohort included 3,185 individuals. 17% (n=538) did not enroll Spring 2015 with 44% (n=236) of those in good academic standing.
  - Fall 2014 cohort included 2,791 individuals. 4% (n=103) did not enroll Spring 2015 with 56% (n=58) of those in good academic standing.
- Stayers vs. Leavers records analysis
  - From the three cohorts (Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014), there were a total of 7,615 Stayers (students who last enrolled Spring 2015 or Summer 2015) and 1,279 Leavers (includes both stopouts and dropouts)
    - 42% of the Stayers (n=3,199) are first generation college goers.
    - 44% of the Leavers (n=568) are first generation college goers.
  - Being a first generation college-goer was a risk factor since a significantly higher percentage of first generation individuals were Leavers.
    - When averaging the 3 cohorts, 78% of Latin@ Leavers are first generation college goers, 45% of African American/Black Leavers are first generation college goers, and 34% of Asian/Asian American Leavers are first generation college goers.
- Leavers = Stopouts + Dropouts: Leavers were divided into stopouts and dropouts based on their response to the question of whether they intended to return to SJSU to finish their degree. Of the Leavers surveyed, 71.3% were classified as stopouts based on their expressed interest in returning to SJSU and 28.7% were considered dropouts since they did not plan to return to SJSU to complete their degrees.

- Leavers most often cited the primary reason for leaving as personal issues (n=102) and other (n=98) which included finances, inability to get classes, health/injury, and issues at home/with family.
- 77% of the stopouts and dropouts are attending college and 23% are not attending any university.
- About 50% of stopouts and 44% of dropouts worked between 15-35 hours per week while attending SJSU.
- All stopouts and dropouts reported they were currently working, with 71% working part-time and 29% working full-time.
- Of the stopouts and dropouts, approximately 80% (n=167) of the individuals received some type of financial support from parents and/or family.
- Overall satisfaction of Leavers with their experience at SJSU was moderately satisfied.
- Open-Ended Survey included both phone (n=214) and online (n=28) participants.
  - The average response rate across all of the open-ended items examined was 76%. For the 5 open-ended survey items, the response rate was between 71-84% (n=151-179).
  - The average responses rate across all of the open-ended items on the online survey examined was 81%. For the 5 open-ended survey items, the response rate was between 55-96% (n=15-27).
- Online Focus Groups included 40 participants and 6 online focus groups.
  - Key Recurring Theme: Difficulty in Attaining Classes
    - Participants shared an inability to take courses in their designated majors (both impacted and non-impacted majors)
  - Strongly Valenced and Recurring Theme: Precipitating Event or Crisis Point in Student's Life
    - Participants shared that within 2-4 weeks from when the crisis point began, the participant made the decision to exit the university
  - Recurring Theme: Feeling No Connection to Campus
    - Participants identified a lack of immediate connection to SJSU in terms of their peer friendships on campus beyond the classroom and overall social life on campus
  - Significant Theme: Difficult Encounters With Advisers
    - Participants referenced advising mishaps and incorrect information from advisers

Students are leaving SJSU for a number of reasons, such as: financial constraints, academic challenges, limited availability of classes, inconsistent advising, engagement/connection issues, and minimal support for mediating crisis points. These challenges are often amplified for first generation and URM students. Even though the participants were generally positive about SJSU, the complexity of their answers (as supported by their survey and focus group responses) suggest there are specific changes SJSU can make to increase and support student retention, graduation, and success.

## Introduction

This Action Research Project was supported by the Chancellor's Office through their "Fostering the Strategic Use of Data to Improve Student Success" grant awarded to SJSU and written by Dr. Maureen Scharberg, Associate Vice President of Student Academic Success Services. The focus of this grant is to study persistence patterns and gaps among various student groups at SJSU. Using records analyses, a phone and online survey, and online focus groups, this study examined the experiences, attitudes, and characteristics of first time college students who started at SJSU in Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014 but did not enroll Spring 2015.

The purpose of this study was to improve student success by learning more about persistence patterns and gaps among different sub-groups, and by gathering more information and increasing the University's knowledge regarding student dropout, stopout, and retention. Though the University has descriptive information for each entering cohort, having individuals share their reasons for not enrolling can provide an understanding of how to support and retain students at SJSU in the future.

This study addressed the following questions:

- What factors influenced students' decision to stopout or leave (dropout) SJSU?
- What happens to stopouts and dropouts?
  - Do they enroll in other colleges, go to work, both, or other?
- Do certain interactions contribute to feeling less connected to the University?
- How can SJSU students feel more connected and supported by the University?

## Method

### Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol

On January 21, 2015 an IRB protocol was submitted. The next day, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, preliminary revisions were suggested. Then, on February 4, 2015 the reviewer's comments were received. On February 24, 2015, the protocol was re-submitted with revisions. IRB protocol #F15008 titled "Why Do URM Students Leave SJSU: An Action Research Project" was approved on March 5, 2015.

On April 21, 2015, an addendum was submitted to add Dr. Debra Griffith as project manager in consultation with Dr. Maureen Scharberg. The addendum was approved April 24, 2015.

A second addendum was submitted on June 3, 2015 to streamline the phone survey. The addendum was approved on June 5, 2015.

A third addendum was submitted on June 28<sup>th</sup> that focused on changes and updates to the focus group protocol. The addendum was approved July 6, 2015.

### Records Analysis

This study consisted of three parts: a records analysis, a phone and online survey, and online focus groups. The records analysis compared all first time college students who began at SJSU in the following cohorts Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014 and enrolled Spring 2015 and Summer 2015 with those students from the same three cohorts who did not enroll in classes Spring 2015. Comparisons were made on the following items:

- **Demographics:** primary ethnicity, first generation status
- **Academic history:** college, major, SJSU cumulative GPA, academic standing

### Phone Survey

**Sample.** The survey was conducted by telephone and consisted of two batches from three cohorts that began Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014 (n=8,894) and focused on individuals from the three cohorts who did not enroll Spring 2015 (n=1,263). The first batch of phone surveys included Latin@ and African American/Black undergraduates who did not enroll Spring 2015. The second batch of phone surveys focused on Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Asian/Asian Americans and European American/Caucasian first time undergraduate individuals from the same three cohorts that did not enroll Spring 2015.

**Content.** The phone survey asked about the following areas:

- Current activities such as work and educational status; plans to return to SJSU.
- Reasons for leaving SJSU such as academic, personal, and financial reasons.
- Satisfaction with instruction, advising, support services, diversity on campus, and overall experience.
- Possible risk factors
  - Financial
    - Extent of parental financial support

- Working status while attending SJSU
- o First choice of major not assigned
- o Whether SJSU was first choice of University to attend

Please see Appendix A for copy of phone and online survey.

**Procedures.** The University provided a list of students who began at SJSU from each of the following cohorts: Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014. First, each cohort was sorted by individuals who did not enroll in coursework for Spring 2015. Then, the list was sorted by ethnicity. Latin@ and African American/Black sub-groups were first contacted by phone. Then, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Asian/Asian Americans and European American/Caucasian individuals who did not enroll Spring 2015 were contacted by phone. The phone surveys were conducted from June 5 to June 24, 2015 by SJSU undergraduate students who were trained by the Faculty-in-Residence for African American Student Success and Chican@/Latin@ Student Success on how to complete the online phone survey. Interviewers first reviewed the complete interview protocol as a group, then each interviewer practiced administering the online survey using the computers that were utilized to conduct the phone surveys. Finally, there was a role-play exercise where each interviewer role-played being an interviewer and interviewee. At each phase of the training, the Faculty-in-Residence and the interviewers discussed the online survey instrument and ways to be successful in the overall process. Towards the end of the training, each interviewer completed one online phone survey then all interviewers gathered together to review their experiences with the trainers.

Phone surveys were conducted on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 12-6pm by a team of 19 interviewers. Each interviewer used a phone headset and computer to type the interviewee's answers directly into a Qualtrics online phone survey while they were speaking with the interviewee. Each day the phone surveys were conducted, the Faculty-in-Residence coordinated the process and checked-in with the interviewers at the beginning and end of the day. Also, trainers would discuss any issues that arose during the interviewing and make suggestions to facilitate the interview process. In addition, there was a graduate student also on site throughout the process to troubleshoot any issues, as needed.

Each potential participant was called at least 3 times. A potential participant was called again if there was no answer or someone other than the potential participant answered. There were also some numbers that were disconnected or incorrect. Any errors in the accuracy of the data collected may be a result of survey question wording that may have created confusion for the respondents or data entry errors by the interviewers. Also, some interviewers may have summarized answers rather than typing responses word for word into the survey. The interviewer training session and on-going support was designed to minimize potential errors and any unforeseen issues.

## Online Survey

**Sample.** The survey was conducted online via a Qualtrics survey. Individuals who did not enroll Spring 2015 and were not a part of the Latin@ and African American/Black subgroups were sent an email with a Qualtrics link so they were able to take the online survey at any time. In addition, Latin@ and African American/Black individuals who did not enroll Spring 2015 and were contacted for the phone survey may have asked to be sent the online survey rather than participate in the phone survey.

**Content.** The online survey was the same as the phone survey and asked about the following areas:

- Current activities such as work and educational status; plans to return to SJSU.
- Reasons for leaving SJSU such as academic, personal, and financial reasons.
- Satisfaction with instruction, advising, support services, diversity on campus, and overall experience.
- Possible risk factors
  - Financial
    - Extent of parental financial support
    - Working status while attending SJSU
  - First choice of major not assigned
  - Whether SJSU was first choice of University to attend

**Procedures.** The University provided a list of students who began at SJSU from each of the following cohorts: Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014. First, each cohort was sorted by individuals who did not enroll in coursework for Spring 2015. Then, the list was sorted by ethnicity. Since Latin@ and African American/Black sub-groups were first contacted by phone, the remaining sub-groups (e.g., Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Asian/Asian Americans, 2 or more ethnicities, decline to state, and European American/Caucasian) were sent an email asking them to participate in an online survey. The initial email was sent on June 9, 2015 (please see Appendix B for a copy of the email). Then, the survey was closed on July 21, 2015.

Individuals who were initially contacted by phone but requested to complete the online survey on their own were sent emails in two batches. On June 12, 2015, an email message with a Qualtrics survey link was sent to 36 individuals. Then, on June 23, 2015 the same message was sent to another 9 individuals (please see Appendix C for copy of email).

## Online Focus Groups

**Sample.** Online focus groups were conducted through the Focus GroupIt platform, a web-based provider of asynchronous focus group discussions that can span over extended periods of time (e.g., weeks to months) and enables convenient participation. Within the phone and online surveys, questions 43 and 44 provided individuals with the opportunity to provide contact information if they wanted to participate in a focus group or interview at a later time. 71 individuals provided email contact information to be contacted at a later time. Overall, online focus group participants were a convenience sample of self-selected individuals who had completed the phone and/or online survey.

**Content.** The online focus group protocol included six areas and ten major semi-structured questions. This format encouraged participants to interpret and reflect on their experiences while at SJSU and possible reasons for leaving SJSU. Follow-up questions were also utilized as well as debriefing questions.

The online focus group areas included the following:

- Experience at SJSU
- Support mechanisms utilized at SJSU
- Perception of racial climate at SJSU
- Information/suggestions to give to diverse students at SJSU

- Reflections of experiences at SJSU
- Future Education at SJSU

Please see Appendix D for Specific Online Focus Group Questions asked.

**Procedures.** Online focus group participants all responded either within the telephone or online survey that they were willing to be a part of a focus group. This sub-group of individuals was contacted by the email address they each provided within the survey and invited to participate. The email invitation also shared that each participant who completed the focus group would receive a \$10 Starbucks gift card and asked if a face-to-face or online focus group (asynchronous and privacy-protected) was preferred. At the start of the online focus group, participants were given the opportunity to make an informed choice regarding whether to consent and thereby willingly participate in the online focus group. And, online focus group participants were given the option to chose a pseudonym.

Any time between 4-8 individuals emailed back their interest in participating in an online focus group, then an online focus group was launched. As a result, there was a total of 6 online focus groups. The first online group began on July 10, 2015 and the 6<sup>th</sup> and final online group began on August 20, 2015.

## Data Analysis

### Quantitative

The quantitative data from the phone and online surveys were analyzed using frequency distributions, descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, correlations, and text analytics. The survey analysis included the grouping of respondents into stayers and leavers, then stopouts and dropouts based upon students' self-reporting of their intention to return to SJSU.

### Qualitative

Survey and online focus group data was analyzed through a two-fold process: 1) traditional hand-coding/thematic analysis, and 2) qualitative analysis software (i.e., NUD\*IST (NVIVO) and QDA Miner) in order to quantify and isolate the fullest range of themes, insights, and meanings.

In order to increase interrater reliability for the qualitative protocol, 3 team members independently and privately coded the data and compiled analytic memos that featured identified themes and key illustrative examples. Once the team members coded the data and completed the analytic memos, the codings and analytic memos were shared and discussed. Together, all significant themes, domains, and patterns of meaning that each coder had independently highlighted were identified as well as all unanimous coder agreement and areas of disagreement.

The most recurring and strongly valenced themes throughout the online focus group participant responses (within and across utterances) were coded. "Most recurring" or "breadth" refers to the widespread coverage and frequency of a thematic meaning throughout the online focus group sessions. "Strongly valenced" or "depth" designates thematic meanings that represent the most emphasized ideas demonstrated by the use of powerfully emotive, intense language and terms (e.g., "I couldn't believe this was happening;" "Something happened to me;" "This devastated me;" and, "My life stopped."). A theme can recur throughout the majority of the online focus group sessions and thus gain attention but it

may not be strongly valenced however a strongly valenced theme can minimally recur yet be significant for analysis. Thematic recurrence and thematic valence are not necessarily connected or correlated but was examined in relation to each other.

Identified key themes of each focus group participant were cross-checked with how they responded on similar items on the phone/online survey (e.g., open-ended survey items: reasons for leaving SJSU and what role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU? As well as: possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU?). This procedure was completed after all of the thematic identifications were made for each focus group response and utterance. This procedure was undertaken to confirm and validate overall agreement or (in)consistencies within each participant's telephone survey and online focus group answers.

# Results

## Quantitative Analysis

### Records Analysis

#### Stayers vs. Leavers

The three cohorts (Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014) consisted of a total of 8,894 individuals. There were 7,615 individuals who enrolled Spring and Summer 2015 and were labeled “stayers” and there were 1,279 individuals who did not enroll Spring 2015 and are referred to as “leavers” (includes both stopouts and dropouts).

**Demographics.** From the institutional records provided, individuals self-identified their primary ethnicity and whether they are first generation college-goers. Please see Appendix E: Table E1: Primary Ethnicity and First Generation by Cohorts.

\*\*\*chart is landscape so in other file\*\*\*

**Stayers.** Fall 2012 cohort consisted of 2,280 stayers, Fall 2013 cohort included a total of 2,647 stayers, and Fall 2014 was comprised of a total of 2,688 stayers. Of the total stayers (n=7,615), 42% (n=3,199) are first generation college goers.

The largest ethnic sub-group population of stayers at SJSU is Asians/Asian American at approximately 45% (n=3,385). The second largest ethnic sub-group population is Hispanic/Latin@ at 22% (n=1,700). There are 1,493 (20%) primary ethnicity self-identified European American/White students attending SJSU, 441 two or more ethnicities individuals (6% of the total stayers population), and 353 African American/Black students (almost 5%). Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander are represented by 97 individuals (1.3% of the total stayers population) and there are 22 American Indian/Alaska Native individuals attending SJSU. There were also 124 students (1.6%) who did not share or declined to state their primary identified ethnicity.

Of the 42% of stayers who are first generation college-goers, approximately 73% (n=1,237) of the Hispanic/Latin@ ethnic sub-group are first generation college goers. The African American/Black stayers are represented by about 39% first generation students and the American Indian/Alaska Native students' overall total is almost 46% first generation. Approximately 43% of Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, 39% Asian/Asian American, 28% Two or More Ethnicities, 20% European American/White, and 27% Decline to State students are first generation students.

**Table 1: Stayers and Leavers Overview**

|  | <b>Stayers</b> | <b>Leavers</b> |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Fall 2012</b>                       | 2,280          | 638            |
| <b>Fall 2013</b>                       | 2,647          | 538            |
| <b>Fall 2014</b>                       | 2,688          | 103            |
| <b>Total</b>                           | 7,615          | 1,279          |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> Generation Total</b> | 3,199          | 568            |

**Leavers.** Fall 2012 cohort consisted of 638 leavers, Fall 2013 cohort included a total of 538 leavers, and Fall 2014 was comprised of a total of 103 leavers. Of the total leavers (n=1,279), 44% (n=568) are first generation college goers.

The highest number of leavers was 383 (30% of the total leavers) from the Asian/Asian American ethnic subgroup. The Hispanic/Latin@ ethnic subgroup included 348 leavers (27%) while the European American/White subgroup consisted of 326 leavers (25%). There were 71 African American/Black (almost 6%), 99 Two or More Ethnicities (almost 8%), 21 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (1.6%), 8 American Indian/Alaska Native, and 23 Decline to State leavers.

First generation leavers ranged from 16%-100% if looking at subgroups within each cohort. The highest percentage of leavers (100%) that are first generation is from the Fall 2014 cohort Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islanders (n=2). In the Fall 2012 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander cohort, 78% (n=7) of the leavers were first generation. For the Fall 2013 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander cohort, 70% (n=7) of the leavers were first generation. Overall, there were 21 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander leavers that included 16 first generation college goers or an average of 76% of this ethnic sub-group population.

Hispanic/Latin@ first generation leavers ranged from 75%-87% of the leavers. For example, with the Fall 2014 cohort, 37 Hispanic/Latin@ students did not enroll Spring 2015. Of those 37 students, 87% (n=32) were first generation college goers. The Fall 2013 Hispanic/Latin@ cohort was comprised of 154 leavers where 75% (n=116) of this cohort of leavers were first generation. From Fall 2012, there were 157 total Hispanic/Latin@ leavers and of that group there were 78% (n=123) first generation individuals. Overall, there were 348 Hispanic/Latin@ leavers that included 271 first generation college goers or an average of 78% of this ethnic sub-group population.

From the Fall 2012 cohort, there were 28 African American/Black leavers and 46% (n=13) were first generation. For the Fall 2013 cohort, there were 37 African American/Black leavers and 39% (n=14) were first generation. There were 7 leavers for Fall 2014 cohort and 71% (n=5) were first generation. Overall, there were 71 African American/Black leavers that included 32 first generation college goers or an average of 45% of this ethnic sub-group population.

There were 130 first generation Asian/Asian American college goers from a total of 383 leavers. From the Fall 2012 cohort, there was 31% (n=67) first generation within a total of 216 leavers. From the Fall 2013 cohort, there was 36% (n=52) first generation

within a total of 142 leavers. And, from the Fall 2014 cohort there was 46% (n=11) first generation within a total of 24 leavers.

For the majority of the ethnic sub-groups, the Fall 2014 cohort contains the overall highest percentage of first generation college goers. However, the actual number of individual leavers is higher for the Fall 2012 cohort. Also, the following sub-ethnic groups have higher percentages of first generation college goers leaving rather than staying: African American/Black, Hispanic/Latin@, American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and Two or More Ethnicities. Please refer to Appendix E: Table E1: Primary Ethnicity and First Generation by Cohorts.

## **Academic History of Stayers and Leavers**

**College and Major.** Stayers (n=7,615) are included within a total of 10 college areas: 1) All University (n=22), 2) Applied Sciences & Arts (n=852), 3) Business (n=1337), 4) Education (n=150), 5) Engineering (n=1453), 6) Humanities & the Arts (n=754), 7) Science (n=712), 8) Social Science (n=943), 9) Undergraduate Studies (n=1387), and 10) No College Listed (n=5). So, the top three college areas that includes Stayers are: 1) Engineering at 19%, 2) Undergraduate Studies at 18%, and 3) Business at almost 18%.

Leavers (n=1,279) are included within a total of 10 college areas: 1) All University (n=22), 2) Applied Sciences & Arts (n=89), 3) Business (n=173), 4) Education (n=12), 5) Engineering (n=243), 6) Humanities & the Arts (n=134), 7) Science (n=73), 8) Social Science (n=134), 9) Undergraduate Studies (n=398), and 10) No College Listed (n=1). So, the top three college areas that includes Leavers are: 1) Undergraduate Studies at 31%, 2) Engineering at 19%, and 3) Humanities & the Arts and Social Science are both at 11%.

Stayers consisted of 128 different majors. The top seven majors for Stayers was: 1) Undeclared (n=1280; 17%), 2) Psychology (n=378; 5%), 3) Computer Engineering (n=313; 4.1%), 4) Business Administration/Marketing (n=286; 3.8%), 5) Mechanical Engineering (n=218; 2.9%), 6) Computer Science (n=211; 2.8%), and 7) Business Administration/Management (n=208; 2.7%).

Leavers consisted of 107 different majors. The top five majors for leavers was: 1) Undeclared (n=362; 28%), 2) Computer Engineering (n=65; 5.1%) 3) Psychology (n=59; 4.6%), 4) Business Administration/Management (n=40; 3.1%), and 5) Mechanical Engineering (n=37; 2.9%).

Please see Appendix F: Table F1: Stayers by College and Major and Table F2: Leavers by College and Major.

**Academic Standing.** Of those students who did not enroll Spring 2015 (from Fall cohorts 2012, 2013, and 2014), an average of 47% (n=600 with a range of 44%-56%) were in good academic standing. There were 264 individuals (an average of 21%) on probation. For Fall cohort 2012 and 2013 only, there were 49 individuals on continued probation and 342 disqualified individuals.

The Fall 2012 cohort included a total of 2,918 individuals. Of this total, 22% (n=638) did not enroll Spring 2015. Of the 638 non-enrollers, 48% (n=306) were in good standing, 18%

(n=133) were on probation, 3% (n=20) were on continued probation, and 30% (n=190) were academically disqualified.

The Fall 2013 cohort included a total of 3,185 individuals. From this total, 17% (n=538) did not enroll Spring 2015. Of the 538 non-enrollers, 44% (n=236) were in good standing, 20% (n=108) were on probation, 5% (n=29) were on continued probation, and 28% (n=152) were academically disqualified.

The Fall 2014 cohort included 2,791 individuals with about 4% (n=103) not enrolling Spring 2015. Of the 103 non-enrollers, 56% (n=58) were in good standing, 42% (n=43) were on probation, and there were no individuals who are currently on continued probation or have been academically disqualified.

Please refer to the tables below for specifics percentages and numbers for Stayers and Leavers.

**Table 2: Academic Standing of Stayers**

|                            | Fall '12 Cohort |      | Fall '13 Cohort |      | Fall '14 Cohort |     | TOTAL | AVG  |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|-----|-------|------|
| <b>Good Standing</b>       | 2,203           | 97%  | 2,502           | 95%  | 2,380           | 89% | 7,085 | 93%  |
| <b>Probation</b>           | 41              | 1.8% | 83              | 3%   | 308             | 11% | 432   | 6%   |
| <b>Continued Probation</b> | 17              | .75% | 51              | 2%   | --              | --  | 68    | .89% |
| <b>Disqualified</b>        | 19              | .83% | 11              | .42% | --              | --  | 30    | .39% |
| <b>Total</b>               | 2,280           |      | 2,647           |      | 2,688           |     | 7,615 |      |

**Table 3: Academic Standing of Leavers**

|                                | Fall '12 Cohort |      | Fall '13 Cohort |      | Fall '14 Cohort |     | TOTAL | AVG  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|-----|-------|------|
| <b>Good Standing</b>           | 306             | 48%  | 236             | 44%  | 58              | 56% | 600   | 47%  |
| <b>Probation</b>               | 113             | 18%  | 108             | 20%  | 43              | 42% | 264   | 21%  |
| <b>Continued Probation</b>     | 20              | 3%   | 29              | 5%   | --              | --  | 49    | 3.8% |
| <b>Disqualified</b>            | 190             | 30%  | 152             | 28%  | --              | --  | 342   | 27%  |
| <b>Reinstated on Probation</b> | 1               | .16% | --              | --   | --              | --  | 1     | .08% |
| <b>Nothing Reported</b>        | 8               | 1.3% | 13              | 2.4% | 2               | 2%  | 23    | 1.8% |
| <b>Total</b>                   | 638             |      | 538             |      | 103             |     | 1,279 |      |

## Phone Survey Analysis

The first batch of individuals contacted from the three cohorts included Latin@ and African American/Black sub-groups containing a total of 419 individuals (Latin@ n=348, African American/Black n=71) who did not enroll Spring 2015. There were a total of 173 individuals who answered the phone with 133 Latin@ and 22 African American/Black who were identifiable by their ethnic sub-group. Of those 173 contacts, there were 3 hang-ups in the middle of the survey, 10 duplicates, 13 still attending, and 18 who either asked to be contacted at a later time, have the survey emailed, or did not choose to complete the entire survey. So, there was 108 Latin@ and 21 African American/Black completed phone surveys or a total of 129 completed phone surveys during the first batch. Please see Table 4 and Table 5 below for cohort specific numbers.

The second batch of individuals contacted from the three cohorts included Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, American Indians, Asian/Asian American, and European American/Caucasian sub-groups containing a total of 738 individuals (Hawaiian/Pacific Islander n=21, American Indian n=8, Asian/Asian American n=383 and European American/Caucasian n=326) who did not enroll Spring 2015. There were a total of 109 individuals who answered the phone. Of those 109 contacts, there were zero hang-ups in the middle of the survey, zero duplicates, zero still attending, and 24 who asked to be contacted at a later time, have the survey emailed, did not choose to complete the entire survey, or presented inconsistent data. So, there were a total of 85 completed phone contacts during the second batch (Hawaiian/Pacific Islander n=1,

American Indian n=1, Asian/Asian American n=56 and European American/Caucasian n=27). Please see Table 4 and Table 5 below.

Overall, 282 individuals were contacted by phone that included 3 hang-ups, 10 duplicates, 13 still attending, and 42 individuals who either asked to be contacted later, provided inconsistent information, or did not complete the entire survey. So, there were 214 phone contacts that resulted in completed surveys. As a result, there was an 18.5% response rate from the original sample of 1,157 individuals who did not enroll Spring 2015.

**Table 4: Leavers Overview by Cohorts and Sub-Groups**

|                             | Leavers (Stopouts and Dropouts) |            |           | 3 Cohorts Total | Phone Contact with Leavers |           |           | 3 Cohorts Total | Total % Surveyed |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|------------------|
|                             | 2012                            | 2013       | 2014      |                 | 2012                       | 2013      | 2014      |                 |                  |
| Latin@                      | 157                             | 154        | 37        | 348             | 46                         | 49        | 13        | 108             | 31.0%            |
| African American/Black      | 28                              | 36         | 7         | 71              | 8                          | 9         | 4         | 21              | 29.6%            |
| Asian/Asian American        | 216                             | 143        | 24        | 383             | 23                         | 30        | 3         | 56              | 14.6%            |
| Hawaiian/Pacific Islander   | 9                               | 10         | 2         | 21              | 0                          | 1         | 0         | 1               | 4.8%             |
| American Indian             | 4                               | 4          | 0         | 8               | 1                          | 0         | 0         | 1               | 12.5%            |
| European American/Caucasian | 165                             | 136        | 25        | 326             | 13                         | 10        | 4         | 27              | 8.3%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>579</b>                      | <b>483</b> | <b>95</b> | <b>1,157</b>    | <b>91</b>                  | <b>99</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>214</b>      | <b>18.5%</b>     |

**Table 5: Leavers Overview of Phone Surveys**

|                              | Complete Phone Contacts | Hang-Ups | Duplicates | Still Attending | Contact Later/ Incomplete/ Inconsistent | Overall Contacted |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|------------|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| Latin@                       | 108                     | 2        | 10         | 13              | 18                                      | 173               |
| African American/ Black      | 21                      | 1        | 0          | 0               |   |                   |
| Asian/ Asian American        | 56                      | 0        | 0          | 0               | 24                                      | 109               |
| Hawaiian/Pacific Islander    | 1                       | 0        | 0          | 0               |   |                   |
| American Indian              | 1                       | 0        | 0          | 0               |   |                   |
| European American/ Caucasian | 27                      | 0        | 0          | 0               |   |                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>214</b>              | <b>3</b> | <b>10</b>  | <b>13</b>       | <b>42</b>                               | <b>282</b>        |

**Classifying Stopouts vs. Dropouts**

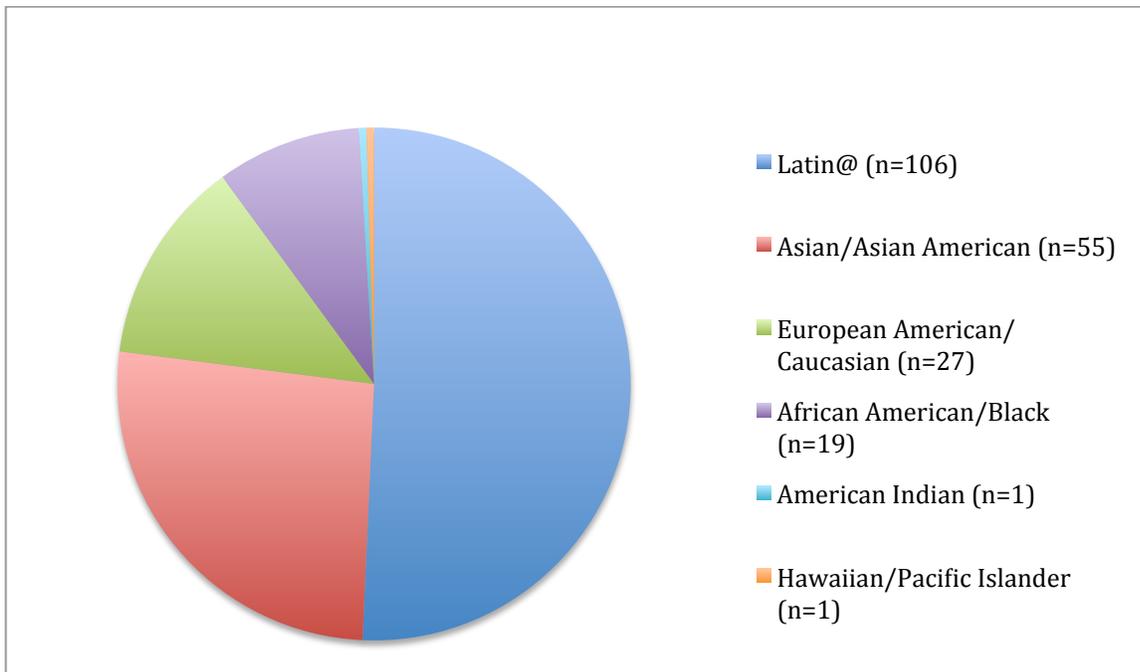
The phone survey respondents were classified as “stopouts” and “dropouts” based upon their response to the following question: Do you plan to return to San José State University to finish your degree? If the individual responded yes or was unsure at the time of the survey whether they would return, then the individual was classified as a stopout. If the individual did not have plans to return to SJSU, then the individual was classified as a dropout of SJSU.

Of the 214 phone surveys that were completed, there were 71 dropouts, 132 stopouts, 3 respondents who provided no answer to the stopout/dropout question, 6 former stopouts (students who dropped out from SJSU but have since returned), and 2 respondents who were forced to leave SJSU.

**Characteristics of Stopout and Dropout Phone Respondents While at SJSU.**

Overall, the majority of phone survey respondents were Latin@ (51%) followed by Asian/Asian American (26%), then European American/Caucasian (13%), and African American/Black (10%). Please see Figure 6 and Table 7 below for breakdown of stopouts and dropouts by ethnic sub-groups.

**Figure 6: Overall Ethnic Sub-Groups of Phone Survey Respondents**



**Table 7: Stopouts and Dropouts by Ethnic Sub-Groups**

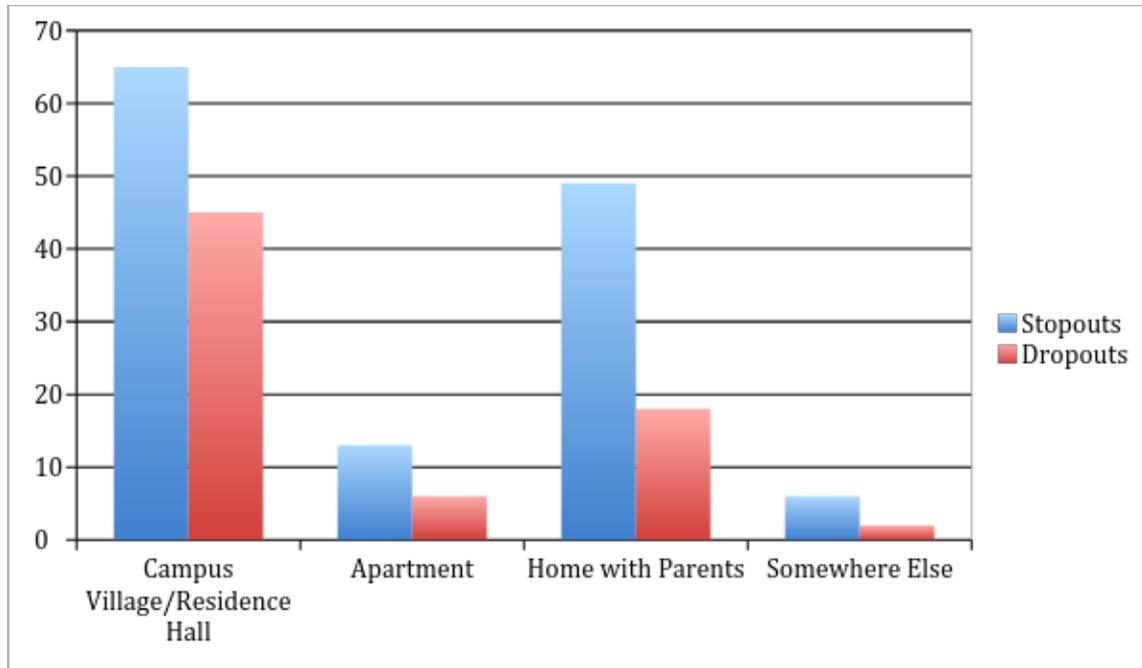
|                             | Stopouts   |       | Dropouts  |       | No Response |     | Total Respondents |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------|-----------|-------|-------------|-----|-------------------|
|                             | n          | %     | n         | %     | n           | %   |                   |
| Latin@                      | 77         | 55.8% | 29        | 40.8% | 2           | 40% | 108               |
| African American/Black      | 11         | 8.0%  | 8         | 11.3% | 2           | 40% | 21                |
| Asian/Asian American        | 30         | 21.7% | 25        | 35.2% | 1           | 20% | 56                |
| Hawaiian/Pacific Islander   | 0          | 0%    | 1         | 1.4%  | 0           | 0%  | 1                 |
| American Indian             | 0          | 0%    | 1         | 1.4%  | 0           | 0%  | 1                 |
| European American/Caucasian | 20         | 14.5% | 7         | 9.9%  | 0           | 0%  | 27                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>138</b> |       | <b>71</b> |       | <b>5</b>    |     | <b>214</b>        |

Of the phone survey respondents, 77 stopouts and 33 dropouts were first generation college goers. So, overall, 51% of the phone surveyed Leavers (stopouts + dropouts)

are first generation college goers. There were 35 stopouts and 22 dropouts that were STEM majors while attending SJSU.

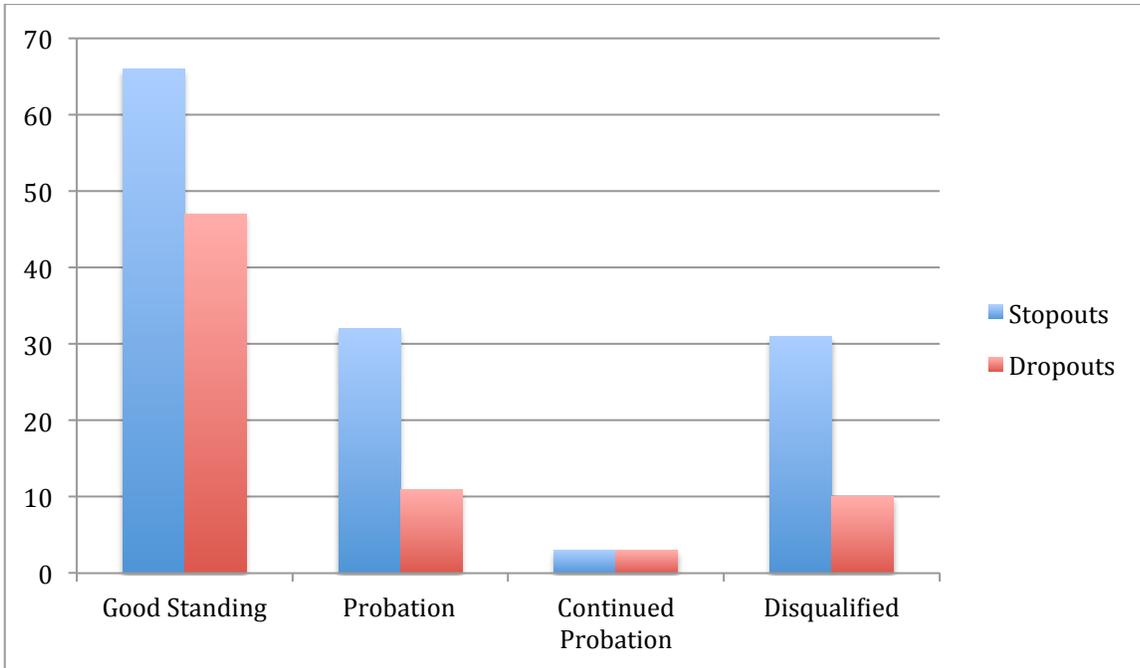
Of the Leavers (stopouts + dropouts), 110 (51%) resided in the campus village or another residence hall during their first semester at SJSU while 68 (32%) lived off campus in an apartment, at home with their parents or somewhere else. 36 (17%) individuals did not share their living arrangements while at SJSU. Please see below for Figure 8 with specific stopout and dropout information.

**Figure 8: Living Arrangements While at SJSU**

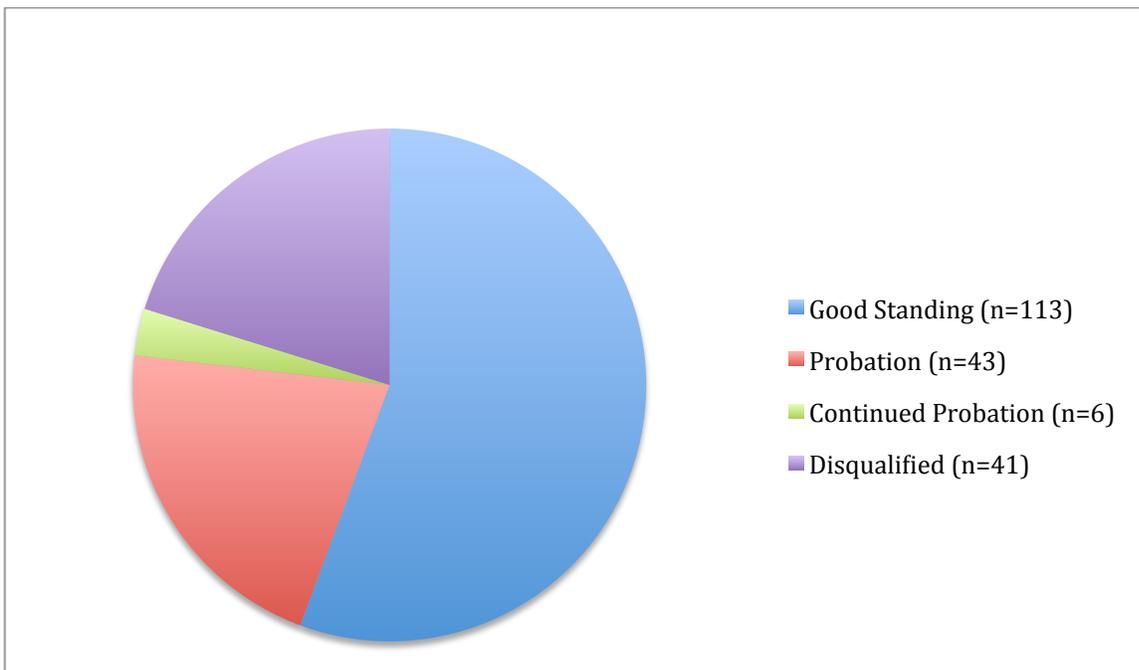


**Academic Standing (n=203).** Academic standing includes four categories: 1) good standing, 2) probation, 3) continued probation, and 4) disqualification. Of the respondents, 66 stopouts and 47 dropouts were in good standing, 32 stopouts and 11 dropouts were on probation, 3 stopouts and 3 dropouts were on continued probation, and 31 stopouts and 10 dropouts were disqualified. Overall, the majority of stopouts and dropouts were in good academic standing. Please see Figures 9 and 10 below.

**Figure 9: Academic Standing by Stopouts and Dropouts**

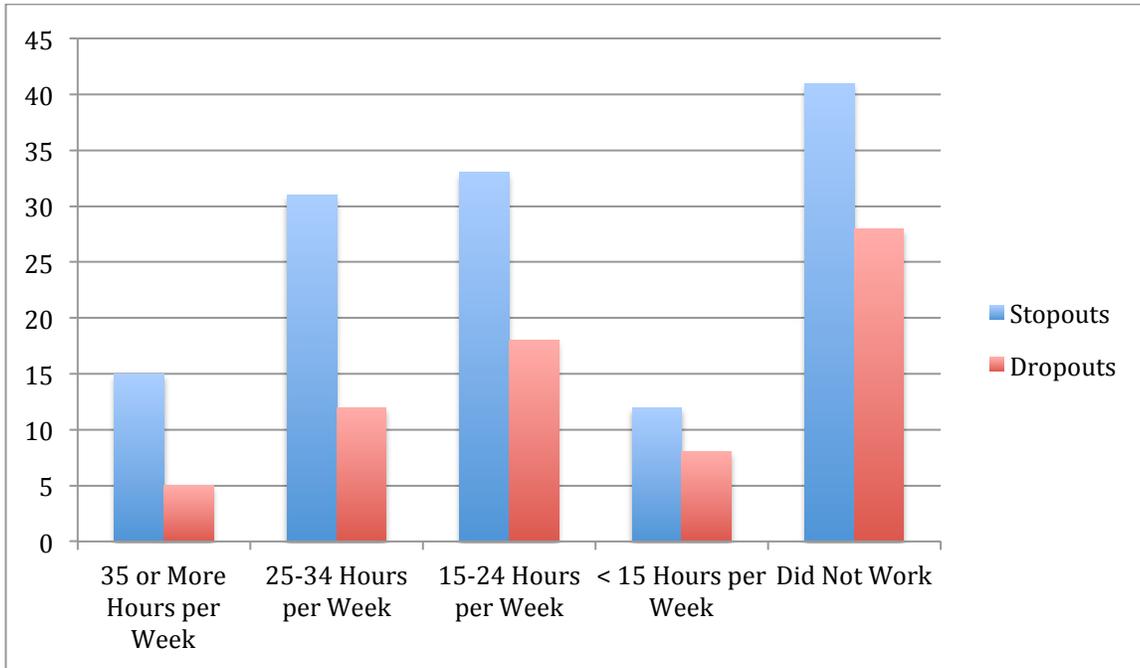


**Figure 10: Overall Academic Standing of Leavers**

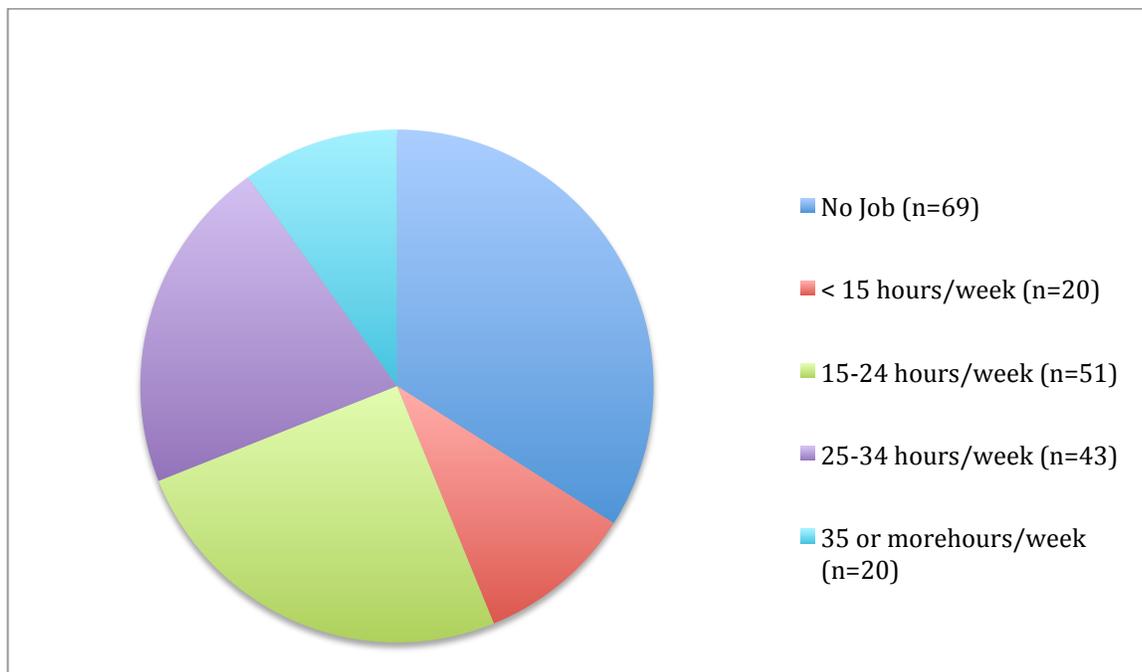


**Work Status While at SJSU (n=203).** While attending SJSU, 41 stopouts and 28 dropouts did not work or have a job, 12 stopouts and 8 dropouts worked less than 15 hours per week, 33 stopouts and 18 dropouts worked between 15-24 hours per week, 31 stopouts and 12 dropouts worked between 25-34 hours per week and 15 stopouts and 5 dropouts worked 35 or more hours per week. Overall, the majority of Leavers were working while attending SJSU. Please see Figure 11 and Figure 12 below.

**Figure 11: Work Status of Stopouts and Dropouts While at SJSU**

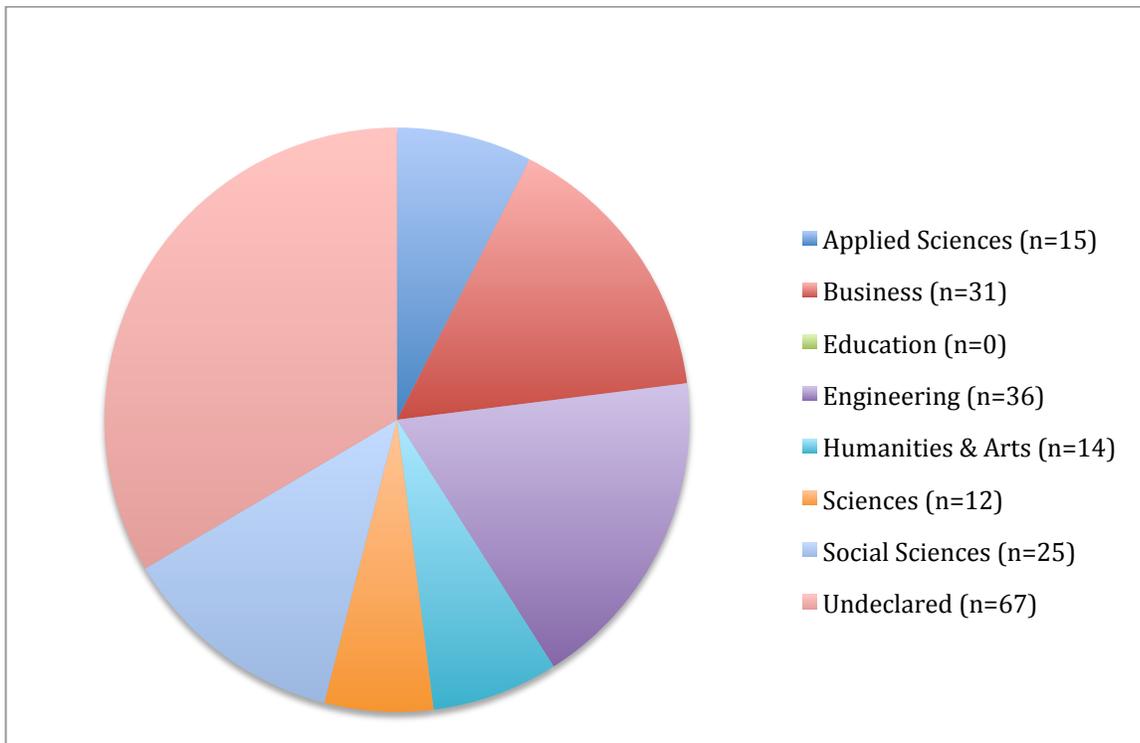


**Figure 12: Overall Working Status of Leavers While at SJSU**



**College and Major While at SJSU.** Students majored in various colleges while at SJSU. There were 9 stopouts and 6 dropouts in Applied Sciences, 21 stopouts and 10 dropouts in Business, zero stopouts and dropouts in Education, 23 stopouts and 13 dropouts in Engineering, 9 stopouts and 5 dropouts in Humanities & Arts, 7 stopouts and 5 dropouts in Science, 17 stopouts and 8 dropouts in Social Sciences, and 44 stopouts and 23 dropouts undeclared. Please see Figure 13 below for College of Leavers (stopouts + dropouts) While at SJSU.

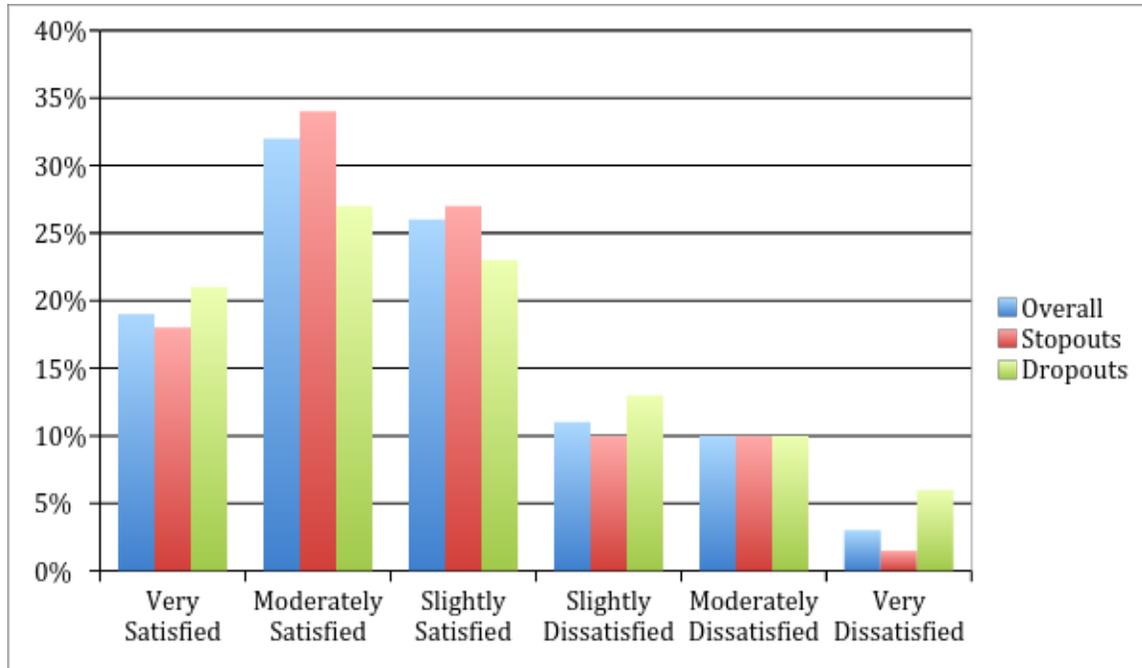
**Figure 13: College of Leavers While at SJSU**



The average cumulative GPA for stopouts was 1.997, for dropouts was 2.399, and for students who gave no response to the stopout-dropout question was 2.127.

**Satisfaction with Experience at SJSU.** When asked, “In general, how satisfied are you now with your experience at San José State University?” 18% of stopouts were very satisfied, 34% were moderately satisfied, 27% were slightly satisfied, about 10% were each slightly dissatisfied and moderately dissatisfied, and 1.5% were very dissatisfied. From the dropouts, 21% were very satisfied, 27% were moderately satisfied, 23% were slightly satisfied, 13% were each slightly dissatisfied, 10% were moderately dissatisfied, and about 6% were very dissatisfied. Overall, 19% were very satisfied, 32% were moderately satisfied, 26% were slightly satisfied, 11% were slightly dissatisfied, 10% were moderately dissatisfied, and about 3% were very dissatisfied. Please see Figure 14 below.

**Figure 14: Satisfaction with Experience at SJSU**



**Activities of Stopouts and Dropouts After Leaving SJSU.** Of the 138 stopouts and 71 dropouts (209 individual total), there are stopouts and dropouts who are currently attending college, not attending college, and working part-time or full-time. Also, for one set of questions there was one individual who did not answer the questions therefore the total respondents of stopouts and dropouts for activities after leaving SJSU is 208.

Of the 161 individuals attending college, there are 101 stopouts and 60 SJSU dropouts. So, 48.6% of the stopouts are attending college elsewhere and anticipate returning to SJSU while 28.9% of the dropouts are continuing their coursework at a different university. Some stopouts shared their reasons for stopping out of SJSU and attending college elsewhere included the inability to register for classes at SJSU, taking courses at a community college where units were more cost effective or cheaper than returning to SJSU to graduate, and wanting to be closer to family or friends.

There were 36 stopouts and 11 dropouts who were not currently attending college. So, 22.6% of the individuals who completed the survey and are not currently attending SJSU also are not attending any other college at this time. Overall, 77.4% of the stopouts and dropouts are attending college and 22.6% are not attending any university.

77% of the stopouts are currently working part-time and 23% are currently working full-time. 59% of dropouts are working part-time and 41% of dropouts are working full-time. Overall, all 208 leavers reported they were working with 71% working part-time and 29% working full-time. Please see Table 15 for Current Activities of Stopouts and Dropouts.

**Table 15: Current Activities of Stopouts and Dropouts**

|                   | <b>Stopouts</b><br>n=137 | <b>Dropouts</b><br>n=71 | <b>Total Leavers</b><br>(Stopouts +<br>Dropouts)<br>n=208 |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Attending College | 101                      | 60                      | 161 (77.4%)   |
| Not in College    | 36                       | 11                      | 47 (22.6%)  |
| Working Part-Time | 106                      | 42                      | 148 (71.2%)   |
| Working Full-Time | 31                       | 29                      | 60 (28.8%)  |

### Reasons for Leaving SJSU

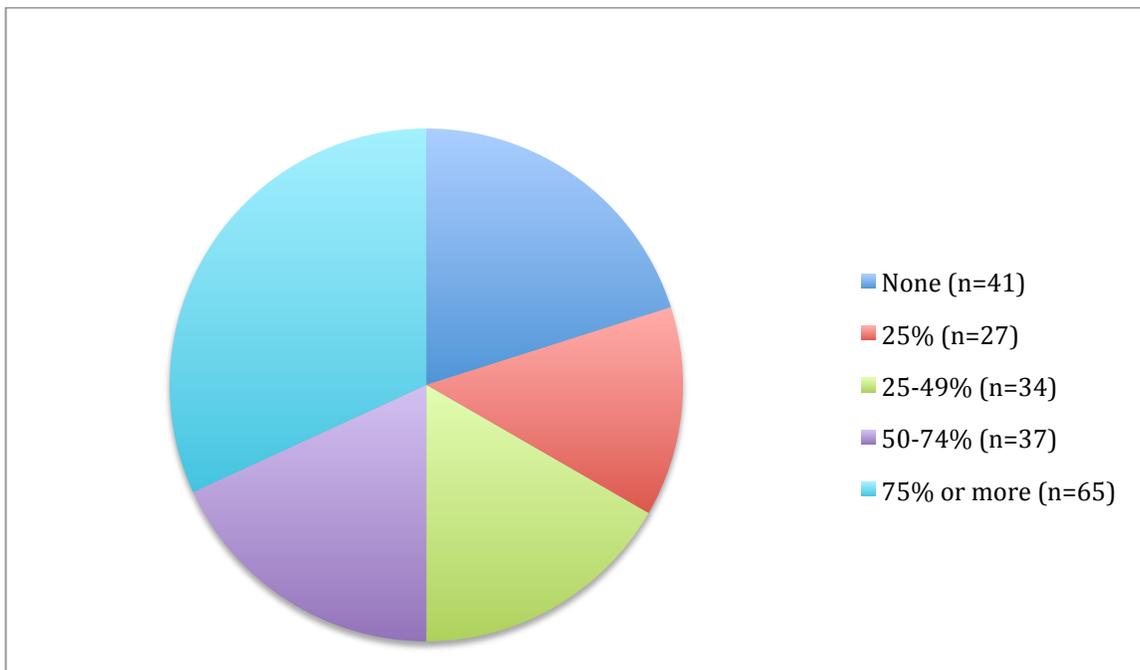
**Risk Factors.** Possible predicted risk factors include financial stress (e.g., extent of parental or family financial support, number of hours worked while attending SJSU, financial hold), academic preparedness, campus climate/experiences, personal issues, and other reasons.

**Financial Stress.** In order to determine extent of parental or family financial support, respondents were asked the following question: How much of your college expenses have been paid by your parents or family? Leavers reported that approximately 80% (n=167) of the individuals received some type of financial support from parents and/or family. The highest percentage of stopouts (30.4%) and dropouts (35.2%) received 75% or more of their financial support from their parents or families. Please see Table 16 for Stopouts and Dropouts Parental and Family Financial Support and Figure 17 for Overall Financial Support.

**Table 16: Stopouts and Dropouts Parental and Family Financial Support**

|                                       | Stopouts   | % Stopouts | Dropouts  | % Dropouts | Overall    |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| No money received from parents/family | 27         | 20%        | 14        | 20%        | 20%        |
| Less than 25%                         | 16         | 12%        | 11        | 16%        | 13%        |
| 25%-49%                               | 26         | 20%        | 8         | 11%        | 17%        |
| 50-74%                                | 24         | 18%        | 13        | 18%        | 18%        |
| 75% or more                           | 40         | 30%        | 25        | 35%        | 32%        |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>133</b> |            | <b>71</b> |            | <b>204</b> |

**Figure 17: Overall Financial Support**



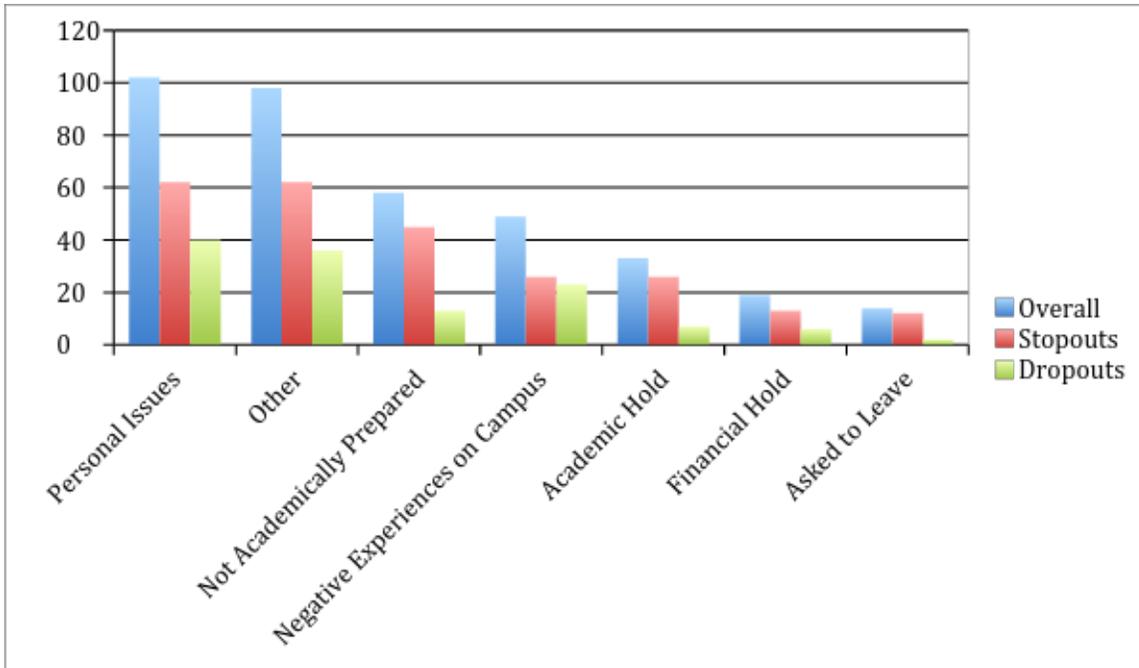
**Working Situation.** To determine the number of hours worked while attending SJSU, respondents were asked the following question: While attending SJSU, how many hours a week did you work? About 50% of stopouts and 44% of dropouts worked between 15-35 hours per week while attending SJSU. Approximately 39% of dropouts did not work at all while attending SJSU while about 30% of stopouts did not work while attending SJSU. A total of 10% of the leavers (stopouts and dropouts) worked full-time (35 hours or more per week) while attending SJSU. Overall, 61% of respondents worked while attending SJSU. Please see Table 18 for Hours Worked While Attending SJSU.

**Table 18: Hours Worked While Attending SJSU**

|                             | Stopouts | % Stopouts | Dropouts | % Dropouts |
|-----------------------------|----------|------------|----------|------------|
| None                        | 41       | 29.7%      | 28       | 39.4%      |
| Less than 15 hours per week | 12       | 8.7%       | 8        | 11.3%      |
| 15-24 hours per week        | 34       | 24.6%      | 19       | 26.8%      |
| 25-34 hours per week        | 35       | 25.4%      | 12       | 16.9%      |
| 35 or more hours per week   | 16       | 11.6%      | 4        | 5.6%       |
| Total                       | 138      |            | 71       |            |

**Campus Climate.** The highest number of respondents (n=102) left the University due to personal issues (stopouts = 62 and dropouts = 40). The second highest category was “other” (overall n=98; stopouts = 62 and dropouts = 36). Respondents who selected “other” for the primary reason for leaving SJSU specified finances, an inability to get classes, health/injury, and issues at home/with family. The third highest reason for leaving SJSU was not feeling academically prepared (overall n=58; stopouts=45 and dropouts=13). Next, negative experiences on campus either inside the classroom with professors and peers or outside of the classroom included 49 responses (stopouts=26 and dropouts=23). Please see Figure 19 below for Reasons for Leaving SJSU.

**Figure 19: Reasons for Leaving SJSU**



**Campus Involvement.** In order to determine campus extra-curricular activities, participants were asked the following questions: While at SJSU, how involved were you in campus extra-curricular activities such as clubs, intramurals and/or fraternities/sororities? Approximately 53% (n=106) of Leavers were not involved in any campus extra-curricular activities. See Table 20: Stopout/Dropout Extracurricular Activities.

**Table 20: Stopout/Dropout Extracurricular Activity**

|                           | <b>Stopouts<br/>n=129</b> | <b>Dropouts<br/>n=71</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Not Involved</b>       | 67                        | 39                       |
| <b>Slightly Involved</b>  | 28                        | 11                       |
| <b>Involved</b>           | 15                        | 15                       |
| <b>Very Involved</b>      | 16                        | 5                        |
| <b>Extremely Involved</b> | 3                         | 1                        |

### **Online Survey Analysis**

The online survey was initially emailed to 863 individuals (2012 cohort n=456, 2013 cohort n= 348, and 2014 cohort n=59). Twenty-one of the email messages were not deliverable or bounced (2012 cohort n=14, 2013 cohort n=3, and 2014 cohort n=4). There were a total of 30 individuals (2012 cohort n=20, 2013 cohort n =9, and 2014 cohort n=1) who completed the survey. So, there was an overall 4% response rate for this cohort of individuals.

There were a total of 45 individuals who were initially contacted by phone but requested to complete the online survey on their own. After the email message was sent with the online survey link to these individuals, 2 messages bounced or were undeliverable (1 message bounced from the initial batch of 36 and 1 bounced from the second batch of 9). Of these 43 individuals, 5 completed an online survey so there was a 12% response rate for this cohort or group of individuals that were initially contacted by phone then requested to be emailed the survey to complete online.

Overall, there was a total of 35 online surveys completed. However, of the 35 surveys completed online, there was 1 duplicate and 6 unmatchable responses (meaning the information provided cannot be aligned with the institutional data so respondents' beginning cohort year, ethnic sub-groups, academic standing, and last enrolled term is unknown). So, there are a total of 28 online surveys that were analyzable.

According to the institutional data, respondents from the Fall 2012 cohort included 5 Asian/Asian American, 1 African American/Black, 6 Latin@, and 5 European American/Caucasian. Fall 2013 cohort respondents included 1 Asian/ Asian American, 1 Decline to State, 3 Latin@, 1 Native Hawaiian, and 4 European American/Caucasian. And, Fall 2014 cohort respondents included 1 Latin@. Overall, the three cohorts included 6 Asian/Asian American, 1 African American/Black, 10 Latin@, 9 European American/Caucasian, 1 Native Hawaiian, and 1 Decline to State.

## Characteristics of Online Surveyed Stopouts vs. Dropouts

The 28 online surveys included 6 stopouts and 22 dropouts.

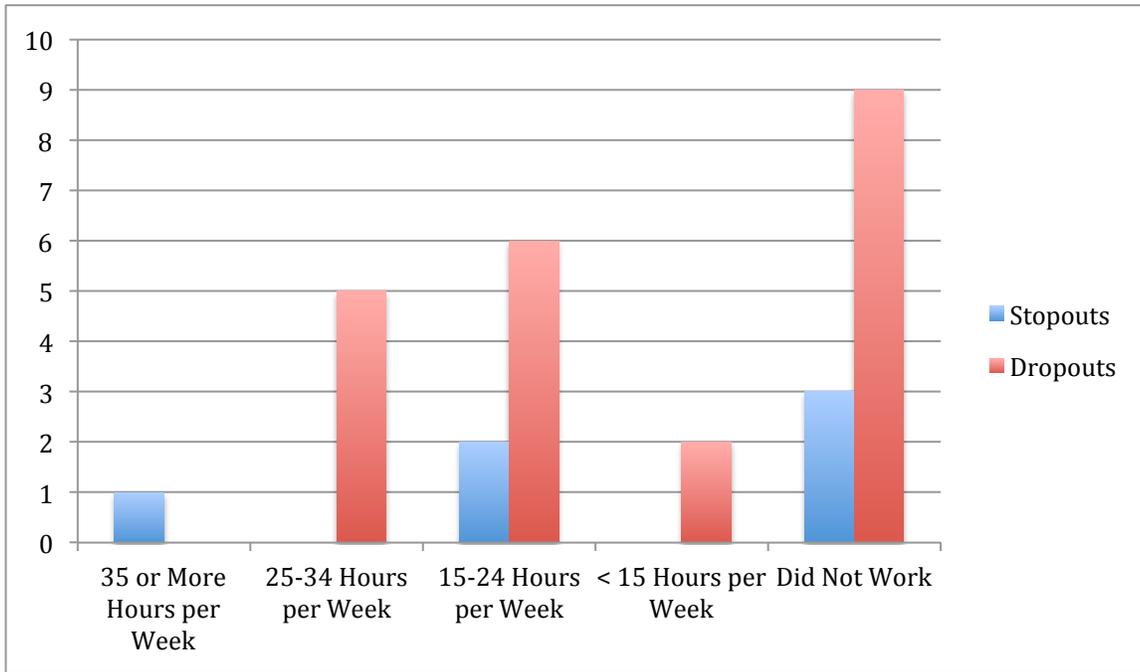
**Academic Standing, College, and Major.** Stopouts self-identified as 3 Latin@, 1 Asian/Asian American, 1 European American/Caucasian and 1 multi-ethnic/multi-heritage individual. Four were in good academic standing, 1 was on probation, and 1 was disqualified. Four were undeclared, 1 was in the college of Humanities and the Arts (Art/Animation/Illustration) and 1 was Engineering (Aerospace). Also, 4 of the 6 Stopouts were first generation college goers; 3 Stopouts were from the Fall 2012 cohort, 2 from the Fall 2013 cohort, and 1 from the Fall 2014 cohort.

Dropouts self-identified as 2 Latin@, 5 Asian/Asian American, 4 European American/Caucasian, 8 multi-ethnic/multi-heritage, and 3 Decline to State. 17 were in good academic standing, 3 were on probation, and 2 were disqualified. 9 were undeclared, 4 were in the college of Applied Sciences (3 Forensic Science—Chemistry, 1 Occupational Therapy), 2 Business (Business Administration—1 general business, 1 business administration), 3 Engineering (1 Aerospace, 1 Computer, 1 Materials), 1 Humanities and the Arts (Linguistics), 1 Science (Biological Sci/Consrv & Organismal Bio), and 2 Social Sciences (1 Communication Studies, 1 Psychology). 14 Dropouts were a part of the Fall 2012 cohort and 8 were Fall 2013.

**Work Status While at SJSU.** While attending SJSU, 1 Stopout worked full-time, 2 worked between 15-24 hours per week, and 3 Stopouts did not work at all.

None of the Dropouts reported working full-time, 5 worked between 25-34 hours per week, 6 worked between 15-24 hours per week, 2 worked less than 15 hours per week, and 9 Dropouts did not work while at SJSU. Please see Figure 21: Work Status While at SJSU below.

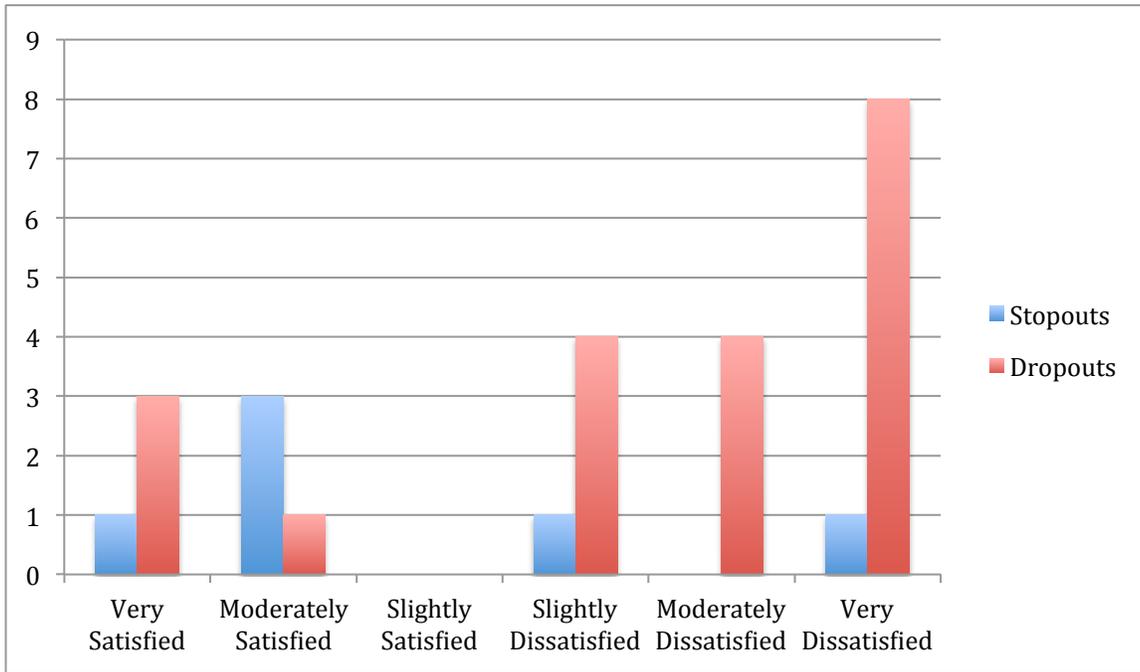
**Figure 21: Work Status While at SJSU**



**Satisfaction with Experience at SJSU.** Of the Stopouts 1 was very satisfied with his/her experience at SJSU, 3 were moderately satisfied, 1 was slightly dissatisfied, and 1 was very dissatisfied.

There were 3 Dropouts who were very satisfied with their experience at SJSU, 1 Dropout was moderately satisfied, 4 were slightly dissatisfied, 4 were moderately dissatisfied, and 8 Dropouts were very dissatisfied with their experience at SJSU. Please see below for Figure 22: Satisfaction with Experience at SJSU

**Figure 22: Satisfaction with Experience at SJSU**



**Activities of Stopouts and Dropouts after Leaving SJSU.** Of the 6 stopouts, 5 are attending college or plan to begin again in Fall 2015 and 1 individual is not attending college and does not have plans to return; 1 individual was STEM. All 6 stopouts plan to return to SJSU (2 in Fall 2015, 1 in Spring 2016, 2 in Fall 2016, and 1 is not sure when). Four of the stopouts are currently working (2 full-time and 2 part-time) and 2 are not currently working.

20 of the dropouts are currently attending a university and 2 dropouts are not attending any university; 2 individuals were STEM. None of the dropouts have plans to return to SJSU. 14 of the dropouts are currently working (5 full-time), 7 are not working, and 1 did not share.

**Table 23: Activities of Stopouts and Dropouts after Leaving SJSU**

|   | <b>Stopouts<br/>(n=6)</b> | <b>Dropouts<br/>(n=22)</b> |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Attending College or Plan to Begin Again in Fall 2015 | 5                         | 20                         |
| Not Attending College                                 | 1                         | 2                          |
| STEM  | 1                         | 2                          |
| Plan to Return to SJSU                                | 6                         | 0                          |
| Working Full-Time                                     | 2                         | 5                          |
| Working Part-Time                                     | 2                         | 9                          |
| Not Currently Working                                 | 2                         | 7                          |

## Reasons for Leaving SJSU

**Risk Factors.** Possible predicted risk factors include financial stress (e.g., extent of parental or family financial support, number of hours worked while attending SJSU, financial capability), academic preparedness, campus climate/experiences, personal issues, and other reasons.

**Financial Stress.** The following question was asked to determine financial support by parents/family: How much of college expenses have been paid by parents/family?

Stopouts shared that 2 individuals had 75% or more of their expenses paid by their parents/family, 1 individual had 50-74% of expenses paid by their parents/family, 1 had between 25-49% of their expenses paid by their parents/family, 1 had less than 25% and 1 had no support from their parents/family. Please see Table 24 below for correlation of importance this financial support by parents/family played in Stopouts' decision to leave SJSU.

**Table 24: Online Stopouts Financial Impact**

| How much of your college expenses have been paid by your parents/family? | Stopouts (n=6) | What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU? |
|--|----------------|---|
| None   | 1              | Not important   |
| Less than 25%  | 1              |   |
| 25-49%   | 1              | Very important  |
| 50-74%   | 1              |   |
| 75% or more  | 2              |   |

Fourteen (64%) of the Dropouts were financially supported 75% or more by parents/family, 2 Dropouts were financially supported 50-74%, 2 were financially supported 25-49%, 1 Dropout was financially supported less than 25%, and 3 Dropouts did not have any financial support from their parents or family. What role this financial support played in their decision to leave SJSU was overlapping and contradictory at times (e.g., some shared it was extremely important while others shared it was not important for the same category) so the results could not be included in Table 25: Online Dropouts Financial Impact.

**Table 25: Online Dropouts Financial Impact**

| How much of your college expenses have been paid by your parents/family? | Responses (n=6) |
|--|-----------------|
| None   | 3               |
| Less than 25%  | 1               |
| 25-49%   | 2               |
| 50-74%   | 2               |
| 75% or more  | 14              |

**Working Situation.** In order to collect information about working status while attending SJSU, Leavers completed the following question: While attending SJSU, how many hours a week did you work?

While attending SJSU, 1 Stopout worked full-time, 2 worked between 15-24 hours per week, and 3 Stopouts did not work at all.

None of the Dropouts reported working full-time, 5 worked between 25-34 hours per week, 6 worked between 15-24 hours per week, 2 worked less than 15 hours per week, and 9 Dropouts did not work while at SJSU.

**Campus Climate.** Stopouts shared the top 4 reasons for leaving SJSU were: 1) difficulty enrolling in classes, 2) financial, 3) major was impacted (unable to get into major I wanted), and 4) family/personal problems.

**Table 26: Online Stopouts Top 4 Reasons for Leaving SJSU**

|                            | <b>Difficulty Enrolling in Classes</b> | <b>Financial</b> | <b>Major Impacted</b> | <b>Family/Personal Problems</b> |
|----------------------------|--|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Extremely Important</b> | 3                                      | 2                | 2                     | 1                               |
| <b>Very Important</b>      | 1                                      | 2                | 1                     | 2                               |
| <b>Somewhat Important</b>  | 0                                      | 0                | 2                     | 1                               |
| <b>Not Important</b>       | 2                                      | 2                | 1                     | 2                               |

Dropouts shared the top 4 reasons for leaving SJSU were: 1) difficulty enrolling in classes, 2) SJSU was not what they expected, 3) family/personal problems, and 4) not feeling connected to campus.

**Table 27: Online Dropouts Top 4 Reasons for Leaving SJSU**

|                            | <b>Difficulty Enrolling in Classes</b> | <b>SJSU Not What I Expected</b> | <b>Family/Personal Problems</b> | <b>Did Not Feel Connected to Campus</b> |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Extremely Important</b> | 9                                      | 9                               | 5                               | 5                                       |
| <b>Very Important</b>      | 3                                      | 1                               | 2                               | 3                                       |
| <b>Somewhat Important</b>  | 3                                      | 3                               | 8                               | 3                                       |
| <b>Not Important</b>       | 7                                      | 9                               | 7                               | 11                                      |

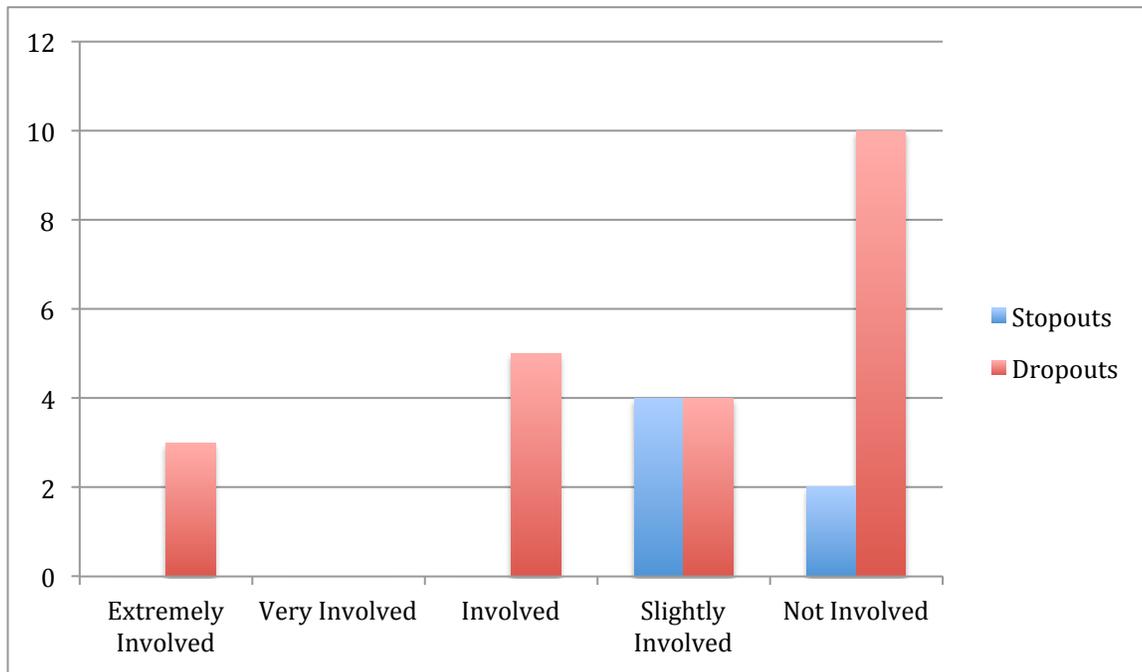
55% of Online Dropouts shared they received very poor (n=9) and poor (n=3) academic advising while at SJSU. Four individuals shared they received good academic advising while 5 received good and 1 very good academic advising at SJSU. When asked what role this played in their decision to leave SJSU, 59% shared it was either extremely or very important (extremely important = 7, very important = 6), 4 shared it was somewhat important, and 5 stated it was not important to their decision to leave SJSU.

**Campus Involvement.** Survey respondents were asked the following question regarding campus involvement: While at SJSU, how involved were you in campus extracurricular activities such as clubs, intramurals, and/or fraternities/sororities?

The 6 Stopouts did not report much campus extracurricular activities; 2 were not involved at all and 4 were slightly involved. When asked what role this played in their decision to leave SJSU, 4 shared it was not important, 1 shared it was somewhat important, and 1 shared it was very important.

Of the 22 Dropouts, 10 were not involved in any campus extracurricular activities, 4 dropouts were slightly involved, 5 were involved, and 3 online dropouts were very involved with campus extracurricular activities. Only 3 of the 22 individuals (14%) shared this played a role in their decision to leave SJSU, whereas 14 shared it was not important and 5 shared it was somewhat important to their decisions to leave SJSU.

**Figure 28: Campus Extracurricular Activities**



**Living Arrangements.** Of the 6 stopouts, 1 lived on campus, 1 lived in an apartment, 3 lived at home with parents, and 1 did not specify.

11 dropouts lived on campus, 2 lived in apartments, and 9 lived at home with parents.

## Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative researchers have recently started to examine hand-coded data through qualitative software analysis programs. These programs are able to more systematically segment, annotate, and categorize focus group responses in relation to demographic variables. In addition, the programs can differentiate within each participant's set of utterances and across all participants' record of utterances (for a list of published social/policy research studies that have used such software refer to the following:

<http://www.provalisresearch.com/Documents/SomeStudies.pdf>). A key advantage of the qualitative analysis software programs is the ability to enable researchers to thoroughly examine large focus group data sets and thereby increase the validity of the data.

By including this step within the analysis before independent hand-coding, the perspective was to prevent coder bias around thematic domains. The emergent thematic perspectives of the focus group participants in relation to the ways in which each participant responded on the phone/online survey was also examined so as to identify any response patterns, linkages, or deviations by way of the survey mechanism and the focus group vehicle. Please see Figure 29 below for the analytic tests used to interpret qualitative data through qualitative analysis software programs (Halualani, 2010a, 2010b).

**Figure 29: Key Analytic Tests**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Conceptual Agreement         | A close match in meaning and association between or among two or more concepts and themes/nodes  |
| Conceptual Linage            | A relational connection between or among two or more concepts and themes/nodes in either a positive (converging) or negative (diverging) direction   |
| Context Analysis             | An examination of the usage of a concept or theme in relation to the surrounding 1,000 words (either preceding or succeeding), as well as the entire data transcript<br><b>Broad</b> —Refers to an analysis of the linguistic context for 1,000 words around a concept or theme<br><b>Narrow to Broad</b> —Refers to a close to far range analysis of the linguistic context around a concept or theme examining transcript segments of varying lengths (e.g., 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 500, or 1,000 words) |
| Coverage                     | In the qualitative analysis software program, NVIVO, coverage refers to the conceptual emphasis of a theme within and across provided responses. Thus, “coverage” factors in more than the quantitative amount or presence of a theme but the recurrence of a theme in relation to its conceptual/thematic emphasis within and across responses (among words and statements from respondents). Usually, the upper range of comprehensive coverage is 25–30% for a theme/node.                                    |
| Emphasis and Source Analysis | A test that examines the usage of a concept or theme in the first ten to thirty words of a response. Such a test reveals a potential source of focus for interpreting or understanding a concept or response to a posed question   |
| Specificity                  | A test that measures the level of detail or “concreteness” present in a theme or in relation to a concept  |
| Semantic Relationship        | A validity test that measures the usage and context of a meaning of a concept, theme, or word. This test is used to validate the agreement or connection of a meaning/definition between or among two or more concepts or themes   |
| Word Association             | Refers to a correlational relationship (either positive or negative) between two or more “words” in the context of their usage and implied meanings  |

## Open-Ended Survey Items

There were five questions included within the phone and online surveys that were open-ended items or allowed the respondents to specify information.

- Do you plan to return to SJSU to finish your degree?
  - Yes—When do you think you will return to SJSU? Next Fall? Not sure? At a later time? (please specify semester/year)
  - No—Can you share reasons as to why not?
  - Not sure at this time
- Please describe reason(s) for leaving SJSU
- If you were to begin your college experience again at SJSU, what would you do differently (if at all)? What could have made it better?
- What kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made you more likely to stay/continue at SJSU?
- How would you describe SJSU's diversity?

Each open-ended comment was categorized into general thematic areas as well as specific sub-thematic areas in order to convey each open-ended comment's original, discrete meaning.

The open-ended survey items from the first batch of phone contacted individuals that included Latin@ and African American/ Black individuals and the second batch that included Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Asian/Asian American, and European American/Caucasian individuals was analyzed (n=214). There were a total of 28 completed online surveys that were also analyzed.

## Telephone Open-Ended Survey Analysis

The average response rate across all of the open-ended items examined was 76%. It should be noted that the typical response rate for open-ended survey items is usually between 20-28% (Andrews, 2004; Miller & Lambert, 2014). For the 5 open-ended survey items, the response rate was between 71-84% (n=151-179). The open-ended survey question with the most responses (n=179) was: If you were to begin your college experience again, what would you do differently. And, the open-ended survey question with the least responses (n=151) was: How would you describe SJSU's diversity? Please see Table 30: Overall Response Rate for Telephone Survey Open-Ended Items.

**Table 30: Overall Response Rate for Telephone Survey Open-Ended Items**

|   | <b>Responses</b> | <b>Response Rate</b> |
|---|------------------|----------------------|
| Do you plan to return to SJSU to finish your degree?  | 155              | 72%                  |
| Reasons for leaving SJSU  | 169              | 79%                  |
| If you were to begin your college experience again, what would you do differently?                            | 179              | 84%                  |
| What kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made you more likely to stay/continue at SJSU? | 160              | 75%                  |
| How would you describe SJSU's diversity?  | 151              | 71%                  |

**Plan to return to SJSU.** The highest number of participants shared they plan to return to SJSU to finish their degree within the next year (21%; n=44), while 9% (n=19) were uncertain. It should be noted that 59 individuals left this question blank or did not respond. Please see Table 31: Plan to Return to SJSU Responses.

**Table 31: Plan to Return to SJSU Responses**

|   |            |             |
|---|------------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>   | <b>59</b>  | <b>28%</b>  |
| <b>Plan To Return Within 1 Year</b>                                 | <b>44</b>  | <b>21%</b>  |
| <b>Uncertain</b>  | <b>19</b>  | <b>9%</b>   |
| <b>SJSU Lacked Support</b>  | <b>10</b>  | <b>5%</b>   |
| <b>Plan To Return In 2 Years</b>                                    | <b>9</b>   | <b>4%</b>   |
| <b>SJSU Too Far From Home</b>                                       | <b>8</b>   | <b>4%</b>   |
| <b>Already Back At SJSU</b>   | <b>7</b>   | <b>3%</b>   |
| <b>Attending Or Wants To Attend Another College (Not UC Or CSU)</b> | <b>7</b>   | <b>3%</b>   |
| <b>Not Returning Because Of Family Reasons</b>                      | <b>7</b>   | <b>3%</b>   |
| <b>SJSU Was Not A Good Fit</b>                                      | <b>6</b>   | <b>3%</b>   |
| <b>Attending Community College, Then Will Transfer Elsewhere</b>    | <b>6</b>   | <b>3%</b>   |
| <b>SJSU Was Too Expensive</b>                                       | <b>5</b>   | <b>2%</b>   |
| <b>May Attend A Community College</b>                               | <b>5</b>   | <b>2%</b>   |
| <b>Will Return When GPA Increases/Improves</b>                      | <b>4</b>   | <b>2%</b>   |
| <b>SJSU Did Not Offer Desired Major</b>                             | <b>3</b>   | <b>1%</b>   |
| <b>Will Return Sometime In The Future</b>                           | <b>3</b>   | <b>1%</b>   |
| <b>Major At SJSU Was Impacted</b>                                   | <b>2</b>   | <b>1%</b>   |
| <b>Miscellaneous (Not Related To The Other Themes)</b>              | <b>2</b>   | <b>1%</b>   |
| <b>Other Plans/Different Outlook</b>                                | <b>2</b>   | <b>1%</b>   |
| <b>Too Hard To Get Classes At SJSU</b>                              | <b>2</b>   | <b>1%</b>   |
| <b>Did Not Like The City</b>  | <b>1</b>   | <b>0%</b>   |
| <b>Plan To Return In 3 Years</b>                                    | <b>1</b>   | <b>0%</b>   |
| <b>Was Academically Disqualified</b>                                | <b>1</b>   | <b>0%</b>   |
| <b>Was Unhappy With SJSU Academically</b>                           | <b>1</b>   | <b>0%</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Reasons for Leaving SJSU.** A thematic analysis indicated that 20% of the participants (n=43 for each theme) shared the following 3 main reasons for leaving SJSU: 1) academics, 2) personal, and 3) financial. Please see Table 31 below and note that “Count Blanks” refers to items that were left blank or not answered by the respondent.

**Table 32: Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU**

|                                 |            |             |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>             | 45         | 21%         |
| <b>Academic</b>                 | 43         | 20%         |
| <b>Financial</b>                | 43         | 20%         |
| <b>Personal</b>                 | 43         | 20%         |
| <b>Housing/City/Environment</b> | 18         | 8%          |
| <b>School/Campus</b>            | 18         | 8%          |
| <b>Other</b>                    | 4          | 2%          |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Specific sub-themes within the 7 thematic categories were tallied and a grounded theory emergent analysis was applied. The sub-theme with the most responses was financial considerations (n=27; 13%) and the second sub-theme was not a good fit/felt out of place (n=11; 5%). Please see Appendix G, Table G1: Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU.

When cross-checking the responses within the answers provided by each survey participant, it emerged that survey respondents may have different ways of making sense of their reasons for leaving SJSU. For instance, many students identified financial considerations as their main reason for leaving SJSU. However, in the other survey items and open-ended comments participants shared the actual reason for leaving SJSU was a difficulty in attaining classes. So, in actuality, not being able to attain enough units for financial aid purposes caused financial problems. Thus, it became apparent that participants have complex, circuitous ways of understanding, identifying, and determining the reasons for their college departures. Participants who identified financial reasons for leaving SJSU, narrated a more comprehensive picture about how personal and academic issues led to some financial pressures which ultimately resulted in their exiting of the institution.

When reasons for leaving SJSU were sorted by ethnic sub-groups, Latin@ respondents shared their top 3 reason for leaving SJSU were financial (n=33; 29%), academic (n=30; 26%), and personal (n=28; 24%). African American/Black respondents' top reason for leaving SJSU was personal (n=7; 35%). Asian/Asian American respondents shared the top two reasons for leaving SJSU were academic (n=8; 35%) and personal (n=7; 30%). See Table 32: Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU by Ethnic Sub-Group.

**Table 33: Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU by Ethnic Sub-Group**

|                                  | Latin@     |     | African American/ Black |     | Asian/ Asian American |     | European American/ Caucasian |     | Count Blank | Total     |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|-------------|-----------|
| <b>Academic</b>                  | 30         | 26% | 3                       | 15% | 8                     | 35% | 4                            | 36% |             | <b>45</b> |
| <b>Financial</b>                 | 33         | 29% | 3                       | 15% | 4                     | 17% | 3                            | 27% |             | <b>43</b> |
| <b>Housing/City/ Environment</b> | 6          | 5%  | 2                       | 10% | 2                     | 9%  | 2                            | 18% |             | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Other</b>                     | 1          | 1%  | 3                       | 15% | 0                     | 0%  | 0                            | 0%  |             | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Personal</b>                  | 28         | 24% | 7                       | 35% | 7                     | 30% | 2                            | 18% |             | <b>44</b> |
| <b>School/Campus</b>             | 17         | 15% | 2                       | 10% | 2                     | 9%  | 0                            | 0%  |             | <b>21</b> |
|                                  | <b>115</b> |     | <b>20</b>               |     | <b>23</b>             |     | <b>11</b>                    |     | <b>45</b>   | 214       |

**What would you do differently?** The highest percentage of respondents (39%; n=84) shared that if they were to begin their college experience at SJSU again, they would go about their academics differently. The second highest thematic area is school/campus (20%; n=42) and the third highest thematic area is financial (14%; n=30). Please see Table 33: Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question and Appendix G, Table G2: Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question

**Table 34: Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question**

|                                 |            |             |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>             | 35         | 16%         |
| <b>Academic</b>                 | 84         | 39%         |
| <b>Financial</b>                | 30         | 14%         |
| <b>Housing/City/Environment</b> | 14         | 7%          |
| <b>Personal</b>                 | 9          | 4%          |
| <b>School/Campus</b>            | 42         | 20%         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Programs, Activities, and/or Programs.** Participants (38%; n=81) identified academic-centered activities as the primary theme for staying and/or continuing at SJSU when asked the following question, “What kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made you more likely to stay/continue at SJSU?” The School/Campus theme was the second highest area (19%; n=40). Please see Table 35: Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs Question.

**Table 35: Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs Question**

|                                 |            |             |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>             | 35         | 16%         |
| <b>Academic</b>                 | 81         | 38%         |
| <b>School/Campus</b>            | 40         | 19%         |
| <b>Financial</b>                | 25         | 12%         |
| <b>Personal</b>                 | 17         | 8%          |
| <b>Housing/City/Environment</b> | 16         | 7%          |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The top two Academic sub-themes: 1) be more focused on school (6%, n=12), and 2) study more/study harder/try harder/be a better student (3%, n=7) revealed that participants focused on what they could individually change rather than sharing or focusing on the programs, activities, and/or services that are offered at SJSU that could have made them more likely to stay and/or continue at SJSU. This is also the case for the School/Campus, Financial, and Housing/City/ Environment thematic areas. The primary School/Campus sub-theme participants shared was to get involved on campus (7%; n=16). For the Housing/City/Environment sub-theme, to live off campus (4%; n=9) was shared the most often and the primary Financial sub-theme was to pursue more financial aid options such as scholarships/loans/grants (3%; n=6). So, participants were taking academic responsibility or agency for their own departures from SJSU rather than focusing on SJSU resources. See Appendix G, Table G3: Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Programs, Activities, and/or Programs at SJSU Question.

**SJSU’s Diversity.** Participants were asked the following question, “How would you describe SJSU’s diversity?” Approximately 20% (n=43) shared they perceived SJSU to be very or extremely diverse. The next highest response was 12% (n=25) of participants shared that SJSU was diverse in general and 10% (n=22) shared SJSU was somewhat/pretty diverse. It should be noted that 21 individuals shared they don’t know how to describe SJSU’s diversity, 17 individuals think SJSU is not very diverse, 11 individuals shared classes at SJSU lack diversity, and 8 individuals’ perception is there are not a lot of Latin@ students at SJSU. Please see Table 36: SJSU Diversity Themes Question below.

**Table 36: SJSU Diversity Themes Question**

|                                     |            |             |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>                 | 34         | 16%         |
| <b>Very/Extremely Diverse</b>       | 43         | 20%         |
| <b>Diverse In General</b>           | 25         | 12%         |
| <b>Somewhat/Pretty Diverse</b>      | 22         | 10%         |
| <b>Don't Know</b>                   | 21         | 10%         |
| <b>Ethnic Cliques</b>               | 19         | 9%          |
| <b>Not Very Diverse</b>             | 17         | 8%          |
| <b>Classes Lack Diversity</b>       | 11         | 5%          |
| <b>Not A Lot Of Latino Students</b> | 8          | 4%          |
| <b>Relaxed Atmosphere</b>           | 7          | 3%          |
| <b>Not As Diverse As Advertised</b> | 6          | 3%          |
| <b>Rigorous School</b>              | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

### **Online Open-Ended Survey Analysis**

The average responses rate across all of the open-ended items on the online survey examined was 81%. As noted in the previous section (Telephone Open-Ended Survey Analysis) the typical response rate for open-ended items is usually between 20-28% (Andrews, 2004; Miller & Lambert, 2014). For the 5 open-ended survey items, the response rate was between 55-96% (n=15-27). The open-ended survey question with the most responses (n=27) was: Do you plan to return to SJSU to finish your degree? And, the open-ended survey question with the least responses (n=15) was: What kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made you more likely to stay/continue at SJSU? Please see Table 37: Overall Response Rate for Online Survey Open-Ended Items.

**Table 37: Overall Response Rate for Online Survey Open-Ended Items**

|   | Responses | Response Rate | Count Blanks |
|---|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| Do you plan to return to SJSU to finish your degree?  | 27        | 96%           | 2            |
| Reasons for leaving SJSU  | 25        | 89%           | 3            |
| If you were to begin your college experience again, what would you do differently?                            | 22        | 79%           | 6            |
| What kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made you more likely to stay/continue at SJSU? | 15        | 55%           | 13           |
| How would you describe SJSU's diversity?  | 24        | 86%           | 4            |

**Plan to return to SJSU.** The highest number of participants shared they plan to attend or want to attend another university not within the UC or CSU system (36%; n=10). There were three individuals (n=1 for each) that shared they were either uncertain, had other plans or a different outlook, or was unhappy with SJSU academically. Please see Table 38: Plan to Return to SJSU Online Responses.

**Table 38: Plan to Return to SJSU Online Responses**

|  |           |             |
|--|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>  | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Attending Or Wants To Attend Another University (Not UC Or CSU)</b> | 10        | 36%         |
| <b>Plan To Return Within 1 Year</b>                                    | 5         | 18%         |
| <b>SJSU Was Not A Good Fit</b>   | 4         | 14%         |
| <b>SJSU Lacked Support</b>   | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>SJSU Did Not Offer Desired Major</b>                                | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Uncertain</b>   | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Other Plans/Different Outlook</b>                                   | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Was Unhappy With SJSU Academically</b>                              | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Reasons for Leaving SJSU.** A thematic analysis indicated that 32% of the participants shared that Financial reasons was the main reason for leaving SJSU. The second theme,

Personal, included 7 individuals (25%) while the third theme was Academic (18%; n=5). Please see Table 39: Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU below.

**Table 39: Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU**

|                      |           |             |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>  | 3         | 11%         |
| <b>Financial</b>     | 9         | 32%         |
| <b>Personal</b>      | 7         | 25%         |
| <b>Academic</b>      | 5         | 18%         |
| <b>School/Campus</b> | 4         | 14%         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The sub-theme with the most responses was financial considerations (n=8; 29%) and the second sub-theme was a five-way tie with 2 responses (7% per area) for each of the following sub-themes: 1) too hard to get classes, 2) poor academic performance, 3) did not like city, 4) bad impression of university, and 5) lack of support/didn't know about services. Please see Appendix G, Table G4: Sub-Themes of Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU.

When reasons for leaving SJSU was sorted by ethnic sub-groups, Latin@ respondents shared their top 3 reason for leaving SJSU were financial (n=3; 38%), personal (n=3; 38%), and academic (n=2; 25%). Asian/Asian American respondents shared the top three reasons for leaving SJSU were: 1) academic (n=2; 29%), financial (n=2; 29%) and personal (n=2; 29%). See Table 40: Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU by Ethnic Sub-Group.

**Table 40: Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU by Ethnic Sub-Group**

|                      | Latin@   |     | Asian/<br>Asian<br>American |     | European<br>American/<br>Caucasian |     | Other    |     | Count<br>Blanks | Total     |
|----------------------|----------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|------------------------------------|-----|----------|-----|-----------------|-----------|
| <b>Academic</b>      | 2        | 25% | 2                           | 29% | 1                                  | 20% | 0        | 0%  |                 | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Financial</b>     | 3        | 38% | 2                           | 29% | 2                                  | 40% | 2        | 40% |                 | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Personal</b>      | 3        | 38% | 2                           | 29% | 1                                  | 20% | 1        | 20% |                 | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>School/Campus</b> | 0        | 1%  | 1                           | 14% | 1                                  | 20% | 2        | 40% |                 | <b>4</b>  |
|                      | <b>8</b> |     | <b>7</b>                    |     | <b>5</b>                           |     | <b>5</b> |     | <b>3</b>        | <b>28</b> |

**What would you do differently?** The highest percentage of respondents (39%; n=11) shared that if they were to begin their college experience at SJSU again, they would go about their academics differently. The second highest thematic area is school/campus (25%; n=7) and the third highest thematic area is personal (7%; n=2). Please see Table 41: Online Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question and Appendix G, Table G5: Online Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question

**Table 41: Online Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question**

|                                 |           |             |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>             | 6         | 21%         |
| <b>Academic</b>                 | 11        | 39%         |
| <b>School/Campus</b>            | 7         | 25%         |
| <b>Personal</b>                 | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Financial</b>                | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Housing/City/Environment</b> | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Programs, Activities, and/or Programs at SJSU.** Participants (50%; n=14) identified academic-centered activities as the primary theme for staying and/or continuing at SJSU when asked the following question, “What kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made you more likely to stay/continue at SJSU?” Please see Table 42: Online Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs at SJSU Question and Appendix G, Table G6: Online Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs Question.

**Table 42: Online Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs Question**

|                     |           |             |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b> | 13        | 46%         |
| <b>Academic</b>     | 14        | 50%         |
| <b>Financial</b>    | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**SJSU’s Diversity.** Participants were asked the following question, “How would you describe SJSU’s diversity?” Approximately 32% (n=9) shared they perceived SJSU to be very or extremely diverse. The next highest response was 18% (n=5) of participants shared that SJSU was somewhat diverse. Please see Table 43: Online SJSU Diversity Themes Question below.

**Table 43: Online SJSU Diversity Themes Question**

|                                |           |             |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>            | 4         | 14%         |
| <b>Very/Extremely Diverse</b>  | 9         | 32%         |
| <b>Somewhat/Pretty Diverse</b> | 5         | 18%         |
| <b>Don't Know</b>              | 3         | 11%         |
| <b>Don't Look At That</b>      | 3         | 11%         |
| <b>Diverse In General</b>      | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Ethnic Cliques</b>          | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

## Online Focus Groups

Focus groups represent insightful vehicles to access a group or community's subjective constructions of their social world in order to identify key conditions and obstacles that can be changed and improved (Lofland & Lofland, 2006; Rossman & Rallis, 2011). The vitality of focus groups for both uncovering campus climate experiences for students of color (Halualani, 2008, 2010a, 2010b; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Morrow, Burris-Kitchen, & Der-Karabetian, 2000) and college experiences of Latin@s and historically underrepresented groups (Chiang, Hunter, & Yeh, 2004; Dennis, Phinney, & Chuateco, 2005; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002; Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2004; Villalpando, 2004; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009) has been highlighted in the literature. For this project, focus groups allowed the participants to share more details and narrate their experiences around factors that influenced their departure from SJSU.

During July-August 2015, 40 individuals participated in six online focus groups. Participants (n=71) first expressed their willingness to participate in a focus group within the survey that was either administered by phone or online. Then, these individuals were contacted via email to solicit focus group participation. Ultimately, 56% (n=40) of the individuals gave consent and completed the online focus group protocol.

## Demographics

**Gender.** There were 21 female (52%) and 19 male (48%) online focus group participants.

**Ethnicity.** Sixty-three percent (n=25) of the online focus group participants self-identified as Latin@ (18 Mexican Americans, 4 Chican@, and 3 unspecified Latin@). About 18% (n=7) self-identified as African American, 15% (n=6) self-identified as Asian (3 individuals self-identified as Filipinos and 3 unspecified Asian individuals), and the remaining 2 participants (5% of the total participants) self-identified as multi-heritage/multi-ethnic (e.g., African American and Filipino heritage and the second individual self-identified as African American, Filipino, and European American heritage).

**Place of Residence During The First Semester at SJSU.** Approximately, 70% (n=28) of the focus group participants lived off campus while 30% (n=12) lived on campus in residence halls.

**Work Status.** Based upon the information shared within the phone/online survey by the online focus group participants, 65% (n=26) are currently working 35 hours or more a week while 35% (n=14) shared they are not currently working.

**Current Higher Education Status.** The majority (93%; n=37) of the focus group participants are not currently attending a higher educational institution. About 8% (n=3) are currently in the process of returning to school (either to a two-year college or four-year university), while 1 individual has already returned to SJSU.

**Overall Frequency of Focus Group Utterances.** There was a total of 352 utterances (statements or key qualitative construct measures) expressed by the focus group participants from the 6 online focus groups. At least 20 illustrative examples were catalogued for each theme that emerged from the focus group transcripts.

**Phone Survey and Online Focus Group Overlap.** There was an 80% agreement between phone and online survey responses compared with online focus group statements; 20% indicated the larger categories of reasons were either overlapping or intertwined.

## **Key Themes**

Throughout the online focus groups, there was a key recurring theme that emerged across the majority of focus group participants as well as a strongly valenced theme that simultaneously recurred through the online focus group sessions.

**Key Recurring Theme: Difficulty in Attaining Classes.** Participants identified the major reason for departing SJSU as being unable to add or enroll in needed classes. This theme occurred in at least 74% of the utterances throughout 4 of the 6 focus group sessions (across-groups) and within 52% of each focus group session (within-group). Participants shared an inability to take courses in their designated majors (both impacted and non-impacted majors). Please see Table V: Majors of Online Focus Group Participants.

**Table 44: Majors of Online Focus Group Participants**

|                                  |          |           |
|----------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Business                         | IMPACTED | 5         |
| Chemistry                        |          | 1         |
| Communication Studies            | IMPACTED | 3         |
| Computer Science                 |          | 2         |
| Criminal Justice/Justice Studies | IMPACTED | 2         |
| Economics                        | IMPACTED | 2         |
| Engineering                      | IMPACTED | 5         |
| French                           |          | 1         |
| Health Science                   |          | 2         |
| Journalism                       |          | 1         |
| MIS                              | IMPACTED | 1         |
| Music                            |          | 1         |
| Nursing                          | IMPACTED | 3         |
| Psychology                       | IMPACTED | 4         |
| Public Relations                 | IMPACTED | 1         |
| Radio Television Film            |          | 1         |
| Sociology                        |          | 2         |
| Undeclared                       |          | 3         |
|                                  | TOTAL    | <b>40</b> |

Participants explained that they could not gain access to any of their needed courses in their major for more than one semester. When probed if they sought help to identify alternatives, they stated that the advisers either gave them incorrect information or told them that there were no other options. 60% of the participants exited SJSU after the 2nd to 3rd semester in which this happened. Through a word association test through qualitative analytics (which gauges the correlational relationship (either positive or negative) between two or more words in the context of their usage and implied meanings), the word "course" was associated with "can't" or "impacted" or "barrier."

Participants detailed the interactions with advisers and shared how there were no immediate remedies or alternative course arrangements set up in the major or for General Education to help them start or continue their coursework. This stood out as the most emphasized reason or number 1 reason for why students exited the university. Online focus group participants indicated that they had a very clear understanding that this was a prime motivator for leaving San Jose State University.

For example, one participant explained, “You get everything done and you are at this school, ready to go, scared out of your mind, the place is so big and it’s college, you know, and then come to find out, you can’t get into one freakin class. Not even one. It’s like you are spinning your wheels.” Another highlighted SJSU’s best-kept “secret”: “I was so happy that San Jose State was taking students and that news was big cuz there weren’t before at all. You get here and guess what, the secret comes out. They let you in but you can’t take anything. There are no classes for you so you ain’t going anywhere.” Several other participants described the problem in attaining classes at SJSU as the “closed door—you just can’t get in” or the “blockade.” Key words like “closed door,” “blockade,” and “barrier” were used to refer to SJSU’s limited provision of needed classes and units for its students.

As they detailed their stories about this recurring theme, online focus group participants all shared that they did not know which courses they could take in the meantime and had little to no guidance if their majors/departments were impacted. One illustrative statement from a online focus group participant was as follows: “Not every new student gets all the classes that she needs but I expected more info on like what I do while I am waiting. There was none of that and it made it seem like I couldn’t take anything that counted for my major, for the real reason I was there at state.” Interestingly, this theme emerged for about 53% (n=21) of the online focus group participants who were a part of impacted majors at SJSU. Difficulty in attaining courses is a common campus-wide experience for SJSU students across a variety of majors and departments. Likewise, all of the online focus group participants (e.g., Latin@, African American/Black, Asian/Asian American, Filipino, multi-ethnic/multi-heritage) identified this recurring theme as a central reason that influenced their decision to leave SJSU.

**Strongly Valenced & Recurring Theme: Precipitating Event or Crisis Point in Student’s Life.** Rather than highlighting specific topical content as a theme, the second theme uniquely focuses on a precipitating event or “crisis point” narrative sequence; or, a distinctive way online focus group participants narrated their experience when they encountered a personal crisis during their first to second year at SJSU. Such a crisis point narrative sequence stands as both a strongly valenced and recurring theme, meaning that it carried an 87% descriptive emphasis (via emphatic words and terms like “very,” “ever,” “in all my life,” “so much,” “the most” or the depth of a meaning) and 82% (n=289) coverage across all focus group session utterances (or the breadth of a meaning across utterances) and across a total of 29 participants. This theme resonated and recurred throughout all of the online focus group sessions in terms of depth and breadth.

In this narrative sequence, participants first identified the reason for leaving SJSU in ways that sounded like personal reasons (“could not pay for units at the last minute,” “loss of employment,” “lost housing,” “family issues,” “relationship issues”). However, it became clear after further examination that the focus group participants clearly equated these reasons for leaving with crisis points that changed the course of their educational pathways at SJSU. As they detailed their crisis points, these participants then explained how they struggled to cope with and navigate their crisis points and were unable to identify any short or long term solutions.

Participants then describe how they reached out to a program, office, or representative of SJSU to help find a solution to the situation but did not receive the assistance or support needed to actually address the crisis point. Then, as a result, the participants shared that they

then felt that they had “no other choice” but to exit SJSU. The narrative sequence unfolds in the following manner:

1. Identification of a personal issue as the main reason for leaving SJSU;
2. Describes struggle to cope and troubleshoot a crisis point;
3. Details attempts to reach out for assistance or support from the university;
4. Finally, after receiving little to no support, decides to leave the institution within two to four weeks from the time the crisis point began.

It is this specific sequence of crisis points that is a main theme for the online focus groups and is the major reason shared for their departures from SJSU. For instance, the following is an excerpt from “Jen’s” crisis point narrative:

Right in the third week of classes, I lost my job, which I had for three years – layoffs and the company changed over. I counted on that job to pay for my classes and everything I needed to get by. It was my lifeline. And when it was gone, I just did not know what to do. It broke me. What was I going to do? I went to Financial Aid to see what I could do and I got no help. There were forms and I had missed deadlines by then. I needed something right away. My dad couldn’t help me. I didn’t know what to do. There was no other way. I left SJSU like about 2 weeks later. I’m never going back either. It just got to be too much from that.

Another example of a crisis point narrative by “Joseph” was the following:

My younger sister got into an accident in my second semester and my mom could only do so much. She works the day shift at her job and we needed someone to stay with my sister. We tried to get help to watch her you know and it wasn’t there. I had to watch her for the next six months, maybe more. I told my professor about it to see what I could do. If I could do the classes after class hours and it couldn’t be done. He didn’t seem to know what to do or how to help me. There was no way around it. I had to drop out so I did. And I got a job right about a year later when my sister got better. I don’t know if I’ll ever go back now.

The online focus group utterances reveal that participants identified personal crises as a sudden event or occurrence that prevented them from continuing their academic coursework at SJSU. In these examples, and throughout the online focus group sessions, the participants struggled to navigate their personal crises and reached out to an office on campus (Financial Aid, Residential Life, Advising Services, among others) or campus affiliated person (faculty member, staff member, counselor, adviser, etc.) at SJSU for help. Participants revealed they did not receive any assistance or any type of support to navigate their crises. While 54% (n=16) of the participants in this theme rationalized that the SJSU offices and contacts likely did not know how to help them, 46% (n=13) expressed that SJSU (via its programs or staff) did not “care” about their crises especially if it was beyond the classroom.

“F” shared that:

I lost my housing and it was kinda complicated cuz of money issues and a roommate thing. I didn't know what to do. I went to the Housing people and nothing. I tried to tell my adviser and she was just like no expression. They just don't care. I got the feeling like the university – State – wasn't going to help out with my problem. They didn't think they had to help me. It wasn't their job to do that.

The notion that SJSU does not “care” and “didn't think they had to help me” and “it wasn't their job to do that” crystallizes the sentiment of several focus group participants that SJSU was not there to help with major personal crises or life issues. “Lori” reiterated this point by stating, “I had a life issue. Family problems, my dad got sick, my mom left, my brothers and I had to rally together. Keeping up with my classes and staying in school was getting hard. I wanted to but I couldn't do it anymore. That school is for students that don't have to deal with that stuff but I did. I had big life issues.” The narrative sequence theme focused on crisis points illustrates that several participants felt that they could not rely on or turn to SJSU for assistance or support, and worse, that SJSU simply “did not care.”

This crisis point theme was supported by 289 utterances. What should be noted is participants shared that within 2-4 weeks from when the crisis point began, the participant made the decision to exit the university. The 2-4 weeks that follow the start of crisis point is critical for a student's retention. If the university does not provide some type of intervention or assist with the navigation of the crisis, there is a high likelihood that the student will leave the university.

Online focus group statements and telephone survey responses for individuals (via cross-matching and sorting of themes) who experience a crisis point (n=29) revealed that 90% (n=26) have not yet returned to college and have no plans to do so. The crisis point theme also resonated with 80% (n=20) of the Latin@ online focus group participants, 71% (n=6) of the African American participants, and 100% (n=3) of the Filipino online focus group participants. Individuals who experience a crisis point that leads to a departure from the university may retain long-term negative perceptions of higher education and therefore their future desire to continue to pursue their degrees may no longer be present.

**Recurring Theme: Feeling No Connection to Campus.** A third recurring theme for online focus group participants was their perception that SJSU was too big and they had no real connection to campus. This recurring theme was supported by 211 (65%) utterances. 70% (n=28) of the online focus group participants shared they did not feel a connection to SJSU as they described their college experiences. “L” shared “SJSU, I knew it was a great place and it was. But not for me. Wasn't for me. Didn't feel like I was a part of it. Like one of them. Too big, too many people.”

Another participant, “David,” explained that while he knew several of his peers in his classes, he did not know many more people at SJSU beyond that:

They say you meet people in your classes and as time goes on. I didn't . . . it didn't happen like that for me . . .it's hard to meet other people and be into stuff. I was driving from work to school and back to work so there is no sense of connection. I never felt a part of SJSU.

“A” went further and associated connection to a sense of belonging.

I sometimes hung out with this guy who was in a fraternity – the [name of fraternity] – that was cool to meet those guys. Made me feel like I belonged to this other world. Like damn this is what it could be like. You have more than just your classes. You do feel like you belong to this university. Could be strong like that. I stopped hanging out with him afterwards cuz we took different classes. From that, San Jose State felt just like where my classes were held. I commuted in so I drove and went to my classes and just went home. I didn't belong there.

The online focus group participants identified a lack of immediate connection to SJSU in terms of their peer friendships on campus beyond the classroom and overall social life on campus. The online focus group utterances for this theme reveal that the participants were missing a connection or anchor point through which to tie them to SJSU beyond the classroom. Their recorded survey responses showed that only 10% (n=3) of the focus group participants who shared this theme (n=30) were involved with a campus student club/organization, Student Life program, or worked on campus. Meaning, 90% (n=25) of the online focus group participants who experienced this theme were not involved with any campus organization, program, or activity, largely due to their commuter status or their off-campus work demands (59% (n=15) of this group worked 35 hours or more off campus).

It should also be noted that while the focus group participants did not identify the lack of connection to SJSU as the primary reason for their departure from the institution, this theme did emerge significantly in their description of their experiences at SJSU with a 64% descriptive emphasis via emphatic words and terms like “absolutely no,” “none,” and “no connection.” The intricate and often delayed manner in which individuals unpack, deconstruct, and make sense of their multidimensional experiences may in fact belie the complex ways in which a perceived lack of connection to a campus may de-motivate and negatively frame (either consciously or unconsciously) their desire to continue their university studies. This theme resonated the most with the Latin@ (n=23; 92% of all Latin@ focus group participants) and African American/Black (n=5; 56% of all African American/Black focus group participants), which may reveal that a connection to campus and a sense of belonging are important factors, especially for first generation, under-represented college students' experiences.

**Significant Theme: Difficult Encounters With Advisers.** A fourth significant theme that emerged in the online focus group sessions revolved around participants' references to advising mishaps and incorrect information from advisers. Although this theme occurred in 37% (n=130) of the focus group utterances, the strong language and emphasis on the topic of advising was palpable, as demonstrated in word association, verbal intensity/descriptiveness measure tests through qualitative online software analysis. Focus group participants referred to advising and advisers as “wrong,” “clueless,” “not helpful,” and “always getting me out the door.” The language used within the first and last 200-word range whenever the topic of advising emerged in the online focus group session was negatively framed with such terms as “misleading,” “reckless,” “inconsistent,” and “rude.” In fact, when online focus group participants described either their difficulty in attaining classes or their crisis point experiences (two of the more recurring themes shared above), their negative encounters with advisers always included these terms throughout the narratives. For example, one student, “C” described how her difficulty in getting into some courses was a direct result of “inaccurate” information from an adviser:

I knew there were prereqs. I read about those. But there was one that I didn't see. I couldn't tell. I asked about it. [She or he] didn't respond so I thought it was off the table.

Then I try to add the course I need and I can't becuZ of that course. The one I asked for. So frustrating. It shifted me in everything I could take for that term. I sat out cuz of it. [She or he] didn't even say sorry, for that mistake.

Several focus group participants characterized their advisers as "incompetent" in helping them navigate their unique situations at SJSU. One explained that her work schedule demands made enrollment and creating an academic plan difficult. When she met with an adviser the, "adviser told me that I didn't have my priorities straight and that it was my fault that I could not progress." This participant went on to explain that she left the advising meeting feeling like a "failure" and ended up leaving SJSU two months later. Another participant highlighted his on-going interaction with an adviser and how the information was inconsistent and had him, "running an obstacle course in which classes I was to be in and what I had to do." "Steve," a transfer student, narrated how he just needed, "help figuring out everything—how to pick classes, how to add them, where to go for this and that," and the advisers he went to (over six different ones) made him feel like that it was not their job to help him; rather, it was his responsibility to "figure out the maze of college." "Steve" summarized his feelings as a result of these interactions as, "I realized that I had to figure it out myself and if I couldn't, I didn't belong in college." This theme resonated with Latin@, African American/Black, and Asian/Asian American focus group participants.

## Discussion

Many first-time freshman need support with the every day facets of college culture and often do not understand the multiple intricate layers that contribute to the daily functioning of a university. For under-represented, first generation college goers this appears to be especially true. A theme that resonated with Latin@, African American/Black, and Asian/Asian American online focus group participants and was shared by "Steve," "I realized that I had to figure it out myself and if I couldn't, I didn't belong in college" may be key to contextualizing the experiences of underrepresented, first generation college goers. Whether it is implied or explicit messages to be independent and self-sufficient, this population is vulnerable to internalizing these perceptions then accepting and blaming themselves for not knowing the strategies nor having the needed and necessary skills to progress with their studies. This internalized blame can manifest in poor grades, failing courses, disengaging, and ultimately lead to dropping out of the university.

Many of the participants shared that they do think highly of SJSU or are not critical of the institution. However, their responses and shared narratives suggest there are many ways in which departments, programs, faculty, and staff can significantly support students with the resources needed to help them navigate all of the complexities of the institution, especially when situations are particularly challenging. Yet, this did not regularly occur for the participants of this study and appears to be a chronic issue at the university.

Even though participants were asked to share what kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made them more likely to stay/continue at SJSU, participants focused on what they could have individually done to be successful. So, these participants were taking academic responsibility for their departure from SJSU rather than focusing on the programs, activities, and/or services that are offered at SJSU that would have made them more likely to stay and/or continue at SJSU. However, if first time freshman are arriving on campus without the necessary tools to navigate and be successful, how can the university expect them to persist and succeed? Perhaps, support needs to begin even before students set foot onto campus and continue until students are familiar with resources at SJSU and also have a support network in place.

First generation college goers especially need support. When focusing on the overall Leavers, there is a marked increase in the number of individuals who are leaving that are first generation college goers. From the 3 cohorts (Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014), first generation Latin@ Leavers ranged from 75-87%, Native Hawaiian first generation Leavers ranged from 70-100%, African American/Black first generation Leavers ranged from 39-71%, and 46% of Asian/Asian American Leavers from the Fall 2014 cohort were first generation. So, a definite risk factor is being a first generation college goer. It should be noted that across 3 cohorts the average percentage of 1<sup>st</sup> generation college Stayers is 42% and the average percentage of 1<sup>st</sup> generation college Leavers is 44%. However, after 1 year of attending SJSU the first generation Leavers within each subgroup for the Fall 2014 cohort were as follows: 100% of the Fall 2014 cohort Native Hawaiian Leavers are first generation, 87% of the Latin@ Leavers are first generation, 71% of the African American/Black Leavers are first generation, 50% of the Two or More Ethnicities & Decline to State Leavers are 1<sup>st</sup> generation, and 46% of the Asian/Asian American Leavers are first generation. This huge gap and difference in percentage should be noted. So, if a student identifies as anything other than European American/White and is also a first generation college goer, then there will be a higher possibility of this student leaving the university after attending for 1 year.

The findings from this research also suggests the need to examine and improve the way academic advising and support is provided at SJSU. The lack of consistency of information provided to students by advisers (both within a department and between departments/colleges) is a critical issue. Students who take the time to meet with an adviser should feel confident that the information received is correct and the interaction should be positive and helpful. Students described experiences with advisers that included impatience, disinterest, and incorrect advising. Advising can and does have an impact on persistence and graduation (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), and academic advisers appear to contribute to the success of racial and ethnic minority students (Museus & Ravello, 2010).

The most seemingly innocuous and perfunctory encounters between student and adviser can carry a lasting impact for historically underrepresented and first generation students, in terms of their sense of belonging and engagement on campus. Encounters with advisers at the university can directly shape students' agency and ability to navigate their college experiences and pathways. First time freshman, and especially first generation college goers, who may already be overwhelmed with the transition to a university will most likely be unfamiliar with alternative ways to find answers to their questions. They may assume the onus is on them to find answers, begin to internalize and feel a sense of helplessness, disengage, then question whether or not pursuing a higher education degree is really the right choice. If improvements in advising can address this issue, this may be a way to retain students, most especially first generation, under-represented students.

There also needs to be a focus on how to connect students with different types of support and a follow-up mechanism should be in place. For example, once a student receives information from an adviser the student may not do exactly what the adviser suggests to do. Or, the student may follow what the adviser suggests to do yet the student may still be struggling with the same issue or other issues. What additional support does the student need to continue and persist at SJSU? Students with multifaceted issues and struggles may require more than one meeting with an academic advisor to connect with the necessary services on campus. Without a follow-up mechanism in place, many of these individuals may continue to struggle and eventually stop persisting.

Difficulty in attaining classes was identified as a major reason for departing SJSU. Participants shared the inability to add or enroll in needed classes within impacted and non-impacted majors. This may be another possible avenue to retain students and support persistence at SJSU. In addition, it should be noted that 389 Leavers were undeclared majors.

First-generation, under-represented ethnic minority college students often encounter personal crisis points such as familial obligations, financial pressures, economic instability, and personal upheavals (Dennis, Phinney, & Chuateco, 2005; Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996). Perhaps, as "Lori" surmises, SJSU is suited for students that do not encounter personal crisis points. However, if this is the case, then SJSU is not well equipped to support the success of first-generation college students. So, it appears crucial for SJSU to provide support that is needed for students to navigate personal crisis points; this may occur by acknowledging and building upon the assortment of strengths these students already come with to the university (Yosso, 2005) or by providing them with opportunities to build their own self-efficacy.

A large majority of the participants were not involved in campus activities and felt no connection to the campus since it was too large; many felt SJSU is "not for me." Campus

involvement (or making a connection to campus) may not simply be a matter of having a strong enough desire to get involved or being highly motivated/committed to seeking out campus activities, roles, and groups. Instead, campus involvement/ connection should be reconsidered in light of the circumstances that contribute to their SJSU student identities (e.g., commuter status, work-life balance, economic/financial needs, course schedules—whether they are day, night, weekend, and/or online students) so that opportunities to get involved on campus (via department or General Education programs, availability of on-campus jobs and work-study that focuses on student life, etc.) take these factors into consideration. Given the population at SJSU and its demographics, these opportunities are crucial for some individuals to engage, persist, and/or graduate.

Understanding why students leave their institutions is essential to deciphering how best to support and retain current and future students. Records analysis and self-report surveys can shed light on the various factors that influence a person's decision to leave a university. Complemented with interviews and focus groups, this mixed methods approach can contribute to the understanding and articulation of issues that lead and contribute to the exit of underrepresented and first generation college goers. Continued in-depth research can help to identify the actions that SJSU must take to retain URM and/or first generation college goers, and to prevent them from stopping and/or dropping out of SJSU. Therefore, a meaningful assessment and analysis of available advising and support services is needed to determine and clarify the significant obstacles that students are experiencing while at SJSU. The development of relationships is essential due to its direct impact on and connection to retention, persistence, and ultimately graduation and student success.

## References

- Andrews, M. (2004). Who is being heard? Response bias in open-ended responses in a large government employee survey. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 69, 3760-3766.
- Chiang, L., Hunter, C. D., & Yeh, C. J. (2004). Coping attitudes, sources, and practices among Black and Latino college students. *Adolescence*, 39(156), 793-815.
- Dennis, J. M., Phinney, J. S., & Chuateco, L. I. (2005). The role of motivation, parental support, and peer support in the academic success of ethnic minority first-generation college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(3), 223-236.
- Halualani, R.T. (2010a). Interactant-based definitions of intercultural interaction at a multicultural university. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 21, 247-272.
- Halualani, R.T. (2010b). Intercultural interaction at a multicultural university: Students' definitions and sensemakings of intercultural interaction. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 3(4), 304-324.
- Halualani, R.T. (2008). How do multicultural university students define and make sense of intercultural interaction: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32, 1-16.
- Harper, S. R., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. *New Directions for Student Services*, 120, 7-24.
- Hurtado, S., & Carter, D. F. (1997). Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging. *Sociology of Education*, 324-345.
- Jones, L., Castellanos, J., & Cole, D. (2002). Examining the ethnic minority student experience at predominantly White institutions: A case study. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 1(1), 19-39.
- Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. H. (2006). *Analyzing social settings*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Miller, A. L., & Lambert, A. D. (2014). Open-ended survey questions: Item nonresponse nightmare or qualitative data dream? *Survey Practice*, 7(5).
- Morrow, G. P., Burris-Kitchen, D., & Der-Karabetian, A. (2000). Assessing campus climate of cultural diversity: A focus on focus groups. *College Student Journal*.
- Museus, S.D., & Ravello, J.N. (2010). Characteristics of academic advising that contribute to racial and ethnic minority student success at predominantly White institutions. *NACADA Journal*, 30(1), 47-58.
- Pascarella, E.T., & Terenzini, P.T. (2005). *How college affects students (Vol. 2): A third decade of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Rossmann, G. B., & Rallis, S. F. (2011). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research*. Sage.
- Terenzini, P. T., Springer, L., Yaeger, P. M., Pascarella, E. T., & Nora, A. (1996). First-generation college students: Characteristics, experiences, and cognitive development. *Research in Higher Education*, 37(1), 1-22.
- Umaña-Taylor, A. J., & Bámaca, M. Y. (2004). Conducting focus groups with Latino populations: Lessons from the field. *Family Relations*, 53(3), 261-272.
- Villalpando, O. (2004). Practical considerations of critical race theory and Latino critical theory for Latino college students. *New Directions for Student Services*, 105, 41-50.
- Yosso, T. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 8, 69-91.

# Appendix A

## Appendix A: Phone and Online Survey

Q1.

Hi, (say first name of person called).

My name is (say own first and last name), I am calling from San José State University.

I am a (insert number) year, (specify) major, (specify some interests).

I am working with Professors Michael Cheers and Marcos Pizarro on the SJSU Taskforce to address the Success of African American and Latin@ students at SJSU.

We are calling people who left SJSU so we can improve our understanding of your experiences while at SJSU and learn better ways to support current students, increase retention, and the overall success of SJSU students. Your experiences and opinion are very valuable to us.

Q2. Are you a current student at SJSU?

Have you ever stopped out?

- Yes, have NOT stopped out then read the following: Thank you for your time, unfortunately you do not qualify to participate in this survey.

A screenshot of a survey question. The question is "Have you ever stopped out?" and the first option, "Yes, have NOT stopped out then read the following: Thank you for your time, unfortunately you do not qualify to participate in this survey.", is selected with a radio button. The screenshot shows a portion of the survey interface, including a scroll bar and navigation buttons.

- Yes, have stopped out but returned to SJSU. Then, continue with survey

A screenshot of a survey question. The question is "Have you ever stopped out?" and the second option, "Yes, have stopped out but returned to SJSU. Then, continue with survey", is selected with a radio button. The screenshot shows a portion of the survey interface, including a scroll bar and navigation buttons.

- No, not a current SJSU student. Then, read the next section and continue with the survey.

A screenshot of a survey question. The question is "Have you ever stopped out?" and the third option, "No, not a current SJSU student. Then, read the next section and continue with the survey.", is selected with a radio button. The screenshot shows a portion of the survey interface, including a scroll bar and navigation buttons.

Q3.

If you have a few minutes right now to talk and answer a few questions, you will receive a \$10 Starbucks Card. We will confirm your mailing and email address at the end of the survey. Are you able to talk for a few minutes right now?

Please understand that choosing **not** to participate in this survey, or in any part of this survey, will **not** affect your relationship with SJSU. Your participation is voluntary. You have the right to **not** answer any questions you do not wish to answer at any time during the survey. Please only share information that you are comfortable sharing.

No risks and/or benefits are anticipated from this survey. The results of this survey may be published, however your identity will remain anonymous since any information that could result in your identification will be kept confidential.

Q4. Now, I am going to begin to read the survey questions. Does that sound okay with you?

- Yes (then skip to "So, you agree to participate in this survey" question)

- No (then go to next question)

Q5.

If person says no, then ask the following:

Is there another time that is better to talk?

Your experiences and opinion are really important to us and we really need and want your input.

**Note time and date.**

Q6. If person does not want/too busy to set-up another time to talk, ask if it is okay to email a survey link they can take in the next couple days.

**Note email address.**

Q7. So, you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes
- No

Q8.

First, we would like to know about your current activities. Are you currently attending college?

- Yes---What college/university? What is your major?
- No---What was your major at SJSU?

Q9.

If you were declared a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) major while at SJSU, are you currently pursuing a STEM field of study?

- Yes
- No---Why did you leave your STEM major? What major are you now pursuing?

- Not applicable/does not apply to me

Q10.

Are you currently working?

- Yes
- No (Please mark "Not applicable/does not apply to me" for the next 2 questions)

Q11.

Do you work full-time, that is 35 hours or more a week?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable/does not apply to me

Q12.

Do you plan to pursue a career in the same field in which you are currently employed?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure at this time
- Not applicable/does not apply to me

Q13.

**Do you plan to return to San José State University to finish your degree?**

- Yes---When do you think you will return to SJSU? Next Fall? Not sure? At a later time (please specify semester/year)?

- No---Can you share reasons as to why not?

- Not sure at this time

Q14.

**We would like to know about your reasons for leaving San José State University.**

**Please describe reason(s) for leaving SJSU.**

Q15.

**Next, please mark all the specific reasons for leaving SJSU that apply to you.**

- Personal issues
- Not feel academically prepared
- Not feel academically prepared
- Negative experience inside classroom with professor
- Negative experience inside classroom with peer(s)
- Negative experience outside of classroom/on campus (Please specify if with professor, staff, classmate, etc.)

- Asked to leave
- Financial hold on record so unable to register
- Academic hold on record so unable to register
- Other (please specify)

Q16.

**What would you say is the one main reason why you did not continue to attend SJSU?**

- Personal issues
- Not feel academically prepared
- Negative experience inside classroom with professor
- Negative experience inside classroom with peer(s)
- Negative experience outside of classroom/on campus (Please specify if with professor, staff, classmate, etc.)

- Asked to leave
- Financial hold on record so unable to register

- Academic hold on record so unable to register
- Other (please specify) [Also, use as write-in space for this question]

Q17.

**For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important.**

|   | 1=not important   | 2=somewhat important   | 3=very important   | 4=extremely important   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Scheduling issues between work and school             | <input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Scheduling issues between work and school 1=not important | <input type="radio"/> Scheduling issues between work and school 2=somewhat important             | <input type="radio"/> Scheduling issues between work and school 3=very important             | <input type="radio"/> Scheduling issues between work and school 4=extremely important             |
| Classes were too big                                  | <input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Classes were too big 1=not important                      | <input type="radio"/> Classes were too big 2=somewhat important                                  | <input type="radio"/> Classes were too big 3=very important                                  | <input type="radio"/> Classes were too big 4=extremely important                                  |
| Difficulty enrolling into courses                     | <input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Difficulty enrolling into courses 1=not important         | <input type="radio"/> Difficulty enrolling into courses 2=somewhat important                     | <input type="radio"/> Difficulty enrolling into courses 3=very important                     | <input type="radio"/> Difficulty enrolling into courses 4=extremely important                     |
| Major was impacted; unable to get into major I wanted | <input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat   | <input type="radio"/> Major was impacted; unable to get into major I wanted 2=somewhat important | <input type="radio"/> Major was impacted; unable to get into major I wanted 3=very important | <input type="radio"/> Major was impacted; unable to get into major I wanted 4=extremely important |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Major was impacted; unable to get into major I wanted 1=not important</p>  |
| Friends attend another University            | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Friends attend another University 1=not important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Friends attend another University 2=somewhat important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Friends attend another University 3=very important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Friends attend another University 4=extremely important</p> |
| The campus was too impersonal                | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. The campus was too impersonal 1=not important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The campus was too impersonal 2=somewhat important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The campus was too impersonal 3=very important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The campus was too impersonal 4=extremely important</p>                 |
| Did not feel safe on campus                  | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Did not feel safe on campus 1=not important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Did not feel safe on campus 2=somewhat important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Did not feel safe on campus 3=very important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Did not feel safe on campus 4=extremely important</p>                         |
| Wanted to travel                             | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Wanted to travel 1=not important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Wanted to travel 2=somewhat important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Wanted to travel 3=very important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Wanted to travel 4=extremely important</p>   |
| Needed to work more to earn money for school | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Needed to work more to earn money for school 2=somewhat important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Needed to work more to earn money for school 3=very important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Needed to work more to earn money for school 4=extremely important</p>  |

|                                   |  |   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
|                                   | <p>decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Needed to work more to earn money for school 1=not important</p>  |   |   |  |
| Family or personal problems       | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Family or personal problems 1=not important</p>       | <p><input type="radio"/> Family or personal problems 2=somewhat important</p>       | <p><input type="radio"/> Family or personal problems 3=very important</p>       | <p><input type="radio"/> Family or personal problems 4=extremely important</p>       |
| Courses were too easy             | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Courses were too easy 1=not important</p>             | <p><input type="radio"/> Courses were too easy 2=somewhat important</p>             | <p><input type="radio"/> Courses were too easy 3=very important</p>             | <p><input type="radio"/> Courses were too easy 4=extremely important</p>             |
| Courses were not relevant         | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Courses were not relevant 1=not important</p>         | <p><input type="radio"/> Courses were not relevant 2=somewhat important</p>         | <p><input type="radio"/> Courses were not relevant 3=very important</p>         | <p><input type="radio"/> Courses were not relevant 4=extremely important</p>         |
| Did not have many friends at SJSU | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Did not have many friends at SJSU 1=not important</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Did not have many friends at SJSU 2=somewhat important</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Did not have many friends at SJSU 3=very important</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Did not have many friends at SJSU 4=extremely important</p> |
| Needed a break from school        | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question,</p>   | <p><input type="radio"/> Needed a break</p>   | <p><input type="radio"/> Needed a break</p>                                     | <p><input type="radio"/> Needed a break</p>  |

|   |   |  |  |   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
|   | <p>you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Needed a break from school 1=not important</p>   | <p>from school<br/>2=somewhat important</p>  | <p>from school 3=very important</p>  | <p>from school<br/>4=extremely important</p>  |
| <p>SJSU was not what I expected</p>     | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. SJSU was not what I expected 1=not important</p>     | <p><input type="radio"/> SJSU was not what I expected<br/>2=somewhat important</p>     | <p><input type="radio"/> SJSU was not what I expected 3=very important</p>         | <p><input type="radio"/> SJSU was not what I expected<br/>4=extremely important</p>     |
| <p>Change in career plans</p>           | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Change in career plans 1=not important</p>           | <p><input type="radio"/> Change in career plans 2=somewhat important</p>               | <p><input type="radio"/> Change in career plans 3=very important</p>               | <p><input type="radio"/> Change in career plans 4=extremely important</p>               |
| <p>Did not feel connected to campus</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Did not feel connected to campus 1=not important</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Did not feel connected to campus<br/>2=somewhat important</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Did not feel connected to campus<br/>3=very important</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Did not feel connected to campus<br/>4=extremely important</p> |
| <p>Classes were too hard</p>            | <p><input type="radio"/> Q17. For this question, you will be presented with a list of possible factors that may have influenced your decision to leave SJSU. You will have four possible answers where 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important, and 4 = extremely important. Classes were too hard 1=not important</p>            | <p><input type="radio"/> Classes were too hard 2=somewhat important</p>                | <p><input type="radio"/> Classes were too hard 3=very important</p>                | <p><input type="radio"/> Classes were too hard 4=extremely important</p>                |

Q18.

**How would you rate the overall quality of instruction that you received at SJSU?**

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent

Q19.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q20. **What was your overall relationship with professors/instructors?**

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- Excellent

Q21.

**Which of the following three choices best describes your relationship with professors/instructors at SJSU?**

- No relationships (classes were large; I never met with professors outside of class; did not feel connected to any professors)
- Some relationships (was able to connect with some professors; felt comfortable asking questions and talking with some professors; met with some professors outside of class)
- Meaningful relationships (felt connected to professors while at SJSU; professors were approachable; met with professors outside of class)

Q22.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q23.

**How would you rate the overall quality of academic advising that you received at SJSU?**

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good

- Very Good
- Excellent

Q24.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q25. **When you applied to SJSU, was it your first choice of colleges/universities?**

- Yes
- No---What was your first choice?

Q26.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q27. **At the time that you were admitted to SJSU, were you assigned to the major that you applied to?**

- Yes
- No---What major did you select?

Q28.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q29.

**How much of your college expenses have been paid by your parents or family?**

- None
- Less than 25%
- 25% to 49%
- 50% to 74%
- 75% or more

Q30.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q31. **While attending SJSU, how many hours a week did you work?**

- None
- Less than 15 hours per week
- 15 to 24 hours per week
- 25 to 34 hours per week
- 35 hours or more per week

Q32.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q33.

**Where did you live during your first semester at SJSU?**

- Campus Village or another residence hall
- An apartment
- At home with parents
- Somewhere else (please specify)

Q34.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q35.

**While at SJSU, how involved were you in campus extra-curricular activities such as clubs, intramurals and/or fraternities/sororities?**

- Not involved
- Slightly involved
- Involved
- Very Involved
- Extremely involved

Q36.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q37.

**In general, how satisfied are you now with your experiences at San José State University?**

- Very Dissatisfied
- Moderately Dissatisfied
- Slightly Dissatisfied
- Slightly Satisfied
- Moderately Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

Q38. **If you were to begin your college experience again at SJSU, what would you do differently (if at all)? What could have made it better?**

Q39. **What kinds of programs, activities, and/or services would have made you more likely to stay/continue at SJSU?**

Q40. **How would you describe SJSU's diversity?**

Q41.

**What role did this play in your decision to leave SJSU?**

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q42.

**Would you like an academic advisor to contact you about returning back to SJSU?**

- Yes---please provide your email and/or phone number
- No

Q43.

**We are planning to have small groups of former students come together to share a meal and conversation in July. Would you be interested in talking more about your experience at SJSU as part of a focus group so we can get a clearer understanding of how to better support SJSU students?**

- Yes---please provide your email
- No

Q44. **If you are unable to come to campus, can we call you for an individual phone interview or would you like to participate in an online discussion group? (mark all that apply)**

- Yes, individual phone interview
- Yes, online discussion group
- No

Q45.

**Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts and experiences with us! We very much appreciate it and value your perspective.**

Q46.

**Please confirm your mailing and email address so we can send you a \$10 Starbuck's card:**

Name

Address

Apartment number (if applicable)

City

State

Zip code

Email

**Q47. Please enter/confirm your SJSU Student ID number.**

**Q48. My ethnic heritage is (please mark all that apply):**

- American Indian, Inuit, Alaskan Native (please specify: Cherokee, Ojibway, Navajo, Aleut, Tlingit, etc.)
- African, Black, African American (please specify: South African, Kenyan, Caribbean, etc.)
- Asian (please specify: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Pacific Islander, Vietnamese, Cambodian, etc.)
- European, Caucasian (please specify: French, German, Italian, Dutch, Australian, Polish, etc.)
- Latino/a (please specify: Mexican, Chicano/a, Cuban, El Salvadorian, Peruvian, etc.)
- Middle Eastern (please specify: Egyptian, Bedouin, Kurdish, Iraqi, Saudi Arabian, etc.)
- Additional ethnic heritage not listed above (please specify)

Q49.

**Thank you again for participating in this survey. SJSU values your input.**

[Survey](#)

## ***Appendix B: Email for Online Survey***

San José State University is committed to the success of all undergraduate students! This survey is being sent to individuals who are no longer attending SJSU.

SJSU needs and values your feedback to help us support undergraduates to succeed while attending SJSU.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and provide us with your insights. Please click on the following link or copy and place in your browser:

[https://sjsu.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV\\_1WT6iF47xBnoRQp](https://sjsu.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_1WT6iF47xBnoRQp)

The information you supply in this survey is confidential. If any question requests information that you do not wish to provide, please feel free to omit it. We request your student id number so we can better interpret the data by college and demographic groups, and we request your name to be sure we are matching to the right person and so we can mail a gift card, if applicable. These identifiers will be removed before anyone reviews data.

Thank you, in advance, for your response!

### ***Appendix C: Email for Initial Phone Contacted Individuals***

Thank you for providing your email address to fill out the survey online about your experiences at SJSU.

Please click on the link below.

[https://sjsu.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV\\_4NqF2rDaVbiJXo1](https://sjsu.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_4NqF2rDaVbiJXo1)

If you have any questions or problems, please let us know.

Thank you again for sharing your experiences with us. We very much appreciate your time and perspective!

## **Appendix D: Focus Group Questions**

### **Your Experience at SJSU: Initial Thoughts**

Let me pose the first question:

- How would you describe your experience at SJSU? Provide your thoughts and any examples or details that you would like to share.

### **Support Mechanisms at SJSU**

- Was there a program, activity, service, or a person at SJSU that helped to support your experience at SJSU? Describe any that you would like to share.
- If there were NO supportive programs, activities, services, or people for you at SJSU, what would you have liked to have as a type of support at SJSU? Why would this have made a difference?

### **Racial Climate at SJSU**

- How would you describe the racial climate at SJSU? Did you encounter diverse students?
- How were your interactions with different racial/ethnic groups at SJSU (other students, peers)? Can you provide me with an example?
- To what extent did you experience any microaggressions? Can you provide me with an example?

### **Information You Would Give to Diverse Students at SJSU**

- What would you tell African American, Latino/a, or Asian Pacific Islander students who are considering coming to SJSU?
- To what extent, would you recommend SJSU to other African American, Latino/a, or Asian Pacific Islander students? Why or why not?

### **Looking Back Upon Your Experience at SJSU**

- If you had to re-do your time/experience at SJSU, what would you do differently? What could SJSU do differently?

### **Moving Forward**

- Is there anything SJSU can do right now to help you in your educational pathway?

***Appendix E: Primary Ethnicity and First Generation by Cohorts Stayers and Leavers.***

**\*\*\*landscape layout\*\*\***

## Appendix F

**Table F1: Stayers by College and Major**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Applied Sciences &amp; Arts</b>            | <b>852</b>  |
| Advertising                                   | 36          |
| Athletic Training                             | 34          |
| Continuing Education                          | 1           |
| Forensic Science - Biology                    | 29          |
| Forensic Science - Chemistry                  | 28          |
| Health Science                                | 75          |
| Health Science - Health Professions           | 14          |
| Health Science/Health Services Administration | 20          |
| Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management     | 80          |
| Journalism                                    | 53          |
| Justice Studies                               | 103         |
| Kinesiology                                   | 197         |
| Nursing                                       | 27          |
| Nutritional Science                           | 26          |
| Nutritional Science/Dietetics                 | 11          |
| Nutritional Science/Food Science & Tech       | 1           |
| Nutritional Science/Packaging                 | 5           |
| Public Relations                              | 57          |
| Recreation                                    | 4           |
| Recreation/Recreation Management              | 6           |
| Recreation/Therapeutic Recreation             | 22          |
| Social Work                                   | 23          |
| <b>Business</b>                               | <b>1337</b> |
| Business Admin/Accounting Info Systems        | 33          |
| Business Admin/Corporate Financial Mgmt       | 52          |
| Business Admin/Entrepreneurship               | 57          |
| Business Admin/Human Resource Management      | 43          |
| Business Admin/International Business         | 86          |
| Business Admin/Mgmt Information Systems       | 134         |
| Business Administration/Accounting            | 194         |
| Business Administration/Finance               | 132         |
| Business Administration/General Business      | 111         |
| Business Administration/Management            | 208         |
| Business Administration/Marketing             | 286         |
| Continuing Education                          | 1           |
| <b>Education</b>                              | <b>150</b>  |
| Child and Adolescent Development              | 124         |
| Communicative Disorders & Sciences            | 26          |

**Table F1: Stayers by College and Major (con.)**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Engineering</b>  | <b>1453</b> |
| Aerospace Engineering                                     | 106         |
| Aviation  | 55          |
| Biomedical Engineering                                    | 85          |
| Chemical Engineering                                      | 53          |
| Civil Engineering   | 170         |
| Computer Engineering                                      | 313         |
| Electrical Engineering                                    | 186         |
| Engineering   | 77          |
| Engineering/Bioengineering                                | 1           |
| Industrial & Systems Engineering                          | 33          |
| Industrial Tech/Manufacturing Systems                     | 10          |
| Industrial Technology/Computer Electronics & Network Tech | 20          |
| Materials Engineering                                     | 18          |
| Mechanical Engineering                                    | 218         |
| Software Engineering                                      | 108         |

**Table F1: Stayers by College and Major (con.)**

|                                    |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Humanities &amp; the Arts</b>   | <b>754</b> |
| Art/Animation/Illustration         | 98         |
| Art/Art History and Visual Culture | 5          |
| Art/Design Studies                 | 78         |
| Art/Digital Media Art              | 35         |
| Art/Photography                    | 7          |
| Art/Studio Practice                | 51         |
| Chinese                            | 2          |
| Composition                        | 5          |
| Continuing Education               | 2          |
| Creative Arts                      | 11         |
| Dance                              | 19         |
| English                            | 68         |
| English/Career Writing             | 4          |
| English/Creative Writing           | 21         |
| French                             | 2          |
| Graphic Design                     | 16         |
| Humanities/European Studies        | 1          |
| Humanities/Liberal Arts            | 6          |
| Humanities/Religious Studies       | 4          |
| Industrial Design                  | 50         |
| Interior Design                    | 34         |
| Japanese                           | 6          |
| Jazz Studies                       | 1          |
| Liberal Studies                    | 48         |
| Linguistics                        | 12         |
| Music                              | 24         |
| Music Education                    | 22         |
| Performance                        | 11         |
| Philosophy                         | 10         |
| Radio-Television-Film              | 61         |
| Religious Studies                  | 1          |
| Spanish                            | 15         |
| Theatre Arts                       | 24         |

**Table F1: Stayers by College and Major (con.)**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Science</b>  | <b>712</b> |
| Applied Mathematics/Applied and Comp. Mathematics         | 26         |
| Applied Mathematics/Economics and Actuarial Science       | 13         |
| Biological Sci/Consrv & Organismal Bio                    | 6          |
| Biological Science  | 75         |
| Biological Science/Marine Biology                         | 20         |
| Biological Science/Microbiology                           | 52         |
| Biological Science/Molecular Biology                      | 47         |
| Biological Science/Systems Physiology                     | 88         |
| Chemistry   | 41         |
| Chemistry/Biochemistry                                    | 67         |
| Computer Science  | 211        |
| Earth Science   | 1          |
| Geology   | 7          |
| Life Science  | 1          |
| Mathematics   | 16         |
| Meteorology   | 12         |
| Meteorology/Climate Science                               | 1          |
| Physics   | 28         |
| <b>Social Sciences</b>                                    | <b>943</b> |
| African-American Studies                                  | 1          |
| Anthropology  | 13         |
| Behavioral Science  | 34         |
| Communication Studies                                     | 108        |
| Economics   | 76         |
| Environmental Studies                                     | 42         |
| Environmental Studies/Energy                              | 8          |
| Environmental Studies/Env Impact Assess                   | 1          |
| Environmental Studies/Env Restoration & Nat Resource Mgmt | 14         |
| Geography   | 5          |
| Global Studies  | 12         |
| History   | 58         |
| Political Science   | 105        |
| Psychology  | 378        |
| Social Science  | 7          |
| Sociology   | 68         |
| Sociology/Community Change                                | 5          |
| Sociology/Social Interaction                              | 4          |
| Sociology/Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies             | 1          |
| Speech-Communication                                      | 3          |

**Table F1: Stayers by College and Major (con.)**

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Undergraduate Studies</b> | <b>1387</b>  |
| Pre-Nursing                  | 3            |
| Special Major                | 1            |
| Undeclared                   | 1280         |
| Undeclared - Pre-Nursing     | 103          |
| <b>Blank</b>                 | <b>5</b>     |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>7,615</b> |

**Table F2: Leavers by College and Major**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Applied Sciences &amp; Arts</b>            | <b>89</b>  |
| Advertising                                   | 2          |
| Athletic Training                             | 3          |
| Early Start - Destination Student             | 4          |
| Forensic Science - Biology                    | 7          |
| Forensic Science - Chemistry                  | 9          |
| Health Science                                | 2          |
| Health Science/Health Services Administration | 1          |
| Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management     | 5          |
| Journalism                                    | 8          |
| Justice Studies                               | 12         |
| Kinesiology                                   | 21         |
| Nutritional Science                           | 5          |
| Occupational Therapy                          | 1          |
| Public Relations                              | 3          |
| Recreation                                    | 2          |
| Social Work                                   | 4          |
| <b>Business</b>                               | <b>173</b> |
| Business Admin/Accounting Info Systems        | 2          |
| Business Admin/Corporate Financial Mgmt       | 2          |
| Business Admin/Entrepreneurship               | 12         |
| Business Admin/Human Resource Management      | 3          |
| Business Admin/International Business         | 15         |
| Business Admin/Mgmt Information Systems       | 7          |
| Business Administration/Accounting            | 8          |
| Business Administration/Finance               | 22         |
| Business Administration/General Business      | 29         |
| Business Administration/Management            | 40         |
| Business Administration/Marketing             | 31         |
| Continuing Education                          | 1          |
| Early Start - Destination Student             | 1          |
| <b>Education</b>                              | <b>12</b>  |
| Child and Adolescent Development              | 10         |
| Communicative Disorders & Sciences            | 1          |
| Early Start-Destination Students              | 1          |

**Table F2: Leavers by College and Major (con.)**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Engineering</b>  | <b>243</b> |
| Aerospace Engineering                                     | 27         |
| Aviation  | 11         |
| Biomedical Engineering                                    | 9          |
| Chemical Engineering                                      | 15         |
| Civil Engineering   | 18         |
| Computer Engineering                                      | 65         |
| Continuing Education                                      | 1          |
| Electrical Engineering                                    | 13         |
| Engineering   | 19         |
| Engineering/Bioengineering                                | 1          |
| Industrial & Systems Engineering                          | 6          |
| Industrial Tech/Manufacturing Systems                     | 2          |
| Industrial Technology/Computer Electronics & Network Tech | 2          |
| Materials Engineering                                     | 3          |
| Mechanical Engineering                                    | 37         |
| Software Engineering                                      | 14         |
| <b>Humanities &amp; the Arts</b>                          | <b>134</b> |
| Art/Animation/Illustration                                | 15         |
| Art/Art History and Visual Culture                        | 3          |
| Art/Design Studies  | 17         |
| Art/Digital Media Art                                     | 5          |
| Art/Studio Practice                                       | 8          |
| Chinese   | 1          |
| Dance   | 7          |
| Early Start - Destination Student                         | 2          |
| English   | 15         |
| English/Creative Writing                                  | 3          |
| French  | 2          |
| Humanities  | 1          |
| Humanities/Asian Studies                                  | 2          |
| Humanities/Liberal Arts                                   | 4          |
| Industrial Design   | 11         |
| Interior Design   | 7          |
| Japanese  | 1          |
| Liberal Studies   | 6          |
| Linguistics   | 3          |
| Music   | 7          |
| Philosophy  | 1          |
| Radio-Television-Film                                     | 6          |
| Spanish   | 5          |
| Theatre Arts  | 2          |

**Table F2: Leavers by College and Major (con.)**

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Science</b>  | <b>73</b>    |
| Applied Mathematics/Applied and Computational Mathematics | 3            |
| Applied Mathematics/Economics and Actuarial Science       | 4            |
| Applied Mathematics/Economics and Actuarial Science       | 2            |
| Biological Sci/Constrv & Organismal Bio                   | 9            |
| Biological Science  | 6            |
| Biological Science/Marine Biology                         | 4            |
| Biological Science/Microbiology                           | 5            |
| Biological Science/Molecular Biology                      | 12           |
| Biological Science/Systems Physiology                     | 3            |
| Chemistry   | 2            |
| Chemistry/Biochemistry                                    | 19           |
| Computer Science  | 1            |
| Early Start - Destination Student                         | 2            |
| Meteorology   | 1            |
| Physics   | 1            |
| <b>Social Sciences</b>                                    | <b>134</b>   |
| African-American Studies                                  | 1            |
| Anthropology  | 1            |
| Behavioral Science  | 2            |
| Communication Studies                                     | 21           |
| Continuing Education                                      | 1            |
| Economics   | 5            |
| Environmental Studies                                     | 4            |
| Environmental Studies/Energy                              | 1            |
| Environmental Studies/Env Restoration & Nat Resource Mgmt | 1            |
| Global Studies  | 5            |
| History   | 7            |
| Political Science   | 13           |
| Psychology  | 59           |
| Social Science  | 2            |
| Sociology   | 10           |
| Speech-Communication                                      | 1            |
| <b>Undergraduate Studies</b>                              | <b>398</b>   |
| Early Start - Destination Student                         | 9            |
| Undeclared  | 362          |
| Undeclared - Pre-Nursing                                  | 27           |
| <b>All University</b>                                     | <b>22</b>    |
| Continuing Education                                      |              |
| <b>Blank</b>  | <b>1</b>     |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>1,279</b> |

**Appendix G: Open-Ended Survey Tables**

**Table G1: Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU**

| <b>Sub-Themes</b>                                    | <b>Themes</b>            | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>                                  |                          | 45       | 21%      |
| <b>Financial Considerations</b>                      | FINANCIAL                | 27       | 13%      |
| <b>Not A Good Fit/Felt Out Of Place</b>              | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 11       | 5%       |
| <b>Academic Disqualification</b>                     | ACADEMIC                 | 9        | 4%       |
| <b>Impacted Major/Not Accepted Into Major</b>        | ACADEMIC                 | 9        | 4%       |
| <b>Personal Reasons</b>                              | PERSONAL                 | 9        | 4%       |
| <b>Lack Of Housing</b>                               | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 8        | 4%       |
| <b>Family Issues</b>                                 | PERSONAL                 | 7        | 3%       |
| <b>Affordability Of School Tuition</b>               | FINANCIAL                | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Dissatisfied With Dorm Living</b>                 | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Too Hard To Get Classes</b>                       | ACADEMIC                 | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Career/Work/Business Priorities</b>               | PERSONAL                 | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Didn't Complete Remedial/Prerequisite Classes</b> | ACADEMIC                 | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Poor Academic Performance</b>                     | ACADEMIC                 | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Athletics-Related Decision</b>                    | OTHER                    | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Did Not Like City</b>                             | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>High Cost Of Living</b>                           | FINANCIAL                | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Bad Impression Of University</b>                  | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 3        | 1%       |
| <b>Felt Stressed/Overwhelmed</b>                     | PERSONAL                 | 3        | 1%       |
| <b>Mental Health Issues</b>                          | PERSONAL                 | 3        | 1%       |
| <b>Physical Health Issues</b>                        | PERSONAL                 | 3        | 1%       |
| <b>School Not A Priority</b>                         | PERSONAL                 | 3        | 1%       |
| <b>Too Far From Home/Missed Family</b>               | PERSONAL                 | 3        | 1%       |

|   |               |            |             |
|---|---------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Wanted A Break</b>                             | PERSONAL      | 3          | 1%          |
| <b>Dissatisfied With Instructors</b>              | SCHOOL/CAMPUS | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Felt Unprepared For University</b>             | ACADEMIC      | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Heavy Workload/Classes Too Hard</b>            | ACADEMIC      | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Lack Of Support/Didn't Know About Services</b> | SCHOOL/CAMPUS | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Not Enough Units For Financial Aid</b>         | FINANCIAL     | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Preferred Major Not Offered</b>                | ACADEMIC      | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Taking Time Off To Earn/Save Money</b>         | FINANCIAL     | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Unqualified For Financial Aid (Academics)</b>  | FINANCIAL     | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Academic Probation</b>                         | ACADEMIC      | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Courses Not Rigorous</b>                       | ACADEMIC      | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Didn't Have A Choice</b>                       | PERSONAL      | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Didn't Pass WST</b>                            | ACADEMIC      | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Having A Baby</b>                              | PERSONAL      | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Immaturity</b>                                 | PERSONAL      | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Learning Disability</b>                        | PERSONAL      | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Total</b>                                      |               | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table G2: Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question**

| <b>Sub-Themes</b>   | <b>Themes</b>            | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>   |                          | 35       | 16%      |
| <b>Get Involved On Campus</b>   | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 20       | 9%       |
| <b>Be More Focused On School</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 15       | 7%       |
| <b>Study More/Study Harder/Try Harder/Be A Better Student</b>           | ACADEMIC                 | 12       | 6%       |
| <b>Live Off Campus</b>  | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 10       | 5%       |
| <b>Have Better Financial Situation</b>                                  | FINANCIAL                | 10       | 5%       |
| <b>Pursue More Financial Aid Options (Scholarships/Loans/Grants)</b>    | FINANCIAL                | 9        | 4%       |
| <b>Be More Prepared/Educated/Organized Regarding Financial Issues</b>   | FINANCIAL                | 9        | 4%       |
| <b>Get Into Intended Major</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 8        | 4%       |
| <b>Seek Better Professors/Dissatisfied With Instruction Strategies</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 7        | 3%       |
| <b>Get More Involved In Extracurricular Activities</b>                  | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Use Counselors More</b>  | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Wouldn't Change Anything</b>   | PERSONAL                 | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Declare A Major</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Ask For Help</b>   | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Connect With People/Make More Friends</b>                            | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>More Academic Planning/Better Scheduling</b>                         | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Not Work/Work Less</b>   | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Use Advisors More/Get Scheduling Help/Have Better Advising</b>       | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Attend Community College First/Finish Ges Before Coming</b>          | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Avoid Academic Probation/Disqualification</b>                        | ACADEMIC                 | 3        | 1%       |
| <b>Balance School, Work, And Personal Issues/Better Time Management</b> | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 2        | 1%       |
| <b>Be Less Involved In Extracurricular</b>                              | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 2        | 1%       |

|   |                          |            |             |
|---|--------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Activities</b>   |                          |            |             |
| <b>Connect More With Professors</b>                                       | ACADEMIC                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Live On Campus/Live In Dorms</b>                                       | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Work Part Time To Help With Financial Problems</b>                     | FINANCIAL                | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Do Better Academically/Get Better Grades</b>                           | ACADEMIC                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Avoid Pregnancy</b>  | PERSONAL                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Be Aggressive About Getting Classes/Enroll Faster</b>                  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Be More Active In African American Organization</b>                    | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Be More Prepared/More Info Ahead Of Time</b>                           | PERSONAL                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Declare Major Sooner</b>   | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Get Priority Registration/Earlier Registration</b>                     | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Have Better Dorm Living</b>  | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Join A Club Related To Major/Communicate More With People In Field</b> | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Not Take Time Off</b>  | PERSONAL                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Pass Remedial Classes</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Plan Housing More Carefully</b>  | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Seek Tutoring</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Slower Pace (Felt Rushed)</b>  | PERSONAL                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Smaller Classes</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Take Classes More Seriously</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Take More Classes</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Take WST Sooner</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Want To Be Able To Graduate In 4 Years</b>                             | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Total</b>  |                          | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table G3: Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Programs, Activities, and/or Programs at SJSU Question**

| <b>Sub-Themes</b>   | <b>Themes</b>            | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>   |                          | 35       | 16%      |
| <b>Get Involved On Campus</b>   | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 16       | 7%       |
| <b>Be More Focused On School</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 12       | 6%       |
| <b>Live Off Campus</b>  | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 9        | 4%       |
| <b>Study More/Study Harder/Try Harder/Be A Better Student</b>           | ACADEMIC                 | 7        | 3%       |
| <b>Get More Involved In Extracurricular Activities</b>                  | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Pursue More Financial Aid Options (Scholarships/Loans/Grants)</b>    | FINANCIAL                | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Wouldn't Change Anything</b>   | PERSONAL                 | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Ask For Help</b>   | ACADEMIC                 | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Connect With People/Make More Friends</b>                            | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>More Academic Planning/Better Scheduling</b>                         | ACADEMIC                 | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Not Work/Work Less</b>   | FINANCIAL                | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Use Advisors More/Get Scheduling Help/Have Better Advising</b>       | ACADEMIC                 | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Be More Prepared/Educated/Organized Regarding Financial Issues</b>   | FINANCIAL                | 6        | 3%       |
| <b>Use Counselors More</b>  | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Attend Community College First/Finish Ges Before Coming</b>          | ACADEMIC                 | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Balance School, Work, And Personal Issues/Better Time Management</b> | PERSONAL                 | 5        | 2%       |
| <b>Be Less Involved In Extracurricular Activities</b>                   | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Connect More With Professors</b>                                     | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Declare A Major</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Get Into Intended Major</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Have Better Financial Situation</b>                                  | FINANCIAL                | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Live On Campus/Live In Dorms</b>                                     | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 4        | 2%       |
| <b>Seek Better Professors/Dissatisfied With Instruction Strategies</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 3        | 1%       |

|   |                          |            |             |
|---|--------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Work Part Time To Help With Financial Problems</b>                     | FINANCIAL                | 3          | 1%          |
| <b>Avoid Academic Probation/Disqualification</b>                          | ACADEMIC                 | 3          | 1%          |
| <b>Take WST Sooner</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 3          | 1%          |
| <b>Be Aggressive About Getting Classes/Enroll Faster</b>                  | ACADEMIC                 | 3          | 1%          |
| <b>Seek Tutoring</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 3          | 1%          |
| <b>Be More Prepared/More Info Ahead Of Time</b>                           | PERSONAL                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Declare Major Sooner</b>   | ACADEMIC                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Do Better Academically/Get Better Grades</b>                           | ACADEMIC                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Get Priority Registration/Earlier Registration</b>                     | ACADEMIC                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Have Better Dorm Living</b>  | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Join A Club Related To Major/Communicate More With People In Field</b> | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Not Take Time Off</b>  | PERSONAL                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Pass Remedial Classes</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 2          | 1%          |
| <b>Plan Housing More Carefully</b>  | HOUSING/CITY/ENVIRONMENT | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Be More Active In African American Organization</b>                    | SCHOOL/CAMPUS            | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Slower Pace (Felt Rushed)</b>  | PERSONAL                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Smaller Classes</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Take Classes More Seriously</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Take More Classes</b>  | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Avoid Pregnancy</b>  | PERSONAL                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Want To Be Able To Graduate In 4 Years</b>                             | ACADEMIC                 | 1          | 0%          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0</b>                 | <b>214</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table G4: Sub-Themes of Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU**

| <b>Sub-Themes</b>                                 | <b>Themes</b> | <b>n</b>  | <b>%</b>    |
|---|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>                               |               | 3         | 11%         |
| <b>Financial Considerations</b>                   | FINANCIAL     | 8         | 29%         |
| <b>Too Hard To Get Classes</b>                    | ACADEMIC      | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Poor Academic Performance</b>                  | ACADEMIC      | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Did Not Like City</b>                          | PERSONAL      | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Bad Impression Of University</b>               | SCHOOL/CAMPUS | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Lack Of Support/Didn't Know About Services</b> | SCHOOL/CAMPUS | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Time Management</b>                            | PERSONAL      | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Impacted Major/Not Accepted Into Major</b>     | ACADEMIC      | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Family Issues</b>                              | PERSONAL      | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Affordability Of School Tuition</b>            | FINANCIAL     | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Career/Work/Business Priorities</b>            | PERSONAL      | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Athletics-Related Decision</b>                 | PERSONAL      | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Felt Stressed/Overwhelmed</b>                  | PERSONAL      | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Total</b>                                      |               | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table G5: Online Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question**

| <b>Sub-Themes</b>   | <b>Themes</b>                | <b>n</b>  | <b>%</b>    |
|---|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>   |                              | 6         | 21%         |
| <b>Connect With People/Make More Friends</b>                            | SCHOOL/<br>CAMPUS            | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>More Academic Planning/Better Scheduling</b>                         | ACADEMIC                     | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Use Advisors More/Get Scheduling Help/Have Better Advising</b>       | ACADEMIC                     | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Would Attend A Community College First</b>                           | ACADEMIC                     | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Balance School, Work, And Personal Issues/Better Time Management</b> | PERSONAL                     | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Join A Club</b>  | SCHOOL/<br>CAMPUS            | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Get Involved On Campus</b>   | SCHOOL/<br>CAMPUS            | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Study More/Study Harder/Try Harder/Be A Better Student</b>           | ACADEMIC                     | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Live On Campus</b>   | HOUSING/CITY/<br>ENVIRONMENT | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Have Better Financial Situation</b>                                  | FINANCIAL                    | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Seek Better Professors/Dissatisfied With Instruction Strategies</b>  | ACADEMIC                     | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Take GE Courses First</b>  | ACADEMIC                     | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Connect More With Professors</b>                                     | ACADEMIC                     | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Not Get Into Athletics</b>   | SCHOOL/<br>CAMPUS            | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Not Join A Fraternity</b>  | SCHOOL/<br>CAMPUS            | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Take More Classes</b>  | ACADEMIC                     | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Total</b>  |                              | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table G6: Online Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs at SJSU Question**

| <b>Sub-Themes</b>  | <b>Themes</b>   | <b>n</b>  | <b>%</b>    |
|--|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Count Blanks</b>  | COUNT<br>BLANKS | 13        | 46%         |
| <b>More Academic Planning/Better Scheduling</b>                        | ACADEMIC        | 4         | 14%         |
| <b>Use Advisors More/Get Scheduling Help/Have Better Advising</b>      | ACADEMIC        | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Connect More With Professors</b>                                    | ACADEMIC        | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>SJSU Programs To Help Students Complete Their Studies</b>           | ACADEMIC        | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>More Class Offerings</b>  | ACADEMIC        | 2         | 7%          |
| <b>Be More Focused On School</b>                                       | ACADEMIC        | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Pursue More Financial Aid Options (Scholarships/Loans/Grants)</b>   | FINANCIAL       | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Seek Better Professors/Dissatisfied With Instruction Strategies</b> | ACADEMIC        | 1         | 4%          |
| <b>Total</b>   |                 | <b>28</b> | <b>100%</b> |

## Appendix H: All Tables and Figures

| <b>Table/Figure</b> | <b>Title</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|---------------------|--|-------------|
| Table E1            | Primary Ethnicity and First Generation by Cohorts                | 75          |
| Table 1             | Stayers and Leavers Overview                                     | 12          |
| Table F1            | Stayers by College and Major                                     | 76-80       |
| Table F2            | Leavers by College and Major                                     | 81-83       |
| Table 2             | Academic Standing of Stayers                                     | 14          |
| Table 3             | Academic Standing of Leavers                                     | 15          |
| Table 4             | Leavers Overview by Cohorts and Sub-Groups                       | 16          |
| Table 5             | Leavers Overview of Phone Surveys                                | 17          |
| Figure 6            | Overall Ethnic Sub-Groups of Phone Survey Respondents            | 18          |
| Table 7             | Stopouts and Dropouts by Ethnic Sub-Groups                       | 18          |
| Figure 8            | Living Arrangements While at SJSU                                | 19          |
| Figure 9            | Academic Standing by Stopouts and Dropouts                       | 20          |
| Figure 10           | Overall Academic Standing of Leavers                             | 20          |
| Figure 11           | Work Status of Stopouts and Dropouts While at SJSU               | 21          |
| Figure 12           | Overall Working Status of Leavers While at SJSU                  | 22          |
| Figure 13           | College of Leavers While at SJSU                                 | 23          |
| Figure 14           | Satisfaction with Experience at SJSU                             | 24          |
| Table 15            | Current Activities of Stopouts and Dropouts                      | 25          |
| Table 16            | Stopouts and Dropouts Parental and Family Financial Support      | 26          |
| Figure 17           | Overall Financial Support  | 26          |
| Table 18            | Hours Worked While Attending SJSU                                | 27          |
| Figure 19           | Reasons for Leaving SJSU   | 28          |
| Table 20            | Stopout/Dropout Extracurricular Activity                         | 29          |
| Figure 21           | Work Status While at SJSU  | 31          |
| Figure 22           | Satisfaction with Experience at SJSU                             | 32          |
| Table 23            | Activities of Stopouts and Dropouts after Leaving SJSU           | 32          |
| Table 24            | Online Stopouts Financial Impact                                 | 33          |
| Table 25            | Online Dropouts Financial Impact                                 | 33          |
| Table 26            | Online Stopouts Top 4 Reasons for Leaving SJSU                   | 34          |
| Table 27            | Online Dropouts Top 4 Reasons for Leaving SJSU                   | 35          |
| Figure 28           | Campus Extracurricular Activities                                | 36          |
| Figure 29           | Key Analytic Tests   | 37          |
| Table 30            | Overall Response Rate for Telephone Survey Open-Ended Items      | 39          |
| Table 31            | Plan to Return to SJSU Responses                                 | 40          |
| Table 32            | Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU                                  | 41          |
| Table 33            | Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU by Ethnic Sub-Group              | 42          |
| Table 34            | Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question                  | 42          |
| Table 35            | Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs Question | 43          |
| Table 36            | SJSU Diversity Themes Question                                   | 44          |
| Table 37            | Overall Response Rate for Online Survey Open-Ended Items         | 45          |
| Table 38            | Plan to Return to SJSU Online Responses                          | 45          |
| Table 39            | Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU                           | 46          |
| Table 40            | Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU by Ethnic Sub-Group       | 46          |

## Appendix H: All Tables and Figures (con.)

|          |   |       |
|----------|---|-------|
| Table 41 | Online Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question  | 47    |
| Table 42 | Online Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs Question                       | 47    |
| Table 43 | Online SJSU Diversity Themes Question   | 48    |
| Table 44 | Majors of Online Focus Group Participants   | 50    |
| Table G1 | Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU   | 84-85 |
| Table G2 | Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question                                 | 86-87 |
| Table G3 | Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Programs, Activities, and/or Programs at SJSU Question       | 88-89 |
| Table G4 | Sub-Themes of Online Thematic Areas for Leaving SJSU  | 90    |
| Table G5 | Online Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for What Do Differently Question                          | 91    |
| Table G6 | Online Sub-Themes of Thematic Areas for Program, Activities, and/or Programs at SJSU Question | 92    |