



Members of the campus community often want to know about data on Fresno State's Hmong population for grant proposals, reports, and other projects. However, we were previously unable to provide such data because of the limitations within the CSU data collection system. Beginning with the fall 2009 application pool, this system was restructured to align with the coding categories of the U.S. Census. With this change, we are now able to provide this long sought-after data.

Of the new undergraduate students that enrolled at Fresno State in fall 2009, 7% are Hmong. Of the 607 new Asian students from this same cohort, 288 (47%) are of Hmong descent. Eighty-nine percent of these students are from Fresno County. Eighty-three percent are enrolled as first-time freshmen and 17% are transfer students. This rate is substantially higher than for all new students, 64% of whom are first-time freshmen. These Hmong students are predominantly female (65%), and they were more likely to have a major in the College of Health and Human Services (23%) than any other college.

The most surprising findings about our Hmong students pertain to their parents' education and income. Within the Hmong student population, 97% are first generation students (FGS); the next closest rate is Hispanic students at 84%.

New Undergraduates That are First Generation Students (FGS) - Fall 2009

	African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian*	Hispanic	Hmong	White	Other	International
FGS	147	14	189	1,234	253	568	253	15
Total**	226	23	291	1,462	262	1,282	472	44
% FGS	65%	61%	65%	84%	97%	44%	54%	34%

*Excludes Hmong students.

**Total excludes non-responses.

Nearly half (51%) of the Hmong students' parents did not receive any high school education.

New Undergraduates Whose Parents Never Attended High School (HS) - Fall 2009

	African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian*	Hispanic	Hmong	White	Other	International
FGS	3	0	45	360	134	6	9	1
Total**	226	23	291	1,462	262	1,282	472	44
% no HS	1%	0%	15%	25%	51%	0%	2%	2%

*Excludes Hmong students.

**Total excludes non-responses.

In addition to a lack of high school education, more than half of the Hmong parents (62%) have a combined family income of less than \$24,000 a year.

New Undergraduates with Parents' Combined Income of Less Than \$24,000 a Year - Fall 2009

	African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian*	Hispanic	Hmong	White	Other
Less than 24,000 a year**	70	2	71	333	138	57	39
Total	167	14	221	1,130	223	967	311
% Less than 24,000 a year	42%	14%	32%	29%	62%	6%	13%

*Excludes Hmong students.

**Total excludes non-responses.

Many of the findings for Fresno State's Hmong students parallel those in FGS literature; however, there are also surprising distinctions. FGS have been found to be more likely than continuing generation students (CGS) to choose to attend an institution because it is near their family's home (Nunez, & Carroll, 1998). This is consistent with the fact that the vast majority of our Hmong students are Fresno County natives. Also, FGS primarily come from low income families (Choy, 2001; Van & Bui, 2002), which was also the case with our Hmong students. However, in the research, FGS are less likely to attend a 4-year university in favor of a 2-year community college (Choy, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2000). Consequently, Fresno State Hmong freshmen are atypical in that they are starting at a 4-year university.

According to the literature, being an FGS is highly related to lower rates of success at four-year universities (Choy, 2001; Van & Bui, 2002). Whether these findings on FGS will be consistent with Fresno State's Hmong student population is unknown as fall 2009 is the first cohort of Hmong students that can be followed. Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning will continue to track the development of this distinct population as the data on their retention and ultimate graduation become available.

References

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