**Title**
A Case Study of Best Practices on High-Impact Yield with Faculty and Staff: A Focus on Underrepresented Minorities at a Public Four-Year Institution



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**Publication Date**
2021

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

# A Case Study of Best Practices on High-Impact Yield with Faculty and Staff: A Focus on Underrepresented Minorities at a Public Four-Year Institution

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

by

Scott Allen Carter

2021

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Case Study of Best Practices on High-Impact Yield with Faculty and Staff:

A Focus on Underrepresented Minorities at a Public Four-Year Institution

by

Scott Allen Carter

Doctor of Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2021

Professor Patricia M. McDonough, Co-Chair

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Annually, high school graduates make an important life decision to continue their education and pursue higher learning, with the challenge of where to apply and enroll. Many underrepresented minority (URM) students who have experienced a systematic denial of resources struggle to find the proper institutional fit to meet their educational goals, academic interests, and resources.

The purpose of this research study was to examine the faculty and staff role in the yield process and review how student-faculty-staff interaction contributes to the college matching process. Utilizing a quantitative analysis, this study examined undergraduate enrollment trends for URM students over 10 years at the University of California, Los Angeles, to validate the introduction of a new form of high-stakes yield programming. The study tested the validity of

underlying assumptions on the impact of college choice and yield events with faculty and staff and the influence on URM student enrollment. A central outcome of my research revealed students attending high-impact yield events with faculty and staff enrolled at double the rate of those who did not participate.

The study reviewed undergraduate admission data and trends for URM admitted students, the College Board Admitted Student Questionnaire outcomes for the institution, and post-event survey responses. The research produced evidence that when students have the opportunity to engage with faculty during the yield process, they are more likely to enroll, thus positively affecting an institution's enrollment goals and outcomes. The study provides suggested best practices for developing effective partnerships and leveraging academic partnerships to support students and families at the critical period of making their final college choice decision and supporting the University's enrollment process.

This study begins to explore the impact of yield programming to support URM students in the enrollment process. It challenges practitioners to consider innovative and strategic efforts that support institutional diversity goals that promote access, equity, and inclusion.

The dissertation of Scott Allen Carter is approved.

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2021

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## Acknowledgments

My journey began with the UCLA Educational Leadership Program, Cohort "Lucky 13." Although our paths have gone in different directions, it was a personally and professionally rewarding experience to be in the classroom with such a diverse group of passionate educational professionals. The lapse in time for me to finish did not dampen my spirit and appreciation for this shared academic experience.

I am incredibly grateful to my co-chairs, Professor Patricia McDonough and Professor Kevin Eagan, for their continuous support and dedication to my study. A special acknowledgment to Pat for believing in me and the challenge she issued on that fateful fall day on campus. Your belief in me surpassed mine at times. I am extremely grateful to Kevin for joining as co-chair and guiding and supporting the methodology of my study.

Thank you to my entire committee and the valuable contributions that Professor Tyrone Howard and David Gere brought to my study. You both challenged and supported me in ways you may never know. I am humbled to have assembled such a dynamic team that encouraged my passion for higher education and our impressive Bruins Community.

A special "thank you" to Youlonda Copeland-Morgan, Vice Provost, UCLA Enrollment Management, for her tremendous support, mentorship, and reflections through this process. She introduced me to the world of strategic enrollment management as I transitioned from student affairs. I have learned more than I could have imagined in nine years, and this study would not be possible without your direct support. More importantly, I applaud your tireless commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

I also thank Gary Clark, Director, UCLA Undergraduate Admission, and his team. We are partners in this work, and I am grateful for your support of my study through access to student data. It makes it easy to support you and your staff when we share the same values and goals.

I am indebted to my family, especially my mother Rozella and stepfather Robert, for doing their very best to support my early education and pursuit of higher education. I am incredibly blessed for the family I have created for myself over the years. Thank you! Your unconditional love, belief in me, encouragement, patience, and humor have kept me motivated throughout this entire process.

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# CHAPTER ONE
# INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Annually, high school graduates make an important life decision to continue their education and pursue higher learning, with the challenge of where to apply and enroll. For many students, especially those with ample resources, the process comes with support and direction, such as parent or mentor influence, previous exposure to an academic program or institution, and proximity and access to a particular school, to name a few. Many underrepresented minority (URM) students who have experienced a systematic denial of resources struggle to find the proper institutional fit to meet their educational goals and academic interests and identify the best path forward.

Researchers have detailed how well-resourced and low-resourced schools produce inequities in academic opportunities, curricula, and career services that impact college access for minority students (Sólorzano & Ornelas, 2004; Teranishi et al., 2004; Sólorzano et al., 2005). Especially vulnerable students include those from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds, under-resourced school systems, and first-generation status. For all students pursuing postsecondary education, college choice is a process that varies based upon a number of factors (Paulsen et al., 1990; Wajeeh & Micceri, 1997). Yet, a commonality for all students who apply is experiencing an admission offer and the period leading up to committing to a particular institution.

The last step in the college choice process for colleges and universities is yield, marking the time an applicant is left to make an informed yet often emotional decision on where to enroll. After enduring an often intense application process and lengthy period waiting to learn of the

outcome of their application, students—particularly those admitted to the most selective institutions—experience a brief reversal in the power dynamic between student and institution. At this point, the applicant has the decision-making power. The college choice process's final stage represents selection when the student decides on the institution where they will enroll (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). For high-achieving students applying to top schools, their options may or may not be plentiful in this yield period.

At this point, colleges and universities have to wait or court those admitted and exercise deliberate strategy to vie for enrolling the best of their admitted student pool. Higher education professionals put their best foot forward during this yield timeframe to convince and sway a student in their favor. While many factors ultimately influence students, parents, and caregivers, making meaningful human connections can often make all the difference. The role and influence of faculty and staff during the yield process are not clearly understood. Yet enrollment and student affairs professionals, and some faculty, are often involved in this deciding period. For many applicants, knowing that someone is willing to engage, teach, mentor, guide, or answer a question can be the determining factor—and ultimately, this can impact the trajectory of a student's life (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015).

## Statement of the Problem

The yield period in American higher education is a critical time when students, not schools, make their final college decision (Stevens, 2009). While many studies exist on college choice, there is a dearth of research on how institutional yield strategies contribute to students' final decision-making, especially for URM students. There is a need to gain further understanding of the role that yield serves in enrollment management (EM), a priority function

for most private and public four-year colleges, which has been growing since the early 1970s. During this time, the EM industry was developing and anticipating a decreasing number of high school graduates. College admission officers established new approaches to student enrollment, which became known as "enrollment management" to best accomplish maintaining enrollments, managing demographic data, and engaging in marketing to prospective students in new ways (Coomes, 1994; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). As EM has evolved and become more aligned with the academic enterprise, further exploration and study are needed on the role that faculty and staff can play in the EM and college decision-making process. EM has become a critical factor in today's high-stakes recruitment and admission markets. However, there is a gap in the research regarding the positioning of faculty and staff during this influential time, specifically the importance of building trusting relationships before a student has committed. By its very nature, many high-stakes yield strategies are proprietary as they can reveal an institution's competitive edge. Thus, many of the advances and techniques to successfully yield a class are held as trade secrets and rarely, if ever, end up in empirical research articles.

A true enrollment model will span from outreach to the graduation of students. However, this study focused on the college choice process and factors that support high-achieving URM students choosing among their admission offers to highly competitive and selective schools. Further, what is the optimal role that faculty and staff play in the final stages of the college choice process? Hossler et al. (1989) define student college choice as “a complex, multistage process during which an individual develops aspirations to continue formal education beyond high school, followed later by a decision to attend a specific college, university, or institution of advanced vocational training.”

An examination of college choice produces varying models to analyze the college decision-making process. Many studies have researched college choice for students representing different races and ethnicities (Allen, 1988, 1992; Hurtado et al., 1997; Freeman, 1999; Ceja, 2000; Urbanski, 2000; Freeman & Thomas, 2002; Teranishi, 2002; Comeaux et al., 2020). Meanwhile, other studies focus on SES and social class influences (McDonough, 1997; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Teranishi et al., 2004). Research confirms that varied experiences exist for underrepresented student groups. Hurtado et al. (1997) examined college application trends among racial and ethnic groups using the National Education Longitudinal Study data. African American and Hispanic applicants were more likely to submit more college applications than White students. In a study on college choice, Sevier (1992) reported that African Americans rated the school's reputation, access to a desired major, total cost, and availability of financial aid as most important in college choice. Significant studies have focused on the college choice process to understand better how students consider their opportunities and make decisions. Various factors that influence students include academic ability; parental income, involvement, and expectations; support from high school counselors and teachers; race and ethnicity; gender; and SES (Hearn, 1991; Hossler & Stage, 1992; McDonough, 1997).

For many students, the path to higher education is not easy and often paved with challenges. First-generation students face a potential lack of knowledge or resources to support their pursuit of advanced education beyond high school (Cho et al., 2008). For those that persist from underrepresented and under-resourced backgrounds, college choice becomes a maze that is difficult to navigate. The cost of education, financial aid packages, and awarded scholarships often determine where a student may choose to enroll (Paulsen et al., 1990). Based on the findings of Hurtado et al. (1997), financial aid significantly factors into making a final college

decision for students of color. However, many other factors come into play, such as fit with a particular institution. The more closely students' values and beliefs aligned with the institution they chose, the more satisfied they were and ultimately persisted (Williams, 1987). On the university's side, the process of yielding a class can be high-stakes and is a highly involved progression of intentional events and activities to persuade a student to commit (Duffy & Goldberg, 2014).

The percentage of admitted applicants who ultimately enroll is known as enrollment yield (Maltz et al., 2006). In his book *Creating a Class*, Stevens (2009) states that while economists may say students enroll at the most prestigious school that admitted them, for many students, the decision is emotional rather than a purely rational choice. Further, Stevens referencing the yield period, states that "in selective admissions, the management and engineering of emotion is an important aspect of the job." This level of emotion is multifaceted, includes trust-building, and is on full display during the yield season. Campus visits, preview days, and overnight stays generate matriculations (Stevens, 2009). Sharing his experience on the yield season, Stevens (2009) assessed that those who visit a campus once admitted are more likely to submit an intent to register than those who stay home or visit elsewhere. The yield period may look different for competitive public institutions as compared to their private peers.

For the University of California (UC) system, which has a highly competitive admission environment, applicants apply and hope to receive an admission offer to one of the most prestigious public university systems in the U.S. The number of cross-admits within the UC system drives many students and families to make several campus visits before the commitment deadline, or at least to their top choice campuses. The emotional investment is commonplace as

many students and their families traverse the state to visit and compare the schools where they received admission offers.

California is the most diverse state in the nation (WPR, 2020). Barriers exist for those students most at risk of obtaining a higher degree, such as those from under-resourced communities, low-SES backgrounds, or first-generation status. Access to higher education has been an issue in California because of public policies that inhibit and impact URM. Problems range from inequitable school financing, limited access to college preparatory courses, insufficient support for English learners, and curriculum tracking, to name a few (Gandara, 1995; Hurtado et al., 1996).

Another factor to consider in California higher education is the impact on diversity due to several significant political and policy actions that redirected admissions. In 1995, the Regents of the UC adopted a resolution known as Special Policy 1 (SP-1), which ended using race, ethnicity, and gender in admissions. In addition, Proposition 209, California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI), was passed by voters in 1996 and amended the state constitution to prohibit state governmental institutions from considering race, sex, or ethnicity. Much research has been conducted on the impact of CCRI and the decline of students applying to or enrolling in California colleges and universities (Contreras, 2005; Arcidiacono et al., 2011). The UC Regents policy and Proposition 209 severely impacted diversity efforts, and the University's ability to offer admission and targeted scholarships to minorities dropped precipitously. For the more selective campuses, numbers were so low that it discouraged minority students from applying (Antonovics & Backes, 2013).

Today in the UC system, students must meet ever-changing standards for traditional admissions criteria as applicant pools become increasingly competitive. Admissions outcomes have become dynamic, and acceptance to the UC is a risky, uncertain proposition (McDonough, 1994). The competitive admission environment, especially for high-achieving minority students, can be challenging and confusing when making final enrollment decisions; understanding the key determining factors that shape and influence college choice is critical for institutions to understand. The Admitted Student Questionnaire, a product of the College Board that is available to every participating institution, offers data that gives insight into intangible qualities and perceptions such as academic image and reputation of an institution that may affect a student's decision to attend. Admitted students complete this annual survey on their final college choice decisions. This survey can help an institution understand its strengths and challenges in the recruitment, admission, and enrollment processes. This study focused on the yield period after URM students receive an offer of admission, leading up to and until they submit their intent to register using university enrollment data, the Admitted Student Questionnaire outcomes, and other data sources.

At the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), strategic enrollment efforts have advanced significantly in the past 10 years. The introduction of an EM model to UCLA came after an external review commissioned by the Division of UCLA Student Affairs in 2009. The review determined significant inadequacies and compliance risks, which warranted the University's investment in a strategic and coordinated approach to managing undergraduate admission, financial aid, and outreach functions. A national search process identified a leader for this new structure, which led to hiring a Vice Provost, EM, who had a depth of financial aid and enrollment experience in private higher education. Not only did UCLA change its approach and

enter a transformative period of restructuring enrollment functions, but other UC campuses followed suit.

EM, as a recent concept to the UC, is today an accepted practice. UCLA introduced EM in 2012 and was the first UC campus to employ this model. Today, six of the nine campuses embrace this type of model. Traditionally, the UC system houses enrollment functions within student affairs. However, as new enrollment models develop, they often align with academic affairs to further connect undergraduate admission work to the institution's core educational mission. As EM becomes more commonplace in the UC system, the strategies employed will also develop and advance. There is an opportunity for the UC undergraduate campuses to learn from one another. The results of this study can provide insight, techniques, and new concepts for yielding and enrolling high-achieving students.

## Purpose of the Study

College choice has been studied from various angles, yet exploration of the yield process and associated practices was the focus of this study. Understanding what influences impact college choice for URM adds knowledge to the research and literature. It improves the options for URM students and their representation at highly selective institutions. Expanding into high-stakes yield that makes connections between admitted students, faculty, and staff introduces the concept and importance of building a trusting relationship with students and their influencers. The purpose of this research study was to examine the faculty and staff role in the yield process and review how student-faculty-staff interaction contributes to the college matching process. The research goal was to create a study that provided evidence on the best practices of yielding

desired admitted students. Stevens (2007) expressed his findings on the final choice that a student makes when selecting their college of choice. He writes,

> … in its final stages, student decision making is partly an emotional choice. Faced with deciding between schools that are objectively similar, families resort to the work of fine distinction, making final decisions on the basis of their feelings about places as well as by more ostensibly objective criteria such as financial aid and institutional rank. (p. 240-241)

This reality is integral to the study of yield and how emotion plays a role in the high-stakes business that is part of strategic EM.

A guiding premise of this research study centered on the relevance and effectiveness of high-impact, high-touch yield events on URM students. Further, determining the role of faculty and staff as influencers in events for these admitted students. Finally, if—and if so, how—does the participation in and engagement with faculty and staff yield events shape and influence final college choice?

1. Did the introduction of faculty engagement events during the yield period contribute to a significant increase in the rate of URM admitted students who matriculated into the university?
2. Controlling for demographic characteristics and prior academic achievement measures, to what extent does attending an event with faculty and staff positively predict whether prospective URM students subsequently matriculate into the university?

3. To what extent do students indicate that faculty and staff had an influence on their perceptions and decision to enroll at UCLA and/or what other factors were involved in the decision process?

To answer the questions posed in this study, I conducted a quantitative study that utilized UCLA Undergraduate Admission URM enrollment data, institutional college-choice quantitative data collected from the ASQ, and quantitative data from post-event surveys from university-sponsored yield events with faculty and staff.

## Significance of the Study

This study contributed to understanding highly competitive URM students' college choice processes by shedding light on high-stakes yield efforts. Gaining insight and perspective can allow institutions to build effective strategies that support underrepresented students during the yield process, shed light on strategies to yield highly recruited and desired students through strategic engagement with faculty and staff, and positively impact university diversity goals. Colleges and universities make valiant efforts to recruit minority students. Still, it is not enough to recruit them, but equally important to consider the impact yield has on a student once they have received an offer of admission. UCLA developed a specific and strategic approach to URM students to support the institution's mission and goals. Diversity is fundamental to the mission of UCLA, which states the position to achieve excellence and diversity. UCLA EM has developed a commitment through strategies that support institutional priorities of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

## Chapter One Summary

This study considered previous research on college choice and expanded research on the impact and influence of yield activities on URM admits. Specifically, the incorporation of faculty and staff as a focused approach to support underrepresented students during their college decision-making process. Without a clear understanding of the effects of such high-impact activities, the knowledge base for college choice lacks a thorough understanding.

# CHAPTER TWO

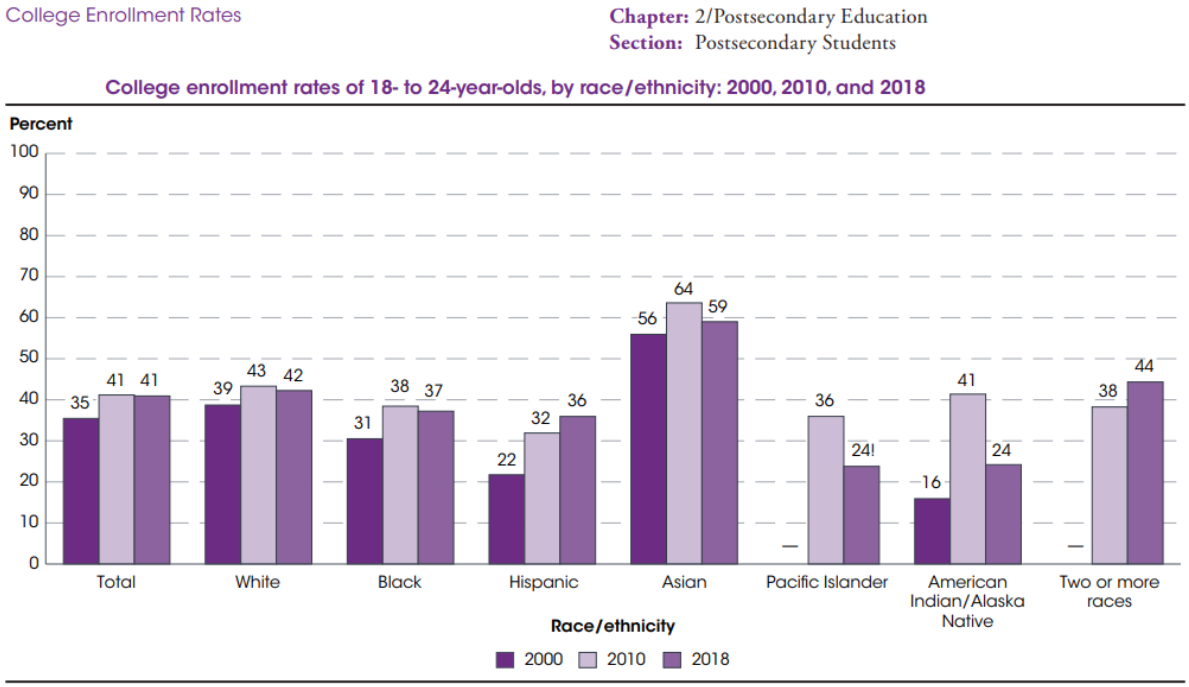
# REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews elements of and provides background on college access, especially for underrepresented minorities (URM), the development of enrollment management (EM) and strategic enrollment management (SEM) in higher education, and admissions, yield, and college choice based on race/ethnicity, as well as student behavior on making enrollment decisions. Further, a review of faculty engagement in EM as well as the role of marketing and branding in higher education.

## College Access and Admissions Policy Changes: California as a Test Case

Access for URM students in American higher education has been the source of more than five decades of research. This study focused on enrollment and college choice for African American (Black), Chicanx/Latinx, Native American, and Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students at a Research 1 Institution. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2017), the overall college enrollment rate (see Figure 2.1) for 18- to 24-year-olds increased from 35 percent in 2000 to 41 percent in 2018. From 2000 to 2018, college enrollment rates increased for those identifying as Black (31 to 37%), Hispanic (22 to 36%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (16 to 24%). College enrollment was slightly higher for Asian Americans (56 to 59%) during the same years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

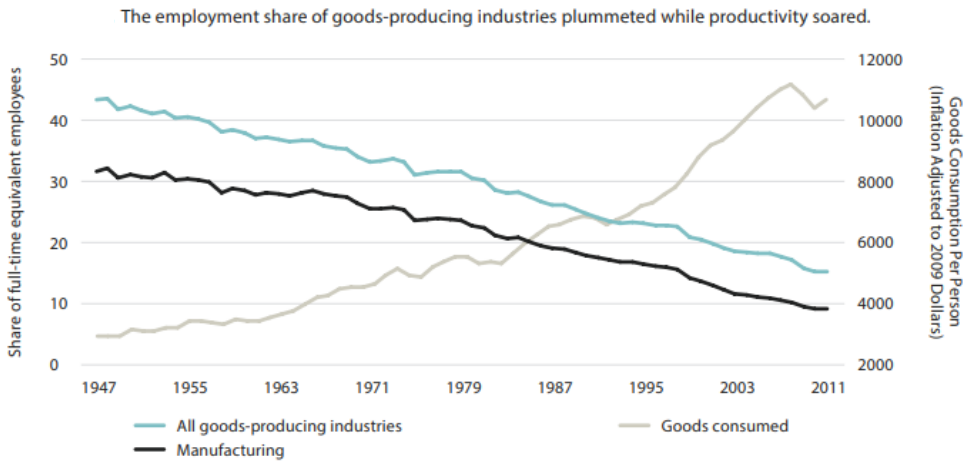
**Figure 2.1: College Enrollment Rates**




— Not available.
! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.
NOTE: Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. Separate data for 18- to 24-year-olds who were Pacific Islander and of Two or more races were not available in 2000. In 2000, respondents of Two or more races were required to select a single race category. Prior to 2003, data for Asian 18- to 24-year-olds include Pacific Islander 18- to 24-year-olds. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 2000, 2010, and 2018. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 302.60.

Despite the rising cost of attending college, the U.S. student population continues to grow rapidly in size and diversity, including race and ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and academic interests (King & Eckel, 2004). This increase supports the shift of the U.S. to a post-industrial economy (see Figure 2.2) and increasing American workers' skill levels and incomes. Thus, the growing value for postsecondary education and services such as finance and business, health care, and education (Carnevale & Rose, 2015). Given the economic need for more college-educated workers and increasing URM populations' enrollment rates, high-achieving minority students will find themselves with increased college choice options. Yet, the challenge of access to the nation's most competitive institutions remains.

**Figure 2.2: Employment Share of Goods-Producing Industries**




Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, 1947-2011.

Nationally, highly selective institutions have struggled to achieve diversity in their student composition—even as it has been a priority goal of the institution. Conversely, less selective and open-access institutions often have an overrepresentation of URM students. Selective private and public schools that desire diversity pursue high-achieving, low-income, and URM students without enrolling underprepared students unable to handle academic rigor. Further, the issue of affordability comes into play as private selective colleges' aid for high-achieving, low-income students has become quite generous to where the cost of attendance is covered or significantly reduced in competitive institutions (Hoxby & Avery, 2013). This reality has challenged higher education in California as the state has become more diverse. Yet, the most selective University of California (UC) schools fail to keep pace with the changing demographics.

In 1995, the UC Board of Regents, despite strong opposition, ended the use of race, ethnicity, and gender in admissions (Special Policy 1, or SP1), contracting, and hiring (Special Policy 2, SP2), which significantly shifted university policy (Douglass, 1997). Staff, faculty, and

students collectively advocated against this proposition and urged the Regents not to pass SP1 and SP2. Affirmative action policies were highly divisive at the time, and still are to this day. Regental authority in admissions was the norm, but campus autonomy was becoming a new model for the UC. The University, as a public trust, specifically the Regents, has a high level of autonomy in managing the nation's largest land-grant university. At the time, and still today, the Regents rely on the faculty, through the Academic Senate, to determine admission requirements and evaluate individual applicants. The creation and passing of SP1 marked a significant departure from decision-making in that a Regent brought forth the proposed change and not the Senate (Douglass, 1997).

The California Civil Rights Initiative, known as Proposition 209, was passed by referendum in the general election in 1996 and amended the California state constitution to prohibit state government institutions from considering race, ethnicity, or gender in public education. Further, in 1998, Proposition 227 was passed by California voters, extremely limiting the use of languages other than English for the instruction of English learners (Contreras, 2005). Contreras (2005) stated that these policies represented a political climate that targeted the most underserved of California's population. As a result of Proposition 209, the UC system experienced significant declines in underrepresented student applications and admissions, with the most critical shifts at the highly competitive University of California, Berkeley, and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campuses. Affirmative action gave universities discretion in student admission decisions and allowed the university to maintain a fair representation of URM, even at the most selective campuses (Contreras, 2005).

This system-wide crisis led to the model of comprehensive review, which most UC campuses use today. Also known as holistic review, admission offices evaluate applications

based on the totality of 14 factors. No single factor plays a deciding role. Such factors include grade point average, test scores, performance in and the number of courses beyond minimum subject requirements, known as "A-G requirements." These include history, English, mathematics, science, languages other than English, visual and performing arts, and college preparatory electives. Additionally, special talents (e.g., music, athletics, math genius, etc.), achievements, awards, and academic accomplishment in light of life experiences (University of California, 2020).

At UCLA, the effects of Proposition 209 would come to a head in 2006. At this time, 96 Black students enrolled, or two percent of the freshman class, the lowest since the early 1970s. This statistic was startling and prompted institution leaders to declare a crisis. Then-Chancellor Albert Carnesale, in an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*, stated this outcome as a "great disappointment," and "clearly, we're going to have to meet this crisis by redoubling our efforts, which have not yielded the results we'd like to see" (Trounson, 2006).

Despite efforts to improve diversity, UCLA became the focus of a 2013 spoken word video created by undergraduate Sy Stokes that garnered national attention. Stokes aimed to highlight the lack of progress the University had made on admitting and enrolling Black males. To date, the video has received over 2.4 million views on YouTube (Stokes, 2013). Proposition 209 impacted African American enrollments significantly, but it is essential to acknowledge that other URM groups were also affected. The proportion of URM first-year students dropped by half following passage of Proposition 209. At UCLA, the number of URM freshmen went from about 28% in 1995 to 14% in 1998—and in 2012, UCLA's proportion of URM freshmen (22%) was well below the pre-Proposition 209 levels (Kidder & Gándara, 2015).

Today, utilizing an EM model, UCLA has employed new levels of outreach, collaboration, and partnerships within the Los Angeles community. Recent strategies have led to improved diversity and the largest URM freshman cohorts for African American and Native American students in the University's history. However, high-achieving URM students have expanded opportunities in today's admission environment, impacting the process of making college choice decisions.

## Background on Enrollment Management

Competition for today's students in higher education is fierce in the most competitive institutions, and the profession of EM has gained prominence in postsecondary education. The academy is generally aware of the term "enrollment management," but it can cause confusion. John Maguire, a leader in the research of this area, defined EM as "bringing together often disparate functions having to do with recruiting, funding, tracking, retaining, and replacing students as they move toward, within, and away from university" (1976; as cited in Henderson, 2001, p.7). This serves as a fundamental definition in the review of the literature.

EM emerged in the early 1970s and today has become an essential function for many colleges and universities. What was primarily a function of an admissions officer, as the gatekeeper, has shifted into a more extensive and comprehensive enterprise for the institution (Hossler, 1996). The concept of EM, considered innovative, was an integration of an institution's admissions, financial aid, orientation, and academic advising into a comprehensive approach to shaping enrollments (Hossler & Gallagher, 2014).

Later, Coomes (2000) provided context and summarized that the profession emerged from three converging issues in higher education. The first was an increasing awareness to reach

more students and expand access to those supported by complex federal, state, and institutional aid programs. Second, there was an expanding empirical and theoretical research base on college choice and identifying factors that influence choice and attrition. Lastly, there was a concern about declining enrollments in the years ahead, with a sharp decline predicted in high school graduates. An expected fewer number of students would replace baby boomers completing their degrees.

Another view of EM came from Hossler (1984) related to the need for admission functions to be embraced on a broader level by campus administrators, especially its leaders. Further, enrollment officers needed to incorporate more research into planning and become increasingly adept with their work's targeted approach. Hossler, Bean & Associates (1990) would later characterize EM in the following manner:

> … an organizational concept as well as a systematic set of activities designed to enable education institutions to exert more influence over their student enrollments and total net tuition revenue derived from enrolled students. Organized by strategic planning and supported by institutional research, enrollment management activities concern student college choice, the transition to college, student attrition and retention, and student outcomes. (p. 5)

Penn (1999) determined that a significant impact on the "business of higher education" (p. 3) were two external forces. Changing demographics was the first, which led to strong competition among colleges and universities for the remaining eligible students. The second external force resulted from a shifting landscape and events of the day; there was an increase in public distrust in all types of public institutions. As a result, legislators expected greater accountability,

implementation of performance-based funding, and required specific statistical measures and reporting (Penn, 1999). EM has grown conceptually to focus on enrolling more students and defining a focus on retention and graduation rates—linking the institutions' academic and enrollment efforts. By the late 1980s, EM had become a significant strategic component of institutions' operations, thus the emerging term "strategic enrollment management" (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015).

More recently, Hossler and Bontrager (2014) have reviewed EM's origins, influence, and position in postsecondary education. More so, public policymakers' attitudes have shifted, and SEM is expanding in other parts of the world due to globalization, including the privatization of tertiary education, international rankings, and demographic trends in several industrialized nations.

Hossler and Bontrager (2014) provided further background and historical roots for SEM's development, suggesting that the stage was set for a competitive admission environment before the 1950s GI Bill spurred an increase in postsecondary education. During this period, the growth of community colleges, coupled with the growth of four-year public institutions, began to place pressure on private colleges, which challenged their recruitment models. Later, in the mid-1970s, a demographic trend of declining traditional-aged college students applied more pressure to focus on students' recruitment and retention. This downturn would be considered the single most significant factor and perhaps the most compelling root cause for SEM. An emerging and more advanced, competitive admission environment in the 1970s and 1980s solidified the precepts of EM (Hossler & Bontrager, 2014).

A critical part of SEM that emerged early from the competition of declining enrollment numbers is the marketing and recruitment activities designed to set one institution apart from another, attract prospective students, and influence their decision-making. A new strategy formed that led admission professionals to learn more about the timing and context of students' search process. As summarized by DesJardins et al. (1997), Paulsen (1990) surmised that college choice studies provided guidelines that allowed institutions to understand better the effects of student characteristics and institutional factors and how they relate to the student college decision-making process. Knowing the impacts of student attributes on college choice processes can be used to identify groups of students possessing characteristics comparable to those who are likely to apply, be admitted, and enroll at a particular college. Paulsen noted that understanding the effects of institutional factors on students' college choices provides helpful insights to developing an appropriate balance of good marketing programs delivered at proper times and places. Improving information on the interaction of students and institutions, especially in high-yield markets, leads to effective marketing strategies (Paulsen, 1990). As a result, college choice studies have become an essential part of the strategy in enrollment planning, operations, and activities.

## College Choice and the Decision-Making Process for Students

The literature characterizes the college choice decision process in three broad stages (Hossler & Gallagher, 2014). The first stage, which spans early childhood to high school, involves forming college aspirations through various factors and processes. The second stage involves identification, selection, and application to a determined number of institutions. During this period, students gain information from various sources that influence decisions on where to apply, which ends when they conclude the application process. The final stage includes

admission, enrollment, and attendance. This phase is when students choose to enroll in one of their “choice set” institutions, typically influenced by how a student responded to the survey administered during college entrance exams (Hossler et al., 1989; Paulsen, 1990; Weiler, 1996). College choice is a process that includes academic, economic, social, and family influences from early childhood education to advanced study. Research has focused primarily on high school students' psychological, sociological, and economic characteristics (Hossler et al., 1989; McDonough, 1994, 1997; Hossler et al., 1999; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Perna, 2006). When expanding to parent engagement and influence in the college choice process, the lens is often that of social class and SES as well as race (Perna & Titus, 2005). How parents value and influence the pursuit of higher education is often central to the impact on students' choice of where to enroll (McDonough, 1994, 1997; McDonough et al., 2000). We know that parent aspirations influence a student's decision to pursue higher education and sometimes the type of institution to attend, which often correlates to parents' education and income levels (Flint, 1992; Davies & Guppy, 1997; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001). When considering URM students, studies show that most Black and Latino children experience the most influence from mothers (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Hossler et al., 1989; Flint, 1992; Hurtado et al., 1997; Freeman, 1999). For low-SES Black and Latino students, parent involvement is critical to preparing, accessing, and graduating from four-year colleges and universities (Hossler et al., 1998; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001). Thus, the evidence base suggests that parents play a role for most students and URM students even more so (Hossler et al., 1989).

Additional models break down the college choice process into a methodological or stage process. One approach presented by Litten (1982) incorporated factors such as race, gender, academic ability, parental education, and geographic location to enhance understanding of

college choice. Hossler and Gallagher (1987) presented a model that emphasized three time markers: predisposition, search, and choice. Predisposition (Kindergarten through Grade 8) represents exposure to the notion of a college education. Search (Grades 9 and 10) involves an inventory phase for students and parents that includes: needs, wants, values, and limitations matched with desired or desirable institutions leading to choice options. The final phase (Grades 11 and 12) for a student involves greater independence from parents and more reliance on influencers such as peers, counselors, and teachers to make final decisions.

Numerous studies have examined the college choice behavior of students at each stage of the process. Studies of college choice behavior propose that student characteristics (e.g., race, gender, academic ability, and achievement), family income, parents' educational attainment and occupational status), institutional characteristics (e.g., tuition, financial aid, geographic location, reputation, selectivity, academic programs and curriculum), and contextual factors (e.g., parental and teacher encouragement, and peer influence and plans) influence a student's application decision (Hossler et al., 1989; Paulsen, 1990).

**Psychosocial Variables, URM Students and College Choice**

Nora (2004) presented a three-stage college selection model: predisposition, search, and choice. Focusing on the choice stage, where psychosocial, institutional, and personal preferences (e.g., campus location) emerge, Cho et al. (2008) studied students' perceptions after their college choice and final enrollment decisions. Their study's results suggested that measures of psychosocial quality of a campus substantially impact college choice. Further, the campus's racial climate is more important to some URM students (McDonough et al., 1997). A secure and welcoming feeling on campus was an important factor for both females and first-generation

males in college choice (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). The study also revealed that acceptance of racial diversity was more significant to all African Americans and Latino first-generation students than other races (Cho et al., 2008). Other college choice literature exists on the influence of institutional and personal variables (Stage & Hossler, 1988; Hossler et al., 1989). Yet, there are other views on the institutional factors that influence college choice. Park and Eagan (2011) further underscore this perspective in their study that looked at predictors of enrolling via early access or early decision programs. More affluent students and those who reported having received private college counseling were significantly more likely to have enrolled in college via an early admissions program, which is the equivalent of a 100-point boost in SAT scores when estimating the likelihood of being admitted to college.

**College Choice and Social Class**

A critical area to explore is how social class impacts college choice. McDonough (1994, 1997) studied the sociological perspective of choice and the influence of organizational and cultural factors influencing social mobility. Informed by the work of Bourdieu (1986), who presented the concept of cultural capital as a way that the upper-middle-class and upper-class in a society reproduce themselves, McDonough explored how college choice operates differently across class status groups and the schools that serve those groups, and how college admissions favor the strategies of advantaged students, who "set the bar" in highly competitive admissions.

Class-based advantages are part of the system that purportedly supports upward mobility, but in fact, continues to reproduce the existing class structure. Still, college opportunity is not equally available to all students, especially students living in urban and rural areas; URM and working-class students; those in the foster care system rapidly aging out; disabled students, etc. There is a

significant investment in what McDonough identifies as the "college knowledge industry," which represents businesses that provide various services, including private college counseling, entrance examination coaching, and other market-driven advantages (McDonough, 1994). This industry and increasing competition have resulted in college admissions becoming a high-stakes, competitive activity where the upper-middle class uses their cultural capital to gain clear advantages. Further, students and parents are becoming increasingly astute at promoting themselves in the admission marketplace, especially in their perception and pursuit of "good colleges." McDonough (1994) refers to this process as "commodification" or "social construction" of an applicant as they engage in the college search. This fixation on maintaining status has shaped the admission field as it evolved into a more substantial enterprise based on marketing strategies and, at times, moving farther from academic precepts.

The admission process from the professional side evolved and has become more of an administrative function and expanded the professional arena with developed career paths and offerings. What was once a function of senior academicians and college presidents has now shifted and presents philosophical dilemmas for college access (McDonough & Robertson, 1995). McDonough and Robertson (1995) expand on the shifting roles from "gatekeeping" to "marketing" that inform and impact the work of college admissions. This notion of advancing marketing techniques and strategies in admissions has also influenced the role of the private, for-profit college knowledge industry through newsmagazines that focus on college rankings (McDonough et al., 1998). These rankings' primary audience is those with cultural capital and increased dependence on resources that focus on status and prestige.

Another area to consider is the literature on first-generation college students. Based on the definition that neither of a student's parents attended college, 24% of college students are

first-generation, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics, U.S. Department of Education (Redford & Hoyer, 2017). However, the number could be higher based on varying definitions. The research on first-generation college students often concludes that students are more likely to be low-SES, ethnic minorities, and experience a home where English may not be the only language spoken (Terenzini et al., 1996; Choy et al., 2000; Bui, 2002). College choice for first-generation students is often impacted by a lack of information and resources in the search and application process, heavily influencing where students will enter higher education (Radford, 2013; Dillon & Smith, 2017).

**College Choice and Race/Ethnicity**

While social class can impact the college-choice process, researchers have also investigated the role of race and ethnicity in the college decision-making process (Hurtado et al., 1997; Freeman, 1999; Teranishi et al., 2004; Perna & Titus, 2005). Freeman (1999) speaks to the consideration and context of culture as influential on African American high school students in the college choice process. Specifically, the way that families impart values for higher education and the influence of economic and career expectations on their lives. African American families, many of whom are first-generation college-goers, approach decision-making about higher education through the role the mother plays and the desire to pursue educational attainment beyond the current level of schooling (Freeman, 1999). Hurtado et al. (1997) studied Asian Americans and college choice and determined that Asian Americans have higher expectations for degree attainment, test-taking, and college applications than other racial groups. Teranishi et al. (2004) examined the Asian Pacific American (APA) population's diversity regarding postsecondary opportunities and outcomes. They found that some APA groups were more likely to be admitted and attend selective institutions due to academic behavior and access to

educational resources. Other APA segments, such as Filipino and Southeast Asian Americans, were more likely to pursue and attend less selective colleges. It is important to consider how race and ethnicity intersect with college choice. A study that explored this area examined the college destinations of African American students (McDonough et al., 1997). Using data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program, Black students were examined by those who enrolled in Historically Black Colleges and Universities and those who enrolled in Predominantly White Institutions. Like most students, Black students choose institutions on such factors as academic reputation and the potential to achieve *good* jobs. Unlike many of their peers, Black students also emphasized financial aid as an important, if not the most important, factor in their college choice. Also, Black students were less likely to be admitted to or enroll in their first-choice school (McDonough et al., 1997). From this research, one can conclude that social and economic conditions are influential for African American students as they develop alternative cultural responses to academic opportunities.

**Factors Related to Students' Decision on Where to Enroll**

Despite the robust literature on postsecondary institutions and the admissions process to select students, there is limited compelling research on how students weigh their options and make final college choice decisions (Nurnberg et al., 2012), specifically the role of admission yield programs and activities. Regarding the factors that influence college choice, the literature suggests that distance from home to school and decisive factors such as college selectivity, prestige, and quality are the most influential in this decision (Avery et al., 2005). Other factors that surface on college choice include the advice of others (peers, counselors, and alumni). Still, the primary influence stems from parents, academic reputation, academic offerings, and financial aid availability (Chapman, 1981; Hossler, 1985; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). The literature

suggests that while there is no clear consensus on the relationship between college selectivity and future earnings, for those students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds, college selectivity relates positively to expected lifetime earnings (Hoxby & Long, 1999; Dale & Krueger, 2002).

**Faculty Engagement**

A lack of literature speaks to the faculty's role in students' admissions and college decision-making processes. However, earlier research on faculty engagement models by Tinto (1993) and Astin (1993) exists. These models proposed that college student engagement led to positive outcomes on student learning, retention, and a meaningful undergraduate experience. In Tinto's (1993) model, the focus was on student retention, and their successful academic and social integration influenced their decisions to continue or leave college. Further, an essential element of this strong assimilation was dependent upon ongoing positive interactions between faculty and students. Astin (1993) based his model on institutional practices and environmental experiences (e.g., interaction between faculty and students, pedagogical techniques) on student outcomes. Astin also advocated that student involvement, which included interactions with student peer groups and faculty, enhanced most academic performance and learning.

A key college experience connected to student development is interaction with faculty, from classroom to office hours, laboratory, and other venues. Interactions between undergraduates and faculty led to stronger academic and personal development (Lau, 2003; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Given the research connection to positive outcomes through faculty-student engagement, introducing faculty into the college decision-making process has become a strategy associated with UCLA's EM model.

## Marketing and Brand Management in Higher Education

An early marketing concept of Product, Price, Promotion, and Place, also known as the Four P's, was introduced by E. Jerome McCarthy in 1960 as a marketing education principle (Yudelson, 1999). Later, Booms and Bitner (1981) developed three more P's (see Figure 2.3), including physical evidence, processes, and people. Since education is not a tangible good but a service, the additional elements created expanded marketing principles. In this case, they support a marketing strategy that targets a student population and the educational experience (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). Known as the service marketing mix, the additional P's determine a service company's presence and success. They impact buying needs, customer satisfaction, and customer experience (Van Vliet, 2013).

**Figure 2.3: Service Marketing, 7 P's**


The higher education market has become increasingly global. The perceived value, effectiveness, and potential benefits of using marketing concepts and theories, which have traditionally been influential in the business world, are becoming commonplace with

universities. The goal of gaining a competitive edge and gaining a larger share of markets is a reality that drives higher education sector marketing (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006). There is growing literature on the marketization of higher education and consumer behavior; however, research to provide evidence on how marketing directly impacts college choice lacks development. As competition increased for colleges and universities, new marketing and brand strategy levels developed to keep pace with an international market for higher education (Binsardi & Ekwulugo, 2003).

As a function of EM, marketing is a tool that enhances strategic enrollment efforts (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015). Hays (2009) authored a chapter in the *Handbook of Strategic Enrollment Management* and shared the challenge of marketing in higher education and that little credence to marketing concepts and strategies is given by the academy. Marketing is often thought of in the private sector and is related to advertising and sales. However, higher education now considers marketing as the facilitator of an exchange where institutions provide a service to their customers, students desiring an education (Hossler & Bontrager, 2015).

**Brand Management**

Increasing competition among colleges and universities demands the need to understand better, manage, and leverage a viable brand (Oplatka, 2006; Celly & Knepper, 2010; Hemsley-Brown & Palfreyman, 2011). Through the evolution of EM, more colleges and universities apply marketing and brand management strategies to compete effectively in meeting institutional goals, meeting targets and competing for the best students (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006; Chapleo, 2010).

Consumer brand research focuses on brand personality, which refers to a brand's human characteristics. Aaker (1997) identified five unique brand personality dimensions: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness (Aaker, 1997). These aspects of brand personality can relate to UCLA EM's work in creating branded events and activities. Although much research exists about factors that influence a student's college choice decision, research into the processes that form institutions' branding decisions is lacking (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009). Bennett and Ali-Choudhury (2008) characterized a university's brand as "a manifestation of the institutions' features that distinguish it from others, reflect its capacity to satisfy students' needs, engender trust in its ability to deliver a certain type and level of higher education, and help potential recruits to make wise enrollment decisions" (p.4). This summation of branding serves as a good overview of the strategy used in SEM as it relates corporate brand concepts to college choice (Bennett & Ali-Choudhury, 2009).

## Conclusion

The literature reviewed offers a summary of the relevant research in the enrollment field and research connected to college access, college choice, and the role of EM strategy. Access and admission policy changes were major foundational underpinnings for this review. A review of SEM's history and role provided an understanding and perspective to inform this study. Next, an examination of how URM student populations interface with and access higher education gave context to understanding students in a high-achieving educational setting, especially the influences on making college choice decisions. Albeit limited, a review of the faculty's role in students' admissions and college decision-making processes. And how faculty influence and positively impact student enrollment outcomes. An additional review focused on understanding the use of marketing and brand management, or brand personality, in the space of higher

education, specifically enrollment programming to compete effectively in meeting institutional goals, meeting targets, and competing for the best students.

In the following chapter, the study's methodology is detailed to support the concept of faculty and staff as influencers on final college choice in high-impact yield activities.

# CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Each year, students enter the college admission process with the desire to pursue an advanced degree that will lead to a successful career. Academic preparation and achievement are vital to gaining admission into highly competitive colleges and universities. Many students with multiple competitive admission offers will weigh their options carefully to determine the best-fit institution. The previous chapter reviewed the body of research related to access and college choice and introduced enrollment management concepts that shape and influence students' admission processes. Research has documented varying patterns of behavior with respect to the college choice process across student demographic characteristics, and many studies have investigated the role that institutional characteristics and strategies play in students' consideration of ultimately where to attend college; however, much less attention has been given to the utility of specific yield approaches used by some of the more selective higher education institutions.

This case study aimed to provide an in-depth understanding and generate best practice findings for strategic enrollment management practitioners. Specifically, the study sought to assess faculty and staff's role and influence on the yield of underrepresented minorities (URM). Exploring the relationship between college choice for high-achieving students through faculty and staff engagement will inform practitioners on new ways to develop and create strategies that support access, equity, and inclusion.

The study focused on investigating a large public research university's effort to meaningfully engage faculty and staff in high-stakes yield efforts to foster, enhance, and build

trusting relationships with minority students. The study addressed whether direct contact with faculty and staff influences college choice as an enrollment strategy. By researching this practice and the factors influencing college choice, new information can guide the strategic enrollment management community by understanding whether connections and relationships with faculty and staff motivate prospective URM students to matriculate into the institution.

The study focused on three primary aspects of engagement during yield events, (a) enrollment trends and outcomes related to admitted students attending university yield events, (b) what was the influence of faculty and staff on the student's college choice decision, (c) if, and if so, what factors led to increased affinity or connection to the university.

Through a review of relevant research and academic frameworks on college choice and analyses of data collected from students admitted to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) between 2012 and 2019, the research questions addressed a gap in what is available on the final phase in the college choice process for high-achieving URM students.

## Research Questions

The case study investigated the relevance and effectiveness of high-impact, high-touch yield events on URM students. Specifically, the role of faculty and staff engagement in the yield process. This following research questions guided this study.

1. Did the introduction of faculty engagement events during the yield period contribute to a significant increase in the rate of URM admitted students who matriculated into the university?
2. Controlling for demographic characteristics and prior academic achievement measures, to what extent does attending an event with faculty and staff positively

predict whether prospective URM students subsequently matriculate into the university?

3. To what extent do students indicate that faculty and staff had an influence on their perceptions and decision to enroll at UCLA and/or what other factors were involved in the decision process?

The chapter offers an overview of the research design and a description of the selected site and participants. The chapter discusses the specific variables analyzed as part of the quantitative investigation and a delineation related to the particular domains covered by the qualitative data collection strategies. Finally, the chapter concludes with an overview of the analytic method of this study applied to the data and discusses considerations related to bias, validity, and reliability.

**Research Design and Rationale**

A quantitative analysis is an appropriate research strategy to gain a comprehensive understanding of strategic yield practices. This study tested the validity of underlying assumptions on the impact of high-stakes yield events with URM students, faculty, and staff. My research reviewed undergraduate admission records for URM students from 2010—2019. I ran frequencies for the dataset based on demographic variables for admitted students and enrolled students. I analyzed secondary student data from the College Board's Admitted Student Questionnaire (ASQ) and UCLA's admission records. The ASQ is the primary instrument reviewed in this study, including campus reports and the outcomes of college choice decisions. A final analysis involved post-event surveys in understanding direct student perceptions and experiences attending yield events with faculty.

The domains covered by the ASQ include student background information, perceptions of college characteristics and images, information sources, financial aid and college costs, overlap with other colleges, and prior academic preparation and achievement. The two primary characteristics reviewed included (a) personal attention and (b) contact with faculty as determining factors in college choice. Specifically, this study focused on the importance of ratings of admitted underrepresented minorities in determining their college of choice. Regression analysis encompassed reviewing undergraduate admission and enrollment data, ASQ survey responses, and admitted student post-event surveys after attending yield events with faculty.

Another aspect of this study was an analysis of post-event survey data collected from student participants attending the yield events with faculty and staff from 2015—2019. The electronic survey relayed via student emails included 32 questions posed to each population: African American, Chicano/Latino, Native American, and Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander (see Appendix C for a list of survey questions). This existing data from the program assessment presented compelling information on the experience of students and families/caregivers.

The yield events with faculty and staff formed as interactive reception or dinner style events in settings that would best support the interaction of admitted students, their families/caregivers with UCLA faculty and staff. A critical first step was to design effective marketing to encourage admitted students to participate. Student invitations deploy through the admission decision site (individual student portal) when admission decisions are released. UCLA EM developed highly individualized invitations for each event, including the African American, Chicano/Latino, Native American, and Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander communities. An analysis of the post-event survey considered the marketing and branding of the events and the

success of brand management strategies used to reach and compete for the URM admits. Cultural competence and awareness guided marketing materials, mindful of equity, diversity, and inclusion (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006; Chapleo, 2010). The study explored participants' experiences and reactions to attending an event with faculty and staff, which position brand development as central to building effective, and culturally aware programming.

## Research Site

The study's focus institution was UCLA, one of nine undergraduate campuses of the University of California (UC) system. UCLA was one of the first UC system institutions to adopt an enrollment management model. UCLA receives more applications for undergraduate admission than any other higher education institution in the U.S. and therefore remains quite selective in deciding whom to admit. The campus has integrated innovative strategies that impact the recruitment and enrollment processes. Highly advanced Customer Relationship Management technology has been incorporated into the recruitment model, expanding the University's reach to highly qualified prospective students. New strategies that utilize print and electronic media, the creation of large-scale interactive admission and yield events, and expanded student staffing as tour guides and ambassadors have advanced the University's undergraduate admission profile. The competitive pool of students is increasing, so are their admission offers to highly selective peer institutions. Because of this advanced competitiveness, EM added high-touch yield events and activities to personalize the University and create new engagement opportunities as part of a comprehensive strategy to improve overall yield. This yield strategy targeted URM student populations. As a result of new enrollment management strategies, UCLA has seen increases in URM students applying, being admitted, and choosing to enroll. While this is encouraging for

the institution, a more thorough understanding of the strategies developed will provide greater context and insight on the impact of faculty engagement in the yield process.

Another compelling reason for choosing this university as a research site is the accessibility to firsthand knowledge and experience in executing enrollment strategies. The chief enrollment officer supports exploring this particular case study on college choice and the impact of yield on URM admits. UCLA has introduced several evident and highly successful yield activities developed over the past nine years. The strategies include the university's signature Bruin Day, a preview day for admitted students, and daily admitted student presentations and tours held each spring. Since its inception, the EM division has created and implemented several innovative enrollment strategies. Many developed from a Comprehensive Plan titled *Investing in our Future through Enrollment Management, A Comprehensive Plan for Change*. This document serves as the foundation for the strategies, goals, and plans of the enrollment division.

**UCLA Location and Context**

UCLA is located on the Westside of Los Angeles and is a public research university. As one of the nine undergraduate campuses of the UC System, it became the Southern Branch of the University of California in 1919 and the second oldest institution of the 10-campus system, including the University of California, San Francisco, that only offers graduate degrees focused on health. The University's core expressed mission is education, research, and service. A key element of the extended mission is the emphasis to "strive at once for excellence and diversity, recognizing that openness and inclusion produce true equality." As diversity is central to the University's mission, EM develops events and activities designed to be inclusive of all students yet acknowledges that some students are disadvantaged by underserved and under-resourced

school systems and may need intervention to prevent undermatching. The University offers 337 undergraduate and graduate degree programs enrolling approximately 31,500 undergraduate and 12,800 graduate students. The undergraduate student body's racial composition includes 28% Asian, 27% White, 22% Hispanic, 3% African American, and less than 1% American Indian/Alaska Native. With respect to gender, 58% of undergraduate students identify as women compared to 42% who identify as men. One in three students is the first in their family to attend college, and 37% of all undergraduates receive Pell Grants. UCLA enrolls more low-income students than any institution of its caliber.

For the fall 2020 incoming freshman and transfer students, UCLA received 135,410 applications, 111,305 freshmen, and 24,105 transfers. The 2019 freshman admit rate was 12% for California residents, and the yield rate was 53%, making UCLA the most competitive UC campus for admission. The average California high school unweighted GPA for freshman students is 4.39, and the average SAT score is 1404.

## Data Sample and Participants

The primary sample of my study is the UCLA Undergraduate Admission database of URM admitted students from 2010-2019. The dataset included African American, Chicano/Latino, Native American, and Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander admitted students. The sample of all URM admitted students included analysis with and without survey data. A subsample derived from admitted, enrolled, and non-enrolling students to UCLA who elected to participate in the ASQ. This national market research survey answers questions about students' perceptions of personal attention and faculty contact and whether attendance at the event

contributes to any differences of opinion on those items. An additional subsample included post-event surveys from 2015-2019.

### Admitted Student Questionnaire

The College Board annually administers the ASQ as a tool to help colleges and universities learn about admitted students, enrolling and non-enrolling, perceptions, and ratings in areas that influenced their decisions to enroll. UCLA receives a university highlights report as well as raw data from responding students. The study analyzed eight years of UCLA's ASQ reports and data. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 summarize the total number of admitted student responses and those enrolling who took the ASQ survey. Both tables include ethnic population breakdowns (see Appendix A for a list of questions).

**Table 3.1: ASQ Student Admit Responses—2012-2019**

| | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 | | 2019 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Total Admits | 3,432 | 100% | 3,618 | 100% | 2,553 | 100% | 3,305 | 100% | 2,241 | 100% | 2,356 | 100% | 3,157 | 100% | 3,057 | 100% |
| Native American | 53 | 2% | 55 | 2% | 54 | 2% | 38 | 1% | 31 | 1% | 40 | 2% | 57 | 2% | 70 | 2% |
| African American | 66 | 2% | 92 | 3% | 71 | 3% | 74 | 2% | 69 | 3% | 63 | 3% | 102 | 3% | 82 | 3% |
| Chicano/Latino | 424 | 12% | 433 | 12% | 366 | 14% | 380 | 11% | 308 | 14% | 254 | 11% | 369 | 12% | 413 | 14% |
| Pacific Islander | 19 | 1% | 15 | 0% | 7 | 0% | 15 | 0% | 13 | 1% | 11 | 0% | 21 | 1% | 15 | 0% |
| Asian | 1,394 | 41% | 1,290 | 36% | 868 | 34% | 1,141 | 35% | 745 | 33% | 738 | 31% | 1,009 | 32% | 1,018 | 33% |
| White | 928 | 27% | 977 | 27% | 750 | 29% | 913 | 28% | 616 | 27% | 681 | 29% | 888 | 28% | 920 | 30% |
| None of the Above | 928 | 27% | 1,156 | 32% | 764 | 30% | 1,097 | 33% | 770 | 34% | 896 | 38% | 1,181 | 37% | 1,040 | 34% |

**Table 3.2: ASQ Student Admit Responses, UCLA Enrolled—2012-2019**

| | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 | | 2019 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Total SIRs | 2,036 | 100% | 2,074 | 100% | 1,634 | 100% | 1,870 | 100% | 1,404 | 100% | 1,303 | 100% | 2,134 | 100% | 2,051 | 100% |
| Native American | 35 | 2% | 36 | 2% | 46 | 3% | 18 | 1% | 25 | 2% | 22 | 2% | 45 | 2% | 50 | 2% |
| African American | 42 | 2% | 62 | 3% | 49 | 3% | 46 | 2% | 50 | 4% | 33 | 3% | 76 | 4% | 53 | 3% |
| Chicano/Latino | 286 | 14% | 308 | 15% | 276 | 17% | 259 | 14% | 228 | 16% | 188 | 14% | 286 | 13% | 321 | 16% |
| Pacific Islander | 11 | 1% | 11 | 1% | 6 | 0% | 10 | 1% | 9 | 1% | 7 | 1% | 18 | 1% | 7 | 0% |
| Asian | 800 | 39% | 719 | 35% | 544 | 33% | 593 | 32% | 417 | 30% | 357 | 27% | 655 | 31% | 668 | 33% |
| White | 525 | 26% | 572 | 28% | 477 | 29% | 530 | 28% | 378 | 27% | 394 | 30% | 605 | 28% | 638 | 31% |
| None of the Above | 539 | 26% | 619 | 30% | 470 | 29% | 616 | 33% | 507 | 36% | 520 | 40% | 780 | 37% | 664 | 32% |

### Post-Event Survey

The second sample involves URM students that participated in university-sponsored yield events with faculty and completed a post-event survey. Survey data exists from the program's inception in 2015 to 2019 for each URM population. The program for Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students was formed in 2019 with survey data from one year. All students received an email communication with a link to an electronic survey following the program. The survey garnered feedback from those attending and insights on why students could not attend. Response rates average 40% per event (see Appendix C for a list of questions).

## Instruments and Variables

The primary instruments used in this study included the UA data set for URM students from 2010-2019, ASQ outcomes from 2012-2019, and post-event surveys from in-person yield events. These sources served as the basis for my study and exploring student's experiences in choosing to enroll or not enroll at UCLA.

UCLA uses the College Board's Admitted Student Questionnaire Plus, which goes beyond a general market survey to allow direct comparisons with competing institutions. The ASQ includes data on the personal and educational background of the university's admitted students and their direct comparisons to UCLA and the other institutions they considered or to competing institutions that we choose to analyze. A driving factor in using ASQ outcomes is to support decisions and make changes in recruitment efforts and materials, course curricula, and financial aid offerings—to improve yield.

The questionnaire includes 70 questions broken into seven sections, including college characteristics, opinions of others in the college choice process, information sources, widely held

images of college, college application and choice information, cost and financial aid, and background information (see Appendix A for a list of survey questions). Key variables for this study fall under college characteristics: *personal attention to students*, and sources of information: *contact with faculty from the college*. An additional variable will be the self-reported background information on race and ethnicity.

A frequency distribution of the survey's variables and statistical analysis organized and summarized the data. Also, the triangulation of data from opinion and satisfaction measures from the ASQ and event surveys increased the credibility and validity of research findings.

## Data Analysis

The study included several strategies to analyze and validate the study's findings, including in-depth descriptions and triangulating the various data sources. Using data on admitted students and enrolled students, the study will first establish whether UCLA has experienced a significant increase in URM students enrolling as freshmen since the introduction of high-touch yield events. The study reviewed URM enrollment trends compared to the number of students participating in targeted events with faculty and staff. Further, the study will test a logistic regression model to determine whether attending a high-touch yield event is significantly related to an admitted student enrolling at UCLA.

## Quantitative Analysis

The research design's quantitative elements incorporated statistical analysis using SPSS to review all data, including undergraduate admission student data, College Board ASQ outcomes, and the post-event survey results. Descriptive analyses primarily focused on the use of cross-tabulations to understand yield patterns across student characteristics (e.g., gender,

race/ethnicity) and by whether students participated in any recruitment events. These analyses aimed to illustrate any baseline differences across demographics or event attendance prior to inferentially analyzing the data to determine whether attending a faculty event uniquely and significantly related to students' likelihood of deciding to enroll at UCLA.

Logistic regression included a review of available datasets and survey results to address the research questions and identify significant predictors of enrollment. This process also allowed the ability to examine the relationship between students responding to ASQ and those attending faculty yield activities.

## Qualitative Analysis

While my study is quantitative, there is a qualitative aspect that emerged from the post-event surveys. The survey included open-ended questions that allow for a narrative of personal experience, reflections, and reactions from participating in the yield events with faculty and staff. This level of investigation added to the study by bringing unique insights to connect with themes that emerged from the overall analysis.

## Limitations

My study explored the impact of faculty and staff during a time that can be difficult for a high-achieving URM student who likely has multiple competitive offers for admission and must make a single choice. Students can experience the emotional tug and pull by various institutions vying for their attention and ultimately awaiting a final commitment and deposit. A natural limitation of this study is the many competing factors that influence college choice, many of which are not quantifiable. These factors can be family or community pressure, a fear to venture

far from home, academic confidence and self-doubt, and the uncertainty of finding and identifying with others from similar backgrounds and cultures.

A primary issue affecting college choice for many URM students is the amount of institutional grant aid and scholarship awards received as part of an admission offer. Financial aid or scholarships can make a difference for many students and families in determining where to enroll. While my study considered family income, I did not conduct an in-depth review of students' decisions based strictly on the ability to pay. My findings did reveal that low-income students are enrolling at higher rates at UCLA despite the increasingly competitive admission environment. The university can develop an elaborate plan to influence students during this process, but there is a bottom line for most admitted students centered on affordability. While this study focused on the engagement with faculty and staff that influence college choice, it is likely only one of many variables.

The population selected for my study limited my ability to compare all students (white and Asian) to make connections and draw further conclusions. I specifically utilized a data set of URM students as the focus of my study to determine the enrollment trends and behaviors of students that attend these community events with faculty and staff. As I conducted my analysis, it became evident that I could compare URM student decision-making with those of all students. Further exploration and study could analyze this aspect to understand admitted student behavior fully.

An additional limitation relates to academic implications on final college choice decisions for URM students deciding to attend or not attend UCLA. I suspected before my analysis that academic performance would influence enrollment as UCLA strives to enroll the

best of the best students in the admitted class and competes with elite peer institutions. It is very understandable that high-achieving URM students likely have several impressive admission offers to consider. While weighted GPA was a significant negative predictor of enrollment, a limitation of the study is that there were not many other variables measuring academic performance. Similarly, the ASQ variables included a question on *academic reputation*, which did not significantly factor into enrollment decisions for those who participated in events with faculty and staff. However, one could surmise that attending a yield event signifies a student who is not just considering but leaning toward accepting a UCLA offer of admission.

Lastly, planned student interviews did not occur due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participant availability and the absence of this dataset element limit a complete understanding of how students experienced and made meaning from these events.

## Ethical Concerns

This study adhered to ethical norms to promote research aims, support knowledge and truth, and avoid errors. Further, the study followed accepted standards to avoid misrepresenting or falsifying research data (Resnik, 2014). Following appropriate ethical guidelines, no apparent identified concerns exist in concluding this study.

Proper submission to the UCLA Institutional Review Board commenced, and approval was granted following the dissertation committee's approval. The study considered appropriate protections of data collection and ensured all subjects' safety to support the University’s Institutional Review Board expectations and requirements.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# RESULTS

My study examined factors influencing final college choice decisions for underrepresented minorities (URM) during the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) yield process. I analyzed the influence of high-impact, high-touch yield events on URM students, specifically the role of faculty and staff. I conducted a quantitative analysis to investigate how one public, comprehensive university's effort to engage faculty and staff in the yield process led to increased enrollment of minority students.

I first studied URM enrollment trends using the university's admitted student databases, focusing on students that attended various yield events and the impact on student choice to enroll at the university. I then focused my study on the school's College Board Admitted Student Questionnaire (ASQ) survey results from URM students completing the annual survey. I compared student respondents that had or had not attended events with faculty and staff. The focus of the ASQ analysis was on the perceptions and influence of *personal attention* and *contact with faculty* on enrollment decisions. Additionally, I reviewed post-event survey student responses collected at these events to analyze perspectives, attitudes, and the impact and influence faculty had on admitted students' college choice decisions.

I describe the demographics and sample variables for the study, review the research methods utilized, and provide results for each of my research questions. The remainder of this chapter discusses the findings related to each of my research questions. First, I review the influence that yield events with faculty have on the increased enrollment of URM students (Research Question 1). Next, I explain the unique and significant influence these faculty events have on URM students' likelihood of enrolling at UCLA (Research Question 2). Finally, I

summarize post-event survey evidence and student testimony on their experiences engaging with the events and the influence of faculty and staff on final college choice decisions (Research Question 3).

## Narrative Description of URM-Targeted, Faculty-Attended Yield Events

In 2015, the UCLA Vice Provost of Enrollment Management (EM) introduced the concept of yield events with faculty and staff as a strategy to enroll more URM students. As UCLA attracts many minority applicants, the number of competitive students that gain admission have many college choice options. UCLA is in direct competition with many public and private peer institutions that vie for these students. EM identified that we were at a competitive disadvantage by not offering high-impact, high-touch events for admitted minority students with faculty that allow students to feel welcomed by the University and counter the popular narrative of being viewed as a number at a large institution. The goal was to make UCLA, as a large institution, more personal for admitted students and their families/caregivers attending the events with faculty, leading to increased connection and affinity. As shared in Chapter 2, the residual impacts of UC Regents Special Policy 1 (SP1) and Proposition 209, political climate, and distrust with URM communities challenged the University's efforts to develop sustainable increases in diversity for the campus. Creative thinking and new strategies were needed to shift culture and increase the enrollment of minority students. Introducing the opportunity for newly admitted students to meet and interact with faculty and staff of color would create connection, access, insight, and familiarity with the institution, which would lead to higher yield as the intended goal of the programs.

The first pilot event began in 2015 through a partnership with Black administrators and faculty and later expanded to other URM faculty and staff. The program concept introduced

faculty across academic disciplines from different divisions of the UCLA College and the Professional Schools to newly admitted African American students as a strategy to improve yield. The highly designed event focused on UCLA's community of scholars and administrators available to support students and families. The format and tone were highly interactive and engaging to allow student participants to learn about academic and campus resources, research opportunities, and career paths, all in a setting with most faculty and staff from similar ethnicities. This initial effort required strong collaboration and engagement between EM and the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies. The original plan was to organize and reach other URM communities, and in 2016 the events expanded to include Chicano/Latino and Native American admits. Campus academic partners for these yield programs included the César E. Chávez Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies, Chicano Studies Research Center, Department of Spanish & Portuguese, Latin American Institute, American Indian Studies Interdepartmental Program, and the American Indian Studies Center. In 2019 a similar event developed for the Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander communities in collaboration with the Asian American Studies Center, Asian American Studies Department, and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies.

Upon admission to the University, students from the communities referenced received invitations via email and the U.S. Postal Service to their community's event with the option of bringing two guests. Careful consideration was given to the branding of each event to be community-specific by creating a feeling of visceral connection through tone, language, color and imagery to allow a student to see themselves at the institution and a thriving part of their community. Such elements included featuring prominent Black alumni, identifying tribal affiliations for Native American faculty and staff, and producing a double-sided invitation card

in English and Spanish to engage Chicano/Latino families/caregivers. The vibrant designs connect to cultural significance for each community with a goal to inspire and engage not just the admitted student, but also families. As summarized in Chapter 2 (Aaker, 1997), brand personality is a viable part of this programming, with the themes of sincerity, excitement, and competence associated with UCLA's commitment to admitted students and their experience at the university.

The student mailings incorporated the specially crafted invitation card, a welcome letter signed by the program directors/faculty of the academic units with a community welcome, overview of the event, and description of what to expect. The mailing also included driving directions, campus maps, and parking instructions. Additional efforts to boost attendance included reminder emails and a faculty, staff, and current student calling campaign reaching out to the admitted students to encourage attendance.

The two-hour campus-based program featured an opening reception for guests to interact with faculty and staff informally, allowing admitted students to meet their peers. Formal welcome remarks by the Vice Provost, Center Director, and a featured faculty member set the tone for a welcoming, congratulatory, and uplifting event to honor the admitted students and give them information about the academic options and path ahead for them at the institution. Following the formal welcome, students were allowed to move into small group discussions with faculty representing the College and Schools. These breakout meetings allowed faculty to talk about their pedagogy, research interests, views on access and engagement with faculty in and outside of the classroom, and share academic options and exploration for those students undecided on a course of study. The program design allowed admitted students to move freely amongst different groups to answer all their questions. In many cases, faculty engaged in one-on-

one consultations with students and parents/caregivers to learn about their academic interests and share what the academic community offers. In addition to a strong faculty presence, staff from Financial Aid and Scholarships and Residential Life/Housing representatives were also present to assist admits with questions on these two influential areas that impact a student's decision.

The UCLA EM division managed the programs and handled administrative details in coordination with academic faculty and staff partners. Each program included an optional student-led and facilitated campus tour for any guests that desired to see the physical campus. In many cases, this may have been the first time a student had visited UCLA, or it had been some time since they last toured campus as a prospective student.

In the first year introducing the program, approximately 35 Black students and their parents/caregivers attended. The pilot program was well-received by admitted students through feedback gained in a post-event survey. The host academic department and participating faculty and staff also shared positive feedback on their experience engaging with admits and their families. As the programs expanded, student participation increased. In 2016, 171 students participated in three programs, and in 2019, 275 admits attended four programs. Nearly 1,500 students and their families/caregivers have engaged in this programming since their inception in 2015, and, as results presented later in this chapter demonstrate, these efforts have contributed significantly to increased yield rates among members of the target populations.

## Demographics of the Study

The first data source for my study included the UCLA Undergraduate Admission student database for URM students from 2010 to 2019. The second data source is UCLA's College Board ASQ reports for URM participants from 2010 to 2019. Finally, data obtained from post-

event surveys collected from URM student participants following yield events with faculty from 2015 to 2019.

An overview of the demographic characteristics for the admitted student population examined in this study is in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2. The ethnic group breakdowns are 15% African American, 65% Chicano/Latino, 2% Native American, and 18% Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students. Additional demographic characteristics of the population studied is 63.2% female and 36.6% male. Also, 60.9% are first-generation college-going, and 48.9% are low-income, in this case. For this study, first-generation represented students whose parents(s)/guardian(s) did not earn a bachelor's degree, and low-income characterized household income less than $40K. Of note is the slightly higher number of higher-income URM admitted students compared to low-income admits over the 10 years of the study. Yet, as the data for enrolled students reveals, this trend reverses with more low-income URM students enrolling.

**Figure 4.1: URM Demographic Characteristics—Admitted Student Ethnicity**

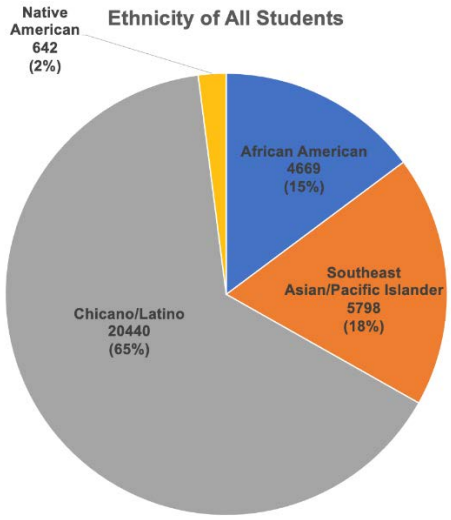
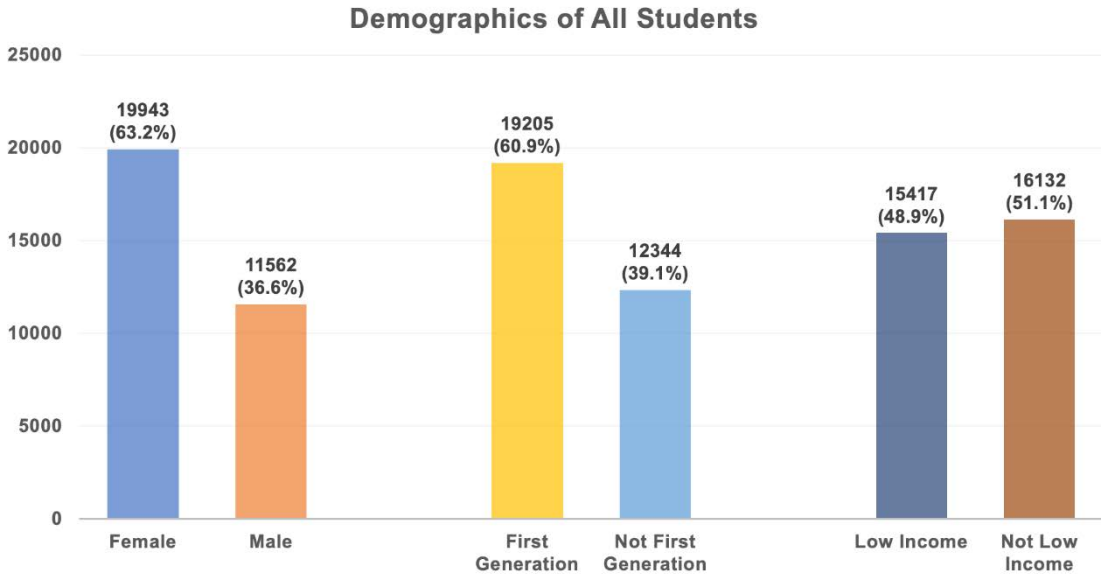


**Figure 4.2: URM Demographic Characteristics—Admitted Students**




Next, I will describe URM enrollment demographics based on ethnicity, gender, first-generation college-going, and low income.

## Trends in URM Student Enrollment Patterns

I examined UA student enrollment data of all URM students and the demographic characteristics of those students enrolling from 2010 to 2019. Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4 summarize the demographics for these 10 years. The ethnicity of enrolled students is 15% African American, 65% Chicano/Latino, 2% Native American, and 18% Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students. Of note, it was surprising to find that each group of admitted URM students yielded at the same rate, an unusual consistency to consider. It is also important to note the numbers of student admits versus percentages. Of the 2% Native American admits, this amounts to 268 students over the 10 years. Similarly, of the 18% of African American admits, this represents 2,504 during the same timeframe. As presented, percentages can sound encouraging, yet the student count grounds the perspective on the actual number of students enrolling. The real

numbers versus the percentages is a critical distinction when striving for equity, diversity, and inclusion in a student body, considering the size of an institution like UCLA.

Additionally, 65.8% are female, 34.1% are male, 65.6% are first-generation, and 53.3% are low-income. While the ethnicity variance from admitted student status to enrolled student status did not change, there is an increase in the number of first-generation and low-income students matriculated to the university. Table 4.1 displays the composition and percentages for admitted students for each URM community. Some interesting highlights of this table include women outnumber men 2:1 among Black and Chicano/Latino students, with Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander closely aligned. Also, 70% of all Chicano/Latino students identify as first-generation and 54% as low-income. A similar pattern of women enrolling at higher rates exists for Native Americans, Southeast Asians, and Pacific Islanders.

**Figure 4.3: URM Demographic Characteristics—Enrolled Student Ethnicity**

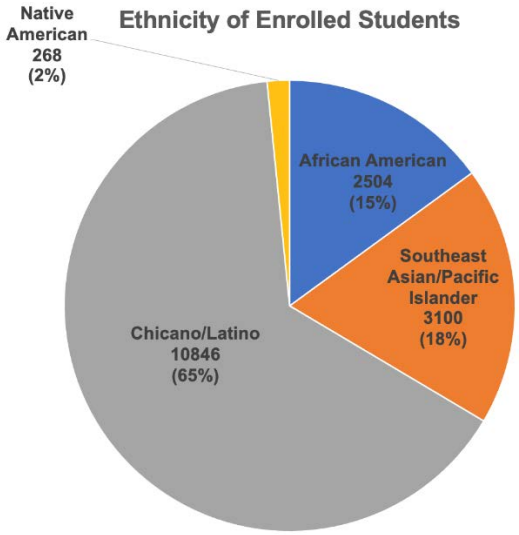


**Figure 4.4: URM Demographic Characteristics—Enrolled Students**

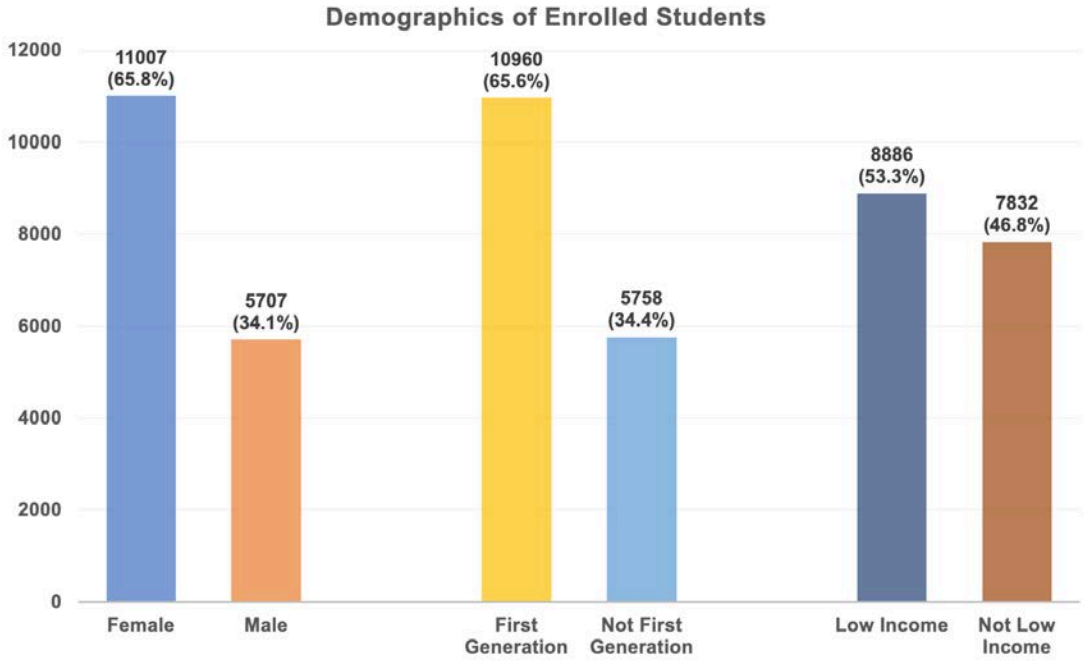



**Table 4.1: URM Demographic Composition by Percentage—Enrolled Students**

| | **African American** ***(n=2504)*** | **Chicano/Latino** ***(n=10846)*** | **Native American** ***(n=268)*** | **Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander** ***(n=3100)*** | **Total** ***(n=16718)*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 32.2 | 36.7 | 40.3 | 39.8 | 34.1 |
| Female | 67.7 | 63.3 | 59.7 | 60.2 | 65.8 |
| Low-Income | 38.6 | 54.5 | 17.4 | 40.8 | 53.2 |
| First-Generation | 39.2 | 70 | 25.4 | 50.2 | 65.6 |

Another demographic overview represents the number of URM students that enrolled and did not enroll in the university over the 10 years analyzed in my study. In Figure 4.5, years 2016-2019 demonstrate significant increases in minority students enrolling over the six previous years, which coincides with introducing the high-impact yield events involving faculty and staff. In 2016, the increase of URM students enrolling was 33% over 2015. In the years 2016-2019, more

URM students enrolled than the previous 2010-2015 period. The total percentage of students who matriculated increased from a range of 46.4% to 52.8% (2010-2015) to a range of 56% to 59.4% (2016-2019). As yield events can lead to a student's commitment to enroll, there are many influences that come into play such as psychosocial quality of the campus, the campus's racial climate, and a secure and welcome feeling received (McDonough et al., 1997; Hurtado and Carter, 1997; Cho et al., 2008). My study reveals improvement in overall URM yield from 46% in 2010 to 59% in 2019. This increase speaks to the new levels of programming that impact admitted students' decision processes by offering unique events and activities such as the one featured in this study. I will highlight more results later in this chapter.

A secure and welcoming feeling on campus was an important factor for both females and first-generation males in college choice (Hurtado and Carter, 1997). The study also revealed that acceptance of racial diversity was more important to all African Americans and Latino first-generation students than other races (Cho et al., 2008). Additional literature on college choice addresses the influence of institutional and personal variables (Stage & Hossler, 1988; Hossler et al., 1989).

Of note, enrollment targets fluctuate based upon the University of California's goals. In 2016, the UC mandated an increase in California students of 15% for the UC campuses, part of a larger plan to increase enrollment in the system by 5,000 students in 2016-2017. UCLA's freshman class in 2016 included 600 additional students, which added to the increase in diversity that year. African American students increased by 32%, Chicano/Latinos by 18%, and Native Americans by 17%.

**Figure 4.5: URM Student Enrollment and Non-Enrollment—2010-2019**

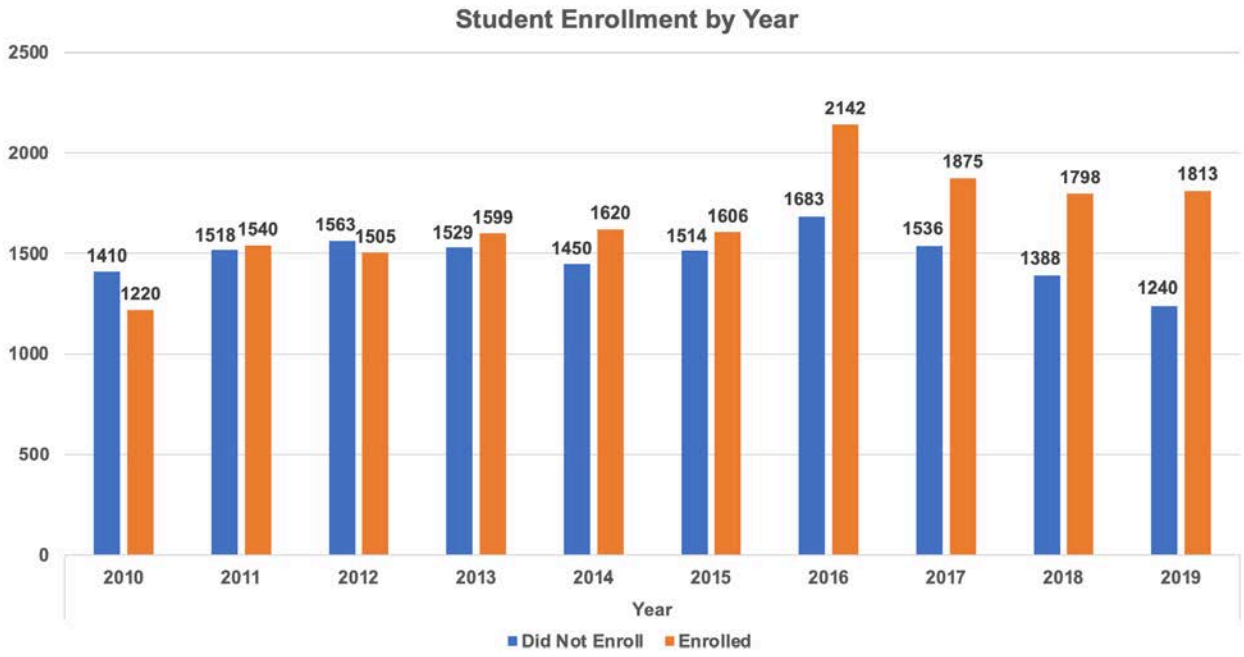



Table 4.2, illustrates our URM student enrollment by year for the 10-year study. This information allows a closer analysis of each group and their behaviors related to enrolling in the institution. In most ethnic groups, enrollments are increasing, with the most significant increase in African American enrollment. Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander student enrollment is more varied and inconsistent throughout this period. For low-income students, there is a steady increase with more students enrolling. This table demonstrates the increasing diversity of the university, with a marked difference in 2016 when the full suite of yield events with faculty developed. An upward trend in URM student enrollment is evident.

Table 4.3 shows the yield percentages for the 10 years of my study. This indicates that yield is increasing for the university, with some of the higher yields occurring in the past several years.

**Table 4.2: URM Enrollment Composition by Percentage and Year**

| | African American | Chicano/ Latino | Native American | Southeast Asian/ Pacific Islander | Low-Income | First-Generation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2010 | 47.5 | 45.4 | 37.7 | 49.4 | 50.8 | 51 |
| 2011 | 52.8 | 49.8 | 45.8 | 50.9 | 55.7 | 54.5 |
| 2012 | 46.2 | 49.3 | 31.7 | 51.9 | 53.1 | 52.8 |
| 2013 | 48.9 | 51.6 | 42.1 | 51.7 | 56.9 | 55.2 |
| 2014 | 50.5 | 53.1 | 42.4 | 54.3 | 57.9 | 57.6 |
| 2015 | 52.1 | 51.5 | 34.5 | 54.4 | 56.1 | 55.2 |
| 2016 | 58.6 | 55.5 | 44 | 56.7 | 60.1 | 60.1 |
| 2017 | 53.9 | 56.2 | 40 | 53.1 | 60.4 | 60 |
| 2018 | 60.6 | 56.2 | 48.5 | 54.5 | 60.3 | 59.9 |
| 2019 | 58.1 | 60.1 | 49.3 | 59.1 | 63.4 | 63.5 |

**Table 4.3 UCLA Enrollment Percentages by Year—2010-2019**

| | Did Not Enroll | Enrolled |
|---|---|---|
| 2010 | 53.7 | 46.3 |
| 2011 | 49.6 | 50.4 |
| 2012 | 51 | 49 |
| 2013 | 48.9 | 51.1 |
| 2014 | 47.2 | 52.8 |
| 2015 | 48.5 | 51.5 |
| 2016 | 44 | 56 |
| 2017 | 45 | 55 |
| 2018 | 43.6 | 56.4 |
| 2019 | 40.6 | 59.4 |

## Outcomes of Enrolled Students Attending Yield Events with Faculty

Of the African American students attending these programs with faculty, the average attendance was 75, and the yield of those enrolling was 81% from 2015-2019. For African

American students that did not attend an event with faculty, they yielded at 51%. The student attendance at the Chicano/Latino events averaged 85, with an average yield of 77% for the events held in 2016-2019. For Chicano/Latino admits who did not attend, they yielded at 53%. Participation in the events with Native American admits averaged 11, with an average yield of 83%, and those that do not attend yield at 40%. The event introduced for Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander students in 2019 included 43 participants and a yield of 92%. For this population, those students enrolling but not attending was 53%. Yield for all admitted students among ethnic groups ranged from 40% to 53% for those who did not participate, compared to 77% to 92% for those who attended.

For the dataset of the admitted students participating in yield events with faculty across 2015-2019, 53.2% were African American, 40.2% Chicano/Latino, 3.6% Native American, and 3% Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander. In the section ahead, I will share more comparative information on enrolled students by attendance and non-attendance at yield events.

My study sought to empirically demonstrate the association between the introduction of high-impact yield events and observed changes in yield rates. The programs have now become an integral part of the annual yield season, and the influence of this added strategy appears to be making an impact. For comparison of yield for the past 10 years, in 2010, UCLA's yield was 46%; in 2015, the introduction year of the faculty programs, yield increased to 51%; and in 2019, it stood at 59% (See Table 4.3). Setting a plan in motion to engage faculty and key staff in the yield process developed relationships and transformed partnerships with EM staff and supporting academic units. Faculty, administrators, and staff now look forward to annually participating with newly admitted students based on continued engagement, informal assessments, and feedback from those involved. The culture of engagement and commitment to supporting the

university's enrollment efforts and URM student admits has developed with campus faculty and staff at gratifying levels.

## Outcomes of the Study

My study utilized a binary logistic regression model including all the relevant demographic variables with the outcome of *enrolled* to see which predictors emerged as significant. This approach builds off the descriptive crosstabs presented above that showed that attendees at yield events tended to matriculate into UCLA at significantly higher rates than admitted students who did not attend these events. By controlling for other factors that may influence a student's decision to enroll, I am able to account for alternative explanations for this decision that may have an association with whether a student attended one of these events. These other control variables included demographic characteristics, prior academic achievement, and survey items from the ASQ. I included a number of interaction items, with a focus on variables related to ethnicity to supplement the findings of the estimated marginal means line charts, with only a few emerging as significant. Prior to and after adding interaction terms to the model, the R-squared only increases by .0003. The model fit is comparable regardless of entered interaction terms. The final model, Figure 4.6, came the closest to the initial model, with the addition of blocking and interaction terms. As such, 19 variables emerged as significant, and I reported on the statistically significant variables with a p-value below 0.05 prior to and after interaction terms, which determined the appropriate variables to guide my study. A Table of Measures is included that lists all variables and coding in the original undergraduate admission dataset obtained from UCLA Undergraduate Admission (see Appendix B for the table of measures).

I compared the enrollment outcomes of the yield events with faculty and reviewed the success of other yield events sponsored in each enrollment cycle. A central outcome of my research revealed that *students who attended high-impact yield events with faculty were roughly two times as likely to enroll than those who did not participate*. This outcome is a significant finding that corresponds with the results of the ASQ findings on *personal attention* and *contact with faculty* as key factors in final college choice. For added perspective, within the ASQ dataset, 18% of all admitted UCLA students completed the survey. While 47% of all admitted students did enroll, 75% of students who completed the ASQ enrolled. Students that are completing the ASQ are yielding at higher rates compared to all students in the dataset.

**Figure 4.6: Binary Logistic Regression Model Predicting Enrollment (before and after adding interaction terms)**

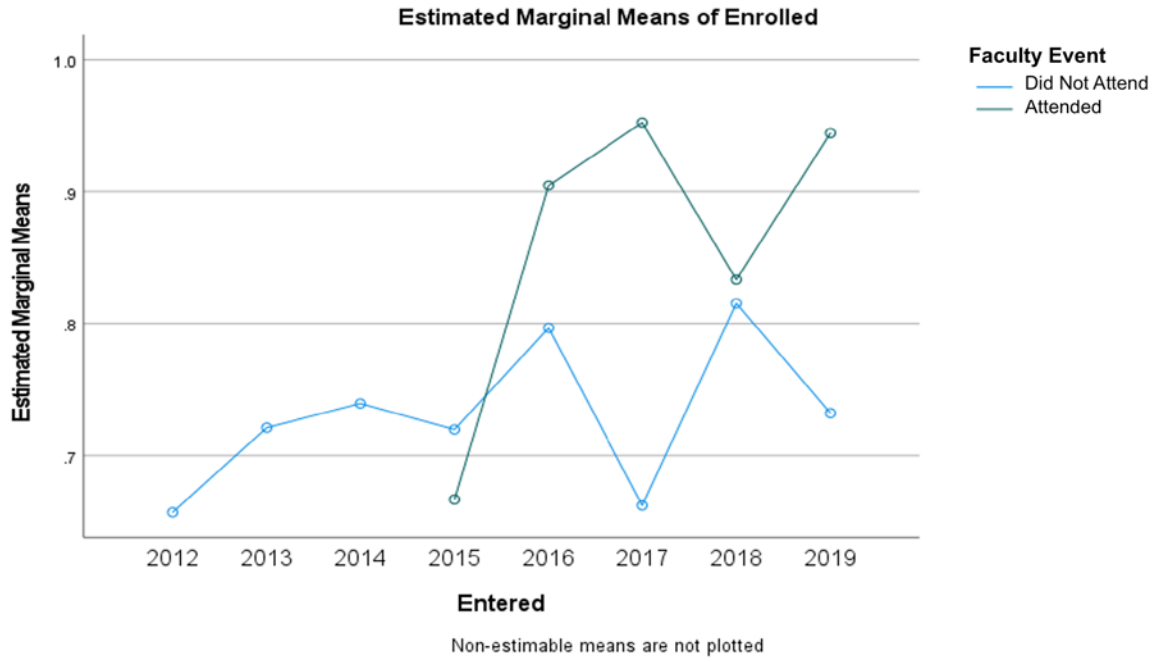
| Statistically Significant Variables | Unstandardized Beta (before interaction terms) | Odds Ratio (before interaction terms) | | Unstandardized Beta (after interaction terms) | Odds Ratio (after interaction terms) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year enrolled | -0.049 | 0.952 | *** | -0.048 | 0.953 | *** |
| Attended a faculty event | 0.714 | 2.043 | *** | 1.504 | 4.5 | * |
| Attended a student-initiated event | 0.466 | 1.594 | *** | -0.061 | 0.94 | |
| Attended Bruin Day | 1.759 | 5.805 | *** | 1.656 | 5.238 | *** |
| Attended a school-specific event | 1.127 | 3.088 | *** | 1.997 | 7.37 | ** |
| Gender: Male | -0.085 | 0.919 | ** | -0.086 | 0.917 | ** |
| First Generation | 0.123 | 1.131 | ** | 0.116 | 1.123 | ** |
| Weighted GPA | -1.942 | 0.143 | *** | -1.945 | 0.143 | *** |
| Ethnicity: Southeast Asian/PI | 0.701 | 2.016 | *** | 0.787 | 2.196 | *** |
| Ethnicity: African American | 0.229 | 1.258 | * | 0.197 | 1.218 | |
| Ethnicity: Chicano/Latino | 0.414 | 1.513 | *** | 0.375 | 1.455 | ** |
| Attended a public high school | 0.308 | 1.361 | *** | 0.315 | 1.37 | *** |
| Attended a rural high school | 0.121 | 1.129 | * | 0.124 | 1.132 | * |
| College Division: Arts and Architecture | 0.324 | 1.383 | | 0.36 | 1.434 | * |
| College Division: Life Sciences | 0.451 | 1.57 | *** | 0.463 | 1.589 | *** |
| College Division: Nursing | 1.505 | 4.503 | *** | 1.512 | 4.535 | *** |
| College Division: Physiological Sciences | 0.335 | 1.399 | ** | 0.352 | 1.421 | ** |
| Faculty event * Chicano/Latino | N/A | N/A | | -1.209 | 0.298 | * |
| School event * African American | N/A | N/A | | -1.642 | 0.194 | * |

**p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001,*
*Hosmer-Lemeshow Chi-square statistic=58.611 (before interaction terms);*
*59.910 (after interaction terms)*

As shown in Figure 4.7, students who attended events with faculty enrolled at higher rates after the yield events from 2016-2019. I developed the line charts through SPSS after finding the estimated marginal means for different variables as fixed factors for the outcome of enrolled students. In this line graph, blue equals admitted URM students who did not attend events with faculty, and green equals admitted students who attended faculty events. As shown in this figure, yield rates of attendees of faculty events significantly outpaced enrollment rates of

admitted students who did not attend these events in three of the four years that they occurred. As a reminder, 2015 was a pilot year for the event with African American admitted students.

**Figure 4.7: URM Student Enrollment and Non-Enrollment**




I analyzed the ASQ College Characteristics question 24 (*personal attention to students*) and question 46 (*contact with faculty*) with a codebook that represents the following: 0 = "Can't Rate," 1 = "Poor/Fair," 2 = "Good, 3" = "Very Good," 4 = "Excellent" (see Appendix A for a list of survey questions). Tables 4.4 and 4.5 provide the ASQ item response breakdown by faculty event attendance and non-attendance. I conducted a t-test that found a significant difference in the means between attendees and non-attendees. This allows a comparison of students that rate *personal attention to students* and *contact with faculty*, which provides insight into the decreases or increases in favorable ratings having participated in yield events with faculty. Through a closer examination in Figure 4.8, the lines represented are blue for enrolled students who did not attend a faculty event and green for enrolled students who participated in an

event with faculty and the impact on enrollment. M*y* study revealed 82% of those attending events with faculty and completing these questions on the ASQ enrolled at the university. Note the higher ratings of *Good* or *Very Good* for students who participate in yield events with faculty. Figure 4.8 demonstrates that students attending yield events with faculty enroll at higher rates when they rate personal attention for the institution slightly higher. As the study sought to confirm the success of high-impact yield events, the cross-tabulation of ethnicity compared with the annual ASQ survey demonstrates that URM students rate personal attention and contact with faculty as determining factors on their decision to enroll or not enroll. As such, the outcomes of my study closely align a favorable rating of *personal attention to students* and *contact with faculty* after experiencing a yield event with faculty. Figure 4.9, similarly, indicates higher enrollment rates for students participating in yield events with faculty and rating the question on *contact with faculty* at a higher rate. Students who rank this question higher appear to benefit the most and enroll; on the other hand, enrollment outcomes do not seem to fluctuate much for those who attend or do not attend.

**Table 4.4: ASQ Q24 Response Breakdown by Faculty Event Attendance**

| Personal Attention to Students | Non-Attendance | Attendance |
|---|---|---|
| 1 (Poor/Fair) | 7.5 | 4.8 |
| 2 (Good) | 27.1 | 24 |
| 3 (Very Good) | 36.4 | 35.6 |
| 4 (Excellent) | 28.9 | 35.6 |

**Table 4.5: ASQ Q46 Response Breakdown by Faculty Event Attendance**

| Contact with Faculty | Non-Attendance | Attendance |
|---|---|---|
| 1 (Poor/Fair) | 13.1 | 9.5 |
| 2 (Good) | 27.4 | 22.9 |
| 3 (Very Good) | 25.8 | 28.6 |
| 4 (Excellent) | 33.7 | 39 |

**Figure 4.8: ASQ Question 24—Personal Attention to Students**

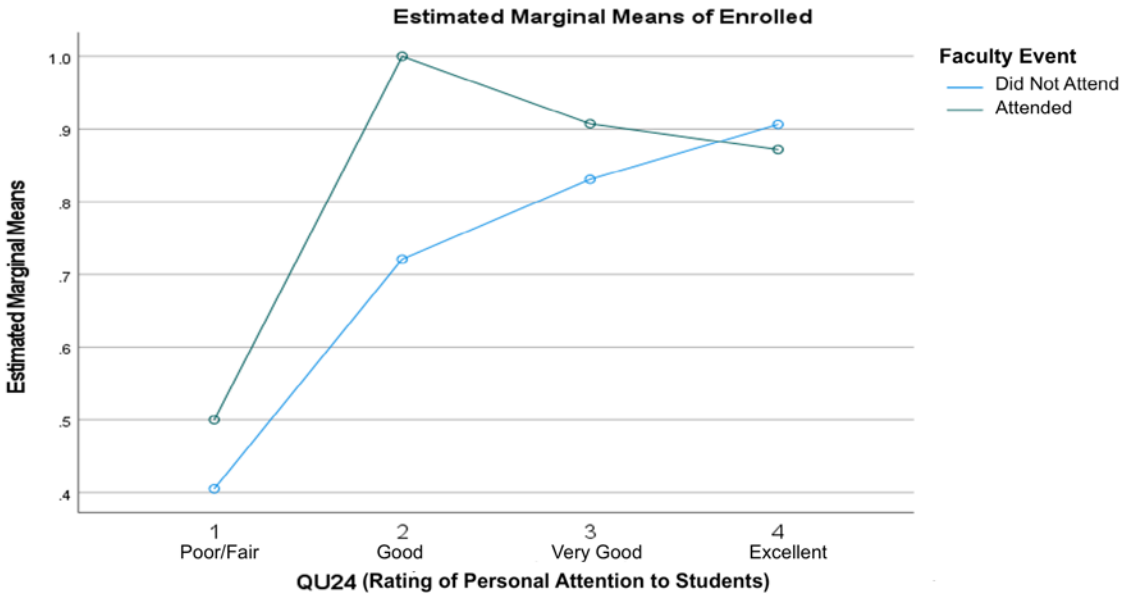
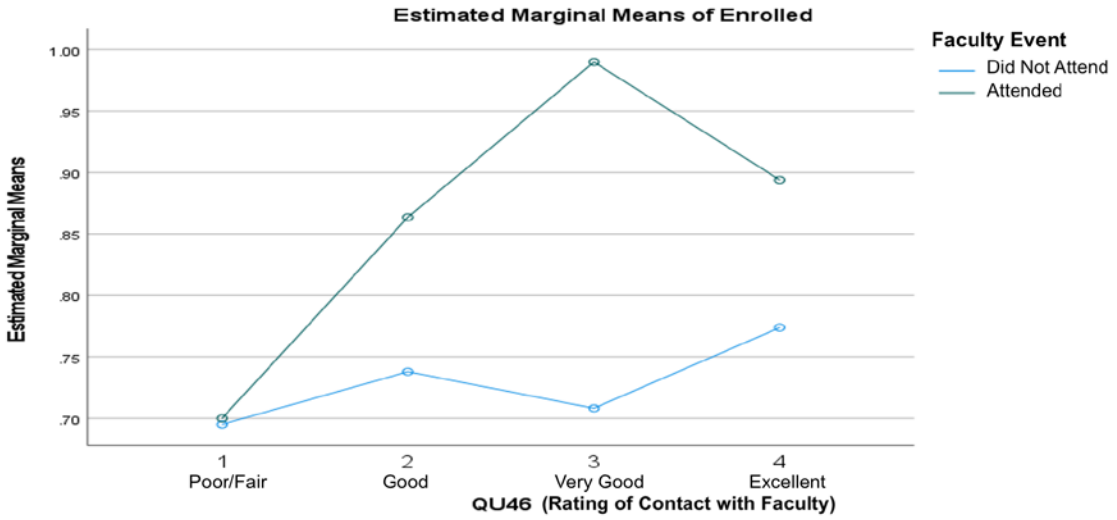


**Figure 4.9: ASQ Question 46—Contact with Faculty**




The ASQ survey responses are an essential part of my study that validates that students desired and favorably responded to opportunities to engage with faculty during the final college choice process, known as the yield period. Perhaps the most significant outcome of my study stems from the logistic regression model of individual URM populations that enroll at higher rates after attending high-impact yield events with faculty, as seen in Figure 4.6. Of the students attending a yield event with faculty, 80% commit to the university and enroll. This percentage represents an impact on enrollment of URM admitted students through participation and engagement with faculty events. A similar comparison to student-initiated events, School-sponsored activities, and Bruin Day as influential factors to determine enrollment. In fact, all yield events have a favorable impact and support enrollment. Of the students who attended events with faculty, 20% did not enroll compared to Bruin Day, where 22% of students did not enroll, and 23% did not enroll after attending School-sponsored activities. The margins are slim when comparing those that attend and enroll or not enroll, so overall, the yield events are impactful and lead to successful outcomes.

For all subsequent line charts, event attendance is on the x-axis. Figure 4.10 reveals the enrollment rates by gender, representing 65.8% female and 34.1% male. Of those enrolling, men and women participate and commit to the university at a higher rate after attending the events with faculty and staff. Figure 4.11 provides insight into the ethnic enrollment of students attending these events. For African American student admits, of the 53% who attended yield events with faculty from 2015-2019, 81% enrolled in the university. Among African American students who did not attend a faculty event, 50.8% enrolled. Chicano/Latino students participated at a rate of 40% with a yield rate of 77% from 2016 to 2019. Among Chicano/Latino students who did not attend a faculty event, 52.7% enrolled. For Native American admits, 4% engaged with the events with 83% committing to UCLA from 2016-2019. Among Native American students who did not attend a faculty event, 39.7% enrolled. In the first year of hosting an event for Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students, 3% attended and 92% enrolled in 2019. Among Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students who did not attend a faculty event, 53.3% enrolled. I highlight these impressive enrollment numbers after engaging with faculty in comparison to URM enrollment trends from 2010 to 2015. As previously reported in Figure 4.7, the increase in minority student enrollment coincides with the advent of this new yield strategy.

As previously reported, URM populations revealed 65.6% are first-generation, and 53.3% are low-income. It is also critical to consider first-generation and low-income as an indicator of ways to increase diversity, achieved at impressive rates after URM students engage in events with faculty and persist to enrollment. For these events, 58% that attend are first-generation students who enroll at a rate of 81%. For first-generation students who did not attend, 19% enrolled. For non-first-generation students who attended, 78% enrolled. For low-income admits, 52% participate, with 82% committing to the university.

As you will see, yield rates tend to be higher within each demographic subset among faculty-event attendees compared to their counterparts who did not attend these events. This high-impact and high-touch approach is an effective strategy to enroll students from these communities.

**Figure 4.10: Faculty Yield Events and Enrollment by Gender**

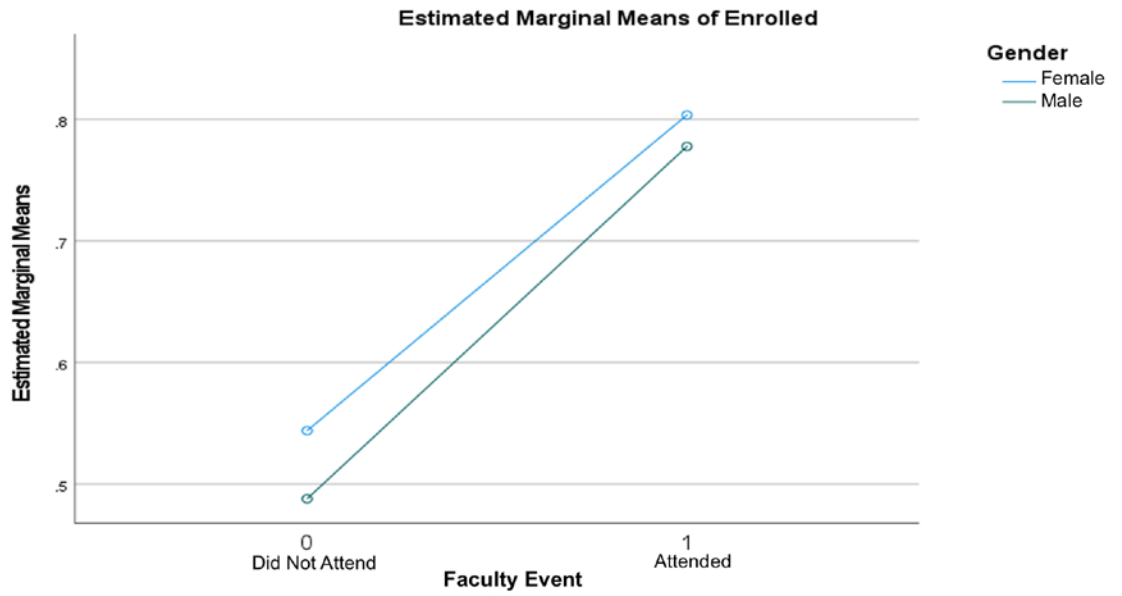
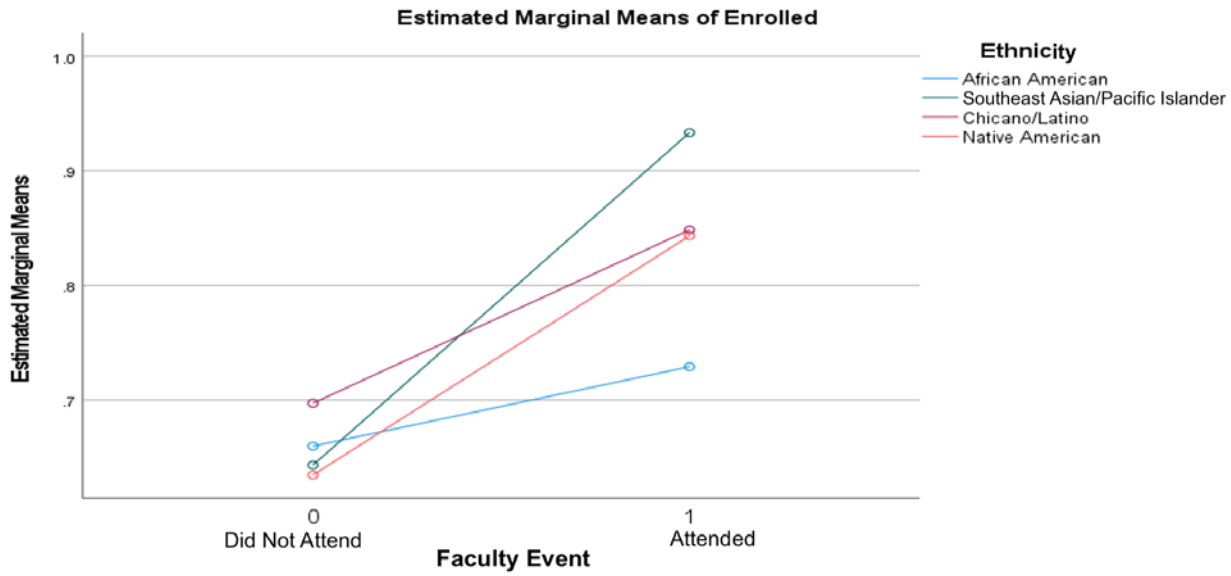


**Figure 4.11: Faculty Yield Events and Enrollment by Ethnicity**




All campus yield events contribute to the overall enrollment goals of the university. To gain a better understanding of the events with faculty and staff, I compared the yield rates of student-initiated events, School-sponsored activities, and UCLA's annual Bruin Day. The events with faculty formed as a new strategy in 2015 to complement successful efforts that already existed for the campus. URM student-initiated yield events have a significant history of student advocacy, yield, and retention to attract and enroll more admitted minority students to the university. My study compared the three primary campus yield programs that influenced final student choice to enroll at UCLA. First, Figure 4.12 demonstrates the enrollment success by gender associated with student-initiated yield events. Both URM women and men enroll at higher rates when they participated in a student-initiated yield event.

An analysis of the ethnic populations that attended student-initiated yield events reveals that African American, Chicano/Latino, and Native American students commit to enroll at higher rates after attending targeted programs with faculty. Figure 4.13 shows the success of these

student events. One trend to note is that Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students participate less, yet those that do participate enroll at a rate of 78% after attending this level of programming.

**Figure 4.12: Student-Initiated Yield Events and Enrollment by Gender**

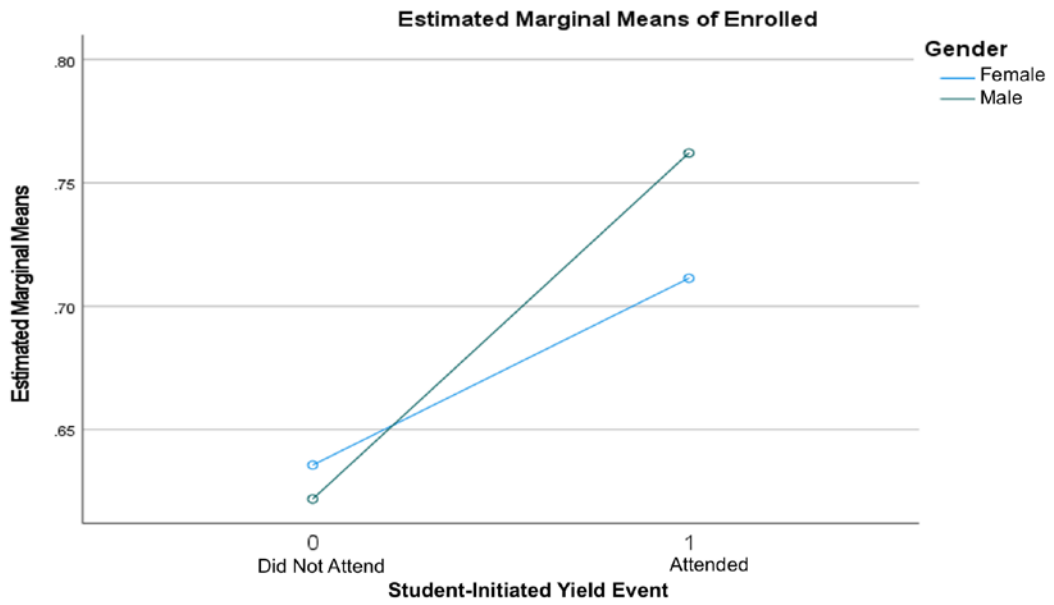
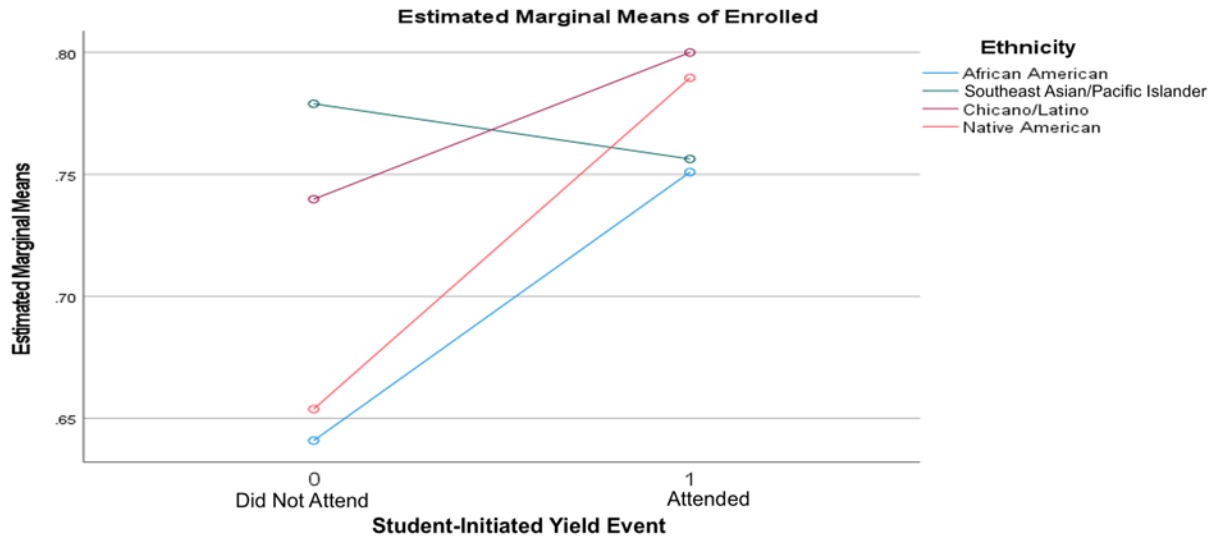



**Figure 4.13: Student-Initiated Yield Events and Enrollment by Ethnicity**



Next, I reviewed the participation of admitted students in yield events sponsored by the UCLA Professional Schools with undergraduate programs. These included the School of the Arts and Architecture, Henry Samueli School of Engineering, the Herb Alpert School of Music, School of Nursing, and the School of Theater, Film and Television. URM students attending these events enroll at 77% after attending school-sponsored events, while 52% enrolled after not attending. Figures 4.14 and 4.15 break down the enrollment rate for those attending by gender and ethnicity versus those that do not engage. Of note, males appear to gain a greater advantage of attending whereas female enrollment does not gain a notable advantage in this level of programming. While encouraging for most ethnic populations, Chicano/Latino students attending events have subsequently higher enrollment. The significant interaction term in Figure 4.8 suggests that African American students who participate in school-sponsored programming derived less of a benefit.

A variety of literature speaks to the challenges of minority students enrolling in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math as well as the Arts and Literature programs. Diversity in these areas continues to be a challenge, and UCLA must continue to address the challenges of attracting and not enrolling URM students (Estrada et al., 2016).

**Figure 4.14: School Yield Events and Enrollment by Gender**

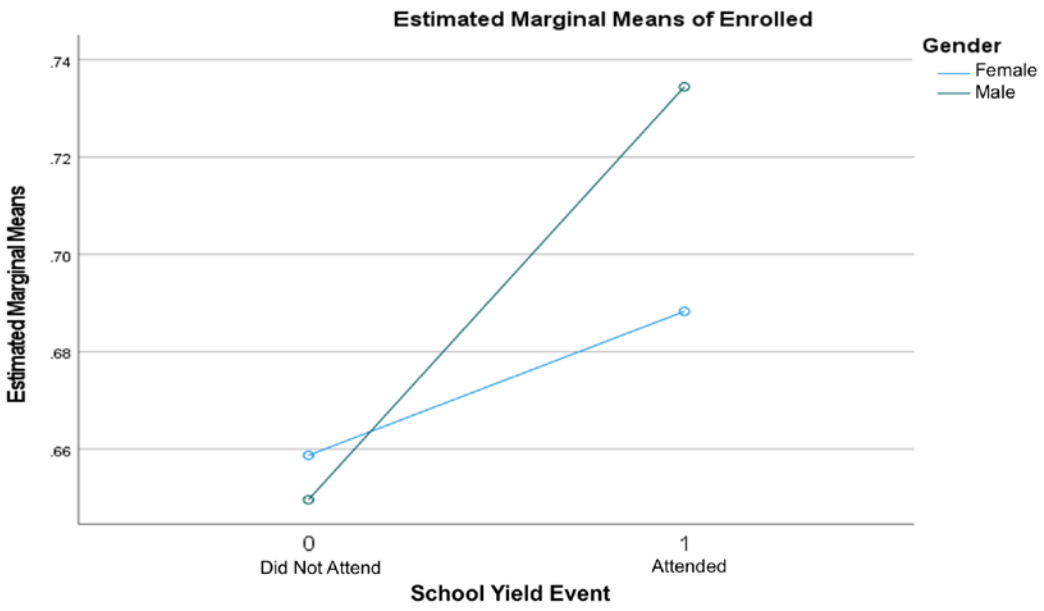
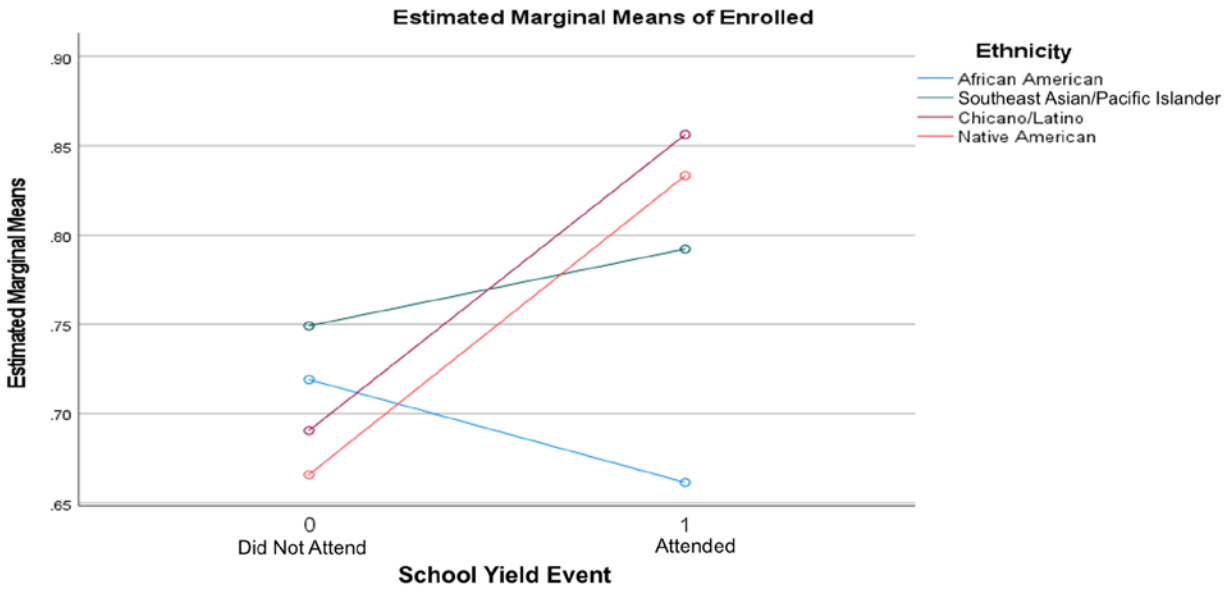



**Figure 4.15: School Yield Events and Enrollment by Ethnicity**




Perhaps the most significant yield event for the University is the signature Bruin Day event for freshmen that hosts nearly 14,000 visitors to the campus. This highly organized day

brings the campus together to allow newly admitted students to see the campus and participate in robust programming to showcase academic and student life. URM students participating in this annual event enroll at a rate of 78%. This is a similar percentage as compared to the student-initiated events (77%) that run concurrently with Bruin Day—a successful pairing of highly individualized and focused events with a more substantial preview day for the University. Figure 4.20 highlights that both men and women appear to benefit significantly from participating in Bruin Day. Finally, the URM enrollment success rate is evident in Figures 4.16 and 4.17, which demonstrate the higher enrollment of URM students that attend Bruin Day versus those that do not attend. Specifically, Table 4.6 compares attending and non-attending admits, and those participating in activities yield at significantly higher percentages.

**Figure 4.16: Bruin Day Yield Event and Enrollment by Gender**

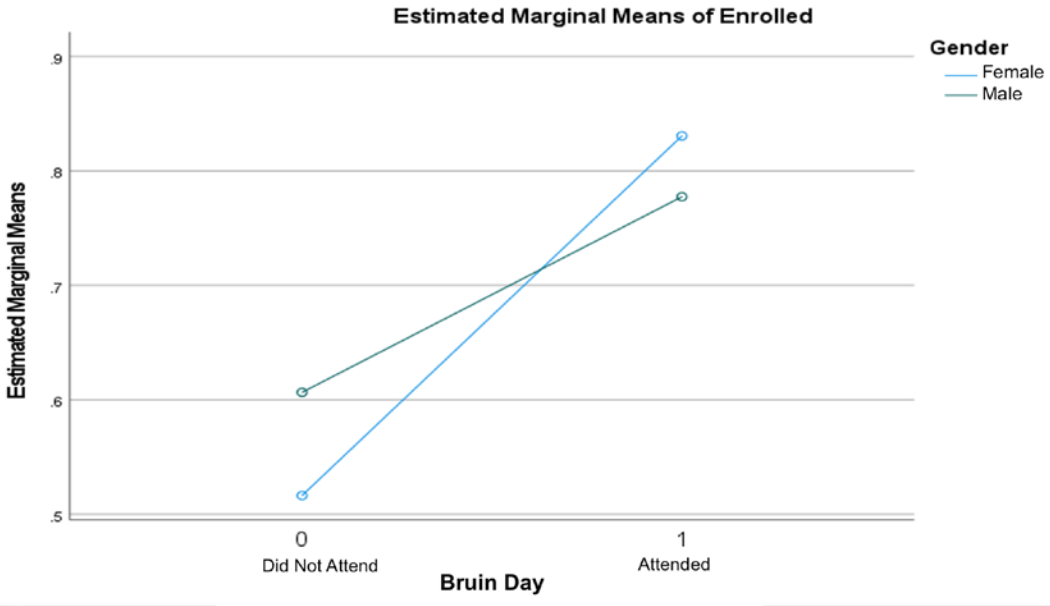


**Figure 4.17: Bruin Day Yield Event and Enrollment by Ethnicity**

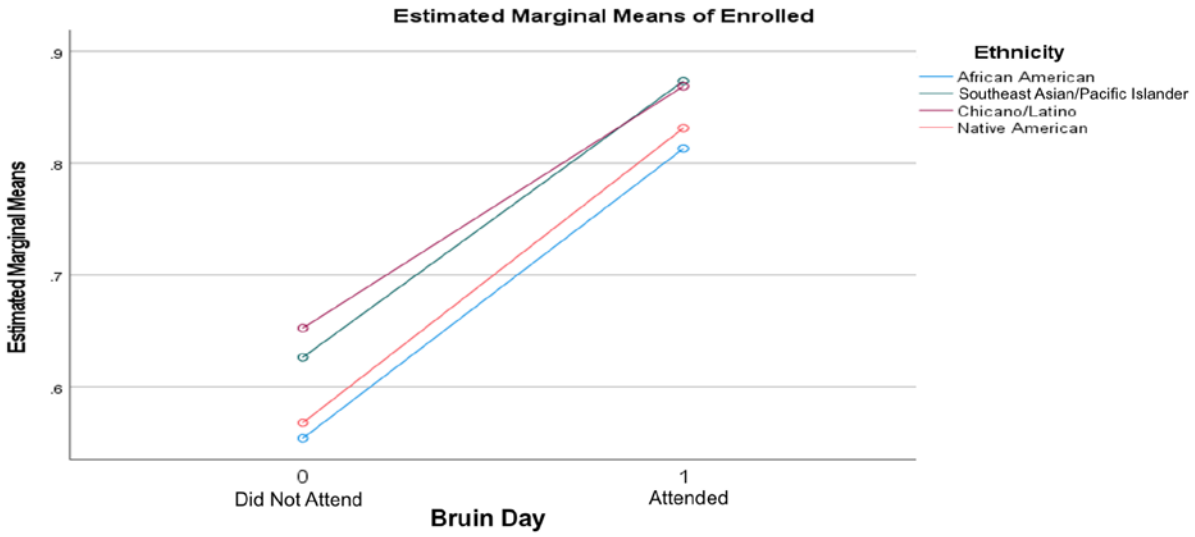



**Table 4.6: Yield Percentages by Event Attendance and Non-Attendance**

| | Non-Attendance (from 2016-2019) | Attendance |
|---|---|---|
| Faculty Event | 55.1 | 79.7 |
| School Event | 55.6 | 76.6 |
| Student Event | 52.7 | 78.5 |
| Bruin Day | 32.7 | 77.8 |

## Yield Events with Faculty, Post-Event Survey Results

A final aspect of my research centers on reviewing the student surveys conducted after the yield events with faculty that began in 2015. Each year that the events have occurred, a campus-based survey using Anthology evaluated the student experience at the yield events with faculty. EM partnered with the UCLA Student Affairs Information and Research Office to develop and guide the question development to accurately measure participating students' opinions, experiences, and behaviors. A continued goal is to measure effectiveness over time, so

the exact question wording is used from year to year with only minor technical time, place, and manner adjustments. The survey is sent to all students whether they RSVP or not to gain perspectives on non-attendance. Generally, there has been a low response for those unable to attend, but routine comments appear such as these from 2017, “Busy on weekdays because of school and parents work late” to “During these times, I was still busy with school and could not manage to skip a day to attend the events.” The timing for the programs does limit participation given impacted schedules of EM staff and faculty availability.

The survey instrument includes 26 questions that assess areas ranging from prior visits to the campus to event logistics, inspirational elements, to the overall experience with the event (see Appendix C for a list of survey questions). UCLA EM promptly administered the survey at the conclusion of the program, and the response rates range from 20-55% of the admitted high school students participating from 2015-2019. The survey allows students to self-report their personal information for individual follow-up and exploration of feedback and engagement with future events.

Questions that explored a student’s agreement or disagreement with elements included “faculty and staff were engaging at the event” and “I felt inspired after the event.” On average, students rate their experiences as Strongly Agree or Agree. For the 2018 African American event, 23 student respondents rated faculty and staff engagement at 100%, Strongly Agree. For the same event, 70% Strongly Agreed they felt inspired, and the remaining 30% Agreed. Survey outcomes for the Chicano/Latino event in 2017 reveal from 30 respondents that 80% felt faculty and staff were engaging, and 73% felt inspired. For the same questions from our Native American event in 2019, five students responded 100% felt faculty and staff were engaging and

inspired them. When asking students what most influenced them to commit to UCLA, several statements reveal the impact of bringing admits together with faculty and staff.

The surveys also assess students' satisfaction with the date of the event, start time, length of the event, the RSVP process, and parking. For the five years we have evaluated the programs, the logistics often receive favorable reviews. A common feedback theme is that the events should last longer, which is a good problem to have and speaks to student engagement. The survey also asks students to share comments about our faculty and staff in attendance. Here are some of the student statements taken from the survey that support conclusions from the ASQ that students favor personal interactions and contact with faculty as determining factors on their enrollment decision. An African American student participant in 2018 states, "I loved interacting with different professors and talking to the staff. They were very helpful and I learned what to expect for my freshman year." A Chicano/Latino event participant in 2019 shared, "I thoroughly enjoyed how interactive the staff and faculty were. Even if a student would not approach a faculty member, they would come up to the students and engage them in conservation which I found lovely." An additional comment from a Chicano/Latino student participant in 2017 speaks to the student experience at the event, "Very inspirational. All faculty had a way with identifying with the students; made us students feel comfortable."

Additional comments speak to the feeling of community that forms at the events and aids in an admitted student's reflection and consideration when making a final decision to attend UCLA. These reflections speak to the desire to find a community and sense of belonging, something that can be challenging at a large public university. In 2018, a Native American student commented, "The faculty was very welcoming. I really felt a sense of community when I attended." A Chicano/Latino student participant shared in 2017, "I enjoyed the feeling of

belonging that event created." Perhaps one of the more compelling statements comes from an African American admitted student in 2018 who shares:

> The level of excitement and motivation was exhilarating, and it truly made me feel part of the community. Usually, with such enthusiasm comes a glimmer of pretentiousness, as the desire to impress an audience usurps the internal desire of passionate encouragement and genuine inspiration originally intended. Here, however, the enthusiasm met the very obvious passion expressed by each faculty, student, and staff in attendance. Their goal was to inspire us admitted students, to quell our qualms regarding any concerns or questions we had. This was a wonderful event, and I hope all races, ethnicities, and cultures have the opportunity to be welcomed by their own as passionately and lovingly as we African Americans were.

Another question posed in the survey is what students most enjoyed about the event. Reactions to this question range from what they enjoy about the campus to the food and beverages served. A few comments that summarize the feeling associated with the event include a Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander student in 2019 that shared, "Diversity is a big factor in my decision and UCLA has more than proved that I have resources and people that I can personally identify with. I felt that I had support already." Also, a Native American student in 2017 simply shares, "The community feeling that I felt." Further, an African American student similarly shared in 2017, "I enjoyed meeting other admitted students who looked just like me and hearing what UCLA had to offer from many perspectives." And, lastly, a comment that speaks to access from a Chicano/Latino admit, "It was a great event. I liked that it was bilingual, for it allowed parents to feel engaged."

An aspect of this study considered the marketing and branding that connects with admitted students and their families/caregivers. While this deeper understanding was not achieved through the qualitative portion of my study, the post-event surveys provide insight to the feeling of community that is formed from being specially invited to a URM event. Many participating students and family members relayed how UCLA personally and uniquely communicated a message of inclusion, connection, and unity through the invitation to meet faculty and staff. An African American admit from the 2018 event offered the following:

> From the moment I received my invitation in the mail, I was excited to see the prominence of UCLA African American alumni. My mom absolutely loved it. She wasn't so sure about UCLA until this event. She got all of her questions answered. Now she is almost as thrilled as I am!

As the person who organizes the event, I often receive direct, in-person feedback from admitted students and their attending families. In one instance, the first time we held the event for Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students in 2019, an admit, and her mother approached me holding their invitation card. At first, I felt they might have thought they needed the card for entry, but instead, the mother wanted to acknowledge the beautiful design of the invitation and how it spoke to their Pacific Islander heritage. They were deeply touched and felt that “UCLA got it right” and how impressed they were with the attention given to the program invitation. This reflection, and others that are similar, connects to special event branding considerations that were foundational to creating this unique level of yield programming.

The yield events occur well before the National Commitment Deadline of May 1, which is the date UCLA requires a student’s commitment. As students are in various stages of their

final decision-making, we ask the question, “Where do you currently stand in your decision process on committing to UCLA?” Some outcomes include, in 2017, seven of 27 respondents attending the Chicano/Latino event with faculty committed during the event. For African American admits that same year, 12 of 20 students responded committed to UCLA before or during the event. In 2019, of five Native American students responding, two decided to commit to UCLA during the event. Similarly, for students attending the Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander event, five of 16 respondents stated that they committed during the event. As previously stated, I call to your attention that this event yielded 92% of the 43 admitted students attending. This comment from a Chicano/Latino admit in 2018 connects to the theme of deciding while attending the event:

> I was truly convinced once I attended this event. I felt like the school was too big to pay much attention but this event made me feel wanted. It made my acceptance here feel very special and it was here that I realized that I want to spend the next four years.

Another question to highlight speaks to what most influenced a student to commit to UCLA if they had not done so. Responses range from loving the location, academic fit, prestige, and UCLA being a “dream school.” A few of the comments made when students share what most influenced them to attend UCLA include an African American admit from 2016, “It was between UCLA and Cal; the positive atmosphere and optimistic outlook really pushed me towards UCLA and I couldn't be happier with my decision.” Another comment speaks to the feeling a student gained from participation and the influence on making a final decision:

> This event did play a role in my commitment to UCLA because before attending it, I was unsure about studying at such a diverse university, but once I met friendly faculty, staff and students that were Hispanic as well, I moved UCLA to the top of my list.

Finally, a Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander student shares, “The charisma and friendliness from staff and faculty ultimately led me to my decision to commit to UCLA.”

The assessment of student attitudes, perceptions, and experiences with the events is an integral part of planning from year to year. The survey outcomes and individual student responses validate the partnerships with academic units, faculty, and staff. In post-event debrief meetings, the survey results are shared with all partners to understand the impact of the program, and where changes can be made in future programs. This review with trusted campus partners strengthens the working relationships and validates the connection with faculty and staff as critical UCLA EM partners and our commitment to give our faculty the very best students in the classroom.

Finally, this qualitative aspect of my study brings to life and confirms the quantitative aspects on the successful yield percentages after experiencing an event with faculty and staff. Program feedback plays a vital role in reaching the academy to engage in this level of programming, at a level faculty do not normally engage. Personal experience as an enrollment practitioner leading these events has led to long-standing relationships with students and families. In fact, parents, while not a part of this study, are some of the most grateful for experiencing these events. A Chicano/Latino student in 2018 writes, “My parents appreciated all the helpful, new information they received. It definitely made them feel much more comfortable with my decision after being so thorough informed.”

## Summary

The results of my study provide encouraging evidence that the role of faculty and staff during the yield period produced favorable enrollment results for minority students. An analysis of undergraduate admission enrollment trends, the ASQ outcomes on personal attention and contact with faculty, and direct student feedback produced positive results that can support enrollment practitioners in developing yield programming with faculty. From the time the targeted yield events with faculty began, there have been marked increases in URM student enrollment. As previously reported in Figure 4.7, enrollments have increased since 2016 for those students attending events with faculty versus those that do not attend. Based on participation in yield events with faculty and ASQ survey outcomes, it became clear that faculty can play an influential role during the annual yield season as a part of larger yield activities for the university. Providing this added program supports a student's final college choice decision.

Finally, through individual assessment and reflection, I share qualitative evidence through annual surveys from program participants. The profound impact that faculty and staff have on a student's decision to attend is evident through student statements. In many cases, admitted URM students cite that the interaction with faculty and staff "sealed the deal" in making a final decision to attend the university.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# CONCLUSION

Research on the last step of college choice decisions, where or where not to enroll, for underrepresented minorities (URM) students, is in its early stages, with more exploration needed. College choice research exists on a broader level, yet there is a gap in the literature on what it takes for a URM student to make their final decision and cross over the threshold. Often, highly competitive students have multiple admission offers to consider. Yet, little research explores this phase of college choice to understand better the impact of yield programming on a student's decision to enroll.

This study contributes to understanding highly competitive URM students' college choice processes by shedding light on high-stakes yield efforts. Specifically, I looked at how students navigated the decision process as they decide where to matriculate. Gaining an in-depth perspective can allow institutions to build effective strategies that support URM students during the yield process, shed light on strategies to yield highly recruited and desired students through strategic engagement with faculty and staff, and positively impact university diversity goals.

I conducted a quantitative analysis to investigate one aspect that could positively support and contribute to the successful yield of URM students: the introduction of faculty and staff in this influential final period when a student decides where to enroll. The study explored enrollment trends of URM students at one highly selective university during the timeframe they are admitted and on what college or university to or not to attend. I analyzed the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) undergraduate admission data and trends for URM admits, studied student participation and outcomes of the Admitted Student Questionnaire (ASQ), and

made connections with post-event survey responses as the qualitative aspect of my research. The results of this study indicate that students who have the opportunity to engage with faculty during the yield process are more likely to enroll, thus positively impacting an institution's enrollment goals and outcomes.

Using multiple logistic regression analyses, I found that URM students participating in yield activities with faculty and staff was a positive predictor of enrollment to the institution. Through my study, I found that African American, Chicano/Latino, Native American, and Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students are twice as likely to enroll when engaging with faculty and staff at sponsored events after having been admitted to the University compared to those who do not participate. This chapter examines the implications of the findings detailed in Chapter 4 and the emerging themes. I will review key findings, indicate limitations of my research, review implications of my study, and share observations and recommendations for enrollment management practitioners.

## Summary of the Findings

My study utilized a binary logistic regression model including all the relevant demographic variables with the outcome of *enrollment* to see which predictors significantly contributed to admitted students' decision to commit to UCLA. This approach builds off the descriptive crosstabs in my study, which confirmed that attendees at yield events tended to matriculate into UCLA at significantly higher rates than admitted students who did not attend these events. By controlling for other factors that may influence a student's decision to enroll, I was able to account for alternative explanations for this decision that may have an association with whether a student attended one of these events. These other control variables included

demographic characteristics and survey items from the ASQ, although not all variables emerged as significant. I included several interaction items, with a focus on variables related to ethnicity to supplement the findings. After running several models, the final model I decided upon ended up closest to the initial model, with the addition of blocking and interaction terms, leading to the highest number of significant variables. I compared the enrollment outcomes of yield events with faculty related to other yield events and activities sponsored by UCLA over a 10-year period.

The results of my study support the literature in many aspects. The development of the models confirmed the complexity of studying this element of final college choice. My final model validated that the role of faculty and staff impact on a student's enrollment decision serves as a viable yield strategy. My findings from this study illustrate the need for additional research on URM student behavior in the yield process.

A central outcome of my research revealed students attending high-impact yield events with faculty enrolled at double the rate of those who did not participate. The odds of enrolling among Bruin Day attendees roughly quintupled enrollment odds of admitted students who did not attend Bruin Day. For school-sponsored events, the odds of enrolling are roughly tripled for event attendees compared to the odds for those not attending. This indicates that yield events are impactful and a strong predictor of enrollment. The introduction of the events with faculty and staff adds to the overall yield of URM students, thus, impacting overall yield of minority students that impact diversity priorities and goals for the institution.

This outcome of students yielding at impressive rates after attending events with faculty corresponds with the results of the ASQ findings on *personal attention* and *contact with faculty* as key factors in final college choice. For the ASQ dataset related to the questions

studied, 71% of student respondents that participated in yield events with faculty rate personal attention as good or excellent for the university compared to 65% of students not attending. An even larger gap appears for contact with faculty at 68% good to excellent rating, compared to 59% for those not participating. Of the 18% of URM students completing Q24 and Q46 of the ASQ, they enroll at a range of 85% to 90% after engaging in UCLA yield activities. This annual survey sheds light on student behaviors for why they chose their institution and perspectives on those they did not select. The findings from my study support the correlation between ASQ responses and enrollment patterns for UCLA.

## Implications

I approached this study with personal experience working in enrollment management for UCLA and through my role in developing high-impact yield events that involve academic stakeholders. Engaging in the planning and execution of events that incorporate faculty and staff, I have witnessed firsthand the positive outcomes when minority students have the opportunity to interact with faculty and staff from their ethnic communities. I hypothesized that strong personal interaction and having a chance to meet and interact with faculty and staff influences a student's final college choice decision. I had personal interactions that predisposed my thinking. I had reviewed post-event surveys that supported the theory that one-on-one and group interactions made a strong impression and aided a student in making their final decision. While I did not have the evidence to support that this work had a significant impact on the university's enrollment efforts to reach and enroll more students of color during the yield period, I did have evidence to conclude that individual students who attend these events have a significantly higher likelihood of deciding to enroll at the institution. This study confirmed that students desire personal attention and contact with faculty to make this important life decision on where to matriculate.

Providing high-impact, high-touch events that allow admitted students to gain firsthand information and insights from faculty and staff from their racial and/or ethnic community offers a level of support, understanding, and connection that is rarely available to a student before making their decision.

**Effectiveness of URM Yield Events with Faculty and Staff**

This is a case study of UCLA Enrollment Management (EM) and the efforts to develop new and creative programming to support students and families and positively impact yield of URM admitted students. The study shared a model for increasing URM student yield in the final period before students make their decision on where to enroll. The strategic enrollment efforts undertaken in the last several years have led to increased yield of African American, Chicano/Latino, Native American, and Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander students. It takes a variety of programming to reach students during this critical period when the university has the opportunity to put its best foot forward and provide the final compelling case for why to choose UCLA.

For the events reviewed in this study, URM students responded at varying levels, and there are some patterns to consider in the outcomes presented. I shared in Chapter 4 the yields of URM students attending the programs with faculty and staff compared to those who do not attend. African American students yield at 81%, compared to 51% yield on students not attending. Chicano/Latino students yield at 77%, while those that do not attend yield at 53%, Native American admits yield at 80%, and those that do not participate yield at 40%. Southeast Asian and Pacific Islanders yield at 92% compared to 77% of those who did not attend. Overall, the percentages of students yielding after participating in this programming are impressive. One

distinction of note is the event for Chicano/Latino students has the lesser yield of all programs that challenge the effectiveness and impact given the interaction effect. Chicano/Latino students represent the most significant population size of the URM admits, and this event is the largest of all four organized events. Due to attendance numbers, this event lacks the level of intimacy that the other programs represent. The structure of this program does not include breakout groups by academic area, which could reflect in the outcomes. At the same time, a viable best practice with impressive results, these programs deserve further analysis to determine ways to improve interactions that could lead to increased effectiveness.

An additional pattern to review and consider comes from Figure 4.9, which indicates the programs in 2018 seemingly eliminated the benefit of the programs given the similarity in yield rates of those attending versus those that did not attend. In 2018, the overall yield was 56% for the campus, the second-largest rate since 2010. One could surmise that UCLA is simply yielding stronger among URM students. A possible explanation for this year relates to the academic calendar and challenges with event scheduling. UCLA is a quarter system school, and each year, winter quarter finals, spring break, and the first week of the spring quarter fall within the timeframe of releasing admission decisions and scheduling yield programs. As one can imagine, faculty availability during this time can be a challenge to maneuver. The faculty partnerships we have formed ensure a commitment to our newest admits, a strong and impressive cultural shift for the community.

A final consideration to acknowledge regarding the effectiveness of faculty programming in yield is that many high-achieving students are self-selecting to attend or not attend these activities. This reality can speak to where UCLA is in the rank order of the student's admission offers. If URM admitted students already have their sights set on a particular institution, they are

less likely to engage in the yield offerings of UCLA. It comes down to the amount of time and resources a student can invest in previewing the schools they are considering. Thus, the power of developing programs that spark interest and entice a student to take a closer look could make all the difference in an enrollment decision or raise the probability where it may have been less or not have existed.

**Academic Partnerships and Collaboration**

The programs reviewed in this study relied on viable partnerships with academic stakeholders invested in enrolling the very best students. A collaboration between EM and the academic departments, centers, and research units is critical in creating the best experience possible for admitted students and their guests. When faculty, administrators, and staff avail themselves to new admits during this critical decision-making time, it can demonstrate a commitment to future students, making a difference in their lives.

Developing and strengthening academic partnerships with various academic divisions, departments, and units and inviting them to the table to engage in the University's enrollment activities led to tremendous diversity outcomes. As stated early in Chapter 1, UCLA is committed to creating an ethnically diverse campus community. EM has the position and influence to impact communities and prospective students, yet students must apply, be admitted, and enroll. This process is highly specialized and detailed for an organization, yet the final phase is when a student must make their decision. Inviting faculty, administrators, and staff to support students, and influence them, has worked for our organization. As there is evidence supporting the benefit of establishing partnerships, other forms of partnerships could be tested and assessed in the future.

Another primary aspect of developing viable partnerships is to shift the organization's culture that allows those external to EM to invest in the institution's future, thus becoming integral stakeholders in the enrollment process. Through my experience, by inviting faculty and critical staff into high-stakes, high-touch yield events, they take ownership and increase their investment in the students they desire to see in the classroom. This shift increases understanding and awareness while building a network of support for the university's enrollment operations. My experience confirmed that faculty and staff want to engage; you just need to invite them to participate.

**Marketing and Brand Development**

While I did not conduct an in-depth study on marketing and branding through my quantitative research, the concepts strongly connect to the success of the developed programs for URM communities. The literature review on marketing and brand development intersects with research on college choice and the emotional connection a student makes during the final choice process. Additionally, a common goal of a marketing campaign is to gain a competitive edge. For the events reviewed in my study, marketing and brand development were fundamental in creating the event and building affinity with the admitted students and their families/caregivers. As detailed in my descriptive narrative in Chapter 4, EM made a concerted effort to be culturally sensitive and emotionally connect with URM students and their families/caregivers through language, imagery, color, and symbolism that allowed students to envision themselves at UCLA. Student perceptions relayed in the post-event survey and through interactions at events confirm how the presented programs make an impact and influence enrollment.

Higher education is becoming more connected to and driven by consumer behavior. Strong marketing and brand development principles should underpin reaching your audience, especially URM populations that do not always see themselves represented in the schools they are considering. Competition to vie for the best students drives creativity and innovation, even if these practices are proprietary and kept as guarded secrets. To directly market to URM admitted students allows a university to more personally connect with families of color, provide support, and enable the University to position itself as an institution of choice—one that is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

## Recommendations for Practitioners

I conducted a case study to identify best practices and produce insight into high-impact yield activities for minority students. The results of my research support the hypothesis that URM admits who interact with faculty and staff during the yield period enroll at higher rates. A strong recommendation for practitioners in higher education is to develop partnerships within the academy and forge new opportunities to connect faculty and admitted students at an earlier stage than most institutions typically consider. It is not common in a large public university setting that admitted students and their families have the opportunity to directly interact with faculty before deciding to enroll. For URM students, given this opportunity to connect and develop an early understanding of academic offerings such as access to faculty, research opportunities, and building affinity with a community of scholars, a student may be more drawn to and interested in their offer of admission.

The activities and events that bring faculty and staff together with students can vary in style, size, and scope. While this study examined high-impact yield opportunities, one could

surmise that increased faculty presence in recruitment settings would be optimal. Proactively involve faculty and staff and find ways to engage them with the enrollment process to represent faculty and speak to the academic opportunities that await them at the institution. Faculty can be influential in supporting the university's mission to increase diversity and bring more first-generation and low-income students to the campus community.

An additional recommendation is for institutions to analyze their data to inform their yield practices. The ASQ is an excellent resource, but it is only as good as putting the outcomes to work for your institution. It is necessary to incorporate the outcomes into your strategic enrollment planning. Listen to the data and what students share the results of such a study with academic partners and stakeholders. In many cases, only the enrollment practitioner has the information to inform internal operations. If, for example, contact with faculty is rated negatively on this annual survey, work with the academic units on the perception that students do not have access to faculty. Form collaborations that can benefit not only enrollment for the institution but the academy.

## Next Steps

This study begins to explore how to develop high-impact yield strategies with faculty and staff. It provides a better understanding and perspective on a yield strategy that is proving effective. The recommendations can start conversations with academic leaders and units to devise an operational plan for incorporating faculty into this influential yield period. However, there is still much to explore and varying concepts and ideas that can inform enrollment professionals on effective strategies to yield URM students at the desired rates.

Other areas that deserve greater exploration and a separate study involve our most disadvantaged low-income and first-generation students, who often lack the network of resources and support to aid in the final stage of committing. Understanding students' primary concerns and needs in making a decision that is right for them requires a thorough understanding of how to reach, communicate, and support students at this level, in this stage of the process. Also, a greater review and connection, which my study did not explore, is needed on how undermatching factors into URM student decisions on where they enroll. There is much to explore and connect on the issue of undermatching as a common consequence of the college choice process for high-achieving students (Fosnacht, 2014). With faculty influence, perhaps this phenomenon could be confronted and redirect high-achieving students at this critical point in their decision-making process.

## Appendix A

# ADMITTED STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE PLUS ™

Many characteristics of colleges are important to students in making college choices. Some of these characteristics are listed below. Please indicate below how important each college characteristic was to you in choosing the college that you will attend. Circle the numbers that best represent your ratings.

| COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS | IMPORTANCE TO YOU | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Very Important |
| 1. Academic reputation | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. Availablility of majors of interest to you | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. Availability of special academic programs (independent study, honors programs, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. Personal attention to students | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. Quality of academic facilities (library, laboratories, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. Availability of recreational facilities on campus | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. Quality of on-campus housing | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. Surroundings (neighborhood, town or city) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. Attractiveness of campus | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. Cost to your family - how much you and your family would have to pay after grants and scholarships (if any) are subtracted from total college costs | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. Quality of social life | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. Access to off-campus cultural and recreational opportunities | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13. Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. Enter College Characteristic | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15. Enter College Characteristic | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 16. Enter College Characteristic | 1 | 2 | 3 |

*[16]*

Please provide the following information about the colleges to which you applied.

17. **Including our college**, to how many institutions did you apply? _____

18. **Including our college**, to how many of these institutions were you admitted? _____

19. a ) Do you plan to enroll in college within the next 12 months? 1 Yes 2 No

If "yes," where? (Name) _____ (City/State) _____

b ) On the lines below please list your top three choices among all the colleges to **which you were admitted.** Include the college you will be attending if it was one of your top three choices.

First (Name) _____ (City/State) _____

Second (Name) _____ (City/State) _____

Third (Name) _____ (City/State) _____

20. On the remaining lines please list any other colleges to which you applied. Circle **YES** for each college from which you have received formal notification of admission.

| College Name | City/State | Admitted? | College Name | City/State | Admitted? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Yes | | | Yes |
| | | Yes | | | Yes |
| | | Yes | | | Yes |
| | | Yes | | | Yes |

*[77]*

From your list of colleges in question 19 above, in columns A and B below print the names of two other colleges to which you were admitted. Using the scale shown below, please rate our college and Colleges A and B on each of the college characteristics. If you were admitted to our college and one other college only, do not use column B. **If you can't rate a characteristic for one of the colleges or it does not apply, please circle zero for that college.**

| COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS | | OUR COLLEGE | | | | | A:_____ | | | | | B:_____ | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Poor/Fair | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Can't Rate | Poor/Fair | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Can't Rate | Poor/Fair | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Can't Rate |
| 21. | Academic reputation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 22. | Availability of majors of interest to you | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 23. | Availability of special academic programs (independent study, honors programs, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 24. | Personal attention to students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 25. | Quality of academic facilities (library, laboratories, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 26. | Availability of recreational facilities on campus | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 27. | Quality of on-campus housing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 28. | Surroundings (neighborhood, town or city) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 29. | Attractiveness of campus | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 30. | Cost to your family - how much you and your family would have to pay after grants and scholarships (if any) are subtracted from total college costs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 31. | Quality of social life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 32. | Access to off-campus cultural and recreational opportunities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 33. | Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 34. | Enter College Characteristic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 35. | Enter College Characteristic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| 36. | Enter College Characteristic | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |

*[133]*

**Please continue to rate the same colleges as A and B throughout the questionnaire.**

From the lists below, please circle all words or phrases that you would say are the most widely held images of our college and colleges A and B.

37. **OUR COLLEGE**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated | Career-oriented | Selective | Average | College Image |
| Prestigious | Not well-known | Athletics | Challenging | College Image |
| Fun | Comfortable | Friendly | College Image | College Image |
| Intellectual | Back-up school | Partying | College Image | Other_____ |

38. **COLLEGE A:** _____

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated | Career-oriented | Selective | Average | College Image |
| Prestigious | Not well-known | Athletics | Challenging | College Image |
| Fun | Comfortable | Friendly | College Image | College Image |
| Intellectual | Back-up school | Partying | College Image | Other_____ |

39. **COLLEGE B:** _____

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated | Career-oriented | Selective | Average | College Image |
| Prestigious | Not well-known | Athletics | Challenging | College Image |
| Fun | Comfortable | Friendly | College Image | College Image |
| Intellectual | Back-up school | Partying | College Image | Other_____ |

*[201]*

This section asks you to compare our college with colleges A and B on the quality of information provided to you. For each source listed, rate the quality of information provided to you by our college and by colleges A and B. **If a given type of information was not available from one of the colleges or not used by you, circle zero for that college.**

| SOURCES OF INFORMATION | | OUR COLLEGE | | | | | A: _____ | | | | | B: _____ | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Not Used | Poor/Fair | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Not Used | Poor/Fair | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Not Used | Poor/Fair | Good | Very Good | Excellent |
| 40. | College publications (catalogs, brochures, etc.) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 41. | College website | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 42. | Communications about financial aid | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 43. | Electronic communication with the college | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 44. | Campus visit | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 45. | Contact with the college after you were admitted | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 46. | Contact with faculty from the college | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 47. | Contact with students who attend the college | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 48. | College Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 49. | College Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 50. | College Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 51. | College Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 52. | College Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 53. | College Source | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

*[251]*

Please provide the following information about college costs and financial aid, if applicable, at our college and colleges A and B.

54. Was either financial aid or the cost of attending a significant factor in your decision to enroll in the college you plan to attend?

1 Yes 2 No

| | | OUR COLLEGE | A: _____ | B: _____ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 55. | Did you apply for need-based financial aid? | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No |
| 56. | Were you offered need-based financial aid? | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No |
| 57. | Were you offered a non-need-based scholarship *by the college* in recognition of your athletic, musical, artistic, or academic talent? | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No |
| 58. | Did your financial aid package include: | | | |
| | Grants or scholarships? | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No |
| | One or more student loans? | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No |
| | A work package or campus job? | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No | 1 Yes 2 No |

59. After subtracting grant and scholarship awards, if any, please rate the cost to you and your family of attending each college, using a scale of 1 (Very low) to 8 (Very high):

OUR COLLEGE _____ A: _____ B: _____

60. Please answer the following questions specifically about **the college you are planning to attend:**

Check here ☐ if you did not apply for financial aid at the college you will attend. OR

Check here ☐ if you applied for but did not receive any financial aid from the college you will attend.

If you DID receive financial aid from the college you will attend, please list the amounts of financial aid awarded by that college **for the first year:**

Work $_____ Need-based scholarship/grant $_____

Student loan $_____ Merit-based scholarship $_____

TOTAL $ _____

*[307]*

61. How are your parents/guardians financing their contribution toward your college education? (Circle all that apply)

1 From current income
2 From past savings (including tuition prepayment plans, Uniform Gifts to Minors, etc.)
3 From parent educational loans (e.g., Federal PLUS, etc.)
4 From other parent loans (including home equity credit line, credit cards, etc.)
5 Help from relatives, friends, etc.
6 Employer's tuition benefit

62. Which of the following categories best represents your average grades in high school? (Circle one answer)

1 A (90-100) 2 B (80-89) 3 C (70-79) 4 D or below (69 or below)

63. What were your highest scores on the following college admission tests?

SAT-Critical Reading _____ SAT-Math _____ SAT-Writing _____ ACT Composite _____

64. Are you Hispanic/Latino (including Spain)?

1 Yes 2 No

Regardless of your answer to the prior question, please select one or more of the following that best describe you:

1 American Indian or Alaska Native (including all Original Peoples of the Americas)
2 Asian (including Indian subcontinent and Philippines)
3 Black or African American (including Africa and Caribbean)
4 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Original Peoples)
5 White (including Middle Eastern)

65. Are you a resident of the state in which our college is located? 1 Yes 2 No

66. How far is our college from your home? (Circle one answer)

1 Less than 50 miles 2 51 to 100 miles 3 101 to 300 miles 4 301 to 500 miles 5 More than 500 miles

67. Which of the following best describes the type of high school you attended? (Circle one answer)

1 Public 2 Independent, Not Religiously Affiliated 3 Independent, Catholic 4 Other Independent, Religiously Affiliated

68. What was the approximate income of your parents or guardians before taxes last year? (Circle one answer)

1 Less than $30,000
2 $30,000 to $39,999
3 $40,000 to $59,999
4 $60,000 to $79,999
5 $80,000 to $99,999
6 $100,000 to $149,999
7 $150,000 to $199,000
8 $200,000 or higher

69. What is the ZIP code of your home address?_____

70. What is your gender? 1 Female 2 Male *[341]*

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Please use the space below for any comments you would like to share with us about our college's admission program.

# Appendix B

## UCLA Undergraduate Admission Dataset Table of Measures

| Variable Name | Coding Scheme |
|---|---|
| Year | 0=2010 to 9=2019 |
| Enrolled | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Attended a faculty event | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Attended a student-initiated yield event | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Attended a school yield event | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Attended Bruin Day | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Gender | 0=Female, 1=Male |
| Ethnicity: African American | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Ethnicity: Chicano/Latino | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Ethnicity: Native American | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Ethnicity: Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Family income | 0=0 thru 4999, 1=5000 thru 9999=1, 2=10000 thru 14999, 3=15000 thru 19999, 4=20000 thru 24999, 5=25000 thru 29999, 6=30000 thru 34999, 7=35000 thru 39999, 8=40000 thru 44999, 9=45000 thru 49999, 10=50000 thru 54999, 11=55000 thru 59999, 12=60000 thru 64999, 13=65000 thru 69999, 14=70000 thru 74999, 15=75000 thru 79999, 16=80000 thru 84999, 17=85000 thru 89999, 18=90000 thru 94999, 19=95000 thru 99999, 20=100000 thru 104999, 21=105000 thru 109999, 22=110000 thru 114999, 23=115000 thru 119999, 24=120000 thru 124999, 25=125000 thru 129999, 26=130000 thru 134999, 27=135000 thru 139999, 28=140000 thru 149999, 29=150000 thru 154999, 30=155000 thru 159999, 31=160000 thru 164999, 32=165000 thru 169999, 33=170000 thru 174999, 34=175000 thru 179999, 35=180000 thru 184999, 36=185000 thru 189999, 37=190000 thru 194999, 38=195000 thru 199999, 39=200000 thru Highest |
| Low income student | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| First generation student | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Parent's highest education: First generation | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Parent's highest education: Bachelor's degree | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Parent's highest education: Graduate degree | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Arts and architecture | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Engineering | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: General studies | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Humanities | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: International Institute | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Life sciences | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Music | 0=No, 1=Yes |

| Variable Name | Coding Scheme |
|---|---|
| College division: Nursing | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Physical sciences | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Social sciences | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| College division: Theater, film, and TV | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Weighted GPA | Continuous: 1.9 to 5.0 |
| High school type | 0=Private, 1=Public |
| High school area: Urban | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| High school area: Suburban | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| High school area: Rural | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| High school location: LA County | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| High school location: Southern California | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| High school location: Northern California | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| High school location: Bay Area | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| High school location: Out of state | 0=No, 1=Yes |
| Q1: Importance of academic reputation | 1=Not important, 2=Somewhat important, 3=Very important |
| Q4: Importance of personal attention | 1=Not important, 2=Somewhat important, 3=Very important |
| Q10: Importance of cost of attendance | 1=Not important, 2=Somewhat important, 3=Very important |
| Q21: Rating of academic reputation | 1=Poor/Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good, 4=Excellent |
| Q24: Rating of personal attention | 1=Poor/Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good, 4=Excellent |
| Q30: Rating of cost to family | 1=Poor/Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good, 4=Excellent |
| Q44: Rating of campus visit | 1=Poor/Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good, 4=Excellent |
| Q45: Rating of post-admit communication | 1=Poor/Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good, 4=Excellent |
| Q46: Rating of contact with faculty | 1=Poor/Fair, 2=Good, 3=Very Good, 4=Excellent |
| ASQ | 0=Did not complete, 1=Completed |

# Appendix C

## UCLA Undergraduate Admission, Yield Event Survey

**Q1. Please select the UCLA program you attended:**

African American
*Join the UCLA Legacy* Welcome with Faculty

Chicana/o/x -- Latina/o/x
*Your Future Starts Here* Welcome with Faculty

Native American
*Join our Community* Welcome with Faculty

Southeast Asian/Pacific Islander
*Discover Your Future Here* Welcome with Faculty

Did not attend

**Q2. By attending *Join the UCLA Legacy*, was this your first time visiting the UCLA campus?**

Yes

No

**Q3. How many times have you visited the UCLA campus?**

1-2

3-4

5+

**Q4. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: Faculty and staff were engaging at the event.**

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

**Q5. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: I felt inspired after the event.**

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

**Q6. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: I felt that all of my questions were answered at the event.**

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

**Q7. If you have comments about our If you have comments about our faculty member, staff, alumni, parents or undergraduates in attendance, please share.**

**Q8. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Date**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q9. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Start Time**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q10. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Length of Event**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q11. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: RSVP Process**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q12. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Parking**

Very satisfied

**Q12. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Parking**

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q13. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Event Location**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q14. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Program Format**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q15. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: Food & Beverages**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q16. Please rate your satisfaction with the following elements of the event: UCLA Materials**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q17. Overall, how would you rate the satisfaction of your experience with the admitted student event you attended?**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

**Q18. Did you bring a guest(s) to the event?**

Yes

No

**Q19. How would rate your guest(s) overall experience at the event?**

Excellent

Good

Poor

**Q20. If your guest(s) had comments about the event that you would like us to know, please share:**

**Q21. What did you enjoy most about the event?**

**Q22. Please share any ideas you have on how we could change or improve the event.**

**Q23. Where do you currently stand in your decision process on committing to UCLA?**

I made my decision to commit to UCLA before attending the event.

I decided to commit to UCLA during the event.

I am still deciding on whether or not to commit to UCLA.

**Q24. How many times have you visited the UCLA campus before today?**

0

1-2

3-4

5+

**Q25. Please tell us what most influenced you to commit to UCLA?**

**Q26. Is there anything else about your journey to UCLA that you think we should know?**

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