

In Focus 2015-2016

A series of publications from the Central Office of Student Affairs highlighting student trends, programs and initiatives that matter to students and their success.

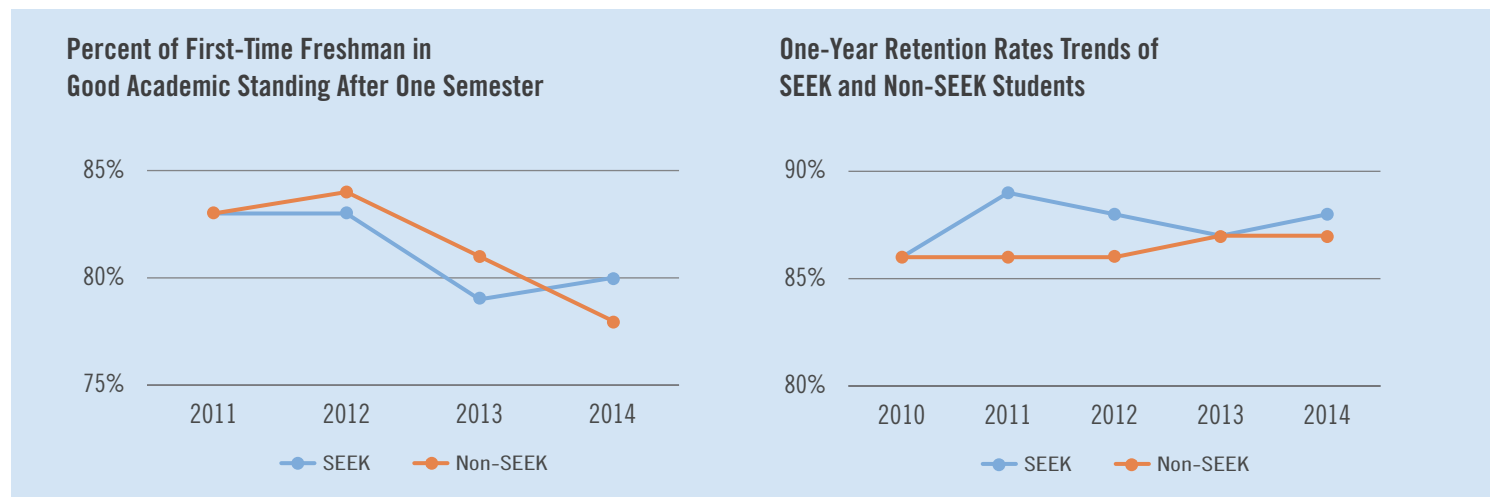
PERCY ELLIS SUTTON SEARCH FOR EDUCATION, ELEVATION, AND KNOWLEDGE (SEEK)

SEEK is the higher-education opportunity program at CUNY's senior colleges where it provides comprehensive academic, financial and social support to high-potential, low-income students. In 2011, the program was renamed to honor Assemblyman Percy Ellis Sutton for his role in opening the doors of higher education for New York's diverse residents.

Research Highlight

SEEK STUDENTS CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

SEEK students achieve staggering outcomes, particularly when you consider that these students would not be able to attend their enrolling college without SEEK. SEEK students consistently have GPAs greater than 2.0 after one semester at similar rates to non-SEEK students. In fall 2014, SEEK freshmen became more likely than non-SEEK to meet this threshold, an impressive milestone. Moreover, SEEK students are more likely to return for their sophomore year than their non-SEEK peers.



Program Highlight

SEEK CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF LEADING THE WAY FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

Signed into law on July 5, 1966, SEEK was the first state-funded higher education opportunity program in the nation. The creation of the SEEK program signaled a nationwide sea change for higher education. SEEK and the programs that followed its footsteps opened the door to a college education for millions of students who may not have pursued one in the past. In response to the needs of the new college student, SEEK programs pioneered activities like pre-freshman summer programs, freshman seminars and learning communities that are now considered the gold standard for enabling student success. In 2016, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the SEEK program, a program that helped change the definition of who is “college material.”

SEEK Providing Critical Services

SEEK students enter college with academic and financial needs that are greater than their non-SEEK peers. SEEK provides students with comprehensive resources and services that help them achieve their educational goals.

Help paying for college

SEEK provides students with additional semesters of New York State Tuition Assistance eligibility, book stipends, and covers student activity fees each semester.

In Focus 2015-2016

SEEK Providing Critical Services *continued*

Extra academic support

SEEK provides matriculating students with a rigorous pre-freshman summer program designed to prepare them for college-level coursework. Students have access to SEEK academic support resources throughout their college careers.

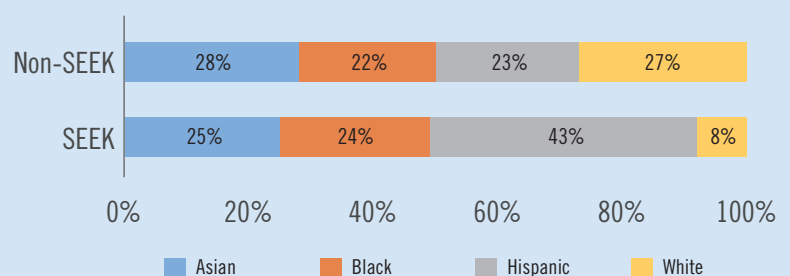
College success counseling

Graduating from college depends on more than academics. That is why SEEK students have access to professional counselors who are able to help them navigate the transition to college, academic requirements, and any personal issues that could come between them and their educational goals.

SEEK Student Diversity

Black and Latino students are increasingly entering CUNY through a community college rather than a four-year college. The SEEK program is an important gateway from high school to a CUNY senior college for these students. At CUNY senior colleges, 24% of SEEK freshmen are black, compared to 22% of non-SEEK freshmen. Strikingly, 43% of SEEK freshmen are Hispanic, compared to 23% of non-SEEK freshmen. These statistics demonstrate the important role SEEK plays in connecting black and Latino students of New York directly to a college where they can earn a four-year degree.

**Ethnicity of Fall 2014 First-Time Freshman:
SEEK and Non-SEEK Students**



Student Leadership Academy

The Student Leadership Academy (SLA) is an annual 3-day leadership retreat that brings together students from across CUNY. Each year, 50 students from SEEK and its sister program at the community colleges assemble to develop problem-solving, teamwork, and conflict resolution skills. The SLA has resulted in closer ties among students across the University, notably in the creation of the United Leaders of CUNY (ULC). The ULC is one of only two official student groups that connect students from across all CUNY colleges, providing them with the opportunity to advocate for student needs that span the University.

DID YOU KNOW...

Since the **SEEK program** was signed into **law in 1966**, more than **300,000 New Yorkers** have participated in the program, including **many notable alumni** such as **Oscar Hijuelos**, the first Latino to win a Pulitzer Prize for fiction, Tony-winner **Lillias White**, labor leader **Henry Garrido**, and **Dr. Oheneba Boachie-Adjei**, an orthopedic surgeon who heads the Scoliosis Unit at New York's Hospital for Special Surgery.