Tech Opportunities Program – 2021-22 Annual Report

We power the potential of first-generation students, low-income students, and students with disabilities. Our dedicated staff provides services and support in the following areas:
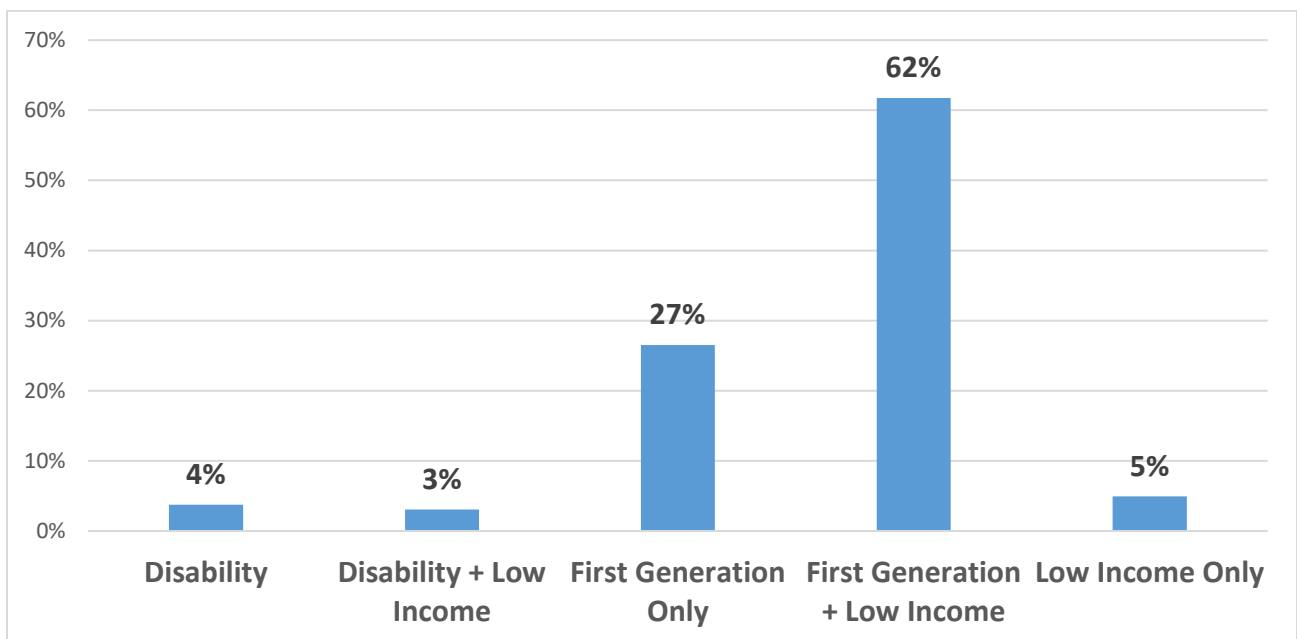
- Study skills, decision-making, and academic coaching.
- Academic, career, and financial planning, supplemental tutoring.
- Peer mentoring and networking with other students, staff and faculty.
- College success classes, faculty-led sessions, and workshops.
- Assistance with applying for financial aid, scholarships, and grants.
- Community building, cultural events, and a sense of belonging.

The TOP program is federally funded to serve 160+ qualifying students. The 2021-22 federal budget was $294,380.

WHO DID WE SERVE IN 2021-22?
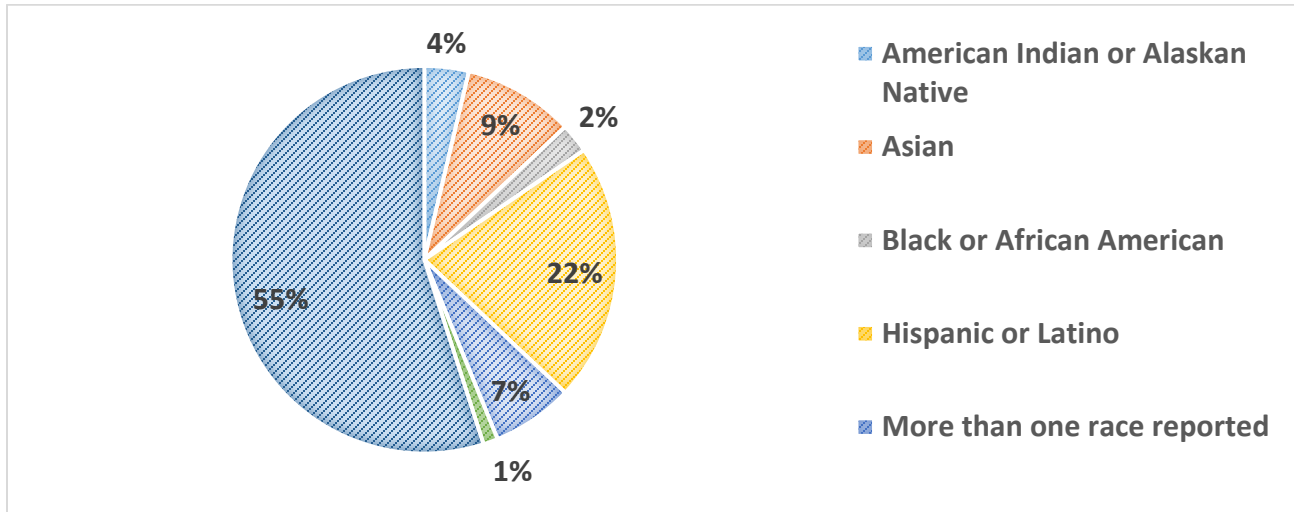
TOP Students by TRIO eligibility

Data source: Blumen – TOP
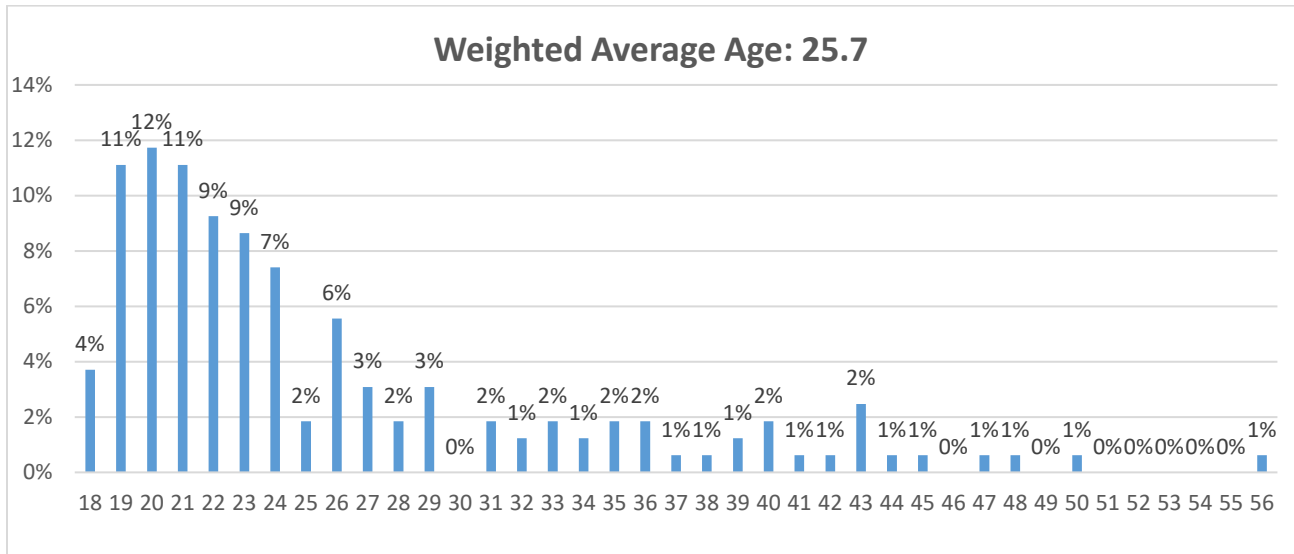
WHO DID WE SERVE IN 2021-22?
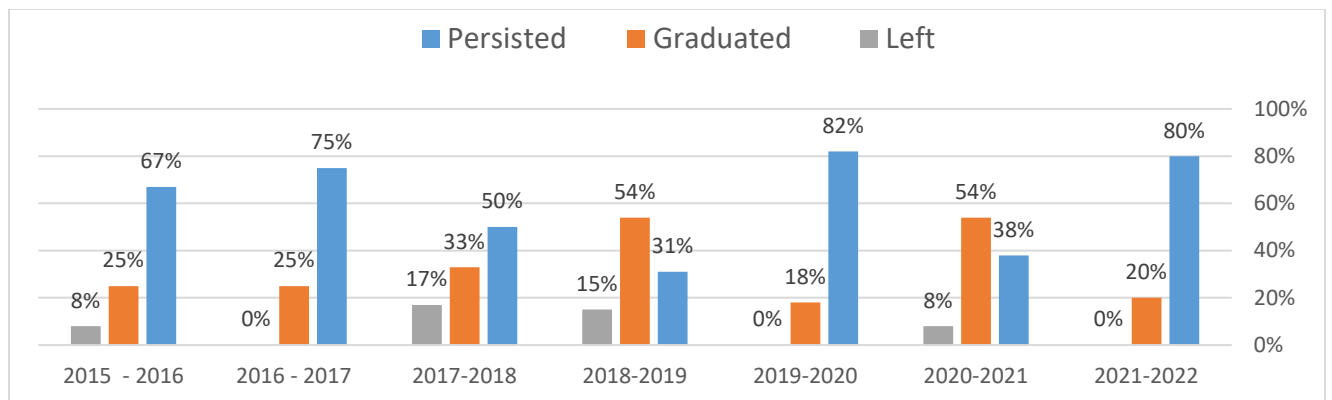
TOP students by ethnicity

Data source: Blumen – TOP

Pie chart legend:
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- More than one race reported

Values shown: 4%, 9%, 2%, 22%, 55%, 7%, 1%

TOP students by age: % of students in each age group

Data source: Blumen – TOP

Weighted Average Age: 25.7

Age	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
%	4%	11%	12%	11%	9%	9%	7%	2%	6%	3%	2%	3%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%

Impact of TOP E Emergency Grant ($10,000 per year OIT commitment)

Six-year persistence status trend of TOP students that utilized TOP E funds

Legend: Persisted · Graduated · Left

|	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Persisted	67%	75%	50%	31%	82%	38%	80%
Graduated	25%	25%	33%	54%	18%	54%	20%
Left	8%	0%	17%	15%	0%	8%	0%

Data source: Blumen – TOP

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

TOP utilizes a holistic, appreciative, and intrusive advising model to increase students' retention and graduation rates. In the 2021-22 academic year we have:

- Provided **2,096+ academic, career and financial planning sessions**.
- Hosted **13 workshops** on topics from financial literacy to networking to graduate school preparation, and career development.
- Hosted **1 alumni panel** focused on career development and networking between current students and TOP alumni
- Taught **4 student success seminar classes**, including success classes on scholarships, career, and graduate school application.
- Conducted **a Summer Bridge program for** incoming TOP students.
- Implemented **2 peer mentoring programs** with cumulative **346+** individual and group **student contacts** including **two student-led** community building **events**.
- Hosted **33+ community events**, including three welcome events, one end-of-year event, a partnership event with Klamath Community College, and two campus-based retreats
- Hosted our third annual **First-Generation Celebration** event at Oregon Tech on November 9th, 2021 to commemorate the signing of the Higher Education Act in 1965. The event featured remarks from Oregon Tech President Dr. Nagi Naganathan and a keynote address from Natural Sciences faculty member Dr. Yuehai Yang.
- Hosted a **Scholarship Month** featuring workshops and presentations on best practices for applying for scholarships in partnership with the Office of Financial Aid.
- Hosted our annual **TOP Honors Dinner to honor the TOP students** that achieved a 3.30 GPA or above in either fall or winter terms of the 2020-2021 academic year.
- **71% of TOP students** (115 out of 160 participants) received a **3.30 term GPA** at least once during the 2021-2022 academic year
- Awarded $25,557 in **TOP Grant Aid** and $8,826 in **Emergency Grants** to students.
- Hosted our **TOP Graduation Celebration** for TOP Graduates and their families.
- Checked out **24+ items** from the TOP Textbook Library

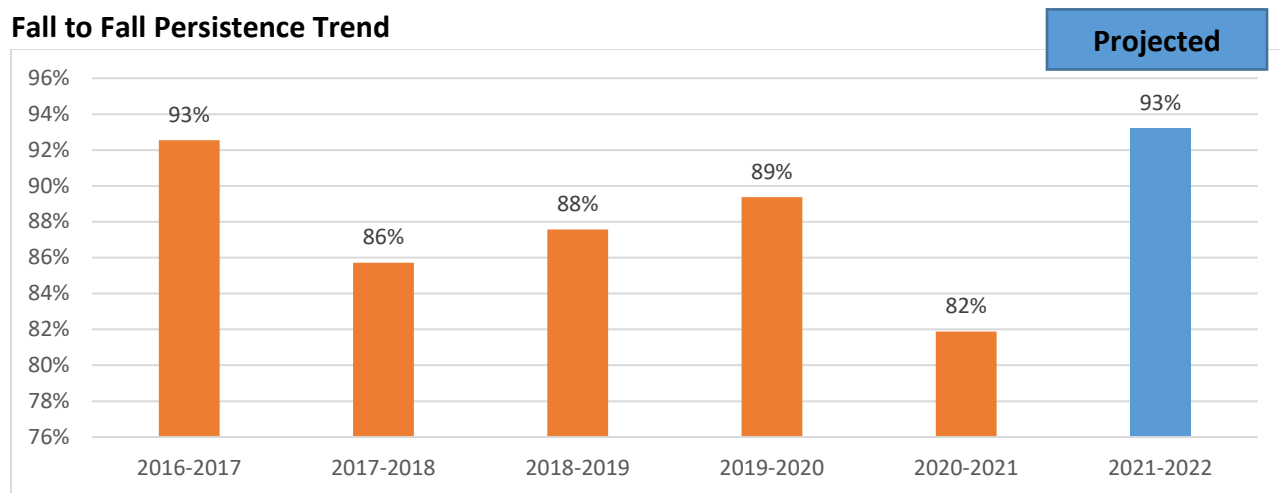**Utilization of TOP services (% of students who utilized services once a month or more often)**
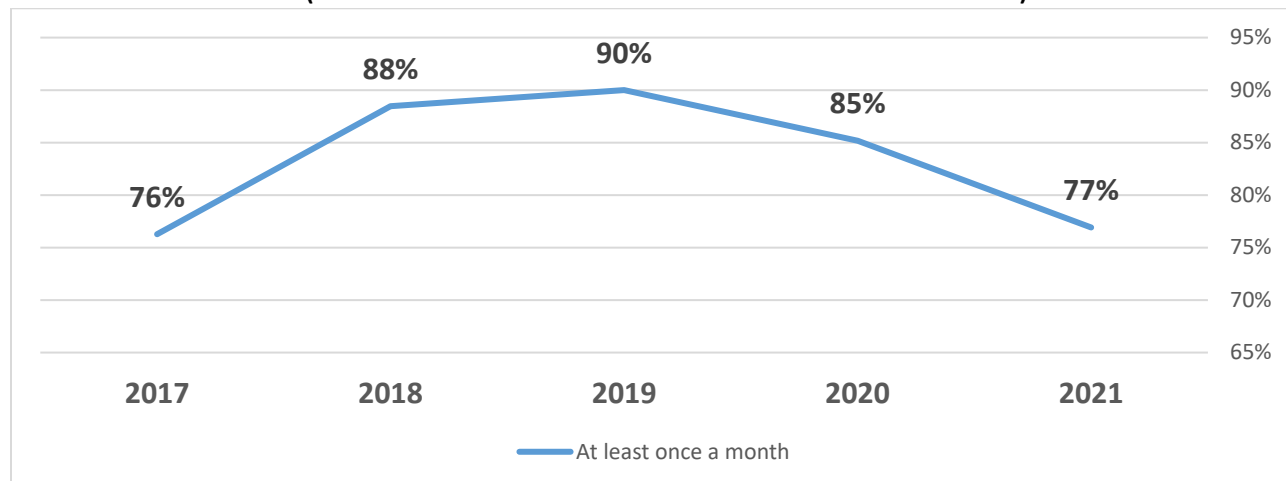
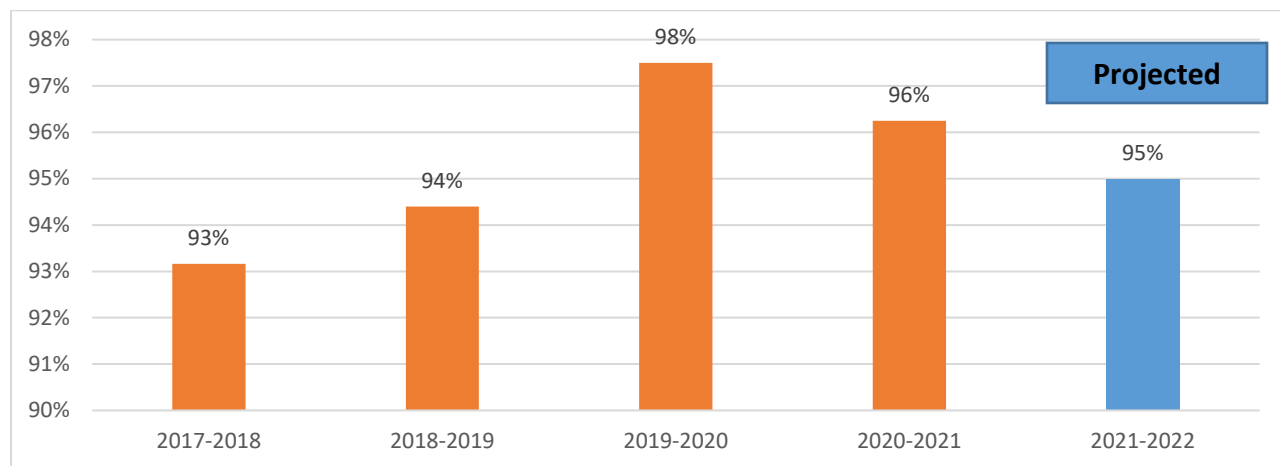
Data source: TOP End of Year Surveys

PROGRESS TOWARDS TOP'S MISSION

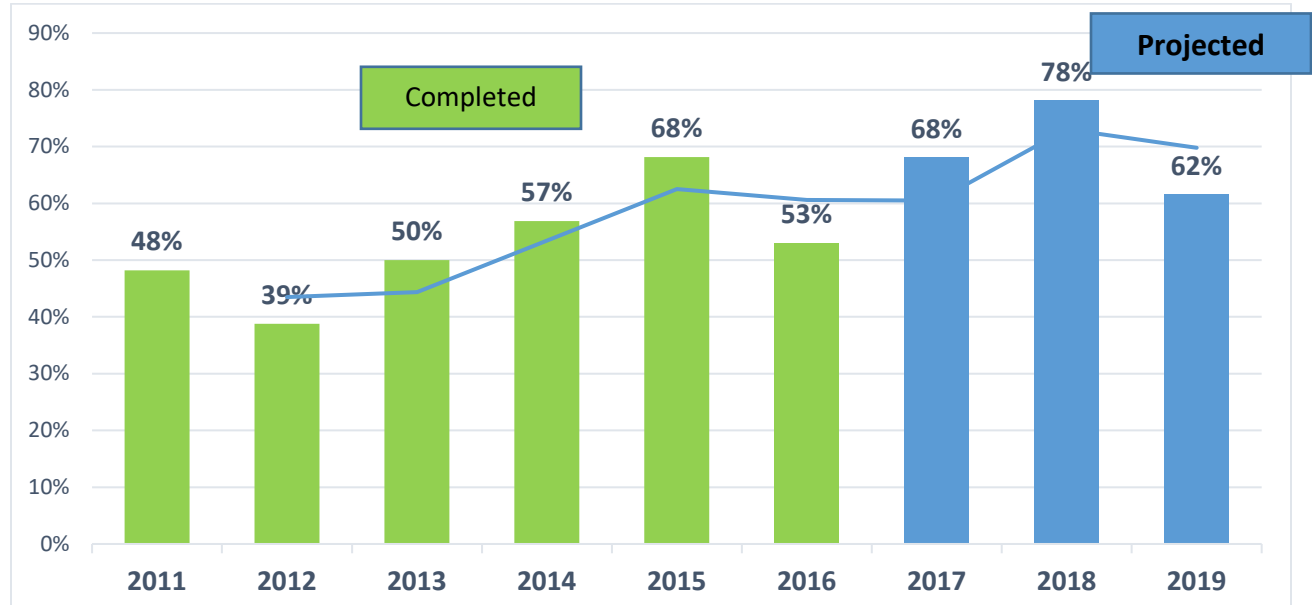**Mission**: *To significantly increase TOP students' academic achievement, retention, and graduation rates.*

Fall to Fall Persistence Trend

Projected

Year	Rate
2016-2017	93%
2017-2018	86%
2018-2019	88%
2019-2020	89%
2020-2021	82%
2021-2022	93%

Good Academic Standing Trend

Projected

Year	Rate
2017-2018	93%
2018-2019	94%
2019-2020	98%
2020-2021	96%
2021-2022	95%

Six-Year Graduation Rate in % Per Cohort Year. In 2021-22, we graduated the 2016 cohort.

Completed

Projected

| Year	Rate
2011	48%
2012	39%
2013	50%
2014	57%
2015	68%
2016	53%
2017	68%
2018	78%
2019	62%

Data source: Blumen | Internal Tracking

STUDENT STORIES

"As a non-traditional student, I felt out of place, overwhelmed and unsure about how to choose all my appropriate classes. I was happy to have TOP there to support me through some very difficult times as a student."

April Wallace
Radiologic Science
Class of 2022
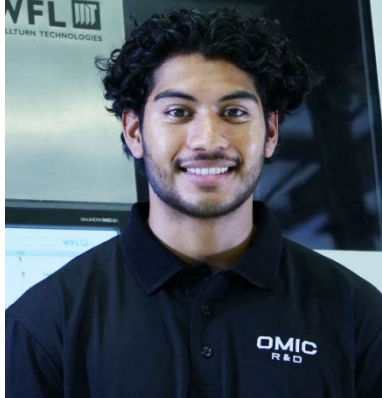
"I wish everyone knew how important it is to have hands-on learning, as well as how helpful having small class sizes can be for your education."

Mario Segura
Mechanical Engineering
Class of 2022

" I am grateful to still be part of the same program at this level of my education. I am a single mother; 1st generation student and this program pushed me to finish."

Jessica Flescher
Applied Psychology
Class of 2022

See more student stories at www.oit.edu/top

Ashland Cultural Trip

TOP Honors

First-Generation Celebration Dinner

Fall Retreat

STUDENTS' FEEDBACK
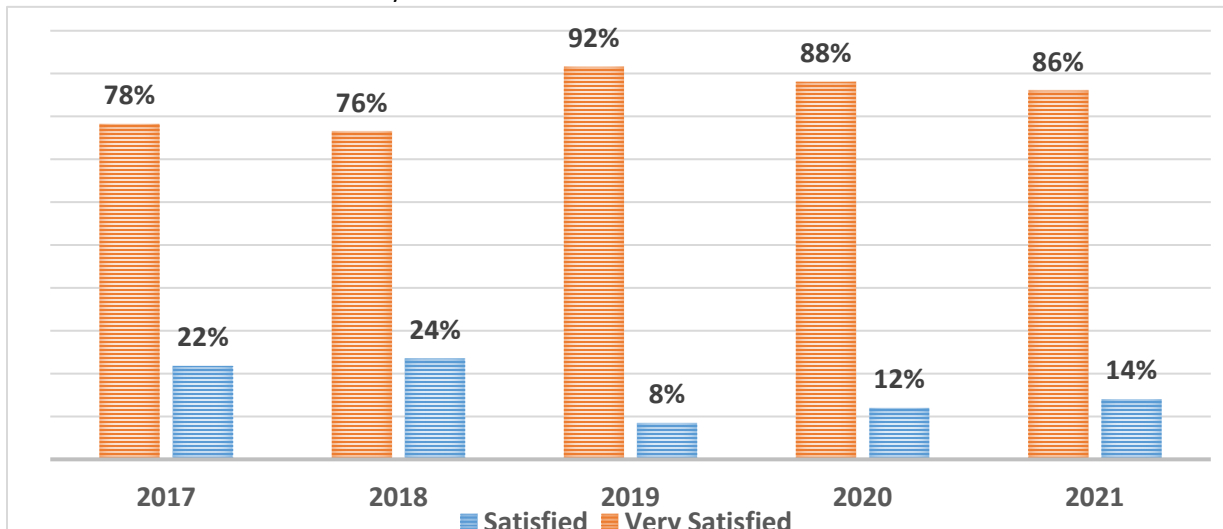
What do you like most about TOP?

- *"The fact that I can turn to TOP staff to try and find a solution to any school issues."*
- *"I love how much my advisors care about me. Whenever I walk into their office, I feel valued, heard and supported. These advisors create a sense of belonging and help alleviate my imposter syndrome."*
- *"I absolutely LOVED the bridge program. Being new to the university, it gave me so much insight on different programs within OIT and gave me useful information on becoming a successful student. The TOP classes that are offered are topical and give a real-life agenda for the curriculum taught. They offer mentoring other than academic advisors and give you resources to programs that may be needed by TOP qualifying students. The peer mentor program is exceptional because you have someone in your (potential) field that can relate to you and that can help you along the way with any questions or just make you feel more comfortable. My personal peer mentor opened doors for me that I don't believe I would've had if not for the TOP program."*
- *"A community-focused event, interaction with the advisors in a space that is cognizant of school without being solely focused on it, the spectrum of support that advisors and peers provide."*

What would you like to add or change about TOP?

- *"I wish TOP Tuesday's happened more often on other days as Tuesday was a lab day for me. I would try to make it out, but the group would be packed up and out by 3pm."*
- *"It would be great to have a large, central study room for all Toppers!"*
- *"I find the Midterm Assessment check-ins a little stressful-because they add just another thing to our already "full plates".... But otherwise, everything is wonderful."*
- *"There isn't much I would change; I think the program offers a nice level of support and is very well-represented by the staff. I wish there were more of you though since your workload sounds incredibly heavy."*
- *"A cooking class offered to learn how to adult in college."*
- *"More off campus programs."*
- *"Classes on how to do basic adult tasks such as cooking, sewing, etc. Kind of like a Home Economics class."*

Students' Satisfaction with TOP

Data source: TOP End of Year Surveys

Bar chart of students' satisfaction by year:
- 2017: Very Satisfied 78%, Satisfied 22%
- 2018: Very Satisfied 76%, Satisfied 24%
- 2019: Very Satisfied 92%, Satisfied 8%
- 2020: Very Satisfied 88%, Satisfied 12%
- 2021: Very Satisfied 86%, Satisfied 14%

Legend: Satisfied | Very Satisfied

2021-22 GOALS: STATUS UPDATE

1. **Receive all possible prior experience (PE) points** for year two of the 2020-2025 grant cycle. This next grant year will be the first in which PEs are awarded by the Department of Education.
Status: We are on track to receive all PE points for year two of the grant cycle. This is the first year in the grant cycle when PE points will count towards refunding for the 2025-2030 grant cycle. These points will make our application more competitive when we refund.

2. Implement the **Plan of Operations** as outlined in the 2020-25 proposal. Adjust based on COVID-19 health/safety guidelines as well as prior year's programmatic evaluations.
Status: In conjunction with university guidance on COVID-19, we implemented the Plan of Operations and adjusted where necessary due to the ongoing nature of the pandemic. A majority of our services were provided in-person this past academic year with virtual services offered to students who were not able to attend in-person.

3. Implement our new intake process using the College Student Inventory (CSI) to better match and align student needs with TOP services and institutional referrals.
Status: This goal is completed for the 2021-22 academic year, and we administered 68 intake assessments for the 2021 cohort. The current persistence rate for the 2021 cohort is 93%.

4. Achieve a **53%+ graduation rate** for the 2016 cohort.
Status: This goal has been accomplished, and we will receive prior experience points for the 2016 cohort when we submit the annual performance report to the Department of Education in the fall.

LOOKING AHEAD: 2022-23 PROGRAM GOALS

5. **Receive all possible prior experience (PE) points** for year three of the 2020-2025 grant cycle. This next grant year will be the second year in which PEs are awarded by the Department of Education.

6. Implement the **Plan of Operations** as outlined in the 2020-25 proposal. Adjust based on COVID-19 health/safety guidelines as well as prior year's programmatic evaluations.

7. Implement recommendations from **NAEOP (regional TRIO association) Peer Review team** regarding grant administration and program management, activities, and fiscal management. This peer review served as a mock audit of our program in order to better strengthen it in the event we are audited by the Department of Education.

8. Implement our new financial literacy service, Financial Literacy 101, for the 2022-2023 academic year. New TOP students will utilize this tool as a financial literacy module during their intake into the program. All students will have access to the Financial Literacy modules, and TOP staff will work to integrate these resources into our regularly offered services (financial counseling, student success seminar courses, etc.)

9. Achieve a **60%+ graduation rate** for the 2016 cohort.