

Changing Our Teaching to Increase Student Engagement, Persistence, and Equity

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All

for

2015-2016

**WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL
(WIG)**

Improving
Fall to Fall
Persistence from
45% to 54%
by Fall 2016

2016 - 2017
Wildly Important Goal
(WIG)



for

ALL



Persistence Rate
of all Oakton Students

Fall to Fall Persistence

● 2014-15 ● 2015-16

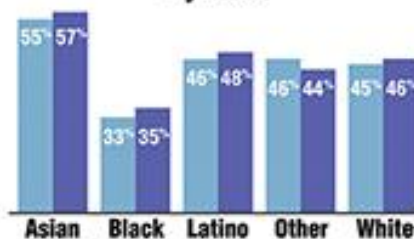
Student Persistence Rate



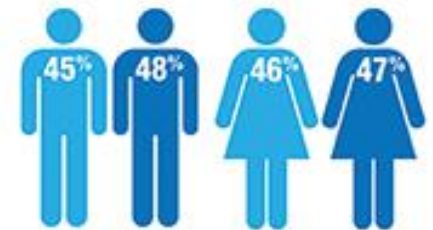
By Age



By Race



By Sex

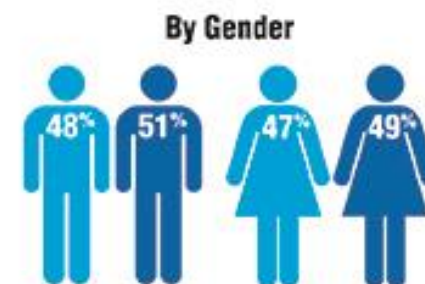
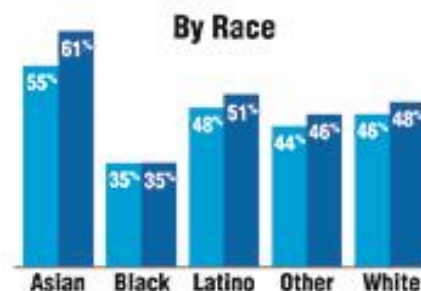
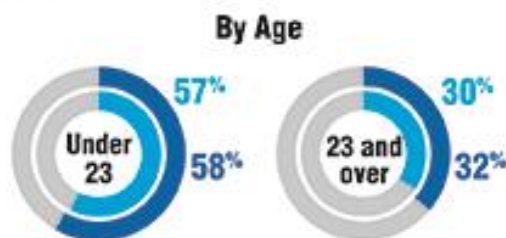


2017-18 Wildly Important Goal (WIG)

Fall to Fall New Student Persistence Rate



● 2015-16 ● 2016-17



Faculty Initiative for Student Persistence

● 2016-17

Faculty members who volunteered for the project incorporated four best-practice activities, including: learning the names of their students quickly and having their students to create community in the classroom; scheduling a fifteen-minute conference with each student; presenting class requirements clearly and setting high academic standards; and making an appropriate assignment as early as possible in order to give students early feedback. In fall 2016, 132 faculty participated, impacting over 1,200 students and 25 percent of course sections.

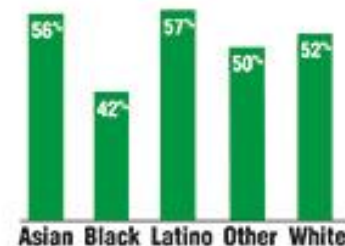
Persistence Rate



By Age



By Race



By Gender



Beginnings in Fall Semester, 2016



- Suggestion from Brad Phillips, Achieving the Dream Coach, to Humanities and Philosophy Department
- Similar program at Odessa College
- Similar program in our Biology Department
- Program initiated and led by faculty at Oakton

Persistence Project Guidelines for the First Three Weeks



- Learning names and having students learn one another's names
- Holding 15-minute, one-to-one conferences in order to get to know students
- Giving feedback on an assignment or quiz before the end of the third week
- Setting clear and high academic standards, but not having policies that easily doom students

Commitments for the Rest of the Semester



- Acquainting students with resources and opportunities at Oakton
- Talking with students about completing an associate degree or certificate
- Attending at least one co-curricular event with students
- Contacting students who are struggling in class and offering them help
- Participating in assessment activities for the project as a whole

Immediate Reactions and Rapid Growth



- Amazing transformation of classes
- Students' enthusiasm about the project
- Decision to expand as rapidly as possible
- Customization by departments to meet the needs of their disciplines
- Six semesters...More than 200 faculty members.....22 departments and programs.....Face-to-face and online classes

One-to-One Conferences and Genuine Bonds with Our Students Are Key

- Getting to know students right away
- Understanding the challenges facing our students as well as their strengths
- Understanding what our students think of their experience at Oakton
- Transforming office hours
- Students want us to listen!
- Possible implications for diminishing inequity

Challenges

A stylized, light-colored logo of a human figure with arms raised, set against a dark teal background.

- Difficulties for adjunct faculty...offices, time, knowledge of Oakton, compensation
- One-to-one conferences are challenging for some instructors
- Faculty concern for students in non-participating sections
- Burn-out from faculty...more work and more stress
- Defining our goals and priorities

Solutions

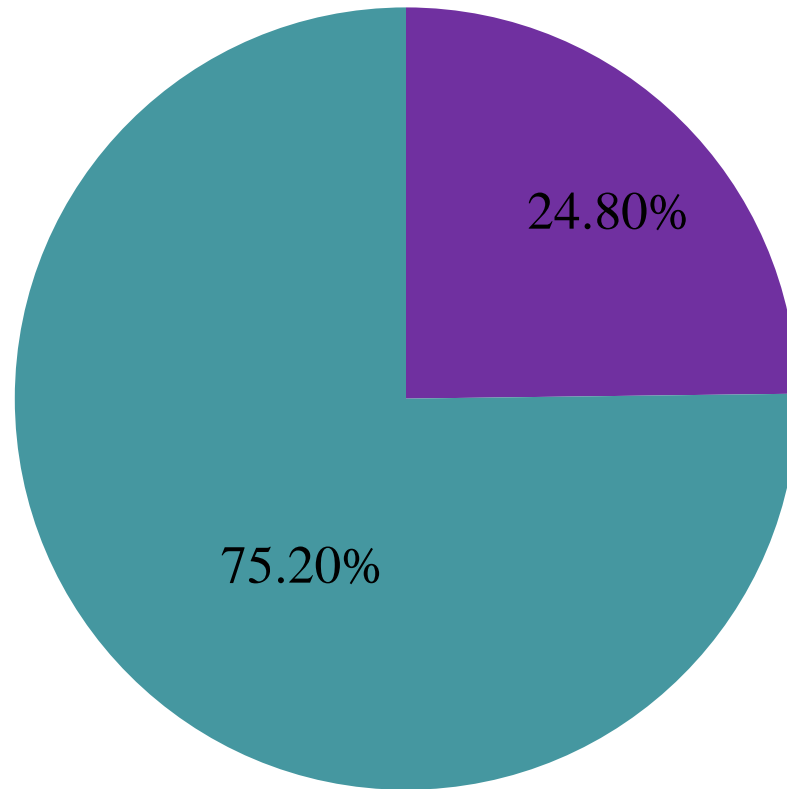


- Attention to the needs of adjunct faculty
- Professional development both on how to conduct one-to-one conferences and on understanding Oakton's resources
- Learning how to take care of our own emotional needs
- Establishing a mentoring system and convincing all departments to participate
- Implementing the project in every class is not a reasonable goal for most instructors nor for the institution as a whole

Participation in Fall 2016

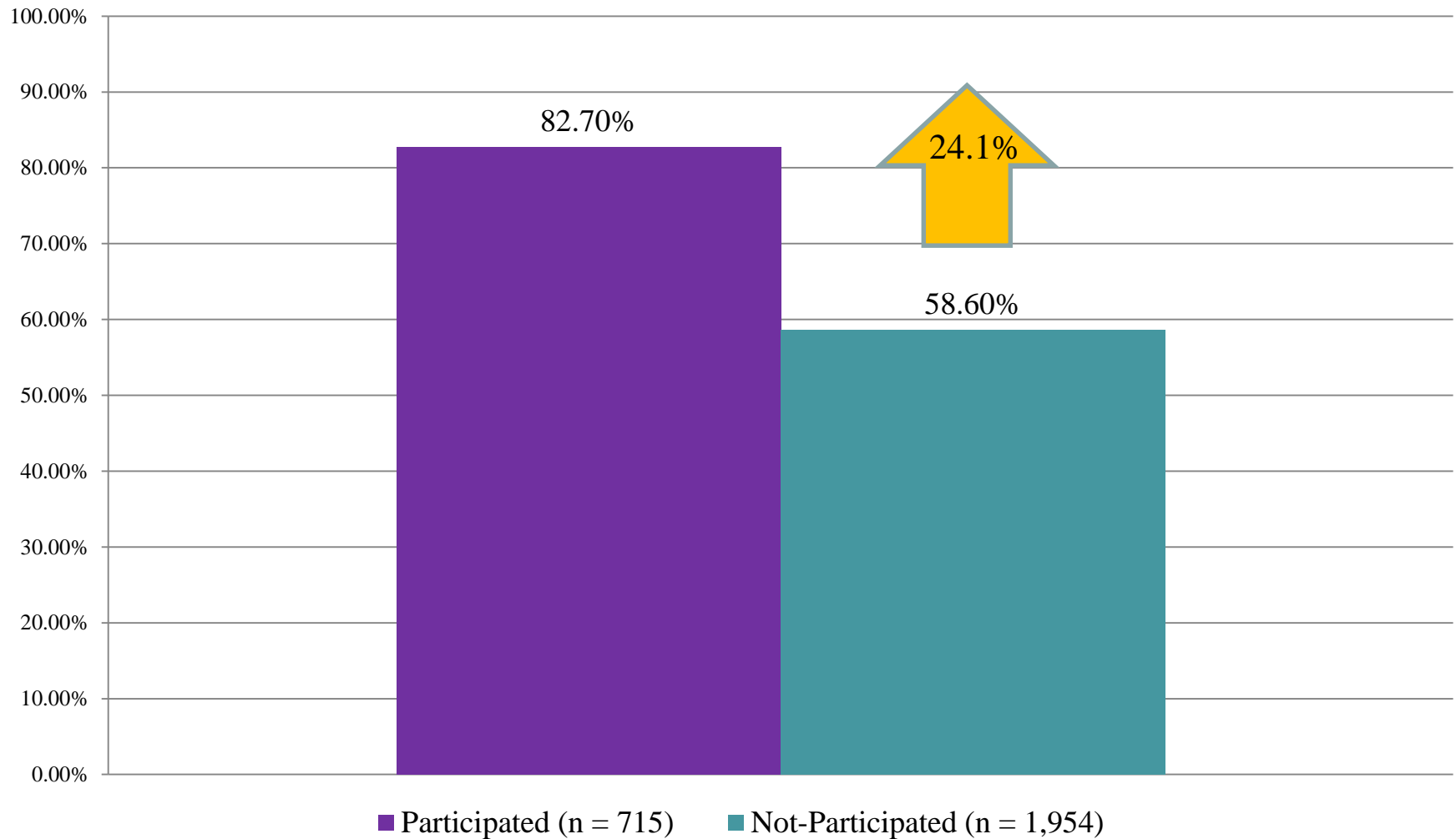


One quarter of students enrolled in at least one course section participating in the Faculty Initiative for Student Persistence

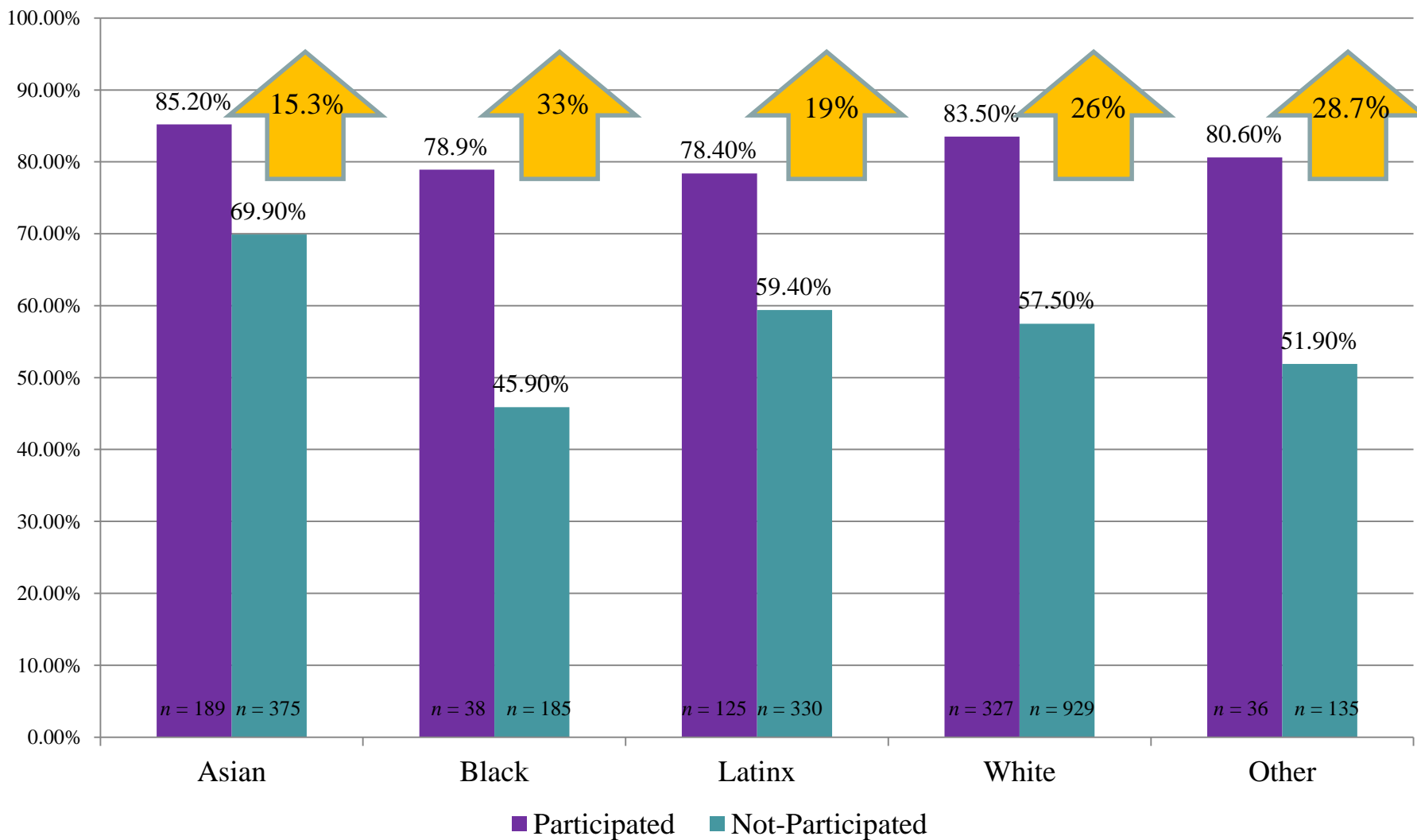


■ Participated (n = 2,388) ■ Not-Participated (n = 7,024)

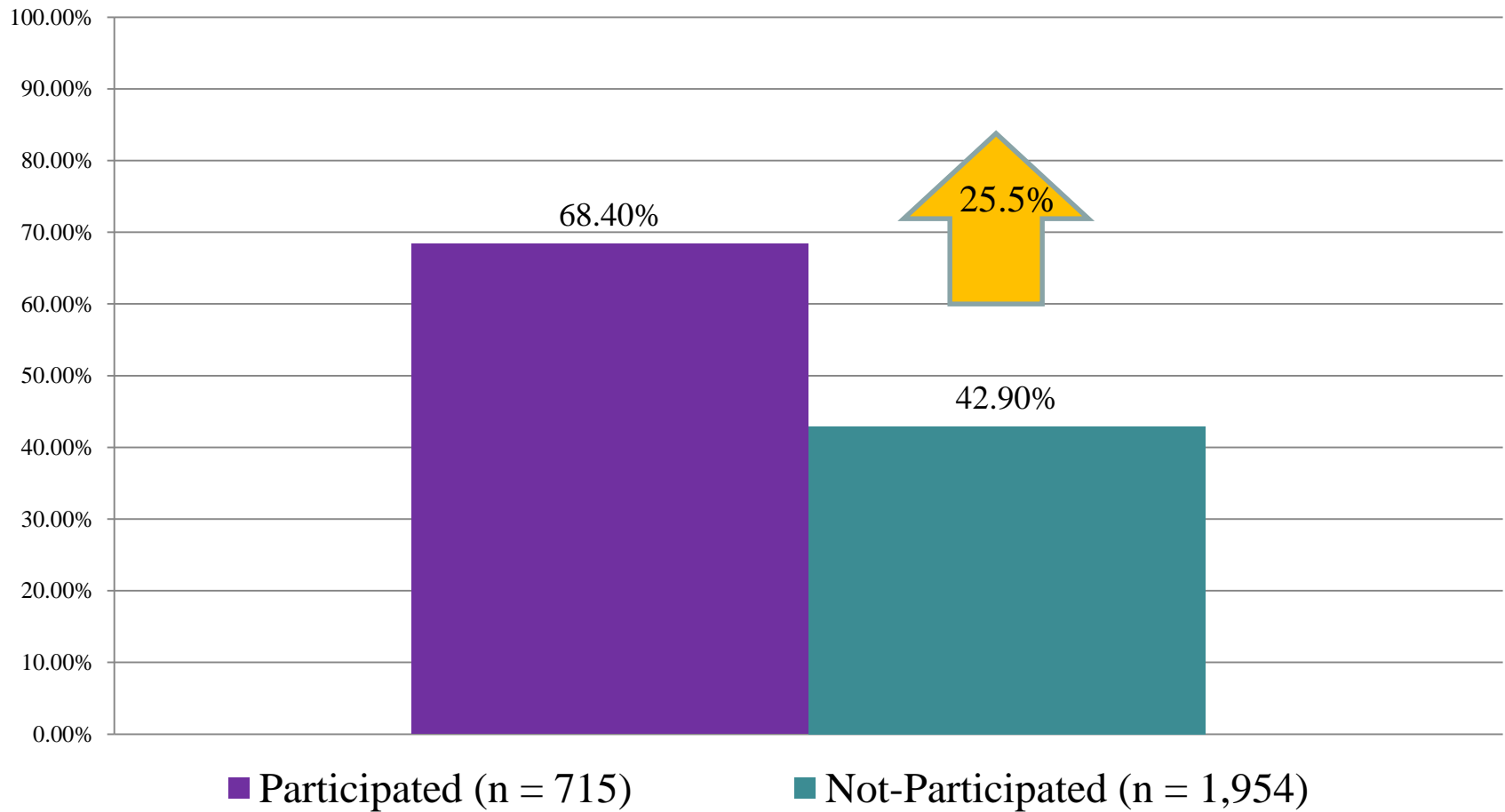
Fall 2016 to Spring 2017 Persistence Rates: New Students Enrolled in Fall 2016



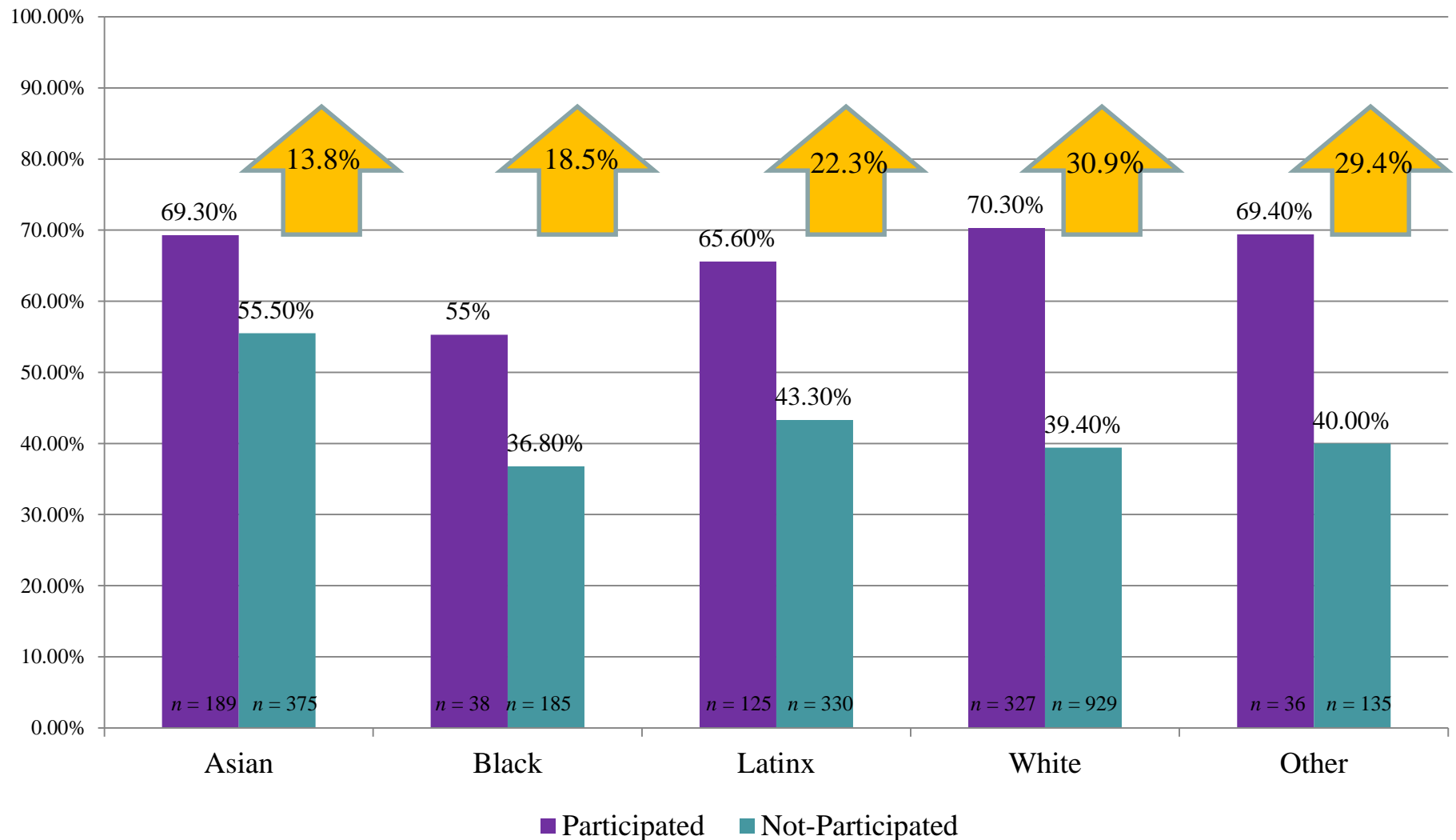
Fall 2016 to Spring 2017 Persistence Rates: New Students Enrolled in Fall 2016 by Race and Ethnicity



Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Persistence Rates: New Students Enrolled in Fall 2016



Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Persistence Rates: New Students Enrolled in Fall 2016 by Race and Ethnicity.



Additional Quantitative Data



- Persistence rates are similar for the Fall 2016-Fall 2017 & Fall 2016-Spring 2017 cohort:
 - New students
 - Returning students
 - All students enrolled
 - Race and ethnicity
- There are no gender differences.

Conclusions



- The project contributes to the overall increase in retention
- Oakton is a major transfer institution and this is not adequately represented in our data
- Racial impact in retention changes from the Fall-Spring to the Fall-Fall
 - Complexity of students' challenges
 - A greater effort for underserved communities
 - Offering support to students for non-academic needs

Current and Future Directions

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- Last semester, we included a new measure to analyze Faculty-Student Engagement:
 - Sense of belonging
 - Personal relationship with faculty
 - Validation from faculty
 - Welcomeness to engage inside & outside class
- In the future, we will conduct focus groups with students and faculty members.

Faculty Testimonials



"The gift of these deeper connections with my students is a payment that cannot be measured, knowing what a difference it has made not just in their lives, but my own."

"You learn quickly during the interviews about the many problems our students are dealing with."

"Once you do it in one class section, you want to try to do it in all of your classes."

Faculty Testimonials



“Just the fact that when students come to your office once, they tend to come back for a variety of reasons.”

“It’s forced me to be a better student of Oakton.”

“Somehow it makes you do what you’ve always been doing in your classes in a much more comprehensive and intentional way.”

“It has helped me form close and lasting bonds with my students.”

Faculty Testimonials



“I’m stunned by how many online students make it into campus to meet me.”

“The relationships I have formed have been transformative.”

“I learned a lot about students who most certainly would NOT have come to see me.”



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- <https://vimeo.com/178906854>