

Authors

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INTRODUCTION

GeoRCSS is a developing program at UT Austin to encourage and support students from diverse backgrounds to major in the Geosciences. We target potential transfer students from community colleges (2YC), which have higher percentages of non-traditional and minority students than is represented in the Geosciences at UT Austin. 2YC students have multiple barriers to successful transition into 4YC institutions and our program seeks to soften or remove those barriers to increase diversity within our program.

Our current work has focused on Austin Community College (ACC), which has seen a 70% decrease in Geology majors since 2016. We wish to share our strategies and seek to develop relationships with 2YC across Texas and the nation.

Increase recruitment and success of transfer students in the Geosciences with existing programs and new collaborations

Student Support Services and Plans

Peer Learning Communities

To develop community for transfer students, we create PLCs among cohorts of 2YC and 4YC students starting in the freshman year to eliminate some of the difficulties that 2YC students have in integrating after transfer.

Authentic Research Experiences

UTA and 2YC students participate in AREs as teams with UTA faculty. AREs will be scaffolded from Freshman to Senior year with increasing responsibility and training as students gain more experience.

Curriculum Alignment

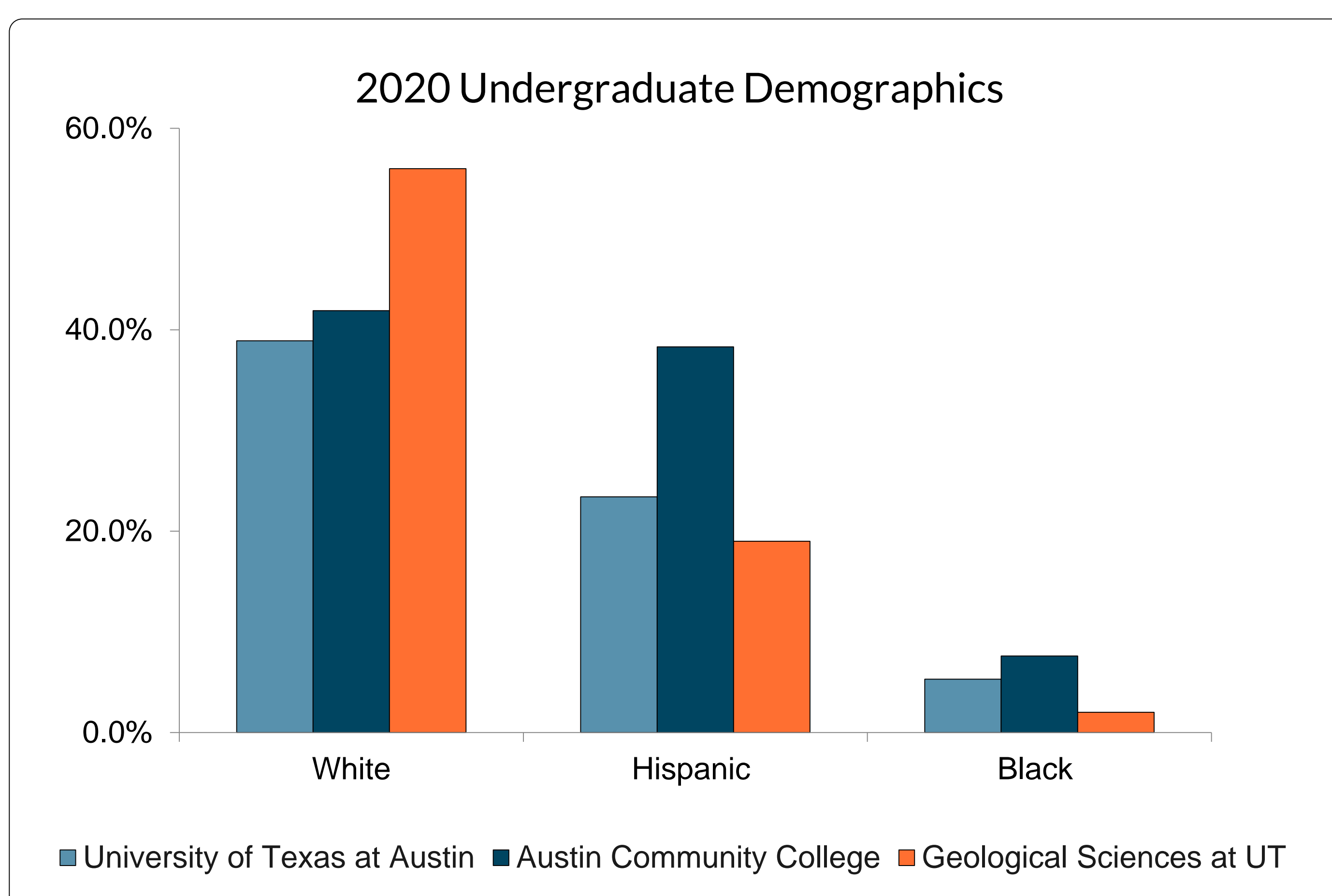
We aligned curriculum between ACC & UTA so that scholars enter UTA prepared in the lower division science classes. This enables students from both institutions to form teams and study together.

Advising

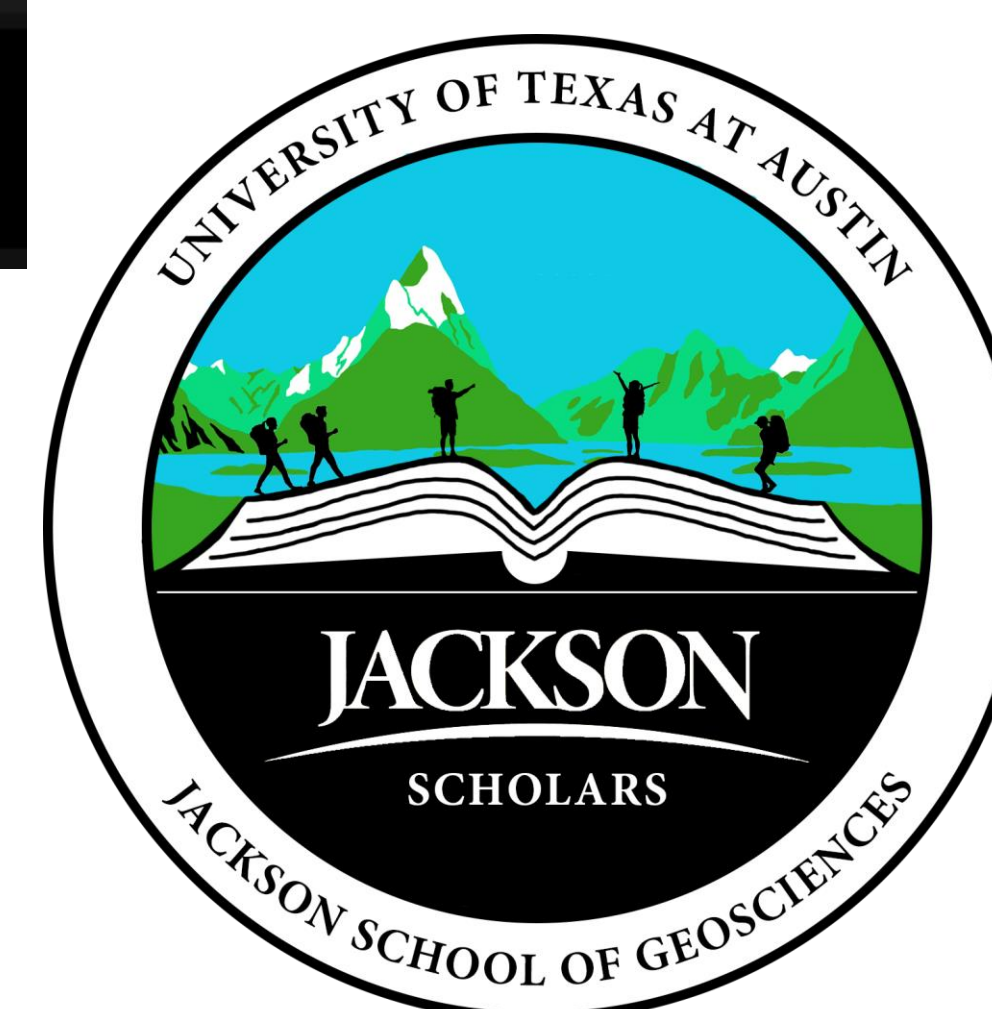
Students receive mentoring and advising from faculty at ACC and UT Austin about expectations for the GeoRCSS program and required coursework.

Progress

- Leverage Jackson Scholars community to promote GeoRCSS at 2YC and develop first PLCs
- Joint field trips with ACC and UTA students
- Three ACC students in AREs
- Two successful transfers



Jackson Scholars from UT Austin who will form the first peer learning community with 2YC students



Collaborative field trip with undergraduates from ACC and UTA