Women's Resource Center Sponsored Student Program Assessment – 2011-2012

Description of Project

Each year, the Women's Resource Center (WRC) sponsors students for admission to the University and provides support for these students, in collaboration with University College (UC). The WRC and UC worked with the Student Affairs Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Office (AER) to assess the WRC's Sponsored Student Program (SSP). The primary purpose of the project was to provide information to the WRC and UC about which of the different aspects of the program were most beneficial and about any gaps in the services being provided. This information would then be used for program improvement. The project also provided information about the overall benefit of the program for students and the additional services they utilized outside of the program. In addition, the individual assessments served to test students' knowledge. The program coordinator could then correct any errors and reinforce their knowledge. Further, the individual assessments provided a reflective space for students to consider how to apply the new knowledge to themselves. *Note:* Campus Labs is the software program utilized by the Division of Student Affairs for survey administration and data management.

Specific Assessment Instrument Descriptions

Orientation Evaluation: The Orientation was a day-long event in which the WRC staff reviewed the mandatory components of the program, introduced students to the WRC and to their UC advisor, and brought in a group of previous sponsored students to share their insight. The evaluation included 10 questions that tested their knowledge about the mandatory components of the program and about different resources available to them. It also asked the following open-ended questions: one thing they learned from the previous WRC sponsored students, one campus resource they plan to use or find out more about, and any questions they have. Students completed this evaluation on paper and then WRC and AER staff inputted the data into Campus Labs.

Workshop Evaluations: There were five workshops during the year which students were expected to attend: "You at the U: Balancing School/Work/Family/Friends" (speaker from Learning Enhancement Program, primarily about time management), "Skills for Success: Knowing Your Resources" (representatives from several offices to share about their services), "Three 'R's of Scholarships: Research, Recommendations, & Writing" (speaker from Financial Aid), "Getting Your Money's Worth in College" (speaker from the Personal Money Management Center), and "Learn How to Successfully Navigate the Financial Aid Process" (speaker from Financial Aid). Each evaluation asked three or four questions about the specific workshop, three or four questions about advising and their experiences with advising, two questions about the program overall, and any questions the student had about the program. Students completed this evaluation on paper and then WRC and AER staff inputted the data into Campus Labs. WRC staff responded to questions any students asked on the evaluations by sending an e-mail to the group and providing additional information or referrals as needed.

Mid-Year and End-of-Year Assessments: In January and in May, students completed an assessment online about their experience in the program. Questions included a student report of the number of contacts they had with WRC and UC, their satisfaction with these staff, and about other services they had utilized. It also included several open-ended questions about the experiences they have had, challenges they anticipate, and resources available to address these challenges.

FemTom Pre and Post Tests: The FemTom is an instrument also titled "Beliefs, Feelings, and Activities Scale" that asks respondents about issues related to empowerment and diversity. There are 32 scaled items and six statements which respondents answer for different dimensions of diversity. Students completed the pre on paper during orientation and the post online with the end-of-year assessment.

Sponsored Students / Respondents

The roster at the beginning of the Fall Semester consisted of 19 sponsored students. Students were asked to include the last four digits of their student ID number so that individual responses could be connected across projects, and students were informed that their responses would not be shared with their names. Because all students who attended the Orientation and workshops completed the paper evaluations, the student ID number provides information about how involved each student was and the overall level of attendance. Table 1 provides the number of sponsored students, the number of other students (e.g., friends or previous sponsored students), and the total number of students at each workshop and who completed the evaluation. The low attendance for the Spring Semester workshops is discussed further below. The percentage of sponsored students who attended a given number of workshops can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Students at Each Workshop

Workshop	Sponsored Students Attended	Others Attended	Total Attended/ Number of Respondents
1 – Time Management	15	3	18
2 – Campus Resources	9	1	10
3 – Scholarships	15	1	16
4 – Money Management	3	0	6*
5 – Financial Aid	2	0	2

* Three students visited the Personal Money Management Center individually and completed the evaluation after their visit.

Table 2. Number of Workshops Attended by Sponsored Students.

Number of Workshops Attended	Percent of Sponsored Students
1	26.3%
2	31.6%
3	21.1%
4	10.5%
5	10.5%

Results

Orientation Evaluation:

Seventeen of the 19 sponsored students attended the orientation in August and completed the Orientation Evaluation. The Orientation Evaluation included 10 questions to test their knowledge about policies for sponsored students and services offered to them. Students correctly answered almost all of the questions. Exceptions include the required minimum GPA (23.5% said the wrong GPA or that there is no minimum) and that Ed Psych 2600 Strategies for College Success is *not* a required component (23.5% said it was). From the open-ended questions, students learned to ask for help and to meet with their advisors from the panel of previous sponsored students. One student said, "Asking for help isn't just okay, it's awesome." Many students identified tutoring, Math Lab, and Writing Center as important campus resources. One remaining question for several students was about financial aid.

Workshop Evaluations:

Note: Comparisons across projects only include Workshops 1-3 because of the low number of respondents in Workshops 4 and 5.
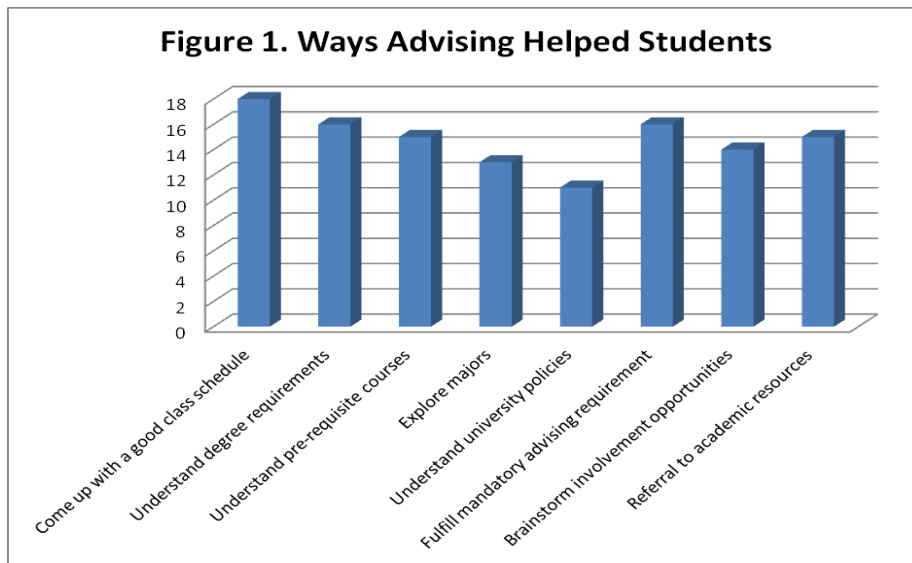
Workshop Questions:
There were one or two questions specific to each workshop that tested students' knowledge and prompted them to apply that knowledge. For the time management workshop, common strategies that the students planned to apply were to plan ahead using calendaring, avoid procrastination, to break big assignments into smaller tasks and starting the task, to take breaks, and to find ways to motivate themselves. They were also able to identify many of the benefits of effective time scheduling. From the panel of campus resources, many students planned to use the Tutoring Center and Writing Center, along with Career Services, the Counseling Center, and Financial Aid Office. From the workshop about scholarships, students learned two specific websites to visit for lists of scholarships, advice for writing

personal statements (and to go to the Writing Center for additional feedback), and guidelines for asking for letters of recommendations. The most common action step following the money management workshop was to track spending.
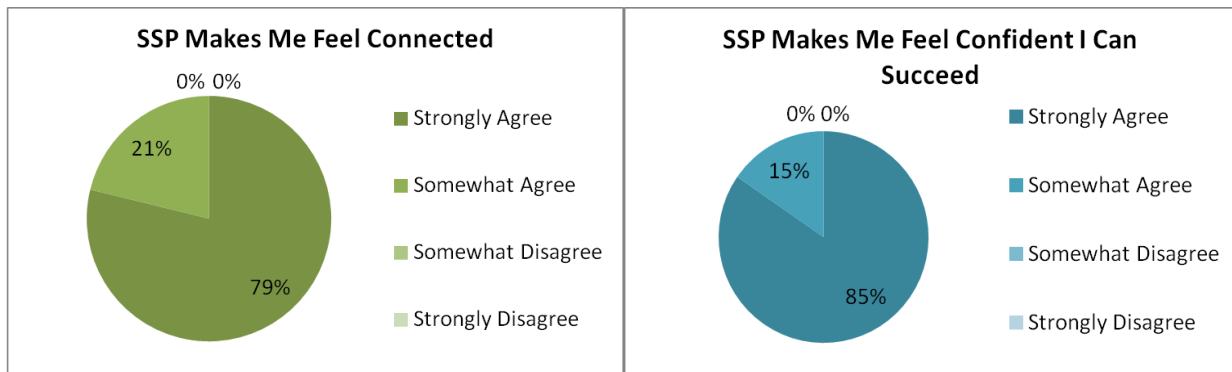
There were also two scaled questions about the workshops. The time management workshop was the most relevant to the students, though all five projects had a mean of 3.6 or higher on a 4-point scale. All attendees agreed that they have a better understanding of how to effectively schedule their time, about campus resources available to them, about the scholarship process, how to track their expenses, and how to fill out the FAFSA after the workshops.

Advising Questions:

When asked about their last advising appointment, most students said it was somewhat or very helpful, with an overall average of 3.57 on a 4-point scale. Almost all students recognized that one way to prepare for advising appointments is to write down questions (95.9%), while fewer recognized to come on time/come early or to bring DARS report (65.3% and 49.0%, respectively). Students utilized advising in a variety of ways, as demonstrated by Figure 1.

Figure 1. Ways Advising Helped Students

Come up with a good class schedule; Understand degree requirements; Understand pre-requisite courses; Explore majors; Understand university policies; Fulfill mandatory advising requirement; Brainstorm involvement opportunities; Referral to academic resources

Overall Program Questions:

SSP Makes Me Feel Connected

0% 0%
21%
79%

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

SSP Makes Me Feel Confident I Can Succeed

0% 0%
15%
85%

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Mid-Year and End-of-Year Assessments:

One purpose of these surveys were to gather students' reports on the number of contacts they had with the WRC and UC and their impression of these visits. Because twice as many students responded to the mid-year assessment, it is difficult to make comparisons, but the following charts provide the number of contacts that students had with WRC and UC each semester. One particular concern with the end-of-year assessment is that students who felt more benefitted by or connected to the program may have been more likely to complete the assessment. Themes from the comments included that they felt supported and helped, and that the staff are "awesome." One person said that the program "makes me motivated to keep going." When asked how well students felt they had utilized their advising sessions, many people said "very well," and identified ways that their advisor had helped them. In the mid-year assessment, three students of fourteen identified that they needed to do better. Several students said that they could improve even more next semester by asking more questions (including writing down questions ahead of time) and by meeting more often with their advisor.
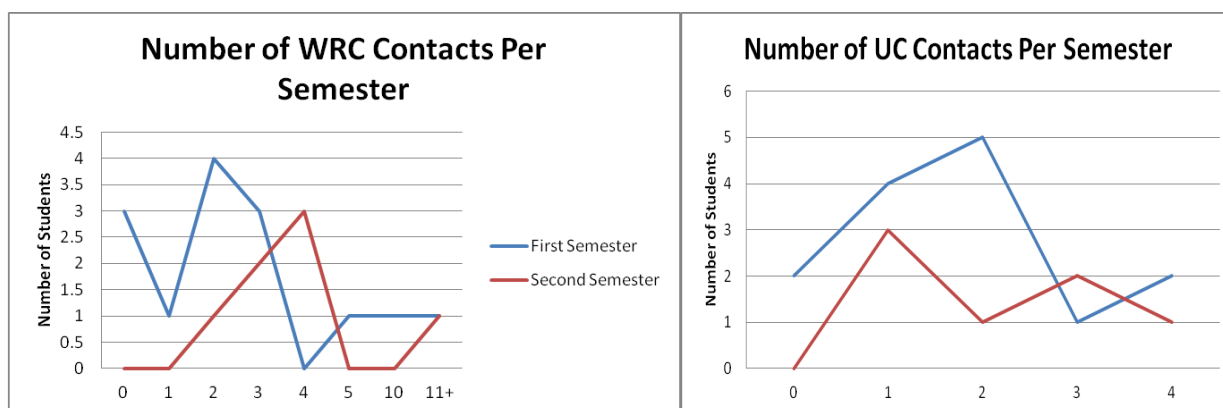
	First Semester			Second Semester		
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree
Workshops were beneficial	64%	29%	7%	86%	14%	0%
WRC staff available	93%	7%	0%	100%	0%	0%
WRC staff supportive	86%	14%	0%	100%	0%	0%
UC advisor available	86%	14%	0%	100%	0%	0%
UC advisor provided relevant info	86%	14%	0%	100%	0%	0%

Students were also asked about other offices they have utilized. Students have used ASUU Tutoring, the Bennion Center, Career Services, the Counseling Center, Financial Aid office, LGBT Resource Center, Marriot Library, Math Lab, Supplemental Instruction, Trio, and the Writing Center. All students felt that they received the services they needed from these offices, and several comments indicated that the offices were "very helpful."

	SSP Makes Me Feel Connected		SSP Makes Me Feel Confident I Can Succeed	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Strongly Agree	77%	71%	85%	57%
Somewhat Agree	15%	29%	15%	29%
Somewhat Disagree	8%	0%	0%	14%
Strongly Disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%

Students were again asked if the SSP made them feel connected to the U and confident that they could succeed academically at the U. When asked for experiences or elements of the program that helped them feel connected and confident they could success, there were a wide range of responses: the cohort, making friends, getting specific and practical advice, the support system, the workshops, being able to walk into the WRC, and experiences beyond the SSP. At the end of spring, multiple students also mentioned the UC 1010 class and the instructor for the class as helping them feel connected and confident they could succeed.

Finally students were asked what challenges they anticipate for next semester and resources to help them face these challenges. The most common challenge students identified was the demands of school, work, and friends and finding a balance. Other concerns including being organized, study skills, difficult coursework, money, focus, health, and the uncertainty of future plans. Students identified that they could find support from the WRC, their advisors, Trio, Tutoring, Career Center, Counseling Center, family and friends, and other students.

FemTom Pre and Post Tests:

The FemTom data can be utilized by the research team working to improve the instrument and as a clinical tool for individuals in counseling. Scores are difficult to interpret in this context, particularly with the smaller response rate for the post test.

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