

Academic Support 1999

Summary

Outcome

The University will provide satisfactory academic support to students to enhance learning through its library, access to computer technology, faculty availability and advising, appropriate placement, and remedial and tutorial services.

Faculty and Personnel Involved

Personnel in the Office of Institutional Research, as well as faculty and students helped with the data collection and analysis of the senior exit survey.

Methods and Procedures

1. Senior Exit Survey

Results

1. Very large percentage (70%-90%) of seniors reported being satisfied or very satisfied with most academic support services.
2. The two relatively lower areas of satisfaction were language development services for students whose first language is not English, and new student placement in writing and math courses.
3. There were some differences between traditional and nontraditional, as well as between on and off campus seniors.
4. Traditional age transfers were more satisfied than freshmen with academic advising and access to computers, and less satisfied with faculty availability and remedial and tutorial services.
5. Nontraditional seniors were less satisfied with informal contacts with faculty, remedial and tutorial services, and with placement in writing and math courses.
6. SCE compared to CAPA were more satisfied with quality of advising, and with placement in writing and math courses, and were less satisfied with library and learning resources.

Actions for Program Improvements

Actions based on these findings will have to wait for dialogue to occur on the issues starting fall of 1999. Faculty, students, and administration should be engaged in the discussions.

Academic Support

Outcome

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Faculty and Personnel Involvement

Personnel in the Office of Institutional Research, faculty and students who helped with the data collection and analysis of the senior exit survey were involved in the assessment effort.

Methods and procedures

1. Senior Exit Survey

The responses of seniors to the Act College Outcomes Survey during the 1997-1998 academic year were used to assess satisfaction with academic support. The survey has 16 items that address satisfaction with academic support issues and services. These items and student responses are attached.

Altogether 134 traditional age and 191 nontraditional age seniors participated in the survey.

2. Utilization rate of the Learning Enhancement Center

The self-study document of the Learning Enhancement Center provides information about the utilization of the support services provided by the center, and will not be covered here.

Results

1. Senior Exit Survey

Overall about 70% to 90% of seniors reported being satisfied or very satisfied with academic support in the following areas:

- Faculty access and respect
- Quality and flexibility of programs
- Quality of advising
- Access to the library
- Access to computer facilities
- Remedial and tutorial services

The two areas of relatively lower satisfaction were language development services for students whose first language is not English, and new student placement in writing and math courses. In all of the academic support areas the seniors at ULV showed more satisfaction than the national normative sample of private universities and colleges.

There were some differences between the traditional age freshmen and transfer entries. Transfers (82%) appeared to be somewhat more satisfied with the quality of academic advising than freshmen (66%). They (87%) also tended to be more satisfied with access to computer facilities than freshman entries (73%). Moreover, transfer entries (77%) tended to be less satisfied with availability of faculty for office appointments than freshman entries (88%). Also, transfer entries (67%) tended to be less satisfied with remedial and tutorial services than freshman entries (84%)

There were also some differences between the traditional and nontraditional seniors, and between CAPA and SCE. The nontraditional seniors tended to be somewhat less satisfied with informal contacts with faculty in nonacademic settings, with remedial and tutorial services, and with placement in writing and math courses. SCE seniors compared to CAPA tended to be more satisfied with the quality of academic advising (83% and 69%, respectively), placement in writing and math courses (48% and 28%, respectively), and less satisfied with library and learning resources (67% and 88%, respectively).

Dissemination and Dialogue

These findings were provided to the School of Continuing Education. However, no active discussions of the issues have taken place as of yet by the faculty and the administration on the central campus or at SCE.

The groups that will be engaged in a dialogue on these issues starting Fall of 1999 will involve the faculty, at both on and off campus locations, SCE site administrators, library staff, and the staff at the Learning Enhancement Center.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Seniors of 1997-1998 are quite satisfied with the academic support that is available on the campus. However, the minor differences between traditional and nontraditional students, as well as those between on and off campus students need discussion and further study.

As the assessment efforts progress at the University actuarial and behavioral data should be collected to assess and track utilization of academic support services on a more systematic basis. The utilization rate data of the remedial and tutorial services at the Learning Enhancement Center should be closely examined and discussed by students, faculty and staff at the earliest time. It may have space and resource implications.

One of the major challenges will be to demonstrate the utilization of academic support services and academic performance. Preliminary data emerging from a senior project study showed differential utilization of the library, computer labs, and the Learning Enhancement Center by different ethnic groups. However, no significant correlations were found between utilization rates and self-reported GPAs for any of the ethnic groups.

Actions for Program Improvements

Actions based on these findings will have to wait for dialogue to occur on the issues starting Fall of 1999.