



Orientation Services
**Guiding Students to the Right Path: An Assessment of
Student Learning at Freshmen Orientation**
Assessment Report

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Choose One: Learning Outcome Assessment

Date of Assessment Implementation: July 2010 – August 2010

Date of Report: July 2011

Purpose of Assessment

To increase persistence and student success, the Academic Senate established *mandatory* Orientation for all new students. Freshmen Orientation was assessed in an effort to evaluate the preparation of new first time freshmen students for success at Cal Poly Pomona. With the “whole” student in mind, Freshmen Orientation seeks to facilitate graduation and to prepare students for both academic and personal success by creating intentional advisor/student interactions, getting students familiar with academic tools/resources, offering transitional support resources and promoting student engagement. In 2010, Freshmen Orientation evolved into a residential program with students attending a 2-day/1-night program (with an additional night option).

Targeted Learning Outcome

Participants will be able to identify at least one tool/resource that will aid with staying on academic track. (LO1)
Participants will understand the importance of student engagement on the academic experience. (LO2)
Participants will be able to identify at least one academic or personal support resource. (LO3)

Assessment Methodology

StudentVoice was used to create an online assessment. Both open- and closed-ended questions were used to assess for student learning. In order to facilitate completion of surveys, the assessment was sent to both the personal and Cal Poly Pomona email addresses of all Freshmen Orientation participants. A drawing for a Fall quarter parking permit was offered as an incentive for 100% survey completion.

Results

Of the 2,079 participants attending Freshmen Orientation, 826 students completed the survey instrument (39.7% response rate). The instrument consisted of 41 total questions, with 6 questions specifically targeted towards assessing the learning outcomes:

LO1: Participants will be able to identify at least one tool/resource that will aid with staying on academic track.

Two closed-ended and two open-ended questions measured student’s knowledge of strategies for staying on academic track.

In response to the question “*as a result of Orientation, I know how to find General Education courses for my major*”, 47.61% Strongly Agreed, 48.14% Agreed, 3.72% Disagreed and .53% Strongly Disagreed.

When asked “*as a result of Orientation, I can identify specific classes that meet General Education requirements for my major*”, 88.43% responded YES and 11.57% responded NO.

As a follow-up to the aforementioned question, students were asked to “*identify (at least one) tool/resource used to find specific classes to meet General Education requirements for (their) major.*”

LO2: Participants will understand the importance of student engagement on the academic experience.

Two likert scale questions measured student’s knowledge of and interest in getting connected to the University.

In response to the question “*as a result of Orientation, I feel better connected to the University and other students*”, 51.44% Strongly Agreed, 41.95% Agreed, 5.91% Disagreed and .69% Strongly Disagreed.

As a response to the question “*as a result of Orientation, I chose (or will choose) to participate in co-curricular activities*”, 63.41% Strongly Agreed, 32.74% Agreed, 3.44% Disagreed and .41% Strongly Disagreed.

LO3: Participants will be able to identify at least one academic or personal support resource.

One likert scale and one open-ended question measured student ability to articulate a campus resource they may be likely to utilize during their tenure at Cal Poly Pomona.

In response to the question “*as a result of Orientation, I am more knowledgeable about the campus resources available to help me with any academic and/or personal difficulties I may encounter*”, 59.28% Strongly Agreed, 37.96% Agreed, 2.48% Disagreed and .28% Strongly Disagreed.

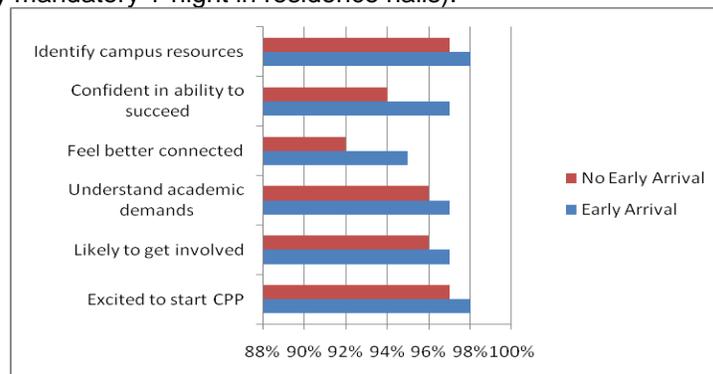
As a follow-up to the aforementioned question, students were asked to “*identify (at least one) campus resource/department (they) would likely use or are interested in*”. 67% named one resource, 24% named two resources, 6% named 3 resources and 3% listed 4+ resources.

Conclusion

Averaging the satisfactory scores for each of the learning outcome assessment questions yields:

- 92.09% of students achieved LO1 (decrease from 94% in 2009)
- 94.12% of students achieved LO2 (flat as compared to 2009)
- 97.24% of students achieved LO3 (decrease from 98.24% in 2009)

The data reflects flat or decreased results. However, it is important to note that comparison data between those students who attended the “Early Arrival” option (2-nights in residence halls), yield higher results than those students who did not (only mandatory 1-night in residence halls).



Implications for Practice

Broader feedback has been sought, and includes not just participant assessment but campus constituent feedback. Campus constituents include the Orientation Advisory Council, University Advising Taskforce, the Council of Chairs and the Associate Deans Council to help drive the design and content of the program. Balancing both student and university feedback assists Orientation Services with keeping current on student trends, needs and interests as well as university goals, initiatives and learning outcomes. The addition of the mandatory overnight yielded positive results, with even greater results for those who opted for the additional night’s stay. This has been used to advocate for an expansion of the program in 2011 that will require all freshmen to stay 3-days/2-nights. Thus providing all students with equal experience to get connected to each other, their campus and student orientation leader.