

Summer Transition Program Impact on First Generation College Students

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Making a Positive Difference

Transitioning from high school to college is an exciting prospect, but often stirs feelings of uncertainty for the first generation college student. This one week Summer Bridge Program is designed to support incoming Educational Opportunity Program (first generation, historically underrepresented) freshmen by exposing them to university life while providing them insight to the expectations and requirements of the college student, ultimately positively impacting their individual confidence upon enrollment in the fall quarter.



Learning Outcomes

After participating in the one week Summer Bridge transition program, participants will indicate an increased confidence in their knowledge, skill, and ability related to specific learning outcomes with a minimum of 85% frequency in the "Agree to Strongly Agree" category:

- Use library resources to find high quality information to draft a college level research paper
- Incorporate effective strategies to learn in environments different from your own learning style.
- Describe the actions to take to meet faculty expectations in a college course.
- Define at least two elements critical for making an effective college level speech/presentation.
- Determine the costs involved in paying for college.
- Read and interpret an Award Summary on BroncoDirect.
- Describe more than two careers related to a major.
- Describe the significance of taking responsibility for personal actions when pursuing an education.
- Identify advising tools and university resources.
- Develop an effective weekly study plan incorporating life balancing strategies.
- Define at least one healthy behavior to ensure physical well being while in college.
- Define the meaning of diversity.

Focus of Assessment

To identify students' perceptions and level of confidence in their own understanding and abilities to meet the expectations of university life and to determine if we are reaching our objectives through the Summer Bridge Program.

Methodology

Central to the format and structure of the Summer Bridge Program is a focus on student learning. Each component of the program emphasizes a shared responsibility in the learning process; students are fully engaged, active participants in discussion, activity, and presentations. The program provides for a safe, nurturing environment to support the learning process. The residential component seeks to develop a sense of belonging and community among the participants.

All participants completed a pre/post assessment which asked them to rate their level of agreement with statements related to the learning outcomes of the program. Additionally, students identified up to three things they hoped to learn (Pre) and what they actually learned (Post) about university life from their Summer Bridge experience.

Results

Statement	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment		
	Agree to Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree to Strongly Disagree	Agree to Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree to Strongly Disagree
I know how to use library resources to find high quality information to draft a college level research paper.	45%	25%	5%	92%	4%	0%
I am able to incorporate effective strategies to learn in environments different from my own learning style.	43%	31%	24%	88%	6%	4%
I am able to describe the actions I must take to meet faculty expectations in a college course.	54%	41%	5%	92%	4%	0%
I am able to define at least two elements critical for making an effective college level speech/presentation.	45%	31%	24%	90%	8%	2%
I know how to determine the costs involved in paying for my college education.	50%	33%	17%	96%	4%	0%
I am able to read and interpret my Award Summary on BroncoDirect to determine how much financial aid I am eligible to receive.	31%	18%	3%	49%	0%	0%
When reviewing the Cal Poly Pomona majors, I am able to describe more than two careers related to any one major.	43%	35%	20%	81%	17%	2%
If I have questions about University policy/procedures I know what advising resources I can refer to for answers.	19%	12%	23%	36%	7%	5%
When asked, I am able to describe the significance of taking responsibility for my own education.	50%	3%	0%	52%	0%	0%
I know at least three academic advising resources I may use to map out my college/academic plan.	12%	12%	29%	39%	5%	3%
I am able to design a weekly schedule incorporating one or more life balancing strategies.	35%	13%	6%	45%	6%	0%
I am able to define at least one healthy behavior that will ensure my physical well being while in college.	47%	5%	2%	49%	0%	1%
I am able to define the meaning of diversity.	87%	9%	4%	94%	0%	2%

Student Responses

"I learned the importance of balancing out everything (time, meals, socializing, sleep, study time) ."

"Most importantly, I learned and experienced the college life. It really helped since I'll be living here."

"I know that I must make sacrifices and make sure my priorities are correctly established."

"I learned that countless resources are available for me so that I may get help when I need it."

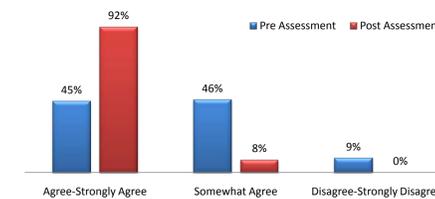
"I have learned that I have to manage my time, since I'm now going to become an independent young adult that will have to deal with my own consequences ."

"I also learned that no one is responsible for your education but you. Tutoring, professors and friends are just people to help you along your way."

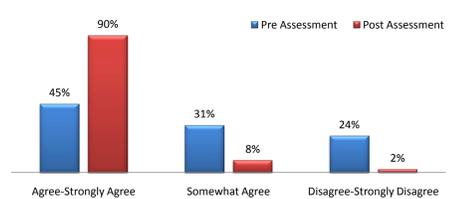
Conclusion

Based on analysis of the pre/post assessment data, it appears most of the program's learning outcomes were achieved to a satisfactory degree. In particular, students indicated positive growth and confidence with all learning objectives with the most significant increases in the areas of utilizing library and other reference materials to meet the expectations of college level research papers and presentations, appreciating and valuing faculty expectations and taking responsibility for their own education, defining and incorporating critical elements for making an effective college level speech/presentation, and determining the costs of and means to pay for their education.

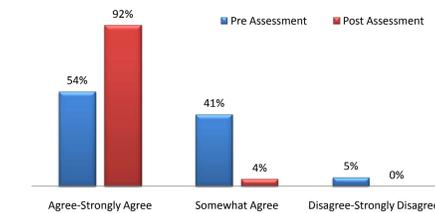
I know how to use library resources to find high quality information to draft a college level research paper.



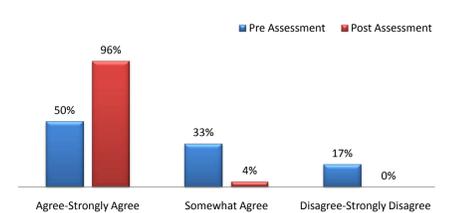
I am able to define at least two elements critical for making an effective college level speech/presentation.



I am able to describe the actions I must take to meet faculty expectations in a college course.



I know how to determine the costs involved in paying for my college education.



Implications for Practice

In general, the one week summer transition program exposed students to the rigors and expectations of university life increasing their personal sense of belonging and belief in their readiness for the college experience. There are a few areas, however, in which the reduction in the size and scope of this year's program may have impacted the outcome . For example, despite an increase from 22% to 74% of the students indicating agreement with better knowing the advising resources to map out an academic plan, the 85% frequency of agreement was not achieved. This may be a result of the limited time available to present and review university expectations as well as apply strategies to develop academic plans.

Similarly, students responded at 69% level of agreement to being able to identify the advising resources available to interpret university policy/procedures an increase from 35%. It is very likely that those instances of learning related to classroom and/or academic matters more closely mimicking the high school experience better resonated with the students in this shorter version of the Summer Bridge Program, while topics relatively new to the students' previous experiences, such as teacher/faculty expectations, need a bit more time to ensure greater confidence in understanding and application.