

Undeclared Student Orientation

The purpose of this assessment is to measure the effectiveness of our Undeclared Student Orientation in providing students with basic advising information regarding our program expectations, as well as, to assist them with successfully developing a fall quarter schedule and registering for classes respective of their skills, interests, and test score placement.



Desired Outcomes

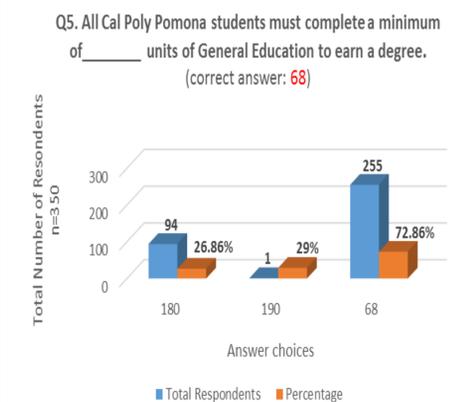
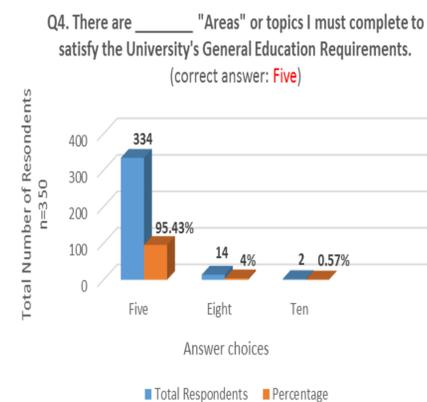
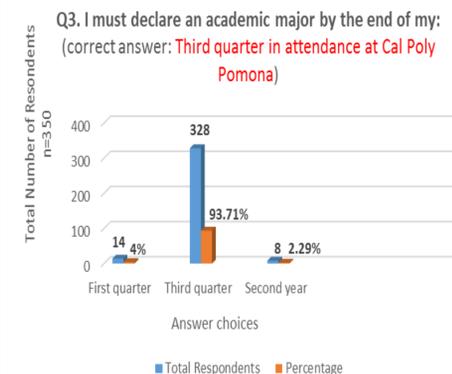
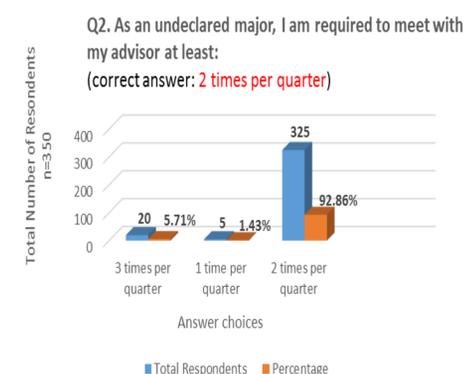
Seven specific learning outcomes (LOs) have been defined for the undeclared student orientation sessions. Following participation, students will be able to; 1) identify the number of advising visits they must complete with their assigned advisor each quarter while undeclared; 2) identify the length of time they have to select, and officially declare, an academic major; 3) identify the number of general education "areas" or topics as defined by Cal Poly Pomona's general education requirements; 4) identify the total number of general education units to complete to fulfill degree requirements; 5) interpret test scores to identify the correct math/English course to take; 6) select courses appropriate to skill level and major of interest; and 7) use the University catalog to identify course prerequisites.

Methodology

All Fall 2014 admitted incoming undeclared students were expected to attend an Undeclared Student Orientation advising session on the third day of their Cal Poly Pomona Orientation program. A total of 350 students participated in these sessions. At the conclusion of each Undeclared Student Orientation session, students were asked to complete an online assessment survey via Campus Labs. Multiple choice questions were included to measure for learning outcomes (LOs) 1-4, while LOs 5-7 were measured by asking students to rate their level of agreement in their ability to interpret, select, or utilize specific resources to develop an appropriate fall quarter course schedule. Responses were collected, data was tabulated, and results were reviewed and interpreted to inform future practice.

Results

Assessment surveys were completed by 100% (350) of the undeclared student participants. Based on the data collected, 93% (325) of the students answered the question correctly regarding the number of advising visits required per quarter while undeclared (LO 1); 94% (328) answered the question correctly regarding the time frame that undeclared students have to officially declare a major (LO 2); 95% (334) answered the question correctly regarding the number of "areas" required to satisfy the General Education requirements (LO 3); 73% (255) answered the question correctly regarding the minimum number of units needed to complete General Education requirements (LO 4).



What Students Learned

I learned . . .

"How to use the catalog."

"I need to complete 68 units of General Education".

"I must meet with my advisor twice a quarter".

"How to choose which classes I am eligible to register for".

"How to use the Curriculum Sheet to compare two different majors".

"As an undeclared student, I must choose a major by my third quarter at Cal Poly Pomona".



Conclusion

The current Undeclared Student Orientation format works well for introducing undeclared students to the basic information needed to effectively register for a first-quarter schedule. The majority of the learning outcomes are being met at a relatively high frequency. However, greater attention needs to be given to helping students better understand General Education, in particular, the five specific "areas" which make up General Education, as well as, the total number of units needed to fulfill these requirements. Student responses suggest some confusion between major curriculum unit requirements and General Education unit requirements. Students appear to have an understanding of the advising expectations within the Undeclared Student Program, as well as, the length of time given to explore, research, and declare a major at Cal Poly Pomona. Students also indicate a good level of confidence in their ability to read and interpret test scores for course placement, utilize the university catalog to identify course pre-requisites and select courses appropriate to skill level and major interest.

Implications for Practice

Based on the results, the advising team will focus more on General Education (GE) requirements to ensure students understand the basic unit requirements better. Meeting GE requirements is complicated when students are exploring majors because they must navigate through different curriculum sheets when deciding which courses will give them flexibility before they declare a major. Therefore, focusing on their understanding of how to meet GE requirements as they explore majors is crucial for planning a timely graduation. Another area the team may explore is adding scenario based questions to measure a student's ability to read and interpret test scores and prerequisites to determine course placement and selection based on skills and major interest. Measuring students' level of agreement with learning outcome statements is helpful to determine their confidence in their own abilities. However, it might be more impactful to include a question that allows students to demonstrate these abilities per the learning outcome expectations.