Preliminary Results from a Longitudinal Study of First-Year Students

*Presented by*
*Beth Lingren Clark, OFYP*
*and*
*Laura Coffin Koch, SVPP*
Inspiring Our Work

- Influence program content, delivery, and messaging
- Integrate data results directly into what we share with students and families
- Share with colleges and units to influence the way we do our work
- Provide evidence to work with units to make strategic changes
Assessment Cycle

• Identify learning objectives/goals for program
• Map learning objectives/program goals to Student Learning and Development Outcomes
• Conduct gap analysis
• Change/enhance content based upon gap analysis and program survey results from previous year (Common questions)
• Implement program introducing objectives and outcomes to population
• Evaluate program
• Analyze and share results
• Repeat
Intent of First Year Assessment Plan

• The intent of this process provides data on student behavior related to:
  • the matriculation process
  • student satisfaction
  • student success both personally and academically
  • longitudinal data utilized
  • measure the impact on student retention and other programs.

• The plan helps to inform institution on the things we were learning about from our students and their experiences
First Year Assessment Cycle

**Summer prior to first year**
- Track Student participation
- Orientation Program Evaluation
- Welcome Week Pre-Assessment

**August/September prior to first year**
- Leader Reflections

**Post Welcome Week – Early September**
- Program Outcomes/Satisfaction Evaluation

**October of first year**
- Fall Check-In Survey
- Focus groups

**Fall of first year**
- Annual Report

**December /January of first year**
- Conduct Leaver’s Study

**February of first year**
- Spring Check-In Survey

**May/June of first year**
- Focus group (every few years)
- Call Leaver’s

**October of second year**
- Conduct Leaver’s Study

- **REPEAT CYCLE**

**Other Surveys:**
- CIRP Survey (every odd year)
- 2008 – National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE)
- 2009-Student Experience for Research Universities (SERU)
- Institutional Student Experience Survey (every other year)
The Results….
Leavers Study (n=178)

Identifiers for Leaving (Not exclusive)
Mid Year Potential Leavers from the Class of 2013 (as of 1/5/2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GPA &gt; 3.0</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA &lt; 2.9</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No GPA</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Hold</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of state</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=210)
Common Question…

- Level of confidence with each Student Development Outcomes after attending Orientation and Welcome Week.
Common Question

What is your main anxiety/concern at this point in time:

- Academic coursework
- Making friends/meeting other people
- Financial concerns
- Deciding on a major/career path
- Developing skills related to note-taking, studying, time-management, stress
Common Question

• What is your main anxiety/concern at this point in time:
  (point in time= Orientation – Pre Welcome Week and Post Welcome Week)
Common Question

(point in time= College breakdown at orientation)

[Bar chart showing financial concerns by college, with colleges marked A to G.]
Common Question

(point in time= College breakdown at orientation)
Next Steps

• After reviewing all assessment points and results, identify themes or trends

• Review programmatic content to identify messages

• Enhance or change program content

• Write assessment questions to measure desired outcome or impact

• REPEAT
Identify specific themes

- Examples utilizing data collected:
  - Making connections
  - Financial concerns
Theme: Making Connections

- Data sources
  - Welcome Week (pre-post)
    - Main anxiety or concern at both points of assessment
  - Check-In survey results
    - Low levels of success at making connections
  - Leavers Data
    - Biggest population to depart; out-of-state students
    - Reason: campus climate 11.2% in 2008 and 7.6% in 2009
- Desired Outcome: Making friends, meeting others, utilizing faculty and staff for support
Making Connections: Programmatic Changes

- Altered residential student group assignments
- Centralized check-in
- Revised Welcome Week Leader training
- Changed small group meetings
- Revamped Convocation program
- Altered Pride & Spirit event (new stadium)
- Facilitated community engagement in groups
- Inserted more free time activities
Pride and Spirit Event:
Have a Greater Sense of School Pride

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- N/A (0)

Percent of Respondents: 48% (Strongly agree), 37% (Agree), 8% (Neither agree nor disagree), 3% (Disagree), 1% (Strongly disagree), 3% (N/A)
Pride and Spirit Event:
Foster My School Pride & Respect

Percent of Respondents

Strongly agree (5) 21%
Agree (4) 46%
Neither agree nor disagree (3) 21%
Disagree (2) 5%
Strongly disagree (1) 2%
N/A (0) 5%

Answers
Explore U: *Gave me a sense of resources available in the business community*

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents for different agree/disagree levels.]

- **Strongly agree (5):** 19%
- **Agree (4):** 51%
- **Neither agree nor disagree (3):** 17%
- **Disagree (2):** 4%
- **Strongly disagree (1):** 1%
- **N/A (0):** 8%
Various Events: Opportunity to Interact with Others
Establish meaningful relationships
Sense of Connection

- Percentage of Students
- To Community
- With others who have similar interests
- To community through service

- 2009
- 2008
Check-In Survey Results

• Met with University employee for advice or counseling:

[Bar chart showing comparisons between Spring '09 and Spring '08 for various types of employees: Professional Counselor, Career Counselor, Faculty Member, Teaching Assistant, Community Adviser]
Theme: Financial Concerns

• Data sources
  – Check-In survey results: In top 3 of major anxiety or concern regardless of point in time
  – Orientation program evaluation results
    • Increased individual One Stop counselor visits
  – CIRP 2007 survey results (n= 5021)
    • 67% of students have some to major concerns compared to 59% of all public institutions
  – Leavers Data
    • Reason - Financial Issues: 18.5% in 2008 and 14.6% in 2009
Financial Concerns: Programmatic Changes

• Increased messaging about finances in the following ways:
  – New session at orientation “Managing the Costs of College”
  – Inserted into “Navigating the U” presentation using TurningPoint technology
  – Shared TurningPoint results at Parent Orientation
  – Required “Money! Money!” Session at Welcome Week
  – “Live Like A Student NOW” campaign

• Desired Outcome: To increase financial literacy
Financial Concerns: TurningPoint
Results to increase awareness

• What do you think the average U of M student debt is after graduation?
  – $30,000 - $50,000
    – Orientation 2009 = 46%
    – Orientation 2008 = 46%
    » Correct Answer: $15,000 - $30,000

• Have you ever made a budget for yourself?
  – Yes
    – Orientation 2009 = 48%
    – Orientation 2008 = 46%

• Do you have…
  – A Credit Card (6%)
  – A Debit Card (53%)
  – Both (21%)
  – Neither (19%)
Financial Literacy Session
Money! Money! Money!

Answers:
- Very helpful (5): 11%
- Helpful (4): 36%
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful (3): 26%
- Unhelpful (2): 11%
- Very unhelpful (1): 7%
- Did not attend (0): 9%

Percent of Respondents
Money! Money! Money!

Made me think critically about what I should or should not spend money on as a college student.
Money! Money! Money!
Gave me more awareness of the money decisions I make now and their impact on me long term

![Bar chart showing percent of respondents' answers](chart.png)
Money! Money! Money!

Provided advice about money in a positive and uplifting way

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Level</th>
<th>Percent of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree (5)</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree (1)</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A (0)</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theme: Financial Concerns

![Bar chart showing mean scores for various financial concerns.]

- Made me think critically about how to spend money: 3.5
- Gave me more awareness of $ decisions and impact: 3.0
- Provided advice in uplifting way: 3.5
- Helped find frugal ways to navigate campus: 3.0
- Showed me how to get a campus job: 2.5
- Made me feel more enlightened about college finances: 3.0

*WW Post Test 2009*
The end result.....
Preliminary Results

• Parent attendance at Orientation is linked to student retention

• Out-of-state students are at greater risk of departing

• Student’s top major anxiety/concerns: academic coursework, making friends, financial concerns, deciding on a major, developing skills related to note-taking, studying, time management, stress management.

• Interactions with faculty and staff are an important part of the college experience.

• On average, students spend between 1-10 hours per week with friends.
Preliminary Results

• The University can feel like a big place so it is important for you to create your community.

• New students leave the U for various reasons: financial concerns, academic, medical, family, and other personal issues.

• At the six to eight week mark, students are seeking more contact with advisers, and want help with study skills.

• Students want more assistance in meeting people and getting involved. Orientation, MyU Web portal, and Welcome Week can begin this process for you before classes start.

• Many students felt that their grade point average was lower than expected; however, expectations of course workload was consistent.
Next Steps….

- Mid Year Leavers from 2013
- Program Evaluations
- Data analysis with Orientation Database
  - Orientation dates
  - Parent involvement
  - Welcome Week participation
- Discussions with key stakeholders
- Targeted changes