Snapshots of the First-Year Experience at UM

Beginnings Subgroup Members

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Beverly Greenfeig Counseling Center
Erin Iverson Resident Life
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Jessica Mislevy IRPA
Mike Passarella George IRPA
Britt Reynolds Admissions
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Today’s Presenters

- Joann Prosser
- Corbin Campbell
- Hilary Sazama

University of Maryland
Beginnings Student Survey (BSS)

- Annual survey since 1996, administered within the 8-10th week of the fall semester in typical freshmen courses

- Gathers data on first-year undergraduates’ experiences at and perceptions of UM

- 1,988 survey respondents (out of about 3,100)
  - 1,074 FTFT respondents used in main analysis
  - 183 FC respondents used in separate analysis
BSS 2007

Topic areas
- Special Undergraduate Experiences
- Admissions
- Diversity
- Student Involvement
- Learning Outcomes
- Weekly Activities
- Finances
- Adjustment
- Academics
- Responsibility

*Report available at wwwumd.edu/cawg*

Limitations

- BSS cannot be generalized
  - Convenience sample
- Data are self reported
  - Ex. Learning Outcomes could measure self confidence
Forum Agenda

- A Week in The Life of A First-Year Student
  - Involvement
  - Academics
  - Working

- Ten Years Later…

About Our Sample

Percents

- Female
  - SAMPLE: 51%
  - UM: 48%
- Male
  - SAMPLE: 49%
  - UM: 52%
- In-state
  - SAMPLE: 65%
  - UM: 65%
- Out-of-state
  - SAMPLE: 35%
  - UM: 35%
- White
  - SAMPLE: 64%
  - UM: 60%
- Asian
  - SAMPLE: 15%
  - UM: 13%
- Black/Afr Amer
  - SAMPLE: 10%
  - UM: 13%
- Hispanic
  - SAMPLE: 6%
  - UM: 7%
- Amer Indian
  - SAMPLE: <1%
  - UM: <1%
- Foreign
  - SAMPLE: 2%
  - UM: 1%
- Unknown
  - SAMPLE: 3%
  - UM: 4%
Freshmen Connection Program

- A fall semester extension program administered by the Office of Extended Studies
- Open to freshmen who confirm spring admission
- Fall classes are scheduled late afternoon and into the evening to earn up to 16 credits
- Get on track to graduate in four years
- All Freshmen Connection students live off-campus

A Week in The Life of A UM First-Year Student
Pop Quiz - Involvement

What percent of respondents said they are satisfied with their level of involvement?

- 41%

- 57% report they were less involved than they would like—why?
  - 33% plan to get involved later
  - 21% have not found a good fit
  - 20% have to study

Involvement

- 79% participate in at least 1 hour of organized student activities per week

- Respondents participate at least “sometimes” in...
  - 59%: residence hall activities
  - 45%: movie/theater/music performance
  - 35%: intramural sports team or club
  - 34%: events that promote diversity
  - 34%: fraternity or sorority events
Involvement

- Respondents participate at least “sometimes” in…
  - 32%: cultural organizations or activities
  - 28%: community service activities
  - 27%: religious services or activities
  - 13%: organized discussion on race/ethnicity
  - 59%: other student group activities (not listed above)

In the future…

- First-year students want to participate in…
  - 87%: internships
  - 73%: international experiences
  - 55%: leadership opportunities
  - 53%: research
  - 38%: service-learning experiences

* Differences by race or gender

1 Significance tests could not be conducted on variable
Pop Quiz: Working

What percent of first-year students do not work?
➢ > 90% do not work on or off campus in an average week

➢ For those who do work, why?
  • Earn spending money (88%)
  • Pay for personal expenses (85%)
  • Gain general work experience (77%)
  • Gain work experience related to my future career (67%)
  • Pay for my college education (66%)

Pop Quiz: Academics

What percent of respondents spend at least 11 hours per week studying?
➢ 64%

➢ 50% spend at least 1 hour per week in study groups/tutoring
Academics

- Most respondents…
  - are adjusting to the academic work of college (77%)
  - know how to contact an academic advisor (76%)
  - have identified a career direction or interest (71%)
  - are satisfied with their current major (72%)\(^2\)

- About half of respondents…
  - have met with an instructor outside of class (47%)

\(^2\) LTSC were excluded in this analysis

Pop Quiz: Attitudes about UM

- What percent of respondents would still enroll at UM if they had to do it all over again?
  - 76%

- Most respondents…
  - Like being a student at UM (88%)
  - Are proud to be a student at UM (86%)
  - Would recommend UM to family and friends (82%)
Freshmen Connection

Where did they respond similarly to FTFT?

➢ Attitudes about UM
  • Proud to be a student at UM (86 vs 86%)
  • Like being a student here (86 vs 88%)
  • Would recommend UM to family and friends (82 vs 82%)
  • Would still enroll at UM if had to do it again (75 vs 76%)

FC vs FTFT

Freshmen Connection

Where did they respond similarly to FTFT?

➢ Working on campus (10 vs 7%)

➢ Academics
  • Are adjusting to the academic work of college (75 vs 77%)
  • Have identified a career direction (67 vs 71%)
  • Have met with an instructor outside of class (53 vs 47%)
  • Spend at least 1 hour per week in study groups (48 vs 50%)

FC vs FTFT
Where did they respond differently than FTFT?

➢ Involvement
  • Fewer FC are satisfied with level of involvement (30 vs 41%)
  • Fewer FC spend at least 1 hour per week in organized student activities (66 vs 79%)
  • Fewer FC participate in each type of activity with 3 exceptions

➢ Working off campus
  • More FC work off campus (26 vs 8%)  

Where did they respond differently than FTFT?

➢ Academics
  • Fewer FC spend at least 11 hours per week studying (55 vs 64%)
  • Fewer FC know how to contact an academic advisor (49 vs 76%)
  • Fewer FC are satisfied with their current major (42 vs 62%)
Ten Years Later…
Perceptions then (1997) and now (2007)

Profiles

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<tr>
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<th>1997</th>
<th>2007</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAT: 25th/75th percentile&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1120/1290</td>
<td>1210/1360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School GPA&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: % Female&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
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</tbody>
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<sup>3</sup> Includes first time, both full and part time freshmen

<sup>4</sup> Includes first time, full time freshmen
Most things haven’t changed much…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1997</th>
<th>2007</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UM was 1st choice</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have made campus friends</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about financing college</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not work on campus</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can afford to enroll next semester</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>83</td>
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A few changed a bit more…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not work off campus</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never participate in organized student activities</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions - Involvement

- Almost 80% of BSS respondents participated in at least 1 hour of organized student activities a week
- Most popular activities included residence hall and student group activities
- 57% were less involved than they would like
- There is strong interest in opportunities that fall under the President’s Promise (e.g., internships)

Conclusions - Working

- Their first semester, the vast majority of first-year BSS respondents did not work (> 90%)
- Ten year longitudinal BSS data suggests that while the percentage of first-year students working on campus remains the same, even fewer first-year students report working off-campus their first semester
Conclusions - Academics

- The majority of first semester students spend at least 11 hrs/wk studying, and participating in study groups or tutoring sessions

- Approximately three-quarters report having adjusted to academic work, identified a career direction, know how to contact an academic advisor, and are satisfied with their current major (when LTSC are removed)

Conclusions - Longitudinal

- Although the academic profile of UM students has changed, their perceptions and attitudes haven’t changed much
Discussion

➢ Thoughts?

➢ Comments?

➢ Impressions?

The Beginning Student Survey 2007 report is available at

www.umd.edu/cawg