

Summary of Deciding on a Major Assessment – 05-20-2008

Between March 1 and May 12, 2008, students who met with program managers for an individual counseling appointment and sought assistance with deciding on a major were identified using the Career Center's contact management system. The identified students were surveyed the week following their appointment to determine the effectiveness of the counseling interaction. This time of the semester was chosen because it coincided with the formal academic advisement period.

Sample

Twenty four students were identified and 11 responded to the survey for a response rate of 46%. As expected, most of the students were first-year and sophomore students.

Classification of Responders	# of Responders	% of Responders
Freshman	6	55%
Sophomore	3	27%
Junior	0	00%
Senior	1	09%
Other	1	09%

Four (36%) of the students had undeclared majors; 7 (64%) had declared majors.

Results

The following table summarizes the responses to the survey:

Statement	Rating (1 = Strongly Disagree & 5 = Strongly Agree)
I understand the steps that are typically involved in choosing a major.	4.4
I am able to identify print and Internet resources that help me learn about different majors and their requirements.	4.5
I am able to identify possible career options for majors that interest me.	4.5
My counselor helped me evaluate potential majors to see if they would be a good fit.	4.2
I am able to identify key campus contacts/advisors for majors that interest me.	4.0
I know the process for actually changing my major.	3.7

Overall, the responses from students are very encouraging. They seem to know the steps in choosing a major, the resources that will help them learn more about potential majors, and how to connect majors to potential career options. Topics that might require more focus in the counseling session are the process of actually changing one's major and the identification of key campus contacts.

Student Comments

Responders to the survey were given the opportunity to offer comments regarding their counseling session(s). Three students provided these comments:

1. I met with Viki Fecas and she was absolutely wonderful. She was positive, honest, and did everything she could to help me decide on a very important decision regarding my future at USC. She went the extra mile and I want her to know that I GREATLY appreciate it!
2. The Career Center was a great place to go when I was unsure about my major. Mrs. Fecas did a wonderful job and she's always there when I need her!
3. She was really helpful.

Summary

Generalizing the effectiveness of counseling interactions that focus on decisions about college major from only 11 responders is limited; however, there was consistency in the student responses. Students were very positive about the helpfulness of the counseling interactions and were effectively introduced to the key components to choosing a major. Staff may want to continue surveying students to increase the sample size and to determine if the consistency in responses remains.