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<th>Tactics &amp; Success Criteria / Tasks</th>
<th>Status/Result</th>
<th>Action &amp; Follow-Up</th>
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</table>
| Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 1.1a.1 - Ensure all areas of Student Affairs have intentional learning objectives that support the Vision for Students | **Tactic:**
Serve as a consultant for each student affairs department as they infuse determined learning outcomes into their programs.

**Tactic Year:**
2012 - 2013

**Success Criterion:**
Every department can convey evidence of their determined learning outcomes.

**Assessment Method Type:**
Frequency of Occurrence |

| 08/01/2014 - While the quality of the assessment instruments/protocol as well as the evidence collected varies, each department was able to assess some level of learning in a relatively effective and useful manner during 13-14. |

**Status/Result Type:**
Completed

**Reporting Cycle:**
2013 - 2014 |

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| Tactic: |
Help departments/functions demonstrate how learning, a potential factor to retention, occurs as a result of participation in their programs.

**Tactic Year:**
2013-14

**Success Criterion:**
Every department/function can articulate what students learned and conceptualize/prove how said learning contributed to their retention.

**Assessment Method Type:**
Number of Participants |

| 08/01/2014 - I provided opportunities for trainings throughout the year to help staff develop good learning outcomes and assessments for their programs. In many cases we can find some level of evidence that conveys what students have learned. The evidence is not all well collected and we have to improve on determining benchmarks and success criteria but overall we're making progress. |

**Status/Result Type:**
Completed

**Reporting Cycle:**
2013 - 2014 |

| Tactic: |
Work with one department to conduct CAS Program Review (Self-Assessment Study) |

**Tactic Year:**
2013-14

**Success Criterion:**
Completion of the Self-Assessment Study

**Assessment Method Type:**
Tactic is completed or not |

<p>| 08/01/2014 - This tactic was not completed due to the decision that the office that had expressed interest, conduct programs, would be undergoing a CAS Standards revision process this year. Therefore, we did not waste time using a version of the Self-Assessment Process that would be outdated. Note that I am chairing the national CAS committee to make these revisions and have been keeping Ben Morton informed about progress. |</p>
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|         | **Tactic:** Help departments better use tools such as Campus Labs and Survey Monkey as a means to improve assessment practices  
**Tactic Year:**  
2013-14  
**Success Criterion:** Every department does at least one Campus Labs project  
**Assessment Method Type:** Number of Participants | **Status/Result Type:**  
Not Yet Begun  
**Reporting Cycle:**  
2013 - 2014 | 08/01/2014 - I witnessed some great improvements in how departments use these tools. Counseling, for example, was more involved in collecting evidence about their programs and used Survey Monkey and Campus Labs on a few occasions. ACSS uses Campus Labs very well. We did trainings for staff to learn to use both tools better. Additionally, we have integrated Qualtrics when appropriate.  
**Status/Result Type:**  
Completed  
**Reporting Cycle:**  
2013 - 2014 |
|         | **Tactic:** Continue and extend scope of research study on factors that influence persistence of specific student populations  
**Tactic Year:**  
2013-14  
**Success Criterion:** While we finished the study in spring 2013, I'd like to see how we can implement recommendations and conduct a similar study in spring 2014.  
**Assessment Method Type:** Survey (locally developed) | **Status/Result Type:**  
Completed  
**Reporting Cycle:**  
2013 - 2014 | 08/01/2014 - We did not continue with efforts to collect more evidence about how student affairs influences retention (the "Vanderbilt Student Study"). However, this year we confirmed that we will use Vanderbilt students to conduct a study on how students from backgrounds of low SES use strategies to persist to graduation. We also have been looking at retention data for many student subpopulations (First-Generation, Online Students, Fraternity/Sorority Members, Students using Child Care, Students using ACSS and CRIS, etc.) in order to see if there are trends and factors that might influence retention and persistence.  
**Status/Result Type:**  
Completed  
**Reporting Cycle:**  
2013 - 2014 |
|         | **Tactic:** Monitor key metrics to document student  
**Tactic Year:**  
<p>| 08/01/2014 - We continue to use activity codes and other reporting systems to document use of |</p>
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<tr>
<td>gaps/needs</td>
<td>affairs contributions to institutional goals.</td>
<td>services. We need to do more about staying on top of these metrics in order to collect better data.</td>
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<td><strong>Action Years:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tactic Year:</strong> 2013-14</td>
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<td><strong>Action Status:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Success Criterion:</strong> Semester review of metric categories, determination of relevance of each category (keep/revise/add?) and solicitation of numbers for report development</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Assessment Method Type:</strong> Tactic is completed or not</td>
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<td><strong>Tactic:</strong> Centralize compilation of metrics, including retention percentages, in order to have consistent reporting of key benchmarks of student affairs contribution to institutional priorities</td>
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<td><strong>Tactic Year:</strong> 2013-14</td>
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<td><strong>Success Criterion:</strong> All departments use either Banner/Activity Codes, OIR or Pat to identify populations of interest. Departments do not provide their own numbers.</td>
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<td><strong>Assessment Method Type:</strong> Tactic is completed or not</td>
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<td><strong>Tactic:</strong> Help departments to collect data, interpret the data, and leverage data for program success</td>
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<td><strong>Tactic Year:</strong> 2013-14</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Success Criterion:</strong> Every department has a plan for data collection, interpretation and use</td>
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<td><strong>Assessment Method Type:</strong> Tactic is completed or not</td>
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08/01/2014 - We have many ways to collect metrics of use/satisfaction/etc. Pat Prahalan works with some offices. Some offices use a login system. Some use activity codes (some of which are based on card swipe data). I would love to improve these systems and get all the people who are doing this around a table to ensure we're collecting quality data and are also able to talk about how we track this data with integrity. We're getting better at reporting retention consistently.

**Status/Result Type:**
On Track
**Reporting Cycle:**
2013 - 2014

08/01/2014 - We are doing well overall with this. Departments are not as intentional about their plans as I'd like them to be. I can help more. We can be more collaborative in the planning of events in order to ensure the right things will be assessed as a result of the event. We're also getting better at using data to inform plans and action. We need to do a better job at documenting this process in order to be more in compliance with SACS.

**Status/Result Type:**
On Track
**Reporting Cycle:**
2013 - 2014
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| **Tactic:** Work with departments to provide unduplicated counts of students participating in key co-curricular programs and most particularly community service and leadership programs in which there is often significant overlap  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14  
**Success Criterion:** We are able to identify unique students in each key cocurricular program  
**Assessment Method Type:** Tactic is completed or not | 08/01/2014 - This area has not gotten much attention this year. We have key metrics and activity codes. We're not doing well to stay on top of reporting out about unique students using services. We're really struggling with how to centralize community service hours/participation in a way that is as close to perfect as we can get it. We just have to work harder at this: creating a recurring system (not annually, not semesterly, but monthly) for departments to report their data. | **Status/Result Type:** On Track  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014 |
| Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 1.4a.2 - Expand use of Hobsons Retain by staff  
**Action Years:** 2012 - 2013  
2013 - 2014  
**Action Status:** Active | **Tactic:** Support the ongoing development of staff competence in using Hobsons Retain and the development of Hyperion Reports  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14  
**Success Criterion:** Staff demonstrates competence in the use of Hobson's and Hyperion report production.  
**Assessment Method Type:** Observational Reports | 08/01/2014 - Madeline worked closely with many staff about using Hobsons. We're doing better at streamlining Activity Code usage. We can do more to train those who have Hyperion access so that they can run the reports they need. However, I've been doing a lot of that for people and it's fine for me to perform this function. | **Status/Result Type:** Completed  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014 |
| Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 1.4b.3 - Provide opportunities for meaningful connections between students, students and faculty, and students and staff  
**Action Years:** 2013 - 2014  
2014 - 2015  
**Action Status:** Active | **Tactic:** Co-chair New Student Convocation with Dr. Richard Irwin. Have 900 students attend.  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14  
**Success Criterion:** 900 students attend the event  
**Assessment Method Type:** Number of Participants | 08/01/2014 - This year's event went very well. It is estimated that since the Rose Theatre was almost entire full during one point of the program that we likely had 900 students attend. We also created 1,000 envelopes and gave away most of them. Report data for the event is found in the related document. | **Status/Result Type:** Completed  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014 |
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| Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 1.4b.5* - *Track retention and graduation rates for target populations | **Tactic:** Support staff identification of retention populations and methods for tracking retention. Serve as a centralizing body for retention data.  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14  
**Success Criterion:** Every student affairs function can identify a population of students and monitor their retention.  
**Assessment Method Type:** Tactic is completed or not | 08/01/2014 - We have done this through consulting with departments about currently identified populations and what other populations we can report retention for that would have an impact on the perception of student affairs programs. We’re working with a few departments to collect better information through the use of activity codes. I run most retention reports, in partnership with OIR, and staff depend on SALA to develop and affirm these reports.  
**Status/Result Type:** Completed  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014 |
| **Action Years:** 2012 - 2013  
2013 - 2014  
2014 - 2015 | **Tactic:** Continue to examine factors within student affairs functions that contribute to student retention.  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14  
**Success Criterion:** Every function can explain how a program contributes to retention. Use of data from Vanderbilt doctoral student led study.  
**Assessment Method Type:** Tactic is completed or not | 08/01/2014 - We’ve been doing this as a result of data from the Vanderbilt Study. We know from that study that students return based on their experiences with student affairs functions. Through retention reports from activity codes we know that many of the student populations with whom we work have higher overall rates of retention and persistence than the general student population (i.e. Frosh Camp, Residence Life, Fraternity/Sorority Life) and we have gotten better at using randomly assigned comparison groups to look at smaller populations such as SSP participants and First Scholars.  
**Status/Result Type:** On Track  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014 |
| **Action Status:** Active | **Tactic:** Compile reports that focus on number of graduates, colleges from which they are graduate, and certified/uncertified status | 08/01/2014 - These data are updated after each Commencement and shared with appropriate University Stakeholders.  
**Status/Result Type:**  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014 |

Related Documents:
- [Report on 2013 New Student Convocation.docx](#)
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<td>for each Commencement and provide to appropriate parties.</td>
<td>On Track</td>
<td>08/01/2014 - We provided a report in fall 2013 that explained retention and persistence of students working on campus and within student affairs. We used a population of students who worked on campus AND were involved in at least some coded activity. We found students involved in an activity AND working on campus were retained at much higher rates than students who were just involved in an activity. See related document. We can do more to improve attention on this population and examine the factors that influence their retention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tactic</td>
<td>Tactic Year: 2013-14 Success Criterion: Reports are completed. Assessment Method Type: Tactic is completed or not</td>
<td>Reporting Cycle: 2013 - 2014</td>
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<td>Tactic: Centralize divisional collection of student (UG and Grad) employment numbers and monitor student retention from fall to fall. Tactic Year: 2013-14 Success Criterion: 90 percent of students employed in a student affairs department return the next fall or graduate prior to the next fall. Assessment Method Type: Number of Participants</td>
<td>Status/Result Type: On Track Reporting Cycle: 2013 - 2014 Related Documents: Student Employees involved in campus activities during 2011-2012.docx</td>
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<td>Tactic: Help departments/functions demonstrate how learning, a potential factor to retention, occurs as a result of participation in their programs. Tactic Year: 2013-14 Success Criterion: Every department/function can articulate what students learned and conceptualize/prove how said learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 1.5b.1 - Increase student community service through the varied Student Affairs programming departments</td>
<td>Tactic: Conduct a year long study on how students perceive student affairs programs/resources/services. Build on retention study data and examine perceptions of overall experience. Tactic Year: 2013-14 Success Criterion: Study completed by June 2014; analysis to begin in July 2014 Assessment Method Type: Interviews</td>
<td>08/01/2014 - We have not begun this project though plans are underway to launch a project with ACAD instructors that may be similar in nature. Status/Result Type: Not Yet Begun Reporting Cycle: 2013 - 2014</td>
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<td>Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 1.7b.1 - Create and promote opportunities for leadership development in all Student Affairs programming.</td>
<td>Tactic: Advise Alpha Lambda Delta in the development and implementation of one service initiative. An alternative is to participate in an existing campus initiative. Tactic Year: 2013-14 Success Criterion: 10 members, including Executive Board, participate and contribute at least two hours.</td>
<td>08/01/2014 - This was not accomplished due to many difficulties in motivating the 13-14 ALD officers. Status/Result Type: Problematic Reporting Cycle: 2013 - 2014</td>
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<td>Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 1.7b.1 - Create and promote opportunities for leadership development in all Student Affairs programming.</td>
<td>Tactic: Conduct training for Alpha Lambda Delta Executive Board. Tactic Year: 2013-14 Success Criterion: All Executive Board members participate in a two hour leadership training.</td>
<td>08/01/2014 - The 13-14 ALD Executive Board was completely disengaged. Even the President and Vice-President, whom the organization spent money on to attend the national leadership conference, failed to do much. It can't get much worse than 13-14 and things look better with a collection of motivated new officers. Status/Result Type: Problematic Reporting Cycle: 2013 - 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 3.2a.1 - Grow and support student affairs programs at Lambuth campus</td>
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<td><strong>Tactic:</strong> Support efforts to assess student affairs activities at the Lambuth campus&lt;br&gt;<strong>Tactic Year:</strong> 2013-14&lt;br&gt;<strong>Success Criterion:</strong> Student affairs staff at the Lambuth campus have assessment practices in place that collect evidence of number of contacts, student learning and program efficacy.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assessment Method Type:</strong> Tactic is completed or not&lt;br&gt;<strong>08/01/2014</strong> - it is unclear the extent to which any assessment is conducted at the Lambuth campus. I need to revisit this function with staff to ensure assessment is integrated into their roles.</td>
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<td>Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 3.2a.1 - Grow and support student affairs programs at Lambuth campus</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Tactic:</strong> Continue to help with implementation of activities that integrate students into (i.e. Convocation) and celebrate their graduation from the campus (i.e. Baccalaureate)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Tactic Year:</strong> 2013-14&lt;br&gt;<strong>Success Criterion:</strong> Lambuth staff view our services as helpful&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assessment Method Type:</strong> Tactic is completed or not&lt;br&gt;<strong>08/01/2014</strong> - I have helped with all aspects of NSC and Baccalaureate, including budgeting, developing materials and scheduling. This is an ongoing effort. I believe the events have gone well overall and we continue to use feedback to improve the programs.</td>
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<td>Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 4.3b.2 - Develop conferences, webinars and events that highlight areas of Student Affairs where the division has expertise</td>
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<td><strong>Tactic:</strong> Develop a listing of student affairs staff professional expertise and incorporate into institution wide &quot;experts&quot; list; create a web-library of workshops/webinars/podcasts/articles developed/facilitated/written by staff.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Tactic Year:</strong> 2013-14&lt;br&gt;<strong>Success Criterion:</strong> 80 percent of exempt student affairs staff has at least one&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assessment Method Type:</strong> Tactic is completed or not&lt;br&gt;<strong>08/01/2014</strong> - This tactic was not prioritized, deciding instead to focus on providing workshops and professional development resources across the division. We're pleased with where we are in terms of enacting professional development opportunities (spring break and summer challenges, webinars, monthly newsletters) so this will no longer be a priority.</td>
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| workshop/webinar/podcast/article on the web-library. | **Assessment Method Type:**  
Tactic is completed or not | **Tactic:**  
Continue to provide monthly professional development newsletters highlighting opportunities for staff development.  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14  
**Success Criterion:**  
Newsletter 10 of 12 months a year - no December and May  
**Assessment Method Type:**  
Tactic is completed or not | **08/01/2014** - Eight newsletters were provided during July 13-July 14. Newsletters provided information on such items as social media, retention literature, and interviews with SA staff who demonstrate competence and confidence in their work. We'll continue this model to whatever extent possible during 14-15.  
**Status/Result Type:**  
On Track  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014 |
| **Tactic:**  
Continue to provide opportunities that help staff increase their competence and confidence in the Core Competencies of Student Affairs Practice (ACPA and NASPA) and specific attention to assessment (e.g. host TAG), access, equity and diversity, and student learning and development.  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14  
**Success Criterion:**  
Every non-hourly staff member in student affairs participates in at least two trainings annually on different topics that help increase their competence and confidence  
**Assessment Method Type:**  
Number of Participants | **08/01/2014** - We hosted three separate opportunities that focused specifically on the ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies: The Spring Break Challenge, MIMSAC, and the July Professional Development Opportunities. All 10 competency areas were attended to in some manner. Many staff attended the wide range of workshops.  
**Status/Result Type:**  
Completed  
**Reporting Cycle:** 2013 - 2014  
**Related Documents:**  
spring14_pd_schedule.pdf |
| Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 5.3a.1 - Explore a professional development plan for Student Affairs staff | **Tactic:**  
Implement professional development plan as developed by the 2011 Task Force for the Division of Student Affairs.  
**Tactic Year:** 2013-14 | **08/01/2014** - Much of what we sough to do has been accomplished with professional development including setting up ongoing opportunities for learning and development. Unfortunately, I am not clear on who is using our individualized professional development plan |

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Page 9 of 10
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<td><strong>Success Criterion:</strong>&lt;br&gt;By the end of 2013-2014 year, at least 25 student affairs staff have personalize professional development plans</td>
<td>options. I know that Jon Campbell and other SLI staff have engaged her staff as well. I estimate about 10 people are using it. I will look more into this for 14-15.</td>
<td><strong>Status/Result Type:</strong>&lt;br&gt;On Track</td>
<td>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Action Years:</strong>&lt;br&gt;2012 - 2013&lt;br&gt;2013 - 2014&lt;br&gt;2014 - 2015</td>
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Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Strategic) - 5.5a.1* - *Each Student Affairs department will measure customer satisfaction and/or evaluate processes to ensure a service-orientation Action Status: Active | 08/01/2014 - I have worked with many departments to collect customer service satisfaction with their programs. I have also worked to help institutional efforts to assess service quality. I will continue to prioritize these efforts as part of my work with departments. | **Status/Result Type:**<br>On Track | **Action Years:**<br>2012 - 2013<br>2013 - 2014<br>2014 - 2015 | **Success Criterion:**<br>Each department conducts some form of assessment to examine perceptions of customer/student satisfaction | **Tactic Year:**<br>2013-14 | **Reporting Cycle:**<br>2013 - 2014 | **Assessment Method Type:**<br>Number of Participants | **Status/Result:**<br>On Track | **Reporting Cycle:**<br>2013 - 2014 |
### Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Learning) - Understanding and Managing Self 5 - Possess appropriate self-efficacy

#### Assessment Years:
- 2012 - 2013
- 2013 - 2014
- 2014 - 2015

#### Outcome Status:
Active

#### Means of Assessment & Benchmarks / Tasks

**Assessment Method Details:**
Participate in a student affairs wide initiative to assess the extent to which student employees believe they possess self-efficacy to interact with diverse others.

Through a training experience, student employees will learn strategies for interacting well with diverse others. A pre-test will examine their beliefs of ability prior to training and a post-test will examine their beliefs after the training.

**Benchmark:**
All student employees will report increased belief that they can interact well with people who are different than them.

**Assessment Method Type:**
Survey (locally developed)

#### Results

08/01/2014 - The project was completed. The attached report summarizes our findings with student employees. Overall, students have a sense that they have some level of competence to interact with diverse others and found the training to help them feel more competent and confident. There are areas of improvement for these students.

**Result Type:**
Criterion Met

**Reporting Cycle:**
2013 - 2014

**Related Documents:**
- Report - Student Employees Learning to Interact Across Differences at the University of Memphis.docx

07/22/2014 - We conducted six workshops this fall to train student employees. Students completed the pre and post assessment. We have 45 students of the over 150 that participated who completed the pre and post assessment. Analysis on this project will complete in mid-June.

**Result Type:**
Criterion Not Met

**Reporting Cycle:**
2013 - 2014
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<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Means of Assessment &amp; Benchmarks / Tasks</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Action Taken &amp; Follow-Up</th>
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<tr>
<td>daily life</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Benchmark:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Action Taken &amp; Follow-Up</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2012 - 2013</td>
<td>85 percent of participants indicate increased perceptions of competence about implementing lessons learned in the workshop</td>
<td>08/01/2014 - This was not a priority this year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>2013 - 2014</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Survey (locally developed)</td>
<td>2013 - 2014</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Assessment Method Details:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During all assessment and professional development workshops, I will collect evidence that participants can explain key concepts and apply them in their respective contexts.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Assessment Method Category:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey</td>
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<td><strong>Benchmark:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>85 percent of participants indicate increased perceptions of competence about implementing lessons learned in the workshop</td>
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<td>Admin (SA) - Student Affairs Learning and Assessment (Learning) - Succeeding as a Professional 4 - Demonstrate effective leadership skills</td>
<td><strong>Assessment Method Details:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Action Taken &amp; Follow-Up</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Years:</strong></td>
<td>I will use a rubric to assess the extent to which Alpha Lambda Delta students develop leadership skills as a result of serving on the Executive Board. Each student will have identified a leadership goal at the beginning of service on the Executive Board.</td>
<td>08/01/2014 - This was not a priority this year due to lots of reasons including the lack of involvement ALD officers had in their roles.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Benchmark:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each student will document some level of growth in a leadership skill they have determined important.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Request for Assistance:
A Mixed Methods Approach to Exploring Persistence Strategies of First Generation College Students at a Large Urban Research Institution

Primary Contact Person:
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Overview of Institution and Division of Student Affairs
The University of Memphis is a large public research institution with over 21,000 students of which about 17,400 are undergraduate (Office of Institutional Research, 2013). The campus hosts residence halls for just over 2,300 students. More than half of entering first-year students is undecided. About 40 percent of students take at least one online class, while only about 10 percent are only online (Office of Institutional Research, 2013).

Campus profile reports indicate that about 44 percent of those enrolled in fall 2013 are students of color and about one-third of students are 23 years of age or older. Almost 16,000 students are on some form of financial aid. Many plan to work while in college. Seventy-five percent of students had only one parent attend college and 43 percent are first-generation students (Office of Institutional Research, 2013a).

Undergraduate enrollment has decreased just over five percent between 2010 and 2013 (Office of Institutional Research, 2013). The one year retention rate of the Fall 2012 cohort was 76.7%. The four-year graduation rate of the Fall 2009 cohort was 17.4%. The six-year graduation rate for 2007 is 44% (Office of Institutional Research, 2013b). Women tend to persist and graduate at higher rates and African Americans and men tend to persist and graduate less often than other students. Seventy-three percent of first-time, first-year, first-generation students return (lower than 76.7% of all first-time, first-year students. The graduation rate for first-generation students is 11.3% in four-years (2009 cohort) and 40% in six years. These numbers are lower than non-first-generation students (Office of Institutional Research, 2013b).

The Division of Student Affairs (Student Affairs) has 12 departments that work toward a collective mission to “foster student learning and promote student success through engagement and involvement in community, academics, diversity and leadership” (Division of Student Affairs, 2013). While Student Affairs has four goals identified with several strategies, the first goal explained is to “increase student retention and graduation” (Division of Student Affairs, 2013). Each department has developed at least one tactic that connects back to the goal of student retention and persistence. Working with first-generation students is highlighted as one of the division’s action items toward the institutional goal of Student Success.

Statement of Problem to Investigate and Research Questions
Student affairs provides programs, resources, and services to all students on our Memphis and Lambuth campuses. With first-generation students being a large population of our students, we are particularly interested in how we enact programs, resources and services to help this population of students. For example, our Student Success Programs (TRiO Programs) have been in place since 2005. Retention and graduation rates for students in these programs have consistently been above the all campus-average (for example, see [http://www.memphis.edu/studentaffairs/annualreport1213.php](http://www.memphis.edu/studentaffairs/annualreport1213.php)). Another example is our First Scholars Program, funded through the Suder Foundation and launched in Fall 2012 with a cohort of 20 students. All 20 students returned for Fall 2013. We can see how programs targeted toward first-
generation students are influencing retention, but we are still unsure about what tactics those students are using to navigate the transition to and overall experience of college. From this curiosity we post three primary research questions:

1. What factors influence first-generation students’ decision to persist at the University of Memphis?
2. What tactics did first-generation students who are in line to graduate use to persist at the University of Memphis.
   a. How did these tactics differ over the course of their four to six years toward graduation?
3. How do Student Affairs departments contribute to first-generation students’ persistence?

Additional questions might be added based on the research team’s interest in this topic. Such questions might include what dispositions these students bring with them that positively influence student persistence or what types of experiences appear easily accessible to these students and which ones are harder to achieve while on our campus. We know that we want to look potentially at distinct phases of these students’ experiences – do certain experiences matter more during the first-year than others.

Data Collection
The study will be a mixed methods examination of first-generation students’ persistence at the University of Memphis. The research team will develop a quantitative and qualitative approach to answer these and sub-questions to be determined. Student participants will be those first-generation students who have filed intent to graduate documents for May or August 2015. Some students will complete intent to graduate forms in Fall 2014 and these students may be considered early-eligible participants. We would know a good percentage (around 50%) of all students who intend to graduate in May 2015 by the middle of January 2015. Our potential sample could be somewhere between 300-1000 students based on estimates of eligible first-generation students.

Additionally, the Vanderbilt doctoral students will have the full support of Dan Bureau, Director of Student Affairs Learning and Assessment as well as other deans and directors within student affairs that can aid in data collection. We will determine the size and scope of both quantitative and qualitative measures once the students meet with Dr. Bureau. Approval for the research will be secured through Institutional Review Board in order to allow the opportunity for conference papers, presentations and journal articles.

Role of the Doctoral Candidates
The doctoral candidates will lead efforts to answer the aforementioned questions. Based on discussions with research team members, they will develop the instrument(s) and protocol for this mixed methods study. The doctoral candidates will possibly gain experience in instrumentation, data analysis, interpreting survey results, developing interview protocol, administering interviews, analyzing qualitative data, interpreting interview themes through coding, and leading colleagues in the shared pursuit of better understanding first generation student persistence. The Director of Student Affairs Learning and Assessment will be the primary assistant to the doctoral candidates.

Support for the Vanderbilt Student
We believe the students who accept this proposal would need to be on campus two consecutive days a week during survey and protocol development, data collection and analysis. Potentially, we might have the students come to the Memphis campus three times during the Fall 2014 semester and four times during the Spring 2015 semester (with final research completed by February 15th). They would have a free registration for our Memphis in May Student Affairs Conference, which is hosted on the third Friday of May 2015.
We would be open to discussing what level of financial support they feel necessary to meet their expectations. We could work on housing arrangements and some funds for travel and meals; however, at this time we do not have allocated funds to administer this project. Should we secure student interest we can talk through University of Memphis resources. From our past experiences with your students, we believe that they were able to secure funds from Vanderbilt.

References


Background and Respondents
New Student Convocation serves as an opportunity to introduce students to the academic and cocurricular traditions of the University of Memphis. Hosted on the first day of classes, New Student Convocation is one of several experiences, including New Student Orientation, Frosh Camp, Warm Welcome, Welcome Week and participation in ACAD 1100, that permit new students to understand how to be successful in college. An overarching goal of the program is to help students “become a tiger” and this year’s event was branded with the concept of “Tiger Training.” In March 2013, the New Student Convocation Committee reaffirmed the following continued to be appropriate objectives for the event:

- Create a sense of loyalty and connection to the University of Memphis
- Promote school spirit
- Focus students’ attention on the goal of graduating with a degree
- Increase students’ knowledge and understanding of academic tradition
- Develop a sense of community among incoming students
- Explain the benefits of being involved outside of the classroom (e.g. Study Abroad, Internships, Student Organizations)

Between March and August, the appointed committee members planned for the realization of these outcomes through the development of a plan for enacting New Student Convocation on August 26, 2013 at 2:30 p.m. Committee members participated in marketing and/or logistics work groups and made recommendations for continuation and/or modification of past Convocation components.

This report provides a summary of a survey sent to all new students, including transfers. Five hundred thirty-three students began the survey, of which 336 indicated they attended the event. For those who did not attend, 41% had a previous commitment other than class, 28% had class commitments and 21% did not know about the event. The remaining 15 percent either were not interested in attending or had other reasons that prevented them from participating.

Realization of learning objectives
Across all of the aforementioned objectives, 82% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the outcome was accomplished. Less than two percent of respondents indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed that any of the six outcomes were accomplished. This is consistent with results from past years. The event tends to be well evaluated. The number of respondents in 2013 more than doubled from that of 2012.

Marketing
A primary focus for this year’s New Student Convocation was branding the event and marketing the value of students’ participation. Rose Theatre holds 1,000 individuals. It appeared that at any time during the event the auditorium was close to if not entirely full. Students indicated that they found out
about the event in many ways. The top three were Email (51%), posters and signs around campus (38%), and attendance at New Student Orientation (35%).

Program Components

The program maintained much of the 2012 schedule but added comments from Senator Corker, as well as made modifications to the part led by the President. We do not ask students to provide feedback on each component of the event due to the fact that they are unlikely to remember it all. However, this year the committee was particularly interested in the message sent by the wearing of regalia. We examined whether or not regalia was seen as something that reinforced the goal of graduation or as something that made faculty and the Provost as unapproachable. For 2013, President Martin chose to not wear regalia.

There were 342 students responding to questions about regalia. More than 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they liked seeing the faculty and provost wearing regalia and regalia reinforced the goal of graduation. At least 87% indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that the provost and faculty should not wear regalia.

Open-ended feedback allowed us to identify what students like most about New Student Convocation. Of all respondents, 295 provided insight into what they found most valuable. Data was coded and three items had at least 20 references:

1. The whole thing was valuable

“I thought that New Student Convocation was very formal, but the information shared was very beneficial. Receiving the tassle and University of Memphis pin made me feel like I was a student at the University of Memphis and reinforced what I came to the University to do, graduate in 2017 and go on to start my career with the tools and knowledge I will receive over the years.”

2. The reinforcement of getting involved was valuable (and connected to the involvement fair, many students found both important to their transition to college life).

“I found that the information about student activities and the involvement outside of the classroom to be very beneficial to my academic career but I also found it beneficial to my identity as a unique individual.”

3. Fostering connections and community among new students (including class picture and t-shirt as artifacts of community).

“I found that New Student Convocation made me feel like I belonged here at The University of Memphis and that it is important that I graduate especially when the alumni spoke about how they graduated in the video just seeing what it looks like to graduate and happy and accomplished these people looked was very encouraging and valuable to me.”
Open-ended feedback allowed us to identify what students like least about New Student Convocation. Of all respondents, 267 provided insight into what they found most valuable. Data was coded and three items had at least 20 references:

1. They liked the whole event
   
   “It was amazing as it was!”

2. Scheduling and Location of the event
   
   “The venue for the event should be held in a larger area because of the students the doormen were forced to turn away.”

3. Need to better engage attendees
   
   “New students should be more involved in the program to make the program more hands on and interactive.”

**Conclusion**

The New Student Convocation committee should feel pleased with student response to the event. Tweaks made from 2012 helped to increase attendance and improve the overall quality of the event. Results indicate that learning outcomes were accomplished. Open-ended student responses allow us to identify areas of success and needed improvement.
Commencement and Student Affairs Learning and Assessment Supplemental Document

Commencement:

1. The increased followers on social media: Twitter, Instagram and Facebook
2. Development of survey component within the attendance form asking students why they choose to not attend Commencement
3. Development of name badge lanyards to make entering and exiting the event locations smoother for crew members and marshals
4. Development of How to videos on Youtube, including: What to expect at cap and gown pick up; how to put on your doctoral and master hood, etc.

Number of ALL Degrees and Certificates 2013-2014 Academic Year

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<td>683</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>2278</td>
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</table>

New Student Convocation

Estimated 900 students attended NSC.

Realization of learning objectives

Across all of the aforementioned objectives, 82% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the outcome was accomplished. Less than two percent of respondents indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed that any of the six outcomes were accomplished. This is consistent with results from past years. The event tends to be well evaluated. The number of respondents in 2013 more than doubled from that of 2012.

SALA

- Continued expansion of use of Campus Labs
- Self-efficacy study
• Completed an examination of retention and academic performance for student employees
• Aided in campus-wide initiative to assess service quality.

**Professional Development**

47 different staff members attended at least one educational workshop; 33 participated in two or more!

45 different staff members attended at least one educational workshop; 26 participated in two or more!
Overview and Demographics
There were 11,424 students we activity coded in 2011-2012, meaning they took part in at least ONE activity for which we track involvement (see list here).

- 6,478 identified as women
- 4,204 identified as Caucasian/White (57%)
- 3,605 identified as African American/Black (32%)
- 510 identified as Asian American
- 108 identified as Hispanic
- 44 identified as American Indian
- For 2949 students, ethnicity is unavailable

For all students that had at least one activity code the average GPA was a 2.94. There were 9,115 (80%) of these students that graduated in Spring or Summer 2012 and/or returned in Fall 2012. Of this number 1,156 (13%) graduated. There were 7,959 (87%) that returned as a student in Fall 2012. Some graduates also were enrolled in Fall 2012. The 99 students who graduated and reenrolled are not counted in Fall 2012 return rates. We do not know if students also had off-campus jobs or chose to work only off-campus. We also do not have a file of all on-campus employees to compare collective performance of these students to those students who are involved in at least one coded activity.

Involvement AND Working on Campus
The focus of the study was to determine if the retention and graduation rate for those students enrolled in 2011-2012 academic year that participated in at least one activity and worked on campus was higher than that of students involved in at least once activity but not working on campus. Additionally, academic performance, determined by GPA was of interest.

1,176 were involved in at least one activity during 2011-2012 and worked on campus at some point in that year. There were 10,248 students did not work on campus while involved in at least one activity. Table One provides a comparison of the two populations. Those in one coded activity and working on campus had higher percentages across the board. GPA for these students was higher than for those who are in at least one activity but does not work on campus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>At least 1 Activity + Work on Campus</th>
<th>At least 1 Activity + no on campus work</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number in Population</td>
<td>1,176</td>
<td>10,248</td>
<td>11,424</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number Graduated</td>
<td>148 (13%)</td>
<td>1,008 (10%)</td>
<td>1,156</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number Retained</td>
<td>898 (76%)</td>
<td>7,059 (69%)</td>
<td>7,957</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number No Return Fall 2012</td>
<td>128 (11%)</td>
<td>2,181 (21%)</td>
<td>2,309</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number working in non-Student Affairs areas</td>
<td>714 (61%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number working in student affairs areas</td>
<td>462 (39% of 1,176)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number working in student affairs areas graduated/returned</td>
<td>407 (88% of 462)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>2.91</td>
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Spring 2014 Schedule for Division of Student Affairs Professional Development Activities

February 14th  Webinar - Revisiting Campus Labs: Strategies for Use
9-11, Fountain View Board Room, University Center

February 17th  Webinar - Student Engagement and Retention
10:30-12, Fountain View Board Room, University Center

February 28th  Engaging in Social Media: Strategies for Delivering and Managing Content
9-11, Poplar Room, University Center

More scheduled post Spring Break

Spring Break Professional Development Challenge

March 10-12 One hour sessions from 9-9:50 and 10-10:50

March 10  9 a.m.  How Tech Works for You: Overview of ITS and Trends in Student Technology Use
March 10 10 a.m. Business and Finance: How the University Makes Budget Decisions
March 11  9 a.m.  Doctors in the House: Lessons from Dissertations by your Colleagues!
March 11 10 a.m. Legal Issues in Student Affairs: Ben Morton’s Annual Overview
March 12  9 a.m.  Contested Issues in Student Affairs: How do we Respond?
March 12 10 a.m. African American Male Persistence at a White Institution

March 13-14 Two hour sessions from 9-11

March 13  9 a.m.  Decision Making in Student Affairs Work
March 14  9 a.m.  Strengths Quest
Student Employees Learning to Interact Across Differences at the University of Memphis:  
An Assessment of Perceptions of Self-Efficacy

Overview

It is important to know to what extent students are prepared, or have a sense of self-efficacy in their ability, to interact with people different from themselves. Creating environments in which students are challenged to explore their perceptions and learn strategies to change impressions and develop skills to work with diverse individuals has been found to have a positive influence on how students experience diversity on college campuses (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). At the start of the Fall 2013 semester, the University of Memphis Division of Student Affairs launched an initiative to assess (1) how often students interact with diverse student populations, and (2) their impressions of how well they are able to work with these diverse populations. This report summarizes findings relative to this project.

Self-efficacy is defined as an “individual’s confidence in their ability to successfully complete a task” (DeWitz, Woolsey, & Walsh, 2009). As a part of the Division of Student Affairs’ Vision for Students (Division of Student Affairs, 2014), the concept of self-efficacy is deeply woven into programs, resources, and services provided by all departments. The Division aims to help students develop the skills they need to feel confident to enact a task in their student organizations, the larger campus, the community and our global society. One of those tasks is working with diverse others.

Student Affairs at the University of Memphis prides itself on its commitment to helping students develop an appreciation for diversity and increase intercultural competence (Division of Student Affairs, 2014). Activities coordinated by departments often incorporate some component that asks students to examine their current perceptions of people who are different than they are and create strategies to interact with those individuals in a way that will promote a civil and just campus community. An activity that occurs annually and can be a powerful force in helping students develop a sense of working well with diverse others is departmental training for student employees.

During Spring 2012, 1,176 students worked on campus. There were 462 employed in the Division of Student Affairs. Data indicates 88% of students employed in Student Affairs during 2011-2012 either reenrolled in or graduated by Fall 2012 (Bureau, 2013). A retention rate of 88% was 12 percentage points higher than the overall student retention numbers for the University of Memphis campus at that time (Office of Institutional Research, 2014).

Students were employed in a range of departments that included Residence Life, Dining, Tutoring, the University Center, Campus Recreation, and a number of offices across the division. Because student affairs values increasing students’ self-efficacy, hopes students can develop competence to interact with diverse others, and aspires toward helping our student employees perform well and persist to graduation, it was determined that this population may be a good one to launch a pilot project to assess how a training might help students increase their self-efficacy to interact with people different from themselves. Ultimately, this population of student employees needed to develop a sense that they were competent to interact with diverse others and The Division of Student Affairs felt compelled to create circumstances that would facilitate that development.
To help this happen, trainings were offered to provide participants with lessons on better understanding diverse backgrounds and developing strategies to work together on shared goals while coming from different perspectives. In particular, departments in which there was a large number of new and returning student employees were targeted. These departments were Campus Recreation and Intramural Services, Educational Support Programs, Residence Life, and the University Center. These four departments were required to send student employees. Other departments were invited to participate but were not required.

The intervention was an hour long workshop facilitated by University of Memphis staff members not connected with the departments from which these students came. Four staff members developed and facilitated a curriculum for students from these departments. Eight sessions were offered to students. One was held for only Resident Advisor staff, Campus Recreation and Intramural Services, and another for University Center staff. Educational Support Programs did not have a session only for their student employees. Campus Recreation and Intramural Services and Educational Support Program student employees were able to attend one of five other offerings. While these sessions were open, at least two of the sessions had only Campus Recreation Students participating. Session attendance varied from five to 60 participants each. All trainings occurred between August 10th and October 15th.

To gauge students' perceptions of self-efficacy to work with diverse others prior to the workshop, each person attending had to complete a locally developed survey within three days of attending the training. A post-test was sent to students in November after their training to gauge any self-perceptions of change. The post-test differed from the pre-test in order to solicit students' perceptions of the training and their competence since completing the training. However, populations and situations we solicited perspectives on did not change. The pre- and post-tests were both made optional in order to not coerce the participants.

About 140-160 students participated in the trainings including 51 resident advisors and 27 University Center student employees. Unfortunately, we do not have specific numbers for attendance at all of the trainings. Overall 153 students participated in the pre-test while 136 students provided their email in order to receive the post-test. Forty-one of the same students completed the post-test, which was administered in November. For some students this was three months after the training and for others it may have been about one month since the final training.

This report summarizes key findings from analysis of the pre- and post-test data. Part one explains students' perceptions entering the training. Part two is an overview of results from analysis of the pre- and post-tests.

**Part One: Findings from Pre-Test Administered Prior to Training**

Pre-test participants were 58% female. Students were allowed to report their ethnicity and select as many options that applied. Forty-nine percent reported African American or Black, 46% indicated Caucasian, and 15% of students indicated another ethnicity. All but one student resided in the United States the year prior to coming to the University of Memphis. While only five percent of participants were first-year students, undergraduate class standing was evenly distributed with between 26-28% for
sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Eleven percent of participants were graduate students. Students were mostly in-state residents (71%).

Students were asked about the frequency with which they interacted with different populations of students within the last year. At least 75% of student employees reported regular or frequent interactions with African American or Black, Hispanic, and Caucasian individuals as well as persons who had the same or a different religion than they. Students also reported high rates of interacting with individuals who identified as gay, straight, or bisexual. Finally, students reported frequent interaction with persons who had a different socioeconomic status than they did, as well as individuals from both rural and city communities.

Less than 75% of students indicate they had regular or frequent interaction with students from the following diverse populations: American Indian, Asian American, international students, students whose primary language is not English, and students with a range of disabilities (mobility, visual impairment, cognitive). The fewest students, less than 10% had frequently or regularly interacted with a person transitioning their gender.

The next set of questions asked about the extent to which students might be comfortable interacting with these same diverse populations. At least 75% of students report feeling comfortable or very comfortable with most of the populations listed. Populations with which students have a lower sense of comfort include: international students, those whose primary language is not English, and those who are transitioning to a different gender.

The final set of scaled questions asked students to report on how they spend their time, particularly asking about the extent to which their time is spent experiencing things that are different from them. It appears that students report spending most of their time with people similar to them AND with those who are different from them. Eighty-two percent indicate they spend most of their time with people similar and 70% indicate they spend most of their time with people who are different from them. It is unclear why students would report such high numbers on both of these questions given that they were right next to each other on the survey. Future surveys might have a different approach to asking the question. It could also be that students contextualized “most of their time” and do in fact spend varying degrees of time with people similar to and different from them.

Beyond just choosing to spend their time with people, participants were asked if they have daily interactions with others that are comfortable for them. Ninety-five percent report they have comfortable daily interactions with persons who are different from them. The vast majority (85%) of participants reported that they see people similar to them on campus.

Student employees report that they would value more education relative to diverse populations; however, the majority of these students indicate they have had educational experiences at the University of Memphis, including work training, which has prepared them to successfully fulfill the responsibilities of their job. Only 68% percent of student employees know where to find the resources to help them better interact with diverse individuals and 74% indicate they have had support from supervisors to learn the skills they need to successfully interact across differences. Students are ready
to learn more as a means to develop skills to interact with diverse individuals: 97% of participants agree or strongly agree that they are motivated to “learn skills that help me deal with different persons and perspectives”.

**Part Two: Does the Intervention Make A Difference? Comparing Pre and Post Test Responses.**

As a means to determine if the training might have influenced students’ sense of competence in working with diverse populations, a post-test was administered. While the pre-test asked questions about previous interactions and comfort levels working with diverse students, the post-test sought to discover the extent to which students had interacted with the same populations since the start of the semester. Unfortunately, isolating the training as the most influential factor was not possible; however, it was hypothesized that as students report increased comfort and provided feedback on the influence of the training it might be determined that the training to increase the self-efficacy of student employees to interact with diverse others was successful.

For the most part, students’ report of frequency of interactions with diverse others in the post-test was consistent with that in the pre-test. Students often interacted with students from African American, Caucasian, similar or different religions, and socioeconomic and geographical backgrounds. Participants also report frequent or regular interactions with persons identifying as gay, straight or bisexual. Students continued to have less frequent interactions or were unable to recall the number of interactions with the other populations such as international students, students whose primary language is not English, and students transitioning their gender.

Students were asked to report on increased levels of comfort in working with diverse populations during their time as a student employee. They could indicate if they had previously high levels of comfort or low levels of comfort while reporting if it had decreased, increased or not changed since the training occurred. The questions did not attribute causation to the training, rather asking students if their time as a student employee in general helped them increase a sense of self-efficacy to enact the skills needed to work with different populations of people.

At least 22% of students report some level of increased comfort in working with every population identified even those previously mentioned as least comfortable for students (international students, students who primary language is not English, and persons transitioning gender). This may indicate that even a generalized training conducted for 60 minutes could have some influence on developing skills to interact with diverse persons from any background.

It should be noted that for many of the populations, at least 50% of students reported they had previously high levels of comfort that had not changed. However, consistent with the pre-test findings, student employees reported they had previously low levels of comfort working with international students, those whose primary language was not English, and students identifying as transgender. For these populations, respondents also were likely to indicate that their previous comfort level had not changed. This means that the training and other experiences the student has had as a result of employment did not influence their comfort level with international students, those whose primary
language is not English and transgender students. In very few cases did students report that they had low levels of comfort and had decreased in their comfort level.

Finally, students were asked about the potential impact of the training itself. At least 75% of students responding to the post-test felt that the training helped them increase their intercultural competence, develop an approach to working with diverse individuals, know where to find resources, and to look at people different than they are in more accepting ways. Ninety-one percent of participants felt the department for which they work placed a high value on intercultural competence, while 85% indicate they have support from their supervisors to learn more to better work with diverse others. Only 52% indicate they would like their department to provide additional training on building intercultural competence.

References


