

Introduction

The attached spreadsheet provides the 2012 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) satisfaction ratings for upper division students by College, L&S Division and department. Satisfaction ratings are ranked (most to least satisfied) to help identify trends and areas for additional consideration.

Executive Summary

Satisfaction with College advising was highest in the small Colleges with centralized advising and lower in L&S where the student populations are larger, advising responsibilities are complex and the structure of advising is mixed. By L&S Division, satisfaction is higher in the Arts & Humanities, Social Science and Undergraduate Division and lower in the L&S Administered Degree Programs, the Biological Science Division and for undeclared students. Satisfaction is higher with departmental advising than College and faculty advising although all results are generally correlated. Students were less satisfied with advising in many capped and other high demand majors.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Results by School and College – Satisfaction with College Advising

The results by College show higher satisfaction levels with College advising in the smaller Colleges with centralized services - College of Natural Resources, Environmental Design, Chemistry and the Haas School. The College of Letters & Science is unique in that it serves a significantly larger student population and the structure of advising is mixed; centralized at the College level and decentralized at the major level. The College of Engineering is an outlier in that it has centralized advising and serves more students than the other small Colleges although it remains small compared to Letters & Science.

The range and complexity of advising roles and responsibilities is also different for each College. For example, College advisors in the College of Natural Resources are responsible for 11 majors, in Environmental Design for 4 majors, in Chemistry for 3 majors, and at the Haas School for 1 major as compared to Letters & Science where College advisors advise for 57 majors and advising responsibilities are shared/coordinated with a dispersed group of major advisors.

Results by L&S Division – Satisfaction with College Advising

Within the College of Letters & Science Divisions, survey respondents were most satisfied with College advising in the Arts & Humanities, Social Science and Undergraduate Division. They were less satisfied with College advising in the “Other L&S Administered Degree Programs,” the Biological Science Division and for undeclared L&S students (this group of upper division students includes undeclared transfer students, late deciders, students searching for a viable major after being turned away from their first choice major, and or/students who are not making normal progress toward degree).

There is a relationship between satisfaction levels with advising by College, advising by departmental staff, and advising by faculty (when satisfaction with advising is high for staff it is also high for faculty) and with other indicators such as “access to faculty outside of class” and satisfaction with “UC grade point average.”

Students were more satisfied with departmental advising than other forms of advising (although the differences in satisfaction with staff and faculty advising is smaller than the differences in satisfaction with College and departmental advising). This could be attributed to a preference for “specialist” over “generalist” advising. In Letters & Science departmental advisors often act in a “specialist” role, using advanced knowledge of a small number of degree programs. At the College level, advisors act as “generalists” using

broad knowledge of a wide variety of programs, policies and services.

Results by L&S Department – Satisfaction with Departmental Advising

By L&S department, students were more satisfied with departmental advising in the Arts & Humanities Division which has more small majors than other divisions (<100 majors). Advising is clustered for some majors in the A&H Division. However, the total student populations in these clusters continue to be small compared to other Divisions.

The green highlights identify capped majors and show lower satisfaction ratings with College and Departmental advising in all capped majors except Social Welfare and Media Studies.

Orange highlights identify majors that have sustained significant enrollment increases in recent years and show lower satisfaction with College advising in the Math, Integrative Biology and Public Health majors. There were also lower satisfaction ratings in MCB.

Letters & Science undeclared majors were also less satisfied with departmental advising (again, this is upper division undeclared students).

FOR ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION

- Comparing UCUES satisfaction ratings on advising by College can be problematic given the significant differences in student populations and structure of advising. As the College of Letters & Science considers how best to deliver advising to its large undergraduate population in a unique centralized and decentralized advising environment, it may wish to determine if there are structural or other programmatic features of advising in the smaller Colleges that could be applied to Letters & Science (i.e., through the development of divisionally based advising subgroups, hybrid positions, or other innovations that would help “shrink” the College and bridge the specialists and generalists advising roles).
- The College may also want to additionally examine advising practices in units with lower and higher satisfaction ratings. Are there practices in units with higher satisfaction ratings (i.e., Comparative Literature, Music, History, Sociology, etc.) that could be applied by other units to normalize the advising experience across Divisions and departments?

- Given the correlation between satisfaction with College, departmental and faculty advising, the College may also wish to examine how these important advising relationships are maintained and enhanced through both formal and informal means. How might the College strengthen connections between College and departmental advisors and help to engage more faculty members in undergraduate advising in the future?
- There have been a number of important demographic and enrollment shifts in the College in recent years putting additional pressure on capped and other high demand majors. The College may wish to determine how advising might be best delivered to large numbers of students preparing for impacted programs.
- UCUES Survey data is only one metric that can be used to evaluate advising. The Advising Council and OPA are working together to develop a range of standard metrics for use by advising units that includes critical information on workload such as advisor-to-student ratios and more information on student characteristics and behaviors such as enrollment trends, demographics and persistence and completion rates. The Council hopes to support the use of both macro-level and local analysis on advising in the future.

Characteristics of Effective Advising Programs

Effective advising units have several common characteristics: There is a **culture of continuous improvement** and innovation; there is collective engagement in **regular evaluation and assessment of service** guided by use of survey, demographic, enrollment and other critical data and information; the **organization of service, advising roles, programs and distribution of resources** is coherent and directed appropriately toward student need; **advising tools and technology** are well designed and applied; **faculty and other critical stakeholders** are constructively involved and advisors are well-trained and developed.

UC Berkeley Advising Council – *Program Effectiveness Working Group* 2013

Advising Council

<http://oe.berkeley.edu/projects/student/AdvisingCouncil.shtml>

Web Address

opa.berkeley.edu

Office Address

Office of Planning & Analysis
655 University Hall, Mail Code 1510
Berkeley, CA 94720-1510