

Assessing the ‘Sophomore Slump’: Lessons Learned from a Pilot Program in Mandatory Advising for 2nd Year Students.

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Presentation Outcomes

- Mission Statement
- Jump Start Your 3rd Year!
- Advising Service Goals Assessed
- Selected Learning Outcomes Addressed
- 2014 Findings: Student Attitudes
- 2014 Advising Unit Interventions
- Lessons Learned and Next Steps for 2015

Mission Statement

UC Merced undergraduate academic advising, in collaboration with the campus community, promotes student success by empowering students to become self-directed learners and decision-makers. In an environment that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive, we provide quality academic advising and related services to help students develop sound educational plans and to take full advantage of their university experience.

JumpStart Your 3rd Year!

- First collaborative effort to support student success
- Mandatory advising session for second-year students, including:
 - Major & minor track
 - Time to degree
 - Career/graduate school options
 - Research/internship options
 - Personal development through co-curricular activities & resources
- Over 1,100 students across our 3 Schools & Undeclared participated
- Assessment data helped improve interventions for this year

Advising Service Goals Assessed

- Promote appropriate progress to degree for native and transfer students.
- Provide students with advising resources and materials that are accurate, current and understandable using delivery formats that respond to student needs
- Provide advising that is tailored to the distinctive needs of specific student populations, and reflects the unique environment of a research university.
- Facilitate student learning and self-advocacy in relation to reaching academic goals and career plans.

Selected Learning Outcomes Addressed

Freshmen

- Seek and apply in your decision-making credible sources of information regarding university and school requirements, policies, regulations, and procedures.
 - Tendency of students to prioritize advice of peers nearly equally to advising staff.
 - 47% identified using academic advisors for advice*
 - 40% identified using their peers for advice
 - MyAudit, Catalog and School Websites as sources of planning information
 - 79% identified MyAudit
 - 36% University Catalog
 - 35% School Website

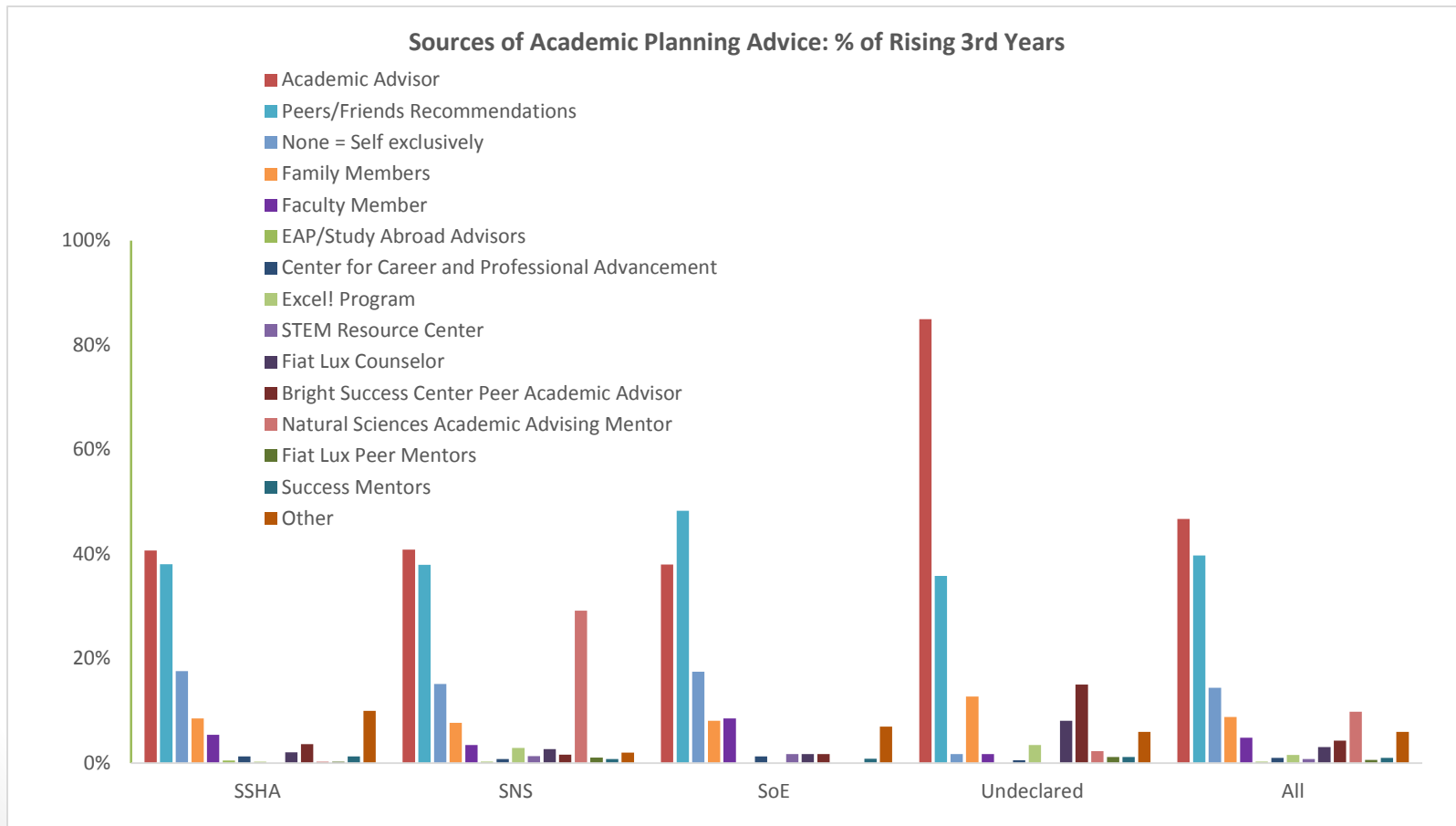
Selected Learning Outcomes Addressed

Sophomore

- Identify a major that aligns with your interests, values, strengths, career and educational goals
 - 322 student not declared in their intended major
 - 56% were eligible, but had not submitted the paperwork
 - 32% were ineligible
 - 11% were undecided

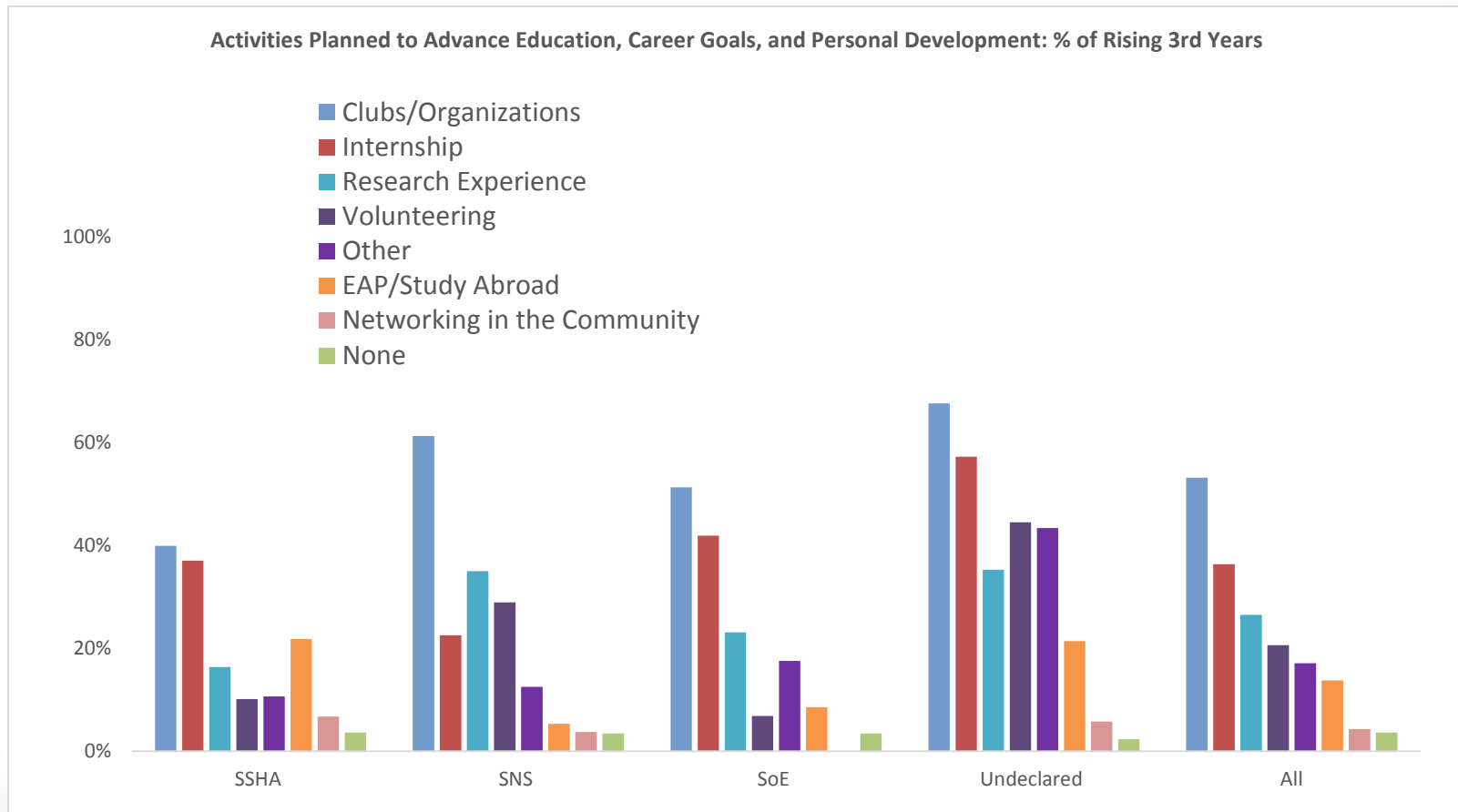
2014 Findings : Student Attitudes

Tendency for students to utilize their peers as often as advisors for advice



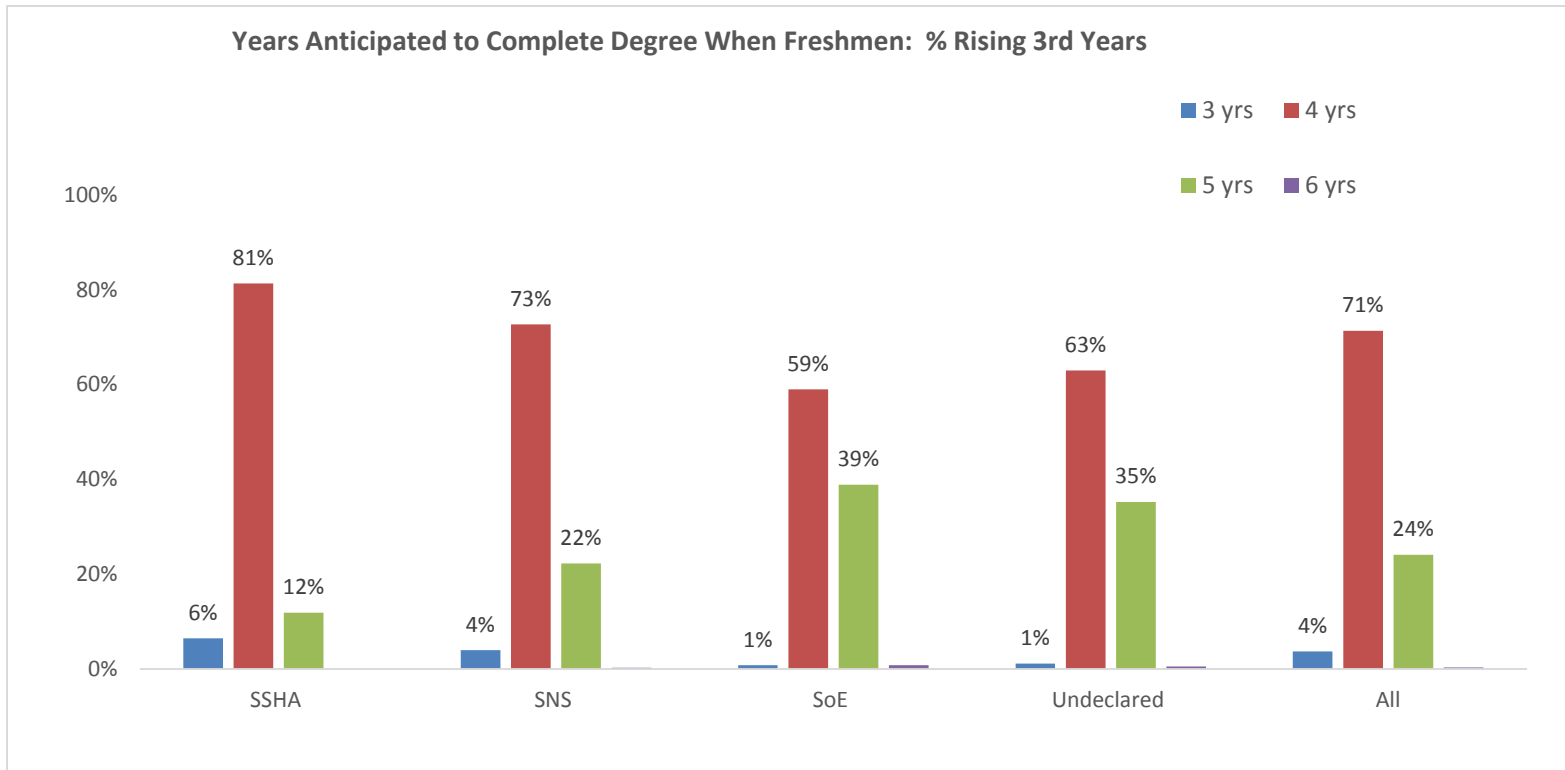
2014 Findings : Student Attitudes

- Students felt that clubs/orgs were just as relevant as internship for post-baccalaureate planning.



2014 Findings : Student Attitudes

- Uninformed expectations on time to degree
- Lack of awareness of pre-requisite and basic degree requirements



2014: Advising Unit Interventions

- Alignment of orientation messaging across units
 - Reaffirming expected graduation timeframes by program
- Restructuring of MyAudit, major flow-charts for sequential courses
- Increased mandatory advising interventions to lessen use of peers and “rumor mill” (select units)
- Early curriculum interventions to identify students who are at risk of not completing on-time

Lessons Learned & Next Steps

- Heads Up Email—Goal was to increase the % of students in the correct major for Jumpstart
- Improved work flow allows for more productive advisor-advisee discussions
 - Intake form
 - Removing questions related to satisfaction of degree requirements (CORE 1, WRI 10)
- Referral Document
 - Common Template modified by each unit to address unit-specific needs
 - Learning Outcomes presented as check-list

Questions?

Special thanks to Laura Martin in the Office of Institutional Assessment for crunching all our numbers and to all of the campus academic advisors for their tireless support of undergraduate students.