

NJCU Ed.D. Fall 2018

Dr. Carnahan

EDTC809 Assessment and Evaluation

Emily Vandalovsky

Project 3

Quantitative Study

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For the purposes of this study, I am going to focus on the effectiveness and utilization of the academic advising feature implemented within the self-service tool used by the first-year students at a community college. Published research shows a strong connection between the academic advising and retention rates. For the last few years, the retention rate published by the studied institution dropped over 18% between the first and second semesters.

Driven by the critical role of the academic advising plays in the student retention rates, I intend to conduct a survey to evaluate the effectiveness and the utilization of the academic advising feature within the self-service student planning tool among first-year students at a community college. It will be a survey-based quantitative study that will investigate the students' perspective on the following research questions:

RQ1: What do first-time degree-seeking students define as essential elements of a student-advisor relationship?

RQ2: What impact, if any, did the advisors have on the enrollment process or class selection for first-time degree-seeking students?

RQ3: What impact, if any, did self-service online student planning tool have on the enrollment process or class selection for the first-time degree-seeking students?

The quantitative design fits the intent of this study because I am interested in investigating the effectiveness and the usability of the online student planner feature as part of the self-service online advising tool. Since the online tool is available to all students at the college, I am anticipating a larger study with a greater result set.

Based on the data recorded from the previous Fall semesters, the estimated population size for this study may reach over 2500 students, with approximately 2000 full-time students and

500 part-time students. With the use of the stratified random sampling approach, the number of participants will be cut in half, resulting in 1000 full-time student sample and 250 part-time student sample. To enable further generalization of the sample data to the original population, the ratio between the full-time and the part-time numbers of students in the studied sample is preserved using the stratified sampling approach.

A half of all students, both full-time and part-time, enrolled in their first semester and have no previous college experience, will be invited to participate in a survey. The original email will contain a brief study description and the unique link to the survey site. In addition, promotional incentive will be included, encouraging participation and guarantying entry into a raffle for five gift cards valued at \$10 each and five gift cards at \$5 each.

It is understood that the return rate of the survey may bring this number down but should allow for the adequate data analysis. I see some issues with the data collecting due to the following reasons: (1) students with language difficulties may have limited understanding of questions or instructions; (2) students may not find sufficient time to complete it; (3) students may not feel motivated enough to complete it.

To answer both research questions, I will use the following instrument: Academic Advising Inventory (AAI), developed by Winston and Sander (2002). AAI is available for free and with no required permission for the research studies. (Winston and Sandor, 2002). The first part of AAI instrument measures the nature of the advising relationship using four scales, such as developmental-prescriptive Advising, personalizing education, academic decision-making and selecting courses. The next part of the instrument measures the satisfaction with advising, which along with the last part, dedicated to the demographical information, can be altered based on the needs of the study. (Winston and Sandor, 2002).

In addition to AAI questions, I will compose my own part of the survey which will be dedicated to the use and the satisfaction from online student planner feature within the self-service tool. I will measure the frequency of its use, and the overall effectiveness. Since the advising at the currently studied institution is not mandatory, I will inquire about the use past and projected use of any advising, from in-person to online to none.

Sources:

Winston, R. B., & Sandor, J. A. (2002). Evaluating academic advising: Manual for the academic advising inventory. Retrieved from

<https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Portals/0/Clearinghouse/links/documents/AAI-Manual-02.pdf>