



Student Affairs Focus Group Summary Report SATAL 2013

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Division of Student Affairs Focus Group Results

At the request of the Division of Student Affairs, the Students Assessing Teaching and Learning Program (SATAL) conducted a series of focus group sessions to gather student feedback on co-curricular experiences and subsequent learning at UC Merced, particularly in relation to the Student Learning Outcomes that have been identified by the Division of Student Affairs. Focus group participants represented juniors, seniors, and graduates from the three schools: School of Natural Sciences, School of Engineering, and the School of Social Sciences Humanities and Arts. Groups of these students were selected and invited by Student Affairs staff. These focus group sessions consisted of a self-assessment survey and open ended questions to broach the various aspects of the Students Learning Outcomes identified by the Division of Student Affairs. SATAL students led three one-hour and a half sessions and 16 students participated in this assessment.

The following SATAL students collaborated in this assessment effort:

Cruzat, Cherrylyn¹; Dachner, Gregory²; Pham, Michael³; Smart, Valorie⁴; Verstak, Tatsiana⁵.

¹Psychology, Junior; ²Cognitive Science, Graduate; ³Human Biology, Junior; ⁴Management, Senior; ⁵Human Biology, Senior.

UC Merced: Division of Student Affairs Student Learning Outcomes

- Appreciation of Human Differences
- Civic Responsibility
- Communication Skills
- Confidence in One's Abilities
- Leadership & Teamwork
- Life-long Learning and Personal Well-being
- Sense of Self and Impact on Others

Part I: Demographic Information

What's your class standing?

_____ Sophomore ____ Junior _____ Senior _____ Other

Did you transfer to UC Merced? ____ No ____ Yes If yes, from where?

What term & year do you plan to graduate?

What's your major?

Please identify your co-curricular involvements at UCMerced, listing the term & year you were actively engaged.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Term & Year</u>	<u>Activity</u>
<u>Term & Year</u>		
1.		2.
3.		4.
5.		6.

Please review the list of the seven Student Learning Outcomes selected by the Division of Student Affairs at UCM as goals of active student participation in the co-curriculum.

(HANDOUT)

Part II: Self-assessment of the seven Student Affairs Student Learning Outcomes

For each of the Division of Student Affairs' Student Learning Outcomes below, please identify the change in your abilities since you started at UC Merced.

1. *Appreciating Human Differences:*

Relative to when I started at UC Merced, my Appreciation of Human Differences has become

Much stronger	Stronger	No change	Weaker	Much weaker

If you indicated Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?

2. *Civic Responsibility and Engagement:*

Relative to when I started at UC Merced, my commitment to Civic Responsibility & Engagement has become

Much stronger	Stronger	No change	Weaker	Much weaker

If you indicated Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?

3. *Confidence in One's Abilities: (social, learning, critical thinking, creativity, goal setting, purposeful risk taking)*

Relative to when I started at UC Merced, my Confidence in my Abilities has become

Much stronger	Stronger	No change	Weaker	Much weaker

If you indicated Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?

4. *Effective Communication: (written, oral and technological)*

Relative to when I started at UC Merced, my ability to Effectively Communicate has become

Much stronger	Stronger	No change	Weaker	Much weaker

If you indicated Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?

5. *Leadership and Teamwork:*

Relative to when I started at UC Merced, my abilities in Leadership and Teamwork have become

Much stronger	Stronger	No change	Weaker	Much weaker

If you indicated Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?

6. *Lifelong Learning and Personal Well-being:*

Relative to when I started at UC Merced, my abilities around Lifelong Learning and Personal Well-being have become

Much stronger	Stronger	No change	Weaker	Much weaker

If you indicated Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?

7. *Sense of Self and Impact on Others*

Relative to when I started at UC Merced, my understanding of my Sense on Self and Impact on Others has become

Much stronger	Stronger	No change	Weaker	Much weaker

If you indicated Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?

Division of Student Affairs
Focus Group Summary Report
Total Number of Students: 16

II. Demographics and Self-Assessment of the Student Learning Outcomes

<u>Part I: Demographic Information</u>		
1. Class standing	N=16	%
Junior	3	19
Senior	11	69
Graduate	2	13
2. Term and year plan to graduate	N=16	%
Spring 2013	2	13
Fall 2013	1	6
Fall 2014	1	6
Spring 2014	8	50
Spring 2015	4	25
3. Major	N=16	%
Management	4	25
Human Biology	3	19
Computer Science and Engineering	1	6
Sociology	1	6
Psychology	4	25
Applied Mathematics	1	6
Mechanical Engineering	1	6
Political Science	1	6
4. Co-curricular activities	N=16	%
Greek life	10	63
Housing and Residential Life	6	38
Orientation Leader	4	25
Campus Store	3	19
USTU T.A.	3	19
H.E.R.O.E.S	2	13
Bright Success Center	2	13
OSL Leadership Program Intern	2	13
Success Mentor Program	2	13
Career Services	2	13
ASUCM Court	2	13
Yosemite Leadership Program	1	6
Assistant to Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs	1	6
Violence Prevention Program	1	6
Order of Omega	1	6
Energy Service Corpse	1	6
Student Assistant at UCM Library	1	6

Mercy ER Volunteer	1	6
UCM Volleyball	1	6
SFAC member	1	6
Filipino American Alliance	1	6
UCM Softball	1	6
Multi-cultural Student Council	1	6
MECHA	1	6
Volunteer at E.C.E.C.	1	6
Testimony Gospel Choir	1	6
Student Interviewer for Head Positions of Departments	1	6
Team Get Set	1	6
Invisible Children	1	6
National Undergraduate Representative for Sorority	1	6
WASC Accreditation Steering Committee	1	6
College Republicans	1	6
Speech and Debate	1	6
VCSA Business Assistant	1	6

Part II: Self-assessment of the seven Student Affairs SLOs		
1. Appreciating Human Differences	N=16	%
Much stronger	9	56
Stronger	7	44
No change	0	0
Weaker	0	0
Much Weaker	0	0
1. a. If you indicate Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?		
Greek Life (2), FYE Leader, Orientation Leader, RA, National Park & Capstone Project, Success Mentor, Multi-cultural student council, campus store position, Bright Success Center, Housing, KKG, ASUCM, community service projects, working in Yosemite, and club involvement.		

2. Civic Responsibility and Engagement	N=16	%
Much stronger	2	13
Stronger	8	50
No change	6	38
Weaker	0	0
Much Weaker	0	0
2. a. If you indicate Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?		
Greek Life, OSL Internship, OSL, Heroes, RA, Energy Service Corpse, Yosemite Leadership Program and Capstone project, community service, FSL programming,		

3. Confidence in One's Abilities	N=16	%
Much stronger	10	63

Stronger	6	38
No change	0	0
Weaker	0	0
Much Weaker	0	0
3.a. If you indicate Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?		
Greek Life (3), Orientation leader (2), Heroes (2), Peer Instructor (2), Bright Success Center, Campus store position, RA, Career Consultant Position, Library position, Yosemite Leadership Program,		

4. Effective Communication	N=16	%
Much stronger	5	31
Stronger	8	50
No change	3	19
Weaker	0	0
Much Weaker	0	0
4.a. If you indicate Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?		
Greek Life (2), Lead peer instructor, Orientation leader coordinator, Health educator, Success Mentor Program, Housing and Residency life, Heroes, Yosemite Leadership Program, SPAC deliberation, club involvement, work involvement.		

5. Leadership and Teamwork	N=16	%
Much stronger	7	44
Stronger	7	44
No change	2	13
Weaker	0	0
Much Weaker	0	0
5.a. If you indicate Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?		
Greek Life (4), Orientation Leader (2), Heroes, Yosemite Leadership Program, Leadership positions, and club involvement.		

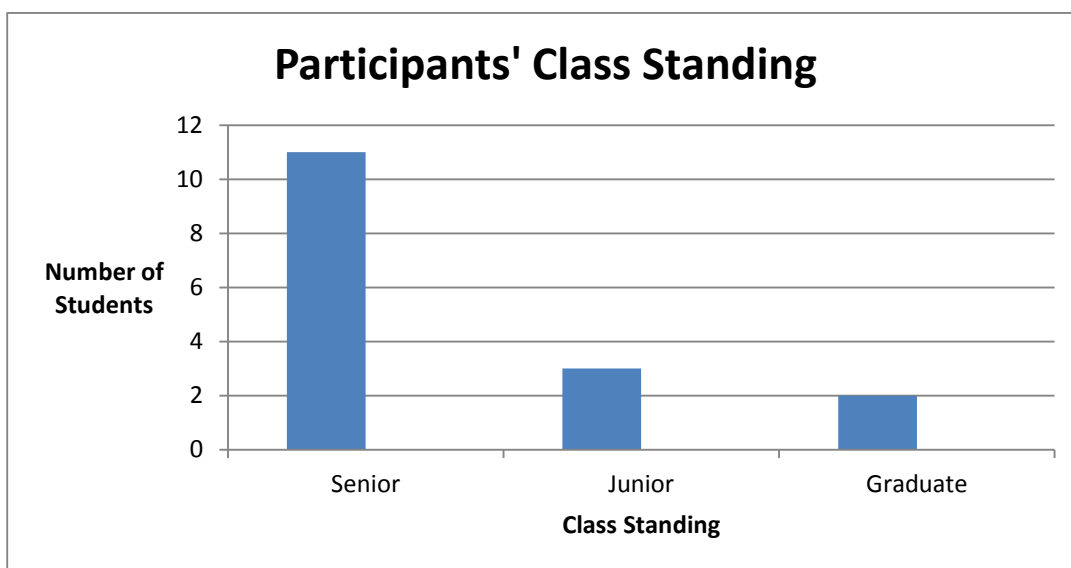
6. Lifelong Learning and Personal Well-being	N=16	%
Much stronger	7	44
Stronger	5	31
No change	4	25
Weaker	0	0
Much Weaker	0	0
6.a. If you indicate Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?		
Greek Life (2), OSL, Violence Prevention Program, Heroes, Housing and Residency life, Yosemite Leadership Program.		

7. Sense of Self and Impact on Others	N=15*	%
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Much stronger	6	40
Stronger	9	60
No change	0	0
Weaker	0	0
Much Weaker	0	0
7.a. If you indicate Much Stronger or Stronger, what project, position or involvement contributed to that increase?		
Greek Life (3), Orientation leader, Housing and Residency life (2), USTU TA, Yosemite Leadership Program, Heroes.		

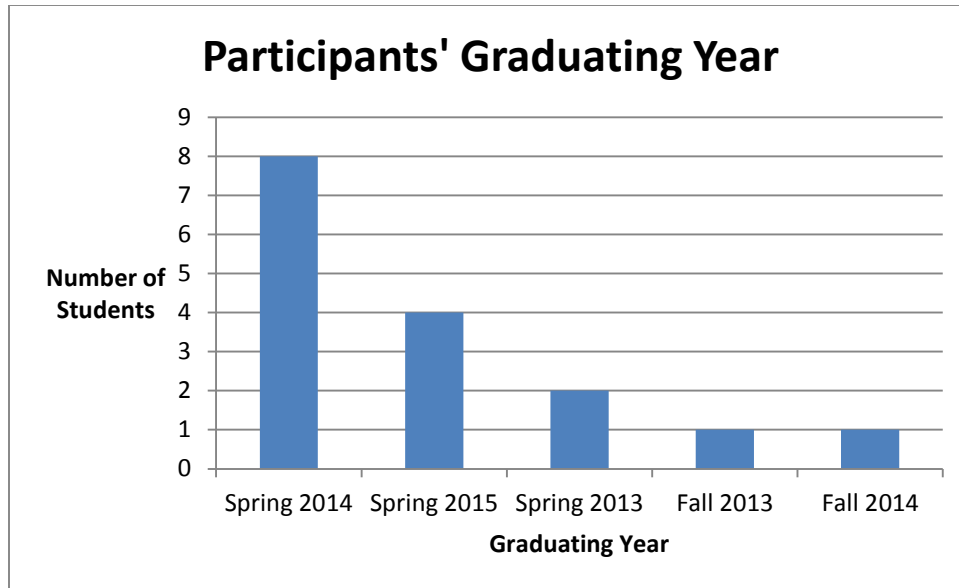
**One student did not complete this section.*

Part I: Demographic Information



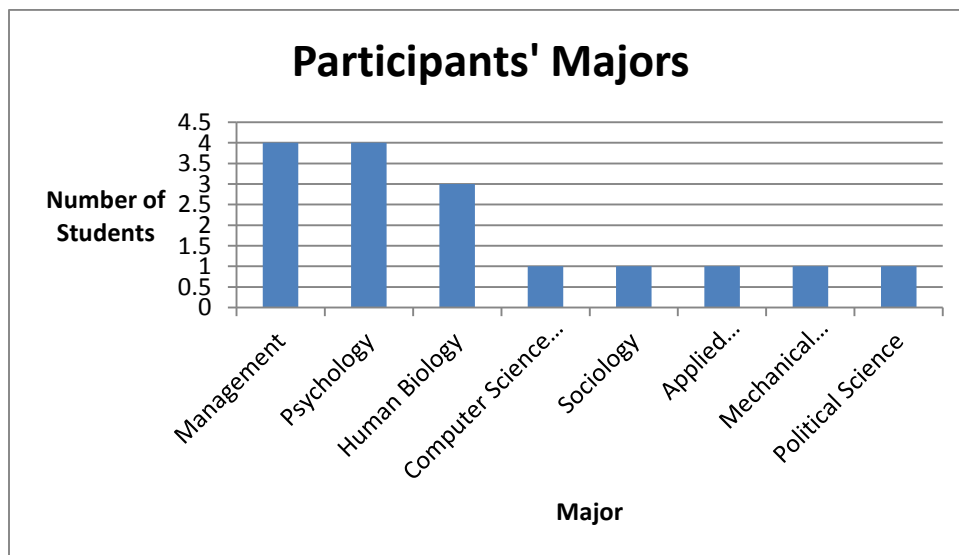
Graph 1 displays participants' class standing

Most of the students who participated in the focus group sessions were seniors (11 or 69%), some were juniors (3 or 19%) and a couple of graduates (2 or 13%)



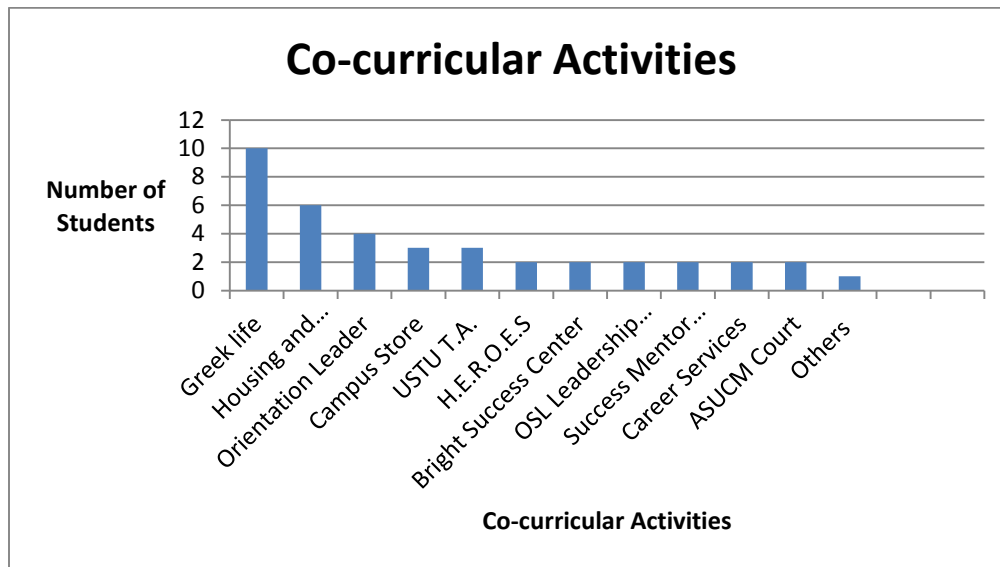
Graph 2 displays participants' graduating year and term

Most of the participating students are planning to graduate in Spring 2014 (8 or 50%) and in Spring 2015 (4 or 25%). A couple of students have already graduated in Spring 2013 (2 or 13%). While one student is graduating in Fall 2013 (1 or 6%), another student plans to graduate Fall 2014 (1 or 6%).



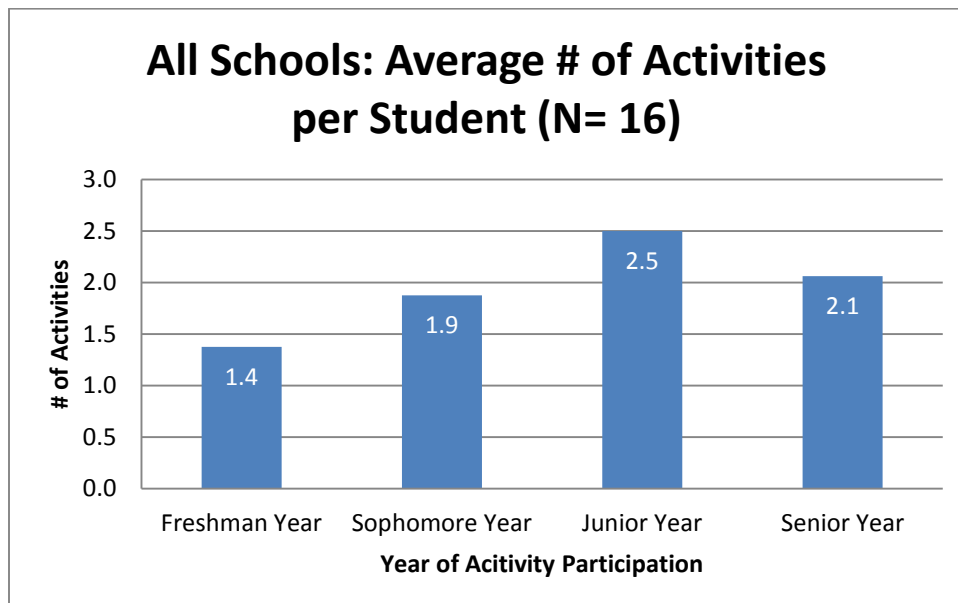
Graph 3 displays participants declared majors.

Management (4 or 25%) and Psychology (4 or 25%) were the most popular majors among participants. While SSHA was the most represented school with 9 or 56%, NSN and SoE were represented with 4 or 25% and 3 or 19% students.



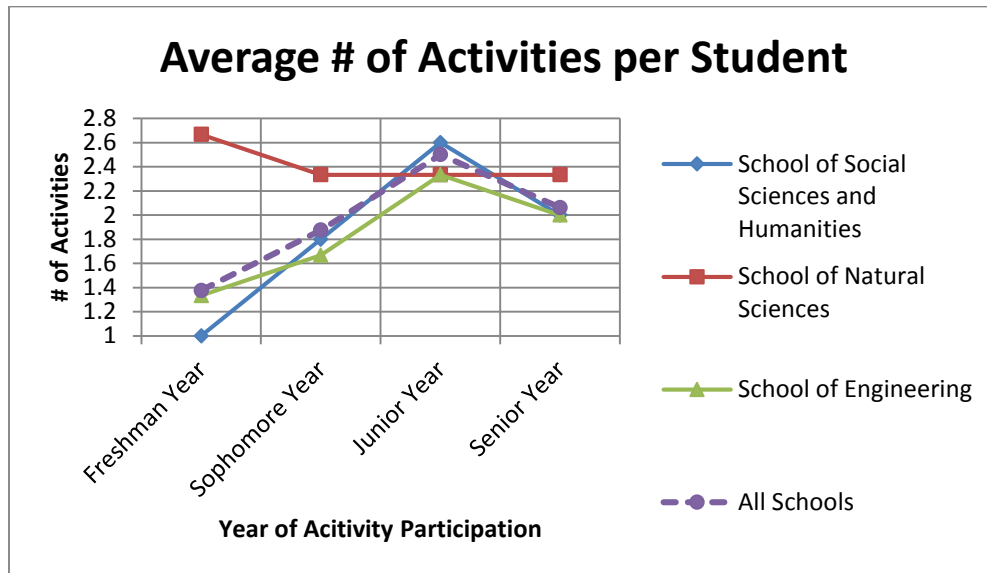
Graph 4 displays participants' co-curricular activities.

Greek life was the most popular co-curricular activity mentioned among participants (10 or 63%), followed by Housing and Resident Life (6 or 38%). Some students participated as Orientation Leaders (4 or 25%), USTU T.A.s, and as staff in the campus store (3 or 19%). H.E.R.O.E.S., Bright Success Centers, OSL leadership program, Success Mentor Program, Career Services, and ASUCM Court were mentioned twice by participants (2 or 13%). Twenty three other campus programs were mentioned once.



Graph 5 displays average student participation in co-curricular activities through time.

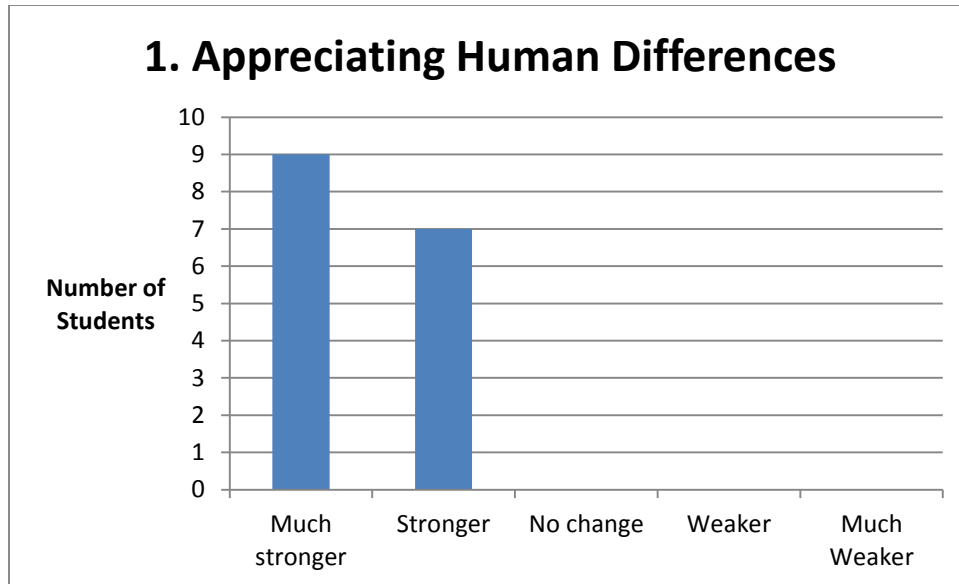
Students have maintained and increased their co-curricular activities throughout their time at UC Merced. On average, students reported they participated in more activities during their junior year than any other year reported. On average students participated on 2.5 activities during their Junior year; i.e, participation increased in 79% from their freshman to their junior year for all schools.



Graph 6 displays average student participation in co-curricular activities by school.

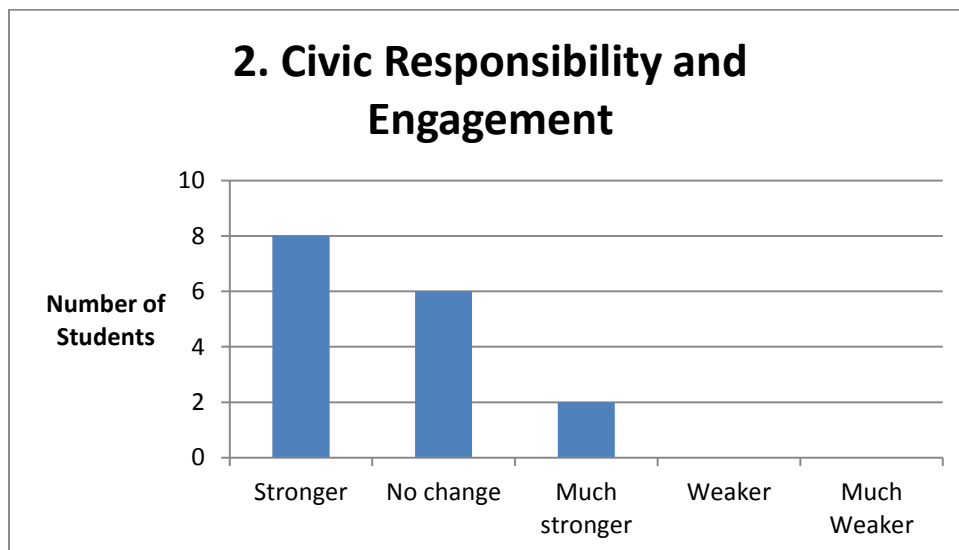
Both SoE and SSHA student participation in co-curricular activities increased during participants' junior year. For SNS students, although they started higher than the rest, it shows a steady participation through time. Participants from SSHA increased their involvement in co-curricular activities more than other students from NSN and SoE through time.

Part II: Self-Assessment of the Seven Student Affairs Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)



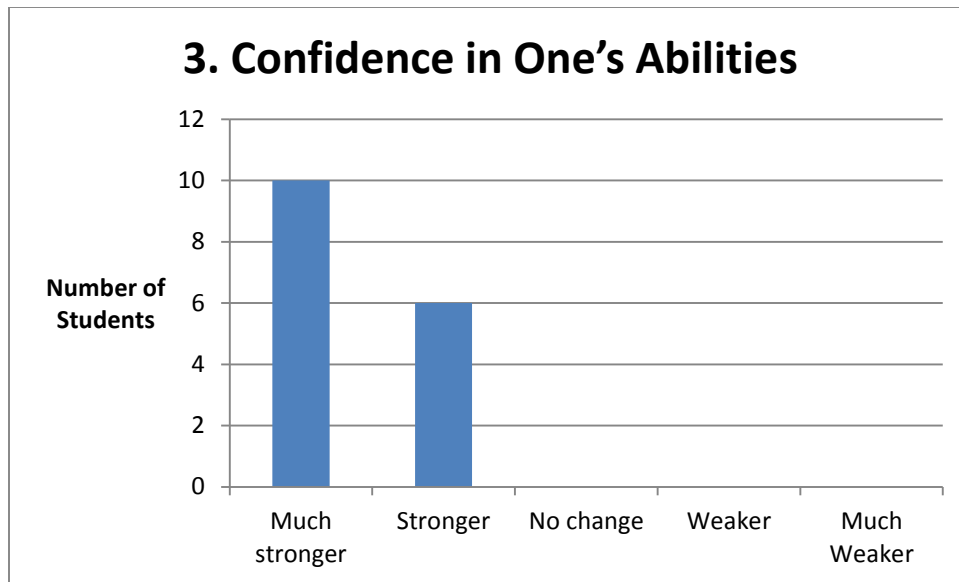
Graph 7 displays results for Student Affairs SLO 1: Appreciating Human Differences.

Relative to when students started at UC Merced, they rated their appreciation for human differences as “Much stronger” (9 or 56%) and “Stronger” (7 or 45%). No student rated this SLO as “No change”, “Weaker” or “Much weaker.”



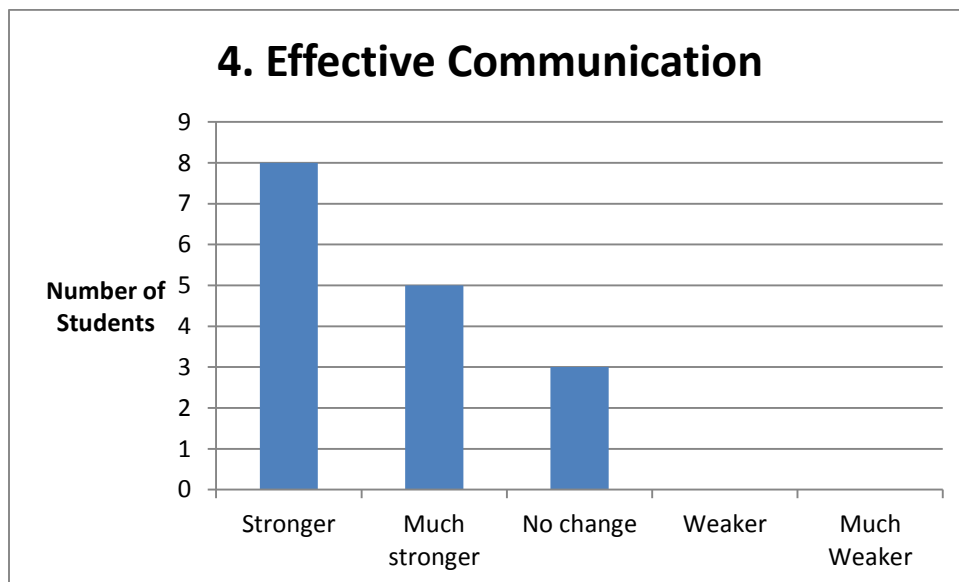
Graph 8 displays Student Affairs SLO 2: Civic Responsibility and Engagement

Relative to when participants started at UC Merced, their Civic Responsibility and Engagement became “Stronger” (8 or 50%) and “No change” (6 or 38%). Few students marked this SLO as “Much stronger” (2 or 13%).



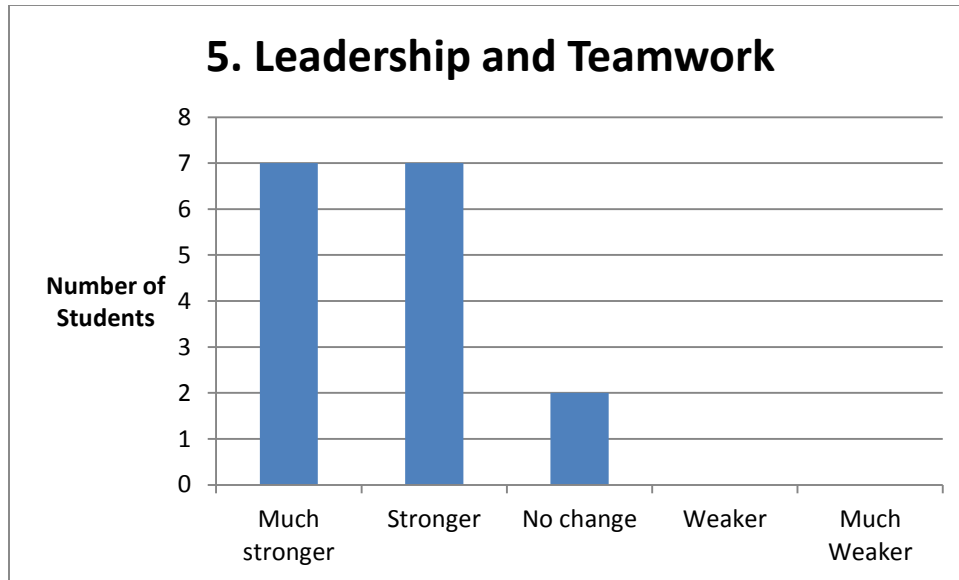
Graph 9 displays Student Affairs SLO 3: Confidence in One's Abilities

Relative to when participants started at UC Merced, students rated their "Confidence in one's abilities" as "Much stronger" (10 or 63%) and "Stronger" (6 or 38%). No student rated this SLO as "No change," "Weaker," or "Much weaker."



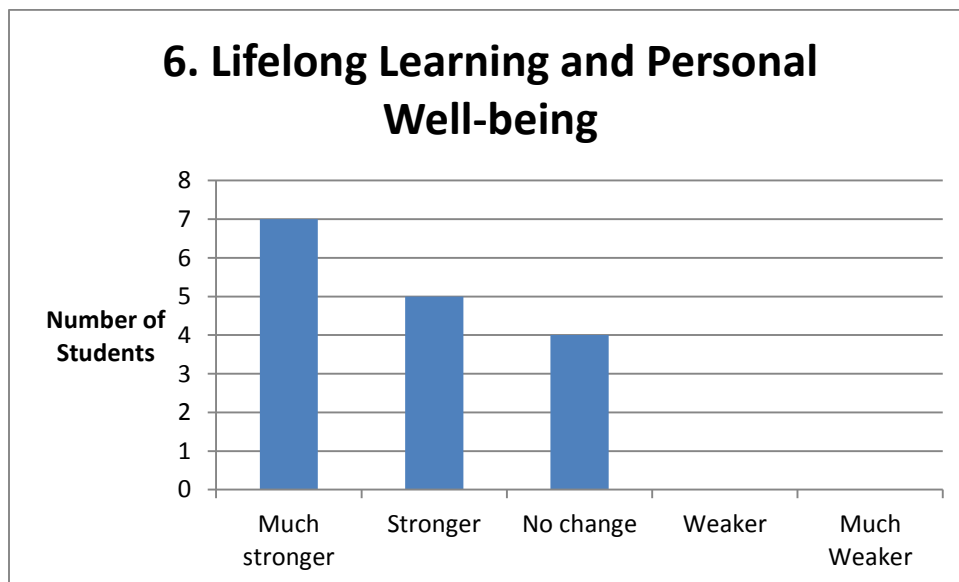
Graph 10 displays Student Affairs SLO 4: Effective Communication

Relative to when participants started at UC Merced, students rated their "Effective Communication" skills as "Stronger" (8 or 50%) and "Much stronger" (5 or 31%). Few students rated this SLO as "No change" (3 or 19%), and no student rated it as "Weaker" or "Much weaker."



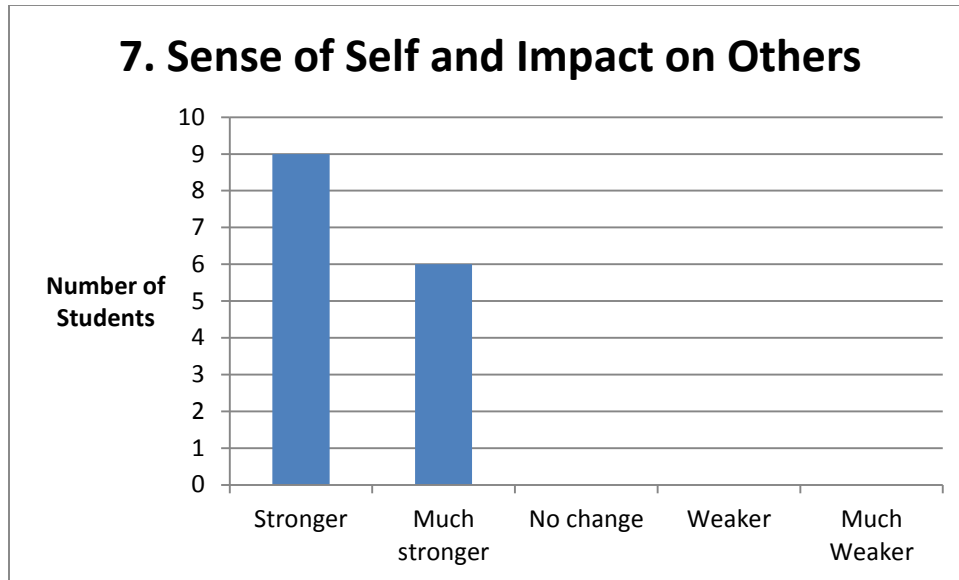
Graph 11 displays Student Affairs SLO 5: Leadership and Teamwork

Relative to when participants started at UC Merced, their “Leadership and Teamwork” became “Stronger” and “Much stronger” (7 or 45%). Few students rated this SLO as “No change” (2 or 13%), and no student rated it as “Weaker” or “Much weaker.”



Graph 12 displays Students Affairs SLO 6: Lifelong Learning and Personal Well-being

Relative to when participants started at UC Merced, their “Lifelong Learning and Personal Well-being” became “Much stronger” (7 or 45%) and “Stronger” (5 or 31%). Some students marked “No change” (4 or 25%), and no student rated this SLO as “Weaker” or “Much weaker.”



Graph 13 displays Student Affairs SLO 7: Sense of Self and Impact on Others

Relative to when participants started at UC Merced, their “Sense of Self and Impact on Others” became “Stronger” (9 or 56%) and “Much stronger” (6 or 38%). No student rated this SLO as “No change,” “Weaker,” or “Much weaker.”

Relative to when participants started at UC Merced, they rated their proficiency with Student Affairs SLOs as “Much Stronger” and “Stronger”; only few instances of “No Change” were recorded during the sessions. None of the students rated their proficiency with Student Affairs SLOs as “Weaker” or “Much Weaker”.

Division of Student Affairs
Focus Group Summary Report
Total Number of Students: 16

I. Brainstorming Activity:

1. How do students grow and change as a result of living in the residence halls, working in the residence halls, playing a sport, being involved in a club or organization, being a tutor, serving as a peer educator or mentor, etc.?

When prompted about students' understanding of the purpose of engaging in the co-curriculum, students noted their development in the following areas. Students agreed that they have increased their appreciation for human differences (16 or 100%)¹ and their ability to communicate effectively (16 or 100%) through their co-curricular activities. Some students mentioned that effective communication is the foundation for all of the other Student Learning Outcomes (3 or 19%). A few students also discussed how they have learned about their sense of self and impact they have on other people (5 or 31%). A couple of students were unclear about the definition of civic responsibility (2 or 13%).

Illustrative Comments

"I have definitely gained human differences from growing up in a very conservative area and coming here to meet people that I did not agree with. I can now appreciate other people's backgrounds and opinions."

"In order for you to be able to talk to other students, you have to be comfortable and approachable. I think effective communication is one of the main SLOs that I have gained and really appreciate."

"In sports I learned about my sense of self and the impact I can have on others, as well as how to work with others if things get difficult."

"I feel like I agree less with civic responsibilities because I feel like I do not give back enough."

II. Demographics and Self-Assessment of the Student Learning Outcomes Self-Evaluation. See Report I. in this folder.

III. Group Discussion focused on Self-Assessment.

2. Examine your self-assessment of the seven Student Learning Outcomes and identify those outcomes for which you rated your abilities as "Much stronger" or "Stronger."

a. To what degree did your co-curricular involvement(s) contribute to your development of these abilities? Why? How? Can you give an example?

Students noted that their participation in co-curricular activities contributed to the following: 1) it has enhanced students' confidence in their own abilities (10 or 63%); 2) it has helped students figure out "what they want to do" after they graduate (6 or 38%); 3) it has increased students' teamwork skills (6 or 38%); 4) a few of the students agreed that their civic

¹ The numbers and percentages represent the frequency of the responses

responsibility is much stronger “because OSL programs have encouraged them to have a desire to give back to the community” (5 or 31%); 5) it helped students develop stronger appreciation of human differences (5 or 31%); and 6) their abilities to communicate effectively have become stronger and much stronger abilities (5 or 31%).

Illustrative Comments

“One of my stronger ones was confidence; before I came to UC Merced I was a very shy person. Participating in co-curricular activities really tapped into the skills I had and gave me the confidence to lead people.”

“Working with different types of people improved my leadership skills.”

“My civic responsibility is stronger because OSL programs like Bobcat Attack have encouraged me to have a lot of desire to give back to the community.”

“As an orientation leader, I have grown to appreciate human differences because despite our different backgrounds, we all have a common goal.”

“I marked stronger in effective communication because I am in charge of the staff under me, so I have to constantly talk to them about lesson plans to describe to students.”

b. To what degree did your academic experience(s) contribute to your development of these abilities? Why? How? Can you give an example?

Students agreed that their academic experiences have also contributed to the development of some skills: 1) effective communication (15 or 94%); 2) leadership and teamwork through working in group projects (9 or 56%); and 3) appreciation for human differences by also working in groups (6 or 38%). Students discussed that their lifelong learning skills (5 or 31%) have developed as a result of the students’ academic success and participation in co-curricular activities (5 or 31%). However, some students mentioned that co-curricular activities provided them with extra resources for their careers (5 or 31%).

Illustrative Comments

“There are a lot of opportunities to talk in discussion, and you learn to communicate effectively if you study well and provide a point that the instructor finds interesting.”

“My co-curricular activities have really given me a push to do well in school. I see that a lot with the people I work with because we have a support group.”

“A lot of my classes focus on teamwork and building upon your leadership experiences. I have a lot of roles that help me in terms of how I work in a team.”

“When you are working with a group, everyone has a different way of approaching things and it is important to understand that every individual is different.”

“Academics would fall under lifelong learning. The professors I have met during office hours are very approachable and I love talking to them about how they continue to learn in their life.”

“I have to communicate with professors and students, as well as have confidence in myself and what I know in my studies.”

“Being in co-curricular activities gives me a sense of accountability; someone is always watching you so you have to perform well on and off campus. At the end of the day, you are a reflection of your boss. This gives you so many resources that you would have not have found by just going to class.”

c. Generally, how important do you think it is that students at UC Merced increase their proficiency in these areas? Why?

Students agreed on the relevance of increasing their proficiency in all of these areas in order to enhance their social skills and have resources for their careers beyond college (16 or 100%). Some of the students mentioned that civic responsibility is particularly important (4 or 25%).

Illustrative Comments

“When you first come in as a freshman to UCM, you are not really connected to anything. You are broken off from your family and friends, and when you get here you cling to things like you are putting together a puzzle. When you tell people at UCM about your experiences, they listen and feed off what you have been through. Without achieving these SLOs, you would not be able to have such a rich interaction at school.”

“We can apply these skills to our future careers when we have to work with teams or do presentations.”

“It is important for students to increase their proficiency in civic responsibility because the majority of clubs give money to places instead of actually going into the community and doing things.”

3. Now consider your self-assessment of the seven Student Learning Outcomes and identify those outcomes for which you rated your abilities as “No change,” “Weaker,” or “Much weaker.”

a. What do you think is responsible for the lack of growth in these areas? ²

Students marked the following outcomes as no change: 1) lifelong learning (4/10 or 40%); 2) civic responsibility for some students is a broad concept (3 or 30%) and for others, they already have a strong foundation in civic responsibility (2 or 20%); and 3) effective communication skills (2 or 20%) because of the type of activities students have been involved.

Illustrative Comments

“I marked no change for lifelong learning because even though I have learned about my personal well-being from interactions with other people, it is not because of Student Affairs.”

“My no change was civic responsibility, due to its definition. It is a broad term; I think that is where I fall short because I do not really know what it is, so how do I know that I am doing it?”

“I put no change for civic responsibility because I was really involved in high school; I probably did more community service then.”

“I put no change for effective communication because I feel like with the things I have been involved in, I have been able to communicate but not effectively.”

² Some students did not respond to this question (n=10/16)

b. What might UC Merced, and the Division of Student Affairs specifically, do to increase student achievement of these seven Learning Outcomes?

Most of the students agreed that Student Affairs lacks effective communication within its departments (11 or 69%). Several of the students agreed that UC Merced has the right amount of activities, but it is up to the students to participate in them (6 or 38%). Some of the students suggestions included: 1) Student Affairs posters might not be the right way to attract students to programs (5 or 31%); 2) Student Affairs could ‘label activities’ with the outcome, so that the students know the learning outcomes of each activity (5 or 31%); 3) there should be presentations for freshmen focusing on “benefits of engaging with Student Affairs activities throughout their time at UCM” (5 or 31%); 4) some students discussed how Student Affairs should stress well-being more often, such as taking care of stress before finals week (5 or 31%); and 5) lastly, a few students agreed that Student Affairs should have more programs at UC Merced such as Bobcat Attack, as well as send more student leaders out to help the Merced community (5 or 31%).

Illustrative Comments

“I know a lot of people who are not involved, and I feel like it is part of Student Affairs’ departments’ fault for not working well together. Why would students want to get the same information from two different things? There needs to be better communication.”

“When you walk by and see all the posters, it can get pretty overwhelming. It does not help get the students to want to go to programs.”

“Student Affairs pushes a lot of appreciation for human differences, but it does not have as many resources for personal well-being.”

“Having the students know what the SLO is can help them learn that outcome.”

“There should be de-stressing workshops earlier than finals week. If we learn this earlier, then the end of the semester would not be so stressful.”

“We should find a way to get incoming freshmen to take workshops that maintain their interest in Student Affairs throughout their time here.”

c. How important is it that students at UC Merced increase their abilities in these seven areas? Why?³

Students agreed that it is very important for everyone to increase their abilities in these seven areas (11/11 or 100%). While some of the students discussed how it is important for their peers to increase their sense of self and impact on others (6 or 55%), others mentioned the importance to increase their abilities in effective communication (5 or 45%). Furthermore, some students highly recommend Students Affairs programs to UC Merced students, in particular

Bobcat Attack, to increase their civic responsibility (5 or 45%)

Illustrative Comments

“By participating in Student Affairs activities, you can increase your ability in all of these areas.”

“It is important to increase growth in communication skills, because without this the programs at the school cannot keep going.”

³ Some students did not respond to this question (n=11/16)

IV. Elaboration

4. Reflect on the journey you have had at UC Merced. Think back to your early experiences here.

a. Has your co-curricular involvement changed over time? If so, in what ways?

The majority of the students agreed that they have interacted with different people and participated in various projects throughout their time at UCM (11 or 69%). Many of the students agreed that they have taken more of a leadership role in their activities as they got older (6 or 38%). Several of the students agreed that participating in co-curricular activities has allowed them to leave a legacy at UC Merced (6 or 38%). Students also discussed how after joining one program, it became easier for them to join others (6 or 38%). A few students mentioned how they focused more on professional activities in their later years (4 or 25%).

Illustrative Comments

“My first year I was not involved in very much, then I became a housing resident, and changed my path based on the influence that I had from the campus, what I was interested in, and what worked out for me.”

“I am president of my fraternity now, but if you told me that four years ago, I would have laughed in your face. The organizations here are not established yet, so you can change things and leave behind a legacy.”

“After being part of one organization and see its continue growing, I got confidence to join other organizations as well.”

“I focused more on activities that would benefit my future career”

b. When considered all together, what benefits did you gain from being involved in the co-curriculum?

Among the benefits gained, students mentioned that participating in co-curricular activities: 1) students gained confidence in communicating with different people, especially talking to staff and faculty (11 or 69%). 2) it was good way to network with their peers (6 or 38%); 3) it created a sense of family among peers (6 or 38%); and 4) Student Affairs has helped some students identify what career they wish to pursue after they graduate (4 or 25%).

Illustrative Comments

“I think both social and professional fraternities are good for making connections with people. I went from just knowing my roommate to knowing everyone around campus. Just making a connection socially, or even professional for a reference really helped me out.”

“You get a sense of family with whoever you are working with because you are going through the same college experience. You will push your limits because you know the people you work with will be there to support you.”

“Being able to talk to people has changed dramatically for me, I was very shy back in high school but I have a lot of confidence in approaching people now.”

c. When considered all together, what could have been better? If you could go back and do it over, what changes would you make? How would you make it better?⁴

If students could go back, they would make the following changes: 1) they would join activities earlier (5/11 or 45%); 2) they would focus more on academics and less on jobs (4 or 36%); 3) they would manage their time more efficiently to keep their grades high (3 or 27%).

Illustrative Comments

“I would have joined sooner because it would have given me more opportunities to start off fresh.”

“I would have worked more on time management because I started the spring semester of my freshmen year and my GPA dropped.”

“There have been a few times where the process to get time off was too complicated in the Housing department, and I ended up working the day before a final when I really needed to go to office hours.”

5. Again considering your experiences outside of the classroom, did your peers contribute positively to your learning and developing? If so, in what ways? Please provide examples or stories to help us understand your experience. Were there any negative impacts from peers? If so, what? What role did UCM staff play in your learning and development, if any?

Students agreed that UCM staff is encouraging, supportive, and approachable (16 or 100%). With regard to peers, students mentioned that peers are usually respectful (10 or 63%). A few students mentioned that mentors helped them manage their time well and provided resources for their careers (4 or 25%). Some of the students noted that they have had experience working with people that were challenging, but they were still able to accomplish their goals (4 or 25%). Lastly, some students attributed their career choice after UCM to the co-curricular activities (4 or 25%).

Illustrative Comments

“All of the staff in OSL is very welcoming and interested in what the students are involved in and what they want to do with their lives; they always advise us on what we can do and help us in terms of applying to study abroad or various jobs.”

“In my experience, all of my peers have been really respectful of all my choices.”

“There have been some people that have stronger personalities than my own, but ultimately it became more of how I learned to work with them and not let them bring me down.”

“There was a faculty member who checked in on me and provided all of these different outlets for me. He has been a great role model.”

⁴ Some students did not respond to this question. (n=11/16)

V. Parting Wisdom

1. What advice would you give to a first year UCM student about how to get the most out of the co-curriculum (other than just a generic “Get involved!”)? Would your advice be different for a sophomore student? For a junior?

Students would advise UCM students to 1) “put in a lot of effort into whatever they are passionate about” and avoid being over involved, be selective and focus on the organizations that they like (11 or 69%); 2) do not forget to focus on academics (10 or 63%); 3) get out of their comfort zone, especially when it comes to talking with staff and faculty (7 or 44%); 4) balance their time (6 or 38%); and lastly, a few students agreed that sophomores and juniors should explore different fields of interest (5 or 31%).

Illustrative Comments

“I know a lot of people who feel the need to join a dozen organizations, but then they slack off. I am only involved in three things, and I think it is good to find passion in what you do.”

“Emphasize that balance is essential to freshmen; just because you have a lot of free time, it does not mean that you will get anything done.”

“Focus on academics, do not forget why you came to school; students often lose their path and do not learn to balance their workload.”

“Exploring different fields has made me a stronger, more well-rounded student.”

“Communicate with the right people because people can change you and impact your life. They will lead you to open doors.”

2. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experiences outside the classroom? **

The majority of the students agreed that the less time they had, the more wisely they used it (6 or 54%). Many of the students mentioned that communication at UCM is more formal and electronic than at high school (5 or 45%).

Illustrative Comments

“Reflecting on this past year, it was my first year where I had two jobs, and it was my most successful. It has made me more responsible to not have time to slack off.”

“I feel like at UCM you have to be more professional. In high school it was very casual.”

3. As you review the seven Student Learning Outcomes, do you feel there are concepts missing from the list? What are they? Please expand on your answer if possible. **

Many of the students agreed that “professional development” should be added to the list (5/10 or 50%). Several students agreed that there should be an SLO about personal well-being, in addition to an SLO regarding applying what you learn in the future (5 or 50%).

Illustrative Comments

“There should be an SLO about mental, physical, and emotional well-being.”

“We should be able to apply what we learn now after college.”



SATAL: focus group guidelines

Before	
Roles	
Assign roles and establish responsibilities during a pre-focus group meeting: • Location • Roles: - Moderator - Note taker • Equipment • Report Draft • Paper survey • Sign in sheet for food	-Decide who will • be a moderator and who will be recording notes • pick up/check out the recorders (or computer)*, test them out to make sure the battery works • be writing the report and/or final report - Consider meeting place limitations (will it be in front of class, meeting room, etc.) *if you use the program OneNote to record and take notes, it is easy to go back to a particular part of the recording when reviewing notes
Materials and Equipment	
Bring the necessary equipment to the session: • Recorders • Batteries • Questionnaire • Sign in sheet • Paper survey	- Check out all 3 recorders & complete the sign up sheet -Test the recorders: turn the recorders on /off to check the battery and to make sure they are in proper working condition - Be aware if food (candy, pizza, etc.) is being delivered to the focus group for the participants.
Practice	
Come to focus group prepared. • Get there 15' early • Read questions aloud • Allocate time to questions	-Show up 15 minutes early, at least, for the focus group -Go over the questions that will be asked, practice, practice, practice! -Think of other questions, “ <i>why?/how?/ect..</i> ” that will allow more insight into student’s thoughts -Think of how much time to dedicate to each question, allocate time and keep track of time.
During	
Environment: “your time to shine!”	
Create a comfortable environment for the participants.	-Introduce yourself and the program – <i>follow the script provided</i>

• Introduce yourselves and the program • Thank participants • Arrange participants in a circle • Follow the script to ensure participants know about confidentiality of findings. • This is a peer to peer conversation; don't be afraid of small talk for 1 minute. • Give every participant the chance to share his/her ideas/ perspectives.	-Remind the participants that their responses will remain confidential -Thank the participants for their attendance, ask them to introduce themselves, make small talk -arrange students in a circle/group, so they face each other -While conducting the focus group, keep the environment relaxed and comfortable -Ensure that all participants are having the chance to participate, avoid one student to dominate the discussion.
Inquiry and Consensus:	
Inquire and follow up on vague responses, • Ask “why” & “how” to responses. • Ask for specific • Get response consensus	-Count the number of participants and make a note of it -Notetakers: do your best to capture students quotes -Moderators: remember to ask, “who agrees with that?” to get consensus on responses (record count) -While conducting the focus group, keep the environment relaxed and comfortable -Ensure that all participants are having the chance to participate, do not allow a domination by one participant
About responses while:	
Consistency:	
• Take detailed notes	- to keep consistency in the responses, we could share focus group notes early with other focus groups moderators. - Avoid rambling tangents- to allow better comparison of results
Turnout:	
• Low vs High turnout • Time Constraints	Our goal is to conduct the best focus group possible, by gaining insight into the course from participants. -when there is low turnout: still engage the participant (only if there is only one) -when there is high turnout: Try to allow everyone to participate, realistically not everyone can answer every question. However, be aware of time constraints.
After	
Equipment:	
• Return equipment immediately	-Return equipment

• Upload recording to computer	-The recordings will need to be uploaded
Responses:	
• Aggregate data in a google doc and share it with students in charge.	-Notetakers: combine all notes onto a single GoogleDoc -Tabulate the report -Include statistics from highest to lowest, followed by illustrative comments
Turn Around Time:	
• We have a week turnaround time max!	-Have report edited - Report results within in 3 days

Class Interview

What things about this presentation helped you learn?

-
-
-
-

What changes could the SATAL program make to this presentation to improve learning?

-
-
-
-

What changes could you make to improve your learning?

-
-
-
-

Group Results

DATE: May 30, 2014

PROGRAM:

FACILITATOR:

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 20

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER GROUPS: 3-4

What things about this class help you learn?	# of Students	% of Students
Office hours	20	100
Meetings	15	75
Lecture slides	10	50
Review sheets	9	45
Organization	6	30
Clicker questions	4	20
Calendar	4	20
Reviewing lecture slides	2	10

What changes could the instructor make to improve your learning?	# of Students	% of Students
Make tasks more relevant	15	75
Be prepared before meetings	6	30
Coordinate more with others	6	30
Starting training sooner	5	25
More time on clicker questions	5	25
Review slides before presenting	5	25
Reduce the length of homework	5	25
Slow down the pace of the meetings	5	25
Group communication (Google doc for ex)	5	25
Give participations for clicker questions, even if students are incorrect	5	25
Allocate work to teams	5	25
Examples with actual numbers	4	20
Summarize meeting	4	20
Workshops	3	15

What changes would you do to your learning?	# of Students	% of Students
Review training modules	9	45
Ask questions	6	30
Be more active in meetings	5	25
Collaborate with others	5	25
Time management	5	25
Spend more on projects	5	25

Individual Results

DATE : May 30, 2014

PROGRAM:

FACILITATOR:

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 20

What things about this class help you learn?	# of Students	% of Students
Meeting minutes	7	37
Practice interactions	6	32
Office hours	4	21
Coordinator availability	4	21
Practice applying situations	3	16
Meeting	3	16
Summarize meetings	3	16
Immediate feedback on performance	3	16
Going over problems	2	11
Slides	2	11
Clicker questions/ Explanation of clicker questions	2	11
Use other methods besides PowerPoint	1	5
Examples related to lecture topic	1	5
Summarize meetings	1	5
Review sheets	1	5
Working Groups	1	5
Small group interaction with facilitator	1	5

No response	1	5
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What changes could the instructor make to improve your learning?	# of Students	% of Students
More example problems in class, 'even more'	4	21
Cover more examples in meetings	3	16
Additional training for particular skills like communication	2	11
Organize groups	2	11
No change!	2	11
No response	2	11
Google docs to help communicate	2	11
Better way to communicate with whole program at once	2	11
Release meeting minutes	1	5
Solve problems in groups	1	5
Offer more forms of training	1	5
More social activities	1	5
Give concrete examples	1	5
More discussion about different types of problems	1	5
Organize meetings and minutes better	1	5

What changes would you do to your learning?	# of Students	% of Students
Be more active in meetings	14	74
Do more practice problems	6	32
Pay more attention	3	16
Review the slides more often	3	16
Ask more questions	2	11
Be on time	2	11
Less Facebook	2	11
Focus more work	1	5
Time management	1	5
Be more involved in projects	1	5