

Department of Multicultural Services Tutoring Services Assessment 2015-2016

Background

According to its website (<http://dms.tamu.edu/>) the Department of Multicultural Services currently provides “free one-on-one and group tutoring sessions to all currently enrolled undergraduates at Texas A&M University. The program bridges the gap between student performance and academic expectations for students having academic difficulty. The program provides consistent one-on-one and small group tutoring from students, trained on educational diversity and learning styles, pre-screened on their ability to develop a positive working relationship and serve as academic role models.”

The mission of the Department of Multicultural Services Tutoring Program is to facilitate student academic success by providing personalized academic assistance and course-specific peer tutoring to assist students in the development of study skills essential to success in coursework. The learning outcomes identified for the program include:

1. Positive interventions and/or changes will occur for students, impacting academic performance.
2. Tutored students will demonstrate improved attitudes toward coursework.
3. Tutors will demonstrate “very good to excellent” tutoring skills, as assessed by the Tutoring Program Coordinator.

This is the first time that Student Life Studies has worked with the Department of Multicultural Services with this assessment.

Method and Sample

The survey was developed, distributed and analyzed using Qualtrics®, a software program that creates web-based surveys and databases. The survey contained 10 quantitative questions. Surveys were sent periodically throughout the spring 2016 semester. The survey was distributed to 176 tutored students, and 29 responded for a 16% response rate. Duplicated emails of individuals who attended tutoring more than once within the distribution period were removed from the survey mailings, so each student would only receive the survey once per period distribution of the survey.

Results

Results include frequency percentages, means, and standard deviations (sd) for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%.

Students were asked to indicate how they found out about the tutoring services offered by Multicultural Services. As shown in Table 1 on the following page, friends, the website, and advisors were the most popular sources.

| How did you find out about the tutoring services? | Spring 2016 [n=29] |
|---|--------------------|
| Friends | 45% |
| Website | 31% |
| Advisor | 28% |
| Brochures/ flyers | 10% |
| Supplemental Instruction (SI) | 7% |
| Faculty | 7% |
| Staff | 3% |
| Other | -- |

Table 1: How Students Learned About Tutoring Services

Respondents were then asked to indicate their level of agreement about their experience with Multicultural Tutoring Services. Table 2 shows that students were generally positive about their tutoring experience, particularly that their tutors were non-judgmental and worked at a pace that was comfortable for the client.

| | Strongly Agree (5) | Agree (4) | Neutral (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly Disagree (1) | Spring 2016 Mean (sd) [n=29] |
|--|--------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| My tutor was non-judgmental. | 66% | 34% | -- | -- | -- | 4.66 (.48) |
| My tutor worked with me at a pace that was comfortable for me. | 66% | 28% | 7% | -- | -- | 4.59 (.62) |
| Online scheduling of tutoring appointments worked well. | 62% | 31% | 3% | 3% | -- | 4.52 (.72) |
| My tutor was interested in my current understanding of the topic/subject matter. | 55% | 34% | 10% | -- | -- | 4.45 (.67) |
| My tutor was encouraging about my ability to comprehend the material. | 55% | 34% | 10% | -- | -- | 4.45 (.67) |
| Tutoring increased my level of confidence about the topic/subject matter. | 48% | 45% | 7% | -- | -- | 4.41 (.62) |
| My tutor understood where I was having trouble on the material. | 52% | 28% | 17% | 3% | -- | 4.28 (.87) |
| My tutor helped reduce my anxiety about the material I was studying. | 52% | 28% | 17% | 3% | -- | 4.28 (.87) |
| Tutoring increased my level of academic confidence in general. | 41% | 38% | 17% | 3% | -- | 4.17 (.83) |

Table 2: Tutoring Experience

Conclusions and Recommendations

Students who attended tutoring provided by the Department of Multicultural Services reported satisfaction with the services they received. Overall, students agreed that their tutors were non-judgmental, worked at a comfortable pace, and were interested in the subject material being covered. Students also agreed that the online scheduling system was an effective way to make an appointment. Respondents were less positive about the impact of the tutoring services on their level of academic confidence in general. While there was still a high level of agreement by students with this learning outcome, Multicultural Services could focus more on study skills, test taking, note taking habits, etc. in order to further improve clients overall confidence in their academics.

Respondents reported finding out about tutoring through a variety of sources, the most popular being friends, the website, and advisors. Multicultural Services should continue using this variety of outlets of information in order to promote the use of the tutoring services.

In order to see if the learning outcome focused on the tutors is being met, staff could consider an assessment that focuses on the development of the tutor in demonstrating “very good to excellent” tutoring skills, if not already being done. This could be done either through a pre- and post-assessment of the tutors skills, or self-reflection by the tutor themselves at the end of the semester. While the first two learning outcomes outlined by Multicultural Services were hinted at in the survey, a more concrete assessment could be used to demonstrate client progress.

Report prepared for: Theresa Y Survillion, Multicultural Services
Report prepared by: Rachael Hovey, Student Life Studies
Analysis completed by: Susan Fox-Forrester, Student Life Studies
Surveys created by: Tyler Harkrider, Student Life Studies
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