

Department of Multicultural Services

Tutoring Services Assessment

Fall 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 students who use the tutoring services and the tutors themselves 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 second 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 out twice during the fall semester, on October 28th and December 6th, closing one week after beginning distribution. The surveys were distributed to 453 tutored students, and 98 responded for a 22% response rate. Duplicated emails of individuals who attended tutoring more than once for the same tutor and same tutored class within the distribution period were removed from the survey mailings, so each student would only receive the survey once per class and tutor for the period distribution of the survey. The data was analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, Microsoft Excel® and Microsoft Word®.

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%. Not included in this report but detailed in additional documents are cross tabulations of the courses tutored and the tutor compared to the survey question responses. Comparisons will be made to spring 2016 results where applicable.

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement about their experience with Multicultural Tutoring Services. Table 1, on the next page, shows that students were generally positive about their tutoring experience, particularly finding the online scheduling of appointments worked well, more so than the spring 2016 respondents. The students also primarily agreed that tutors were non-judgmental and worked at a pace that was comfortable for the tutored student. Similar to spring, however, the students were less positive that tutoring increased their academic confidence in general.

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Fall 2016 Mean (sd) [n]	Spring 2016 Mean (sd) [n=29]
Online scheduling of tutoring appointments worked well.	62%	31%	3%	3%	--	4.72 (.55) [98]	4.52 (.72)
My tutor was non-judgmental.	66%	34%	--	--	--	4.64 (.83) [97]	4.66 (.48)
My tutor worked with me at a pace that was comfortable for me.	66%	28%	7%	--	--	4.59 (.88) [97]	4.59 (.62)
My tutor was interested in my current understanding of the topic/subject matter.	55%	34%	10%	--	--	4.54 (.84) [97]	4.45 (.67)
My tutor was encouraging about my ability to comprehend the material.	55%	34%	10%	--	--	4.45 (.90) [97]	4.45 (.67)
My tutor understood where I was having trouble on the material.	52%	28%	17%	3%	--	4.37 (.94) [97]	4.28 (.87)
Tutoring increased my level of confidence about the topic/subject matter.	48%	45%	7%	--	--	4.32 (1.07) [97]	4.41 (.62)
My tutor helped reduce my anxiety about the material I was studying.	52%	28%	17%	3%	--	4.29 (1.09) [97]	4.28 (.87)
Tutoring increased my level of academic confidence in general.	41%	38%	17%	3%	--	4.24 (1.11) [97]	4.17 (.83)

Table 1: Tutoring Experience

Students were also asked to indicate how they found out about the tutoring services offered by Multicultural Services. As shown in Table 2 the website, friends and advisors were the most popular sources, although in fall fewer reported friends as a source and more indicated learning about the services from faculty. Those who selected “other” could write in a comment, and comments included their dad, the ExCEL conference and room advisor.

How did you find out about the tutoring services?	Fall 2016 [n=96]	Spring 2016 [n=29]
Website	37%	31%
Friends	28%	45%
Advisor	26%	28%
Faculty	19%	7%
Brochures/ flyers	16%	10%
Staff	8%	3%
Other	5%	--
Supplemental Instruction (SI)	2%	7%

Table 2: How Students Learned About Tutoring Services

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 and more so than those who responded to the spring 2016 survey. Respondents continued to be least 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.

If not already being done, 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. 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.

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