

**Aggie Transition Camps (ATC)**  
**T Camp 2020**  
**Counselor/Teamer/Co-Chair and Camper Surveys**

**Purpose of Assessment**

The purpose of this assessment was to understand the experience of students who participated in T Camp. T Camp, sponsored by Aggie Transition Camps (ATC), is an extended (three-day) optional orientation camp for students who previously attended another institution and are transferring to Texas A&M University. Due to COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings, this fall two sessions of T Camp were held virtually; session one was held August 3 through August 5, and session two was held August 7 through August 9. One survey was sent to co-chairs, counselors, and teamers a few weeks into the semester, and T Camp participants (campers) were sent a different survey to measure their camp experience.

**Key Findings with Recommendations**

Student Life Studies identified several key findings and developed actionable recommendations the ATC may take based on the results. However, ATC student leaders and staff may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the event and community. Student leaders and staff members are strongly encouraged to read all the results and qualitative comments to gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences.

- Participants (campers), counselors, and teamers of 2020 T Camp overall reported a positive experience. Counselors and teamers generally indicated feeling prepared for T Camp, although not as prepared as their counterparts in previous years. Correspondingly, the campers felt welcomed and learned about Texas A&M traditions, but not quite to the level as Howdy Camp 2020 campers.
  - Counselors and teamers least agreed that the Community of Respect and Inclusion (CoRI) training prepared them for camp, some saying it was too general and did not prepare them with specific actions to use with campers. ATC staff may want to include practice scenarios for counselors during training that include recommendations to address various potential behaviors and reactions of campers.
  - Counselors and teamers understood the need of moving to a virtual camp experience and generally thought the training went well. However, if camps continue virtually going forward, counselors and teamers suggested that more training in the virtual space and a run-through of the complete schedule would be helpful to improve their preparation for camp. They would also like more communication from co-chairs and ATC director staff outside of just the larger All Camp (AC) trainings, as generally, they felt less supported by this staff than their Howdy Camp counterparts.
- Campers indicated that T Camp helped them feel more prepared to start at Texas A&M University and a slight majority felt they connected to fellow students as a result of attending. Campers were least positive about factors that involved the virtual environment of T Camp, such as ease of navigation and support of T camp content in eCampus. Campers noted they were less likely to use co-chairs as a resource than their Howdy Camp counterparts, which may also be a result of the virtual environment. If virtual ATC camps continue, staff may want to review how co-chairs can increase their direct involvement with campers to increase the comfort of campers using them as future resources.

**Method and Sample**

The counselor/co-chair/teamer and camper surveys were developed and distributed using Qualtrics®, a software program that creates web-based surveys and databases. The counselor/co-chair/teamer survey contained 19 questions; 13 quantitative, and six qualitative questions. It was sent successfully to 121 students on September 24, 2020, through an email invitation; non-respondents received up to three reminders and the survey closed on

October 9, 2020. Of the students who were sent the survey, 49 completed at least some part of it, resulting in a 40% response rate. Due to branching technology, not all respondents saw all questions.

The 24-question camper survey included 20 quantitative, and four qualitative questions. Due to branching technology, not all respondents saw all questions. The camper survey was sent successfully to 201 students through an email invitation on September 24, 2020; non-respondents received three reminders and the survey closed on October 9, 2020. Of those who were sent the survey, 35 responded to at least some part of the survey, for a 17% response rate, lower than last year's T Camp camper survey response rate of 30%.

Data for both surveys were analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, Microsoft Excel® and Microsoft Word®.

## **Results**

Results will be reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages 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%. Tables are in 2020 T Camp descending mean or frequency order, unless otherwise specified. Summary themes are provided in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. Comparison to previous camps is provided where possible. This report contains two sections: Counselor/Teamer/Co-Chair Survey and Camper Survey.

### **Counselor/Co-Chair/Teamer Survey**

When asked what their role was on staff, 96% of 44 respondents selected counselor, 4% selected teamer and no one selected co-chair. Counselors and teamers were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to statements describing the training for their roles at T Camp. Table 1, on the next page, indicates respondents rated highest that the expectations for their role were realistic. Respondents least agreed that the Community of Respect and Inclusion (CoRI) training prepared them for camp.

	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2020 T Camp Mean (sd) [n]	2020 Howdy Camp Mean (sd) [n=30]
<b>The expectations (number of meetings, cost, deadlines) for my role were realistic</b>	56%	44%	--	--	3.64 (.49) [44]	3.47 (.51)
<b>I have developed positive relationships that I hope to continue after camp</b>	66%	26%	7%	--	3.59 (.62) [44]	3.80 (.41)
<b>‡ The CPT/CREI training prepared me for camp</b>	43%	50%	7%	--	3.36 (.61) [44]	3.47 (.51)
<b>The work days were well organized</b>	41%	50%	7%	2%	3.30 (.70) [44]	3.37 (.72)
<b>All camp (AC) refresher was well organized</b>	38%	52%	10%	--	3.29 (.64) [42]	3.50 (.57)
<b>The CoRI training prepared me for camp</b>	36%	52%	9%	2%	3.23 (.71) [44]	‡‡

Table 1-Counselor, Teamer and Co-Chair Experiences  
‡ Child Protection Training (CPT) and Civil Rights, Equity and Investigations (CREI)  
‡‡ not asked

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with any statement were provided a chance to write why they felt they were underprepared and four respondents commented. They mentioned the CoRI training provided general information, but did not provide training on what counselors were to do and that the inclusivity language made it hard to discuss and ask questions.

When asked about any other training topics that should be included during All Camp meetings or workdays that would have helped better prepare them for their role, 29 respondents provided comments. Many comments mentioned more training, suggestions and ideas on how best to use the virtual platform (Zoom). Other suggestions included training on how to improve reaching out to campers, especially when they are not engaging with camp, increasing the number of mock Discussion Groups (DGs) and how to manage discussions surrounding race and other diversity topics.

The next set of questions asked about the amount of time in the spring counselors, teamers and co-chairs expended to prepare for camp. Table 2, on the next page, shows that most respondents spent between 1-5 hours per week working on T Camp, nearly double the percentage who chose that response as the amount of time they spent working on T Camp last year. None selected the choices that indicated spending over 15 hours per week in preparation during the spring semester, whereas last year 6% of respondents chose those selections in preparation for T Camp. Table 2, on the next page, presents data in ascending order of hours per week spent.

<b>On average, how much time <i>per week</i> during the Spring semester did you spend working on T Camp?</b>	<b>2020 T Camp Percent [n=44]</b>	<b>2020 Howdy Camp Percent [n=30]</b>	<b>2019 T Camp Percent [n=77]</b>
0 hours	2%	--	--
1-5 hours	80%	37%	43%
6-10 hours	11%	43%	36%
11-15 hours	7%	17%	14%
16-20 hours	--	3%	5%
21+ hours	--	--	1%

Table 2-Hours Spent per Week on T Camp in the Spring Semester

When asked if they felt engaged in camp, 65% of the 43 respondents answered yes, and 35% answered sort of. No one selected no as a response to the question. All respondents were then asked to explain their feeling of engagement, or lack of, in camp activities. Thirty-seven responded and about half explained their feeling of engagement in camp activities and about half explained their lack of feeling engaged. Those indicating they felt engaged noted they felt engaged because the virtual meetings were intentional, that co-chairs and other counselors made the students feel valued as individuals and accepted. Others said they felt engaged because they were excited to be counselors and made sure to participate and be engaged. Those who indicated feeling less engaged in camp activities said that due to the virtual environment it was tougher to stay focused and active during the meetings. Others said that they felt engaged during the meetings, but due to the lack of continuity activities with campers and lack of activities outside of the formal schedule they just felt less engaged.

Respondents were asked what they were most prepared for at camp, and nearly three-quarters of 38 respondents indicated they were most prepared for Discussion Group (DG) time. Others noted they were prepared to perform skits and engage campers who were not actively engaged in camp. Respondents were then asked to make suggestions for improving the preparation for their roles. Many respondents indicated that there was no need for improvement because they felt prepared and thought preparation was done as well as it could be considering the COVID required virtual environment. However, some suggestions for better preparation increasing mock DG time, rehearsal of the virtual camp schedule, and how to better involve quieter, more reserved Discussion Groups (DG).

All respondents were asked if they felt supported by the co-chair staff and ATC director staff, based on a five-point scale. As noted in Table 3, respondents indicating feeling supported more often by their co-chairs than by ATC director staff, but in general, felt less supported than their Howdy Camp 2020 and T Camp 2019 counterparts indicated.

<b>I felt supported by....</b>	<b>Always (5)</b>	<b>Often (4)</b>	<b>Sometimes (3)</b>	<b>Rarely (2)</b>	<b>Never (1)</b>	<b>2020 T Camp Mean (sd) [n=44]</b>	<b>2020 Howdy Camp Mean (sd) [n=26]</b>	<b>2019 T Camp Mean (sd) [n=75]</b>
<b>My Co-chairs</b>	75%	16%	7%	2%	--	4.64 (.72)	4.88 (.33) [26]	4.65 (.71)
<b>ATC Director Staff</b>	43%	30%	14%	9%	5%	3.98 (1.17)	4.31 (.85) [29]	4.55 (.74)

Table 3-Support from Co-chairs and ATC Director Staff

Respondents were then asked whether the ATC director staff fulfilled their role as a liaison. Of the 44 respondents answering this question, 64% indicated they felt the ATC director staff always fulfilled their role, 21% indicated often, while 11% indicated sometimes and 5% indicated rarely did the director staff fulfill that role. Respondents were asked to provide examples of when they felt supported or unsupported and five provided comments, including that there was no personal communication outside of the large training events by co-chairs or director staff, lack of knowing the way camp was to run until a week before and feeling unsupported during the application process.

Counselors and teamers were requested to identify their camp color/name. Table 4 demonstrates that respondents most frequently identified themselves as a counselor from Camp Tarvin.

<b>Camp Color/Name</b>	<b>2020 Percent [n=44]</b>
<b>Purple- Camp Tarvin</b>	23%
<b>Red- Camp Jameson</b>	21%
<b>Blue- Camp Hiney</b>	16%
<b>Green-Camp Miller</b>	15%
<b>Aqua- Camp Woolverton</b>	14%
<b>Yellow- Camp Monaco</b>	7%
<b>Team Stalvey</b>	5%

Table 4- T Camp Color/Name

### **Participant (Camper) Survey**

Participants (campers) were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement to a series of statements about their experiences attending T Camp to ascertain how well the camp accomplished its goals. Table 5, on the following page, indicates that campers most strongly agreed feeling welcomed at the University and felt they built positive relationships with their fellow Aggies after attending T Camp 2020. However, respondents agreed at a lesser rate to all statements when compared to their counterparts who attended Howdy Camp 2020.

	<b>Strongly Agree (4)</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2020 T Camp  Mean (sd) [n=32]</b>	<b>2020 Howdy Camp Mean (sd) [n=42]</b>
<b>I feel welcomed into the university</b>	66%	34%	--	--	3.66 (.48)	3.93 (.26)
<b>I have positive relationships with members at Texas A&amp;M</b>	72%	22%	6%	--	3.66 (.60)	3.83 (.38)
<b>I know Texas A&amp;M traditions</b>	59%	41%	--	--	3.59 (.50)	3.83 (.38)
<b>I am aware of resources available to me at Texas A&amp;M</b>	47%	53%	--	--	3.47 (.51)	3.69 (.47)
<b>I know opportunities to get involved on campus</b>	56%	34%	9%	--	3.47 (.67)	3.83 (.38)
<b>I felt prepared to begin at Texas A&amp;M</b>	50%	44%	6%	--	3.44 (.62)	3.76 (.43)
<b>I feel connected to the Aggie Family</b>	44%	50%	6%	--	3.38 (.61)	3.86 (.35)
<b>I know Texas A&amp;M yells</b>	31%	47%	22%	--	3.09 (.74)	3.76 (.48)

Table 5-Camper's experience

Respondents were asked to describe how their counselors, co-chairs and the virtual environment contributed to their camp experience. Table 6, on the following page, revealed campers indicated their counselors created a welcoming environment, that they are comfortable using their counselors as resources and counselors effectively answered questions during T Camp. This year's campers least agreed that they felt comfortable using co-chairs as resources and that T Camp content within eCampus supported the T Camp experience in Zoom.

	<b>Strongly Agree (4)</b>	<b>Agree (3)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>2020 T Camp  Mean (sd) [n=31]</b>	<b>2020 Howdy Camp Mean (sd) [n=42]</b>
<b>My counselors created a welcoming environment at T Camp</b>	68%	32%	--	--	3.68 (.48)	‡
<b>My counselors effectively answered questions about campus resources</b>	58%	42%	--	--	3.58 (.50)	3.76 (.43)
<b>I am comfortable using my counselors as resources</b>	55%	42%	3%	--	3.52 (.57)	3.83 (.44)
<b>Overall, I found the T-Camp experience engaging</b>	55%	36%	10%	--	3.45 (.68)	‡
<b>T-Camp e-campus environment was easy to navigate during Camp</b>	52%	42%	3%	3%	3.42 (.72)	‡
<b>I am comfortable using my co-chairs as resources</b>	36%	61%	3%	--	3.32 (.54)	3.55 (.60)
<b>The T-Camp e-campus content supported the T-Camp experience in Zoom</b>	45%	42%	13%	--	3.32 (.70)	‡

Table 6-Camp Resources

When asked whether they felt connected to other students through their involvement with T Camp during this COVID-19 pandemic. Of the 30 respondents, 53% said yes, sure did, 40% said kind of and 7% said no, not really.

Campers were asked to explain how their Discussion Group (DG) leaders contributed to their camp experience. Most of the 19 respondents said their DG leaders helped them feel welcome, were informative, and made campers feel liked they belonged. Others indicated the DG leaders were engaging and made the camp fun. However, one camper responded that the DG leaders did not do much, and another indicated they liked having the leaders there, but the DG leaders stopped being active in group chats and only were interested in interacting with other ATC people, not the DG family.

Participants were then asked how the Community of Respect and Inclusion program (Stand Up/Sit Down, I'm an Aggie and ..., As Aggies, We Are...) contributed to their camp experience. Responses (n=20) revealed campers felt more included and thought it connected to the Aggie core values. Respondents also mentioned that they appreciated the students sharing their personal stories and it made them feel they were less alone in their feelings. Finally, comments showed respondents learned to be respectful of others and accept differences between themselves and others.

Participants were then also asked what they wish they knew about T Camp before they attended. Of the 16 respondents, a few indicated they wish they knew how fun it was going to be, how engaging and informative it was instead of being anxious about participating. One noted that it would have been helpful to know more about the format, and how often the yells would be practiced. Most commonly respondents indicated nothing in response to the question.

In a select-all-that-apply format, participants were requested to share what activities their camp counselors invited them to join since camp to help them stay connected to the other campers. According to Table 7, participants chose most frequently that counselors planned continuity events and dinner. Those who selected “other” could write a response, and those responses included a potluck, studying, coffee, and the first football game.

<b>What activities have your counselors* invited you to since camp to help you stay connected?</b>	<b>2020 T Camp Percent [n=21]</b>	<b>2020 Howdy Camp Percent [n=32]</b>	<b>2019 T Camp Percent [n=77]</b>
<b>Continuity Events</b>	86%	78%	↓
<b>Dinner</b>	62%	94%	75%
<b>Campus Tour</b>	52%	72%	38%
<b>Virtual Hangouts</b>	48%	↓	↓
<b>Lunch</b>	38%	84%	74%
<b>Other</b>	23%	18%	20%
<b>No activities have been planned</b>	--	↓	↓

Table 7-Post-Camp Activities

↓ Option not provided

Using a select-all-that-apply question, campers were asked which activities their counselors planned for them had they participated or planned to participate in after T Camp. Noted in Table 8, students most frequently selected dinner and continuity events. Those who selected “other” were able to write a response indicated study, first football game and coffee.

<b>What activities that the counselors planned have you participated in or plan to participate in since camp.</b>	<b>2020 T Camp Percent [n=20]</b>	<b>2020 Howdy Camp Percent [n=21]</b>	<b>2019 T Camp Percent [n=73]</b>
<b>Continuity Events</b>	70%	65%	↓
<b>Dinner</b>	55%	87%	52%
<b>Virtual Hangouts</b>	50%	↓	↓
<b>Lunch</b>	20%	52%	52%
<b>Campus Tour</b>	20%	39%	22%
<b>Other</b>	20%	13%	12%
<b>No Activities Have been planned</b>	--	↓	↓

Table 8-Post-Camp Activities Participation

↓ Option not provided

Participants were also asked if they were still interacting with members of their DG. Twenty-two responded, with more than three-quarters (77%) indicating yes and 23% indicating no.

Now that the students have been at Texas A&M for several weeks, they were asked what topics they feel should have been covered at T Camp or covered in greater depth. A few of the respondents said nothing else needed to be covered. A few mentioned adding tips for students about the campus resources, study places, and more about game etiquette, traditions and yells. Other respondents would have liked more information on transportation services, bus routes and bike lanes.

Campers were asked to identify their camp name and color. As noted in Table 9, on the following page, respondents were most frequently from Camp Jameson.



<b>Camp Color/Name</b>	<b>2020 Percent</b>
<b>Red- Camp Jameson</b>	26%
<b>Purple- Camp Tarvin</b>	17%
<b>Blue- Camp Hiney</b>	17%
<b>Green-Camp Miller</b>	17%
<b>Yellow- Camp Monaco</b>	13%
<b>Aqua- Camp Woolverton</b>	9%

Table 9-Camp Color/Name (n=23)

Demographic information for T Camp participants was collected through official student records using the participants' University Identification Number. Table 10, shows the demographics of T Camp participants and respondents to the survey. Participants and respondents to the survey were primarily female, sophomores, White and were in the College of Liberal Arts. Frequencies presented in the table are in descending order by respondents to the survey.

<b>T Camp 2020 Participants</b>	<b>Participants Percentage n=199</b>	<b>Respondents Percentage n=35</b>
<b>Classification</b>		
<b>Sophomore</b>	57%	71%
<b>Junior</b>	27%	20%
<b>Freshman</b>	14%	9%
<b>Senior</b>	2%	--
<b>Academic College</b>		
<b>Liberal Arts</b>	31%	37%
<b>Education and Human Development</b>	21%	23%
<b>Agriculture &amp; Life Sciences</b>	21%	14%
<b>Engineering</b>	9%	11%
<b>Architecture</b>	9%	9%
<b>Business</b>	3%	3%
<b>Geoscience</b>	2%	3%
<b>Science</b>	2%	--
<b>Public Health</b>	2%	--
<b>Vet Med</b>	1%	--
<b>Ethnic Origin</b>		
<b>White</b>	68%	69%
<b>Hispanic or Latino of any Race</b>	24%	20%
<b>Asian</b>	4%	6%
<b>Black or multi-racial with Black</b>	2%	3%
<b>Unknown</b>	1%	3%
<b>Multi-racial excluding Black</b>	2%	--
<b>First Generation College Student</b>		
<b>Not First Generation</b>	75%	80%
<b>First Generation</b>	24%	20%
<b>Unknown</b>	1%	--
<b>Sex</b>		
<b>Female</b>	60%	63%
<b>Male</b>	40%	37%

Table 10- Demographic Comparison of All T Camp Participants and Respondents

## **Organization Background**

According to its website (<https://www.tamu.edu/traditions/orientation/t-camp/index.html>), T Camp is an extended (three-day), orientation camp for students who are transferring to Texas A&M University for the fall semester. Participants usually travel to Trinity Pines in Trinity, Texas and stay in cabins; however T Camp 2020 sessions were virtual due to COVID 19 gathering restrictions. T Camp is led by students currently attending Texas A&M and who have familiarity with transferring. The camp student staff is made up of directors, co-chairs, teamers, and counselors. Their goal is to help new transfer students establish relationships with fellow students and learn Texas A&M traditions.

## **Project Details**

The Department of Student Life Studies provides quality assessment services, resources and assessment training for departments in the Texas A&M University Division of Student Affairs and student organizations. Services by Student Life Studies are funded, in part, by the Texas A&M University Advancement Fee. Results of this project and other assessment projects done through Student Life Studies can be found at <https://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu/results/>. Additionally, division staff and student leaders can follow Student Life Studies on Facebook.

To work with Student Life Studies for future assessment projects, please fill out the Assessment Questionnaire at <https://slsform.dsaapps.tamu.edu/>.

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