

Student Activities

Fish Camp Participant Evaluation

Summer 2022

Purpose of Assessment

According to its website (<http://fishcamp.tamu.edu/mission/>), Fish Camp strives to “welcome freshmen into the Aggie Family by sharing the traditions and values of Texas A&M University and building long-term relationships that embody the Aggie spirit.” Fish Camp operates as a student organization and is housed in the Department of Student Activities. This year, eight sessions were held in person from July 23rd through August 9th, 2022. Fish Camp used to be a four-day camp at Lakeview Methodist Conference Center in Palestine, TX. However, starting in 2021, and continuing in 2022, Fish Camp was shortened to three days.

Fish Camp leaders and advisors wanted to understand the participants’ camp experience and how Fish Camp affected, if at all, the start of the fall semester for those who attended. Fish Camp has worked with Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research to assess participants’ camp experience since 2000.

Key Findings with Recommendations

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research (SAPAR) identified several key findings and developed actionable recommendations the organization may take based on the results. However, Fish Camp staff and advisors may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the community and program. Student leaders and staff members are strongly encouraged to read all the results and qualitative comments to gain a fuller understanding of students’ experiences.

- Fish Camp seems to have fulfilled its mission based on the assessment results. Most respondents were positive about their experience at Fish Camp. Additionally, participants reported meeting new people and gaining knowledge about Texas A&M, especially its traditions.
- Freshmen reported positive interactions with all camp staff, especially with their Discussion Group (DG) leaders. While students felt that their DG leaders effectively facilitated DG time, they were less in agreement that their DG time was an effective learning environment. Students also indicated less agreement compared to previous years that the Campfire speeches got them excited and prepared for college.
 - Fish Camp staff might consider the purpose of the DG time and look at the topics and activities for these times to see if they align. If the purpose is for students to learn information about the institution or transition to college, what percentage of time is spent on that compared to team building? However, if the purpose of the DG time is for students to meet other students and develop relationships, then asking about those times being a learning environment may not be aligned with its purpose.
 - Fish Camp staff may want to review the preparation they provide to Fish Camp namesakes and the expectation of (camper learning outcomes) of what is covered during the Campfire speeches. If the intent remains that these speeches prepare and excite the students for college, providing ideas to the namesakes on ways to promote both may reverse this downward trend.
- Students indicated they felt the time spent on most activities was the right amount of time. They would prefer to have more free time as well as slightly more time in their DG groups and camp time. Alternatively, they would like less time on videos of campus resources. Furthermore, freshmen ranked pre-made videos the lowest of the presentation styles.
 - Fish Camp is encouraged to look at how much time is spent on different activities and if some of those could be shifted.
 - Additionally, Fish Camp staff may look at the presentation styles used throughout camp and increase those that utilize interactive discussions and student leaders.

- A common expectation for students attending Fish Camp is that they will make friends. Students also want those connections to continue once the school year begins. While many students indicated they did make connections and make friends, others did not. Additionally, some students felt that because they did not have a connection with their DG group or camp or that their DG group did not plan activities during the fall semester, that was the reason Fish Camp did not prepare them for the semester.
 - Fish Camp staff may want to look at the expectations of counselors once the fall semester begins as well as look at the continuity of programming and sharing resources with freshmen.
- Fish Camp is encouraged to continue sharing results with its stakeholders. This could be sharing information with the various speakers who attend camp, staff selected for Fish Camp 2023, current or potential donors, and incoming freshmen to market what new students gain from attending Fish Camp.
- Fish camp is encouraged to work earlier to get the survey out by late September or early October to hopefully improve the declining response rate.

Method and Sample

The electronic evaluation was developed in Qualtrics®, a software program that creates web-based surveys. Of the 80 questions, 66 were quantitative and 14 were qualitative. There were four additional questions this year compared to 2021; however, 21 fewer questions than the survey in 2020. The survey was created with sections that were divided among students attending Fish Camp, so not all students saw all questions. SAPAR evaluated the data using SPSS®, a statistical software program, and Microsoft Excel®.

SAPAR sent an email with the survey link on November 17, 2022, to 5,581 students who registered for Fish Camp, even if they did not attend their scheduled session. However, six email addresses were invalid and were not delivered. Non-respondents received up to four reminders before the survey closed on December 19, 2022. Of the 5,575 students successfully receiving the survey, 962 freshmen responded to at least part of the survey, yielding a 17% response rate. The response rate has decreased over the last four years, with the highest being 26% in 2019. In 2020, the response rate was 18% and in 2021 it was 19%.

Results

Results are reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the questions. For ease of reading, percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Not applicable responses were removed from the analysis. Tables are listed in order of decreasing 2022 means or frequencies unless otherwise noted. The summary themes are contained in this report for the qualitative questions, but the full listing is in a separate document. Comparisons to results from previous years will be made where appropriate.

This report is divided into 16 sections. All respondents were asked to respond to questions regarding Registration & Attendance, Fish Camp Scholarships, Overall Experience, and Post Fish Camp Experience. Additionally, approximately one-third of Fish Camp participants were asked to respond to questions in the remaining sections: Discussion Groups (DGs) and Camp Staff, Discussion Group Time, Campfire Speeches, Academics, Social Involvement, Skits, Time for Activities, Programs, Traditions, Continuity, and Core Values. The last section is Demographics, which were gathered from the University's student information system.

Registration & Attendance

Students were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with several statements regarding their registration experience. Table 1 illustrates that respondents were able to select sessions that fit their schedule, found camp information easily, that questions were answered promptly and quickly. However, 18% of respondents agreed that the cost of Fish Camp was a concern, which was similar to the past years. Furthermore, the cost of attending Fish Camp was more of a concern for Asian, Black, and Hispanic/Latino than it was for White students. First-generation students also indicated the cost of attending Fish Camp was more of a concern for them compared to non-first-generation students.

Please rate your agreement with the following statements.	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2020 Mean (sd) [n]
There were sessions that were available to fit my schedule.	53%	42%	4%	1%	1%	4.46 (.67) [795]	4.41 (.67) [874]	4.29 (.83) [696]
Information about registration (such as deadlines, scholarships, session changes, cancellations, and medical release forms) was easy to locate and understand.	26%	49%	14%	8%	3%	3.89 (.97) [779]	4.01 (.86) [867]	3.98 (.97) [696]
My questions were answered quickly and promptly whether by email or phone.	26%	39%	29%	5%	1%	3.84 (.91) [666]	3.91 (.87) [718]	4.09 (.90) [650]
The registration system was easy to navigate.	24%	46%	15%	13%	3%	3.76 (1.03) [793]	3.58 (1.12) [871]	3.92 (.98) [700]
The cost of Fish Camp was a concern for me.	4%	14%	26%	42%	15%	2.49 (1.03) [793]	2.44 (1.09) [847]	2.39 (1.18) [672]

Table 1: Registration

Freshmen were asked when they first heard about Fish Camp and all the methods that they heard about Fish Camp. Table 2, on the following page, demonstrates almost half of the students were aware of Fish Camp prior to even applying to Texas A&M University. However, this is less likely for Asian, Black, Hispanic or Latino, and multi-racial students. Just 20% of Asian students, 37% of Hispanic or Latino students, 39% of multi-racial students, and 44% of Black students heard about Fish Camp prior to applying to Texas A&M University, compared to 57% of White students. Additionally, first-generation students were less likely to hear about Fish Camp prior to applying to Texas A&M.

When responding to the second question about how they heard about Fish Camp, similar to the past several years, a majority of students found out about Fish Camp through family and friends. However, International students, Black students, and multi-racial students were slightly less likely to learn about Fish Camp through family and friends compared to White students. Furthermore, first-generation students were also less likely to find out about Fish Camp through friends and family. Students selecting the prospective student center response could write the location of the center. Three locations were shared: Houston, Mission, and Pharr.

Statements	2022 Percent	2021 Percent	2020 Percent
When did you <u>first</u> hear about Fish Camp	[n=796]	[n=874]	[n=715]
Prior to applying to Texas A&M	49%	51%	67%
After being admitted to Texas A&M	28%	28%	17%
After completing my application to Texas A&M	13%	11%	8%
After receiving the mailer or email from Fish Camp	4%	4%	5%
After my New Student Conference	4%	4%	3%
Other	2%	2%	1%
How did you hear about Fish Camp? (select all that apply)	[n=790]	[n=875]	[n=718]
Family/Friends	84%	87%	82%
New Student Conference	30%	34%	38%
Instagram	18%	20%	24%
Fish Camp Website	15%	18%	14%
Aggie Mom's Club or local Alumni Group	11%	12%	7%
Facebook	2%	4%	5%
Other	2%	2%	3%
Prospective Student Center	1%	2%	3%
Twitter	1%	1%	3%

Table 2: When and How Respondents Heard about Fish Camp

Attendance

Students were asked to indicate which Fish Camp session they attended/participated in and their camp color if they attended Fish Camp. As seen in Table 3, in order by camp sessions, based on who responded to the survey, attendance at each of the eight sessions was evenly distributed in general and was similar to last year. Students who registered for Fish Camp but reported they did not attend Fish Camp (n=5) were asked a follow-up question about why they did not attend Fish Camp. Three students provided a comment with different reasons. One student indicated having another trip at the same time, one said for personal reasons, and one said that there were no available sessions.

Question	2022 Percent	2021 Percent	2020 Percent	2019 Percent	2018 Percent	2017 Percent
What Fish Camp session did you attend?	[n=803]	[n=872]	[n=720]	[n=1,271]	[n=1,536]	[n=1,583]
A	13%	14%	14%	16%	15%	15%
B	13%	15%	11%	20%	16%	18%
C	11%	14%	12%	18%	16%	15%
D	12%	12%	13%	16%	15%	17%
E	13%	12%	15%	13%	14%	14%
F	12%	14%	13%	9%	12%	12%
G	12%	12%	11%	8%	11%	8%
H	13%	8%	‡	‡	‡	‡
Did not attend Fish Camp	1%	1%	11%	<1%	1%	<1%

Table 3: Participant's Session
(‡ session not available)

Fish Camp Scholarships

This is a new section that was added to the survey this year. There is no previous year data for this section. Students who agreed or strongly agreed that the cost of Fish Camp was a concern for them (n=140) were asked if they were awarded a scholarship to attend Fish Camp. Of the 136 students responding, 76% answered that they did not receive scholarships and 24% students reported that they did. Black students, International students, and Hispanic or Latino students were more likely to have received a scholarship than White students. Additionally, first-generation students were more likely to be awarded a scholarship compared to non-first-generation students.

Students who did not receive a scholarship (n=103) were asked if they knew that scholarships were available for Fish Camp. Just over half (53%) said that they did not know and 47% said that they did. However, International students, Black students, multi-racial students, and first-generation students were less likely to know about the availability of scholarships. Students who were not aware of available scholarships (n=54) were asked if having a scholarship to attend Fish Camp would have changed their decision. Out of the 54 students responding, 44% answered yes, 24% said no, and 32% were unsure. Black students and multi-racial students indicated at higher rates that a scholarship would have changed their decision.

Students who were awarded a scholarship (n=33) were asked how they found out about the Fish Camp scholarship. Table 4 shows that almost all the students found out about the scholarship from the Fish Camp website. The one comment provided for the "other" response option indicated finding out about scholarships from the LEAD Summit program.

Statements	2022 Percent
How did you find out about Fish Camp offering scholarships? (select all that apply)	[n=33]
Fish Camp Website	94%
New Student Conference	6%
Family/Friends	3%
Aggie Mom's Club or local Alumni Group	3%
Other	3%
Prospective Student Center	--

Table 4: How Respondents Learned about Fish Camp Scholarships

Discussion Group (DG) and Camp Staff

A series of questions asked respondents to report their level of agreement or disagreement with their interactions with Discussion Group (DG) Leaders, Camp Counselors, and Co-Chairs during Fish Camp. Table 5 reveals that students had positive interactions with all their camp staff; however, more students reported having positive interactions with the DG Leaders.

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2020 Mean (sd) [n]
I had positive interactions with my DG Leaders while at Fish Camp.	67%	24%	6%	2%	1%	4.54 (.77) [254]	4.68 (.66) [285]	4.68 (.66) [200]
I had positive interactions with the Camp Counselors while at Fish Camp.	59%	31%	6%	3%	<1%	4.46 (.78) [253]	4.56 (.69) [284]	↓
I had positive interactions with the Co-Chairs while at Fish Camp.	48%	34%	13%	4%	1%	4.25 (.88) [253]	4.36 (.82) [285]	↓

Table 5: Discussion Group Leaders
(↓ Question not asked)

A follow-up question provided the opportunity for respondents to share any information on their interactions with their camp staff and 75 wrote a response. Many of the comments positively described camp staff as amazing, incredible, helpful, inclusive, positive, friendly, and fun.

Discussion Group Time

When asked if their DG time was an effective learning environment, 30% of the students strongly agreed, 36% agreed, 18% were neutral, 14% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed (mean=3.75/5.00, sd=1.11, n=242). This decreased compared to the last several years as seen in Figure 1.

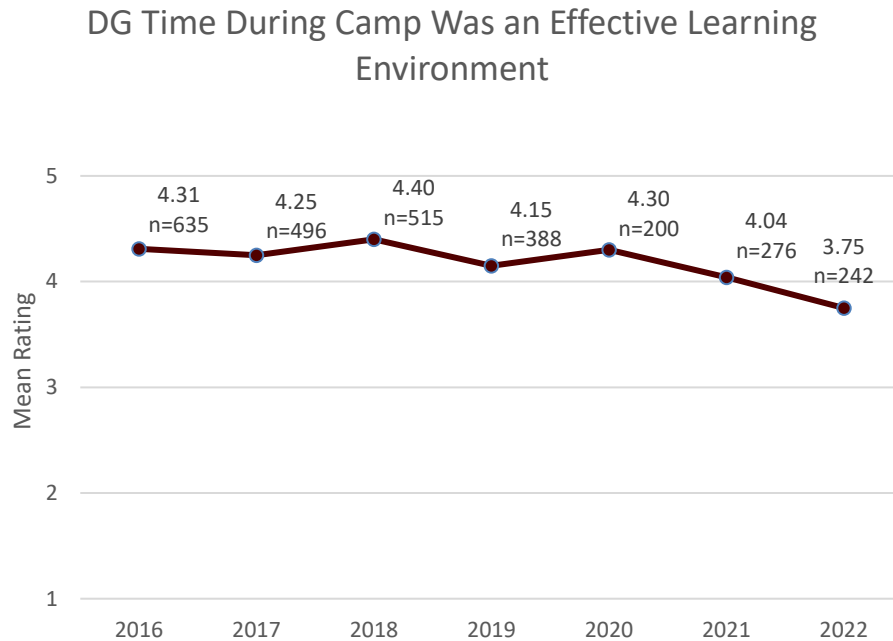


Figure 1: DG Time Was an Effective Learning Environment

Using a select all that apply formatted question, participants were asked about what they learned from their DG time. Table 6 indicates students learned about traditions the most. A small percentage (4%) of students shared that they did not learn anything from the DG time. Those that selected the “other” option were given the opportunity to write a response. Only one respondent selected this option and replied that they gained a sense of community. There was a notable increase in students learning about Texas A&M Core Values and diversity/inclusive environment compared to the previous year.

What did you learn from DG time during camp? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=241]	2021 Percent [n=275]
Traditions	85%	88%
What to Expect from College Life	75%	77%
Campus Resources	69%	71%
Involvement	66%	73%
Texas A&M Core Values	60%	74%
Academic Information	54%	57%
Importance of Time Management	54%	52%
Diversity/Inclusive Environment	46%	61%
Nothing	4%	4%
Other	<1%	3%

Table 6: DG Time

Respondents were asked if their DG leaders effectively facilitated DG times during camp. From the results, shown in Table 7, in descending order by year, a majority agreed their DG leaders effectively facilitated DG times. This year's mean score is lower than in previous years.

My DG leaders effectively facilitated DG times at camp.	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean (sd) [n]
Fish Camp 2022	50%	35%	11%	4%	1%	4.29 (.87) [242]
Fish Camp 2021	60%	31%	5%	3%	1%	4.47 (.79) [277]
Fish Camp 2020	71%	21%	8%	1%	1%	4.61 (.69) [201]
Fish Camp 2019	58%	34%	6%	1%	1%	4.48 (.71) [389]
Fish Camp 2018	62%	30%	5%	1%	<1%	4.58 (.64) [516]

Table 7: DG Leaders

Those who disagreed or strongly disagreed (n=11) were asked to explain their response. The four comments shared suggested that they did not want to participate in a discussion group, one leader was never around when needed, it did not feel meaningful, and it was awkward at times.

Campfire Speeches

Campfire speeches are given in the evening by the co-chairs or namesakes for each camp and freshmen were asked about their experience with these activities. Table 8 indicates that students felt slightly more excited about college at Texas A&M after their Campfire speeches than they felt prepared for college, which is similar to past years.

Campfire Speeches	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2020 Mean (sd) [n]
The Campfire speeches make me feel more excited for college at Texas A&M.	29%	35%	25%	8%	4%	3.77 (1.06) [220]	3.98 (1.00) [264]	4.01 (.94) [179]
The Campfire speeches helped me feel more prepared for college at Texas A&M.	21%	41%	24%	12%	3%	3.64 (1.04) [220]	3.83 (1.06) [264]	3.88 (.93) [179]

Table 8: Campfire Speeches

Additionally, through a select all that apply format, students were asked what they learned from their Campfire speeches. Table 9 reveals that students learned mostly about traditions, what to expect from college life, and the Aggie core values. However, more students indicated that they did not learn anything from their campfire speeches compared to previous years. Those selecting the “other” response option had the opportunity to provide a comment and three did. One student reported learning about a new family, another student stated learning that Texas A&M is a low-key cult, and one student could not remember what their Campfire speakers said.

What did you learn from Campfire Speeches? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=213]	2021 Percent [n=258]	2020 Percent [n=175]	2019 Percent [n=357]	2018 Percent [n=496]	2017 Percent [n=475]
Traditions	70%	64%	78%	68%	69%	72%
Aggie Core Values	57%	63%	73%	66%	67%	67%
What to Expect from College Life	56%	64%	65%	68%	70%	68%
Involvement	56%	55%	52%	55%	60%	56%
Campus Resources	49%	48%	41%	36%	39%	41%
Diversity/Inclusive Environment	45%	50%	49%	54%	56%	56%
Academics	44%	45%	38%	41%	45%	44%
Importance of Time Management	39%	40%	38%	38%	42%	39%
Nothing	13%	10%	5%	6%	4%	6%
Other	1%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%

Table 9: Learned from Campfire Speeches

Academics

Using a select all that apply format, participants were asked how Fish Camp prepared them, if at all, academically. Table 10 illustrates that students learned about academic resources, where to study, interacting with professors, and the differences between high school and college. Freshmen did not feel as strongly about learning how to study. Additionally, 17% felt that Fish Camp did not prepare them academically. Results are similar to the previous year.

How has Fish Camp prepared you academically? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=209]	2021 Percent [n=253]	2020 Percent [n=180]	2019 Percent [n=348]	2018 Percent [n=488]	2017 Percent [n=473]
Academic resources (tutoring, Supplemental Instruction [SI] sessions, etc.)	55%	61%	52%	56%	59%	60%
Where to study	50%	46%	39%	50%	56%	55%
How to successfully interact with professors/instructors	48%	51%	46%	47%	47%	47%
Academic differences between high school and college	40%	49%	56%	53%	54%	50%
Managing time	36%	41%	38%	37%	40%	37%
Fish Camp did not prepare me	17%	15%	13%	15%	10%	11%
How to study	15%	20%	17%	14%	19%	15%

Table 10: Academic Preparation

Participants were then asked, also using a select all that apply format, what parts of academic preparation they wished they would have learned more about from Fish Camp. Table 11 indicates that students wished they knew more about how to study.

As a currently enrolled student, what parts of academic preparation do you wish you would have learned more about from Fish Camp? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=208]	2021 Percent [n=245]	2020 Percent [n=174]	2019 Percent [n=342]	2018 Percent [n=467]	2017 Percent [n=461]
How to study	53%	40%	51%	49%	50%	48%
Managing time	29%	30%	28%	33%	35%	36%
How to successfully interact with professors/instructors	27%	28%	31%	28%	27%	28%
Where to study	20%	22%	31%	17%	18%	15%
Academic resources (tutoring, Supplemental Instruction [SI] sessions, etc.)	20%	16%	25%	21%	21%	22%
Academic differences between high school and college	18%	21%	14%	17%	17%	18%
I don't wish I knew more about any parts	17%	26%	15%	22%	21%	23%

Table 11: Academic Needs

A new question this year asked students their level of agreement or disagreement that the academic success discussion was beneficial. Just over one-quarter (26%) strongly agreed and 40% agreed with this statement. Additionally, 25% were neutral, 6% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed (mean=3.83/5.00; sd=.96; n=209).

Social Involvement

When asked how they spent their free time during camp, a majority of the respondents spent time in their camp room, watching Aggie Wranglers, or playing intramurals as seen in Table 12. Seventeen students wrote a response to the “other” option indicating they spent their time hanging out with friends, walking around, playing gaga ball, singing karaoke, and making bracelets. Several students stated that they did not have any free time or that there was very little free time due to heat indexes. In 2020, the options were different due to Fish Camp being remote therefore those responses are not included. Before 2020 response options included Corps of Cadets Q&A, the pool, and the aquarium; however, those were removed for 2021.

How did you use your free time or downtime during camp? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=208]	2021 Percent [n=255]	2019 Percent [n=368]	2018 Percent [n=472]	2017 Percent [n=501]
Intramurals (volleyball, basketball, gaga ball, etc.)	39%	38%	37%	42%	35%
Went to Aggie Wranglers	39%	21%	37%	29%	28%
Camp Room	35%	42%	32%	27%	31%
Cabin	29%	31%	35%	30%	41%
Took a Nap	17%	19%	29%	24%	30%
Other	9%	15%	6%	8%	5%
Fade To Black	2%	↓	↓	↓	↓
Swimming	--	↓	↓	↓	↓

Table 12: Free Time
(↓ Question not asked)

Skits

As seen in Table 13, students were positive about understanding the skits performed by the counselors during camp and found the post-skit explanations helpful. These results are less positive than last year.

Skits	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2020 Mean (sd) [n]
The post-skit explanations helped clarify the purpose of each skit.	46%	41%	10%	2%	1%	4.28 (.83) [224]	4.50 (.72) [278]	4.33 (.77) [189]
Overall, I understood the meaning behind the skits counselors performed during Fish Camp.	39%	43%	8%	6%	4%	4.09 (1.01) [224]	4.35 (.84) [278]	4.08 (1.03) [192]

Table 13: Skits

Using a select all that apply format, participants were asked what they learned from the skits. Table 14 demonstrates that a majority of participants learned a variety of topics from the skits, especially about campus traditions, Aggie core values, and campus resources. Those that selected the “other” option were given the opportunity to write a comment. Of the two students who answered this question, one said that it was not worth going and another said the school spirit.

What did you learn from your skits? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=222]	2021 Percent [n=276]	2020 Percent [n=188]	2019 Percent [n=377]	2018 Percent [n=472]
Traditions	90%	96%	90%	96%	97%
Aggie Core Values	82%	88%	87%	88%	90%
Campus Resources	82%	88%	81%	86%	90%
Involvement	79%	80%	69%	74%	80%
Academics	70%	77%	59%	63%	70%
Diversity/Inclusive Environment	70%	70%	65%	70%	77%
What to Expect from College Life	69%	79%	69%	71%	77%
Importance of Time Management	59%	69%	57%	59%	69%
Nothing	4%	3%	3%	2%	1%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%

Table 14: Skits

Students were asked to elaborate on which skits they learned from the most. Several of the 76 responses said that they learned from all the skits or that they could not remember individual skits. Multiple students commented on the skits about Aggie traditions and campus resources.

When asked to describe skits that they did not like or found inappropriate to their purpose if any, a majority of the 57 comments stated none, they all were great, or not applicable. Some indicated that they could not hear the skits, they did not always understand the purpose of the skits, and they do not remember the skits.

Time for Activities

Students were asked if they felt there should be more or less time for listed activities. Table 15 shows that participants thought that they could use more free time the most. Almost two-thirds of students felt that programs about Aggie traditions and campus resources as well as the presentations by CAPS and Health Promotion did not need the time allocated for them changed.

Please select if you felt there should have been more or less time, or no change, for the following activities during camp.	Significantly More Time (5)	Slightly More Time (4)	No Change (3)	Slightly Less Time (2)	Significantly Less Time (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2020 Mean (sd) [n]
Free Time	39%	34%	22%	4%	1%	4.04 (.95) [213]	3.88 (.83) [268]	3.44 (.79) [197]
Programs about Involvement	8%	34%	48%	4%	6%	3.33 (.91) [213]	3.20 (.73) [269]	3.42 (.79) [199]
Programs about Aggie Traditions	7%	25%	61%	5%	2%	3.30 (.77) [213]	3.31 (.73) [268]	3.48 (.86) [199]
DG Times	9%	38%	32%	13%	9%	3.25 (1.08) [213]	3.42 (.88) [267]	3.68 (.87) [199]
Camptime Programs (Only your color)	7%	33%	45%	9%	7%	3.23 (.95) [212]	3.36 (.84) [270]	3.36 (.78) [199]
Programs about Campus Resources	3%	16%	64%	10%	6%	3.00 (.80) [212]	2.94 (.69) [269]	3.20 (.70) [198]
Counselor Skits	5%	15%	43%	23%	15%	2.72 (1.04) [213]	3.07 (.97) [270]	2.87 (1.03) [198]
Presentation by counseling and psychological services (CAPS)	1%	6%	61%	23%	9%	2.67 (.77) [213]	†	†
Videos of Campus Resources	2%	12%	43%	29%	14%	2.59 (.94) [213]	2.05 (.87) [271]	2.86 (.86) [197]
Presentations by Health Promotions	--	3%	60%	24%	13%	2.54 (.76) [213]	2.65 (.76) [269]	2.65 (.76) [199]

Table 15: Activity Times
(† Question not asked)

Programs

Freshmen attended several sessions that taught them about programs, services, and organizations available at Texas A&M. Students were asked to rank what presentation style worked the best. Table 16 lists the presentation style in ascending order of the presentation style rankings. It should be noted that the lower the mean for a given style, the higher it was ranked on average. Similar to the past couple of years, interactive discussions were viewed as the presentation style that worked best for campus programs. Over half of all students ranked it number one. Pre-made videos and interactive through technology were ranked the lowest and both were less preferred by students similar to last year.

Please rank the order of the presentation style for the campus programs you felt were most beneficial.	2022 Rank	2022 Mean (sd) [n=248]	2021 Rank	2021 Mean (sd) [n=229]	2020 Rank	2020 Mean (sd) [n=168]	2019 Rank	2019 Mean (sd) [n=366]
Interactive Discussions	1	1.94 (1.30)	1	1.74 (.97)	1	2.04 (1.25)	1	2.14 (1.27)
Testimonies from Student Leaders	2	2.56 (1.34)	2	2.45 (1.32)	3	2.91 (1.24)	2	2.74 (1.56)
Testimonies from Campus Representative	3	3.64 (1.30)	3	3.38 (1.16)	5	3.92 (1.09)	5	3.97 (1.37)
Prizes Given Out for Participation	4	3.99 (1.69)	4	3.83 (1.60)	†	†	3	3.49 (1.57)
Pre-made Videos	5	4.04 (1.39)	6	4.85 (1.33)	4	3.36 (1.48)	4	3.78 (1.64)
Interactive through Technology	6	4.83 (1.41)	5	4.75 (1.22)	2	2.77 (1.28)	6	4.89 (1.36)

Table 16: Programs' Presentation Style
(† Question not asked)

Additionally, students were asked to rank the program presentations based on which worked the best. A couple of choices for this question were changed from last year. Table 17, on the next page, reveals that students felt the Career Center worked the best with almost half ranking it number one or two. Alternatively, they ranked the CARPOOL presentation the lowest with about one-quarter ranking it last. Again, the lower the mean for a presentation, the higher it was ranked overall.

Please rank the order of the presentations you feel works the best.	2022 Rank	2022 Mean (sd) [n=250]	2021 Rank	2021 Mean (sd) [n=222]
Career Center	1	3.03 (1.74)	2	3.34 (1.61)
Traditions Council	2	3.61 (2.60)	‡	‡
Rec Sports	3	3.90 (2.23)	3	3.70 (2.64)
University Libraries	4	4.60 (2.35)	7	6.60 (2.70)
Counseling and Psychological Services	5	4.74 (2.10)	4	4.58 (2.17)
Class Councils	6	4.88 (1.98)	6	5.73 (1.95)
Health Promotions	7	5.59 (1.84)	‡	‡
CARPOOL	8	5.65 (2.04)	5	5.57 (2.44)

Table 17: Programs' Presentations
(‡ Question not asked)

Participants were asked to describe presentations that stood out to them and why. Of the 61 comments, many stated Silver Taps and Muster for being serious and evoking the importance of these campus traditions. The presentation by Rec Sports was also mentioned because it was fun and involved students. Students also felt that the presentation by Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) stood out because it was informative, and the presenter cared.

Traditions

This is a new section that was added to the survey this year. There is no previous year data for this section. Students were asked how knowledgeable they felt about Texas A&M traditions before and after participating in Fish Camp. Half of the students said that they felt somewhat or very knowledgeable before Fish Camp, and this number rose to 99% after Fish Camp. These results are shown in Table 18. Almost half (46%) increased one level from before attending Fish Camp to after attending Fish Camp. Additionally, 27% increased two levels and 6% increased three levels (not at all knowledgeable before camp to very knowledgeable after camp). Another 20% stayed at the same level. Black students reported not being knowledgeable about the traditions after Fish Camp slightly higher than other students.

Traditions	Very Knowledgeable (4)	Somewhat Knowledgeable (3)	Not Knowledgeable (2)	Not At All Knowledgeable (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]
How knowledgeable did you feel about Texas A&M traditions after participating in Fish Camp?	68%	31%	1%	<1%	3.66 (.51) [252]
How knowledgeable did you feel about Texas A&M traditions before participating in Fish Camp?	11%	39%	34%	16%	2.46 (.89) [252]

Table 18: Level of Traditions knowledge

Students were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements given in Table 19. The statement that students agreed upon was that they learned about campus traditions from the Traditions Council presentation.

Traditions	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]
I learned about campus traditions from the Traditions Council presentation (MSC, Good Bull, Wild Cats, Gig 'Em, etc.).	51%	40%	6%	2%	<1%	4.39 (.74) [250]
The presentation from Traditions Council (MSC, Good Bull, Wild Cats, Gig 'Em, etc.) was engaging.	47%	43%	7%	2%	1%	4.33 (.76) [252]
I learned about traditional programs from the Class Council presentation (Elephant Walk, Ring Day, etc.).	41%	46%	10%	3%	<1%	4.24 (.77) [252]
The presentation from Class Council (Elephant Walk, Ring Day, etc.) was engaging.	32%	48%	16%	2%	2%	4.06 (.87) [252]

Table 19: Traditions

Students were asked what information, if any, did they know from the New Student Conference. Out of the 33 students that answered this question, most of them talked about some traditions that they heard about at the NSC. About one-quarter of the students replied that they did not learn a lot.

Continuity

Participants were asked if the materials in their DG folder were helpful. Over half of the respondents agreed, as seen in Table 20. This is a decrease compared to the last years.

Please rate your agreement with the following statements.	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2019 Mean (sd) [n]	2018 Mean (sd) [n]
The materials I received in my DG folder were helpful.	32%	35%	21%	8%	4%	3.85 (1.07) [249]	4.12 (.84) [234]	3.94 (.89) [372]	4.05 (.88) [481]

Table 20: DG Folder Materials

When asked about their preference for receiving materials to access after Fish Camp, 50% reported they wanted to continue to receive a physical folder at camp, 31% had no preference, and 20% would prefer access to a digital folder.

Core Values

Last year this section was called “We are the Aggies, the Aggies are We” but it was changed to Core Values this year and questions were changed accordingly. There is no previous year data available for this section.

Students were asked how knowledgeable they felt about Texas A&M’s core values before and after participating in Fish Camp. Before the camp, two-thirds of students (67%) felt that they were very knowledgeable or somewhat knowledgeable about the core values. After the camp, almost all students (98%) felt very knowledgeable or somewhat knowledgeable about the core values. Table 21 shows these results. Black students reported not being knowledgeable about the Core Values after Fish Camp slightly higher than other students.

Just over half (51%) increased one level from before attending Fish Camp to after attending Fish Camp. Additionally, 19% increased two levels and 4% increased three levels (not at all knowledgeable before camp to very knowledgeable after camp). Another 27% stayed at the same level.

	Very Knowledgeable (4)	Somewhat Knowledgeable (3)	Not Knowledgeable (2)	Not at all Knowledgeable (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]
How knowledgeable did you feel about Texas A&M's Core Values after participating in Fish Camp?	76%	22%	2%	0%	3.74 (.48) [243]
How knowledgeable did you feel about Texas A&M's Core Values before participating in Fish Camp?	16%	51%	24%	9%	2.74 (.83) [243]

Table 21: Community of Respect

Participants were then asked if they felt comfortable listening to their counselors share their core values of loyalty and selfless service. Most of the respondents (84%) said ‘yes’, 2% said they were not sure, 14% said they did not remember the stories, and less than one percent said ‘no’. Participants who remembered their counselor’s stories were asked to explain their responses. The 40 comments were all from students who reported they felt comfortable listening to their counselors share their core values of loyalty and selfless service. Students appreciated hearing from other students to hear their stories. Many felt their counselors were personable, relatable, engaging, and truthful. Additionally, many shared that it helped them relate to and understand the Core Values.

Overall Experience

Table 22 shows four new questions that were added to this year's survey. The results show that most students feel prepared to be successful academically, feel comfortable using campus resources, and have a support system at TAMU. Black students reported a slightly lower level of agreement with all four statements compared to other students. First-generation students indicated a slightly higher level of agreement that they were comfortable using campus resources and that they had a support system at Texas A&M.

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]
I have a support system at TAMU.	34%	44%	16%	4%	2%	4.03 (.92) [639]
I feel prepared to be successful academically at TAMU.	29%	51%	16%	3%	1%	4.03 (.82) [640]
I feel comfortable using campus resources.	29%	51%	16%	4%	1%	4.03 (.81) [639]
I feel able to manage my time effectively.	23%	52%	17%	5%	2%	3.89 (.89) [638]

Table 22: Overall experience

When asked what they expected to learn and/or gain from Fish Camp, 239 participants provided a comment. While there was a wide range of expectations, some of the most common ones were making friends, learning about the traditions, and gaining information or knowledge about the university such as resources, campus life, or involvement. Additionally, many did not know what to expect from attending Fish Camp, or they did not have any expectations going into Fish Camp.

Participants were asked what it means to be an Aggie and 222 shared their thoughts. Many students talked about being an Aggie meant you are part of a family or part of something bigger than yourself. Others described being an Aggie as being accepting, respectful, honest, and involved. Some mentioned the Aggie Code of Honor or the Aggie Core Values.

Post Fish Camp Experience

The survey was administered several months after the school year had started to understand students' experience and continued connection after Fish Camp. Students were first asked a set of questions about their first semester at Texas A&M University. Table 23 reveals that students generally felt that they are accepted at Texas A&M, feel comfortable at the institution, and that they belong at Texas A&M. However, Black students did not feel as welcome or that they belong at Texas A&M compared to other students. Alternatively, first-generation students reported a slightly higher level of agreement that they felt welcome and accepted at Texas A&M, and that they belonged at Texas A&M.

	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2022 Mean (sd) [n]	2021 Mean (sd) [n]	2020 Mean (sd) [n]
I feel welcome and accepted at Texas A&M University.	49%	41%	7%	1%	2%	4.35 (.79) [625]	↓	↓
I get along well with people at TAMU.	45%	46%	8%	1%	1%	4.33 (.71) [624]	4.34 (.61) [699]	4.26 (.72) [509]
I feel comfortable at TAMU.	50%	37%	9%	2%	2%	4.32 (.85) [623]	4.41 (.69) [698]	4.37 (.73) [507]
I belong at TAMU.	52%	33%	11%	2%	1%	4.32 (.86) [624]	4.41 (.74) [698]	4.35 (.77) [509]
I am similar to the kind of people who succeed at TAMU.	37%	46%	14%	2%	1%	4.17 (.80) [623]	4.05 (.74) [698]	3.93 (.79) [509]

Table 23: Experience at Texas A&M University
(↓ Question not asked)

Using a select all that apply format, freshmen were asked about the activities their camp planned after Fish Camp to help them stay connected. Hanging out continued to be the most common activity with over three-fourths of the students selecting it as seen in Table 24, on the following page. Participants selecting the "other" response option could write what their camp planned, and 35 comments were shared. Pond hopping was the most commented activity by almost 30% of respondents. Other planned activities included going to the Bonfire Memorial, studying together, having a tailgate before a game, going to Sonic Sunday, and attending a football game. Additionally, students who indicated their camp attended a Howdy Week event were asked to specify what event, and 31 shared. Almost half of the 31 comments indicated their camp attended Rec-A-Palooza. MSC Open House was also reported by almost 20% of the comments. Several students said their camp attended "a lot" of events and several could not remember what events their camp attended.

What activities has your camp planned since the end of Fish Camp to help you stay connected, whether you attended or not? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=625]	2021 Percent [n=699]	2020 Percent [n=521]	2019 Percent [n=1,006]	2018 Percent [n=1,354]	2017 Percent [n=1,417]
Hangout	75%	81%	77%	79%	82%	77%
Sporting Events	56%	69%	↓	65%	74%	70%
Dinner	53%	64%	↓	70%	73%	69%
Midnight Yell	50%	45%	9%	71%	80%	79%
Lunch	42%	53%	↓	62%	71%	75%
Camp Reunion	41%	51%	↓	63%	73%	72%
Silver Taps	41%	40%	25%	57%	71%	77%
MSC Open House	35%	31%	11%	56%	70%	60%
Campus Tour	26%	32%	24%	42%	40%	33%
Howdy Week Events	21%	29%	5%	32%	31%	30%
Movie Nights	12%	16%	15%	16%	19%	16%
Other	7%	7%	11%	9%	8%	5%
Bowling	4%	7%	↓	7%	12%	9%
No activities have been planned	4%	2%	15%	1%	1%	1%

Table 24: Post Fish Camp Activities
(↓ Question not asked)

A follow-up question was asked of students who indicated their camp had planned any activity since the end of Fish Camp to find out approximately how many activities had been planned with their camp or DG. The results, displayed in Table 25, show that over three-fourths reported 1-10 activities, which is slightly more than last year.

Approximately how many activities have been planned with your camp or DG?	2022 Percent [n=590]	2021 Percent [n=678]	2020 Percent [n=435]	2019 Percent [n=983]	2018 Percent [n=1,326]	2017 Percent [n=1,387]
1 – 5 activities	52%	42%	71%	37%	29%	33%
6 – 10 activities	28%	31%	24%	31%	33%	36%
11 – 15 activities	12%	16%	3%	17%	20%	17%
16 – 20 activities	5%	6%	1%	6%	8%	7%
More than 20 activities	4%	6%	1%	9%	10%	8%

Table 25: Number of Post Fish Camp Activities

When asked if they were still interacting with members of their DG, 53% of the 623 students responding said yes and 47% said no. This is a notable decrease from last year when 71% said yes. Those who were no longer interacting with their DG (n=292) were asked to explain why. Several of the 171 who responded indicated they were too busy or that due to their schedule they were not able to attend DG activities. Many also indicated that their DG did not have a lot in common with one another or that they did not like the others in their group. Some also said that their DG leaders did not plan anything. A few students also stated that they were in the Corps, and they usually did not have free time from the Corps when activities were planned.

Students were asked about how often their DG leaders communicated with them and the method of communication. Table 26, on the next page, reveals that more than half communicated once in a while, but the overall communication from DG leaders decreased as compared to previous years.

Communication with DG Leaders	2022 Percent	2021 Percent	2020 Percent	2019 Percent	2018 Percent
How often do your DG leaders communicate with you?	[n=623]	[n=698]	[n=516]	[n=1,002]	[n=1,347]
Once in a while	63%	47%	53%	53%	33%
Weekly	12%	24%	17%	18%	22%
My DG leaders have not communicated with me	12%	4%	12%	7%	3%
Several times per week	9%	16%	12%	12%	23%
Once a day	2%	4%	3%	4%	7%
Multiple times per day	2%	6%	3%	7%	11%

Table 26: Communication with DG Leaders

All freshmen were asked if they felt that participating in Fish Camp helped them in their first few weeks at Texas A&M. More than two-thirds of the 616 respondents felt that Fish Camp did help them in their fall semester, as seen in Table 27. This percentage is similar to previous years.

Did participating in Fish Camp help you in your first few weeks at Texas A&M this fall?	Yes	No	Unsure
Fish Camp 2022	67%	17%	16%
Fish Camp 2021	73%	13%	15%
Fish Camp 2020	64%	15%	21%
Fish Camp 2019	76%	11%	13%
Fish Camp 2018	80%	9%	12%

Table 27: Fish Camp Help First Semester

Those who felt that Fish Camp helped them (n=412) were asked to explain their response or to indicate what information they learned was helpful. A majority of the 190 students responding to the question talked about knowing people, feeling connected to others, or having someone to ask questions to during the first several weeks of the semester. Many stated that Fish Camp made them feel comfortable about coming to Texas A&M. Others indicated they learned about campus resources, traditions, what to expect in college to make the transition easier, and where things are located on campus. Some talked about Fish Camp making them feel like they belonged, and that Texas A&M was the right place for them.

Alternatively, those reporting that Fish Camp did not help them in their first few weeks (n=107) were also provided the chance to explain, and 42 wrote a comment. Several students mentioned they did not connect with their DG group or that they did not make friends. Some felt that they made a connection at camp, but there were no activities together once they came to campus. Some said that they did not learn anything new at Fish Camp or that they had already heard the information before.

All respondents were asked what topics they felt should be covered at Fish Camp or covered in greater depth now that they had been on campus for several weeks. A wide range of suggestions was received from the 231 students who responded. Many students felt that all topics were covered during camp or that the topics did not need to be covered in greater depth. Mental health was mentioned by many students to cover topics such as emotional support, stress management, anxiety, depression, homesickness, and freshman burnout. Another topic mentioned by several students was academics: topics such as class schedules, how to study, different types of classes, classroom etiquette, working with faculty members, and time management. Other students would have liked to

have more information about how to do various things on campus such as get involved, make friends, pull athletic tickets, balance everything, and adjust to college life.

Using a select all that apply question, freshmen were asked if they attended any other orientation campus program in addition to Fish Camp. A majority of the students (78%) indicated they did not attend any other camp. Of the students who did attend another program, a majority went to Impact Retreat, as seen in Table 28. Four of the nine comments from the “other” response option wrote St. Mary’s Connect Retreat. Additionally, two students reported the LEAD Summer program, and one student said Corps of Cadets Freshmen Orientation Week, SEAL, and Whoopin’ Weekend each.

Did you attend any orientation camp program in addition to Fish Camp? (select all that apply)	2022 Percent [n=116]	2021 Percent [n=92]	2020 Percent [n=111]	2019 Percent [n=195]	2018 Percent [n=234]	2017 Percent [n=243]
Impact Retreat	84%	82%	90%	86%	80%	82%
Other	9%	15%	6%	11%	14%	10%
ExCEL	<1%	2%	5%	2%	5%	7%
Venture Camp	<1%	1%	2%	2%	3%	3%

Table 28: Additional Extended Orientation Programs

Demographics

Demographic data were obtained through the University's student information system for the First Time in College (FTIC) students for fall 2022, students who registered for Fish Camp, and survey respondents. Results are displayed in Table 29, listed in descending order by survey respondents for each demographic category. More White students and fewer first-generation and Asian students registered for Fish Camp than the fall FTIC cohort. The students responding to the survey generally matched the students registered for Fish Camp except for sex. There was a slight overrepresentation of females responding to the survey compared to those registered for Fish Camp.

Demographic Statements	FTIC Students at Texas A&M Fall 2022 [N=11,487]	Students Registered for Fish Camp Fall 2022 [n=5,513]	Fish Camp Survey Respondents Fall 2022 [n=955]
College			
Engineering	38%	36%	31%
Arts and Sciences	32%	30%	30%
Business	10%	13%	15%
Agriculture	9%	9%	9%
Education	4%	4%	4%
Public Health	4%	4%	4%
Bush	1%	2%	3%
Architecture	2%	2%	2%
Performance and Visualization	1%	1%	1%
Sex			
Female	48%	51%	64%
Male	52%	49%	36%
Ethnicity			
White	51%	63%	64%
Hispanic or Latino of any Race	25%	23%	21%
Asian	15%	8%	8%
Multiracial excluding Black	3%	3%	4%
Black / Multiracial with Black	3%	2%	2%
American Indian / International / Native Hawaiian / Unknown	1%	<1%	--
Top Ten Percent Admission			
Top 10%	50%	52%	57%
Not Top 10%	50%	48%	43%
First-Generation College Student			
Not First-Generation	81%	88%	89%
First-Generation	19%	12%	11%
Unknown	1%	<1%	--
Classification			
Freshman	86%	86%	84%
Sophomore	11%	12%	13%
Junior	3%	2%	3%

Table 29: Student Demographics

Background

Fish Camp provides a transition from high school to college for about 6,000 incoming freshmen, out of the approximately 11,000 students in the freshman class. Each of the eight sessions is divided into six camps represented by a camp color. Each camp consists of approximately 120 freshmen, 24 upperclassmen counselors, and two co-chairs. Freshmen spend camp time watching skits and participating in larger group discussions. They also attend various programs to learn about campus life, Aggie traditions, and a variety of services and resources to help students succeed. Additionally, freshmen are divided into smaller Discussion Groups (DGs) to meet other students and can ask questions in a smaller environment.

Fish Camp advisors and student leaders identified the following learning outcomes for students attending Fish Camp:

1. Articulate and understand traditions at Texas A&M traditions (symbols, jargon, etc.).
2. Articulate and understand the Core Values at Texas A&M (Respect, Excellence, Leadership, Loyalty, Integrity, and Selfless Service).
3. Recognize the relevance of the Core Values and their connection to interactions with others at Texas A&M.
4. Describe academic resources to support the college experience. (i.e. time management, study skills).
5. Articulate the Aggie Honor Code and the importance of academic integrity.
6. Identify involvement and leadership opportunities.
7. Recognize on-campus student services.

Project Details

The Department of Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research (SAPAR) 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 SAPAR are funded, in part, by the Texas A&M University Advancement Fee. Results of this project and other assessment projects done through SAPAR can be found at <https://sapar.tamu.edu/results/>. Additionally, anyone can follow SAPAR on Facebook.

To work with SAPAR for future assessment projects, please fill out the Assessment Questionnaire at <https://sapar.tamu.edu/aqform/>.

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