

Fish Camp Participant Evaluation 2018

Background

According to its website (<http://fishcamp.tamu.edu/>), Fish Camp “welcomes the freshmen class to Texas A&M each year with the purpose of giving them an opportunity to have fun, make friends, and learn more about life at Texas A&M.” Furthermore, Fish Camp “is led by A&M students who are passionate about making the first year of college a success for freshmen!”

Fish Camp, a four-day extended orientation camp through Texas A&M University, provides a transition from high school to college for about 6,500 incoming freshmen, out of the approximately 11,000 students in the freshman class. Each session is divided into camps, which consist of approximately 120 freshmen, 24 upperclassmen counselors, and two co-chairs. Freshmen 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 have the opportunity to ask questions in a smaller environment.

This year, the seven sessions ran from July 27th through August 17th, 2018. Fish Camp has partnered with Student Life Studies to assess participants’ camp experience since 2000.

Method and Sample

The electronic evaluation was developed in Qualtrics®, a software program that creates web-based surveys. Of the 77 questions, 62 were quantitative and 15 were qualitative. The survey was created with sections that were divided among students attending Fish Camp, so not all students saw all questions. Student Life Studies evaluated the results using SPSS®, a statistical software program, and Microsoft Excel®.

The survey was sent out several weeks after the school year started, rather than immediately after camp as had been done up until 2015. Student Life Studies sent an email with the survey link on October 8, 2018, to 6,535 students who were registered for Fish Camp, even if they did not attend their scheduled session. Non-respondents received up to three reminders before the survey closed on October 22, 2018. There were 16 email addresses that were not valid. Of the 6,519 students receiving the survey, 1,711 freshmen responded to at least part of the survey, yielding a 26% response rate.

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 2018 means or frequencies unless otherwise noted. For the qualitative questions, the summary themes are contained in this report, 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 13 sections. All respondents were asked to respond to questions regarding Registration, Attendance, 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), Campfire Speeches, Academics, Skits, Social Involvement, Programs, Continuity, and Community of Respect. The last section is Demographics, which were gathered from the University’s student information system.

Registration

Students were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with several statements regarding their registration experience. Table 1 illustrates mostly similar responses compared to last year, and that respondents were able to select sessions that fit their schedule, felt the registration system was easy to navigate, information was easy to locate and understand, and that questions were answered quickly. However, almost half of the students disagreed about not being concerned with the cost of Fish Camp, which was similar to the past two years.

Please rate your agreement with the following statements.	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2017 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
There were sessions available that fit my schedule.	61%	35%	3%	1%	<1%	4.56 (.61) [1,520]	4.55 (.61) [1,570]	4.54 (.61) [1,881]
The registration system was easy to navigate.	45%	45%	8%	2%	<1%	4.33 (.72) [1,514]	4.32 (.71) [1,564]	4.34 (.66) [1,871]
Information about registration (such as deadlines, scholarships, session changes, cancellations, and medical release forms) was easy to locate and understand.	45%	46%	7%	2%	1%	4.33 (.73) [1,507]	4.23 (.78) [1,552]	4.24 (.76) [1,858]
My questions were answered quickly and promptly, whether by email or phone.	41%	43%	15%	1%	1%	4.21 (.78) [1,264]	4.09 (.88) [1,257]	4.21 (.75) [1,527]
The cost of Fish Camp was a concern for me.	7%	18%	27%	33%	14%	2.71 (1.14) [1,478]	2.73 (1.16) [1,527]	2.70 (1.10) [1,838]

Table 1: Registration

Freshmen were asked when they *first* heard about Fish Camp and all the ways that they heard about Fish Camp. Table 2, on the following page, demonstrates that just over half of the students were aware of Fish Camp prior to even applying to Texas A&M University. Students who selected the “other” option were provided the opportunity to write a response. Many, of the 29 write-in responses, commented on how they learned about Fish Camp rather than when they learned about it. They indicated learning about Fish Camp from family, former students, high school teachers/counselors, and other Aggies. When responding to the second question about how they heard about Fish Camp, a majority of students found out about Fish Camp through family and friends. The “other” ways students heard about Fish Camp included attending events or tours on campus, friends, Instagram, other Aggies, email, teachers/recruiters at high schools, and family. Students who selected learning about Fish Camp through a Prospective Student Center were given the opportunity to write the location. Students indicated Arlington, Corpus Christi, Laredo, and Tyler the most.

A follow-up question asked students about the relationship when family or friends were reported as how they heard about Fish Camp (n=1,232). Using a select-all-that apply option, 55% reported hearing about Fish Camp from a family friend, 35% said parents, 20% said siblings, 13% indicated aunt/uncle, and 4% selected grandparent. Additionally, 15% selected the “other” option and wrote a response including friends, cousins, teachers, classmates, and current students. These were similar results compared to 2016 and 2017.

Statements	2018 Percent	2017 Percent	2016 Percent	2015 Percent
When did you first year about Fish Camp	[n=1,535]	[n=1,582]	[n=1,900]	[n=2,763]
Prior to applying to Texas A&M	51%	56%	52%	50%
After being admitted to Texas A&M	26%	22%	27%	28%
After completing my application to Texas A&M	11%	11%	10%	11%
After receiving the mailer or email from Fish Camp	7%	7%	7%	7%
After my New Student Conference	4%	3%	4%	3%
Other	2%	2%	2%	2%
How did you hear about Fish Camp (select all that apply)	[n=1,526]	[n=1,577]	[n=1,889]	[n=2,756]
Family/Friends	81%	83%	83%	85%
New Student Conference	36%	35%	33%	44%
Mailing	26%	31%	24%	35%
Fish Camp Website	18%	18%	16%	25%
Twitter	12%	11%	9%	13%
Facebook	7%	7%	7%	9%
Aggie Mom's Club or local Alumni Group	5%	5%	5%	5%
Other	3%	2%	2%	1%
Prospective Student Center	2%	2%	1%	1%
Correspondence from Aggie Athletics	1%	1%	‡	‡

Table 2: When and How Did You Hear about Fish Camp (‡ Question not asked)

Attendance

Students were asked to indicate which Fish Camp session they attended and their camp color if they attended Fish Camp. As seen in Table 3 there were slightly more respondents from the earlier sessions and fewer from the last sessions, which is a similar pattern to previous years.

Respondents who registered for Fish Camp but did not attend their session (n=11) were asked to explain why in a follow-up question. Students indicated getting sick, having a medical emergency, needing to work, or having something else come up. Students who did not attend Fish Camp were taken to the end of the survey after this question.

Question	2018 Percent	2017 Percent	2016 Percent	2015 Percent	2014 Percent
What Fish Camp session did you attend?	[n=1,536]	[n=1,583]	[n=1,902]	[n=2,765]	[n=2,030]
A	15%	15%	17%	17%	16%
B	16%	18%	17%	18%	16%
C	16%	15%	18%	16%	15%
D	15%	17%	15%	13%	15%
E	14%	14%	11%	13%	15%
F	12%	12%	9%	11%	11%
G	11%	8%	13%	12%	12%
Did not attend Fish Camp	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%
What Fish Camp color were you?	[n=1,520]	[n=1,575]	[n=1,900]	[n=2,740]	[n=1,999]
Yellow	18%	14%	15%	13%	16%
Purple	17%	20%	17%	15%	15%
Red	17%	19%	17%	14%	13%
Blue	16%	13%	14%	17%	14%
Aqua	13%	16%	13%	16%	18%
Green	11%	11%	12%	13%	13%
Lime	8%	7%	12%	13%	12%
I do not remember	--	<1%	<1%	‡	‡

Table 3: Participant's Session and Color (‡ Question not asked)

Discussion Group (DG)

When asked if their DG time was an effective learning environment, 55% of the students strongly agreed, 33% agreed, 9% were neutral, 2% disagreed, and <1% strongly disagreed (mean=4.40/5.00, sd=.78, n=515). This was a slight increase when compared to 2017 (mean=4.25/5.00, sd=.93, n=496) and 2016 (mean=4.31/5.00, sd=.88, n=635).

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with what they learned from their DG time. Table 4 indicates students were generally positive regarding all listed options, especially learning about campus traditions and Texas A&M core values. Those that selected the “other” option were given the opportunity to write a response. Answers from 23 students included learning about college life, creating relationships with others, resources, and being part of the Aggie family.

From my DG time, I learned about...	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2017 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
Traditions	60%	34%	5%	1%	--	4.53 (.65) [511]	4.50 (.76) [492]	4.56 (.66) [631]
Texas A&M Core Values	60%	34%	5%	1%	<1%	4.52 (.66) [514]	4.49 (.76) [496]	4.45 (.76) [633]
Diversity/Inclusive Environment	57%	37%	6%	1%	--	4.49 (.66) [513]	4.38 (.85) [496]	4.37 (.75) [633]
Involvement	56%	37%	6%	2%	--	4.47 (.70) [512]	4.40 (.85) [496]	4.39 (.78) [633]
Campus & Community Resources	52%	41%	7%	1%	--	4.43 (.65) [514]	4.30 (.84) [495]	4.37 (.74) [631]
What to Expect from College Life	49%	39%	10%	2%	1%	4.33 (.79) [512]	4.25 (.88) [495]	4.27 (.82) [632]
Academic Information	45%	42%	11%	2%	<1%	4.29 (.77) [511]	4.20 (.91) [496]	4.21 (.89) [633]
Importance of Time Management	43%	39%	13%	5%	1%	4.19 (.88) [512]	4.15 (.97) [496]	4.13 (.92) [632]
Other	46%	21%	31%	1%	1%	4.11 (.95) [95]	3.99 (.98) [69]	4.01 (.98) [118]

Table 4: DG Time

Respondents were asked if their DG leaders effectively facilitated DG times at camp, and a majority agreed (62% strongly agreed and 30% agreed). Additionally, 5% were neutral, 1% disagreed, and <1% strongly disagreed (mean=4.58/5.00, sd=.64, n=516). This was a slight increase when compared to the results from 2017 (mean=4.48/5.00, sd=.78, n=497). Those who disagreed or strongly disagreed (n=5) were asked to explain. There were different responses from four students, including that they mostly played games during DG time, had little interaction, and that the DG leaders did not participate in answering the questions they asked the freshmen.

For the final question in this section, students were asked to indicate if they felt there should be more or less time for listed activities. Table 5 shows that participants thought that they could use more time for sleep, free time, and meals. Conversely, freshmen felt there could be less time for Copeland programs. The time spent on many of the activities had similar responses compared to the last two years; however, some of the changes were that students wanted less time for Copeland programs, programs about campus resources, and programs about involvement.

Should be more or less time, or no change, for the following activities.	Significantly More Time (5)	Slightly More Time (4)	No Change (3)	Slightly Less Time (2)	Significantly Less Time (1)	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2017 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
Sleep	23%	39%	36%	1%	1%	3.84 (.80) [513]	3.91 (.78) [493]	3.88 (.81) [634]
Free Time	21%	40%	34%	5%	1%	3.75 (.86) [515]	3.67 (.90) [492]	3.67 (.85) [632]
Meals	16%	38%	44%	2%	<1%	3.68 (.76) [515]	3.63 (.76) [493]	3.47 (.65) [633]
DG Times	14%	38%	39%	9%	1%	3.56 (.87) [512]	3.61 (.88) [494]	3.59 (.87) [631]
Camptime Programs (only your color)	8%	36%	46%	7%	3%	3.40 (.84) [512]	3.38 (.88) [492]	3.33 (.81) [632]
Mixers	16%	23%	48%	9%	5%	3.36 (1.00) [512]	3.30 (1.02) [491]	3.24 (1.02) [633]
Counselor Skits	12%	23%	50%	11%	3%	3.31 (.92) [513]	3.39 (.95) [493]	3.34 (.91) [631]
Programs about Aggie Traditions	4%	20%	62%	12%	3%	3.11 (.75) [511]	3.17 (.69) [493]	3.11 (.71) [633]
Programs about Involvement	2%	15%	50%	29%	6%	2.77 (.82) [509]	2.88 (.79) [491]	2.90 (.80) [630]
Programs about Campus Resources	1%	9%	50%	31%	8%	2.62 (.80) [509]	2.77 (.76) [493]	2.76 (.75) [632]
Copeland Programs (all session colors)	1%	6%	34%	41%	18%	2.31 (.88) [511]	2.44 (.89) [494]	2.43 (.90) [630]

Table 5: Activity Times

Campfire Speeches

Campfire speeches are given in the evening by the co-chairs or namesakes for each camp. When freshmen were asked if their Campfire speeches helped them feel more prepared for college, 36% strongly agreed, 41% agreed, 17% were neutral, 6% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed (mean=4.03/5.00, sd=.93, n=499). These results were a slight increase to those of 2017 (mean=3.94/5.00, sd=1.01, n=476).

Freshmen were also asked if the speeches made them feel more excited about college at Texas A&M. Almost half of the students (47%) strongly agreed the speeches made them more excited, 33% agreed, 15% were neutral, 3% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed (mean=4.22/5.00, sd=.90, n=496). This was also a slight increase compared to 2017 (mean=4.16/5.00, sd=.96, n=476).

Additionally, through a select-all-that-apply format, students were asked what they learned from their Campfire speeches. Table 6 reveals that students learned mostly about what to expect in college life and traditions. The “other” responses included learning about the Aggie network, being connected with others, and understanding the Aggie family.

What did you learn from Campfire Speeches? (select all that apply)	2018 Percent [n=496]	2017 Percent [n=475]	2016 Percent [n=604]	2015 Percent [n=873]	2014 Percent [n=677]	2013 Percent [n=1,838]
What to Expect from College Life	70%	68%	71%	85%	‡	‡
Traditions	69%	72%	70%	75%	74%	56%
Aggie Core Values	67%	67%	65%	72%	84%	*
Involvement	60%	56%	57%	77%	82%	68%
Diversity/Inclusive Environment	56%	56%	52%	68%	71%	60%
Academics	45%	44%	47%	65%	71%	62%
Importance of Time Management	42%	39%	47%	63%	‡	‡
Campus Resources	39%	41%	39%	56%	61%	54%
Nothing	4%	6%	4%	3%	2%	‡
Other	4%	4%	2%	1%	4%	1%

Table 6: Campfire Speeches (‡ Question not asked)

Academics

Using a select-all-that-apply format, participants were asked how Fish Camp prepared them, if at all, academically. Table 7 illustrates that Fish Camp provided knowledge about academic resources and where to study. Freshmen did not feel as strongly about learning how to study. Compared to the previous year, freshmen were fairly similar about Fish Camp preparing them academically.

How has Fish Camp prepared you academically? (select all that apply)	2018 Percent [n=488]	2017 Percent [n=473]	2016 Percent [n=595]	2015 Percent [n=865]	2014 Percent [n=676]	2013 Percent [n=1,838]
Academic resources (tutoring, Supplemental Instruction [SI] sessions, etc.)	59%	60%	61%	81%	80%	73%
Where to study	56%	55%	62%	72%	73%	67%
Academic differences between high school and college	54%	50%	48%	62%	67%	62%
How to successfully interact with professors/instructors	47%	47%	50%	79%	‡	‡
Managing time	40%	37%	39%	67%	61%	54%
How to study	19%	15%	15%	33%	33%	32%
Fish Camp did not prepare me	10%	11%	11%	2%	3%	4%

Table 7: Academic Preparation (‡ Question not asked)

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 8 indicates that half the students wished they knew more about how to study, which was a slight increase compared to previous years. There were slight decreases in most of the statements compared to 2017.

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)	2018 Percent [n=467]	2017 Percent [n=461]	2016 Percent [n=578]	2015 Percent [n=831]	2014 Percent [n=654]	2013 Percent [n=1,838]
How to study	50%	48%	49%	56%	53%	40%
Managing time	35%	36%	34%	19%	33%	24%
How to successfully interact with professors/instructors	27%	28%	25%	17%	‡	‡
I don't wish I knew more about any parts	21%	23%	19%	21%	23%	--
Academic resources (tutoring, Supplemental Instruction [SI] sessions, etc.)	21%	22%	21%	15%	20%	14%
Where to study	18%	15%	14%	15%	12%	11%
Academic differences between high school and college	17%	18%	17%	14%	15%	12%

Table 8: Academic Needs (‡ Question not asked)

Skits

As seen in Table 9, students were positive about understanding the skits performed by the counselors during camp and found the post-skits explanations helpful. These results are also similar to the previous two years.

Skits	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2017 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
The post-skits explanations were helpful in clarifying the purpose of each skit.	62%	32%	5%	1%	<1%	4.54 (.68) [473]	4.53 (.68) [514]	4.55 (.61) [620]
Overall, I understood the meaning behind the skits counselors performed at camp.	57%	38%	4%	1%	<1%	4.49 (.68) [473]	4.47 (.70) [514]	4.49 (.64) [619]

Table 9: Skits

Using a select-all-that-apply format, participants were asked what they learned from the skits. Table 10 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 another option. Students reported learning about handling emotions, navigating campus, respect, and mental health.

What did you learn from your skits? (select all that apply)	2018 Percent [n=472]	2017 Percent [n=511]	2016 Percent [n=620]	2015 Percent [n=886]	2014 Percent [n=609]	2013 Percent [n=1,838]
Traditions	97%	96%	98%	99%	97%	85%
Aggie Core Values	90%	92%	91%	92%	92%	‡
Campus Resources	90%	89%	91%	94%	94%	82%
Involvement	80%	83%	85%	94%	95%	79%
Diversity/Inclusive Environment	77%	80%	79%	83%	87%	74%
What to Expect from College Life	77%	80%	82%	88%	‡	‡
Academics	70%	74%	75%	81%	84%	73%
Importance of Time Management	69%	70%	68%	72%	‡	‡
Other	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Nothing	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	‡

Table 10: Skits (‡ Question not asked)

Students were asked to elaborate on which skits they learned the most from. Several of the 177 responses said all the skits or indicated multiple skits. Skits about different Aggie traditions and campus resources were mentioned by many students.

When asked to describe skits that they did not like or found inappropriate to its purpose, if any, a majority of the 105 comments stated none or that the skits were all funny or they liked the skits. A couple of skits were mentioned as inappropriate or not being enjoyed including the guy dance and diversity ones.

Social Involvement

Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements regarding social involvement. Table 11 reports that team building activities provided a time for DGs to build teamwork. All statements increased compared to the previous year.

Please rate your agreement with the following statements.	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2017 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
The Team Building activities provided our DG a time to build teamwork in a unique way.	43%	41%	10%	4%	1%	4.21 (.88) [469]	4.16 (.95) [499]	4.09 (.92) [577]
Free times were a fun way to get to know people from across the session.	39%	36%	17%	8%	1%	4.04 (.97) [468]	3.95 (1.05) [495]	4.03 (.99) [594]
The Aquarium provided a fun environment to hangout, play games and get to know other people.	32%	40%	23%	4%	2%	3.98 (.91) [409]	3.97 (.91) [449]	4.08 (.82) [541]
The Mixers created an atmosphere to get to know other people in other camps.	37%	34%	18%	7%	3%	3.97 (1.04) [463]	3.91 (1.09) [483]	3.88 (1.09) [580]

Table 11: Social Involvement

When asked how they used their free time, in a select-all-that-apply format, Table 12 indicates almost half of the respondents spent time at the Aquarium; however, this was a decrease compared to the previous three years. Students who wrote a response to the “other” option spent their time hanging out, socializing with others, relaxing in a hammock, eating icy pops, and walking around.

How did you use your free time? (select all that apply)	2018 Percent [n=472]	2017 Percent [n=501]	2016 Percent [n=508]	2015 Percent [n=877]
Aquarium	45%	56%	68%	62%
Intramurals (volleyball, basketball, ultimate Frisbee)	42%	35%	23%	28%
Cabin	30%	41%	48%	43%
Went to Aggie Wranglers	29%	28%	35%	32%
Camp Room	27%	31%	28%	17%
Took a Nap	24%	30%	31%	26%
Went to Fade 2 Black	19%	18%	12%	8%
Yoga	11%	‡	‡	‡
Self-Defense	9%	‡	‡	‡
Other	8%	5%	5%	8%
Corps of Cadets Q&A	3%	2%	1%	‡
Pool	2%	3%	5%	8%

Table 12: Free Time (‡ Question not asked)

Programs

Freshmen attended several sessions that taught them about programs, services, and organizations available to them at Texas A&M. Students were asked to rank what style of presentation for campus programs worked the best. Table 13 lists presentation style in ascending order of most common presentation style rankings. It should be noted that the lower the mean is for a given style, the higher it was ranked on average. Similar to the past couple of years, interactive discussions and testimonies from student leaders were viewed as the presentation styles that worked best for campus programs and were ranked higher on average. The ranking order remained similar compared to 2016 and 2017, except for the styles ranked 3rd and 4th switching order.

Please rank the order of the presentation style for the campus programs you feel works the best.	2018 Mode	2018 Mean (sd) [n=471]	2017 Mode	2017 Mean (sd) [n=487]	2016 Mode	2016 Mean (sd) [n=467]
Interactive Discussions	1	2.15 (1.34)	1	2.11 (1.30)	1	2.11 (1.30)
Testimonies from Student Leaders	2	3.01 (1.54)	2	2.86 (1.58)	2	2.82 (1.54)
Pre-made videos	3	3.34 (1.64)	4	3.62 (1.56)	3	3.51 (1.53)
Prizes given out for participation	4	3.53 (1.61)	3	3.55 (1.61)	4	3.61 (1.61)
Testimonies from Campus Representative	5	4.00 (1.37)	5	3.82 (1.38)	5	3.75 (1.33)
Interactive through technology (iClickers and surveying audience)	6	4.97 (1.32)	6	5.04 (1.25)	6	5.20 (1.20)

Table 13: Programs' Presentation Style

In addition, participants were asked to describe any presentation that stuck out to them and why. Of the 191 comments provided, Silver Taps, Muster, and Bonfire were mentioned frequently because they were serious and evoked the importance of these campus traditions. Students also appreciated the "I am an Aggie" presentations to get to know their counselors and understand that all students are individuals. The football video and Yell Leaders were enjoyed for being fun and getting students excited. Several resource presentations were mentioned including the Library, Rec Center, CARPOOL, Transportation Services, Writing Center, Career Center, study abroad, GLBT Resource Center, alcohol education, and academic misconduct/Honor Code. Also mentioned were the skits because the counselors were funny and namesake speeches for sharing stories. Some students talked in general about presentations mentioning they enjoyed the videos that were funny, presentations with prizes, and personal testimonies or stories from other students. There were a couple of students who mentioned that many of the presentations were similar to what they learned at New Student Conferences.

There were two new questions asked of Fish Camp participants this year about their knowledge of Texas A&M traditions. Table 14, on the following page, indicates that students learned about campus traditions by attending Fish Camp.

How knowledgeable did you feel about Texas A&M traditions...	Very Knowledgeable (4)	Somewhat Knowledgeable (3)	Not Knowledgeable (2)	Not AT All Knowledgeable (1)	2018 Mean (sd) [n]
After attending Fish Camp	79%	20%	1%	<1%	3.78 (.45) [482]
Before attending Fish Camp	15%	50%	22%	12%	2.68 (.87) [483]

Table 14: Traditions

Continuity

Participants were asked if the materials in their DG folder were helpful. Three-fourths of the respondents agreed (33% strongly agreed and 45% agreed). In addition, 17% were neutral, 3% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed (mean=4.05/5.00, sd=.88, n=481). This has decreased over the past three years when results in 2017 were mean=4.10/5.00, sd=.89, n=504, in 2016 results were mean=4.24/5.00, sd=.81, n=569, and in 2015 the results showed the mean=4.64/5.00, sd=.56, n=893.

Community of Respect

Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements regarding the Community of Respect program. Table 15 shows that participants felt mostly positive about each area of the program. Additionally, the results this year are similar to the past two years.

Please rate your agreement with the following statements.	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2018 Mean (sd) [n]	2017 Mean (sd) [n]	2016 Mean (sd) [n]
The program was carried out in a respectful way.	62%	34%	3%	1%	1%	4.54 (.67) [471]	4.53 (.68) [493]	4.56 (.61) [560]
I understood the reason behind the Community of Respect program.	58%	36%	5%	1%	1%	4.49 (.70) [471]	4.44 (.68) [496]	4.52 (.62) [566]
After experiencing the program at camp, I appreciated the diversity among the students of Texas A&M.	54%	34%	9%	2%	1%	4.37 (.83) [472]	4.37 (.83) [495]	4.37 (.75) [561]

Table 15: Community of Respect

When asked if they felt comfortable listening to their counselors' Defining Moments and I Am An Aggie And ___ statements, almost all students (91%) said yes, 2% said no, and 2% were not sure. Furthermore, 4% reported that they did not remember the counselors' statements. Students who remembered their counselors' statements were provided the opportunity to explain their response and 195 wrote an explanation. Students reporting they were not comfortable listening to their counselors said it was too personal from someone they did not know, it was too serious or emotional, and that it felt awkward. Those who were unsure about their level of comfort listening to their counselors said that it was strange listening to their stories, it was hard when counselors broke down on stage, and that while the stories were touching, they were also uncomfortable. Students who had indicated they were comfortable listening to their counselors' statements expressed appreciation for the counselors to be themselves and to open up. Several freshmen commented on being able to relate to some of the statements and feeling that they were not alone. Many felt that hearing the statements helped break down stereotypes some may have of students at Texas A&M. Students also reported feeling closer to others in their camp and that it helped some freshmen open up in their Discussion Group.

Respondents were asked to provide any general comments about the Community of Respect program and 77 provided a response. Many students shared positive comments and feelings about the program. Some expressed that the Community of Respect program is vital and helped everyone slow down for a little bit at camp. Others felt that it allowed students to grow closer and to see the individual differences in people. Alternatively, some students felt that the program was boring, a little forced, repetitive, and too deep for camp.

Overall Experience

When asked what they expected to learn or gain from Fish Camp, 870 attendees provided a comment. Many students shared different thoughts about meeting new people such as making friends, networking, being part of a social group, joining the Aggie family, having a sense of belonging, and building a community. Students also talked about expecting to learn information about Texas A&M such as traditions, yells, resources, and the campus culture. A final main theme that students said was connected with helping them transition to college, being prepared for their freshman year, gaining confidence, learning college survival skills, and navigating campus. There were some who did not know what to expect from attending Fish Camp.

Participants were asked if their expectations of Fish Camp were met and then given the opportunity to explain their answer. Over three-fourths (83%) said yes, while 10% were unsure, and 8% said no. Compared to 2017, more students felt their expectations were met. Last year 79% said yes, 9% were unsure, and 12% said no. Students who said Fish Camp met their expectations (n=1,050) talked about making friends, getting together with their camp after school started, having helpful counselors, having fun at camp, learning about traditions, and gaining information. Freshmen who felt their expectations were not met (n=96), shared that there were too many presentations, it was too similar to their New Student Conference, they did not make many friends, or that their DG has not met since school started. A couple of students indicated that Fish Camp was more for the counselors and not the freshmen. Those who were unsure if their expectations were met (n=123) talked about not having expectations to begin with, or that some of their expectations were met but others were not. Some expressed that they did not have fun or that they would like to have more time for games and to talk with other students and fewer presentations.

Using a Net Promoter Score (NPS) question, campers were asked how likely they were to recommend Fish Camp to a friend. The NPS is an index ranging from -100 to +100 and measures the willingness of someone to recommend a product or service to others. Respondents were given the options of zero to 10, with 10 being most likely to recommend Fish Camp to others. Scores of a nine or 10 are considered to be promoters, scores of seven or eight are passives, and scores six and below are detractors.

Of the 1,336 students responding to the question, just over two-thirds (69%) were promoters, 18% were passive, and 13% were detractors. Given the NPS range of -100 to +100, generally, a positive score or anything above zero is considered a good score. Anything at +50 is considered excellent, and above +70 is considered "world class." The Net Promoter Score for Fish Camp was +55.46.

Respondents were provided the opportunity to explain their zero to 10 rating for recommending Fish Camp and 829 wrote a comment. Campers who were detractors (n=178) shared that camp was not fun, they made friends, but only with a couple of people, and that it was repetitive to their New Student Conference. Several felt that Fish Camp was fun, but also that it was long and tiring. Others felt that the facilities and food were not good and that Fish Camp was not worth the cost to attend. There were 125 comments from those who were passive (n=239). These students indicated that Fish Camp was fun or a great experience; however, they also felt the information was repetitive, could be learned other ways, that it was exhausting, and that it may not be for everyone. Many of the 608 comments by promoters expressed how much they loved Fish Camp using descriptors such as awesome, great, amazing, fun, and wonderful. Students talked about experiencing their first Aggie tradition by going to Fish Camp, learning what it means to be an Aggie, and meeting new people. Additionally, many felt that all Aggies should go to Fish Camp.

Fish Camp participants were asked what it meant to be an Aggie and 745 shared their thoughts. Many students talked about being an Aggie meant being part of a family or a community. Others talked about different characteristics such as friendly, kind, and helpful. Others referenced different core values, the Aggie Code of Honor, or being part of the 12th Man. Some simply said it was everything while others said it could not be explained.

Post Fish Camp Experience

Similar to the last two years, the survey was sent out after the school year had started. Students were asked a series of questions to understand their experience and continued connection after Fish Camp. Using a select-all-that-apply format, freshmen were asked about the activities their camp planned after Fish Camp to help them stay connected. As shown in Table 16, hanging out and Midnight Yell were the most common activities. Compared to last year, most activities increased except for a slight decrease of Silver Taps and having lunch. Students selecting Howdy Week events were asked to identify which events, and they reported the cookout/BBQ, MSC Open House, pond hopping, fish campus, soccer game, Midnight Yell, Recapolooza, and the GatheRING. Additionally, several said all of them or that they could not remember specific ones. Furthermore, those selecting the “other” response option were also provided the opportunity to write a response. Students reported football, game nights, ice skating, pond hopping, breakaway, Jumping World, paint war, ice cream, and pumpkin carving.

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)	2018 Percent [n=1,354]	2017 Percent [n=1,417]	2016 Percent [n=1,695]
Hangout	82%	77%	76%
Midnight Yell	80%	79%	84%
Sporting Events	74%	70%	75%
Camp Reunion	73%	72%	80%
Dinner	73%	69%	75%
Silver Taps	71%	77%	65%
Lunch	71%	75%	76%
MSC Open House	70%	60%	70%
Campus Tour	40%	33%	47%
Howdy Week events	31%	30%	40%
Movies	19%	16%	20%
Bowling	12%	9%	6%
Other	8%	5%	5%
No activities have been planned	1%	1%	1%

Table 16: Post Fish Camp Activities

A follow-up question was asked of students who indicated their camp had planned any activity since the end of Fish Camp (n=1,341) to find out approximately how many activities had been planned with their camp or DG. The results displayed in Table 17 shows that almost two-thirds (62%) reported 1-10 activities.

Approximately how many activities have been planned with your camp or DG?	2018 Percent [n=1,326]	2017 Percent [n=1,387]	2016 Percent [n=1,655]
1 - 5 activities	29%	33%	25%
6 - 10 activities	33%	36%	38%
11 - 15 activities	20%	17%	19%
16 - 20 activities	8%	7%	7%
More than 20 activities	10%	8%	12%

Table 17: Number of Post Fish Camp Activities

When asked if they were still interacting with members of their DG, 77% of the 1,349 students responding said yes and 24% said no. This was a slight increase in students still interacting with their camp from 2017 when 72% said they were interacting with their camp and 28% indicated they were not. Those who were no longer interacting with their DG (n=317) were asked to explain why. Several, of the 237 who responded, indicated that they were busy with school or that they were involved in other activities such as the Corps or other student organizations. Some said that their counselors did not care or did not plan activities, or that they did not connect with others in the DG.

Students were asked about how often their DG leaders communicated with them and the method of communication. Table 18 reveals that over half communicated once in a while or several times a week. These are similar results to the previous year. Those who reported some level of communication from their DG leaders (n=1,308) were asked about the communication method used with a select-all-that-apply question. The results also found in Table 18 says that GroupMe was the most common communication method. Those selecting social media were able to write which social media platforms were used; of the 378 responses, Snapchat and Instagram were the most common. Furthermore, respondents who selected the “other” response option were provided the opportunity to write a response. Of the three comments, two mentioned hangout outs and one said work.

Communication with DG Leaders	2018 Percent	2017 Percent	2016 Percent
How often do your DG leaders communicate with you?	[n=1,347]	[n=1,411]	[n=1,677]
Once in a while	33%	35%	23%
Several times per week	23%	24%	30%
Weekly	22%	22%	22%
Multiple times per day	11%	10%	15%
Once a day	7%	7%	8%
My DG leaders have not communicated with me	3%	3%	2%
How does your DG leader communicate with you? (select all that apply)	[n=1,303]	[n=1,366]	[n=1,640]
GroupMe	85%	↓	↓
Text	52%	76%	87%
Social Media	37%	43%	36%
In person	33%	29%	35%
Phone	18%	23%	23%
Other	<1%	6%	5%

Table 18: Communication with DG Leaders (↓ Question not asked)

All freshmen were asked if they felt that attending Fish Camp helped them their first few weeks at Texas A&M. A majority of the 1,335 students responding to the question (80%) said yes, 12% were unsure, and 9% said no. This was slightly more positive compared to 2017 when 76% of the students felt that attending Fish Camp helped them their first few weeks, 12% were unsure, and 12% said it was not helpful.

Those who felt that Fish Camp helped them (n=1,053) were asked to explain their response or to indicate what information that they learned was helpful. Many of the 614 students who responded talked about having friends or a group of people to go places with or ask questions. Others talked about going on a campus tour before classes started and learning about resources and traditions. Many talked about having support and feeling more comfortable or less stressed as the school year started. Alternatively, those reporting that Fish Camp did not help them in their first few weeks (n=118) were also provided the chance to explain, and 66 wrote a comment. Many felt that they knew most of the information already or learned it from sources other than Fish Camp such as their New Student Conference. Some indicated that they did not make friends from Fish Camp so did not have people to hang out with once classes began or that they did not see friends from their DG on campus once classes started.

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, and 606 students provided a wide range of responses. Many students talked about different academic topics being covered more such as how to study, time management, test preparation, and available resources. Others talked about having more on building your Aggie network such as how to meet others, getting involved, and handling conflicts. Some felt there should be more information on personal topics including handling homesickness, managing stress, being safe on campus, and knowing about mental health. There also were many students who reported that all topics were covered during Fish Camp or that nothing needed to be covered in greater depth.

Using a select-all-that-apply question, freshmen were asked if they attended any other orientation campus program in addition to Fish Camp. Of the students who did attend another program, a majority went to Impact Retreat, as seen in Table 19. Those selecting the “other” response option wrote in Connect Retreat, Corps of Cadets Freshmen Orientation Week, Engineering Summer Bridge Program, and SALT Camp at Texas A&M Galveston.

Did you attend any orientation camp program in addition to Fish Camp? (select all that apply)	2018 Percent [n=234]	2017 Percent [n=243]	2016 Percent [n=294]
Impact Retreat	80%	82%	80%
Other	14%	10%	11%
ExCEL	5%	7%	7%
Venture Camp	3%	3%	4%

Table 19: Additional Extended Orientation Programs

Demographics

Demographic data were obtained through the University's student information system. Table 20 is listed in descending order by students registered for Fish Camp for each demographic category. The students responding to the survey generally matched the students registered for Fish Camp except for sex. There was an overrepresentation of females responding to the survey compared to those registered for Fish Camp.

Demographic Statements	Students Registered for Fish Camp [n=6,513]	Fish Camp Survey Respondents [n=1,711]
College		
College of Engineering	33%	28%
Mays Business School	11%	10%
College of Liberal Arts	10%	11%
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences	9%	11%
College of Science	9%	9%
College of Education and Human Resource Development	8%	9%
College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Science	8%	9%
General Studies	7%	7%
College of Architecture	3%	3%
Public Health	2%	2%
College of Geosciences	1%	2%
Galveston	<1%	--
Sex		
Female	52%	65%
Male	48%	35%
Ethnicity		
White	66%	68%
Hispanic or Latino of any Race	22%	22%
Asian	6%	6%
Multiracial excluding Black	3%	2%
Black / Multiracial with Black	2%	2%
American Indian / International / Native Hawaiian / Unknown	<1% each	<1% each
Top Ten Percent Admission		
Top 10%	55%	59%
Not Top 10%	44%	41%
First Generation College Student		
Not First Generation	81%	80%
First Generation	18%	20%
Unknown	1%	<1%
Classification		
Freshman	90%	89%
Sophomore	8%	9%
Junior	2%	2%
Senior	<1%	--
Masters / UG Nondegree	<1% each	<1% each

Table 20: Student Demographics

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the assessment results, Fish Camp seems to have fulfilled its mission. Most respondents were positive about their experience at Fish Camp and that their expectations of the camp experience were met. Additionally, it seems that participants met new people and gained knowledge about Texas A&M traditions and campus resources from the skits, DG discussions, and campfire speeches. Fish Camp is considered “excellent” based on the Net Promoter Score received. However, in some areas students were a little less positive compared to previous years and shared more comments regarding their dissatisfaction. Fish Camp staff is encouraged to reflect on changes that may have been in training co-chairs and counselors or in the camp itself.

Students continued to report wanting more time for sleeping and free time to interact with other students. Additionally, students would like to see less time in larger programs or have presentations that are so repetitive to what is shared at New Student Conferences. Fish Camp may want to spend time thinking about how the Fish Camp experience is different or could be different, from New Student Conferences, as well as the new first-year experience courses being discussed at the university level. What aspects of a new students' transition makes the most sense to get at Fish Camp and what is Fish Camp best at doing? It may be valuable for camp planners to focus on the strengths of Fish Camp and spend less time trying to cover everything. It also may be very beneficial for those who plan Fish Camp and New Student Conferences to meet with those putting together the first-year experience courses. What is all the information that new students need to learn? Which of these experiences is the best place for introducing information and building on the information; being mindful that approximately one-third of the new students do not attend Fish Camp?

Furthermore, it may be valuable to work with presenters of many of these resources areas to think about the information that is shared at New Student Conferences and to share either different information at Fish Camp or to build on the information that students may have learned at New Student Conferences. It may be more helpful for freshmen at Fish Camp to have presentations that are distinctly different from New Student Conference presentations. It also could be beneficial for Fish Camp Directors to contact New Student and Family Programs about attending certain presentations held at New Student Conference to hear how much the information seems to be repeated rather than reinforced through a different presentation style.

Students indicated they want less time sitting around (such as during skits, presentations, DG time, etc.), therefore Fish Camp may want to explore options for more interactive presentations. Could campers do activities to learn material or information rather than sitting hearing about it? Students being more actively engaged in their learning would probably retain the information for longer.

It may be valuable to partner with the Academic Success Center, if not already, to either present information to students on study skills, time management, and faculty interactions or to provide resources to Fish Camp staff when they share information to freshmen. Maybe there is an activity that could help students be ready for the start of semester academically or a video of students talking with faculty. If this information seems more appropriate to share with freshmen as the semester is really starting, maybe Fish Camp could host an academic session during Howdy Week and the DGs can bring their students to hear from the Academic Success Center, other students, or maybe a faculty panel.

Some information may be better given closer to the beginning of the semester or even after classes started. Maybe as part of a Camp Reunion, there could be information shared or reminders about how to do things on campus. Or maybe plan DG times during Howdy Week that covers certain topics more relevant to classes starting so soon. However, it may be worth looking at offering that for all of Fish Camp rather than by individual DG since some students reported their DG did not connect or students did not feel included. Maybe the weekend before the first day of classes, all Fish Camp attendees could meet on campus and then based on how many are there, counselors could take groups of students on a campus tour. Fish Camp Directors could even collaborate with students in the

Aggie Orientation Leader Program or Resident Advisors to do something like this and have other trained student leaders give a campus tour.

Students continue to report that the materials in the DG folder were less helpful. Fish Camp may want to review those materials and talk with freshmen about what is not helpful about them or what materials would be helpful. Maybe the folders do not need to be shared at all, or maybe it would be better to share them when students come back to campus from Fish Camp and having information to move them towards the first day of classes.

Fish Camp directors may want to explore the Community of Respect program and if the structure accomplishes what it is intended to during camp. While most students were positive about the program, some students felt it was very deep for camp. Does the structure of the program fit with the camp environment or could a different interactive program be done that would still reach the goals of inclusion and discussing diversity?

Fish Camp staff is encouraged to administer the non-participant survey again this year. If the organization would take some of these recommendations and explore options to change the Fish Camp programming, it may be beneficial to have data of those students who did not attend Fish Camp as a comparison with those who did attend camp. Additionally, it may be helpful to look at data from both surveys and disaggregate it to understand if all students are having the same experience or if certain groups of students may be experience Fish Camp differently. Fish Camp can contact Student Life Studies for the non-participate survey as well as disaggregating data.

Next year Fish Camp might consider removing some survey questions from the survey either because the results are not providing useful information or because the results have been consistent for several years and there has been few changes made to the program or schedule. Some of the feedback on the qualitative comments was similar as respondents continued taking the survey, which also may indicate not all the questions are needed.

Fish Camp staff is strongly encouraged to read through all of the qualitative responses to gain a better understanding of the themes represented in this report. There were many suggestions shared from participants, and Fish Camp staff may want to consider implementing some of these changes. Some of the comments made might be a valuable resource for addressing issues in the future.

Fish Camp is also encouraged to share results with their stakeholders. This could be sharing information with the various speakers who attend camp, staff (counselors, co-chairs, and directors) selected for Fish Camp 2019, current or potential donors, the Texas A&M Foundation, and incoming freshmen to market why students could attend Fish Camp.

Report Prepared for: Andrew Carruth, Fish Camp Advisor
Report Prepared by: Kelly Cox, Student Life Studies
Report Prepared on: October 23, 2018
Analysis Prepared by: Lyric Jackson, Student Life Studies
Surveys Created by: Kelly Cox, Student Life Studies

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