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Were Here to Help: Accessing the Needs of Transfer Students

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Purpose of Study

The need to assist transfer students is particularly important because transfer students enter into new institutions with unique needs, perspectives, and experiences compared to non-transfer students. Many orientation programs do not address the needs of transfer students and focus on freshman students. Little is known about the correlation between transfer students and orientation attendance. Therefore, this study aimed to identify transfer student needs, increase their attendance of orientation programs, and to provide effective programming for them.

Research Questions

- What barriers or perceptions influence transfer students to attend or not to attend orientation?
- What constitutes a successful orientation experience for transfer students?
 - What kinds of institutional support do transfer students' need?
 - From the transfer students perspective what are the components of a successful orientation program?

Participants

Semi-Structured interviews were conducted with 2013-14 transfer students. Eight interviews with two males and six females ranging from ages 18-25.

Findings

- Student Organizations
- Advising
- Employment

Connecting with
Campus
Environment

- Prior Orientation Experience
- Institutional Type
- Effective Community of Urgency from NSP

Factors that
impact Orientation
Experience

- Contingent on semester of transfer and institutional type
- Length of Orientation
- Campus Tour

Components of
Transfer Student
Orientation

Methods

This qualitative study focused on eight undergraduate students that transferred during the 2013-2014 academic year. Students were interviewed and responded to a series of questions regarding reason for transfer, previous orientation experience, and recent orientation experience.

Implications

If this study could identify strategies to support and barriers to transfer students attending orientation programs it could provide recommendations to higher education institutions and assist in creating effective programming. This in turn could increase academic and social learning and lead to increased graduation rates among transfer students.

Selected References

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