

4-9-2016

Are We Out of the Woods Yet? Students' Perceived Values of Outdoor Pre-Orientation Program Experiences Over Time

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/stander_posters

Recommended Citation

"Are We Out of the Woods Yet? Students' Perceived Values of Outdoor Pre-Orientation Program Experiences Over Time" (2016).
Stander Symposium Posters. 797.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/stander_posters/797

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Stander Symposium at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Stander Symposium Posters by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.



Are We Out of the Woods Yet?

Students' Perceived Values of Outdoor Pre-Orientation Program Experiences Over Time

Victoria Heithaus Advisor: Nasser Razek

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What are the perceptions of the value of Camp Blue among students 1-4 years post-program?
What experiences at Camp Blue yielded the most positive evaluations?

BACKGROUND

Challenging environments foster student growth

Easier transition to college life

Pre-Orientation Program Outcomes: personal development, increases in self-efficacy, and increased retention after the first year

"I gained confidence, and learning to be yourself, and I don't know that I would have gotten that otherwise."

Camp Blue Camper

"In high school I always wanted to be the leader but there were other people on my [Camp Blue] team that were challenging me that I'd never seen before, like I'd never been challenged for leadership in high school."

Camp Blue Camper

"I think the main takeaway that turned into a skill for me was just realizing that, in coming to college, I was going to be encountering people that came from diverse backgrounds and had a lot of different life experiences from me."

Camp Blue Camper

Friendship & Socialization

Leadership Skills

Confidence

Stepping Outside Comfort Zone

Diversity

FINDINGS

PROFESSIONALS

Student Staff Training
Trends & Research
Institutional Values & Mission

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Physical & Mental Challenges
Socializing with Peers
Observing Student Leadership

ABSTRACT

Often the first welcome to university life for students comes in the form of an orientation program. Pre-orientation camps, like Camp Blue at the University of Dayton, serve to ease the transition through a leadership development lens. The purpose of this research is to examine the effects of the Camp Blue leadership lessons over time, assessing students' perceived value of their camp experiences. A focus group comprised of six former campers, representing first-year through senior students, highlights some key themes and characteristics from the camp experience that remain relevant post-program. This study informs future practices for camp curriculum and activities, and assists orientation professionals in developing effective pre or extended orientation programs for new students.

METHODS

- Phenomenological research
- Focus group of 6 former Camp Blue campers (2012-2015)

SELECT REFERENCES

Davis-Berman, J. & Berman, D. (1996). Using the wilderness to facilitate adjustment to college: An updated description of wilderness orientation programs. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 19(1), 22-28.

Devlin, A.S. (1996). Survival skills training during freshman orientation: Its role in college adjustment. *Journal of College Student Development*, 37(3), 324-333.

Gass, M.A., Garvey, D.E. & Sugerman, D. (2003). The long-term effects of a first-year student wilderness orientation program. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 26(1), 34-40.

Jones, J. J. & Hinton, J. (2007). Study of self-efficacy in a freshman wilderness experience program: Measuring general versus specific gains. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 29(3), 382-385.

O'Keefe, M. (1989) Freshman wilderness orientation programs: Model programs across the country. In J. Gilbert (Ed.), *Life beyond walls: Proceedings of the National Conference on Outdoor Recreation*, Ft. Collins, Colorado, 165-179.

Priest, S. & Gass, M. (2005). *Effective leadership in adventure programming*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Vlamiis, E., Bell, B. J., & Gass, M. (2011). Effects of a college adventure orientation program on student development behaviors. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 34, 127-148.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my family for your support when I made the decision to get my masters degree. Thank you to Molly, Michele and Nasser for creating a space to learn and grow. This research was inspired by my work with New Student Programs and the amazing student leaders I have come to know. Re'Shanda, your passion for the field of orientation, transition and retention inspires me, and I hope one day I can positively impact this professional field too. Finally, I would like to thank Matt for telling me two years ago to "go for it".

FUTURE ACTIONS & IMPLICATIONS