Methodology

We administered 45 questionnaires using face-to-face surveys, which were given on the SFA campus. Our questionnaire contained scales, closed-ended and open-ended questions. Our population of interest was SFA students who had completed between 0 to 29 credit hours, were enrolled as full-time students, were not a student at SFA previously, and were currently enrolled as a student for the Fall 2017 semester. During the research, we had three fieldworkers who administered the surveys around campus in December of 2017.

Objective

Are SFA freshmen prepared for college or not?

Introduction

For incoming freshmen, college can be a very challenging, exciting, confusing and overwhelming time as they transition between adolescence and adulthood in an unfamiliar environment. Through the following research, we hope to identify whether freshmen attending Stephen F. Austin State University are prepared for college or not. The Student Success Center on campus would be the most interested in this information. This could help the Student Success Center to have a better understanding of just what SFA freshmen are experiencing.

1. What are SFA freshmen’s views on SFA?

Overall, SFA freshmen have positive views of SFA when compared to other colleges. The degree programs offered and the financial aspects of SFA are some of the factors that SFA freshmen viewed as positive enough to lead them to enroll.

2. How do SFA freshmen feel about working while being a student?

Of the SFA freshmen who do work, many of them do not feel as if working while being a student has a negative effect on them.

3. How do SFA freshmen feel about their current financial situations?

SFA freshmen are optimistic about their ability to pay off loans they’ve taken out for college expenses, but many also don’t believe they possess enough knowledge on money management.

4. What are the main sources of stress for SFA freshmen and are they able to properly manage it?

The main sources of stress for SFA freshmen are finances and grades. Although a few freshmen admitted to using alcohol or drugs to cope with stress, most believe they are able to properly manage their stress.

5. Do SFA freshmen feel as if they possess the academic capabilities necessary for college?

SFA freshmen believe they have been prepared for the college workload, but an underwhelming amount think they will be satisfied with their GPA for their first semester at SFA. SFA freshmen are confident in their capabilities to graduate in 4 years and not need remedial courses.

6. Do SFA freshmen feel like they will re-enroll for the Fall 2018 semester at SFA?

SFA freshmen believe they will re-enroll for the Fall 2018 semester at SFA.

7. What are SFA freshmen’s views and experiences of the social aspects of college life?

SFA freshmen do not view college life as it has been portrayed in the media and have experienced negative peer pressure in college. Drinking alcohol is viewed as more acceptable than taking drugs in college. Many SFA freshmen are involved in organizations and clubs on campus, mainly Greek and cultural organizations.

8. Preparation level variability of students relating to demographics and geographics.

SFA first-generation college students are more likely to abuse alcohol or drugs to cope with stress and not feel as prepared to handle the college workload than those who are non first-generation students. SFA students from lower income households tend to be less confident in their re-enrollment for the Fall 2018 semester at SFA.