FALL FIRST YEAR STUDENT
EXPECTATIONS AND REALITIES

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The fall survey focused on the expectations freshmen had for their first semester of college. In January/February, a follow-up survey was conducted with those who voluntarily provided their SF State ID number. The follow-up survey provided similar questions, allowing for comparisons between pre-semester expectations and post-semester realities.

The questions were on areas related to the mission of Residential Life and the Dean of Students unit:

- Life in the Residential Community
- Academic Success and Growth
- Multicultural Competence
- Alcohol and Other Drug Awareness
- Leadership Involvement and Development
- Personal Development and Accountability
- Community Engagement
### Demographics

**Expectations (Fall 2012)**  
Total Respondents: 550

- **Community**  
  - 65% Park & Ward  
  - 22% TCS & STTC  
  - 13% Village  

- **Age Range**  
  - 97% -- 17-18 Y.O.  
  - 3% -- 19-20 Y.O.  

- **Gender/Gender Identity**  
  - 67% Female  
  - 32% Male  
  - 1% Transgender  

- **Race/Racial Identity**  
  - 40% White, Non Latino  
  - 17% Two or more races  
  - 13% Chicano, Mexican American  
  - 9% Asian  
  - 7% African American

**Realities (Spring 2013)**  
Total Respondents: 133

- **Community**  
  - 59% Park & Ward  
  - 22% Village  
  - 19% TCS & STTC  

- **Age Range**  
  - 74% -- 18-19 Y.O.  
  - 26% -- 19-20 Y.O.  

- **Gender/Gender Identity**  
  - 45% Female  
  - 21% Male  
  - 34% Decline to State  

- **Race/Racial Identity**  
  - 39% White, Non Latino  
  - 16% Two or more races  
  - 16% Asian  
  - 13% Chicano, Mexican American  
  - 8% African-American
Notable changes from Fall to Spring

- Developing a good relationship with the Resident Assistant (RA)
  - Fall – 73% believed they *would* develop a good relationship with their RA
  - Spring – 89% felt they *had* developed a good relationship with their RA

- Utilizing academic support (ie. Learning Assistance Center, Academic Advising, etc.)
  - Fall – 61% believed they *would* utilize academic support
  - Spring – 43% actually *did* utilize academic support services

- Social Justice and Diversity programming and involvement
  - Although 90% of residents stated their intention to attend a Residential Life program on the topics of social justice and diversity, only 16% actually attended this type of program within the community
Notable changes from Fall to Spring

- Alcohol and Other Drugs (underage consumption of alcohol)
  - Fall – 20% *believed* they would experience negative consequences because of alcohol consumption
  - Spring – 10% *did* experience negative consequences because of alcohol consumption

- Leadership Involvement and Development
  - Fall – 70% *believed* they would apply for one or more student staff positions within Residential Life
  - Spring – 12% *did* apply for one or more student staff position within Residential Life
Key Recommendations for Residential Life Staff

- Residential Life should consider providing more clear direction related to not only what constitutes programming when it comes to social justice and diversity. It may be beneficial to tighten up program requirements and expectations for each semester of employment, setting benchmarks related to the number of programs each staff should have within each category, per semester.

- Residential Life should consider offering ongoing Academic Advising Services during both the fall and spring semesters, primarily geared toward first year and transfer students. This program should be expanded beyond the Dining Center, as a number of students do not have a meal plan. Additionally, these services could be extended to non-residents or after traditional office hours of 9am-5pm.

- Student staff recruitment should continue to start in mid-late Fall semester and reach out to student organizations to develop a diversity candidate pool. Research programs of similar size and make up of the residential population and adapt and/or adjust recruitment process accordingly.
Sources


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