Welcome Students to UConn: Assessing Perceived Effectiveness of Welcome Programming at the University of Connecticut

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Introduction: Current university staff are not aware of, and are unable to ascertain any previous outcome assessments on welcoming programs. This assessment was created to examine how UConn welcomes and assists in the transition process for all incoming first-year and transfer students.

Related Literature: Successful welcome programming must include diversity, equity, and access initiatives in order to be aligned with the Council for the Advancement of Standards (Miller, Dyer & Nadler, 2002)

Participants: All undergraduate students at the UConn Storrs campus were invited to participate.

Data Collection: Data was collected through an online survey created for this assessment.

Reliability: The self-made instrument was grounded in relevant literature.

Data Analysis: Quantitative data was analyzed through SPSS with independent means t-tests.

Results: Survey data indicated a statistically significant difference in experiences between various student groupings (see chart). All welcoming characteristics received positive ratings (see chart). All groups indicated positive a usefulness rating of welcome programs except veteran students (see chart). A majority of individual programs received positive ratings—only four had mean scores below neutral (see chart).

Conclusions: We found that students at UConn perceive they are being welcomed effectively. Students also have different experiences of being welcomed to UConn based on a variety of factors. Although not a statistically significant amount of Veteran students responded, those who did showed low satisfaction with welcome programming.

Implications: Academic welcome programming should be enhanced. Non-white students indicated a more positive experience of usefulness compared to white students, warranting further research especially around cultural programming during welcome week. Also, welcome programming should account for the different experiences of underrepresented groups, especially transfer and non-traditional age students.

Limitations: Not enough veteran students responded to conduct accurate statistical analysis.

Survey Responses

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population Size</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
<th>Total Complete</th>
<th>Mean Useful-ness Rating</th>
<th>p Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 16,914</td>
<td>1,452</td>
<td>n = 1,253</td>
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Program Usefulness Rating by Mean Response

Total Usefulness by Rating

UConn Welcome Programs Overall Rating