

UW DIVERSITY OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT

Seattle Central Community College Connection

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INTRODUCTION

In response to Initiative 200, which eliminated racial preference as a basis for admission selection, University of Washington (UW) President Richard L. McCormick in January 1999 established the President's Advisory Committee on Diversity to support programs that would continue the University's dedication to a diverse campus culture. A subcommittee of the Advisory Committee decided that a promising way to encourage minority students to apply for admission to the UW would be to host a community college class on campus to help acclimate students to the UW and its resources.

During spring quarter 2001, a Seattle Central Community College class was held in UW's Mary Gates Hall for a three hour block of time on four days each week. The integrated class satisfied core requirements in English, Biology, and Sociology at the community college. Concerns that the UW subcommittee addressed in preparation for the class included: Where do students park? How can students use the UW library? What computer access is available to them on campus? Because of these concerns, a UW staff member was assigned as a liaison for the purpose of troubleshooting problems that might arise during the quarter.

METHODOLOGY

At the beginning of spring quarter 2001, a staff member from the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) met with the Executive Director of the UW Office of Admissions and Records to obtain information on the format of the class and the purpose of hosting it on the UW campus. Subsequently, emails were exchanged between course instructors and the OEA to establish contact. A classroom visit and initial meeting was made the first week of the community college quarter. Two other meetings were held with the instructors during the quarter for planning purposes and to ascertain their perspectives on the success of the experience. To gather feedback from students at the end of the quarter, the OEA worked with the course instructors to develop a class questionnaire (see Appendix A) that asked students to rate their satisfaction with the class and their overall UW experience on a scale of 1 to 6. Six open-ended questions also allowed students to comment in an unstructured format. The questionnaire was administered by the OEA during the last week of class meetings. Fifty-four of the fifty-nine students enrolled in the class completed the questionnaire, a 92% response rate. The quantitative data were analyzed for frequency of responses and means, and the qualitative data from the open-ended questions were coded and inductively analyzed for categories of response.

FINDINGS

During the informal meetings with the community college instructors, they revealed that they had been worried about filling the class roster, unsure of how their students would feel about attending a class held at the UW. They were amazed at the positive response when the class roster was filled with 65 students and included a waiting list of others who wanted to register. There were so many students in attendance the first week of class that some had to sit on the floor because there were not enough chairs. By the end of the quarter, six students had withdrawn for medical or job-related reasons, and 59 students completed the course.

During the quarter, a variety of activities were planned for the community college students. The instructors arranged a time when UW student representatives could speak about life at the UW, hosted UW staff who were knowledgeable about the transfer process, and encouraged their students to explore the campus. The instructors had planned to have more interaction with UW professors and classes, but the logistics were not conducive to such this quarter. The instructors mentioned that if the opportunity arises to repeat the course, they would like to have small groups of their students attend UW classes, have some UW students attend their community college class discussions and activities, and have more interaction with the UW faculty in general. If possible, they would like to set up a mentoring process with a core group of UW students who would be assigned to groups of five or six community college students during the quarter.

Questionnaire Response Frequencies

Results of the analysis of students' responses on the questionnaire indicated a positive response to the class. Responses frequencies and means for all of the questions are included in Appendix B. Student responses to specific questions about the UW and the possibilities of transferring were highly positive (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Students' response percentages on end-of-course questionnaire.

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Fair (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)	Excellent (6)	Mean
The effectiveness of this learning community at the UW was:	0.0	3.7	16.7	16.7	27.8	35.2	4.74
My interests in transferring to the UW are:	9.8	11.8	17.6	9.8	13.7	37.3	4.18

Questionnaire Open-ended Questions

Students' responses on the open-ended questions (see Figure 2) indicated that they had used many UW resources. Students were very impressed with the resources of the UW libraries and the helpfulness of the staff. They appreciated having a UW computer lab in Mary Gates Hall, a convenience for them after their class. The experience also seemed to clarify students' personal values in identifying an institution of higher education in which to enroll. For some students (35.2%), the experience made them more excited to attend the UW, and for others (35.2%) it gave them the confidence that they could succeed at a large university because it was not as intimidating as they had thought. Some students (20.4%) found that the campus was too large and a smaller setting would be better for them. A few students (16.7%) mentioned that the campus did not seem diverse.

Figure 2. Students' responses to open-ended questions.

Note: Totals may not add up 100% because of the open-ended response format.

What UW resources did you use, e.g., library/librarians, computer lab, during this quarter?

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
46	85.2	Libraries
29	53.7	Computer labs
17	31.5	Common areas (e.g., HUB, study areas)
8	14.8	Other (e.g., museum, canoes)

How did having this learning community on the UW campus change your attitude about transferring to a 4-year university?

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
19	35.2	I am excited to transfer
19	35.2	I am more confident that I can transfer, the UW is less intimidating
11	20.4	I will not transfer, the UW is too big for me
9	16.7	There is a lack of diversity at the UW

Quotes from the open-ended responses revealed the extent to which students appreciated the resources on the UW campus.

Amazing amount of sources offered to us through libraries, computer databases, etc. contributed not just to my learning but also my decision about transferring to UW as full time student.

I used the computer lab on a daily basis. It was conveniently located [on the floor below] our class. I was more encouraged to use the Odegaard library which seemed far away--but the librarians were more than helpful every time I went.

Their presence on the UW campus helped some students realize that they did have the abilities needed to attend a large university.

To be here allowed me to feel as though my goals of higher learning in the future were more accessible. I am a lot less nervous. I understand that at a university there is a network of information at your fingertips and all you have to do is reach out and use it.

I've always planned on transferring, but never looked forward to it. Now I am actually excited about transferring here.

I know that the university is not ethnically diverse--this discouraged me from wanting to attend, but being on campus for a quarter helped me see other assistance the university could offer me. I am excited now about attending.

I always knew I would go on to University but I just haven't been motivated for it. Being at the UW has sparked my interests and given me a taste of campus life that I really enjoy and will attend sooner than I would have before.

I was under the wing of three accomplished instructors who know their subject matter and thoroughly enjoy teaching it. Their example and representation made the transitioning to UW

largeness smoother and safer and a desire to stretch. Therefore I was able to take the step day after day and gain the confidence I may one day attend a university such as the UW -- reinforced a vision and a hope.

For other students, being on the UW campus helped them make a decision about what college was best for them to attend.

I realized that I like a smaller setting/learning community and UW can't offer that, so I'm thinking of attending Evergreen. The lack of diversity in students is also a turn-off.

My first week on campus, I was shocked at the lack of diversity among the student population. Everyone seemed to be upper-middle class and conservative. Even the UW Daily was very right-wing despite being a student paper. However, I decided to transfer here in spite of (or to spite) the homogenous student body. The school has excellent resources, and I want to use them.

This class has made me look at the UW differently. I now know I wouldn't want to go here because there isn't much diversity in terms of race or class (economic). I think that the UW is very uninviting to people who don't have money, everything costs. The staff at the transfer office was very rude. I asked for help and they didn't answer any of my questions. The only people who were helpful were the ones who talked directly to our class. I also noticed that the UW is populated by a bunch of Gap wearing, white, upper class students. Not once was I approached by an instructor or advisor that would have encouraged me to attend the University. As a person of color I didn't get the feeling that there was support for me at the UW in terms of community. I would have to go "looking" to find that type of support.

CONCLUSION

For the majority of those who were involved in the project, the experience had positive outcomes. Instructors integrated many activities to familiarize students with the UW, but also had ideas for additional activities that would be positive experiences for their students. Students realized the university campus had invaluable resources, and many students want to continue their experience at the UW. In fact, some students approached UW personnel to ask if their privileges to use the library and computers could continue after the end of the quarter -- a discussion topic for those who plan the experience in the future.

While some students were encouraged and excited, a lack of diversity on the UW campus seemed to be a barrier to UW enrollment for other community college students. On the questionnaire, students were not asked how they defined "diversity." Did their definition include individuals who are Asian, gay or lesbian, or handicapped? What would constitute an "adequate" level of diversity for respondents to this questionnaire? These questions need to be answered in future years.

Whether positive or negative, the experience for these students did reinforce their plans for future enrollment in a four-year institution of higher education.

APPENDIX

SEATTLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This questionnaire is intended to provide information for future planning of this class. Your response is voluntary and you may leave any question blank, but completion is greatly appreciated. Your responses will not be considered individually nor will you be identified in any way. Your handwritten comments in response to the questions on page two will be returned to your instructors after grades are turned in. Responses to the survey will be summarized by the UW Office of Educational Assessment, and was administered on June 6, 2001. Fifty-four of the fifty-nine students enrolled in the class responded to the questionnaire, a 92% response rate.

Please circle your best response.

Very	Poor	Poor	Fair	Very Good	Good	Excellent						
The course as a whole was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
The course content was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
The course organization was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
The effectiveness of this learning community at the UW was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
My interests in transferring to the UW are:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Instructors' ability to present alternative explanations was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Instructors' use of examples and illustrations was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Quality of questions or problems raised by the instructors was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Student confidence in instructors' knowledge was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Instructors' enthusiasm was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Encouragement given to students to express themselves was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Answers to student questions were:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Availability of extra help when needed was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Use of class time was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Instructors' interest in whether students learned was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Amount you learned in the course was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Usefulness of course content was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Evaluative and grading techniques (tests, papers, projects) were:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Reasonableness of assigned work was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements was:	1	2	3	4	5	6						
Relative to other community college courses you have taken:	Much Lower	-	Average	-	Much Higher							
Do you expect your grade in this learning community to be:	1	2	3	4	5							
The intellectual challenge presented was:	1	2	3	4	5							
The amount of effort you put into this learning community was:	1	2	3	4	5							
Your involvement in this learning community was:	1	2	3	4	5							
1. On average, how many hours per week have you spent on this course, including attending classes, doing readings, reviewing notes, writing papers and any other course-related work?	Under 5	5-10	11-15	16-20	21 or More							
26. What grade do you expect in this course?	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F

SEATTLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This questionnaire was intended to provide information for future planning of the class and was administered on June 6, 2001. Fifty-four of the fifty-nine students enrolled in the class responded to the questionnaire, a 92% response rate.

RESPONSE PERCENTAGES AND MEANS

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Fair (3)	Good (4)	Very Good (5)	Excellent (6)	Mean
2. The course as a whole was:	0.0	5.6	11.1	24.1	42.6	16.7	4.54
3. The course content was:	0.0	1.9	7.4	27.8	40.7	22.2	4.74
4. The course organization was:	3.8	9.4	24.5	39.6	20.8	1.9	3.70
5. The effectiveness of this learning community at the UW was:	0.0	3.7	16.7	16.7	27.8	35.2	4.74
6. My interests in transferring to the UW are:	9.8	11.8	17.6	9.8	13.7	37.3	4.18
7. Instructors' ability to present alternative explanations was:	0.0	1.9	20.4	27.8	29.6	20.4	4.46
8. Instructors' use of examples and illustrations was:	0.0	1.9	14.8	27.8	27.8	27.8	4.65
9. Quality of questions or problems raised by the instructors was:	0.0	1.9	15.1	18.9	37.7	26.4	4.72
10. Student confidence in instructors' knowledge was:	0.0	5.6	16.7	18.5	25.9	33.3	4.65
11. Instructors' enthusiasm was:	0.0	1.9	9.4	18.9	26.4	43.4	5.00
12. Encouragement given to students to express themselves was:	0.0	5.6	13.0	29.6	16.7	35.2	4.63
13. Answers to student questions were:	0.0	0.0	31.5	24.1	29.6	14.8	4.28
14. Availability of extra help when needed was:	1.9	7.7	21.2	23.1	32.7	13.5	4.17
15. Use of class time was:	0.0	7.5	28.3	22.6	30.2	11.3	4.09
16. Instructors' interest in whether students learned was:	0.0	3.7	13.0	24.1	24.1	35.2	4.74
17. Amount you learned in the course was:	3.7	3.7	13.0	22.2	27.8	29.6	4.56
18. Usefulness of course content was:	1.9	1.9	11.1	20.4	29.6	35.2	4.80
19. Evaluative and grading techniques (tests, papers, projects) were:	7.4	11.1	31.5	33.3	11.1	5.6	3.46
20. Reasonableness of assigned work was:	5.6	3.7	25.9	37.0	24.1	3.7	3.81
21. Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements was:	0.0	13.0	22.2	33.3	27.8	3.7	3.87

Relative to other community college courses you have taken:	Much Lower (1)	- (2)	Average (3)	- (4)	Much Higher (5)	Mean
22. Do you expect your grade in this learning community to be:	9.3	11.1	33.3	29.6	16.7	3.33
23. The intellectual challenge presented was:	7.4	5.6	20.4	48.1	18.5	3.65
24. The amount of effort you put into this learning community was:	0.0	5.7	30.2	37.7	26.4	3.85
25. Your involvement in this learning community was:	1.9	3.7	22.2	42.6	29.6	3.94

26. On average, how many hours per week have you spent on this course, including attending classes, doing readings, reviewing notes, writing papers and any other course-related work?	Under 5	5-10	11-15	16-20	21 or More
	0.0	7.4	5.6	24.1	63.0

26. What grade do you expect in this course?	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
	11.1	16.7	14.8	22.2	11.1	7.4	3.7	5.6	5.6	1.9	0.0	0.0

SEATTLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Totals may not add up to 100% because of the open-ended response format.

7. *Was this learning community intellectually stimulating? How did it stretch your thinking?*

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
51	94.4	Yes I have new ways to look at things now I liked the interactions with other students and the instructors I learned different perspectives
3	0.6	No Slow pace, disorganized, more discourse

8. *What aspects of this learning community contributed most to your learning?*

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
33	61.1	Interactions and seminar groups
26	48.1	Readings, assignments, and activities
11	20.4	Instructors

9. *What did not work for you in this learning community?*

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
7	13.0	Everything worked well
15	27.8	Assignments and Activities: I needed more time, had other obligations
7	13.0	Grading system
5	9.3	Readings seemed inappropriate
5	9.3	Seminar problems
3	0.6	Research paper process
12	22.2	Instructors: Unclear expectations, constant changes, unorganized
6	11.1	Connect the disciplines better

10. *What suggestions do you have for improving the class?*

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
13	24.1	Connect biology better
9	16.7	Expectations for student conduct, challenge thinking, raise expectations, build community between students
8	14.8	Instructor communication and organization

Many separate comments on specific suggestions: do MAP as large group with discussion, do not have biology in the morning, cut out one book to have time for in depth discussions, more whole group focused discussions, give tips on writing research papers, emphasize evaluation and give feedback, parking, explore and interact with UW more, too much homework, realistic and clear expectations, review for biology tests, more hands-on activities, add reflective response papers, have more speakers, have a wider variety of readings, change seminar group instructors periodically.

11. *What UW resources did you use, e.g., library/librarians, computer lab, during this quarter?*

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
46	85.2	Libraries
29	53.7	Computer labs
17	31.5	Common areas (e.g., HUB, study areas)
8	14.8	Other (e.g., museum, canoes)

12. *How did having this learning community on the UW campus change your attitude about transferring to a 4-year university?*

<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
19	35.2	I am more confident that I can transfer, the UW is less intimidating
11	20.4	I will not transfer, the UW is too big for me
9	16.7	There is a lack of diversity at the UW