

Enrollment Study Report

Sample and Procedure

As of September 11, 2014, there were 3,691 continuing students who had not registered for the Fall 2014 term. To ascertain why students are not returning to CSUDH, a telephone survey was given to over 300 students who did not return to campus for classes in the Fall of 2014. The final dataset included 290 “good” cases. The survey was designed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment with the assistance of the CSUDH Assessment Laboratory, and was administered through Student Affairs. There were 26 specific reasons for not returning that were queried. In addition, students were given a chance to add additional reasons through an open-ended item on the questionnaire. The original 26 items plus the additional reasons were reduced to a small set of dimensions through factor analysis, resulting in 8 main reasons for not returning to campus (not in order): problems with employment, liking another campus more than CSUDH, social/academic problems, scheduling problems, personal problems, failing to learn, transportation problems, and financial problems.

Results

The top 5 reasons for not being enrolled during the Fall 2014 term were

1. financial reasons,
2. personal reasons,
3. employment reasons,
4. failure to learn, and
5. social/academic problems.

The top 5 reasons given for attending a different institution were

1. economic/financial reasons,
 2. problems with scheduling,
 3. mismatch with major preferences,
 4. personal problems,
 4. academic problems, and
 4. taking GE courses elsewhere.
- (the last 3 reasons were tied for fourth place)

The top 5 improvements that CSUDH could make were

1. financial help or advice,
2. better scheduling,
3. nothing,
4. academic help, and
5. student returning anyway.

Cluster analysis

Cluster analysis of the sample revealed 5 types of students who did not return for the Fall 2014 semester:

- **Financial Temporary Leavers** (n = 110) were having financial problems, as well as employment conflicts and personal problems, and planned to come back to CSUDH after taking time off from school.
- **Temporary Leavers** (n = 70) were experiencing personal problems and were not enrolled at any other campus, but did plan to come back to CSUDH.

- **Temporary Switchers** (n = 35) were enrolled at another institution for the Fall 2014 term mainly for economic/financial reasons but planned to return to CSUDH.
- **Permanent Switchers** (n = 28) were enrolled at another institution because of personal reasons, thinking another campus was better than CSUDH, and having scheduling problems at DH; these students did not plan to return to CSUDH.
- **Permanent Leavers** (n = 28), characterized by job-related issues, personal problems, and financial problems, were not enrolled anywhere else and did not plan to come back.

Implications

By far the largest cluster of non-enrolled students was the Financial Temporary Leavers (n = 110) who were experiencing financial problems, as well as personal problems and employment conflicts to a lesser extent. Many of these students said that they did not qualify for financial aid at DH. Some of the specific problems mentioned were mistakes from the financial aid office, difficulties obtaining the required information for applications, and not turning in financial aid information on time. Perhaps not coincidentally, the top suggestion for improving the campus was to provide financial help or advice.

The second largest cluster of students was the Temporary Leavers (n = 70). These students were experiencing personal problems but did plan to come back to CSUDH. They were not enrolled elsewhere. Personal problems include family obligations and health-related problems. Examples of personal problems from the data set include having a baby, having to take care of a family member with medical problems, and having personal medical problems. There was no common suggestion given by the students for how CSUDH could address these problems.

Together, the Financial Temporary Leavers and the Temporary Leavers—the two largest subgroups—comprised 62% of the students from the sample. Together with the Temporary Switchers, they form a large block of students (n = 215; 74% of sample) who do plan to return to CSUDH. The remaining students did not plan to return. Since the Temporary Switchers also gave financial reasons for not enrolling at CSUDH, the suggestion to improve financial help or advice on campus applies to them, too.

Conclusion

The Fall 2014 non-returning student survey was a fruitful endeavor. It provided initial insight into the reasons why CSUDH students do not return to campus. Improvements on the study procedures should be made and the study run regularly to give guidance to persons responsible for enrollment.

Weaknesses

The sample size may be too small to make strong conclusions. The 290 good cases used in the analyses represent a small fraction of the total population of non-returning students (8%); thus the conclusions reached here might not generalize to all non-returning students. Further, no comparison group was used (e.g., a sample of students who did enroll in the Fall 2014 term). So, it is logically possible that the students in the present sample experienced the same problems as students who did return for the Fall 2014 term, and that there were other, unmeasured, reasons why the current set of students did not re-enroll at CSUDH. A third weakness is that the study is based on self-report and the responses might not be accurate. For example, students' self-assessments of having financial problems might be incorrect when actual financial situations are analyzed and compared to other students.

Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

Class Level

| | | Totals | |
|------------------|-----------|--------|--------|
| | | N | % |
| Last Class Level | Freshman | 57 | 21.2% |
| | Sophomore | 24 | 8.9% |
| | Junior | 84 | 31.2% |
| | Senior | 104 | 38.7% |
| Totals | | 269 | 100.0% |

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Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

Ethnicity

| | | Totals | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|--------|--------|
| | | N | % |
| Ethnicity | Asian | 18 | 6.7% |
| | Black/ African American | 66 | 24.5% |
| | Hispanic/ Latino | 143 | 53.2% |
| | Native Hawaiian/ Other Pac Isl | 1 | .4% |
| | White | 18 | 6.7% |
| | Two or more races | 6 | 2.2% |
| | Unknown | 13 | 4.8% |
| | Nonresident Alien | 4 | 1.5% |
| | Totals | 269 | 100.0% |

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Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

Sex

| | | Totals | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | N | % |
| Sex | Female | 170 | 63.2% |
| | Male | 99 | 36.8% |
| Totals | | 269 | 100.0% |

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Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

Age Range

| | | Totals | |
|--------------|--------------|--------|--------|
| | | N | % |
| Age Category | 19 and under | 58 | 21.6% |
| | 20-24 | 99 | 36.8% |
| | 25-29 | 40 | 14.9% |
| | 30-34 | 28 | 10.4% |
| | 35-39 | 12 | 4.5% |
| | 40-44 | 13 | 4.8% |
| | 45-49 | 10 | 3.7% |
| | 50-54 | 5 | 1.9% |
| | 55 and over | 4 | 1.5% |
| Totals | | 269 | 100.0% |

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Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

College

| | | Totals | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------|--------|
| | | N | % |
| College of major when last attended | College of Business Administration and Public Policy | 73 | 27.1% |
| | College of Arts and Humanities | 32 | 11.9% |
| | College of Education | 9 | 3.3% |
| | College of Health and Human Services | 59 | 21.9% |
| | College of Natural and Behavioral Sciences | 76 | 28.3% |
| | University | 20 | 7.4% |
| Totals | | 269 | 100.0% |

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Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

Major

| | | Totals | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
| | | N | % |
| Major when last attended | Africana Studies | 1 | .4% |
| | Anthropology | 1 | .4% |
| | Applied Studies | 3 | 1.1% |
| | Art | 5 | 1.9% |
| | Behavioral Sciences | 1 | .4% |
| | Biochemistry | 1 | .4% |
| | Biology | 14 | 5.2% |
| | BSN | 22 | 8.2% |
| | Business Administration | 50 | 18.6% |
| | Chemistry | 3 | 1.1% |
| | Child Development | 11 | 4.1% |
| | Clinical Sciences | 1 | .4% |
| | Communications | 11 | 4.1% |
| | Computer Science | 7 | 2.6% |
| | Computer Technology | 3 | 1.1% |
| | Criminal Justice Administration | 20 | 7.4% |
| | Digital Media Arts | 3 | 1.1% |
| | English | 2 | .7% |
| | Health Science | 8 | 3.0% |
| | History | 4 | 1.5% |
| | Human Services | 8 | 3.0% |
| | Interdisciplinary Studies | 3 | 1.1% |
| | Liberal Studies | 9 | 3.3% |
| | Mathematics | 2 | .7% |
| | Philosophy | 1 | .4% |
| | Physical Education | 9 | 3.3% |
| | Physics | 4 | 1.5% |
| | Political Science | 3 | 1.1% |
| | Psychology | 20 | 7.4% |
| | Sociology | 17 | 6.3% |
| | Spanish | 1 | .4% |
| | Theatre | 1 | .4% |
| | Undeclared | 20 | 7.4% |
| Totals | | 269 | 100.0% |

Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

Demographics of the respondents by Class Level

| | | Last Class Level | | | | | | | | Totals | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| | | Freshman | | Sophomore | | Junior | | Senior | | N | % |
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | | |
| Ethnicity | Asian | 2 | 3.5% | 1 | 4.2% | 11 | 13.1% | 4 | 3.8% | 18 | 6.7% |
| | Black/ African American | 12 | 21.1% | 7 | 29.2% | 21 | 25.0% | 26 | 25.0% | 66 | 24.5% |
| | Hispanic/ Latino | 38 | 66.7% | 13 | 54.2% | 35 | 41.7% | 57 | 54.8% | 143 | 53.2% |
| | Native Hawaiian/ Other Pac Isl | | | | | 1 | 1.2% | | | 1 | .4% |
| | White | 2 | 3.5% | 2 | 8.3% | 5 | 6.0% | 9 | 8.7% | 18 | 6.7% |
| | Two or more races | | | 1 | 4.2% | 4 | 4.8% | 1 | 1.0% | 6 | 2.2% |
| | Unknown | 1 | 1.8% | | | 6 | 7.1% | 6 | 5.8% | 13 | 4.8% |
| | Nonresident Alien | 2 | 3.5% | | | 1 | 1.2% | 1 | 1.0% | 4 | 1.5% |
| Totals | 57 | 100.0% | 24 | 100.0% | 84 | 100.0% | 104 | 100.0% | 269 | 100.0% | |
| Sex | Female | 31 | 54.4% | 18 | 75.0% | 54 | 64.3% | 67 | 64.4% | 170 | 63.2% |
| | Male | 26 | 45.6% | 6 | 25.0% | 30 | 35.7% | 37 | 35.6% | 99 | 36.8% |
| Totals | 57 | 100.0% | 24 | 100.0% | 84 | 100.0% | 104 | 100.0% | 269 | 100.0% | |
| Age Category | 19 and under | 50 | 87.7% | 8 | 33.3% | | | | | 58 | 21.6% |
| | 20-24 | 7 | 12.3% | 16 | 66.7% | 41 | 48.8% | 35 | 33.7% | 99 | 36.8% |
| | 25-29 | | | | | 16 | 19.0% | 24 | 23.1% | 40 | 14.9% |
| | 30-34 | | | | | 11 | 13.1% | 17 | 16.3% | 28 | 10.4% |
| | 35-39 | | | | | 5 | 6.0% | 7 | 6.7% | 12 | 4.5% |
| | 40-44 | | | | | 5 | 6.0% | 8 | 7.7% | 13 | 4.8% |
| | 45-49 | | | | | 5 | 6.0% | 5 | 4.8% | 10 | 3.7% |
| | 50-54 | | | | | 1 | 1.2% | 4 | 3.8% | 5 | 1.9% |
| 55 and over | | | | | | | 4 | 3.8% | 4 | 1.5% | |
| Totals | 57 | 100.0% | 24 | 100.0% | 84 | 100.0% | 104 | 100.0% | 269 | 100.0% | |

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Fall 2014 Survey of Non-Returning Students

Percentages are based on Row totals

| | Yes | | No | | TOTALS | |
|--|-----|--------|-----|-------|--------|--------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Q3. Were you moving out of town? | 34 | 11.0% | 276 | 89.0% | 310 | 100.0% |
| Q4. Did you dislike the CSUDH experience? | 44 | 14.2% | 265 | 85.8% | 309 | 100.0% |
| Q5. Did friends/family members attend another school? | 97 | 31.5% | 211 | 68.5% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q6. Did you complete your educational goal? | 35 | 11.3% | 275 | 88.7% | 310 | 100.0% |
| Q7. Did you have family obligations? | 155 | 50.2% | 154 | 49.8% | 309 | 100.0% |
| Q8. Was there a health-related problem (family or personal)? | 92 | 29.7% | 218 | 70.3% | 310 | 100.0% |
| Q9. Did you feel alone or isolated? | 48 | 15.6% | 260 | 84.4% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q10. Was CSUDH not your first choice? | 114 | 37.3% | 192 | 62.7% | 306 | 100.0% |
| Q11. Were the desired courses scheduled at inconvenient times? | 113 | 36.7% | 195 | 63.3% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q12. Were the desired programs not available? | 90 | 29.0% | 220 | 71.0% | 310 | 100.0% |
| Q13. Did another university offer more value? | 70 | 22.7% | 239 | 77.3% | 309 | 100.0% |
| Q14. Did you have difficulty obtaining transportation to the University? | 39 | 12.6% | 271 | 87.4% | 310 | 100.0% |
| Q15. Did you experience difficulties with on-campus housing? | 23 | 7.5% | 284 | 92.5% | 307 | 100.0% |
| Q16. Were the courses too difficult? | 33 | 10.6% | 277 | 89.4% | 310 | 100.0% |
| Q17. Were the courses not challenging? | 57 | 18.5% | 251 | 81.5% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q18. Was the academic advising inadequate? | 62 | 20.1% | 247 | 79.9% | 309 | 100.0% |
| Q19. Were you dissatisfied with the academic reputation of this University? | 40 | 13.0% | 268 | 87.0% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q20. Did you feel you were not learning what you wanted to learn? | 44 | 14.3% | 264 | 85.7% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q21. Were you not gaining skills related to getting a job? | 57 | 18.8% | 247 | 81.3% | 304 | 100.0% |
| Q22. Did you have any financial reasons for not returning? | 164 | 53.2% | 144 | 46.8% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q23. Did you not qualify for financial aid? | 123 | 41.3% | 175 | 58.7% | 298 | 100.0% |
| Q24. Did you have employment responsibilities (work travel, overtime, etc.) | 172 | 55.8% | 136 | 44.2% | 308 | 100.0% |
| Q25. Was childcare not available or too costly? | 29 | 9.6% | 274 | 90.4% | 303 | 100.0% |
| Q26. Did you accept a full-time job? | 135 | 43.7% | 174 | 56.3% | 309 | 100.0% |
| Q27. Was there a conflict between the demands of the job and the University? | 113 | 36.9% | 193 | 63.1% | 306 | 100.0% |
| Q28. Did your chosen occupation not require an education? | 71 | 23.3% | 234 | 76.7% | 305 | 100.0% |
| Q29. Do you have any other reasons for not returning that I didn't mention? | 234 | 100.0% | | | 234 | 100.0% |
| Q30. Are you enrolled elsewhere for the semester? | 83 | 27.0% | 224 | 73.0% | 307 | 100.0% |
| Q31. May I ask where you are currently enrolled? | 83 | 100.0% | | | 83 | 100.0% |
| Q32. Please tell me why you chose to enroll there instead of CSUDH. | 76 | 100.0% | | | 76 | 100.0% |
| Q33. Do you plan to return to CSUDH in the future? | 234 | 79.3% | 61 | 20.7% | 295 | 100.0% |