Effectiveness of IMPACT Toward Improved Retention
for First-Year Students

Divisional Mission

To recruit, admit, engage, retain, and graduate a diverse student population for success at LSU and beyond. We enhance learning by fostering critical thinking and ethical responsibility to create a university experience that transforms lives.

Departmental Mission

As LSU’s central learning center we enhance the learning and teaching experience by empowering individuals with effective, transferable strategies and resources.

Vision: Foster and promote engagement, retention, graduation and transition to career and/or advanced education.

Program/Service Area Description (Learning Strategies)

The learning strategies unit within the CAS serves all LSU students toward improving their overall academic effectiveness. Proven, cognitive strategies are shared through positive, proactive interactions in a variety of formats. Services such as individual consultations (i.e. one-on-one sessions), in-class presentations, workshops designed for special populations, and large open workshops, such as IMPACT; are offered throughout the academic year.

Student Success Outcome(s)/Strategic Plan Goal(s)

1. Persistence and academic achievement (GPA, retention) Primary focus
   a. Students will improve overall GPA from fall to spring semester on average of a 0.4 letter grade increase.
   b. Students who attend IMPACT will be retained by at least a 10% higher level as compared to LSU’s overall retention percentage
2. Cognitive complexity (critical thinking, reflective thinking, metacognition)
   a. Students will be better prepared to assess their learning process, incorporating strategies that with their tendencies or strengths
3. Interpersonal/intrapersonal competence (realistic self-appraisal)
   a. Students will learn strategies to assess their progress in each course
   b. Students will learn and begin implementation of effective time management strategies through the usage of weekly and semester calendars
2014-2015 Assessment Plan
Department: the Center for Academic Success

Project Specifics

Project Title: Assessing Effectiveness of IMPACT for First-Year Students

Purpose of the project (How measured):
To determine effectiveness of a two-hour workshop that focuses on specific learning, testing, and time management strategies. Participants will complete formative assessment at end of workshop, summative assessment at end of semester. Semester GPA’s (fall and spring), and retention (14th day of fall semester) obtained through LSU’s Budget & Planning, to determine learning growth and retention of IMPACT students compared to LSU’s overall retention data.

Assessment Method(s)/Timeline:
- CAS paper survey – A formative survey is given and gathered at the end of each IMPACT workshop. CAS staff will gather feedback, assimilate, review, and report back to CAS staff by March 1st.
- CAS end of semester survey – A self-report, summative assessment will be given one week after finals to gather feedback on student’s confidence, preparedness, ability to accurately assess progress, and overall effectiveness of study strategies (See SSO’s 2-5).
- LSU Budget & Planning – Semester GPA for all students attending IMPACT will be requested by May 31st, to compare fall to spring semester grade averages.
- LSU Budget & Planning – Retention information will be requested after 14th day of classes during fall semester for students who attended IMPACT (both on W/P and non-W/P) and compared to overall LSU retention data.

Population/Sample to be assessed:
- All IMPACT participants will be included in the formative assessment, GPA comparison, and overall retention. A random sampling will be selected for end-of-semester summative survey.

Staff Contact(s):
Melissa Brocato – 578-5293 or mbrocato@lsu.edu;
Diane Mohler – 578-2522 or dmosler@lsu.edu;
Effectiveness of IMPACT Toward Improved Retention for First-Year Students (Cont.)

Clarification:

The IMPACT workshop provides key “proven” learning strategies, time and stress management techniques, and resources to help prepare first-year students (i.e. incoming freshmen and transfer students) for the academic rigor of LSU. The two-hour workshop covers several strategies that students can immediately begin to implement, with additional tips and tools to maintain and sustain academic growth.

- First-year students include incoming freshmen (i.e. may include first-year students who attended summer and fall semesters) and transfer students (i.e. new to LSU) are invited to attend IMPACT.
- Students who are on academic warning or probation are highly encouraged (e.g. colleges or specific programs may require attendance) to attend one session from several that are offered at the beginning of the spring semester.
- IMPACT is offered at the beginning of the spring semester only.

Special challenges to this assessment:
Acquiring a clear representation of students who received CAS services compared to those who did not (i.e. may not be able to clearly define services obtained if not through CAS, such as private tutoring). Students who received CAS services independently (did not attend IMPACT however, came to individual consultation) will be removed from the control group. This is not always 100% accurate (i.e. may have obtained information from friend, private tutor, etc.) and takes additional time to collect.

Use to improve current practice:
Results will be evaluated to determine modifications needed in content, activities, advertising strategies, and overall design of delivery for improving retention and/or academic performance.

Plans for reporting results:
Annual report, marketing materials (on web site, posters, postcards, etc.) for students and parents, A & A Deans and Directors, academic advisors.

Campus Labs Used: X Yes □ No
Measuring Effectiveness of Supplemental Instruction toward
Improved Retention

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Program/Service Area Description (Academic Support)

The Center for Academic Success’ Academic Support unit provides two key resources, tutoring and Supplemental Instruction (SI), for all LSU students. These resources target courses that have shown to be historically challenging for students, providing additional support that is content focused. LSU’s CAS hires, trains, and supports approximately 25-35 students per semester, as SI leaders. They work closely with faculty and CAS personnel to ensure effective, active strategies are used to enhance and support content discussed within lectures.

Student Success Outcome(s)/Strategic Plan Goal(s)

- Persistence and academic achievement (GPA, retention) Primary Focus
  - Students will obtain on average at least 0.4 letter grade increase if attended at least four (4) SI sessions compared to students who did not attend SI within same course/section.
  - Students who attend at least four (4) SI sessions will be retained by at least 10% higher than those students in same course/section, who did not attend SI.

- Cognitive complexity (effective reasoning, critical thinking)
  - Students will self-report value of SI through survey questions on critical thinking and effective metacognitive strategies.
Project Specifics

Project Title: *Measuring Effectiveness of Supplemental Instruction toward Improved Retention*

Purpose of the project (How measured):
Data comparison using course grade between users (i.e. use SI at least four times within a semester) and non-users (i.e. within same course/section who do not use SI) will be gathered, calculated, and evaluated. Grade comparisons between users (above) and non-users (above) will include comparison of A’s, B’s, C’s, and DFW’s. Retention data (i.e. the number of students completing a specific course with “C” or higher grade compared to those who did not attend SI) will also be obtained, calculated, and recorded.

Assessment Method(s)/Timeline:
- LSU Budget & Planning – End of each semester – Grades requested from registrar’s office for specific course/sections to be measured. Comparison between ABC grades and DFW grades will be culled to show overall persistence and retention in each course.
- CAS SI Database (Attendance) – End of semester – This information is combined with data from registrar’s to determine who attended and how many times.
- CAS Online Survey – End of Semester – Summative survey to gather qualitative feedback from a random sampling of all SI users.

Population/Sample to be assessed:
Quantitative data will be gathered from CAS data base to show number of visits, all students within a course/section are reviewed and used in comparison data. End of semester survey will be sent to a random sample of all SI users.

Staff Contact(s):
Susan Saale – 578-7119 – ssaale1@lsu.edu
Diane Mohler – 578-2522 or dmohler@lsu.edu
Clarification:
Supplemental Instruction is provided in courses that have been historically challenging for students, with departmental support. This program offers additional sessions for all students within a course/section, to assist in content knowledge, critical thinking, and metacognitive reflective strategies. Intensive training is required for all SI leaders, with ongoing support of CAS staff and GA’s. Effectiveness continues to be consistent with international benchmarks.

Special challenges to this assessment:
Some students may obtain private tutors or other resource (i.e. online tutor, workshop, family or friend, etc.) equivalent to SI program, not provided by CAS, included in the “non users” data, which may skew data.

Use to improve current practice:
▪ Results gathered are shared with new SI leaders and in all SI training.
▪ Videos of LSU’s SI leaders (especially courses with high attendance) have been created based on proven strategies that help student integrate new knowledge, which in turn, increases successful completion of these courses.
▪ Information shared with deans/directors/faculty for continued support, future growth and expansion of this resource into new disciplines.

Plans for reporting results:
Annual report, marketing and promotional materials (e.g. website, bookmarks, training materials, etc.) for students and parents, A & A deans/ directors/ faculty, academic advisors, development communications and programming.

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Student Success Outcome(s)/Strategic Plan Goal(s)

- **Persistence and academic achievement (GPA, retention)** Primary focus
  - Students who attended at least two (2) coaching sessions will improve overall GPA from fall to spring semester on average of a 0.7 letter grade increase as compared to students who attended IMPACT and did not follow-through on coaching.

- **Cognitive complexity (effective reasoning)**
  - Students who attend at least two (2) coaching sessions will improve critical thinking skills, effective reasoning skills, and metacognitive strategies.

- **Practical competence (pursuing goals, managing personal affairs, health & wellness)**
  - Same as above
Project Specifics

Project Title: Coaching Catalytics: Effectiveness for IMPACT Students

Purpose of the project (How measured): To evaluate effectiveness of coaching component within the IMPACT program. Grade point average gathered for those students who attend two (2) or more coaching sessions and compared to all other IMPACT participants. Feedback from coaches is requested on an ongoing basis to ensure even distribution of coaches. End of semester Coaches Breakfast and emailed surveys, will gather feedback to determine overall effectiveness, as well as provide insights and ideas for future coaching improvement.

Assessment Method(s)/Timeline:
- LSU Budget & Planning – Requested at end of spring semester to measure difference of fall to spring semester GPA results and retention (following fall semester) of students who attended IMPACT and (organized and requested by CAS staff):
  - Choose to participate in coaching after attending a workshop
  - Attended at least two sessions with coach working specifically on strategies to improve the learning process (e.g. time/stress management, study strategies, test preparation, etc.)
  - To students who attended IMPACT, did not sign-up for coaching, or did sign-up for coaching but DID NOT participate.
- CAS contact data – Students who requested coaching and attended at least two sessions, gathered from coaches throughout semester.
- Email survey – A short survey (qualitative) will be sent (email or Campus Labs) to all students who participated in coaching, at end of spring semester.

Population/Sample to be assessed:
- Students who requested coaching after attending an IMPACT session will be included in all quantitative data, all who attended two or more sessions included in end of semester, qualitative survey, at this time.

Staff Contact(s):
- Diane Mohler – 578-2522 or dmoehler@lsu.edu
- Melissa Brocato – 578-5293 or mbrocato@lsu.edu
- Pam Ball – 578-2856 or pball1@lsu.edu
Clarification:

The IMPACT workshop is offered just prior to the spring semester for all first-year students, including freshmen and transfer students. For the past few years students have been offered an opportunity to meet with a professional staff or faculty member for one-on-one sessions, called “coaching”. Faculty and staff attend a one-hour workshop that includes key tools and resources that may be shared during these sessions. Preliminary data supports the value of this resource.

Special challenges to this assessment:
- Not always able to extract other academic resources that students obtain, especially those outside of the CAS.
- Percentage of students who take advantage of coaching after signing up is about 50% of all who initially respond. Several discussions have taken place on how to increase follow-through after IMPACT.
- Coaches are totally voluntary, no stipend or other monetary support is available at this time.

Use to improve current practice:
CAS staff will gather and review data to evaluate any areas in coordination, content, and communications that may need to be improved. Data will be shared with future IMPACT participants, current and future coaches, and community members who may find value in this program/resource.

Plans for reporting results:
Annual report, marketing and promotional materials (e.g. website, bookmarks, presentations, etc.) for students and parents, A & A deans/ directors/ faculty, academic advisors, development communications and programming. Information/data also shared during Coaching Recap Thank You Breakfast.

Campus Labs Used: X Yes  No