

Name of Assessment Project: Faculty Mentor Program Research Symposium 2014

Name(s) of Person(s) Responsible for Assessment Project: FMP/Conf Coordinator (Karen Van Ness)

Email Address: kvanness@ucsd.edu
Phone Number: 858-534-5791

Other Contacts:
Providing Department: Academic Enrichment Program

Other Units/Departments Involved in Assessment Project:

Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project: The Faculty Mentor Program Research Symposium is an annual event held in Week 9 during Spring Quarter. At this event, students who participated in the FMP present the research they have conducted in the program. This year, 90 students presented their research in a poster session on May 28 in the Price Center West Ballrooms.

The Symposium is divided into two one-hour sessions.

In the Faculty Mentor Program, students conduct research for two quarters under the guidance of a UCSD faculty member for academic credit. The program is open to all UCSD undergraduates with at least junior standing and a 2.7 GPA. Faculty from across UCSD, including the School of Medicine and SIO, participate each year.

Assessment Project Description: Background:

AEP has three conferences each year at which students present their research. The conferences have consisted of small panels of 6-8 students organized into two sessions. Students present to their small panel in one session, and then are free to view other panels in the session in which they are not presenting. Because of this structure, students can only view a limited number of presentations; given that the presentations are 20 minutes each, at most, they could view the presentations of 15 other students.

One of the main goals of AEP's conferences is to give the students opportunities to share ideas with others who have similar research interests. Such interactions can help students to form communities as well as encourage collaboration. In past assessments of our conferences, the category "I was able to meet and form connections with others who have similar interests at the [name of conference]" usually rates the lowest, with around 70% of students choosing "Agree strongly" or "Agree". Although this is a good rating, we wanted to see if there was a way to better fulfill this particular goal. In the qualitative sections of the evaluations, students have also frequently asked to get more feedback. Because of these responses, we have been looking for ways to make the conferences more interactive.

There are logistical reasons to change to poster sessions as well. We have three small panel conferences in a row (the Undergraduate Research Conference in March, the FMP Symposium in May, and the Summer Research Conference in August). Many of our students participate in all three, and although there is value in learning to revise and improve a presentation, we felt that it might benefit the students to learn how to do different types of presentations. There is some burn out among the faculty who volunteer for these conferences, and it can become difficult to find enough faculty volunteers for all three. Whereas a faculty member is need in each panel to moderate the discussion, no faculty are required to oversee a poster presentation.

There are some disadvantages to poster sessions. It is expensive to rent the display boards for the students' posters, and it is an added expense for the students to print their posters. Students must finish their presentations in advance, since it takes time to print a poster.

Research Questions for Assessment:

To give the students more opportunities to meet and connect with others, we changed the structure of the FMP Research Symposium to poster presentations this year. By organizing the posters into two sessions with 45 presenters each, participants will be able to view all of the 45 presentations that are not in the session in which they are presenting. Poster sessions are also more interactive than PowerPoint presentations, since there is more give and take between the presenter and audience. We set up a method for presenters to receive feedback by giving the audience feedback forms to fill out. These forms were then left in envelopes taped to each student's poster board.

To decide whether or not to continue with poster session for the FMP Research Symposium, we are asking the following questions:

- Do students feel they are receiving feedback on their work?
- Do students feel they are connecting with others?

We also want to make sure that the Symposium is fulfilling its other goals:

- Participating in the FMP Symposium provides the student presenters with skills and knowledge that will benefit them in the future.
- Participating in the Symposium helps students to see themselves as researchers.
- Participating in the Symposium helps students to feel more confident in their public speaking skills.

The answers to these questions will be compared to the previous year's evaluation to see if the changes in the Symposium's

format has made a positive impact on the students' experience in relation to the Symposium's goals.

Unit/Program Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes: Participating in the FMP Symposium will

1. help students to see themselves as researchers,
2. provide students with skills and knowledge that will benefit them in the future,
3. give students confidence in their public speaking skills,
4. give students the opportunity to meet and form connections with others who have similar research interests.

We are also looking to see if students felt that they received adequate feedback on their presentations.

Relationship to Student Affairs Communicate Effectively, Advance a Plan for Personal, Academic, and Professional Success

Learning Outcomes: 7/1/2013

Assessment Project Start: 6/30/2014

Assessment Project End: Of the 90 students who presented at the conference, 54 completed the paper on-site survey. Of the 75 students who completed the online FMP survey, 72 responded to the question about the Symposium's format.

Type of Assessment: Satisfaction study

Other Assessment

Type(s):

Assessment Methods: Surveys

Other Assessment

Method(s):

Data Collection Tools: A. An on-site paper survey was administered to student presenters.

Participants were asked to the following six questions using a 5 point Likert scale:

1. I was able to get useful feedback on my work at this Symposium.
2. Participating in the FMP Symposium has provided me with skills and knowledge that will benefit me in the future.
3. I was able to meet and form connections with others who have similar interests at the Symposium.
4. Participating in the Symposium has helped me to see myself as a researcher.
5. As a result of the Symposium, I now feel more confident when speaking in front of a group.
6. Should the FMP Symposium continue to use poster presentations or change to Powerpoint presentations in small panel?

The Likert scale had the following choices:

- 5: Agree Strongly
- 4: Agree
- 3: Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- 2: Disagree
- 1: Strongly Disagree

There was also a space provided for students to make additional comments and suggestions at the bottom of the form.

Question 6 had to be thrown out, due to the fact that the Likert scale was mistakenly put as the option, and this did not make sense given the question.

B. Because of the error with question 6 of the on-site survey, a multiple choice question was added to the online end of the year survey given to FMP students. The question was "Next year, should the Symposium have a poster session or small panel discussions? Panel discussions would mean students would give Power Point presentations to groups of 6-8. Poster sessions would mean that students would present their posters in two sessions."

The options to answer this question were:

- I prefer poster sessions.
- I prefer PowerPoint presentations.
- No opinion/not sure

Data Analysis Methods: Percentages were figured for the responses to the Likert scale and multiple choice questions.

Presentation of Findings: These findings will be presented to the AEP director, Dr. David Artis, in determining the budget and format for the FMP Symposium. It will also be included in the information introducing the Faculty Mentor Program to the new VCSA.

Progress: 100%

Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline : Campus Labs Baseline was not used in this assessment.

Name	Source
------	--------

No items to display.

Summary of Findings:

Conclusions

The Symposium had strong ratings, but these ratings were not significantly different from the previous year's ratings. In fact, the category that we hoped would improve actually went down. In 2013, 80% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I was able to meet and form connections with others who have similar interests at the Symposium". This year, 74% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed. There are limitations to these results, since 2013 had 114 respondents, and this year we only had 53. When students were asked directly if they preferred the PowerPoint or poster sessions, however, students preferred poster session by a ratio of 4:1.

Summary of Data from 2014 FMP Symposium Satisfaction Surveys

Note: The data from the surveys is in the attached spreadsheet.

Below is a summer for each question asked on the 2014 FMP Symposium Satisfaction Surveys. Averages were calculated based on the number of respondents to each particular question and were rounded to the nearest whole number.

Part One: On site survey

1. I was able to get useful feedback on my work at this Symposium.

Responses	n	%
5: Strongly Agree	15	28
4: Agree	25	47
3: Neither Agree nor disagree	8	15
2: Disagree	3	6
1: Strongly Disagree	2	4
Total # of Responses	53	

2. Participating in the FMP Symposium has provided me with skills and knowledge that will benefit me in the future.

Responses	n	%
5: Strongly Agree	40	74
4: Agree	10	19
3: Neither Agree nor disagree	4	7
2: Disagree	0	0
1: Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total # of Responses	54	

3. I was able to meet and form connections with others who have similar interests at the Symposium.

Responses	<i>n</i>	%
5: Strongly Agree	21	39
4: Agree	19	35
3: Neither Agree nor disagree	9	17
2: Disagree	5	9
1: Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total # of Responses	54	

4. Participating in the Symposium has helped me to see myself as a researcher.

Responses	<i>n</i>	%
5: Strongly Agree	26	48
4: Agree	24	44
3: Neither Agree nor disagree	4	7
2: Disagree	0	0
1: Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total # of Responses	54	

5. As a result of the Symposium, I now feel more confident when speaking in front of a group.

Responses	<i>n</i>	%
5: Strongly Agree	28	52
4: Agree	18	33
3: Neither Agree nor disagree	7	13
2: Disagree	0	0
1: Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total # of Responses	54	

6. Should the FMP Symposium continue to use poster presentations or change to PowerPoint presentations in small panels?*

Responses	<i>n</i>	%
5: Strongly Agree	27	59
4: Agree	7	15
3: Neither Agree nor disagree	10	22
2: Disagree	2	4
1: Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total # of Responses	46	

*Due to the error in the answer choices provided on the survey, question 6 was discarded in the assessment.

Part Two: Online survey

Due to the error in question 6, a question was added to the end of the year FMP survey asking "Next year, should the Symposium have a poster session or small panel discussions? Panel discussions would mean students would give PowerPoint presentations to groups of 6-8. Poster sessions would mean that students would present their posters in two sessions."

- 48 students chose "I prefer poster sessions."
- 12 students chose "I prefer PowerPoint sessions."

- 9 students chose "No opinion/not sure."
- 3 students did not respond to the question.

A total of 75 students responded to the end of the year survey.

-  [2014 FMP Symposium - Assessment Data](#)

Impact of Assessment: Despite the somewhat disappointing results in the paper survey, the majority of students polled preferred the poster sessions. Also, several students stated how much they enjoyed the posters to the AEP staff during the Symposium as well as through email afterwards. As a result, we will try the poster session for one more year to see if improvements can be made to the format. One goal is to encourage more faculty participation. Only about a half-dozen professors attended the conference this year, and these low numbers may have something to do with the lower rating students gave on their ability to form connections. Another goal is to make providing feedback easier for the audience. For example, we could give the option of providing online feedback forms in addition to the paper forms, so that the audience could use their smart phones. We also need to improve instructions for printing posters. Many students complained of the cost in the qualitative response of the survey, so we need to work with them so that they use UCSD's ACMS printer, which cost around \$6 for a poster, in comparison to Kinko's, which can charge upwards of \$100.

In conclusion, the ratings for the Symposium overall were fairly strong, particularly for the first time out with the new format, but given the cost of poster sessions in comparison to PowerPoint sessions, we need to make improvements to the Symposium's format to improve the students' experience.

Lessons Learned: The most important lesson we learned was to proof-read the questions carefully, as an error meant that one of the questions on the instrument had to be tossed out. I had worked out the assessment itself well ahead of time, but put off making the form until the last minute. So I guess the lesson was to not just plan, but to do.

The other lesson was it's harder to get students to fill out the survey in a poster session than when they are in small panels, so we need to work harder to make sure everyone fills out a survey before they leave.

Supplemental Information: I have attached the data from the 2013 FMP Symposium satisfaction survey.

-  [2013FMPSymposium_SurveyResults](#)