



Student Legal Services Counseling Survey

Public

Name of Assessment Student Legal Services Counseling Survey

Project:

Name(s) of Person(s)

Responsible for

Assessment Project:

Role

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Providing Student Legal Services

Department:

Other

Units/Departments

Involved in

Assessment Project:

Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project

Student Legal Services (SLS) provides free, confidential counseling, education and referrals on all types of legal matters to currently registered UC San Diego students and student organizations. Counseling appointments are offered to students on an individual, one-on-one basis, as well as to groups of students on request. The purpose of this assessment project was to measure learning outcomes and satisfaction related to the individual and group counseling services offered by SLS.

Assessment Project Description

This project recorded the results of a written survey provided to students who received counseling at SLS between January and June, 2013. Students were asked to complete and return a paper survey form upon conclusion of their counseling session. Approximately 32% of students who received counseling from SLS completed and returned surveys. The results of every survey form that was completed and returned was recorded in Student Voice/Campus Labs.

There were several objectives of this assessment project. One purpose was to (1) identify whether and to what extent the legal issue(s) faced by each student seeking assistance at SLS was adversely affecting his or her ability to focus on academics, and (2) whether the student believed that the counseling session would assist the student in focusing on his or her academics. Thus, the survey sought to measure the extent to which the services provided by SLS contribute to student retention and academic success. The survey also sought to determine (1) whether and to what extent, as a result of the counseling session, each student better understood the factual and legal issues relevant to their matter, and (2) whether and to what extent, as a result of the counseling session, each student felt better prepared to manage his or her legal matter. Students were also asked to provide feedback regarding their experience at SLS, as well as indicate if they felt that they were treated in a friendly and respectful manner, and if they would return to SLS should another legal issue or question arise. Students were asked whether, on a one to five (Likert) scale, they "strongly disagreed" to "strongly agreed" with statements related to the above objectives. Finally, demographic information was collected, including class standing (graduate or

undergraduate) and how the student learned about SLS.

Unit/Program Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes

This project attempted to measure the following learning outcomes relating to the counseling services provided by SLS:

After receiving counseling on a legal matter from Student Legal Services, students will (1) better understand the factual and legal issues relevant to their legal matter, and (2) will be better prepared to manage their legal matter.

The survey results would seem to indicate (albeit by students' self-reporting) that the above learning outcomes were assessed, and that a vast majority of the students who completed and returned surveys did report that the learning outcomes were achieved, as further discussed below.

Relationship to Student Affairs Think Critically and Solve Problems, Advance a Plan for Personal, Academic, and Professional Success

Learning Outcomes:

Assessment Project Start: 1/28/2013

Assessment Project End: 6/30/2013

Population/Sample

90 of the 282 students (or approximately 32%) who sought and received counseling from SLS for a legal issue or matter between January 28, 2013, and June 30, 2013, completed and returned the survey.

Type of Assessment: Student learning outcomes and/or behavioral outcomes, Tracking usage , Satisfaction study

Other Assessment

Type(s):

Assessment Methods: Surveys

Other Assessment

Method(s):

Data Collection Tools

Students were asked to complete a paper survey form which was provided to them at the end of their counseling session. Students were asked to fill out and return the survey to a "suggestion box" in the office lobby to maintain anonymity. SLS staff then entered survey responses into Student Voice/Campus Labs.

Data Analysis Methods

Survey results (including ratings on a Likert scale as well as written feedback provided by students) were compiled and entered into Student Voice/Campus Labs and subsequently analyzed by SLS staff.

Presentation of Findings

The findings were compiled and analyzed via Student Voice/Campus Labs by SLS staff. They are presented by way of this Report, and will additionally be presented to Student Life staff and potentially to the Student Fee Advisory Committee. Some report results are additionally featured on a Campus Labs/Baseline [Key Performance Indicator](#) page.

Progress:

Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline

<https://studentvoice.com/app/ClientWeb/Results.aspx?ProjectId=118529>

Source Name	Project Name
No items to display.	

Summary of Findings

There were several noteworthy takeaways from this project.

First, of the 90 students who completed the survey, 49 (or 54%) answered "yes" to the question, "The issue that I sought help from SLS for is adversely affecting my ability to focus on my academics," while the remaining 41 (or 46%) answered "no." While it was anticipated that many students were faced with legal matters that distracted them from their academics, the fact that a majority of respondents reported this was unexpected. Also unanticipated was the high number of students who answered "yes" to the above question who additionally stated that the assistance they received from SLS would help the students focus on their academics. 39 of the 49 students "Strongly Agreed" with the statement, "I believe that the assistance I received from SLS will help me focus on academics." This would seem to indicate that the counseling services offered by SLS does help contribute to the academic success of students who seek assistance at SLS for a legal matter, despite the fact that SLS attorneys are permitted only to provide advice to students and not representation.

Second, the data tend to indicate that the learning outcomes that this survey sought to measure were being achieved. Of the 90 respondents, 77 "Strongly Agreed" with the statement, "As a result of my consultation, I better understand the factual and legal issues relevant to my matter." Another 11 students "Agreed" with that statement, while two students answered "Neutral." Similar results were reported in response to the statement, "As a result of my consultation, I feel better prepared to handle my issue/matter," with 82 students who "Strongly Agreed," seven who "Agreed," and one who answered "Neutral."

Third, this project revealed some noteworthy information regarding the students who completed the survey, including that a vast majority (80 of 90 respondents) were undergraduates. While this ratio is consistent with the proportion of undergraduate to graduate students at UC San Diego, it would suggest that more outreach by SLS to graduate students is needed given the low number of graduate student respondents. The survey also revealed that while exactly half of the respondents (45) learned about SLS by online means, the other half heard about SLS from another UCSD student, UCSD staff or faculty, or orientation, tabling or presentation. This would indicate the need for SLS to maintain a conspicuous online presence while continuing to utilize more traditional methods of marketing and outreach.

Impact of Assessment

There is much to celebrate based on the survey results. As mentioned above, the data demonstrates that the two learning outcomes measured by the survey are being achieved. The data also reflects that respondents felt that they were treated in a friendly and respectful manner

by SLS staff, and that they would be comfortable returning to SLS if another legal issue or question arose. The written feedback provided by the students was also overwhelmingly positive. These results, along with the finding that SLS is helping to contribute to the academic success of the students we serve, will be shared within Student Life and, potentially, with the Student Fee Advisory Committee.

On the other hand, the survey revealed that its methodology will need adjustment, as will be discussed in the next section.

Lessons Learned

SLS will need to consider revising its counseling survey form.

First, the survey was not always applicable to all students who sought counseling at SLS. For example, some students came to SLS seeking mentoring and/or advice about law school or a career in the legal profession, and this survey did not relate to those students' interests. Perhaps an additional survey or other means of assessment may be utilized for this population.

Secondly, the format of the survey seemed to cause some confusion. Specifically, the survey featured three questions to be answered by way of a Likert scale, followed by a question on the form seeking a "yes" or "no" response. Two additional questions utilizing a Likert scale were next. Of the 90 respondents, all 90 answered the first three questions and the "yes"/"no" question, but only 41 of the 90 answered the last "Likert" question. This was mostly due to an error by Student Voice/Campus Labs, but was also the result of several students simply not responding--perhaps by failing to see the question on the form. In future iterations of this survey, SLS staff will seek to (1) communicate more clearly and explicitly with Student Voice/Campus Labs regarding what is needed for future projects, and (2) consider reformatting the survey form to encourage a higher response rate for all questions.

Thirdly, SLS will, in consultation with Assessment Coalition Steering Committee members, consider whether future assessment of counseling services should be measured by online or other means. While a paper survey form was reasonably effective in encouraging responses, an online survey (perhaps via a post-session email and hyperlink) may lead to higher response rates, and will encourage responses that are provided after some time for reflection by students, thereby potentially minimizing any bias caused by the proximity in time to the counseling session. An online survey will additionally increase efficiency by permitting respondents to provide their feedback directly on to Student Voice/Campus Labs.

Lastly, SLS will consider revising some questions and responses on the survey.

Supplemental Information

Marlene Lowe is awesome!

Last modified 8/21/2013 at 12:42 PM by [Marlene Lowe](#)

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