

2012

Targeted Report: Financial Aid

The Community College Survey of Student
Engagement (CCSSE)

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Research by Tinto and others has shown that student engagement is directly related to retention and student success. The University of Texas (Austin) developed the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to measure levels of student engagement in five benchmark areas: Student/Faculty Interaction, Support for Learners, Active in Class Learning, Student Effort, and Academic Challenge.

During the spring semesters in the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2012, the Office of Assessment, Research, and Planning (ARP) administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to students in randomly selected classes. ARP has analyzed the results of each of the survey administrations focusing on the benchmarks, and previously distributed those results through written reports and briefings to members of the college community.

Yet another way to organize the CCSSE questions/results is based on campus activity or program. This brief, targeted report provides results of CCSSE questions which relate to financial aid program.

Analysis

Most all students (85%) taking the 2012 CCSSE survey regard financial aid advising (13g3) as “somewhat” or “very important.” Fewer than 15% of respondents regard the function as “not [important] at all,” and the mean for 2012 (2.54) is statistically significantly lower than 2007 (2.65).

Students at MTC, however, appear generally more positive than their 2012 large college counterparts and the entire CCSSE cohort with the financial aid function/program at their respective colleges. Fifty five percent of MTC respondents felt the college was providing the financial support as “quite a bit” or “very much” (9f) the student needed, higher than the two other cohorts. Fully 64% of Midlands’s students in 2012 indicated they were “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the service (13g2), more than ten percentage points higher than at other large colleges participating in the CCSSE in 2012, and seven points higher than the full CCSSE cohort. Finally, almost sixty percent (59.3%) of MTC students used financial aid advising, “sometimes” or “often” (13g1) as compared to less than fifty percent (47.2%) of the large college counterpart.

Although Midlands’s students regard the financial aid function as important and appear satisfied at this point, Midland’s scores are trending downward. On question 13g3, the importance of financial aid advising, between 2007 and 2012 student responses declined 4.0%, a statistically significant drop. As some are viewing the function as “less important,” this may indicate that students are giving up on financial aid or are seeking other sources. These possibilities are supported by a decrease in 13g1, the frequency in using financial aid advising, in the table above.

Next steps

Midlands’s financial aid program meets the needs of many students. However, when looking over time, CCSSE respondents appear less satisfied fewer are using the service than in 2007. ARP will continue to work with Student Development Services to monitor the trends.

Survey Questions

The following set of four questions and responses come from the CCSSE survey administered in spring, 2012. The table compares MTC student responses with the 2012 results provided by the University of Texas for large colleges and the entire CCSSE 2012 cohort of 710 colleges.

Item		MTC		Large Colleges		2012 Cohort	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
9f. How much does this college emphasize providing the financial support you need to afford your education (SUPPORT)	Very little	169	16.9	26,180	24.3	97,979	22.2
	Some	280	28.0	28,303	26.3	112,397	25.5
	Quite a bit	293	29.3	26,856	24.9	114,736	26.0
	Very much	258	25.8	26,451	24.5	116,117	26.3
	Total	1,000	100.0	107,790	100.0	441,229	100.0
13.1g. Frequency: Financial aid advising	Do not know/Not applicable	98	10.3	21,623	20.7	79,373	18.5
	Rarely/Never	290	30.4	33,533	32.1	127,322	29.7
	Sometimes	321	33.6	29,965	28.6	133,356	31.1
	Often	246	25.7	19,473	18.6	88,079	20.6
	Total	956	100.0	104,594	100.0	428,129	100.0
13.g2. Satisfaction: Financial aid advising	Not applicable	173	18.6	33,776	33.5	121,739	29.4
	Not at all	166	17.8	13,794	13.7	53,055	12.8
	Somewhat	313	33.7	27,670	27.4	116,540	28.2
	Very	277	29.9	25,633	25.4	122,156	29.5
	Total	929	100.0	100,872	100.0	413,490	100.0
13.g3. Importance: Financial aid advising	Not at all	134	14.6	19,098	19.1	71,720	17.5
	Somewhat	150	16.4	17,616	17.7	70,013	17.1
	Very	633	69.0	63,070	63.2	267,544	65.4
	Total	918	100.0	99,784	100.0	409,278	100.0

The following financial aid questions are part of larger analysis conducted by ARP of MTC student responses over the four CCSSE administrations, to help the college discover trends in MTC student engagement.

Question	MTC 2007 Mean	MTC 2008 Mean	MTC 2009 Mean	MTC 2011 Mean	MTC 2012 Mean	Difference from 2007
How much does this college emphasize each of the following? (Scale: 1=Very Little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much)						
9f. Providing the financial support you need to afford your education	2.63	2.57	2.61	2.59	2.64	0.3%
How often do you use the following services? (Scale: 1=Rarely/Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often)						
13g1. Frequency: Financial aid advising	1.95	2.01	1.98	1.95	1.95	-0.1%
How satisfied are you with the following services? (Scale: 1=Not at all, 2=Somewhat, 3=Very)						
13g2. Satisfaction: Financial aid advising	2.13	2.20	2.15	2.15	2.15	0.9%
How important is the following services? (Scale: 1=Not at all, 2=Somewhat, 3=Very)						
13g3. Importance: Financial aid advising	2.65	2.55	2.61	2.53	2.54↓	-4.0%

↑↓ Note: Directional arrows highlight those items in 2012 that are significantly above or below the mean of 2007. Using one-way analysis of variance the items highlighted are significant at $p < .05$, a 95% confidence level.