

2007

Senior Capstone Project final research report : the visual link in the formation of relationships

Elaine Austin
California State University, Monterey Bay

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps_thes

Recommended Citation

Austin, Elaine, "Senior Capstone Project final research report : the visual link in the formation of relationships" (2007). *Capstone Projects and Master's Theses*. 170.
https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/caps_thes/170

This Capstone Project is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ CSUMB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Capstone Projects and Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CSUMB. Unless otherwise indicated, this project was conducted as practicum not subject to IRB review but conducted in keeping with applicable regulatory guidance for training purposes. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csumb.edu.

Elaine Austin
CHHS 400/496
Senior Capstone/Field Seminar

Senior Capstone Project Final Research Report

The Visual Link in the Formation of
Relationships

Keywords: visual class rosters, relationships, teachers, students, registration, schools

Abstract: Office and teaching staff at Parents' Place interface with of students daily and are finding it difficult to identify and address each student correctly. My capstone project addressed the problem of identifying students by creating a new visual class roster for each class. I also conducted 2 teacher in-service trainings teaching staff how to remember and identify students easier and faster with the help of the new roster.

Executive Summary

Parents' Place was created by a woman named Gail Root, and began its first year of operation in 1987 at the Pacific Grove Adult School in Pacific Grove, California. Parents' Place is one of three Parents Education programs offered through the Pacific Grove Adult School year-round. Specifically, Parents' Place offers classes for parents of children birth to 3 years of age. There are currently over 650 families attending classes each week. During the past 20 years, Parents' Place has grown in to a program of over 24 staff members, 6 classrooms, and offers over 54 different courses each week.

Office and teaching staff at Parents' Place interface with hundreds of students every day and are finding it very difficult to identify and address each student correctly. Research has shown that students feel more involved and welcomed to the school atmosphere when they can be addressed correctly by either teachers or by other students. The goal and mission of Parents' Place is to have all students feel welcomed and involved in the program.

My capstone project addressed the problem of correctly identifying students by creating a new visual class roster for each class. The roster includes pictures of the students in the class. I also conducted 2 teacher in-service trainings, teaching staff how to remember and identify students easier and faster with the help of the new roster.

I found the new visual class roster was indeed improving the ability of the teaching staff to identify their students easier and faster. Responses gathered from informal interviews with students also showed they were using the new rosters and found it to be very helpful for them when coming to class.

I recommend to Parents' Place that new students take their pictures upon registering for the program. I also recommend that office staff attend each class at least two times during each session to take pictures of students who have been previously missed throughout the sessions.

Description of Agency

Parents' Place began when Gail Root, the Coordinator of the program, met a woman name Barbara Dickenson at the Monterey Adult School who was teaching parenting classes. The size of the classes had grown so Mrs. Dickenson hired Mrs. Root to teach some classes. Mrs. Root was helping to support her family financially and needed more teaching hours in order to do so. Mrs. Root and one of her friends approached the Pacific Grove Adult School with the idea of setting up parenting classes at that campus. In June 1987, Parents' Place began and over time the size of Parents' Place grew and eventually became a program of over 24 staff members, 6 classrooms, and over 54 courses being taught every week. (Peninsula Family Connection, 1999).

The mission of Parents' Place is: 1) to provide parents with information needed to nurture their children in a positive, healthy, and loving environment; 2) to offer an atmosphere of support and comfort, which encourages the building of a community of parent-to-parent relationships; 3) to honor and respect family in all its forms; and 4) to promote a sound educational curriculum that increases parents' confidence and allows for diversity in learning modes. (Parents' Place, 2006).

The Problem and Issues Addressed

The office staff at Parents' Place interfaces with a large number of people on a daily basis. They find themselves unable to match a name to a face. There are also students at Parents' Place with the same name adding to the confusion. The teaching staff often asks the office staff about a description of a parent so they can greet them appropriately. At times the staff is unable to provide the needed information. It is also important for the office staff to have a visual identification of each student for security purposes. The need for visual identification in the student's records was determined to be a problem. "By keeping up-to-date records, the Director can avoid problems that make it difficult to see in advance the direction in which a center might be headed" (Shoemaker,

1995). The picture taking project has prepared the staff and teachers at Parents' Place to get to know their current students, and the many more students expected to join the program a little faster and easier.

The students are in the process of building support and social networks due to their transition into parenting. "High societal expectations, limited social support, and poor preparation for the parenting role combine to make modern parenthood an exceedingly complex task" (Smith & Pourchot, 1998). The class lists now include the pictures and contact information of the students and will help them to make personal connections, thus easing some of the pressures in the transition to parenthood. The new class list will help the students and teachers get to know each other faster and easier. "Student to student interaction is fostered through exercises in which students directly learn their peers' names, or indirectly when they hear the professor address classmates by name" (Middendorf, 2003). There are several populations this problem has impacted. They is the student population of approximately 650 families, all with children, birth to three years of age or older, and the office and teaching staff which consists of 24 people.

Project Description

From October 2006 through the end of April 2007, I have taken over 435 student pictures. The pictures have been uploaded to their file in the office computer network that can be accessed by the staff. The computer network registration system is FileMaker Pro. I created a new class roster with the pictures of the students for each class. The new class rosters have been handed out to the students and teachers. The previous roster Parents' Place used did not have the pictures. Though the previous class roster helps the staff to remember students who attend on a regular basis, the new roster will help staff remember those students who do not attend on a regular basis. With new class rosters and computer files, teachers and office staff will be better equipped to make face to name

connections. “Building such community connections is essential to fostering a sense of belonging to the school community” (Thousand, Villa, & Nevin, 1994). The goal of the project was to create this feeling of personal connection with staff and students. Also, new students entering Parents’ Place will now be able to connect and build social support networks faster and easier.

In addition to the pictures, I conducted short presentations to the staff during two staff meetings this spring. The first presentation I introduced the new class roster, explained the importance of being able to remember names and faces, demonstrated 3 techniques that will help the staff remember correct names and faces, and conducted a pre-new roster survey on the teaching and office staff. During the second staff meeting later in the spring, I re-examined the techniques I had introduced to the staff, conducted the post-new roster survey, interviewed several staff members, and obtained any other relevant information from the staff.

The 3 techniques I showed the teachers are: 1) name tags; 2) learning traits; and 3) alternative adjective name game (Middendorf, 2003). A couple of teachers already use the name tag technique, and during the interview of those teachers I found how useful the technique is and when they started doing it. The learning traits technique helps a person remember another by remembering a specific trait about that other person, such as interesting shoes or large ears. Lastly, the alternative adjective name game is when you take “the first letter of their name and selecting an adjective that begins with the same letter” such as Great Garry or Silly Sally (Middendorf, 2003).

I was able to know the effectiveness of my solution by conducting a survey and interviews of the teaching and office staff before and after the introduction of the new class rosters. By comparing the two models, modifications and improvements have been noted.

The surveys showed that the teaching staff’s ability to remember their students’ names and faces improved due to the new roster. Attached are the results from the two quizzes represented in a bar graph (the graph is attached before the bibliography page). The informal interviews with

students also showed that the new roster has been helping them become more comfortable in the class and get to know their classmates faster.

Analysis – The project can be analyzed on many different levels. While the finished product of the visual class roster is of importance, the ability to create another branch of the program infrastructure is key. Long after I leave Parents’ Place, the new registration process will replace the present and outdated system.

Collaboration – I have been working with the students in the classrooms and will need their consent to take their pictures. Many of these parents are experiencing new things so they were unprepared or unaware of the picture taking project. I worked with them to determine the best course of action. On occasion, I worked with students who refused to have their picture taken. I negotiated another time and place to meet that would be better for them. I am also worked directly with the office staff as they trained me to use the computer program FileMaker Pro and various other computer programs or office instruments. The other group of people I worked with are the teachers. The teachers worked with me to make sure I was taking the pictures of their students. They also worked with the students by informing them ahead of time about the picture taking project. The students were the key participants of this project so their input and participation was important.

Negotiation – As mentioned above I negotiated with the students for the best possible picture re-take time. I negotiated with the teachers to determine the appropriate time to show up to class and create the least disruptions. I worked with the office staff to arrange a time-line for the project with due dates for individual projects.

Research – I researched various topics such as parenting stresses and helpful methods to ease those stresses, and electronic identification methods as it pertained to my capstone project.

Major Learning Outcomes and Vision Statement of CSUMB

Information management- My capstone relates to the MLO's of CHHS by broadening my scope of information collection. By understanding the role of advanced technology, I am able to create and conduct a more thorough and concise project. I researched and documented "success stories" on data programming, and the techniques used for client information collection and management in similar agencies. My goal was to better understand the importance of attention to detail and correct input of student information and picture placement into the PGUSD registration network.

Knowledge of Health and Human Services- While working with a population of parents and children, birth to age 3, I have increased my awareness of the importance of symptom recognition and illness onset. I have learned better communication skills in terms of relating this critical information. I increased my knowledge of early childhood development, and the life changes experienced by the parents.

Personal and Professional Communication- On a daily basis I interfaced with the student population and the office and teaching staff.

Personal and Professional Ethics- I accessed the student personal and confidential information. I have conducted myself with the highest level of appreciation towards this information.

Professional Development- I have created a blueprint for a new registration process of all students. I have created both written and visual representations of this process. I have also kept a journal regarding my professional and personal growth.

"The university will invest in preparation for the future through integrated and experimental use of technologies as resources to people, catalysts for learning, and providers of increased access

and enriched quality learning.” I have been working with various technologies such as photographic equipment and computer programs to conduct this project. Once finished, this project has increased the learning of new and returning students’ names and faces for the teachers and staff of Parents’ Place.

“Our graduates will have an understanding of interdependence and global competence, distinctive technical and educational skills, the experience and abilities to contribute to California's high quality work force, the critical thinking abilities to be productive citizens, and the social responsibility and skills to be community builders.” Creating a class list with pictures of students in turn contributed to a higher quality teaching and learning experience for teachers, staff, and students. The social support networks for students will hopefully build stronger and more personal connections with the new class lists.

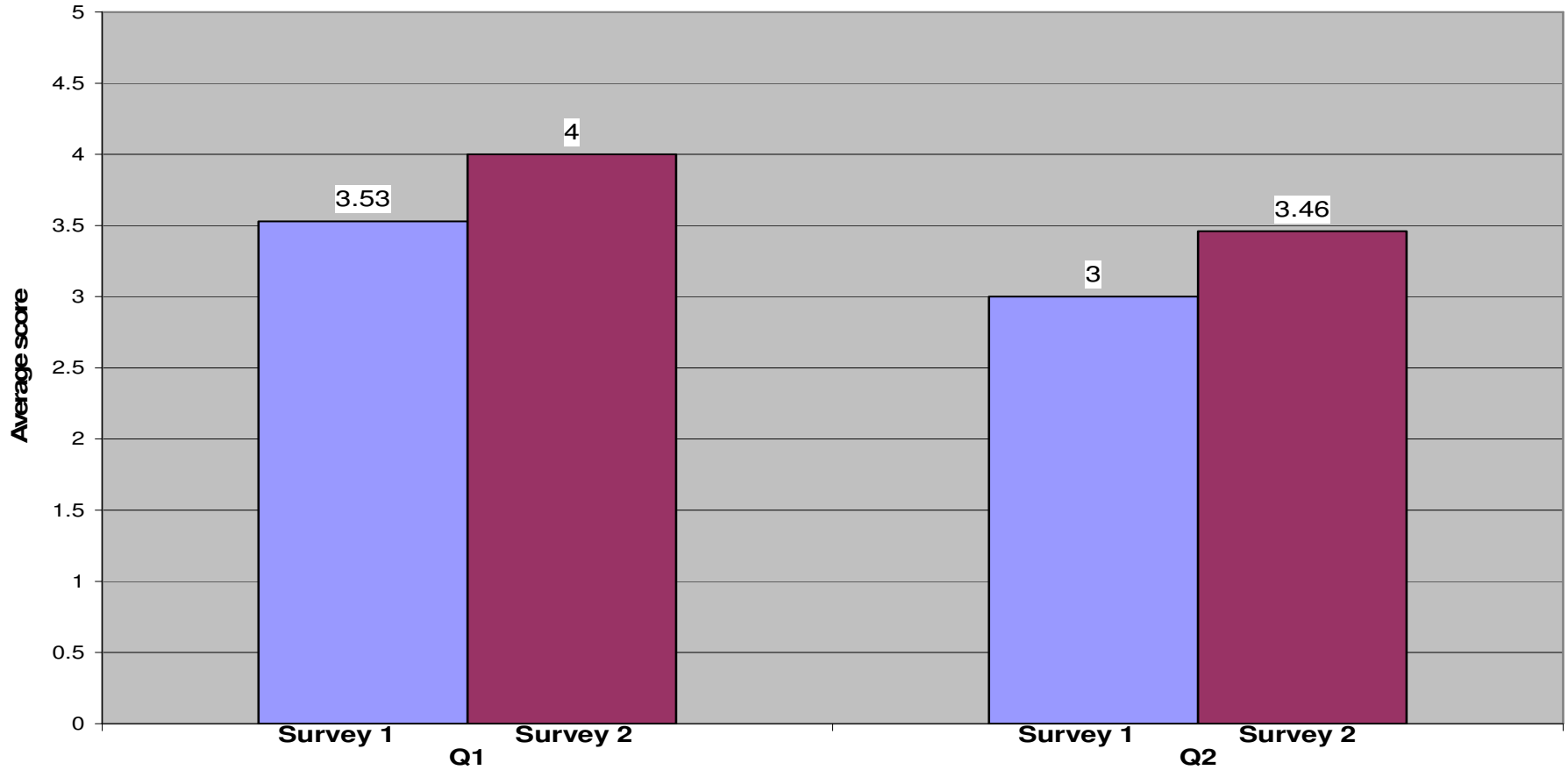
“CSUMB will dynamically link the past, present, and future by responding to historical and changing conditions, experimenting with strategies which increase access, improve quality, and lower costs through education in a distinctive CSU environment.” Parents’ Place is reaching its twentieth birthday this year in July, and is working with nearly 650 families. As this program has grown and changed so has the population. By providing visual identification of the students to the staff of Parents’ Place, the quality of attention, personal connection, and the social support networks will hopefully increase and improve the experience for all by being able to place correct names with faces.

Conclusion

Through the completion of my capstone project I have found that there is indeed a link in the formation of relationships. That link can be many things, but for the purpose of my project that link is the creation of the new visual class roster, training sessions with teachers and office staff, and

positive involvement of students in the program. Through two surveys of the teachers and informal interviews with students I have found that the new roster has helped both teachers and students on many levels. Beyond my original assumptions, I found that the substitutes and partners of students are using the rosters to become familiar with the class prior to coming to class. I also found that office staff is using the pictures now available on the registration program to look up students who have not paid for the session or who have checked out books from the library. The general consensus is that the new visual roster has added a branch to the infrastructure of the Parents' Place program.

I recommend to the office staff that pictures of new students be taken while the new student is present in the office registering for classes. There is no guarantee that the student will come to class regularly, so to avoid a missing picture on the roster, I think it best the picture be taken as soon as they register. I recommend that teachers are constantly reminding and encouraging their students to have their picture taken for the rosters. The teaching staff's involvement during my project's process helped me complete most of the rosters by informing students of my project. If Parents' Place chooses to improve or expand this project I recommend that the in-service training outlines and the Steps for Picture Taking Process notes I created be used and referred to as needed.



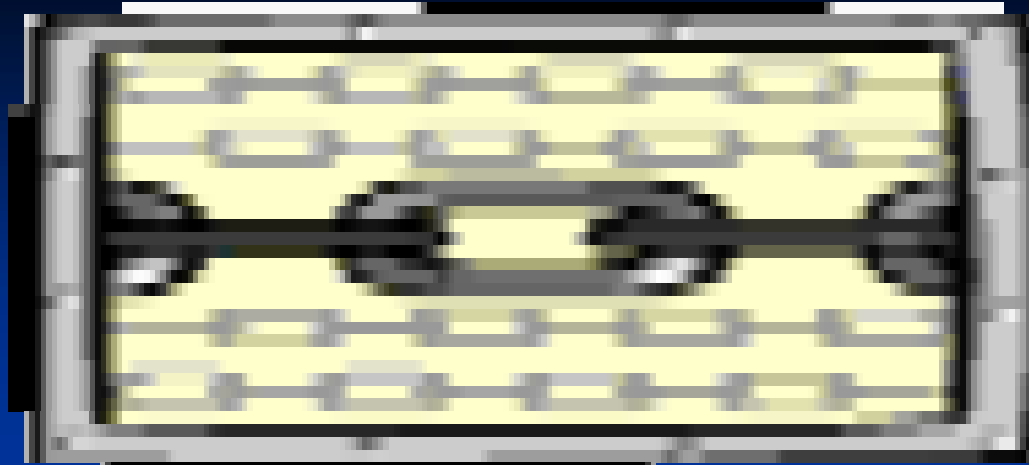
The following two questions are from both surveys, and the results are represented above.

Q1: Generally, how well do you remember your students' names and faces when you have had a class for one full session?

Q2: When you get a *new* class, how quickly do you know your students' names and faces by the 4th week?

Bibliography

- American Academy of Pediatrics (n.d.). *Children's health topics; developmental stages*. Retrieved October 16, 2006, from <http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/stages.cfm>.
- California State University Monterey Bay. (1994, September 24). *Vision Statement*. Retrieved October 30, 2006, from <http://csumb.edu/site/x11547.xml>.
- Higbee, K. L. (1996). *Your memory: how it works and how to improve it*. Retrieved November 9, 2006, from <http://books.google.com/books?vid=ISBN1569246297&id=N6FPQzBpheEC&printsec=copyright&dq=memory,+Higbee>.
- Middendorf, Joan. (2003) *Learning student names*. Retrieved December 5, 2006, from <http://www.ntfl.com/html/lib/bib/names.htm>.
- Parents' Place. (2006). *Mission statement*. Retrieved October 10, 2006, from <http://www.pgusd.org/parents/missionstatement.html>.
- Peninsula Family Connection. (1999, July- September). Gail Root; wife, mother, teacher, mentor, friend. Pacific Grove: Author.
- Shoemaker, C. J. (1995). *Administration and management of programs for young children*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Smith, M. C., & Pourchot, T. (1998). *Adult learning and development; perspectives from educational psychology*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Thousand, J. S., Villa, R. A., & Nevin, A. I. (1994). *Creativity and collaborative learning; a practical guide to empowering students and teachers*. Baltimore, Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, Inc.



THE VISUAL LINK IN THE
FORMATION OF RELATIONSHIPS

Presented By
Elaine Austin

Parents' Place at the Pacific Grove Adult School

- Since July 17, 1987 Parents' Place has grown into a program with 24 staff members, 6 classrooms, 54 courses, and 650 families, and one student intern.
- Parents' Place Mission Statement:
 - Provide information to nurture children
 - Respect family in all its forms
 - Offer an atmosphere of support, comfort, and respect
 - To increase parents' confidence



**Parents' Place
Pacific Grove Adult
Education
1025 Lighthouse Ave.
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
(831) 646-6623**

Summary of the Problem

- Teachers and staff are having difficulty with identifying and addressing students correctly
 - “A professor who does not know his or her students’ names may be perceived as remote and unapproachable.” (Middendorf, 2003)
- This problem impacts:
 - Office Staff
 - Teachers
 - Families



Literature Review

- Parent's are experiencing powerful changes in their life
- Confidence in staff, teachers, and parents
- Importance of personal connections and support networks



Capstone Project

- Moving Parents' Place into the 21st century
- Creating a new class roster that includes the pictures of students for each class
- Adding to the infrastructure of Parents' Place
- Assessing the effectiveness of my project



**Parents' Place
Pacific Grove Adult Education**

Class Use C

**Katie Griffin-Hart
Wednesday AM**



1. **[redacted], Kathryn**
Brenndon 11-15-04
[redacted]
Salinas 93908
[redacted]
kathgriffin@chelehal.net
BD: /



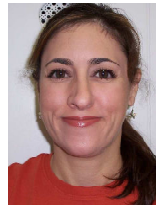
6. **[redacted], Lisa**
Caleb 12-15-04
[redacted]
Seaside 93955
[redacted]
lisa@chelehal.net
BD: /



2. **[redacted], Theresa**
Cheyenne 12-18-04
[redacted]
Carmel Valley 93924
[redacted]
BD: /



7. **[redacted], Valarie**
Amelia 12-25-04
[redacted]
Monterey 93940
[redacted]
BD: /



3. **[redacted], Christina**
Lauren 10-08-04
[redacted]
Seaside 93955
[redacted]
BD: /



8. **[redacted], Nicole**
Alex 11-25-04
[redacted]
Carmel 93923
[redacted]
tea
BD: /



4. **[redacted], Kim**
Noah 9-26-06
[redacted]
112 Oyster Vista Dr.
Monterey 93940
[redacted]
[redacted]et
BD: /



9. **[redacted], Mary**
Riley 10-25-05
[redacted]
PO Box 22000
Carmel 93922
[redacted]
[redacted]m
BD: /



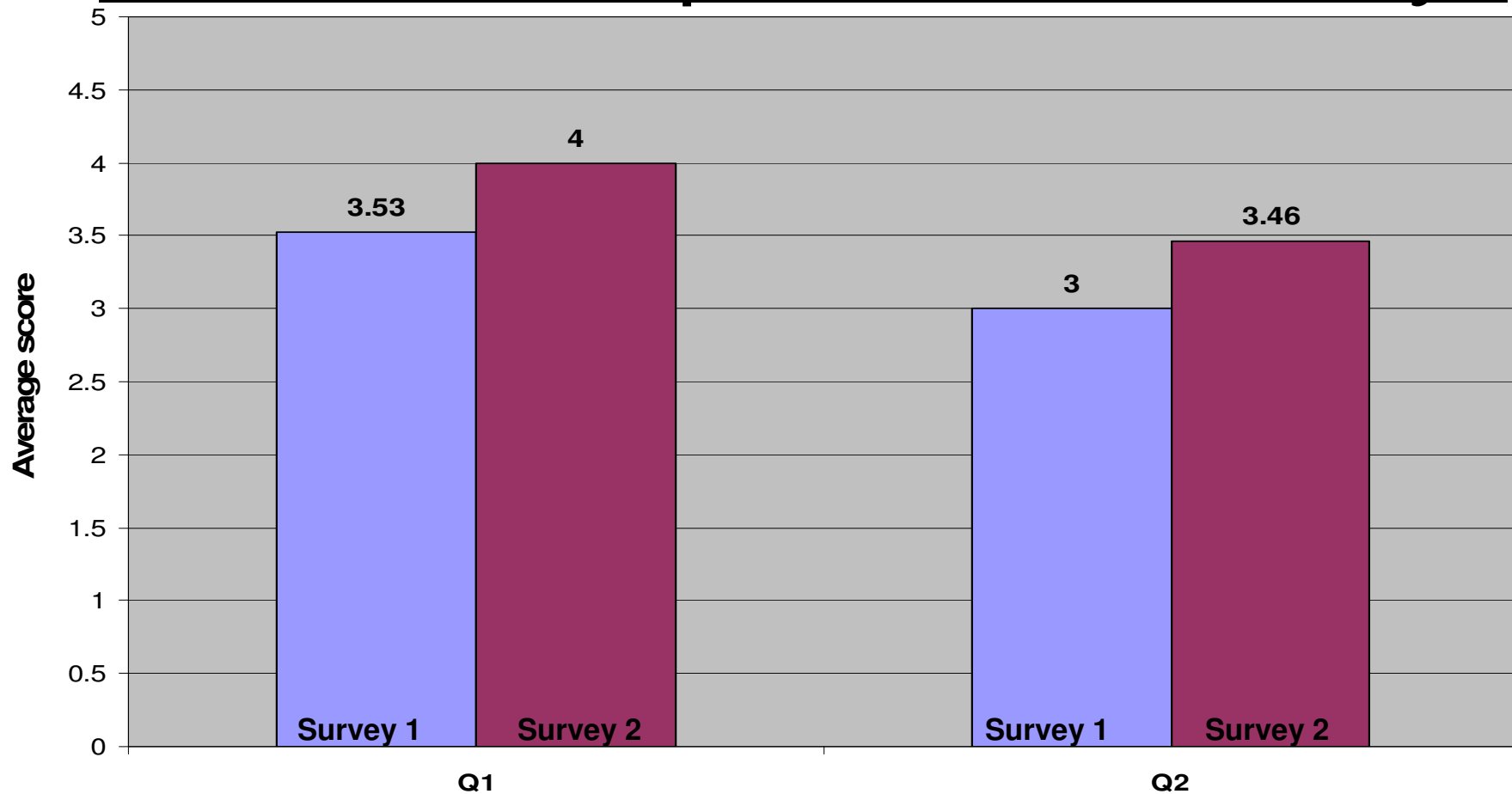
5. **[redacted], Sandra**
Gavin 12-12-04
[redacted]
Monterey 93940
[redacted]
sa
BD: /



10. **[redacted], Christine**
Travis 11-07-04
[redacted]
Monterey 93942
[redacted]
[redacted]m
BD: /

* Parents' Place lists are not to be used for solicitation (e.g. mailing invitations for tupperware-type parties.) You may bring such invitations to class and announce the events there and invite class members. Thank you for your cooperation.
4/2/2007 - Class # 070101

Teacher Responses to Surveys



Q1: Generally, how well do you remember your students' names and faces when you have had a class for one full session?

Q2: When you get a *new* class, how quickly do you know your students' names and faces by the 4th week?

Student & Teacher Responses

- “The substitute used the class roster to help identify the students in the class.”
- “The new roster helped my husband when he came to class instead of me. He felt more comfortable coming to class having looked at the new roster before hand.”
- “I felt included.”
- “I work in the office and this is so helpful to me. I use the pictures everyday!”
- “It is fantastic! I wish we could have had a system like this years ago. I recommend this to all service providers, especially day care centers.”
- “I feel it has enabled me as a teacher to learn who my students are, and more importantly my students can learn who each other are.”

My Capstone Project Findings

- Teachers, office staff, and students of Parents' Place welcomed the change
- Both office staff and teachers are using the new rosters
- I believe the new rosters are going to help with funding, new relationships, and a greater experience at Parents' Place



Recommendations For the Future



- 1) Take pictures of new students while they are in the office registering for the program
- 2) Go to each class at least 2 times during each session to take pictures of those students missed before

What I Learned From My Project

- Information Management
- Personal and Professional Communication
- Professional Development



The CSUMB Vision Statement & My Capstone



- “The university will invest in preparation for the future through integrated and experimental use of technologies as resources to people, catalysts for learning, and providers of increased access and enriched quality learning.”
- “Our graduates will have an understanding of interdependence and global competence, distinctive technical and educational skills, the experience and abilities to contribute to California’s high quality work force, the critical thinking abilities to be productive citizens, and the social responsibility and skills to be community builders.”
- “CSUMB will dynamically link the past, present, and future by responding to historical and changing conditions, experimenting with strategies which increases access, improve quality, and lower costs through education in a distinctive CSU environment.”

Thank you!

- Parents' Place Staff: Gail Root, Kim Biggio, Karen Sheppard, Leslie Ternullo, and the entire teaching staff
- Collaborative Health and Human Services Teaching Faculty & Staff
- My Family
- My Friends