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First-Generation Students' Satisfaction with The CSUMB Academic Advising Program

Daniela Zaragoza

California State University, Monterey Bay

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First-Generation Students' Satisfaction with The CSUMB Academic Advising Program

Professor: Jennifer Lucido
Capstone Advisor: Dr. Michelle Lewis

SBS 402: Senior Capstone Seminar II

By: Daniela G Zaragoza

Social & Behavioral Sciences, Human Development Minor

California State University Monterey Bay

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Table of Contents

Abstract	4
Introduction	5
Background of the Program	6
Literature Review	7
Theoretical Frameworks.....	7
Relationship Between the Advisor and Student Advisee.....	9
The Roles of Academic Advisors.....	10
Academic Advising and On-Time Graduation.....	10
Academic Advising and Student Retention/Success.....	11
Conclusion.....	12
Methodology	12
Findings	13
Demographics of Participants.....	14
Use of Advising Services.....	15
Satisfaction with Advising Services.....	15
Satisfaction with Quality of Information Provided by Academic Advisors.....	18
Promoting a Positive College Experience Through Academic Advising.....	22
Discussion of Findings	24
Satisfaction with Advising Services Analysis.....	24
Satisfaction with Quality of Information Provided by Academic Advisors Analysis.....	25
Promoting a Positive College Experience Through Academic Advising Analysis.....	26
Discussion of Limitations.....	27

Conclusion.....	27
References.....	29
Appendix A: First-Generation Personal Interests and Career Goals Survey Responses....	31
Appendix B: Campus Resources Survey Responses.....	32
Appendix C: Course Registration and Scheduling Survey Responses.....	33
Appendix D: Overall Academic Advising Experience Survey Responses.....	34

Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine first-generation students' satisfaction with advising services from the Center for Advising, Career, and Student Success at California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB). To this end, a survey was administered to 78 first-generation students at CSUMB. Concepts from the Developmental Academic Advising Model created by Terry O'Banion were applied in the analysis of data to explore the quality of information provided by advisors during advising sessions. Also, concepts from Social Cognitive Theory by Albert Bandura were applied to examine how academic advising affect students' self-confidence and strategies for developing academic and career objectives. The findings indicate that CSUMB first-generation students are satisfied with the walk-in and advising services. However, the findings also point to the need to improve the advising and information provided by academic advisors to ensure that CSUMB students have a positive college experience.

Introduction

Effective academic advising programs are needed in institutions of higher education to support and guide students through successful academic performance and completion of graduation requirements. However, the literature shows that some academic advising programs are not providing students with the resources necessary to succeed. More specifically, sources indicate that some of the problems with academic advising are that academic advisors do not provide appropriate information and resources. When this is the case, students find it difficult to complete their major and minor requirements in a timely manner and fail to create positive relationships with their advisors.

Ideally, comprehensive academic advising programs in higher education are designed to influence student academic success (He and Hutson, 2016). For example, many academic advising programs provide students with knowledge about courses and graduation requirements (Strayhorn, 2015). Furthermore, many academic advisors work closely with students and encourage them to make informed personal decisions about their future career and personal goals (Strayhorn, 2015). This comprehensive approach to academic advising creates an important advisor-advisee relationship that in some cases, may be the only positive guidance that a student receives in college (Braun and Zolfagharian, 2016; Yarbrough, 2015). Successful academic advising also improves student retention and fosters a positive learning experience, which increases student satisfaction (Engle, 2007). Other studies of academic advising services found that, due to the lack of resources in many academic advising programs, many academic advisors do not receive proper training about student learning (Engle, 2007). Consequently, they do not provide the advising that is necessary for college student success (Baxter Magolda, 2003).

Given the importance of quality academic advising programs, this study was designed to assess the degree to which first-generation university students are satisfied with academic advising services provided by the California State University, Monterey Bay's (CSUMB) Center for Advising, Career, and Student Success (CACSS). This topic was chosen because it is important to understand the attitudes and opinions of first-generation college students and identify some of the program's challenges and successes.

The main research questions guiding this study are:

- 1) To what extent are first-generation students satisfied with the walk-in and individual education learning plan advising services provided by CSUMB's Center for Advising, Career, and Student Success?
- 2) To what extent are first-generation college students satisfied with the quality of information provided by academic advisors?
- 3) In what ways can academic advising promote a positive college experience for first-generation students?

Background of the Program

California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB) is the smallest one of the twenty-three California State University (CSU) campuses. It is located on the central coast of California in Monterey County. In the fall of 2015, it served approximately 7,378 students (California State University, Monterey Bay [CSUMB], n.d.). The Center for Advising, Career, and Student Success (CACSS) offers a variety of advising services that guide and support students to achieve academic and personal success. The CACSS is divided into three different programs: the Center for Advising, the Career Development Center, and the Center for Student Success. The Center for Advising assists students with creating and updating their individual education plans,

reviewing their major and minor requirements and navigating the graduation application process after completing their undergraduate degree requirements. (“CSUMB Center for Advising,” n.d.). The Career Development Center focuses on assisting students with creating resumes and cover letters and finding jobs and internships related to their career interests (“CSUMB Career Development,” n.d.). Lastly, the Center for Student Success assists students who are on academic probation. The advisors work closely with students as they respond to a set of back on track requirements that students need to complete to improve their individual academic success and remain enrolled. (“CSUMB Center for Student Success,” n.d.).

Literature Review

The following literature review provides an overview of the importance of academic advising in higher education and student success. The purpose is to analyze how an effective academic advising program can increase first-generation student satisfaction and create a positive college experience. The specific topics discussed include: 1) theoretical frameworks, 2) the relationship between the advisor and student advisee, 3) the roles of academic advisors, 4) academic advising and on-time graduation, and 5) academic advising and student retention.

Theoretical Frameworks

The study conducted for this capstone draws on Social Cognitive Theory and the Developmental Academic Advising Model to analyze and evaluate academic advising. The Social Cognitive theory by Albert Bandura focuses on how people motivate themselves to achieve personal goals. It consists of two important concepts that impact the achievement of goals: self-efficacy and self-regulated learning. In this case, Social Cognitive theory applies to academic advising because it focuses on student learning (Erlich & Russ-Eft, 2011). Additionally, Vuong et al. (2010) state that self-efficacy refers to one’s ability to perform

necessary tasks in order to achieve individual goals. With this idea in mind, Erlich & Russ-Eft (2011) acknowledge that students who successfully recognize and create their own academic plans demonstrate strong self-efficacy. In terms of self-regulated learning which refers to one's ability to understand and control one's learning strategies to achieve goals, Erlich & Russ-Eft state that students who are strong self-regulated learners are able to develop effective learning strategies in order to achieve their objectives.

This theory applies to the capstone research discussed here regarding how students who utilize the CACSS use self-efficacy to create their personal goals. Successful academic advisors guide their students toward a successful pathway that can lead their students to plan and set their academic and career goals. Therefore, the concept of self-regulated learning will investigate how students who utilize academic advising services acquire self-regulated strategies for developing their academic plan and individual objectives.

The second theory, developed by Terry O'Banion (1994), is the Developmental Academic Advising Model. It presents an academic advising model that focuses on the advising process with the goal of improving advising sessions. The model is comprised of five concepts. The first and second concepts are the exploration of life and academic goals. With these concepts in mind, academic advisors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with their students' individual characteristics and provide them with a process for setting their personal and professional goals.

In addition, the third and fourth concepts of the advising model are contributing to an understanding of undergraduate programs and course choices. O'Banion says that academic advisors should have solid knowledge about undergraduate programs and university

requirements. Finally, the fifth concept of the model states that it is important for academic advisors to understand the schedule of classes offered each academic term.

It is important to note that this model serves as a foundation for assessing student satisfaction with advising services to analyze whether academic advisors discuss with students' their individual and career goals during advising sessions.

Relationship Between the Advisor and Student Advisee

The relationship between a student and their academic advisor is a vital one. Ideally, the student will feel comfortable with their advisor, which makes it easier to discuss personal and career goals. Importantly, scholars have found that academic advisors are the primary individuals on campus to create strong relationships with students (Vianden and Barlow, 2015).

Relationships between the advisor and student advisee increase students' effective academic success and provide "a foundation for meaningful dialog and interactions" (Hughey, 2011, p.22).

To encourage advisors to develop a strong close relationship with their students, Yarbrough (2002) suggests using an engagement model. The five characteristics of the model are: 1) advisors acknowledge individual academic standards (e.g. recognizing students' abilities); 2) advisors provide catalog information (e.g. allowing students to understand their individual academic requirements); 3) advisors encourage students to recognize their strengths and weaknesses (e.g. determining what classes to take according to their abilities); 4) students explore their academic interests (e.g. researching about undergraduate programs); and 5) students make it a priority to complete their program successfully. Similarly, Braun & Zolfagharian (2016) created a scenario-based survey to analyze what type of advisor-advisee relationship increases student satisfaction. Eighty-nine sophomore students from a Southwest United States public university were randomly selected to complete the survey. The participants observed a

student advising session and then answered questions about the relationship between the advisor and student-advisee. The researchers found that the students regarded the scenario as ineffective because the advisor did not encourage the advisee to engage in the conversation. Consequently, the study found that equal interaction between the student and academic advisor is key to foster a positive relationship (Braun and Zolfagharian, 2016).

The Roles of Academic Advisors

In addition, the literature suggests that academic advisors play an important role in students' academic career by providing academic assistance and promoting individual student success. The primary role of advisors is to help students with their educational and career options by providing accurate information about degree requirements and academic programs of study. "Advisors are expected to share their knowledge of major and degree requirements, help students schedule their courses, and generally facilitate progress to obtain their degree in a timely manner" (Baker and Griffin, 2010, p.2). The goal of academic advisors should not be to focus on increasing graduation rates; instead, it should be to encourage students to obtain confidence in their abilities to accomplish their academic goals (White, 2015; O'Banion, 1994).

To elaborate on the role of academic advisors, Lynch and Stucky (2001) conducted a study that focused on examining the similarities and differences between the roles and responsibilities of academic advisors and faculty advisors. These include: 1) a model to analyze information provided in academic advising sessions; 2) the average length of advising meetings; 3) areas of advising responsibilities; and 4) the special population being advised. The results demonstrated that some of the important roles of academic advisors are assisting students with course selection, preparing them to register for classes, attend a new student orientation, and providing career life planning information.

Academic Advising and On-Time Graduation

It is shown that low rates of on-time graduation are affecting various institutions of higher education, particularly the California State University Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI's) (Contreras and Contreras, 2015). The majority of students who attend HSI's are first-generation college students. In 2015, each of the fourteen HSI's reported having low Hispanic/Latino graduation rates (Contreras and Contreras, 2015). For example, CSU Bakersfield and CSU Los Angeles reported that 33% of Hispanic/Latino students graduated (Contreras and Contreras, 2015). These graduation rates could possibly improve if academic advisors were to encourage and provide students with helpful resources that can lead them to successfully complete academic programs on-time.

In addition, Strayhorn (2015) states that a structured academic advising program that provides accurate information about university and degree requirements can positively lead to increase on-time graduation rates. This is important because it encourages first-generation students to feel supported during their academic career. All in all, an effective academic advising program can improve student success and increase efficiency, on-time graduation rates.

Academic Advising and Student Retention/Success

Most researchers agree that academic advising is a beneficial service that universities can provide to their students to support student success in academic and personal career achievement. Given that, first-generation students are those whose parents have not pursued a college degree they can greatly benefit from having an adult who guides them through college. Due to the insufficient support received from their families, first-generation students who attend post-secondary institutions more often leave college without completing a degree (Swecker et al., 2013; Petty, 2014).

In regard to student retention, academic advising can positively influence student achievement and contribute students' feelings of connectedness to the university (Petty, 2014). With this idea in mind, if students feel connected to the university, they will seek help from advisors more often.

Conclusion

The literature review has shed light on various issues pertaining to academic advising programs in higher education. It reveals that effective university academic advising programs contribute to higher on-time graduation rates, positive student satisfaction, and stronger academic performance. Significantly, most of the studies point to the necessity for advisors to develop a close relationship with their students.

Methodology

The methodological approach used in the capstone study combined qualitative and quantitative methods. In addition to the literature review, data were collected to examine student satisfaction with two academic advising services as well as the quality of information provided by academic advisors at the CSUMB CACSS. This entailed the creation of a 35- question survey. Google Forms, a simple way to create surveys and receive summaries of survey results with charts and graphs, was used to create the survey. It included original questions as well as some found in the article entitled *The Best Practices for Evaluating Academic Advising* by Szymanska (2011). The survey questions were divided into four sections. The first section measured the use of advising services. The second section measured the satisfaction of advising services. The third section measured student satisfaction with the information provided by academic advisors. The fourth section measured how academic advising promotes a positive college experience for first-generation students.

Between October 2, 2018, and October 19, 2018, the survey was shared with two CSUMB early outreach and support programs that support first-generation student success: College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) and TRIO Student Support Services (TRIO SSS). In addition, the director of CACSS emailed students requesting their participation. Furthermore, the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services, and instructors of the senior capstone seminar courses within the Social and Behavioral Sciences major and the family development course also sent the survey form on my behalf. Students were informed that their responses would be anonymous and confidential.

A total of 95 students completed the survey. Given that seventeen participants had freshmen standing or did not identify themselves as first-generation college students, of the students their data were deleted. Therefore, data from 78 first-generation CSUMB students from sophomore to senior levels were analyzed. Participants were asked to respond to each statement using a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, strongly disagree and disagree). The survey also included several open-ended questions that sought opinions about the academic advising services as well as suggestions regarding how to improve the program.

The survey data were analyzed using 2016 Microsoft Excel software, an electronic spreadsheet that is known for storing, organizing, and interpreting data. The program was used to code survey responses and create statistics.

Findings

This section presents the qualitative and quantitative findings. The findings include: 1) demographics of the participants: 2) use of advising services: 3) satisfaction with advising services: 4) satisfaction with the quality of information provided by academic advisors: and 5) maintaining and promoting a positive college experience through academic advising.

Demographics of Participants

Of the 78 participants, 77% identified as Hispanic or Latino. The second largest group of participants, 13%, identified themselves as White. The remainder of the participants identified themselves as Black or African American (5%), Asian (3%), Half White and Half Indian (1%), and Indo-Fijian (1%). The numbers reflect the demographics of the student body population at CSUMB, where the majority identifies as Hispanic/Latino.

Figure 1, shows the academic standing and college department of participating students.

Figure 1: Academic Class Standing and College Departments

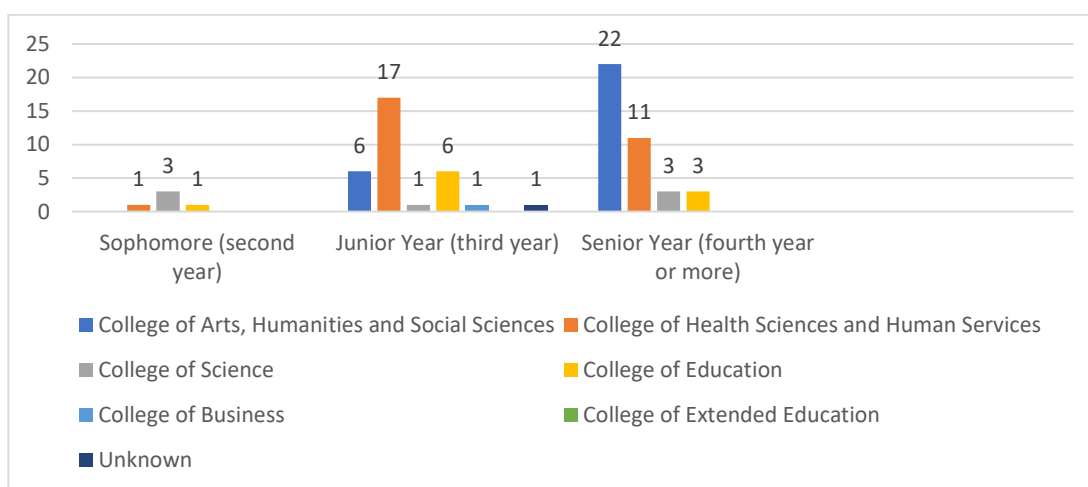


Figure 1: The bar graph below shows the academic class standing and college department of the 78 student participants.

Of the 78 participants, the largest group, (51%) of students that participated in the survey are seniors who have attended CSUMB for more than four years. The remaining participants include juniors (42%) and sophomores (6%). Furthermore, as shown in Figure 1, the majority of participants belong to the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Majors in this academic department include Social and Behavioral Sciences, Psychology, Human Communication, Visual and Public Art, Cinematic Arts and Technology, Music, Japanese Language and Culture, and Spanish Language and Culture.

Use of Advising Services

The first section of the survey assessed how frequently students have used the walk-in and individual educational learning plan advising meetings.

Figure 2: Use of Advising Services

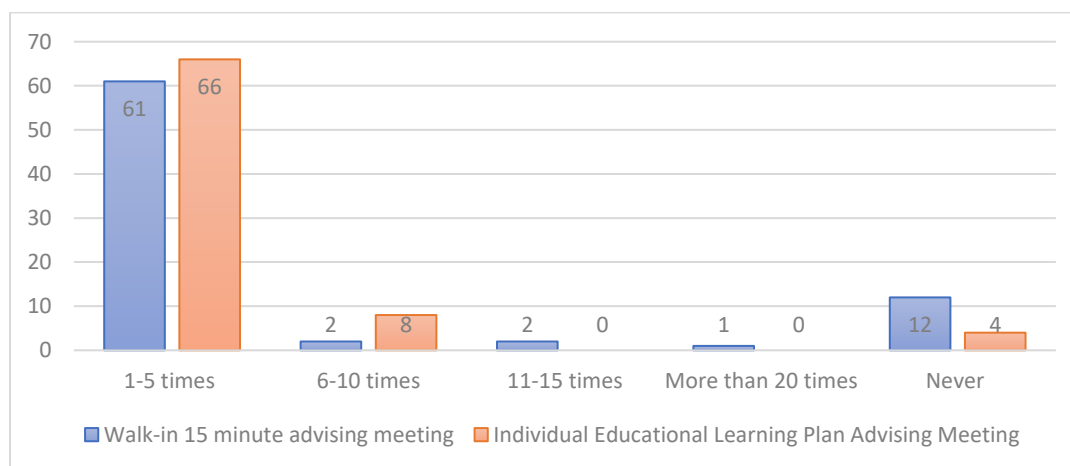


Figure 2: Number of times that students have used advising services provided by the CACSS during their enrollment at CSUMB.

Of the 78 respondents, 54% reported that they have used the individual educational learning plan meetings 1 to 5 times during their enrollment at CSUMB. The results demonstrate that more students are seeking individual advising meetings compared to the walk-in advising meetings because they have more time to go over detailed information about their academic requirements. Figure 2 also shows that a small proportion of students did not use either of the two advising services.

Satisfaction with Advising Services

The second section of the survey measured respondents' satisfaction with walk-in and individual educational advising meetings. The strongly agree responses were combined with agree responses and strongly disagree responses were combined with disagree, as shown in Figure 3 (see below).

Figure 3: Satisfaction with Information about General Education Requirements

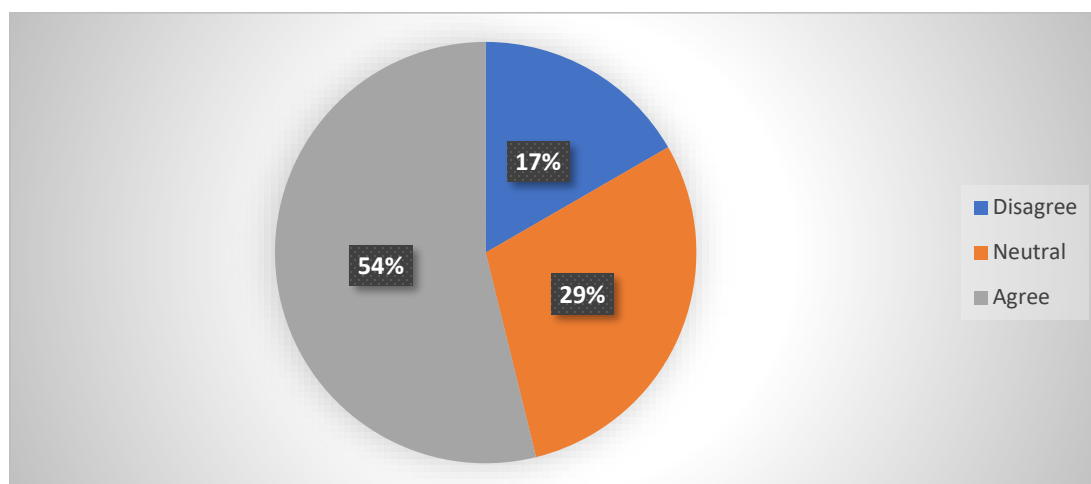


Figure 3: Percentage of student satisfaction about general education requirements

When asked if they were satisfied with the information provided by the CACSS about general education requirements, 54% of respondents agreed and 17% respondents disagreed. These findings indicate that students who are satisfied with the quality of information about general education requirements are clear about what classes they need to take before completing their undergraduate degree.

Another question asked students to rate their satisfaction with the information provided by the CACSS about undergraduate degree programs. Of the 78 respondents, 46% of students agreed, 23% rated their opinions as neutral and 31% disagreed. The findings of Figure 4 (below) demonstrate that students who are satisfied with the quality of information about CSUMB undergraduate degree programs believe they are provided with information that enables them to understand their program of choice.

Figure 4: Satisfaction with Information Provided About Undergraduate Degree Programs

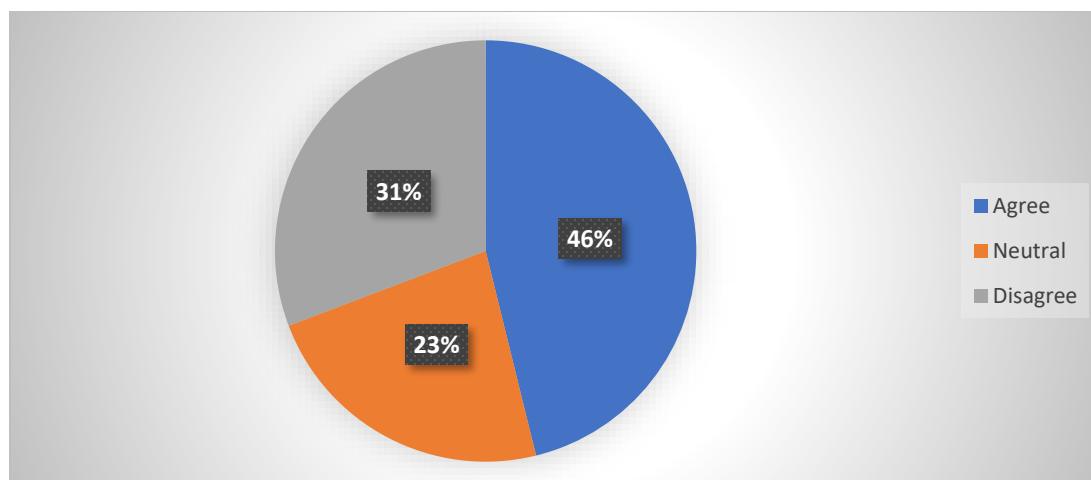


Figure 4: Percentage of student satisfaction with information provided by the CACSS about CSUMB undergraduate degree programs

“I would like CACSS staff to help me look into more options for careers involving my major.”

To further explore student satisfaction with advising services, an open-ended question asked students to provide suggestions about how the CACSS can improve services. Table 2 provides an overview of common themes in the responses.

Themes	Number of Respondents
Provide advisors per major	8
Offer more walk-in and individual educational plan appointment meetings	6
All major student advising outreach	6
Provide information about advising workshops	5
Needs to be more attentive to student needs	5
Advisors need to be more readily available	3
Unchanging academic advisor need to be consistent for majors	2
Offer more workshops on different days	2
Provide scholarship opportunities	2

Provide consistent information about undergraduate programs	1
Require Freshmen and Transfer mandatory meetings	1
CACSS advertising services	1
Advising consistency per course recommendations	1
Providing studying abroad assistance	1
Require mandatory advising meeting for seniors	1

Table 2: Main themes that emerged from student suggestions about how to improve the CACSS program

The majority of students stated that they were satisfied with the services provided by the CACSS. However, areas of improvement and suggestions were discussed. The main suggestions are that the CACSS should provide students with more advisors per major, offer more walk-in and individual appointments meetings, and be more attentive to their needs. A senior from the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, said that better availability of appointments is needed because “it takes forever to get an appointment, and advisors aren’t always aware of the classes needed to graduate”.

Satisfaction with Quality of Information Provided by Academic Advisors

The third section of the survey measured respondents’ level of satisfaction with the information provided by their academic advisors. Figure 5 (below) shows student satisfaction with the quality of discussion about career goals, academic challenges, academic interests, and college transition.

Figure 5: Levels of Satisfaction with Information Provided by CACSS Academic Advisors

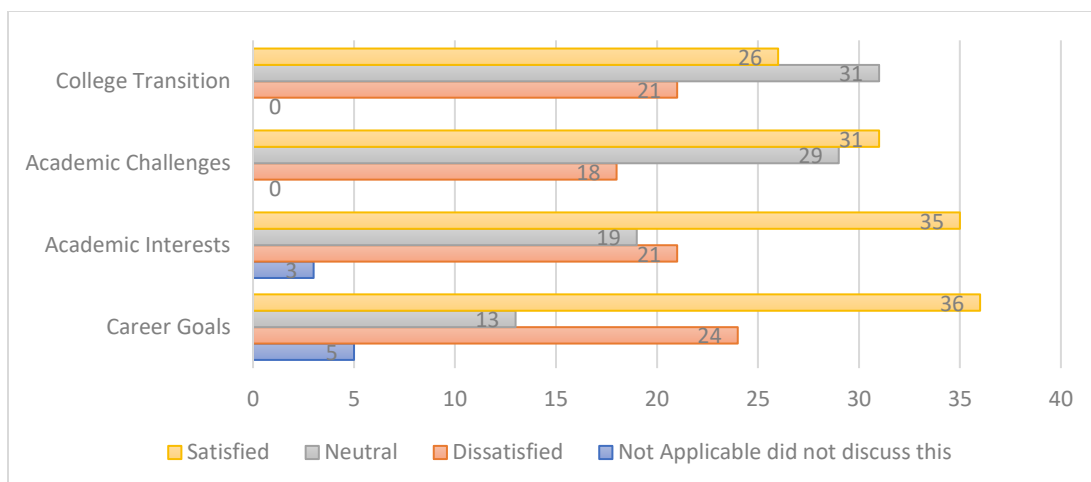


Figure 5: Overall student count of advising topics that contribute to students' levels of satisfaction

“CACSS Advisors should spend more time getting to know the students they are helping.”

In regard to information about career goals, 46% of respondents said that they were satisfied, while almost 30% were dissatisfied; the remaining 6% did not discuss this topic. This question shows that students' dissatisfaction was due to the low level of communication and helpfulness of advisors.

When asked about satisfaction with information about academic interests, 45% of respondents said that they were satisfied and 27% were dissatisfied. Interestingly, 4% did not discuss this topic with their advisors. The 21 students who were dissatisfied indicated that academic advisors are not engaging with them, nor providing them with information about their career interests.

In addition, when students were asked about their academic challenges, 40% said that they were satisfied, while 14% were dissatisfied; the remaining 38% provided a neutral response. The number of students who provided a neutral response might signify that academic advisors are not addressing students' academic challenges.

Figure 5 (see above) displays student levels of satisfaction with information provided by academic advisors about the transition to college from high school or a community college. Thirty-three percent of respondents said that they were satisfied with the information provided and 27% were dissatisfied; the remaining 40% were neutral. As the first-generation in their family to attend college, respondents would like to be provided with opportunities to be involved and easily adjust to a new campus community.

The next set of questions asked students to rate their academic advisors' knowledge about general education requirements and graduation requirements. Figure 6 provides the findings of the 78 respondents, 77% agreed that their academic advisor is knowledgeable about their graduation requirements and 12% disagreed. This clearly signifies that most students believe their advisors are providing appropriate information about the classes they need to take to complete their lower and upper division general education requirements.

Figure 6: CACSS Advisors Knowledge About General Education Requirements

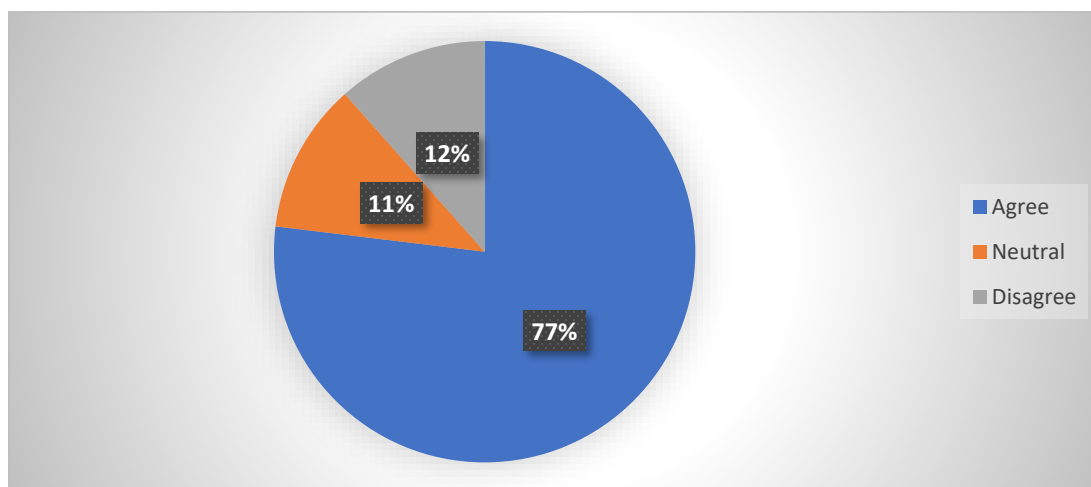


Figure 6: Overall percentage of CACSS advisor's knowledge of student's general education requirements

"My academic advisor helped me find what classes I need to move forward"

Furthermore, Figure 7 shows students' ratings of academic advisors' knowledge about graduation requirements. 74% of respondents said that they were satisfied, 18% were neutral and 8% disagreed.

Figure 7: CACSS Advisors Knowledge About Graduation Requirements

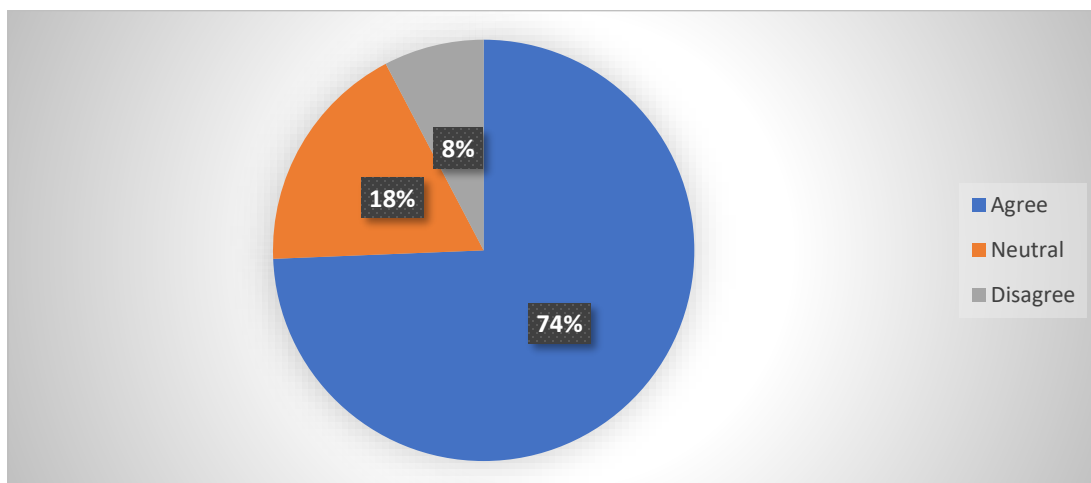


Figure 7: Overall percentage of student satisfaction with CACSS advisor's knowledge of graduation requirements

"My academic advisor helps me recognize all the classes that are necessary to graduate."

Figure 8: Respectful and Supportive Academic Advising Environment

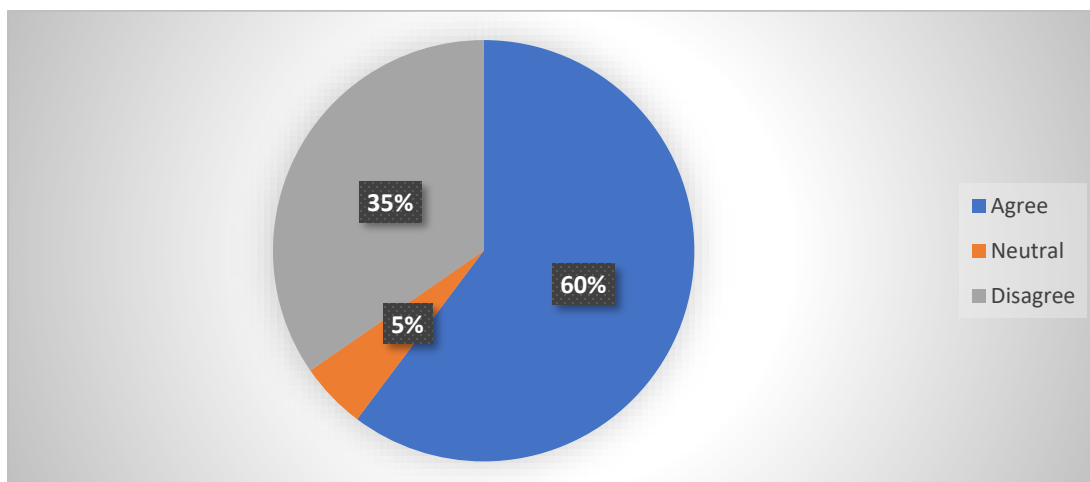


Figure 8: Percentage of students who believe that their academic advisors provide them with a supportive and respectful environment

"The advisors make you feel welcomed, comfortable, and secure"

Students were also asked if they believe that their academic advisors provide them with a supportive and respectful environment during their advising meetings. Sixty percent agreed and 35% of respondents disagreed, with 5% rating their opinions as neutral. Overall, the results demonstrate that the majority of students feel respected and supported by CACSS staff.

Participants were asked to describe their overall academic advising experiences. Among the positive responses, the main theme was the relationship between the advisor and student-advisee. A first-generation Senior student said, “In CACSS you meet many great people whom you have the opportunity to build a relationship with and it’s like taking a step into networking. They can later let you know about opportunities that might interest you”. Another sophomore responded, “My advisor motivates me and acknowledges my hard work.”

Promoting a Positive College Experience Through Academic Advising

The last section of the survey measured the extent to which academic advising promotes a positive college experience. Respondents were asked to reflect on their academic advising experiences and rated their levels of satisfaction with topics that contribute to obtaining a positive college experience. Figure 9 provides a breakdown of the results.

Figure 9: Positive College Experience Through Academic Advising

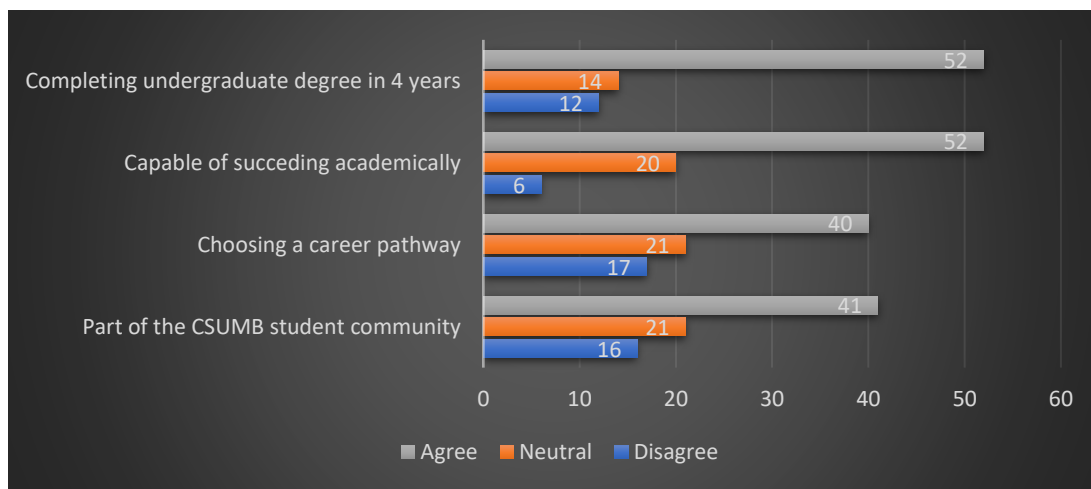


Figure 9: Breakdown of topics that contribute to an overall positive college experience

“Academic Advisors should help out with career goals. They should ask students what they want to do, so they can suggest classes to take that can interest you.”

As shown in Figure 9, 67% of respondents said that they feel capable of graduating from CSUMB in 4 years, while 15% disagreed and 18% were neutral. Respondents who disagreed or were neutral had the opportunity to provide an explanation of their answers. They said they were misguided by their advisors, which contributed that they would not complete their degree in 4 years.

Participants were also asked if academic advising services contribute to their capability of succeeding in their undergraduate career. As shown in Figure 9, 67% of respondents said that they agreed and 8% disagreed. Interestingly, 25% of students rated their responses as neutral. The two-thirds of students who agree that they feel capable of succeeding academically clearly signifies that the academic information provided by the CACSS contributes to most students' ability to perform academically successful during their undergraduate career at CSUMB.

When asked if academic advising services have guided participants in choosing their individual career pathway, 51% of respondents said that they agree, 22% disagreed and 27% rated their level of agreement as neutral. Those who disagreed or rated their experience as neutral said that academic advisors do not provide effective guidance towards a career pathway. One student in particular mentioned seeking help but felt like his questions were not going to be answered.

When students were asked if academic advising services contribute to feeling part of the CSUMB student community, 53% agreed, 20% disagreed and 27% were neutral. The majority of respondents who disagreed or were neutral explained that they do not feel valued by the CACSS staff and believe that they are just another student seeking advice.

Toward the end of the survey, an open-ended question prompted students to discuss what they liked or disliked about academic advising services. One student stated that the advisors respond to student questions in a short amount of time. Another student suggested that “counselors should be trained to have more personal connections with their students to create a friendlier environment where students are actually willing to share their goals, concerns, and ideas.”

Discussion of Findings

Satisfaction with Advising Services Analysis

Research Question 1: To what extent are first-generation students satisfied with the walk-in and individual education learning plan advising services provided by CSUMB’s Center for Advising, Career, and Student Success?

The first research question explores the extent to which first-generation students are satisfied with the walk-in and the individual educational learning plan advising meetings. Based on the study findings, the majority of first-generation students at CSUMB are satisfied with the information that the CACSS provides to them about their general education and graduation requirements. These findings are consistent with the literature review, which indicate that academic advising programs provide students with an understanding of their course and major requirements (Strayhorn, 2015).

Bandura’s self-regulated learning also provides an understanding of the results of the survey. In the open-ended responses, students who were dissatisfied with the two academic advising services said that misguidance and the poor quality of information received led them to create their educational learning plan on their own. Self-regulated learners have the ability to control their individual learning strategies in order to achieve their individual goals (Erlich &

Russ-Eft, 2011). These findings show that participants who created their individual educational plan with limited guidance from their advisors demonstrated strong self-regulation by developing individual strategies to help them figure out the classes needed to fulfill their undergraduate degree.

Satisfaction with Quality of Information Provided by Academic Advisors

Research Question 2: To what extent are first-generation college students satisfied with the quality of information provided by academic advisors?

The second research question addresses the extent to which first-generation students are satisfied with the quality of information provided by academic advisors. In the Developmental Academic Advising Model, O'Banion suggests that life and academic goals should be discussed with students. Based on students' low levels of satisfaction with the information provided, the findings suggest that academic advisors are not sufficiently emphasizing or discussing career goals and academic interests with students.

In the Developmental Academic Advising Model, O'Banion (1994) suggested that academic advisors must have a solid understanding of undergraduate programs and university requirements. When students were asked about their academic advisors' knowledge of general education and graduation requirements, most students agreed that their advisors have strong knowledge about this topic and know how to provide clear information regarding individual education learning plans. These findings are consistent because it provides a strong foundation for creating effective academic advising meetings.

A significant part of a students' academic advising experience is to be in a secure and safe environment. Some participants offered that their advisor provided them with a supportive

and comforting environment. As suggested by the findings of the literature review, students who develop a close relationship with their advisor are able to thrive personally and academically.

Promoting a Positive College Experience Through Academic Advising Analysis

Research Question 3: In what ways can academic advising promote a positive college experience for first-generation students?

The third main research question explored the ways in which academic advising can promote a positive college experience for first-generation students. The self-efficacy concept refers to an individual's belief and ability to achieve their individual goals (Gore, 2006). This concept was measured by asking students if the advising services received by the CACSS contributed to the likelihood that they would complete their undergraduate degree and their ability to succeed academically. Half of the students indicated that the advising services have encouraged first-generation students to obtain self-efficacy of achieving their goal of completing their undergraduate degree in 4 years and their capability to succeed academically which contributes to an overall positive college experience.

The concept of self-efficacy was also used to assess if the advising services contributed to students feeling part of the CSUMB student community. Students expressed that the advising services do not contribute to their feeling part of the CSUMB student community. Instead, students feel like they are just another unknown number of students seeking academic advising services.

A way that academic advising can contribute students to obtain a positive college experience is by encouraging academic advisors to show interest in their student needs and reach out to students to inform them about academic workshops and scholarship opportunities. Although most first-generation students said that they feel confident in completing their

undergraduate degree in 4 years, first-generation students' overall positive college experience would benefit from establishing a close relationship with their advisors in order to feel more valued as a student and feel part of the CSUMB student body.

Discussion of Limitations

An important limitation of this study is the sample size. Due to the time and availability of resources, the sample does not fully represent the overall student population of CSUMB first-generation students. For example, most of the students are from the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and the College of Health Sciences and Human Services. Another limitation of the study is that 50 of the 78 participants did not respond to them.

Conclusion

The main objective of this research was to measure the level of satisfaction of first-generation university students with the academic advising services provided by the CSUMB Center for Advising, Career, and Student Success. Overall, the findings indicate that approximately half of first-generation CSUMB students are satisfied with the walk-in and individual educational advising services. However, the quality of information provided by the academic advisors needs to be improved to ensure that CSUMB first-generation students have a positive college experience during their undergraduate career. Based on student suggestions, a main priority for advisors is to appropriately provide career and academic resources and support their students to ensure that they have opportunities to succeed and develop a sense of belonging in the CSUMB student community.

Further research could examine the opinions and experiences of a larger sample of first-generation students at CSUMB as well as examine correlations between responses and grade

point average. In addition, focus group discussions and individual student interviews could yield in-depth data about students' experiences with academic advising services.

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APPENDIX A

First-Generation Students Personal Interests and Career Goals Survey Responses

Academic Advising has increased my clarity about my personal interests

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Personal Interests	37	23	18

Academic Advising has increased my clarity about my career goals

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Career Goals	28	26	24

Academic Advising has increased my knowledge about undergraduate degree programs related to my career goals.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Knowledge about Undergraduate Degree Programs	32	18	28

Total: 78 CSUMB first-generation student responses

APPENDIX B

Campus Resources Survey Responses

Academic Advising has increased my knowledge about the Cooperative Learning Center

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Cooperative Learning Center	36	21	21

Academic Advising has increased my knowledge about the Food Pantry

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Food Pantry	14	12	52

Academic Advising has increased my knowledge about the Personal Growth and Counseling Center

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Personal Growth and Counseling Center	20	15	43

Academic Advising has increased my knowledge about the Career Development Office

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
CACSS Career Development	20	16	42

Academic Advising has increased my knowledge about how to apply for financial aid and scholarships

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Financial Aid and Scholarships	22	19	37

Total: 78 CSUMB first-generation student responses

APPENDIX C

Course Registration and Scheduling Information Survey Responses

Levels of Satisfaction with information provided about course registration and scheduling

	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Not Applicable
Course Registration and Scheduling	44	16	16	2

Total: 78 CSUMB first-generation student responses

APPENDIX D**Overall Academic Advising Experience Survey Responses**

Overall, I am satisfied with my academic advising experience at CSUMB

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
First-Generation Student Academic Advising Experience	41	24	13

Total: 78 CSUMB first-generation student responses