Gaining a Better Understanding of ESL Students:
Identifying Achievements and Barriers in Order to Support Their Success
Welcome

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Outline

- Connecting with our ESL students
- Why we pursued a grant
- The Study
- Data Gathered
- Next Steps
Activity

Connecting with our ESL students
Academics

• Unique tutoring and academic support services are necessary

• Students felt confident to overcome linguistic barriers

• Do not trust or seek out resources
Social

- Non-linguistic challenges are real barriers
  - Financial
  - Acceptance
  - Structural restraints

- Strong peer relationships provide support
ESL Students at Newark

What we knew

• ESL Immigrants 3.3% of student population
• Only anecdotally
• Difference from other campuses
ESL Students at Newark

Existing Resources

- ESL English course (EduT&L 1902)
- Writer’s Studio
- Tutoring Center
- Multicultural Programs
Why we pursued the grant

• Recommendations from literature
• Formal process and validity of study
• Provided financial resources for study
• Undergraduate Research Assistants
Goals of Study

• Identify academic and social needs to improve student success

• Create environment students feel connected and can thrive

• Inform decisions on future programming
Methods

• Historical data – academics, retention, and transition to Columbus

• Focus Groups with current students
New First Term Students (NFTS)
- AU13, AU14, AU15
- NFTS ESL students
- Other NFTS students

ESL Students
- Citizenship status
- Country of citizenship
- Place of birth
Things to keep in mind

- ESL Group smaller than other NFTS
  AU13 - 67 vs. 1005
  AU14 - 95 vs. 1173
  AU15 - 69 vs. 1150

- Information provided by students on admissions application
  Could be more ESL immigrant students
Fewer students on probation

Historical Data

- ESL Students
- Other Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AU13</th>
<th>AU14 TERMS</th>
<th>AU15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% ON PROBATION</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>23.16</td>
<td>23.19</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.92</td>
<td>29.56</td>
<td>28.7</td>
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The graph shows a decrease in the percentage of students on probation from AU13 to AU15, with ESL students and other students compared.
Higher Cumulative GPA in first term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>ESL Students</th>
<th>Other Students</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU13</td>
<td>2.431</td>
<td>2.349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU14</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU15</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.496</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Historical Data

Higher percentage of retention

- ESL Students
- Other Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERMS</th>
<th>AU13</th>
<th>AU14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Of Retention</td>
<td>77.61</td>
<td>75.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>58.65</td>
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</table>
Historical Data

Higher Rates Transitioning to Columbus 2\textsuperscript{nd} AU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>ESL Students</th>
<th>Other Students</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU13</td>
<td>61.54%</td>
<td>53.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>AU14</td>
<td>63.89%</td>
<td>59.45%</td>
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</table>
Focus Groups

Describe qualitative data

- Focus Groups & Process
- Participant Demographics
- Summary of Responses
Focus Groups

Process

- Identified ESL immigrant students
- Students self-selected to participate
- Nine focus groups held
  1 hour each
  13 participants
Focus Groups

Participant Demographics

Age

- 18-19 years old: 38%
- 20-25 years old: 54%
- 31 or older: 8%
Focus Groups

Participant Demographics

Ethnicity

- 9 African
- 2 Black/African American
- 1 Asian American
- 1 Hispanic/White
Focus Groups

Country of Origin
Focus Groups

Participant demographics

Length of Time in the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+ years</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
Focus Groups

Preparation for College

• Thought they were, but were actually not
  Issues with pace of courses, time
  management, independence, and new
  experience

• Reached out to
  Professors
  Advisors
  Academic Peer Coaches
  Resources on campus
Focus Groups

Connection to Campus

• Felt connected to campus through Peers, resources, and being involved on campus

• On-campus would reach out to faculty and advisors

• Off-campus would reach out to friends

Some students said they had no one
Focus Groups

Peer Relationships

- Have strong relationships
- Higher self-esteem and sense of belonging
- Consider classmates and other foreign-born students as their friends
  all have common goal and similar interests
Focus Groups

Difference from Peers

- Experience
- Culture
- Race/Ethnicity
- Language
Focus Groups

Academic Progress

• Struggles with English speaking, reading, and writing skills

• Forced to overcome challenges by
  Speaking to professors
  Putting in more time
  Reaching out to resources
Focus Groups

Responsibilities Off-Campus

• Family
  Some are support systems for their parents & take care of younger siblings or their home
  Others only care for themselves
  Most are role-models for younger siblings

• Employment
  Most have a job and work an average of 16 hours per week
Financial Impact

- Only some students experience financial struggles
  - Primarily only when family first moved to the United States due to limited job opportunities
- Motivates them to work harder
- Some receive financial aid to help pay for college expenses, others work to help pay for it themselves
Future Programming

- Hire permanent position for ELL Professional Tutor and Mentor
- First-year writing courses
- Summer bridge program
Thank you
Center for Higher Education
Enterprise Faculty Research
Grants Program!


Questions?