



The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*)

Overview of 2012 Survey Results SOWELA Technical Community College

The key information in this report has been extracted by SOWELA's Office of Planning and Analysis (OPA) for Strategic Effectiveness from the SENSE data that were published by the Center for Community College Student Engagement in Austin, Texas for year 2012.

Introduction

The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*), a product and service of the Center for Community College Student Engagement, helps community colleges discover why some entering students persist and succeed and others do not.

Administered during the 4th and 5th weeks of the fall academic term, *SENSE* asks students to reflect on their earliest experiences (academic and services-related) with the college. *SENSE* serves as a complementary piece to the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*), with a more narrowed focus on early student experiences.

***SENSE* Member Colleges**

SENSE data analyses include a three-year cohort of participating colleges. This approach increases the total number of institutions and students contributing to the national dataset, which in turn increases the reliability of the overall results. In addition, the three-year cohort approach minimizes the impact, in any given year, of statewide consortia participation.

The 2012 *SENSE* Cohort includes all colleges that participated in *SENSE* from 2010 through 2012. If a college participated more than one time in the three-year period, the cohort includes data only from its most recent year of participation. The 2012 *SENSE* Cohort participants included 245 institutions from 38 states, the District of Columbia, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and the Northern Marianas.

***SENSE* Sampling**

In *SENSE* sampling procedures, students are sampled at the classroom level. The survey was administered in classes randomly selected from those courses most likely to enroll entering students, will a random sample pulled from all first college-level English and math courses and all developmental reading, writing, and math courses, excluding ESL courses.

Of those entering students sampled at our institution, **222 out of 600** respondents submitted usable surveys. The number of completed surveys produced an overall “percent of target” rate of **37%**. The percent of target rate is the ratio of the adjusted number of completed surveys (surveys that were filled out properly and did not fall into any of the exclusionary categories) to the target sample size.

Excluded Respondents

Exclusions serve the purpose of ensuring that all institutional reports are based on the same sampling methods and that results are therefore comparable across institutions. Respondents are excluded from institutional reports for the following reasons:

- The respondent did not indicate whether he or she was enrolled full-time or less than full-time at the institution.
- The respondent did not indicate whether he or she was an entering or returning student.
- The survey is invalid. A survey is invalid if student answered all sub-items of Item 19 as either *never* or *four or more times*.
- The student reported his or her age as under 18.
- The student indicated that he or she had taken the survey in a previous class or did not respond to item 1.
- Oversample respondents are not included because they are selected outside of *SENSE*'s primary sampling procedures.

2012 Student Respondent Profile

Enrollment Status

23% of entering student respondents at SOWELA college report attending college less than full-time, while **27%** of the 2012 *SENSE* Cohort colleges' entering students report attending college less than full-time. Only **77%** of our entering student respondents report being full-time college students compared to **73%** of the 2012 *SENSE* Cohort colleges' entering students. This inverse representation is a result of the sampling technique and the in-class administration process. Population data (reported for the most recent **IPEDS** enrollment report) for all students at our college is **34%** less than full-time and **66%** full-time. For this reason, survey results are weighted or disaggregated by enrollment status so that reports will accurately reflect the underlying student population.

Age

At SOWELA, entering student respondents range from 18 to 64 years of age. Approximately **92%** are between **18 to 39** years. **72%** are between **18 and 24** years, while **20%** are between **25 and 39** years of age. Only **2%** are over **40** years old. Student population at our college (in the range of 18 - 24 years of age) are fewer than the 2012 *SENSE* Cohort, of which **81%** of students are between 18 and 24 (compared to SOWELA's **72%**). 2012 *SENSE* Cohort's **27%** are between 25 and 39 as compared to SOWELA's **20%** in the same age range (25 - 39). Finally while **13%** of the *SENSE* Cohort are over 40 years old, only **2%** of the SOWELA's entering student population are over 40 years old.

Gender

Unlike the 2012 *SENSE* Cohort (with **42% male and 54% female**), **47%** of our entering student respondents are **male** while **45%** are **female**.

Racial Identification

50% of SOWELA entering student respondents identified themselves as White/non-Hispanic, **3%** as Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, **33%** as Black or African American, and **0%** as Asian. **1%** of the student respondents are American Indian and **4%** marked *other* when responding to the question, “What is your racial identification?” 2012 *SENSE* Cohort, on the other hand, has **51%** White/non-Hispanic, **16%** Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, **15%** Black or African American, **3%** Asian, and **2%** American Indian.

International Students

Only **3%** of our entering students responded *yes* to the question, “Are you an international student or foreign national?” Our college has fewer international students than the 2012 *SENSE* Cohort, of which **5%** are international.

The results for the following student respondent categories are weighted according to the most recent IPEDS population data.

Limited English Speaking Students

At our college, only **3.8%** of *SENSE* respondents are non-native English speakers.

First-Generation Status

41% of entering student respondents indicate that neither parent has earned a degree higher than a high school diploma nor has college experience; accordingly, these students are considered "first-generation.

Orientation

30.2% of entering student respondents report attending an on-campus orientation prior to the beginning of classes, while **47.3%** report attending an online orientation. **3.2%** of entering student respondents report enrolling in an orientation course during their first semester/quarter at the college.

Courses Dropped

8.6% of entering student respondents report dropping at least one course after the first day of class.

External Commitments

37.9% of entering student respondents work **21** or more hours per week; and **57.2%** spend at least **6** hours per week working for pay.

Goals

Entering student respondents were asked to indicate their reasons or goals for attending this college. The majority, **81%** indicated that obtaining an associate degree is a primary goal. On the question of transfer to a 4-year college or university, **51%** responded affirmatively while **49%** indicated that their goal did not include transferring to a 4-year college or university.