

# **UALR Assessment Report**

## **2002 FYEC Report: Student Learning in 2001**

### **Survey Administration**

This survey was conducted on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR). In Fall 2001, eleven sections of the freshman seminar, which included 225 undergraduate students, were invited to participate in the FYI study. Of these eleven sections, ten were PEAW 1300 courses and one was a PEAW 1124 course. A total of 174 surveys were completed from the eleven sections yielding a 77% response rate.

The FYI survey was distributed to the students enrolled in the course. The survey was given prior to the completion of the freshman course (one week before the Thanksgiving Holiday). In Fall 2001, eleven factors were evaluated. They are listed as follows:

1. Course Effectiveness
2. Course Increased Participation
3. Course Improved Cognitive Abilities
4. Course Improved Relationships
5. Course Improved Life Skills
6. Course Improved College Life
7. Course Instruction
8. Student Sense of Belonging
9. Course Improved Self Perception
10. Satisfaction with College/University
11. Overall Satisfaction with Course

### **Respondent Demographics**

Demographics for the 174 students who participated in the Fall 2001 FYI survey are listed as follows:

<b>Gender:</b>	Female	71%
	Male	29%
<b>Ethnicity:</b>	African American	56%
	White Non-Hispanic	40%
	Multi-racial/Other	2%
	Hispanic American	2%
<b>Hours Worked per Week (paying job):</b>	Do not work	28%
	1-10 hours	8%
	11-20 hours	23%
	21-30 hours	22%
	31-40+ hours	18%
<b>Current Residence:</b>	Campus residence halls	31%
	Off-campus w/family	49%
	Off-campus w/o family	20%

It is important to note that this survey is based on a different pool of students every year. Such variability in a dependent variable would seem to decrease the reliability of the data; however, for this particular situation, this is not the case. Just as the makeup of the student body is ever changing, so are their requirements for overall course satisfaction. The tracking of this kind of data allows for the documentation of almost real-time trends in the requirements for overall course satisfaction.

### **Priority Matrix**

The Priority Matrix is a statistically based analysis involving t-tests and regression analyses. Upon the interpretation of this matrix, one can determine the degree to which these factors are predictors of overall satisfaction. The value calculated as Cronbach's Alpha then provides a reliability coefficient for each factor.

The major predictors (impact factors) have the greatest impact on overall satisfaction, while the minor predictors (no impact factors), regardless of their performance, are unlikely to have an impact on the predictability of

overall satisfaction. The prioritization of each factor should be assigned accordingly. The Priority Matrix Table (see Table 1) below denotes which factors should be improved and which should be monitored. The factors that are bolded are directly related to UALR's learning objectives for the First Year Experience course.

**Table 1 - Priority Matrix Table for Fall 2001**

		Impact on Overall Satisfaction	Performance Description
Top Priority for Fall 2001			
Factor 7. Course Instruction		Extreme Impact	Good
<b>Factor 3. Course Improved Cognitive Abilities</b>		<b>Moderate Impact</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Factor 6. Course Improved College Life</b>		<b>Slight Impact</b>	<b>Good</b>
Factor 10. Overall Satisfaction with College/University		Slight Impact	Good
Factor 2. Course Increased Participation		Slight Impact	Fair
Monitor			
<b>Factor 8. Student Sense of Belonging</b>		<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Factor 4. Course Improved Relationships</b>		<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Good</b>
Factor 1. Course Effectiveness		No Impact	Good
<b>Factor 9. Course Improved Self Perception</b>		<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Factor 5. Course Increased Life Skills</b>		<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Fair</b>

The top priority factors for Fall 2001 are as follows: Factor 7 (Course Instruction), Factor 3 (Course Improved Cognitive Abilities), Factor 6 (Course Improved College Life), Factor 10 (Overall Satisfaction with College/University), and Factor 2 (Course Increased Participation). These factors were found to have the greatest potential to improve the Overall Satisfaction for the Course. For four of the top priority factors, UALR's performance was rated as 'Good,' while one top priority factor was rated as 'Fair.' Factor 7 (Course Instruction) was identified as an Extreme Impact factor. Although it is not directly aligned with the learning objectives, efforts should focus on the improvement of this factor since it will have the greatest potential to improve the Overall Satisfaction of the Course. Subsequent efforts should focus on Factor 3, which has a Moderate Impact, and then Factor 2. Factor 2 should take a higher priority than Factors 6 and 10 because it received the lowest rating 'Fair' performance rating of the variables that were deemed to have a 'Slight Impact.'

### **PEAW 1300 and PEAW 1124**

In summation, the First Year Initiative Survey was completed by 174 students taking PEAW 1300 and PEAW 1124. For this survey, students ranked their level of satisfaction in eleven different categories, or factors. These factors were assessed in 75 questions. The factor means for the University were statistically compared to the average factor means of a peer group ('Select Six'), of structurally similar schools ('Carnegie Class'), and of all the participating institutions ('All Schools'). An analysis of the data obtained from this study presents the results of the overall course effectiveness, factors with the greatest impact, areas to maintain and monitor, and an item analysis of Factor 7 (Course Instruction). Overall Course Satisfaction (Factor 11) was the dependent variable. Precedence should be given to top priority factors that have the greatest level of impact, since improvement in these areas will yield the most significant results.

The top priority factors which produce the greatest impact in overall course effectiveness and student satisfaction and its ratings are listed as follows:

Top Priority for Fall 2001		
Factor 7. Course Instruction		Good
Factor 3. Course Improved Cognitive Abilities		Good
Factor 6. Course Improved College Life		Good
Factor 10. Overall Satisfaction with College/University		Good
Factor 2. Course Increased Participation		Fair

The data suggests further research on methods to improve course instruction (extreme impact) and on Improving Cognitive abilities (high impact). Efforts to Improve College Life (slight impact), Overall Satisfaction with the College/University (slight impact), and Increase Participation (slight impact) should be maintained and monitored for progression.

For more information about this study, please contact Dr. Thea Zidonowitz Hoeft at 501.569.8686 or tmhoeft@ualr.edu.