Research Poster

2836 - Transfer Student Expectations for Affordable Course Materials: A Focus Group Study
Transition Programs and Supports, Diversity and Inclusion

This session shares the results of a fall 2022 focus group study determining the affordable course material needs of in-state transfer students to our large research university. The study highlights student expectations and material acquisition strategies based on their (generally) less expensive prior academic institutions and the increasing availability of affordable library resources. This examination of pre- and post-transition experiences guides collection development and other retention strategies, while underscoring outreach that remains to be done.

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TRANSFER STUDENT EXPECTATIONS FOR AFFORDABLE COURSE MATERIALS: A FOCUS GROUP STUDY

Zach Welhouse, Beth Filar Williams, Stefanie Buck

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to explore what transfer students from other Oregon institutions experience when they use the Valley Library to access their course materials and what their expectations are regarding the affordability of course learning materials, either those available through the library course reserves system or through open educational resources.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Number of Students: 23
Total Number of Focus Groups: 5

DATA

Access
Transfer students found the cost of university textbooks and homework/quiz platforms to be a barrier to their acquiring the needed course materials and use a variety of strategies to acquire them.

Affordability
Some students had to make certain sacrifices to purchase their required course materials, such as which instructor to choose.

METHODOLOGY

- Participants contacted by posters, flyers, and e-mail via comprehensive list of transfer students
- Flyers also distributed during Welcome Week transfer student event
- Compensation: gift card, food, and drink
- Online eligibility screening for age, transfer status, availability, and prior Oregon education
- Four m-person groups: One online group
- Groups met in a variety of locations to accommodate different populations
- 2-hour sessions. Two blocks with three questions each.
- One conversation leader and two recorders/supplemental questioners
- Introductions and icebreakers
- Follow-up questions developed naturally from discussion
- Transcription, coding, and code-checking

ACTION ITEM: MARKETING
- Don’t notice screens. Use paper signs or whiteboards
- Offer small handouts: “something I can hold onto”
- Students look down. Try chalkling or stickers on sidewalk
- Use peer leaders to share: it’s “more personal”
- Attend student club meetings to share out
- Share through advisors (or majors) – specifics, “not just ‘resources’”
- Email: half say YES and half say NO WAY

ACTION ITEM: SHARE DATA
- The Course Reserves task force
- Specific stakeholders in the General Education Council
- The Academic Affairs Leadership Team
- Specific stakeholders on the campus-wide OER team
- The OSU Undergrad Student Success Committee
- The Libraries’ Research & Learning Department and Public Services Department

ACTION ITEM: UPDATE
- Library websites
- Liaison librarian guides
- Liaison librarian communications
- Library introduction tutorials
- Library tours
- Canvas training modules

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I bought the book but then the teacher said we don’t need it and we were all like ‘Wow, I went my $200 book bad’.