

Report on Libraries Outreach Activity: Transfer Student Social with Departmental Librarians & Advisers

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Transfer Student Social | Tuesday, September 27th 2016 | 4:00 - 5:00 pm

This Dawg Daze event welcomed transfer students to the UW Libraries and provided them an opportunity to socialize with fellow transfer students and to meet librarians and advisers for their intended majors before the start of fall quarter. Refreshments were served and the event was strategically scheduled immediately following the Undergraduate Research Program's popular "Undergraduate Research for Community College Transfer Students" panel presentation.

Goals and Outcomes

1. Create a welcoming library event for new transfer students.
2. Connect transfer students with the subject librarian for their intended major.
3. Inform transfer students of the Libraries' resources and services, especially Subject Librarians.

Partners

Office of First Year Programs (FYP), Undergraduate Research Program (URP), Undergraduate Academic Advising (UAA)

Resources

Funding: Funds spent on refreshments for 60-75 attendees.

Planning Committee: Amanda Hornby, Linda Whang, Emilie Vrbancic

Event Staff: 3 Odegaard Librarians, 2 Odegaard Research and Learning Services GAs, 1 Transfer Ambassador, UW Libraries subject librarians (10-15) and Undergraduate Academic Advising advisers (3).

Activity Overview

The Transfer Student Social with Departmental Librarians & Advisers is an informal event where new transfer students can meet and socialize with other transfer students, librarians, and academic advisers. The event was catered and held in Odegaard 220 immediately following the Undergraduate Research Program's Undergraduate Research for Community College Transfer Students event which was held from 2:30-4:00 pm in the same room, and students who attended the URP event were encouraged to stay for the Social. Our assessment methods included headcounts, observations during the event, follow-up e-survey, and reflection after the event.

Over 40 students attended the Social-- most were new transfer students, but some returning transfer students and other first-year (non-transfer) students attended as well. Many of the attendees stayed after the URP event (which drew over 50 attendees), and several students came just for the Social. Very few students were observed getting food and leaving-- most stayed to chat with other students, librarians, or advisers.

Students were observed speaking to other students in groups and approaching URP research panelists with questions about how to get involved in research in particular disciplines. Librarians were observed approaching students to find out where they transferred from and what they intend to study, and then introducing them to the librarian for their subject (e.g. the business librarian, or the engineering librarian). Conversations between

librarians and transfer students covered topics such as finding course reserves, using scanners in the libraries, finding case studies in the Business Library, how to navigate a large university campus, how to find research in specific departments, as well as informal conversations about where students are from, their families, etc. These conversations indicate that students are becoming informed of library services and resources, meeting other students who share their interests, learning about research opportunities, and learning who the librarian for their department is and that librarians are here to help them.

Contact information for students attending the URP event and the Social was collected, and a follow-up e-survey was emailed to attendees. Only three students responded, but all three respondents reported that they spoke to a librarian or adviser during the event, learned about available resources and services, and were likely to contact their librarian or advisers after the event. Two students reported that they would recommend the event to other transfer students, and one student commented that, “the actual ‘social’ part [of the event] was the most valuable.” One student wrote, **“I appreciate all the on campus transfer events. It truly feels welcoming and has helped prepare me for my classes.”**



URP Undergraduate Research for Community
College Transfer Students Panel Presentation



Transfer Student Social with Departmental Librarians &
Advisers

In our post-event reflection meeting, it was noted that this event is High Impact/Fairly Low Effort and is definitely worth repeating next year. The timing of the event (early in the week, Monday/Tuesday, and late afternoon) was conducive to drawing a large audience, the location (Odegaard Library Room 220) was ideal for both the panel presentation and the Social, and scheduling the Social immediately following the URP event maximized attendance at the Social. In addition, it was noted that URP staff recommended UW librarians and mentioned the Library Research Awards during their session, which provided a nice segue to the Social. One of the most valuable aspects of the Social is its informal nature-- we loved seeing the connections that were being made and we felt that the informal quality of the interactions worked really well.



Conclusions

Based on our assessment data, the goals for the Transfer Student Social were met. The Social welcomed a large number of new transfer students to the UW Libraries and introduced them to departmental librarians, advisers, and library resources and services that can help them succeed in their classes (e.g. course reserves, subject-specific resources such as case studies, etc.). Students were observed having high-quality interactions with other students, librarians, and advisers, sharing information, and getting to know other people, all of which can help students build a sense of community and belonging on the UW's large campus. It is noted that the large number of UW librarians who attended the Social, and the Libraries' generous contribution to funding the refreshments, demonstrate the Libraries' commitment to serving transfer students. Scheduling the Social in conjunction with URP's popular event (and co-listing the two events on the Dawg Daze schedule) is a model for other Dawg Daze events. The event was high impact with fairly low staff time and moderate financial costs.

Recommendations & Resources Requested

We recommend holding the Transfer Student Social during Dawg Daze 2017 and partnering with URP to schedule the Social immediately following their Undergraduate Research for Community College Transfer Students event, holding both events in Odegaard Room 220, and co-listing the two events in the Dawg Daze schedule.

- Request funding from UW Libraries and FYP for refreshments
- Recommend same day/time (early in the week before classes start - Monday or Tuesday, late afternoon)
- Recommend using a paper survey for students to fill out before they leave, instead of an e-survey
- Recommend additional survey questions - What surprised you? Would you recommend this event to your friends? What was the most important thing you learned?