

Harper College
Survey of F1 International Students

Prepared by the Office of Research
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Introduction

As part of its program review efforts, the International Student Office (ISO) at Harper College wanted to measure the satisfaction of international students with the various services provided in their office.

In the early spring of 2008, surveys were sent by mail to international students (i.e., students that achieved F1 visa status) that attended Harper between FY05 and FY08. After two survey mailings, 337 F1 students were surveyed and 39 completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 11.6%. The response rate is low due to the difficulty in obtaining the most current mailing address for these students. Because of the low response rate, the following results should be interpreted with caution.

The report is organized into an Introduction, a Results and Discussion Section that presents the results from the survey, and a Summary Section. Verbatim comments from the survey, as well as a copy of the survey instrument, are presented in the Appendix.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

| Race (N^a=36) | F1 Respondents | | F1 Students | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| | n | % | n | % |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 20 | 55.6 | 211 | 62.6 |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.3 |
| Black | 3 | 8.3 | 19 | 5.6 |
| Hispanic | 2 | 5.6 | 19 | 5.6 |
| White | 9 | 25.0 | 66 | 19.6 |
| Other/Unknown | 2 | 5.6 | 21 | 6.2 |
| Gender^b (N=36) | | | | |
| Female | 27 | 75.0 | 187 | 55.5 |
| Male | 9 | 25.0 | 150 | 44.5 |
| Age Group (N=36) | | | | |
| 18 and under | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 1.2 |
| 19 to 24 | 12 | 33.3 | 157 | 46.6 |
| 25 to 39 | 21 | 58.3 | 166 | 49.3 |
| 40 and over | 3 | 8.3 | 10 | 3.0 |

^a N denotes number of respondents.

^b Response rate was significantly different by gender ($\chi^2=8.20$, $df=1$, $p<.05$).

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the F1 students and survey respondents. Female F1 students were more likely to respond than male students ($\chi^2=8.20$, $df=1$, $p<.05$); a degree of gender bias is not uncommon in survey research. There was no statistical difference in response rate based on race or age group.

Table 2: Usage of International Student Office

| How often do you visit the International Student Office per semester at Harper? (N=39) | n | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| Once | 11 | 28.2 |
| 2-3 visits | 10 | 25.6 |
| More than 3 visits | 18 | 46.2 |
| Why have you used the International Student Office?^a Mark ALL that apply. (N=39) | | |
| Assistance with visa (F1) status | 29 | 74.4 |
| Assistance with applying to Harper | 17 | 43.6 |
| Other | 17 | 43.6 |
| Assistance with gaining/maintaining health insurance | 16 | 41.0 |
| Assistance with on-campus employment | 13 | 33.3 |

^a Percentages can add to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to mark multiple responses.

The frequency of visits per semester to the International Student Office (ISO) was somewhat dispersed; 46 percent of the respondents indicated visiting ISO more than three times a semester, while 26 percent visited ISO two or three times and 28 percent visited only once a semester. The clear majority of respondents reported using the International Student Office to receive assistance with their visa status. Sizeable minorities of respondents used ISO to receive assistance with applying to Harper (44%) and to receive assistance with gaining health insurance (41%). Another sizeable minority of respondents chose Other (44%), and 29 percent of these students indicated that they used the ISO to discuss transfer options, while 24 percent used ISO to discuss personal matters and 18 percent went to the International Student Office to receive academic advising on future courses.

Table 3: Usefulness of ISO Services

| Please mark how useful you found the following services provided in our office: | n | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| Visa (F1) application assistance (N=30) | | |
| Very useful | 19 | 63.3 |
| Useful | 7 | 23.3 |
| Not very useful | 3 | 10.0 |
| Not useful at all | 1 | 3.3 |
| Did not use | 7 | |
| On-campus employment ^a (N=17) | | |
| Very useful | 6 | 35.3 |
| Useful | 5 | 29.4 |
| Not very useful | 5 | 29.4 |
| Not useful at all | 1 | 5.9 |
| Did not use | 16 | |

^a Responses were significantly different by age group ($\chi^2=24.33$, $df=6$, $p<.05$).

Table 3: Continued

| Please mark how useful you found the following services provided in our office: | n | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| Applying to Harper (N=29) | | |
| Very useful | 15 | 51.7 |
| Useful | 11 | 37.9 |
| Not very useful | 3 | 10.3 |
| Not useful at all | 0 | 0.0 |
| Did not use | 9 | |
| Health insurance issues (N=28) | | |
| Very useful | 9 | 32.1 |
| Useful | 13 | 46.4 |
| Not very useful | 6 | 21.4 |
| Not useful at all | 0 | 0.0 |
| Did not use | 8 | |

Clear majorities of international students at Harper found the services provided by the International Student Office to be useful to their needs. The top rated services provided by ISO were applying to Harper (89% useful) and assistance with visa applications (87% useful), while health insurance issues (79% useful) and on-campus employment searches (65% useful) also received high ratings from the respondents. Younger respondents were more likely to report searching for on-campus employment as useful to their needs (100% of respondents under 25 years old vs. 50% of respondents 25 and older; $\chi^2=24.33$, $df=6$, $p<.05$).

Table 4: Satisfaction with ISO Office Staff

| Please mark your response to each of the following questions: | n | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| The office staff was approachable and friendly (N=39) | | |
| Strongly agree | 21 | 53.8 |
| Agree | 15 | 38.5 |
| Disagree | 3 | 7.7 |
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0.0 |
| The office staff was knowledgeable about my needs (N=37) | | |
| Strongly agree | 16 | 43.2 |
| Agree | 15 | 40.5 |
| Disagree | 6 | 16.2 |
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0.0 |
| The person(s) who assisted me listened and communicated effectively (N=37) | | |
| Strongly agree | 21 | 56.8 |
| Agree | 15 | 40.5 |
| Disagree | 1 | 2.7 |
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0.0 |

Table 4: Continued

| Please mark your response to each of the following questions: | n | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| I received timely service while visiting the office (N=37) | | |
| Strongly agree | 19 | 51.4 |
| Agree | 15 | 40.5 |
| Disagree | 3 | 8.1 |
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0.0 |
| I am satisfied with the overall level of service I received when visiting the office (N=36) | | |
| Strongly agree | 16 | 44.4 |
| Agree | 19 | 52.8 |
| Disagree | 1 | 2.8 |
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0.0 |

International students at Harper were very satisfied with the level of service provided by the ISO office staff; at least 83 percent of the respondents positively agreed with all of the level of service indicators above, with 97 percent of the respondents satisfied with the overall level of service in the ISO office. Also, 97 percent agreed that the ISO staff members listened and communicated effectively.

Table 5: Student Satisfaction with Skills

| During your visit(s), how often did office staff promote the following: | n | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| Other campus services (health services, student activities, etc.) (N=38) | | |
| Very often | 12 | 31.6 |
| Not too often | 17 | 44.7 |
| Not at all | 9 | 23.7 |
| Cultural events on campus (N=38) | | |
| Very often | 12 | 31.6 |
| Not too often | 10 | 26.3 |
| Not at all | 16 | 42.1 |
| Overall inclusion within the campus community (N=35) | | |
| Very often | 8 | 22.9 |
| Not too often | 18 | 51.4 |
| Not at all | 9 | 25.7 |

According to the international students, other campus activities and services were not often promoted within the ISO office. Clear majorities of respondents indicated that other campus services (68%), on-campus cultural events (68%), and the overall inclusion of F1 students within the campus community (77%) were not often or not at all promoted.

Table 6: Convenience of International Student Office

| Did you find the location of the International Student Office to be convenient? (N=39) | n | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| Very convenient | 20 | 51.3 |
| Somewhat convenient | 18 | 46.2 |
| Not convenient at all | 1 | 2.6 |

Nearly all of the international student respondents (98%) found the location of the International Students Office to be convenient, with a majority (51%) finding the location to be very convenient.

Table 7: Educational Status of Graduates

| Have you received academic advising services at Harper? (N=39) | N | % |
|---|----------|----------|
| Yes | 31 | 79.5 |
| No | 8 | 20.5 |
| If yes, then please state where/how you have received advising services?^a Mark ALL that apply. (N=31) | N | % |
| International Student Office | 23 | 74.2 |
| Academic Advising Center | 22 | 71.0 |
| Center for New Students and Orientation | 11 | 35.5 |
| Harper faculty | 4 | 12.9 |
| Other | 1 | 3.2 |

^a Percentages can add to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to mark multiple responses.

A clear majority of respondents (80%) reported receiving academic advising services at Harper. Of the respondents that received academic advising, 74 percent reported being advised by the ISO office and 71 percent from the Academic Advising Center.

Verbatim responses to the open-ended questions are available in the Appendix. No general trend was observed among the comments given by the respondents, and the responses provided should be reviewed with caution due to the low response rate of this survey.

Summary

In the spring of 2008, surveys were mailed to international students (i.e., students that achieved F1 visa status) that attended Harper between FY05 and FY08. After two survey mailings, 337 international students were surveyed and 39 completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 11.6%.

A majority of respondents (54%) reported visiting the International Student Office (ISO) between one and three times per semester, while a sizeable minority (46%) visited the Office more than three times. The clear majority of respondents (74%) used the ISO to receive assistance with their F1 visa status, though sizeable minorities of respondents also used the International Student Office to receive assistance in applying to Harper (44%) and help in receiving health insurance (41%).

The respondents positively rated the usefulness of services provided by the ISO; 89 percent found assistance with applying to Harper and 87 percent found assistance with their visa application as useful to their needs. Younger respondents were more likely to report assistance with obtaining on-campus employment as useful. International students at Harper were very satisfied with the level of service provided by the ISO office staff; 97 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the overall level of service in the ISO office. Also, 97 percent agreed that the ISO staff members listened and communicated effectively.

Campus-related services and activities were not promoted often enough, according to the international students. Clear majorities of respondents indicated that various campus services (68%), cultural events (68%), and the overall inclusion of international students within the campus community (77%) were promoted not very often or not at all. Nearly all of the international student respondents (98%) found the location of the International Student Office to be convenient, with a majority (51%) finding the location to be very convenient. Also, 80 percent of the respondents indicated receiving academic advising at Harper; of these students, 74 percent were advised from the International Student Office and 71 percent received advising from the Academic Advising Center.

Based on these findings, we offer the following recommendations:

- Promote campus services and campus-related activities to international students in order to enhance their inclusion within the campus community.
- Maintain effective working relationships with alternative advisors and counselors (i.e., Academic Advising and faculty) in order to ensure that individual students receive uniform counseling and academic advising throughout all levels of campus services.

Appendix

Responses to Open-Ended Questions Survey Instrument

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Why have you used the International Student Office? Other, please specify:

Survey ID Q2e Other

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 18 | Assistance with choosing courses. |
| 52 | Apply for OPT |
| 62 | Assistance with transfer to a 4-year university! Assistance with taxes, very useful! Thanks! |
| 76 | Transfer to 4-year school. |
| 98 | Personal reasons. |
| 107 | Assistance with taking regular classes (after the ESL class.) |
| 115 | Need to meet a teacher. |
| 122 | Transfer to NIU. |
| 183 | I-20 issue. |
| 202 | Transfer questions. |
| 219 | Personal. |
| 231 | Some of personal reasons, to get permission. |
| 241 | Transfer. |
| 296 | OPT information/as degree. |
| 310 | Counseling about a course/regular class. |
| 328 | Consulted my personal problem with adviser. |
| 330 | Talking with teachers and friends who work at the office. |

*If yes, then please state where/how you have received advising services.
Other, please specify:*

Survey ID Q7e Other

- | | |
|----|-----------------------|
| 93 | Multicultural Center. |
|----|-----------------------|

What areas would you suggest that we improve or emphasize within the International Student Office

Survey ID Q8

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 8 | Free coffee. |
| 52 | They've already done great jobs in all areas. |
| 57 | To have someone who able to speak Chinese for front desk. Be more friendly to international students. |
| 107 | Please hire international students more. |
| 183 | More friendly student staff. |
| 185 | Staff on the front desk should have better knowledge and they should be nicer. |
| 218 | Update student's status on time. |

- 231 Conversation Café. I know it is for the international students who are not really good at English. However, I sometimes think that it's not that interesting. I suggest to have many kinds of topics (or new) and the café. Then, many students will be interested in it, and the café will improve much more than now.
- 241 More activities for international students. Explain more details about insurance, the usefulness of health insurance. Offer more on campus employment.
- 296 Overall good!
- 328 Having more seats or change to a big office is necessary.

Overall, how can Harper improve the services we provide to international students?

Survey ID Q9

- 8 Free coffee.
- 52 Informative, accurate information, friendly approach.
- 57 Able to join the student activity, I mean the big group of Harper students. International Café is boring and non-native speaker not useful at all.
- 67 Harper should offer more internship programs and advanced English for students who already finish level 5.
- 107 Please reduce the tuition. It is too expensive.
- 185 More information regarding driver license for the beginning during orientation. More info regarding our status.
- 218 More events and activities. I have granted as a permanent resident of United States. Thanks for all the help.
- 310 You have to let the students know about the US education system. Because the system is very different from my country. (Elementary, Middle, High, College, University.) I'm going to study in regular class at Harper College, so I still want to know how I can get degree and certificate. Also, I don't know what's different between them. Make more opportunity to hang out with American friends.
- 327 Lower the cost. \$1000 per class in the community college?!
- 336 It was great! There is no one like XXXXXXXX in California. Thank you so much XXXX. I miss you a lot!

International Student Office Survey of Student Satisfaction



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OFFICE SURVEY OF STUDENT SATISFACTION

Harper College's International Student Office is committed to providing excellent service to our students. We need your feedback to improve. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

1. How often did you visit the International Student Office per semester at Harper?

- a. Once
- b. 2-3 visits
- c. More than 3 visits

2. Why have you used the International Student Office? Mark ALL that apply.

- a. Assistance with visa (F1) status
- b. Assistance with on-campus employment
- c. Assistance with applying to Harper
- d. Assistance with gaining/maintaining health insurance
- e. Other, please specify: _____

3. Please mark how useful you found the following services provided in our office:

- a. Visa (F1) application assistance.....
- b. On-campus employment.....
- c. Applying to Harper.....
- d. Health insurance issues.....

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Very useful | Useful | Not very useful | Not useful at all | Did not use |
| a. Visa (F1) application assistance..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. On-campus employment..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Applying to Harper..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Health insurance issues..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Please mark your response to each of the following questions:

- a. The office staff was approachable and friendly.....
- b. The office staff was knowledgeable about my needs.....
- c. The person(s) who assisted me listened and communicated effectively.....
- d. I received timely service while visiting the office.....
- e. I am satisfied with the overall level of service I received when visiting the office.....

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| a. The office staff was approachable and friendly..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. The office staff was knowledgeable about my needs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. The person(s) who assisted me listened and communicated effectively..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. I received timely service while visiting the office..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. I am satisfied with the overall level of service I received when visiting the office..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. During your visit(s), how often did office staff promote the following:

- a. Other campus services (health services, student activities, etc.).....
- b. Cultural events on campus.....
- c. Overall inclusion within the campus community.....

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Very often | Not too often | Not at all |
| a. Other campus services (health services, student activities, etc.)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Cultural events on campus..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Overall inclusion within the campus community..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. Did you find the location of the International Student Office to be convenient?

- a. Very convenient
- b. Somewhat convenient
- c. Not convenient at all

If not convenient, then for what reason? _____

Continue survey on other side

7. Have you received academic advising/planning services at Harper?

- Yes
- No

7a. If yes, then please state where/how you have received advising services.

Mark ALL that apply.

- a. International Student Office
- b. Academic Advising Center
- c. Center for New Students and Orientation
- d. Harper faculty
- e. Other, please specify: _____

What areas would you suggest that we improve or emphasize within the International Student Office?

Overall, how can Harper improve the services we provide to international students?

Thank you for completing this survey.

PN08-838