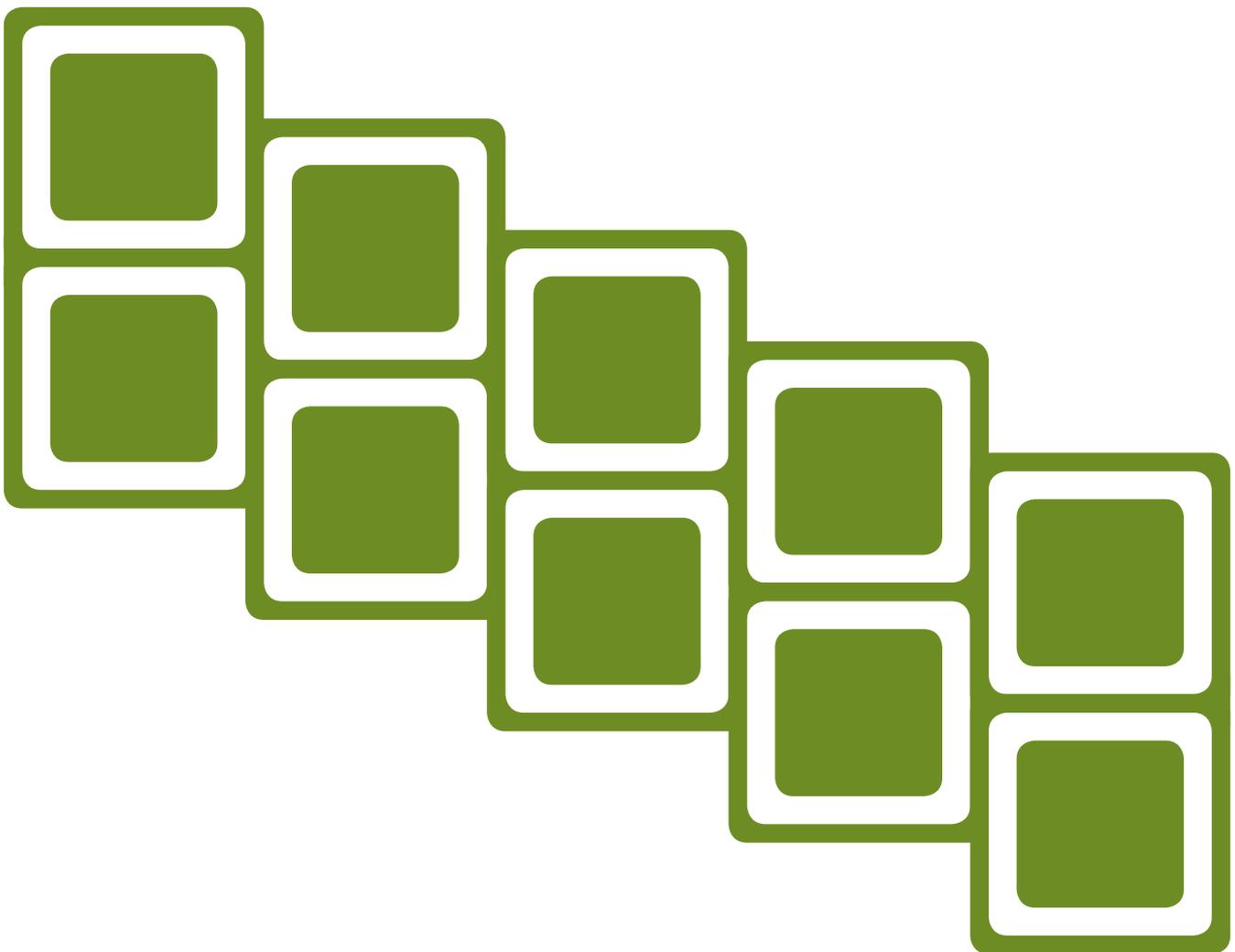


Summer Academe
Research Papers

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Supporting Transfer Students Through a Summer Transfer Transition Program

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Abstract

As the number of transfer students increases, institutions are seeking ways to facilitate the transition for these students. Unlike new first-year students, transfer students have made the adjustment to college life and have proven their ability to be successful in an academic setting. These students do, however, have special needs as they adjust to their new environment.

The present project poses two questions in this regard: “In what ways did transfer students already utilize summer session?” and “In what ways can we create summer session programming to meet transfer students’ needs?” Current and recently graduated transfer students at the University of Virginia were polled to pursue the answers to these questions. Additionally, the instructors of the classes with the largest numbers of transfer students were asked to participate in an effort to further specify unique characteristics of the transfer population at the university.

Introduction

The trend for students to transfer from one institution to another is well documented. One-third of postsecondary students move from one institution to another at least once (Hossler et al., 2012). As the number of transfer students increases, institutions are seeking ways to facilitate the transition for these students. Unlike new first-year students, transfer students have made the adjustment to college life and have proven their ability to be successful in an academic setting. These students do, however, have special needs as they adjust to their new environment. Townsend (2008) found that transfer students feel as though they are starting over in some respects. She noted that “students, whether they transferred from a community college or a four-year school, ‘feel like a freshman again’ in their lack of knowledge about how their new school works . . . Yet transfer students were explicit about not being first-year students and did not want to be treated like them” (p. 73). The goal, then, is to help these experienced students adjust to a new environment. The purpose of this study is to explore the needs of transfer students to the University of Virginia (UVA) in an effort to create a summer transfer transition program to support their adjustment to the university.

Laanan (2001) highlighted two institutional characteristics that contribute to campus climate and affect the transfer student’s adjustment to the new institution. The first of these is “the extent to which a college is selective in the admissions process” (p. 10). Of the 2,402 students who applied for admission as transfer students to UVA in 2012, only 895 received offers of admission. The students who are accepted are expected to perform at the same academic level as their peers.

The second characteristic Laanan emphasized was the size of the institution. As a midsized public institution, UVA may feel quite large in comparison to the community colleges or smaller four-year institutions some students previously attended. In this new environment, students must attend large lecture classes, live in residence halls, and navigate crowded campus spaces.

The origins and destinations of transfer students are diverse (Hossler et al., 2012). Some students move from one four-year institution to another, others from two-year colleges into baccalaureate programs at universities. Likewise, the reason for transferring varies. For some, dissatisfaction with the first institution leads to departure. Disappointment with intellectual growth opportunities is the strongest factor in students’ decision to transfer. Inability to access adequate student support and career planning resources is another major deciding factor (NCES, 1996).

For other students, transferring is part of a larger academic plan. Millions of students in higher education are enrolled in two-year colleges, seeking a cost-effective and flexible path to a baccalaureate degree (Laanan, Starobin, & Eggleston, 2010). A significant number of community college students transfer to four-year colleges after their first or second year and are an important and growing segment of the four-year institution’s student body. The community college is a popular path toward a degree for minority students (Laanan et al., 2010). Likewise, low-income students find the community college to be an affordable option in their pursuit of higher education (Townsend, 2009). Therefore, when these groups of students transfer to four-year colleges, they enhance the diversity of the university population with their varied backgrounds and experiences.

Increasingly, community colleges and four-year institutions across the United States are working together to augment the number of students completing bachelor degrees. Programs in Texas (Arguijo & Howard, 2010) and California (Handel, 2007), for example, focus on easing the transition from community college to university through joint admissions programs and transfer credit articulation agreements. Similarly, the Commonwealth of Virginia is focusing on collaborative efforts between community colleges and four-year institutions to strengthen innovation and investment in higher education (Commonwealth of Virginia, 2010).

Initially, this project was designed to focus primarily on the students coming to UVa from community colleges. Soon after the investigation began, however, it became clear that students transferring from four-year institutions also need assistance with the transition. The population of transfer students is a diverse one with a variety of needs based on a number of factors. The scope of the project therefore was broadened to capture the experience of all transfer students, not just those coming from community colleges.

The increase in the number of transfer students necessitates enhanced support for these students. Transfer students have different concerns and needs than traditional first-year students (Handel, 2007). In an effort to address these concerns, UVa supports 600 transfer students each year through a variety of support structures. The College of Arts and Sciences has an academic dean who works exclusively with transfer students. More recently, the Office of the Dean of Students has appointed an associate dean of students with primary responsibility for transfer and low-income students. A peer mentor program allows transfer students to assist one another, while a newly created residential community provides social support for transfer students. These existing support structures for transfer students are concentrated during the academic year. Summer session has been a missed opportunity in providing early support for these students.

Building on these structures and the success of several summer programs for traditional incoming first-year students, the Summer and Special Academic Programs Office, in conjunction with Student Academic Support in the College of Arts and Sciences, examined the viability of a Summer Transfer Transition Program for transfer students entering UVa. This program would be designed to provide transfer students an opportunity to earn credits toward their degrees in the summer prior to their first full semester. To create this pilot program, an assessment of the needs of these transfer students—as perceived by the students themselves and those who instruct them—was necessary. The present project posed two questions in this regard: “In what ways did transfer students already utilize summer session?” and “In what ways can summer session programming be created to meet transfer students’ needs?” Current and recently graduated transfer students at UVa were polled to pursue the answers to these questions. Additionally, the instructors of the classes with the largest numbers of transfer students were asked to participate in an effort to further specify unique characteristics of the transfer population at the university.

Using the information gleaned from the first phase, a pilot program was designed for up to 20 transfer students. Faculty and advisors to transfer students were consulted to help with the implementation of the pilot program, from marketing to choosing the content courses to be offered. These constituents also contributed to the development of the pilot program’s workshops

and seminars. The focus of this article is the first phase, centering on the assessment and design stages of the project. Evaluation of the pilot phase will inform the future direction of the Summer Transfer Transition Program.

As universities across the country experience an increase in the numbers of transfer students, programs such as this one can provide opportunities for students to succeed. The Summer Transfer Transition Program can serve as a model for other university summer sessions seeking to meet the needs of this vital population.

Methods

Participants

The University of Virginia is a highly selective, midsized, public university in the southeastern United States. The undergraduate enrollment is approximately 14,500 students, 2,000 of whom are considered transfer students. About 69% of the undergraduate population comes from within the Commonwealth of Virginia. The majority ethnicity is Caucasian (about 73% of the undergraduate population), with Asian/Pacific Islander as the next largest ethnic group (12%). It has a slight majority female population (55%), and the average age of its undergraduate students is 20. There are six schools that serve undergraduates: Arts & Sciences, Engineering and Applied Science, Commerce, Education, Architecture, and Nursing.

Researchers recruited current and recently graduated transfer students to provide information about their experience thus far at UVa. Transfer students were defined as any person, regardless of age, who had spent at least one academic year at another postsecondary institution (but did not earn a bachelor's degree) before enrolling at the university. Any currently enrolled transfer student was recruited; additionally, any student who had graduated within one academic year of the present project was also invited to participate.

Participants were recruited via email. The researchers used a university-provided list of currently enrolled and recently graduated transfer students. An email inviting participants was sent in the first half of 2012 spring semester, and a follow-up email was sent in the second half of the same term. A total of 2,200 students were invited to participate. These emails were the only form of recruitment used in the study. A total of 403 students participated in the survey, representing a response rate of 17.7%.

As well, a survey was conducted with instructors. The university provided a list of the courses with the highest enrollment of transfer students. The instructors of these courses, both faculty and graduate instructors, were invited to participate in an online survey hosted on Survey Monkey. Of the 161 faculty and graduate instructors invited to participate, 31 completed the survey, yielding a 19% response rate.

Student Survey

Student participants completed a survey comprised of 28 questions. The survey was administered online via Survey Monkey. The questions were divided into three categories: demographics, experience at the university (including with summer session), and desired components of a new transfer student program. Demographic questions included age, race, year in school, major, and hometown. Experience questions asked students about (i) what support services at the university they had used and (ii) their enrollment in summer session. These questions were multiple choice and allowed participants to choose as many options as necessary. Finally, students were asked about the kind of information and assistance they would like to see in a transfer student summer program. These questions were also multiple choice but limited the responses to participants' top three choices. The survey can be found in Appendix A.1.

Focus Groups

After completing the survey, student participants were asked if they would like to participate in a focus group, lasting approximately one hour. Focus group discussions used the student survey responses as a springboard for conversation and exploration. Focus group participants were asked eight open-ended questions about their experience at the university, the strengths and challenges of being a transfer student, their experience with summer session, among other questions. The list of questions can be found in Appendix A.2. The focus groups were audio recorded; these recordings were then transcribed. Five students participated in the focus groups, yielding a small but rich sample of responses.

Faculty Survey

The instructor survey consisted of 10 questions, which asked for demographic information as well as instructor perspectives on the strengths and challenges of transfer students. The demographic questions focused on the instructors' amount of experience and their discipline, while the questions about transfer students asked instructors to reflect on their experience working with transfer students and the needs of this population. These questions were open-ended, allowing participants to write freely in response. Finally, faculty were asked a series of multiple-choice questions about the kind of programming that should be part of a summer program aimed at transfer students. The faculty survey can be found in Appendix A.3.

Analysis

The quantitative data collected by the student and faculty surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics; means and modes were calculated to determine the most common responses. The transcripts from the focus groups were analyzed using qualitative analysis software. The most common words and phrases were extracted to determine the most common themes among the participants. The open-ended responses from the faculty survey were analyzed in a similar manner.

Results

Demographics

The mean age of the participants was 22.7, although participant ages ranged from 18 to 43. Seventy-five percent reported they were in-state students, and 73% identified their racial/ethnic group as Caucasian. Fifty-five percent of the participants were women. With regard to ethnicity, gender, and residency, the sample was representative of the UVa population. The majority of participants (202, 51%) entered the university as third-year students, and 44% (172) entered as second-year students. Forty-four percent of the participants came from a community college, while 52.9% (207) came from another four-year institution; the remaining 3.1% of participants had experienced both settings prior to coming to UVa.

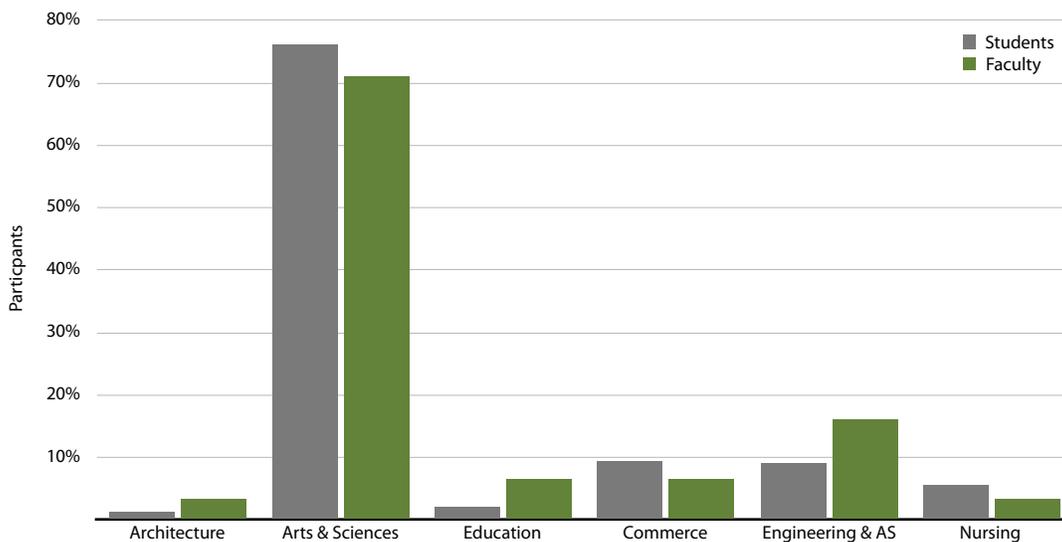


Figure 1. Percentage of Participants from Each College

Among the instructors, two primary demographic characteristics were collected: years of experience and the university college with which they were affiliated. The average number of years of experience was 17.3; the range of experience spanned from three years to 40. Participating instructors came from every college serving undergraduates at the university. The percentage of participants from each college was similar to that of the student participants; these data are presented in Figure 1.

Utilization of Services

Transfer students reported accessing various academic support offices and student services. Among the participating students, 298 (73.9%) responded that they had utilized at least one of

these campus resources. The leading response was academic advising (202 respondents, 67.8%), followed by career services (150, 50.3%). The services used by transfer students were predominantly academic in nature and can be seen in Figure 2.

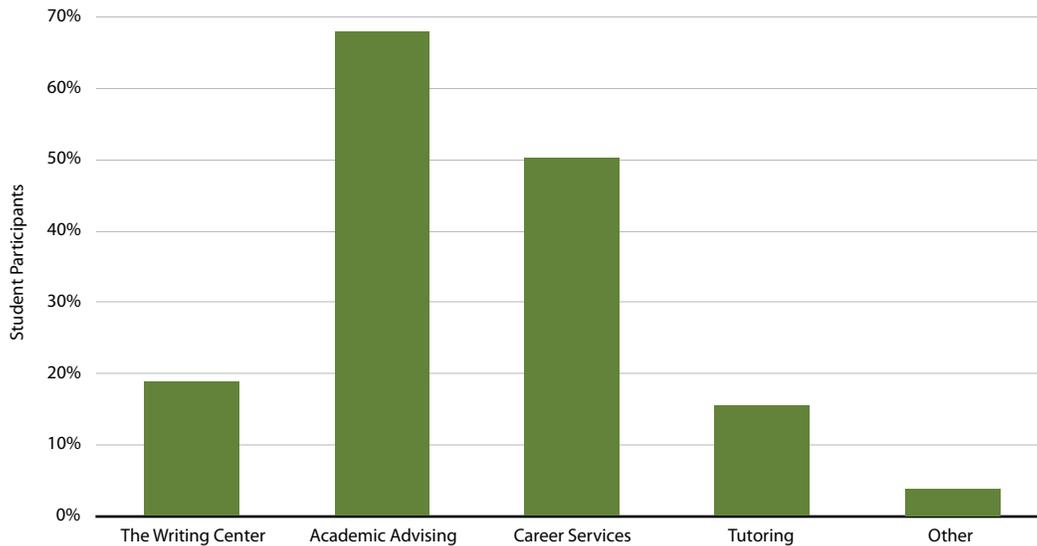


Figure 2. Percentage of Student Participants Using Support Services

Participating students were asked if they had attended summer session prior to the start of their first semester at the university; about nine percent reported that they had. These 38 respondents were then asked their primary reason for enrolling in this term. The response receiving the highest ranking was to fulfill major requirements (34.2%). The next highest response was to become more familiar with the university. The complete results for this question can be seen in Figure 3.

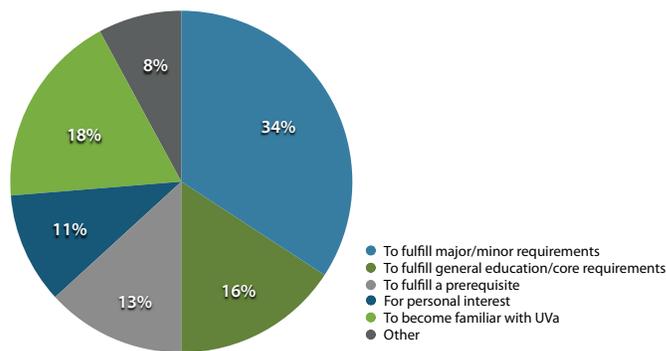


Figure 3. Primary Reasons Transfer Students Enrolled in Summer Session

Needs of Transfer Students

See Figure 4 for a breakdown of student needs as indicated on the survey. The themes emerging from the qualitative portions of this study and confirmed by the survey results point to three main needs for transfer students. First, many transfer students must adjust to an academic standard different from their first institution. Second, academic advising is necessary to help

students navigate the academic landscape. Finally, students should have assistance in the social and cultural adjustments facing them.

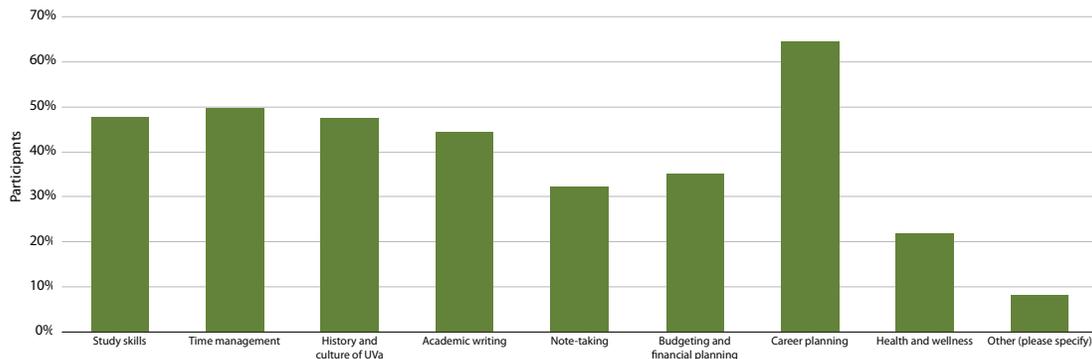


Figure 4. Student-identified Needs of Transfer Students

The difference between the academic expectations at the former institution and those at UVa emerged as an area of concern in both the survey and the focus groups. Open-ended responses to the survey question regarding topics especially useful in a transfer transition class or workshop included “expectations for classes at UVa (for adjustment from community college),” “transitioning to UVa,” and “UVa policies.” Survey participants suggested a desire to increase their academic skills in preparation for the transition to these new expectations. Close to half the students responded that they would like a transfer transition class or workshop to include study skills (47.7%), time management (49.5%), and academic writing (44.5%).

Focus group participants noted expectations for more independent work, a heavier reading load, and a change to more analytical and critical discourse. One student stated, “[A]t community college, you don’t necessarily have to be diligently reading every day to get an A,” while his workload at UVa has him “understanding that work’s pretty much going to dominate life for 19 hours on Saturday.” He noted that he is often expected to work independently, whereas previously his instructors had given more day-to-day guidance. His focus on rote memorization and basic knowledge had shifted to an emphasis on analytical and critical thinking. Faculty also commented on the need for students “to adjust to a more academically rigorous environment.” This sentiment was echoed most often by professors in science fields, some of whom lamented the students’ lack of preparation in community college science courses. Humanities and social science instructors also wished students were better prepared for the academic writing tasks they faced in this new environment. An art instructor noted the adjustment of transfer students as they came to “realize that studio culture is an 18-hour effort, seven days a week.” Although some noted that many transfer students manage well academically, the adjustment to a more rigorous environment was mentioned more than any other in the faculty comments. The number of faculty comments by type can be seen in Figure 5.

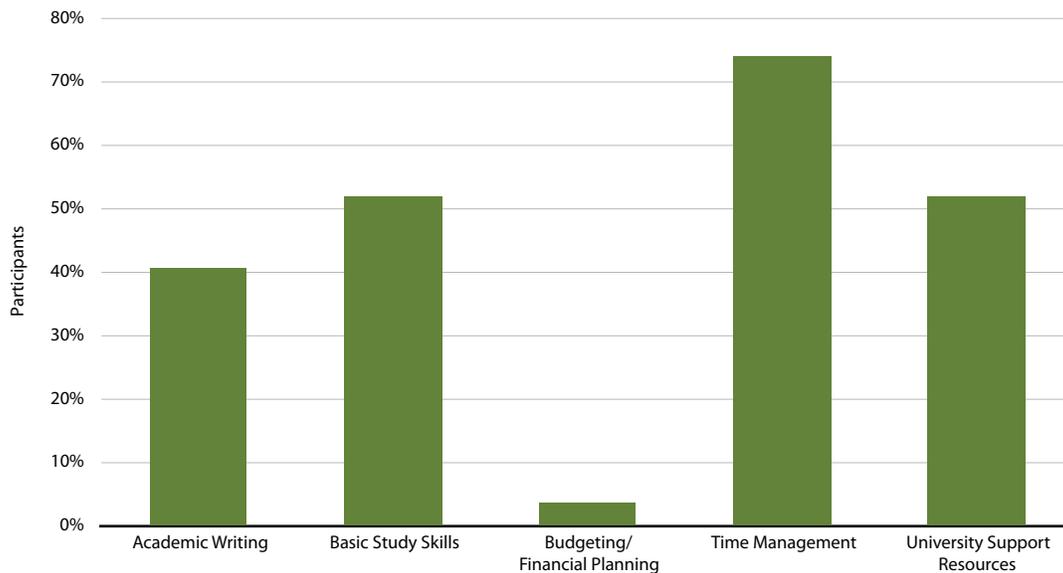


Figure 5. Faculty-identified Needs of Transfer Students

The need for academic advising was the second most-mentioned item from the faculty comments. Students need assistance in “keeping track of all the different requirements, getting their credits to transfer,” as well as “speeding up their familiarity and comfort with the curricula” to get “major requirements done in a timely fashion.” This academic advising needs to be comprehensive and ongoing, according to one instructor, who suggested that “a separate advisor should guide their progress with frequency during 300-level courses.”

The student participants agreed with this view. Survey participants requested assistance with “major-specific transfer help,” “better direction in class selection,” “academic planning,” and “how to choose the right major.” A focus-group participant stated that transfer students need help to “formulate our major—it was kind of those things we already sort of knew, but didn’t know how they worked specifically at UVa.” In addition to traditional course-planning assistance, faculty members said transfer students would benefit from advising “to help them develop skills for reading textbooks, taking notes, study habits, etc.” Likewise, students suggested that “study skills training” would be helpful in facilitating a smooth transition between institutions. Academic advisors could be an indispensable means for helping students achieve their academic goals. Finally, students and faculty agreed that transfer students need support in adjusting to university culture.

Table 1. Comparison of Needs of Transfer Students as Identified by Participants

Students		Faculty	
1. Study skills	47.7%	1. Time management	74.1%
2. Time management	49.5%	2. University support resources	51.9%
3. History/culture of UVa	47.4%	3. Basic study skills	51.9%
4. Academic writing	44.5%	4. Academic writing	40.7%
5. Note taking	32.4%	5. Budgeting/financial planning	3.7%
6. Budgeting/financial planning	35.2%	6. Other	20.0%
7. Career planning	64.5%		
8. Health and wellness	21.8%		
9. Other	8.4%		

Table 1 offers a comparison for student answers compared to those of the faculty. Learning to “integrate into the student culture” was noted as difficult by both faculty and students. One professor stated it this way:

UVa students are so hyper-involved in everything (they are organizers, they are very academically involved, they are socially everywhere, every night/weekend) that I imagine this is probably overwhelming at first for transfer students, who will certainly feel pressure to do the huge amount of activities and majors and parties that their fellow students also participate in. Perhaps some info on time management or support resources will help with this.

Students were more concerned with learning the customs and traditions of their new academic home. One student laughed as he shared his experience of hearing fellow students discussing the “baffling UVa traditions”; he later “surreptitiously checked Wikipedia” to learn the details. Another stated she would like to have had a better understanding of how “these cool traditions factor into student life.”

Survey participants suggested that a “systematic familiarization with campus and outlying buildings” and “a more comprehensive/practically useful tour” would be beneficial. Assistance with housing options and finding roommates was also identified as a need. Forty-seven percent of survey respondents wished to see the history and culture of UVa included in the transfer class or workshop.

Summer Transfer Transition Program

The Summer Transfer Transition Program addresses many of the issues raised by the student and faculty participants in this study. Summer session provides an ideal environment for a program of this nature. Participants benefit from smaller classes, more student–faculty interaction, and a reduced number of courses upon which to focus. Summer session gives new students an opportunity to become familiar with the university during quieter months. Few students in the study had participated in summer session prior to their first full semester of course work. To understand how to encourage more students to consider summer session and take advantage of these opportunities, more exploration should be conducted. Existing programs for first-year students provide helpful models for a summer transfer transition program, in part, because these models provide academic credit and support resources for participants. The needs of transfer students are quite different from those of first-year students, necessitating a tailored program for this population. Transfer students participating in such a program would receive needed support early in their university careers, make important connections with faculty and peers, and earn credits toward their degrees.

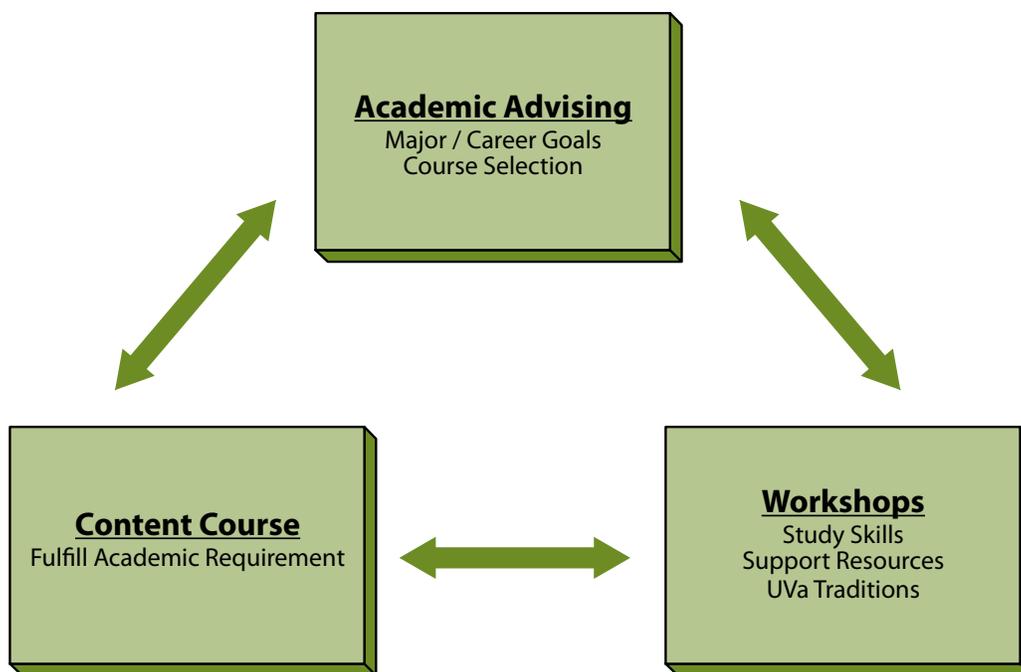


Figure 6. Model for the Summer Transfer Transition Program—Students Have Access to Academic Advising, Content Courses, and Specialized Workshops

The second phase of the project was the implementation of a pilot program funded by the College of Arts and Sciences Transition Program and the Office of Summer and Special Academic Programs. Students were invited to participate through newsletters and emails from their schools of enrollment. The program consists of three components: academic advising, a content course, and support workshops, as illustrated in Figure 6.

The first component, academic advising, begins as soon as possible after the student has been identified as a participant in the Summer Transfer Transition Program. If possible, the advisor assigned in the summer continues to work with the student in the fall term. Beginning with a conversation about the student's academic goals, career aspirations, and scholarly interests, the advisor seeks to put course selection in a larger context. The academic advisor then reviews with the student the transfer credits s/he will be applying to a UVa degree and helps formulate a plan for beginning coursework at the university. Using this information, the advisor helps students identify course(s) that will provide a first step in the academic journey toward degree completion. Throughout the summer session, the advisor is available to answer questions or to help the student find necessary resources.

The second component of the program is the credit-bearing course the student will take. One of the first decisions the student makes, with the help of the academic advisor, is the selection of an appropriate summer session course. Care must be taken to ensure that the course will apply to the student's general education or major requirements and that it is a suitable first course for the student. Academic advisors, who have a strong knowledge of the curriculum and general trends in student success in various courses, can assist their advisees in selecting courses that provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support for each individual student. This course is the first that a transfer student experiences at the university, and it must set a realistic expectation of the level of work required without discouraging the student.

Finally, a series of Wednesday afternoon workshops complement the advising and content course, providing students with an introduction to the university. This is an ideal venue for sharing information and giving transfer students the opportunity to meet one another. Led by professionals from a variety of departments, workshops introduce students to UVa culture and traditions, refresh their knowledge of study skills and time management, introduce the Writing Center and the expectations for academic writing, share opportunities for education abroad, and teach mindfulness techniques for stress reduction.

Evaluation of the pilot phase is ongoing and will inform how the program adapts and changes for the future. Early discussions with participants have been positive, and students have indicated that they appreciated the opportunity to participate in the program. Changes for future iterations of the program include personalized invitations to incoming transfer students, the addition of University Career Services to the workshop schedule, and closer work with University Student Financial Services to secure financial aid for qualified participants.

Conclusions and Limitations

The Summer Transfer Transition Program is a valuable addition to the summer session programming at the University of Virginia. Students have opportunities to focus on one or two classes while becoming acclimated to the new academic environment. Student-faculty interaction is enhanced with smaller classes and daily meetings. Occasions to interact with other transfer students help to ease the discomfort that may accompany the new experience. Academic advising through the summer provides a seamless transition into the full schedule of the first fall term. Participants have expressed appreciation for the individualized attention they received through this program.

The primary limitation of this study is the small sample size. Only 403 students responded to the call to participate. This resulted in a response rate of only 17.7%. This response rate dropped for the focus groups, in which only five students participated. Future research on this topic will need to incorporate a larger number of students participating in the focus groups in order to corroborate the survey data. Likewise, few instructors responded to the call to participate, which resulted in some colleges being underrepresented within the participating sample. Nonetheless, the results from this small sample were rich. Participants were thoughtful and thorough in their survey completion and focus-group conversations.

Although the sample reflected the UVa populace, it has a limited applicability. The University of Virginia is a highly selective, public institution with entrenched traditions and a predominantly middle-class population. While these results help to speak to the general needs of transfer students at UVa and other elite institutions, they cannot be confidently generalized to all populations. This study can, however, provide direction for further research on the topic and inform institutions looking to create similar programming.

As the Summer Transfer Transition Program develops, it is important to note that transfer students also bring unique strengths to the university, as evidenced by the comments of several faculty members surveyed. One instructor referred to the “breadth of perspectives” that transfer students contribute to the classroom community. Eleven other instructors reiterated this sentiment, expressing appreciation for those students who may be older and have some different life experiences to share. One stated that these transfer students “bring a different perspective to the student body—especially the community college transfer students, because many of these students have had to support themselves through those first two years of nonresident college.” Supporting these students in their transition to the university is an important and essential undertaking. Summer session could be an ideal introduction to the university and may influence students’ ultimate success at UVa.

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Biographies

Rachel Nottingham Miller is the associate director of summer and special academic programs at the University of Virginia and serves as an academic advisor for transfer students in the university’s College of Arts & Sciences. She holds degrees from Mars Hill College, Western Carolina University, and the University of Virginia. Rachel’s research interests include academic success for students with disabilities and the transfer student experience.

André Durham is an assistant director and academic advisor within the University Honors Program at the University of Cincinnati (UC). In addition to advising students within their experiential project-based program and teaching at UC, André also is an active member of the ACPA: College Student Educators International Ethics Committee. André’s research interests include student faith development, masculinity, and internationalization.

Appendix A.1: Student Survey

Transfer Student Study Informed Consent Agreement

Please read this consent agreement carefully before you decide to participate in the study.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of the study is to determine which areas of support University of Virginia transfer students would recommend for incoming students.

What you will do in the study: Participants will answer survey questions and will have the option of giving their email for participation in a focus group.

Time required: The study will require about ten minutes of your time.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks in this study.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research study. The study may help us prepare programming for future incoming transfer students.

Confidentiality: The information that you give in the study will be anonymous. Your name will not be collected or linked to the data. However, if you choose to leave your email for the focus group, it may be possible to deduce your identity; however, there will be no attempt to do so and your data will be reported in a way that will not identify you.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

How to withdraw from the study: If you want to withdraw from the study, please press the “Exit this Survey” button on the top of the page. There is no penalty for withdrawing.

Payment: You will receive no payment for participating in the study.

If you have questions about the study, contact:

Researcher’s Name: Rachel Nottingham Miller
Department, Address
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Dell 1, University of Virginia
P.O. Box 400161
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If you have questions about your rights in the study, contact: (please reference: IRB#2011021900)

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Email: irbsbshelp@virginia.edu
Website: www.virginia.edu/vpr/irb

***1. Agreement: I agree to participate in the research study described above.**

- Yes, I choose to participate in this study.
 No, I choose to NOT participate in this study.

Thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions about your experience at UVa. Your responses to this survey are anonymous. Your name or computing ID will not be linked in any way to this survey and we will not attempt to deduce your identity from the answer you provide. Please take your time going through each question and mark the response(s) that most accurately reflect your answers.

2. What is your age?_____

3. Are you considered a Virginia resident by the University of Virginia?

- Yes. Please specify your county/city of residence below.
 No. In what state/country are you a resident? Please specify below.

Residency: _____

4. How do you define your race? Please mark all that apply.

- African American/Black
 Native American/American Indian
 Asian American or Pacific Islander
 Caucasian/White
 Latino/Hispanic
 Prefer not to answer
 Other (please specify): _____

5. What is your gender?

- Man
 Woman
 Other
 Prefer not to answer

6. What is your academic major(s)?

7. Do you have any minors?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please specify: _____

8. Did you transfer to the University of Virginia?

- Yes
 No

9. At what academic level were you classified upon arriving at UVA?

- First Year
 Second Year
 Third Year
 Fourth Year

Other (please specify): _____

10. From which type of institution did you transfer to UVA?

- Community College
- Four Year College or University
- Other (please specify): _____

11. Was your former institution...

- Public
- Private
- Other (please specify): _____

12. Approximately how large was your former institution?

- Under 2,000 undergraduate students
- Between 2,000 and 5,000 undergraduate students
- Between 5,001 and 10,000 undergraduate students
- 10,001 and 15,000 undergraduate students
- 15,001 and 20,000 undergraduate students
- Over 20,000 undergraduate students
- Not sure

13. In which UVa School are you currently enrolled? Please mark all that apply.

- College of Arts & Sciences
- School of Engineering and Applied Sciences
- McIntire School of Commerce
- School of Nursing
- Curry School of Education
- School of Continuing and Professional Studies
- School of Architecture

14. Did you attend Summer Session prior to your first fall semester at UVA?

- Yes
- No

15. What was your primary reason for enrolling in the Summer Session course you chose?

- To fulfill major/minor requirements
- To fulfill general education/core requirements
- To fulfill a prerequisite
- For personal interest
- To become familiar with UVA
- Other (please specify): _____

16. Which of the following support services have you used at UVA? Please check all that apply.

- The Writing Center
- Center for American English Language and Culture
- Academic Advising
- Career Services
- Tutoring
- Other (please specify): _____

17. If an academic support class for transfer students had been available in the summer, would you have enrolled?

- Yes
- No

18. What topics would you find especially useful in such a class? Please mark all that apply.

- Study skills
- Time management
- History and culture of UVa
- Academic writing
- Notetaking
- Budgeting and financial planning
- Career planning
- Health and wellness
- Other (please specify): _____

19. Would you be interested in participating in a focus group to discuss your experience in more detail? By answering "yes," you indicate that you are interested in being considered to participate in a focus group. You are in no way bound to participate if you change your mind at a later date.

- Yes
- No

20. Please provide your best email address so that we may contact you with information regarding focus groups. Thank you.

Appendix A.2: Focus Group Protocol

1. How long have you been at UVa?
2. What year were you when you transferred here?
3. From what kind of institution did you transfer?
4. How does your experience at UVa compare to your experience at your prior institution?
5. How would you describe your adjustment from your prior institution to UVa?
6. What were your biggest challenges in your first semester?
7. What were your biggest achievements in your first semester?
8. What university resources have been most beneficial to you?
9. What do new transfer students most need to know in their first term at UVa?
10. Did you study abroad? Are you planning to study abroad? Why/why not?
11. What was your experience in arranging your education abroad program?
12. Did you take summer session courses?
13. Why did you choose the course(s) that you took in the summer?
14. How was your experience in Summer Session?
15. Would you have liked to participate in a transfer student summer program?
16. Would you have liked to have taken a class in your first semester?
17. What topics/subjects should to be covered in a class for transfer students?

Appendix A.3: Faculty Survey

Transfer Student Study Informed Consent Agreement

Please read this consent agreement carefully before you decide to participate in the study.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of the study is to determine which areas of support are recommended for incoming University of Virginia transfer students.

What you will do in the study: Participants will answer survey questions.

Time required: The study will require about ten minutes of your time.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks in this study.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research study. The study may help us prepare programming for future incoming transfer students.

Confidentiality: The information that you give in the study will be anonymous. Your name will not be collected or linked to the data.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

How to withdraw from the study: If you want to withdraw from the study, please press the "Exit this Survey" button on the top of the page. There is no penalty for withdrawing.

Payment: You will receive no payment for participating in the study.

If you have questions about the study, contact:

Researcher's Name: Rachel Nottingham Miller

Department, Address

Office of Summer and Special Academic Programs

Dell 1, University of Virginia

P.O. Box 400161

Charlottesville, VA 22903.

Telephone: (434) 9243371

Email address: rnm4n@virginia.edu

If you have questions about your rights in the study, contact: (please reference: IRB#2011021900)

Tonya R. Moon, Ph.D.,

Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences

One Morton Dr Suite 500

University of Virginia, P.O. Box 800392

Charlottesville, VA 229080392

Telephone: (434) 9245999

Email: irbsbshelp@virginia.edu

Website: www.virginia.edu/vpr/irb

1. How many years have you taught at the University of Virginia?

2. In what school(s) do you teach?

- Architecture
- College of Arts & Sciences
- Curry School of Education
- McIntire School of Commerce
- School of Engineering and Applied Science
- School of Nursing

3. In what department(s) do you teach?

4. What do you see as the biggest academic challenge for transfer students?

5. What do you see as the biggest nonacademic challenge for transfer students?

6. What do you see as the biggest academic strength of transfer students?

7. What do you see as the biggest nonacademic strength of transfer students?

8. What do you wish transfer students in your class knew about UVa?

9. What support services/resources do you feel transfer students need?

10. If a class were offered for new transfer students, what topics should be covered?

- Academic Writing
- Basic Study Skills
- Budgeting/Financial Planning
- Time Management
- University Support Resources
- Other (please specify) _____