RUNNING START
SUMMER - 2007

ORIENTATION EVALUATION

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BACKGROUND

Running Start is a dual enrollment/dual credit program operated jointly by the Hawaii Department of Education (Hawaii’s public school system) and the University of Hawaii.

Qualified, screened high school juniors and seniors are given the opportunity to enroll in specified, regular college (transfer level) classes while simultaneously earning high school and college credits.

The program is designed to allow highly talented high school students to experience the college classroom and enroll in classes that may not be available to them at their high schools.

Honolulu Community College piloted the Running Start program (concept borrowed from Washington State) seven years ago and has led the UH System in Running Start enrollments ever since.

As a result of statewide public school year schedule changes, HCC now offers a special summer session that facilitates the enrollment of Running Start students during this new, shortened summer recess.

To ensure that the large number (over 100) of Running Start summer session students are familiar with college facilities, processes, and policies, HCC’s Running Start Counselor - Jean Maslowski - developed a Summer Running Start Orientation Session.

This summer’s session was attended by over fifty Running Start students.

A brief evaluation was conducted at the conclusion of the session to gauge student perspectives about the value of the orientation.

The report that follows summarizes the evaluation’s findings.

RUNNING START ORIENTATION SESSION EVALUATION FINDINGS

85% OF ATTENDEES WERE ENROLLING IN FIRST RUNNING START CLASS

FIRST RUNNING START SEMESTER? (N = 53)
Some Summer Session Running Start students had completed a semester or two at HCC and did not, consequently, feel that an orientation session to the program was necessary. Others simply chose not to attend the orientation as it was not a mandatory enrollment requirement.

**ONLY A QUARTER OF ATTENDEES PLAN TO ENROLL IN THE FALL OF 2007**

While Washington State’s RS program is viewed as a regular component of the high school education process (at least for advanced students), in Hawaii it is viewed more as an “add-on” opportunity. Consequently, while our summer session attracts over one hundred RS students, regular Fall and Spring semesters attract fewer than half as many students.

![Pie chart showing attendance plans for Fall 2007: 78% yes, 22% no.](chart)

**PARTICIPANTS WOULD RECOMMEND ORIENTATION TO OTHER RS STUDENTS**

85% of participants would recommend the orientation; 15% felt they may recommend the orientation; and none of the participants reported that they would not recommend the orientation to other RS students.

![Pie chart showing recommendation rates: 84% yes, 4% may, 5% no.](chart)
This pattern (recommending the orientation session) was essentially the same for the 45 first semester RS students as it was for the 8 returning RS students.

**OVER 90% FOUND THE ORIENTATION: HELPFUL OR VERY HELPFUL**

Respondents were asked to specifically evaluate three components of the orientation - the Campus Tour, the HCC Staff and Facilitators, and the OVERALL orientation experience.

None of the respondents evaluated any of these three as *Not Helpful* and only a few (less than 10%) gauged any aspect of the orientation as *OK*. Over 90% felt that all aspects of the orientation were *Helpful* or *Very Helpful*.

A closer examination of the data reveals that the Overall experience and HCC Staff and Facilitators received slightly higher marks than did the Campus Tour.

55% rated the HCC Staff/Facilitators as *Very Helpful*; while someone fewer (32%) rated the Campus Tour as *Very Helpful*.

**PARTICIPANT COMMENTS VERIFY THE UTILITY OF THE ORIENTATION**

The final three items on the evaluation form asked students to provide comments/suggestions about the orientation.
MOST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF THE RUNNING START ORIENTATION

Participants were asked to identify the specific aspect of the orientation that they found to be the most valuable.

Two major trends appeared in their responses:

♦ MEETING OTHER STUDENTS AND COUNSELORS

♦ LEARNING ABOUT THE LOCATION OF CAMPUS OFFICES, FACILITIES, AND CLASSROOMS AS A RESULT OF THE CAMPUS TOUR

Representative comments include:

Meet a lot of new people before class. Getting acquainted with other RS students...
.. Meeting new faces ...
.. Meeting new people ...
.. I got to meet new people, and it's a very welcoming environment.
.. Making friends..

.. The most valuable part of the orientation was the campus tour.
.. Finding the locations of buildings & people ...
.. They taught us where to go & who to see when we need help..
.. Where the bookstore is and what I can do at the library
.. I found the campus tour & the speakers the most valuable...
.. The campus tour because I am more familiar w/ the campus now.

Other areas rated most valuable included:

The helpful tips and strategies for succeeding in college; meeting the counselors, and new people
The packet with HCC program handouts ...
The packet contained info about Running Start.

PARTICIPANT SUGGESTIONS ABOUT WHAT MIGHT BE MODIFIED/ADDED

Most participants were fully satisfied with the orientation and did not recommend any modifications/changes. These representative comments are included below:

I can’t really think of any questions that weren’t answered along the way ...
Nothing really-most of my questions were answered. ... Is there an email or online account that is recommended? ...
Everything is understood & well-explained ... Nothing was missing ... All of my questions were answered :) ...
None, it was very information & useful ... None because it was very informative ...
I didn’t miss anything ... Everything was covered ...
There were no unanswered questions ...
I didn’t think anything was missing. All my questions were answered ...
The games were fun ...
Great staff & facilitators made it fun ...
I like the prizes and energisers...
It’s good there’s lunch ...
This orientation was very helpful ...
Great experience; tour was most helpful - Thanks
SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE ORIENTATION

While most comments simply verified the quality/utility of the orientation a few students suggested modifications/additions, including:

Add to the orientation by having a few professors introduce themselves ...

Go to more common rooms like the cafeteria & a classroom ...

What are the Fall/other sessions of Running Start like? ...

What happens if we want to change classes before we start? ...

Is there an email or online account that is recommended?

When & where you get our textbooks?...

What is the schedule for the COMPASS test?...

CONCLUSION

It appears that the Summer Running Start Orientation effectively assists students transition from high school to college.

Participants report that the orientation answered most or all of their questions about the college.

A few participants have recommended that the orientation address some areas not currently included.

HCC counselors, admissions staff, and faculty will review this report and make appropriate modifications to the Running Start Orientation to ensure that next year’s program will even better meet the needs of incoming RS students.