Date of Initial Registration and Student Success in Fall 2013 of New, First-Time Students at Kapiʻolani Community College

Methodology

All new, first-time students (student types = 'F' or 'M') at Kapiʻolani Community College (KapCC) except concurrent high school students (major = 'SPEA') were identified from the Operational Data Store (ODS) data warehouse after the fall 2013 census freeze (30 September 2013.) The initial dates of registration for each of the 1,297 previously identified students also were extracted from Banner. The relation between registration date and student success (term GPA, course success, and fall-to-spring reenrollment extracted from ODS) was examined.

Findings

The correlation between the initial registration date for each student and their term GPA at KapCC was calculated. The Pearson correlation coefficient showed a small negative correlation between registration date and term GPA ($r = -0.208$, $p < 0.0001$.) There was a tendency for the GPA in fall 2013 to be higher the earlier the student registered.

The relation between term GPA and registration date also was significant if students were divided into two groups based on date of initial registration. Students who started registration before the first day of classes were labeled 'Early' (1,260 students), and students who started registration on the first day of classes or later were labeled 'Late' (37 students.) A significant t-test ($t = 3.95$, $p < 0.0001$) indicated that 'Early' students had significantly higher fall GPAs than 'Late' students (2.104 vs. 1.194, respectively.)

The two registration groups also were examined to determine if they had significantly different fall-to-spring reenrollment rates. The 'Early' group reenrolled at a higher rate (78.25%) than the 'Late' group (51.35%.) This was a significant difference ($\chi^2 = 14.91$, $p < 0.001$.) The 'Early' group reenrolled significantly more than the 'Late' group.

Course success rates also were examined between the two registration groups. Successful course completion was defined as a 'C' or higher grade. A course success rate was calculated for each student. There was no significant difference between 'Early' and 'Late' students on overall course success ($t = 1.66$, $p > 0.05$.) However, if course success was examined for each course taken rather than an overall course success for each student, there was a significant difference between the two groups and course success. The 1,297 students in the current study registered for a total of 4,380 classes in fall 2013. The 1,260 'Early' students registered for 4,294 classes, and the 37 'Late' students registered for 86 classes. The 'Early' students were successful in 68.14% of their classes, and the 'Late' students were successful in 53.49% of their classes. This was a significant difference ($\chi^2 = 8.30$, $p < 0.01$.) 'Early' students were significantly more successful in their classes than 'Late' students.

Conclusion

Early registration was significantly related to student success. Students who registered early had significantly higher GPAs, were more likely to reenroll, and had higher course success rates. These results don't show that early registration increases student success. Early registration may just be a practice of successful students. Additional research would be needed to establish any causal relation.

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