Undergraduate Academic Programs

End of Year Report 2020-2021

UC DAVIS
COLLEGE of AGRICULTURAL
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Executive Summary

This report marks the third year of formally assessing selected student programs offered by the CA&ES Undergraduate Academic Programs (UAP) team. Programs and activities during the 2020-21 academic year were fully remote due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While this created challenges and opportunities, the flexibility and resiliency of students and UAP staff was remarkable, and we are proud of the many successes of our efforts. This report documents some of those selected successes and demonstrates that, in spite of the challenges that remote work and learning presented, we were highly effective in achieving our student-centered learning outcomes.

Our assessment is grounded in four student learning outcomes (SLOs), and this year, for each outcome, we reviewed one program.

Student Learning Outcome #1. Students will create an integrated course of study in alignment with their academic, professional, and personal goals.
Our Peer Advisor program was assessed for its ability to support students in achieving SLO #1. Assessment showed that the majority of students met with peer advisors for General Education (GE) and Preliminary Degree checks, consistent with this SLO. In online webinars, chats and office hours for incoming students, peer advisors were able to directly respond to student questions about the UC Davis student experience. The peer advisors shared their own personal stories of successes and failures from their first year at UC Davis, helping to normalize the ups and downs of the first year at college for incoming students.

Remote work and learning presented significant challenges for effectively connecting students with peer advisors, however, the adaptations made in 2020-21 resulted in developing mechanisms for peer advisors to triage appointments ahead of time and for peer advisors to help students set up appointments with professional staff as appropriate. We continue to use and adapt these learnings to the hybrid work environment in 2021-22, seeking guidance and input from the peer advisors on ways they can best support our students in achieving this and other SLOs.

Student Learning Outcome #2. Students will cultivate relationships with faculty, staff advisors, and peers that enhance their educational experience.
International Academic Advising Webinars were able to meet this SLO by creating intentional time during the webinars with breakout rooms for students to meet and connect with each other. The majority of students (75%) who attended the webinars agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to make connections with other students during the webinar. Further, 90% of student participants indicated the webinars were effective in providing information about how they can continue to cultivate relationships with others through advising and attending campus and college events, such as Coffee with the Dean.

The remote Zoom platform can offer challenges for effectively connecting with students, and some students expressed some discomfort with participating in break-out room discussions that had small numbers of students. Future webinars/workshops, whether remote or in-person, can take this into account by adjusting the prompts for small group discussions and normalizing the discomfort in meeting new people to empower students to take positive risks through interacting with others.

Student Learning Outcome #3. Students will improve their local area, campus, home region, and/or global communities.

The nine-member Aggie Ambassador Officer team meets this SLO by cultivating their own leadership skills (and those of other students), and by developing an understanding of their role and contributions as part of a team and in supporting other students in the Aggie Ambassador program. Student reflections describe growth in these areas:

- "I gained or developed even further a variety of strengths as a team member but also independently, such as collaboration, communication, adaptability and creativity. With the difficulty of a virtual year, I identified patience as a strength this year."
- "If someone was struggling with getting something done or was dealing with a personal issue, I was willing to take on a heavier load so they could focus on what they needed to."

Future efforts to incorporate reflections throughout the year can better track officer growth and development. In addition, intentional efforts to align officer activities and trainings with this SLO may be effective at further supporting Aggie Ambassador Officers in developing their own skills and abilities to achieve this SLO.

Student Learning Outcome #4. Students will analyze their skills and abilities necessary to achieve their goals.

Asynchronous discussion boards were used to prompt students in the Aggie Ambassador class to engage in self-reflection in order to enhance synthesis of information, to apply class learnings to individual experiences and goals, and to provide opportunities for students to learn with and from each other. Using an assessment framework based on Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2008) and Critical Hope Theory (Duncan-Andrade, 2009), we observed that 81% of the student responses to the prompts demonstrated an intentional reflection on their own personal development, consistent with this SLO. Student responses that demonstrate this intentional reflection include:

- "After hearing [the speaker] it made me want to explore the world more and become more culturally aware of others."
- "I would love to get involved in a research lab [...] I think that working in a lab would provide me with an understanding of the type of work I would be doing [when I graduate] and the commitment/responsibility that goes into it."

As a result of the success of the asynchronous discussion boards in encouraging student engagement in self-reflection, we continue to use them even as we have moved to in-person instruction in 2021-22. In addition, the assessment framework has proved useful for evaluating evidence for students embracing challenges and learning new things and for encouraging engagement with other students in the class and learning from the successes of others. Future efforts to develop discussion prompts with these assessment criteria in mind can better support student growth and development in these areas.

Within UAP we continue to use our shared-leadership framework to collaboratively refine and streamline our assessment processes. Based on learnings from the first three years of our assessment efforts, our team will spend time during the 2021-22 academic year refining our learning outcomes, re-mapping programs to the outcomes, and identifying indicators that can be used to better assess if program outcomes are being met.

We are proud to offer these reports as a snapshot of our holistic student support efforts during 2020-21. The learnings obtained from our assessments will continue to be used to enhance and sustain our future student-centered efforts, consistent with our UAP vision, mission, and values.

—CA&ES Undergraduate Academic Programs, December 2021

Student responses to "what advisors/associate deans do" submitted during an online workshop, 2020-21.

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 STUDENTS WILL CREATE AN INTEGRATED COURSE OF STUDY IN ALIGNMENT WITH THEIR ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL, AND PERSONAL GOALS

a Understand academic requirements and policies

b Participate in academic, professional, and/or co-curricular activities that align with educational goals

c Monitor individual progress with appropriate campus technology

d Develop academic plans with advisors

2 STUDENTS WILL CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY, STAFF ADVISORS, AND PEERS THAT ENHANCE THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

a Identify and participate in co-curricular experiences discussed when meeting with faculty, staff, or peers

b Utilize appropriate advising resources based upon advisor recommendations

3 STUDENTS WILL IMPROVE THEIR LOCAL AREA, CAMPUS, HOME REGION, AND/OR GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

a Cultivate leadership skills

b Engage in community development and service

c Attend events that will expand own knowledge and experience of worldviews

d Understand self as part of a larger community

4 STUDENTS WILL ANALYZE THEIR SKILLS AND ABILITIES NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

a Assess strengths and abilities to identify appropriate major in alignment with goals

b Carry-out advisor recommendations

c Intentional reflection on own personal development

Outgrow the Expected: Holistic Advising, Leadership, Engagement, and Outreach Work in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) at UC Davis

Overview

The Undergraduate Academic Programs Unit (UAP) in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) aims to provide an integrated and holistic framework for supporting our diverse student population. Within UAP we engage students in a variety of ways, striving to be thoughtful, intentional, innovative, and inclusive in our approaches. Our support is also comprehensive, starting from pre-matriculation/ recruitment to graduation and beyond and includes one-on-one advising appointments, leadership opportunities, outreach and engagement activities, and service-learning programs.

As we seek to empower students through our holistic and learning-centered student support approaches (Wilcox, 2016), UAP has also worked to model an organizational culture of empowerment where each member of UAP is encouraged to grow, learn, reflect and lead the unit in a variety of areas that match their individual interest and expertise. This shared leadership culture reflects the values of our unit and provides unique opportunities for our team to learn more about the ways we work together to support our students and advance the mission and vision of UAP.

This report marks our third end-of-year assessment and the process of collectively working together to assess our programs. All of the programs offered in 2020-21 were fully remote due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and, as outlined in these reports, this required creativity and flexibility to adjust our activities, while still striving to meet program goals and learning outcomes. The assessments described in this report highlight many areas of strengths in our virtual programming, as well as challenges of the virtual format in fully meeting learning outcomes. The process of assessing these programs continues to provide a framework for reflection and motivation for improvements of our programs and services to ensure that our work is guided by our overall mission, vision, and values.

UAP Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

We will be leaders in the creation of a community of support that engages and empowers all students to succeed academically and beyond.

Mission

UAP invests in students holistically from recruitment to graduation with strategic outreach, thoughtful advising, and innovative programming experiences. We support and challenge students to develop meaningful connections and build community while empowering them to achieve their educational goals. UAP uses inclusive and collaborative approaches to immerse students in the college's mission to understand agricultural, environmental, and social sustainability through research, education, and public engagement opportunities.

UAP also works with all academic advisors embedded in all departments throughout the college. Therefore, we found it important to also develop a specific CA&ES advising mission:

CA&ES College-wide Advising Mission
Academic advising in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) facilitates a network of support connecting students with faculty, staff, and peer advisors. Students and advisors have a shared responsibility to develop partnerships where students are mentored in their academic exploration and pursuit of goals by advisors who provide guidance and knowledge. We provide undergraduates support in decision-making from their time as a prospective student through graduation.


Values

- **Diversity**: We recognize that our student population has varied backgrounds, academic interests, and post-graduation goals. We seek to empower each student to uniquely contribute to our college and university.
- **Innovation**: Excellence in student learning and research motivates staff and faculty to continually challenge and reevaluate existing student success practices. We understand that student services should be dynamic and individualized, in order to best serve our student population.
- **Respect**: We are committed to creating an inclusive environment, so students feel comfortable asking questions and engaging in dialogue.
- **Integrity**: We provide students with intentional, accurate advising and meaningful skill-building leadership and engagement opportunities. Students are expected to synthesize information, reflect on experiences, and think critically to make educated decisions.
- **Awareness**: We interact in a way which we are aware of students' academic, mental, and physical health. By maintaining campus partnerships, we direct students to available resources to meet varying needs.

We know when we are moving towards our vision and living out our mission and values through assessing our unit-level student learning outcomes.

Assessment and Program Evaluation

For each program assessed, these reports include an overview, goals and/or connections to unit-level student learning outcomes, demographics (where available), various measures, limitations and challenges, and future recommendations. These elements show our ability to review the work we have done, determine whether we achieved the goals that were set, show how we achieved those goals (or not), and consider ways in which we can improve. This is in alignment with the Assessment Cycle outlined by Undergraduate Education at UC Davis (Student Learning Outcomes, Office of Undergraduate Education, https://assessment.ucdavis.edu/get-curious).
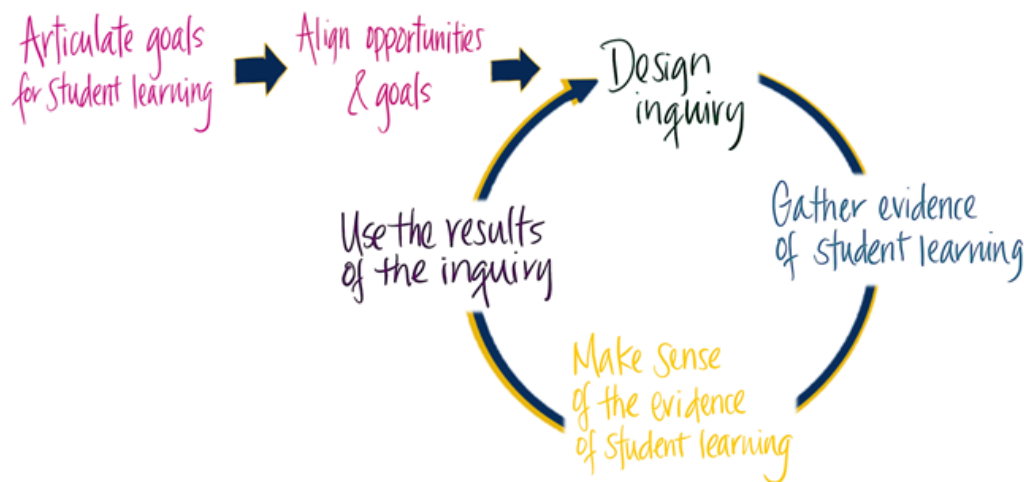
UAP Student Learning Outcomes

As a unit, UAP has created Student Learning Outcomes for students in our college. The programs that were assessed for each learning outcome during this academic year (2020-21) and that are included in this report are summarized here:

Student Learning Outcome #1: Students will create an integrated course of study in alignment with their academic, professional, and personal goals
- Peer Advisors

Student Learning Outcome #2: Students will cultivate relationships with faculty, staff advisors, and peers that enhance their educational experience
- International Academic Advising Webinars

Student Learning Outcome #3: Students will improve their local area, campus, home region, and/or global communities
- Aggie Ambassador Officers

Student Learning Outcome #4: Students will analyze their skills and abilities necessary to achieve their goals

- Aggie Ambassadors: Class Speakers

UAP Assessment Cycle

Our UAP assessment and program evaluation plan reflects the shared leadership culture we have established within UAP where team members have collectively identified a multiyear assessment cycle based on the Student Learning Outcomes. Not all programs are assessed each year, but programs are evaluated at least once within the multiyear assessment cycle. As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and associated workload, the team decided to limit the number of programs assessed in 2020-21, focusing on one program/activity for each learning outcome. UAP team members were split into four different teams with each team responsible for assessing and evaluating one specific program, project, or activity, based on Student Learning Outcomes.

To enhance and better share the learnings from the assessment of each program, an internal peer review process was developed where team members reviewed and gave feedback on draft versions of reports that they did not author. We also incorporated more frequent and intentional discussions and updates of our program assessment activities at our UAP team meetings throughout the year in order to better share learnings and challenges throughout the year. Finally, as a result of our program assessments we have identified that some programs may not map clearly to our learning outcomes; as a result, we have initiated a process of reviewing and updating our learning outcomes and identifying key performance indicators that can allow us to better assesses if program outcomes are being met. This process will continue and be the focus of our efforts in 2021-22.

Overall, our assessment process has been a successful way to demonstrate evidence of the effectiveness of UAP programs, identify opportunities for program improvement, enhance leadership development and a sense of teamwork within UAP, and engage staff, faculty, college leadership, and students in a cycle of continuous improvement. The intentionality behind our work demonstrates the dedication we have towards continual improvement. This ultimately impacts retention, four-year graduate rates and most importantly—our ability to actively engage with students to support them in reaching their unique and individual goals.

Outcomes/Impact from 2019-20 End-of-Year Report (link here)

Our second assessment report in 2019-20 **identified several successes in our approaches** for providing holistic student support and meeting our student learning outcomes (SLOs). For example, Academic Probation webinars effectively enhanced student understanding of probation policies (SLO #1); programs such as Slice of Advising supported students in cultivating relationships with UAP staff and with other students (SLO #2); service learning experiences provided opportunities for students to improve leadership skills (e.g., teamwork,

communication) and learn more about their local community, while connecting with staff and other students (SLO #3); and Academic Probation Webinars and our Subject to Dismissal processes supported students in developing strategies to address factors that may be impacting their grades and to connect to campus support resources (SLO #4).

Through intentional reflection as part of the assessment process, **we also identified ways to improve our programs for the future**. For example, as noted in this year's report, International Student Webinars were modified to provide more intentional time for students to meet and connect with each other during the webinar. Structured reflections are being used to assess growth and development of Aggie Ambassador Officer leadership skills and asynchronous discussion boards are being used to provide opportunities for students in the Aggie Ambassador Class to actively reflect on learnings from guest speakers. Several documents provided to students during the subject to dismissal process were refined to specifically support holistic conversations between advisors and students and referrals to campus resources. And, to enhance response rates and participant recall, surveys for assessing program outcomes are provided during and/or immediately after programs/activities whenever possible.

As noted previously, the process of collectively working together to assess our programs has provided the UAP team opportunities to **strengthen accountability and to engage in thoughtful reflection** on learning outcomes and goals for our programs while also providing motivation for continual improvement. The team continues to reflect on ways to further improve and streamline our assessment processes and ensure a more sustainable approach to assessment and program improvement.

We also continue to seek ways to communicate the impact of our work[1]. Information from our 2019-20 program assessments and program outcomes was **shared with college and campus leadership**. UAP team members gave an oral presentation on the Aggie Ambassador discussion boards at the 2021 UC Davis Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference (link here; abstract #7 here). As a result of this outreach and distribution of information, various stakeholders shared their enthusiasm for our assessment program outcomes and our efforts to improve student programming. Selected comments and feedback from others include:
- Thanks again for everything you all do so carefully thought out for our students!
- …very helpful to get an idea of how much work goes on at UAP to support our students.
- I love the sense of empowering students and working with them that the team clearly creates.

In sum, our students continue to inspire us with their passion and resiliency. The reports provided here document our continued efforts to engage and empower our students through our holistic support services.

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[1] Previous End of Year Reports and Summaries are available online: 2018-19 Report and Summary; 2019-20 Report and Summary

Student Learning Outcome 1

Peer Advisors

Prepared By: Alina Bara, Clarissa Mark, Greg Anderson, & John Lee

"L. was the peer advisor that helped me. [They] were extremely kind and helpful throughout the appointment. [They] was more than willing to answer any questions I had, and even gave me information I didn't know I needed. It was a great experience thanks to L.!"
-Student Feedback-

Photos of the UAP Peer Advising Team from Summer 2020 through Spring 2021.

Overview

Peer Advisors in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) are an integral part of the Undergraduate Academic Programs team (UAP), as they provide academic advising and resource referral to undergraduate students. Peer advisors serve as a resource for undergraduate students and support the university and college
advising mission and values. The current Peer Advisor team includes six undergraduate students in various majors from within CA&ES and has been operating for at least a decade.

As summarized in the Peer Advisor job description, Peer Advisors assist UAP in supporting undergraduate students in these primary ways:

- *Provides frontline academic advising via telephone, drop-in advising and internet*
- *applications (Zoom, OASIS, Schedule Builder).*
- *Provides advising regarding course selection, understanding academic requirements,*
- *using online web-based registration, finding a major, and other academic concerns.*
- *Assists students by making appropriate referrals to campus departments in a timely*
- *manner.*
- *Role models appreciation of differences while fostering an inclusive environment and*
- *actively supports the UC Davis Principles of Community.*
- *Knowledge of FERPA/Confidentiality and skills to handle and work with confidential*
- *records and materials.*
- *Support student-oriented events within the college (i.e. orientation, welcome week activities, Peer Advising, Coffee with the Dean, Study Breaks, Slice of Advising, Gametime with Advising, etc.)*
- *Serve on Recruitment Advisory Committees (RACs) and workgroups*
- *Create content and flyers for social media and marketing*

Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, Peer Advisors worked predominately at the Undergraduate Academic Programs (UAP) Front Desk. Their work was comprised by a mix of advising services and administrative support for UAP. Peer Advisors provided advising triage at the Front Desk for both in-person visits and phone calls. Peer Advisors also met with students in one-on-one advising appointments that were scheduled on a drop-in basis. These appointments were spent reviewing General Education requirements as well as completing pre-graduation degree completion checks. Their advising also focused on connecting students with campus resources and orienting new students to available opportunities. The Peer Advisors also attended UAP Advising events like Study Break and Slice of Advising, and provided valuable student perspectives in the planning of these events. Within the office, Peer Advisors provided administrative support by greeting Dean's Office visitors, sorting and scanning UAP documents, answering general phone inquiries and helping with various projects.

A significant amount of modifications had to be made to the peer advising program during the coronavirus pandemic and remote work. With the suspension of the in-person Front Desk, the role of Peer Advisors focused more on the advising components of their roles, compared to their in-person administrative support. After an unsuccessful attempt of scheduling Peer Advising appointments via caesadvising@ucdavis.edu in Spring and Summer 2020, Peer Advising appointments were made available directly to students on https://appointments.ucdavis.edu for the first time. This greatly increased the number of

students who were able to meet with Peer Advisors and decreased the number of empty appointment slots. Between Summer 2020 and Spring 2021, the Peer Advisors held 1228 appointments. The topic of these appointments mirrored pre-Pandemic appointments, but also led to Peer Advisors connecting students with Staff Advisors more frequently as well. Peer Advisors have also transitioned to providing more opportunities for students to access remote advising; they provided informal advising in weekly Zoom 'Office Hours' and created more content for CA&ES UAP social media accounts.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO 1)

The Peer Advisors team's work and duties meets the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

1. *Students will create an integrated course of student in alignment with their academic, professional, and personal goals. (a) understand academic requirements and policies, (b) participate in academic, professional, and/or co-curricular activities that align with their educational goals, (c) monitor individual progress with appropriate campus technology, (d) develop Academic Plans with Advisors*
2. Students will cultivate relationships with faculty, staff, advisors, and peers that enhance their education experience (a) Identify and participate in co-curricular experiences discussed when meeting with faculty, staff, or peers
3. Students will improve their local area, campus, home region, and/or global communities (b) Engage in community development and service, (c) attend events that will expand own knowledge and experience of world views, (d) understand self as part of larger community
4. Students will analyze their skills and abilities necessary to achieve their goals (a) assess strengths and values to identify appropriate major in alignment with goals, (c) intentionally reflect on personal development

Program Goals Related To SLO 1:

Peer Advisors will be able to articulate complex policies, procedures and degree requirements including but not limited to understanding the anatomy of a undergraduate degree (university, General Education, academic standing).

Assessment

1a. Understand academic requirements and policies

Between Summer 2020 and Spring 2021, the Peer Advisors held 1228 appointments. The topics of these appointments mirrored pre-Pandemic appointments, as Peer Advisors met with CA&ES students to review academic requirements and policies and connected students to various campus resources, which ultimately led to Peer Advisors connecting students with Staff Advisors more frequently.

Peer Advisors have extensive experience and training in navigating college requirements and resources. They possess excellent communication skills, responsibility and sound judgment, discretion to maintain confidentiality, and the ability to problem solve.

During advising appointments, Peer Advisors reviewed academic requirements and policies pertaining to college, university graduation requirements such as the requirement of 180 total units (out of which 54 upper division); American History and Institutions; Entry Level Writing Requirement; Scholarship and Residence Requirement and General Education (GE). Peer advisors also reviewed specific college and university policies pertaining to add/drop deadlines, class registration and pass times; unit limitations such as PHE, Special Study Courses and Internship units and previously approved exceptions made by our office When applicable, the Peer Advisors suggested possible course substitutions and encouraged students to submit petitions for exceptions to policies, to be reviewed by the UAP Academic Advisors.

In addition to reviewing academic requirements and policies pertaining to graduation, the Peer Advisors also provided advice on the following topics: Scheduling and Registering for Classes; Navigating Online Academic Tools such as OASIS, Schedule Builder and Major Exploration Tool; and provided referrals to various campus resources for academic success such as: Academic Assistance and Tutoring Centers; Office of Educational Opportunity and Enrichment Services; Health Professions Advising; and much more.

Table 1: Peer Advisor appointment availability Spring 2020-Spring 2021

	Total Available Appointment Slots	Filled Appointments	Unfilled Appointments
Spring 2020 (Mar. 29 – June 12)	218	66 (30%)	152 (70%)
Summer 2020 (June 22 – Sept. 25)	321	123 (38%)	198 (62%)
Fall 2020 (Sept. 28- Dec. 18)	506	405 (80%)	101 (20%)
Winter 2021 (Jan. 4 – Mar. 25)	508	396 (78%)	112 (22%)
Spring 2021 (Mar. 29 – June 11)	425	304 (72%)	121 (28%)

Figure 1: Peer Advising Appointments
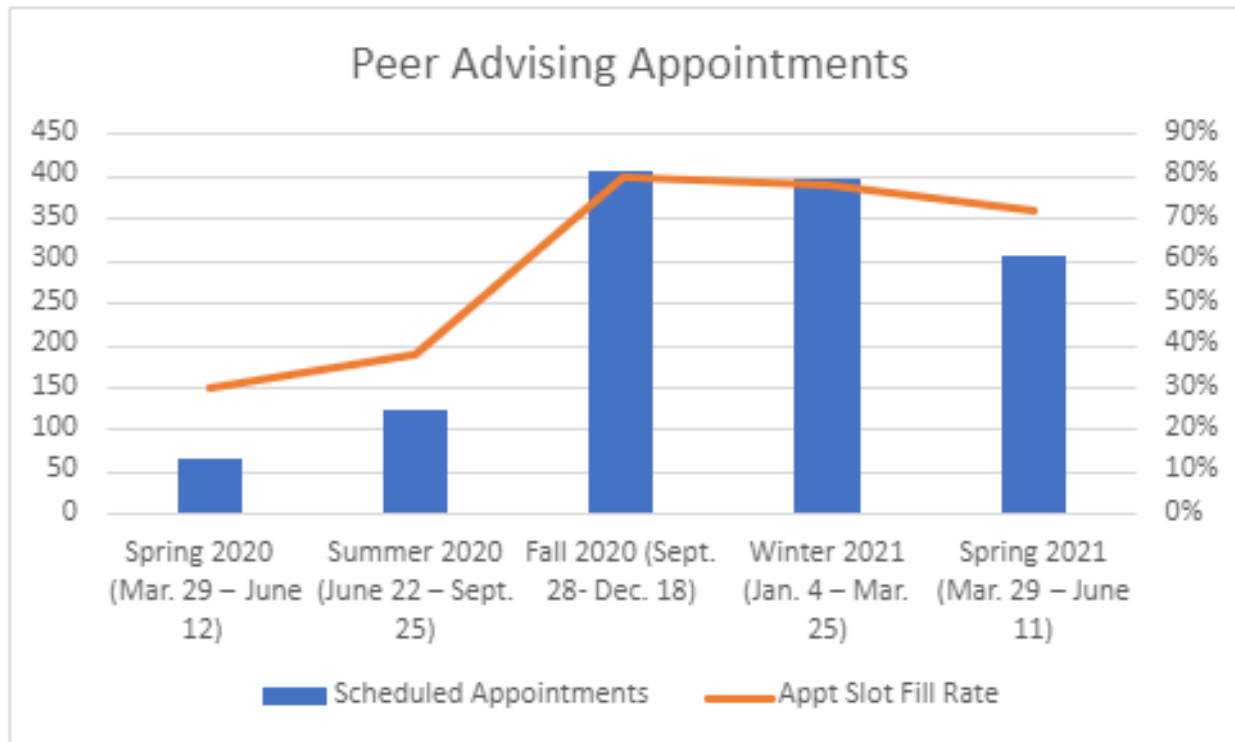
When students make an appointment with a Peer Advisor using the Online Appointment System, they are required to choose the reason for their appointment. This is used to help the Peer Advisor adequately prepare for the appointment conversation, as well as ensuring that the appointment reason should be handled by a Peer Advisor, instead of being transferred to a Staff Advisor (e.g. Multiple Repeat petitions, Late Drops, etc.). Students are also able to choose multiple options from the checkbox list for their appointment reason. For example, a student could be inquiring about both using Schedule Builder to register for classes, as well requesting a GE check to help determine which types of classes the student might want to register for. Most students, (54%), made appointments with the Peer Advisors for a GE Check, and 21% of students requested a Preliminary Degree Check. About 9.5 % of students had questions about class registration and inquired about steps and tutorials on how and when to use Schedule Builder to register for future classes. The Peer Advisors also met with 27 students (2%) to discuss and show students how to access various campus resources, and talked in detail about life as a UC Davis student with about 24 students (1.5%).

Knowing that not all students are familiar with the terminology used in OASIS, we also added an "Other "option for students to be able to freely express the reason why they were looking for an appointment. The "Other" box allowed us to review the reasons why students were seeking appointments and made determinations, in a timely manner, if the meeting was appropriate for the peer advisors or if the students should be referred to staff advisors. Unfortunately, at the

current time, there is no mechanism in place for capturing information and data in the "other" reason box.

Table 2 below, provides a summary of the reasons that students have made appointments with Peer Advisors. Please note that students can choose more than one appointment reason when scheduling appointments, so there are more appointment reasons than actual appointments.

Table 2: Peer Advisors Appointment Reasons

	Total Appt Reasons	**Appointment Reasons**					
		Accessing Campus Resources	**General Education (GE) Check**	**Life as a UC Davis Student**	**Preliminary Degree Check (PDC)**	**Using Schedule Builder/ Registering For Classes**	**Other**
Summer 2020 (June 22 – Sept. 25)	85	1 (1%)	41(48%)	2 (2%)	20 (24%)	10 (12 %)	11 (13%)
Fall 2020 (Sept. 28- Dec. 18)	505	15 (3%)	241(48%)	12 (2%)	118 (23%)	58 (11%)	61 (12%)
Winter 2021 (Jan. 4 – Mar. 25)	476	4 (1%)	282 (60%)	6 (1%)	98 (21%)	36 (7%)	50 (10%)
Spring 2021 (Mar. 29 – June 11)	355	7 (2%)	210 (59%)	4 (1%)	57(16%)	30(8%)	47(13%)
Total /Average	1421	27 (2%)	774 (54%)	24 (1.5%)	293 (21%)	134 (9.5%)	169 (12%)

Note: *Students were able to choose more than one appointment reason when scheduling appointments, so there are more appointment reasons than actual appointments.*

1b. Participate in academic, professional, and/or co-curricular activities that align with their educational goals

The UAP Dean's Office offered many virtual events to support students during 2020-2021. Between Summer 2020 and Spring 2021, nine events were hosted remotely via Zoom with participation from Peer Advisors. Three events were held during Summer 2020. Two events were held during Fall 2020. Three events were held during Winter 2021 and one virtual event was held during Spring 2021. These virtual events were open to all CA&ES undergraduate students, with the exception of webinars offered during Summer 2020, which targeted new students admitted to UC Davis for Fall 2020.

Peer Advisors assisted with three types of virtual events: Registration Support webinars, Understanding CA&ES Degree Requirements workshops, and Game Time with Advising events. The Registration Support webinars occurred during Summer 2020 via Zoom with the purpose of

providing real time hands-on help for new freshmen and new transfer students as they enrolled in their first quarter schedule. The UAP Dean's Office offered one Registration Support webinar for new freshmen, on August 3, and two webinars for new transfer students, on August 10 and August 17.

One UAP Dean's Office staff advisor and one Peer Advisor served as facilitators for each Registration Support webinar. They reviewed logistics on how to use Schedule Builder, such as adding/dropping classes, and how to search for classes, discussed campus resources and recommended classes, and shared personal stories from their experience as college students. New students were able to submit questions to Staff Advisors and Peer Advisors through Zoom Chat and Zoom Q&A, with some frequently asked questions being answered verbally by the facilitators. Students asked Peer Advisors to talk more about their experience with different UCD activities, in specific classes, and during their first year overall. Peer Advisors shared various personal stories of successes and failures from their first year, which helped to normalize experiencing ups and downs during their first year at UCD. During Summer 2020, 39 students attended the Registration Support webinar for new freshmen and 22 total students attended the Registration Support webinars for new transfers. Two Peer Advisors assisted at each webinar.

Peer Advisors also supported undergraduate students by facilitating Understanding CA&ES Degree Requirements workshops, which focused on reviewing college and university requirements with students. One workshop was held during Fall 2020 and two workshops were held during Winter 2021. In Fall 2020, 10 students attended this workshop and 3 Peer Advisors assisted. In Winter 2021, 12 total students attended the two workshops and 3 total Peer Advisors assisted.

These workshops were designed to help first- and second-year students learn about each requirement, learn how to search for class options to meet the requirement, discuss recommended classes, and answer any other questions they may have. Though these workshops were designed for first- and second-year students, the events were open to all CA&ES students. During the workshops, students were able to ask questions via Zoom Chat and Zoom Q&A directly to Peer Advisors in a casual setting instead of making an appointment with a staff advisor.

The UAP Dean's Office hosted one Game Time with Advising event each quarter. The goal of this event was to provide a virtual space for CA&ES students to connect and build community with their peers, which remote classes made difficult for students. Each Game Time with Advising event centered around one virtual game that UAP Dean's Office staff, Peer Advisors, and CA&ES students played together, such as Scattergories and BINGO. Peer Advisors supported Game Time with Advising by participating in the virtual game, communicating with student attendees via Zoom Chat and answering questions during live Q&A throughout the session. In Winter 2021, 20 students attended and two Peer Advisors supported Game Time with Advising. Due to the UAP Student Engagement Coordinator's leave of absence, the student

attendee data for Game Time with Advising in Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 were not accessible; however, three Peer Advisors participated during Fall 2020 and one Peer Advisor during Spring 2021.

Table 3 below provides a summary of each virtual event hosted by the UAP Dean's Office, the number of student attendees, the number of Peer Advisors that supported the event, and the Peer Advisors who assisted with each event.

Table 3: Virtual Events Attendees Summer 2020 - Spring 2021

	Number of Student Attendees	Number of Peer Advisors	Peer Advisors who Participated
Summer 2020 Freshmen Registration Webinar (Aug. 3)	39	2	Claire, Isabella
Summer 2020 Transfer Registration Webinar (Aug. 10, Aug. 17)	22	2	Claire, Isabella
Fall 2020 Degree Requirements Workshop	10	3	Cyrus, Lizette, Nicole
Fall 2020 Game Time with Advising	Data Not Available	3	Cyrus, Lizette, Nicole
Winter 2021 Degree Requirements Workshops (Feb. 2 - 3)	12	3	Claire, Lizette, Nicole
Winter 2021 Game Time with Advising	20	2	Isabella, Lizette
Spring 2021 GameTime with Advising	Data Not Available	1	Claire

1c. Monitor individual progress with appropriate campus technology
The UAP Peer Advising program does not currently directly address this SLO since MyDegree is not actively supported by our office. While not necessarily related to individual progress, Peer Advisors do review OASIS, Schedule Builder, Assist.org, and UC Davis websites, in their appointments with students.

1d. Develop Academic Plans with Advisors
The UAP Peer Advising program did address this SLO thoroughly since students met with Peer Advisors to complete General Education (GE) Checks as well as Preliminary Degree Checks

(PDCs). Once completed, students used these checks to update their academic plans to satisfy any missing requirements. However, there is not currently a measurement of the amount of GE Checks or PDCs created as an 'output' of appointments. The Appointment Reasons in Table 2 above can be used as a gross approximation of the number of students requesting these checks, but many students also used the 'Other' field to make these requests and simply weren't familiar with the 'GE Check' or 'Preliminary Degree Check' terminology.

Program Limitations and Challenges

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, peer advising appointments were only scheduled via in-person drop-in. Students would arrive in the UAP main lobby and triaged to meeting with peers by the front desk staff when the student's request was peer appropriate (e.g. GE check, Preliminary Degree Check, accessing campus resources, etc.). This ensured that topics that specifically had to be seen by a staff advisor did not accidentally get sent to a peer.

Once our office began remote work, we tried to replicate this 'drop-in' model to ensure Peer Advisors were meeting students on appropriate topics, especially since the Peer Advisors were hosting appointments virtually, and did not have a staff advisor office that they could walk students to if the appointment took an unexpected turn. Students were required to email caesadvising@ucdavis.edu to be scheduled with a peer advisor. The result of this was the peer advising appointments plummeted. For example, in Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 quarters, our peers met with 366 and 353 students via in-person drop-in, respectively. In Spring 2020, our peers had reduced availability with only 212 appointment slots, but only met with 61 students (28% of available appointment slots). In Summer Session I, this trend continued; our peers had 143 appointment slots, yet met with only 52 students (36% of available appointment slots). We suspect that this decrease was due to an issue with the remote manner to schedule an appointment, and not in demand for appointments.

Initially, there was hesitancy to make a switch to peer advising appointments that could be pre-scheduled via appointments.ucdavis.edu. There were a number of concerns, including a reduction in the number of students seeking advising with staff, ensuring that topics were peer-appropriate, and confusion by students about whom they should be seeing for different topics. The Peer Advising team came up with a number of solutions to deal with these legitimate concerns; for example, a list of peer-appropriate topics were added to the appointment system to serve as an indication of what students should be meeting with the peers about. Quynh Hoang, one of our Peer Advisors, and eventually the peers themselves, reviewed appointments in advance and rescheduled appointments that were on a topic meant for a staff advisor. Peer Advisors collected copies of FERPA in advance of any meetings with students.

Recommendations for Future

As we look forward into the future and consider recommendations for the Peer Advising program, there are several recommendations that we believe will help the program become more effective in regards to how it can support our students at UC Davis further.

Our first recommendation would be to utilize keywords in OASIS so that we can record specific data regarding Peer Advising appointments. Having the ability to track and record the topics of appointments Peer Advisors are having will allow us to understand what issues, concerns, and questions the Peer Advisors are handling. Understanding this would allow us to provide the Peer Advisors with additional training, resources, and support so that they feel more confident answering future inquires.

Secondly, creating an online student satisfaction survey and distributing it to students after meeting with a Peer Advisor would provide more immediate feedback from the student perspective. Peer Advisors would be able to review the feedback with the Front Desk Advisors and discuss things that went well during the appointment, potential areas of improvement, and to provide a safe space for the Peer Advisor to decompress, ask follow-up questions, and to feel supported. Creating an online survey will allow students more flexibility to complete the survey, generate email reminders, and provide easier access and organization for the Front Desk Advisor. Peer Advisors would be able to review and discuss their feedback surveys with the Front Desk Advisor during their weekly one-on-one meetings.

Lastly, we would like to recommend that the Peer Advisors become more involved with various UAP workgroups (e.g. First Year Workgroup, Coffee with the Dean, Probationary Workgroup, and Commencement). We believe that the Peer Advisors would be able to provide invaluable feedback through the lens of a student at UC Davis. They would have a better understanding of the type of information students are looking for and the most effective way to promote and advertise events into areas such as classrooms, Canvas, and amongst their friends.

Our goal in regards to the Student Survey is to encompass two major points. The first is to provide the opportunity for the Peer Advisors to grow as Advisors. With the feedback that they will be receiving, they will be able to understand what their strengths are as Advisors, and understand their areas of improvement. The second point would be to have additional data regarding student appointments and showcasing the shear amount of appointments the Peer Advisors do. By collecting specific data regarding their appointments, we can pinpoint what topics students are looking for assistance with and provide more support through various methods.

Incorporating these recommendations into our Peer Advising program would vastly increase the quality of advising the Peers are providing, while also generating valuable data regarding issues, concerns, and topics that students are looking for support with. Gathering this information would allow our office to target these concerns and provide greater assistance through events, workshops, and more.

Student Learning Outcome 2

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

STUDENTS WILL CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY, STAFF ADVISORS, AND PEERS THAT ENHANCE THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

> Identify and participate in co-curricular experiences discussed when meeting with faculty, staff, or peers

> Utilize appropriate advising resources based upon advisor recommendations

International Academic Advising Webinars

Prepared By: Leslie Charlton and Honora Knopp

I really liked the opportunity to chat with other people. It was nice to hear about their experiences and their tips for advising. The presentation was also great."
–Student Feedback

Overview

International Academic Advising Workshops were created in 2016 to meet the needs of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) growing international student population. The International Academic Advising Workshops provide a unique opportunity for new, first-year international students in CA&ES to create a purposeful and meaningful advising relationship with the Undergraduate Academic Programs (UAP) Dean's Office. At its core, in keeping with the student learning outcome that address relationship building, the workshop aims to help students understand the benefits of a long-term advising partnership, the value of utilizing academic resources, and formulate strategies for asking for help.

At least ten, one-hour long workshops were offered in Fall quarter 2019 to provide maximum flexibility and opportunity for students to connect with UAP academic advisors. Registration holds were placed and then removed once students attended the workshops. Students who did not attend the workshops were required to meet with a UAP academic advisor to release the registration hold.

In the workshops, students were introduced to their advising network of support, information about CA&ES co-curricular opportunities such as Career Discovery Groups (CDG) and Aggie Ambassadors, and campus resources that are designed to support academic and personal growth and development. Students engaged in small and large group discussion and through ice-breakers and have an opportunity to connect with other students. As previously mentioned, the workshops normalize advising, asking for support and building community among peers, staff, and faculty within CA&ES. As such, the workshops address the main learning outcome as well as the sub-outcomes as identified below.

In 2020, the International Academic Advising workshops were offered as webinars due to Covid-19. To improve access with time zone differences, four live webinars were held in the evenings between 6:00-8:00PM (PST). For students who could not attend live webinars, a recording was shared that could be watched asynchronously. As a way to create an equitable experience, students attending the live or asynchronous webinar were asked to complete a reflective worksheet on Qualtrics after the session to support goal setting, identify campus resources, and provide webinar feedback.

As referenced above, registration holds were historically placed on students' accounts in order to ensure full participation in the workshops. This year, the practice of not placing registration holds was piloted. This decision was made to offer greater flexibility for international students in different time zones and with varying internet access. Not placing holds was also in

alignment with the workshop's new framework around empowering students in their educational experiences.

During Fall 2019, the workshop goals included:
1. Review advising resources and network
2. Learn how to prepare for advising appointments
3. Build an action plan for using resources
4. Have your questions answered, and have fun..

During Fall 2020, that webinar goals changed to:
1. Build connections with your peers
2. Learn strategies for navigating academics at UCD
    a. Advising network of support
    b. Campus resources
    c. Faculty/TA support in classes
3. Set personal and educational goals
4. Ask your questions

The curriculum for the International Academic Advising Workshops were adjusted for Fall 2020, based on prior feedback on the student experience. As a result of limited opportunities to meet and connect with other international students, the workshops focused on providing students with opportunities to build community with peers through zoom. Opportunities to meet other international students existed for incoming students in Fall 2020. Through shared experience, students were asked to reflect and set personal and/or educational goals, and ask group advising questions.

Student Learning Outcomes
The International Academic Advising Webinars meet the following Student Learning Outcomes (the SLOs addressed in this section are italicized below):

1. Students will create an integrated course of study in alignment with their academic, professional, and personal goals (a) understand academic requirements and policies, (d) develop academic plans with advisors
2. *Students will cultivate relationships with faculty, staff, advisors, and peers that enhance their educational experience, (a) Students will identify and participate in co-curricular experiences discussed when meeting with faculty, staff, or peers, (b) Students will utilize appropriate advising resources based upon advisor recommendations.*

4. Students will analyze their skills and abilities necessary to achieve their goals (c) intentionally reflect on personal development

During the webinar, students learned the value of advising and ways to build upon an advising relationship by connecting to additional campus resources (i.e., tutoring, success coaching and learning strategies, counseling, etc.) as needed. Students are introduced to their network of support and different types of advising offered in the College (Peer Advisor, Major Advisor, and

UAP Dean's Office Advisor). Students also learned about various campus resources, such as the Academic Assistance and Tutoring Center, Success Coaching and Learning Strategies, and the Internship and Career Center. Ultimately, the webinars introduce and support students' cultivation of relationships that will serve them throughout their time at UC Davis.

The International Academic Advising Webinars were also grounded in the following guiding principles:

- Build on summer international webinar, but do not require attendance for presentation to be accessible and supportive.
- Provide access to specific campus resources and review details, such as how to meet with advisors, where to find academic support, the network of support
- Focus on the student experience and allow for connection over shared experiences in a virtual space.
- Create a space that promotes a sense of belonging within the university.

Assessment

All students who attended the webinar in Fall quarter 2020 were asked to complete a Qualtrics survey which was shared during the zoom webinar and shortly after the webinar were complete. The survey aimed to determine if the program goals and Student Learning Outcomes were met. Survey questions were crafted in partnership with the International Academic Advisor. Of the 105 students who attended the webinar live, 88 students responded to the survey (83.8% response rate).

Survey Questions
- During the webinar, I connected with other new students in my college. (Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree)
- As a result of this webinar, I learned about a new resource on campus. (Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree)
- Do you feel comfortable making an advising appointment? (Yes, No, Maybe)
- What campus resource would you recommend to a friend? (open response)
- What is one CA&ES event that you hope to attend this academic year?
- Please share any feedback you have about the webinar.

Notable responses include student perceptions of their ability to make connections with others in the webinar as well as their level of comfort with making advising appointments post-webinar.

Q3 - During the workshop, I connected with other new students in my college.
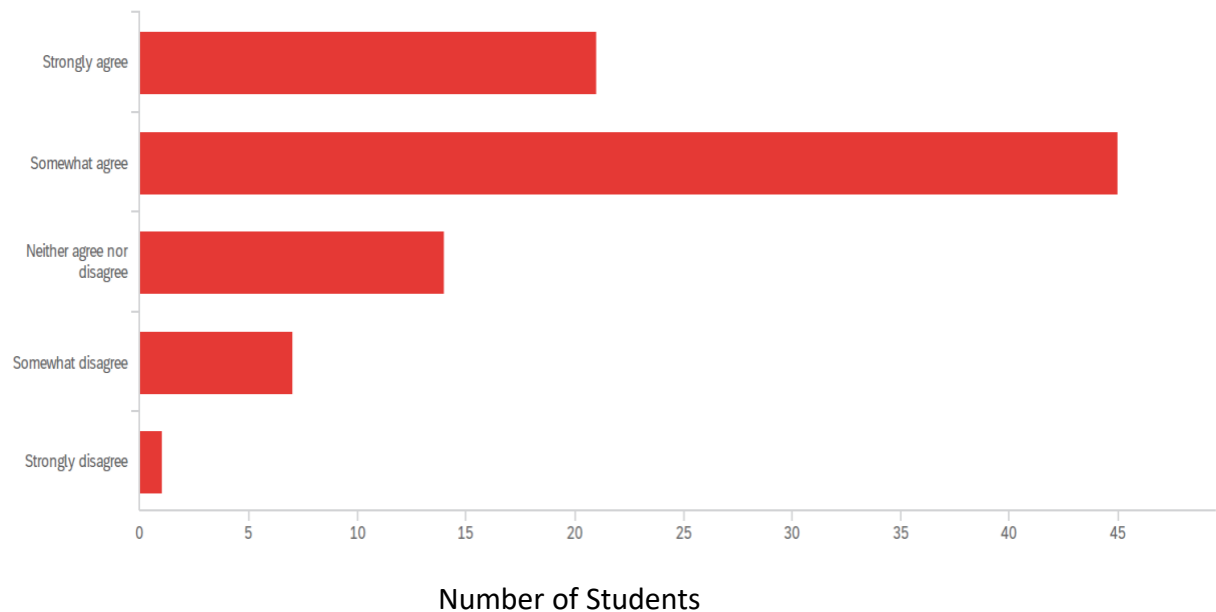

Number of Students

Table 1: During the workshop I made connections with other students in my college

Responses	Number of Students
Strongly Agree	21
Somewhat Agree	45
Neither Agree nor Disagree	14
Somewhat Disagree	7
Strongly Disagree	1

75% of students (66 students out of 88) out of who completed the survey either strongly agree or agree that they were able to make connections with other students in the online webinar. Making connections is defined as students being able to begin to build relationships with others in the virtual space. One way in which community was built was in the meeting format provided with break out rooms, so that students would have the opportunity to speak to other alone, without the IAA advisor. Students were split into groups of four to five and given space to connect over a shared experience. Breakout prompts:

1. What has your experience with academic advising looked like?
2. As you prepare for winter quarter registration, would types of questions do you think would be useful to ask in an advising appointment?

When students returned from break out rooms to the larger meeting, they shared responses to the prompts with others. It is likely that based on the activities provided, students were informed about and comfortable with the idea of making an advising appointment. Students were also asked if they felt comfortable with making an advising appointment at the end of the webinar. The following graph indicates that 92 percent of students (87 students) indicated that they felt comfortable with making an advising appointment as a result of attending the webinar. Building a network of support was an important and stated goal of the webinars along. Academic advising is a key part of the network of support for CA&ES students. Further, when asked, "What is one CA&ES event that students hope to attend this academic year," students most often indicated Coffee with the Dean, (an event in which students are able to engage with the CA&ES Dean, Associate Dean and UAP staff around a topic or theme of interest) and academic advising.

Figure 2: Advising Appointments

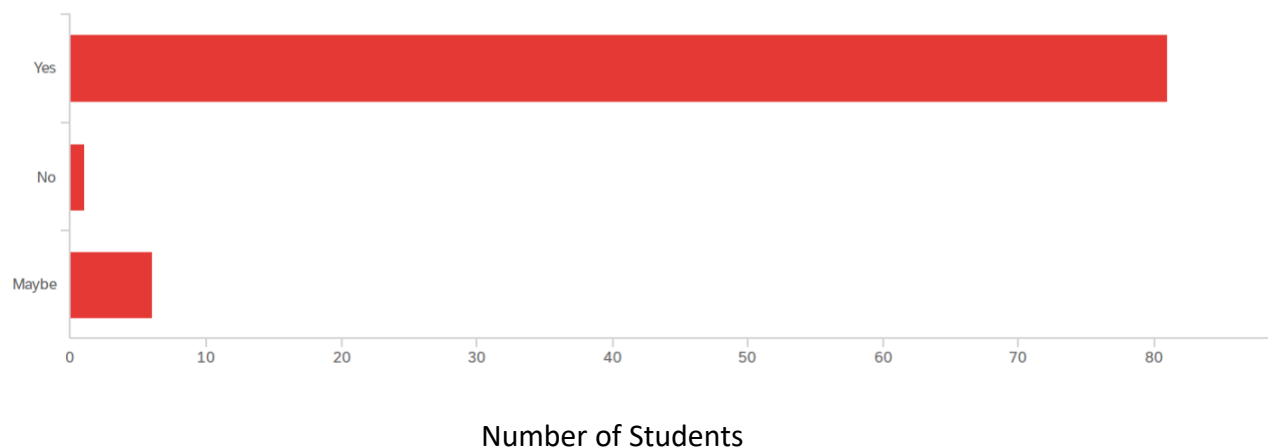## Do you feel comfortable making an advising appointment?

Number of Students

Table 2. Do you feel comfortable with making an advising appointment?

Response	Number of Students
Yes	81
Maybe	6
No	1

Program Limitations and Challenges

There are perceived limitations in the mode of delivery of this webinar. Undergraduate Academic Programs continued to deliver programmatic services through the zoom webinar platform keeping building relationships at the center of the webinar. We have

limited functions and features to utilize to increase and facilitate participation in small and large groups such as polling feature, breakout rooms, Q&A, and raise your hand feature. Participants noted that the level of participation in small breakout rooms, used with the intention to encourage "meeting" as many participants as possible, cited perceived discomfort in participation from fellow peers in the smaller space. One participant shared "I would recommend putting students in bigger breakout rooms. I feel like this would make some students feel more comfortable about sharing their responses to questions and positively benefit conversation - since it is more likely someone that is willing to initiate conversation will be present in a bigger group." Another participant cited an observation with a suggestion "The breakout rooms were very quiet—maybe add more prompts to push students to engage in a conversation." While the experience created during these webinars has shared responsibility between facilitator and presenter, we also want to continue to empower our participants to be vulnerable and take a positive risk in interacting by voice and/or chat features during webinars that is within their capacities and agencies.

Another perceived limitation is the norming of the "experience of the university" on zoom from a student perspective. In most cases, the entering new class had to complete their academic studies online, using zoom and other platforms. Some classes have established that they will be asynchronous, providing students an opportunity to attend their lectures and other classroom materials on their own timeline. We observed in the feedback that the time of the webinar was not as conducive based on the time zone available, some participants mentioned that an hour-long webinar was longer in length than preferred.

In terms of assessment, 180 students were given access to the asynchronous webinar recording, but did not complete the survey. Because of this, we do not have data on students' asynchronous experiences engaging with the survey.

Recommendations for the future
Recommendations from 2019 included sending the surveys to students soon after the workshops were complete. As expected, the more strategic timing of the surveys in 2020 yielded a greater number of responses and provided a more immediate assessment of learning that occurred as a result of attending the workshop.

Another recommendation from the 2019 report was a consideration of additional outreach to continuing international students to continue to build the advising relationship. Although this report did not assess the quantity of additional outreach, there were additional touchpoints with students throughout the 2020-2021 academic year.

Based on the experience of some participants in the 2020 webinar, a consideration of what norming participation in the virtual environment may look and feel like. Examples may include sending out a message to participants of what participation will be requested before the webinar, cover the participation examples through the slides as members are coming into the virtual space, establish that silence is also acceptable (as an example).

To address the length and time offerings of the webinar, one could consider having the students review the academic information or recorded webinar prior, and then focusing the time of the webinar of 30-45 minutes of relationship building. Another suggestions is to utilize the recommendations that are recommended in Healthy Virtual Meetings Checklist as a part of our programming delivery model – section on mindful meetings: https://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/units/occupational-health/health-well-being/nutrition/healthy-meeting/virtual-mtg-checklist.

University and departmental programming and events likely will be continuing in a hybrid model due to COVID-19, travel restrictions and OSHA requirements. Further engagement with our UAP Assessment team needs to continue to explore strategies for completing the assessment for this program and support the next steps and recommendations provided in this report.

Student Learning Outcome 3

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

STUDENTS WILL IMPROVE THEIR LOCAL AREA, CAMPUS, HOME REGION, AND/OR GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

- Cultivate leadership skills
- Engage in community development and service
- Attend events that will expand own knowledge and experience of worldviews
- Understand self as part of a larger community

Aggie Ambassador Officers

Prepared by: Ruby Bal, Layne Delorme, Joe Lee, and Marinka Swift.

"My top strength that I have discovered through this year is being flexible. I already had valued this strength in myself prior to this year, but I gained a lot more confidence in it this year because of the ways I stepped in to help other teams and make new plans under very limited time restraints."
-Aggie Ambassador Officer Feedback

Overview

Since 1998, the Aggie Ambassadors have taken an active role in the outreach and promotion of all the majors within the college. Officers and general members of the Aggie Ambassadors work to improve their leadership development and communication skills by participating in student panels, college workshops, and by assisting in events around the campus. College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) Aggie Ambassadors travel each year to engage with elementary, junior high, high school, and community college students. Through the members, we hope to further expand the knowledge of the general student body as well as the public about the opportunities available within CA&ES at UC Davis. The Aggie Ambassador program remains committed to three pillars of community, leadership, and outreach.[2]

The Aggie Ambassador Officer Team is a group of dedicated undergraduate students who provide crucial support and guidance for the Aggie Ambassador organization. The officers facilitate class meetings, create social engagement opportunities, coordinate outreach opportunities, facilitate outreach workshops, and work alongside Undergraduate Academic Programs (UAP) staff to provide these opportunities for students who are participating in Aggie Ambassadors. Undergraduate students are able to apply each academic year to take on a leadership role within Aggie Ambassadors to become an officer. The 2020-2021 officer team consisted of nine students, but the number of officers may change from year to year and ranges from 8-10. The varying number of officers can depend on number of applicants received and consideration of individual characteristics and how they may work within a team environment. Aggie Ambassador Officers are supported by UAP staff including, the Student Leadership Coordinator, the Outreach Coordinator, and an Academic Advisor. Officers meet weekly throughout each quarter and have individual check-ins with UAP staff on a quarterly basis. These check-ins provide opportunities for feedback, personal growth, and discussions about academic progress and include meeting with the UAP student leadership coordinator, outreach coordinator, and an academic advisor each quarter.

Student Learning Outcomes

The Aggie Ambassador officer program meets the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) (the SLOs addressed in this section are italicized below):

3. *Students will improve their local area, campus, home region, and/or global communities (a) cultivate leadership skills, (b) engage in community development and service, (d) understand self as part of a larger community*

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[2] https://caes.ucdavis.edu/students/clubs/aa

4. Students will analyze their skills and abilities necessary to achieve their goals (c) intentionally reflect on personal development

Assessment

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the Aggie Ambassador program included nine participants representing eight different majors in CA&ES and one major in the College of Biological Sciences; six students were in their junior year, two in their sophomore year, and one in their senior year. The data presented throughout this report consists of student reflections and notes from individual quarterly appointments the officers completed with Joseph Lee, Academic Advisor in Undergraduate Academic Programs.

Aggie Ambassador Officers for the 2020-2021 academic year included the following majors:
- Agricultural and Environmental Education (1)
- Animal Biology (1)
- Animal Science (1)
- Community and Regional Development (1)
- Ecological Management and Restoration (1)
- Human Development (1)
- Managerial Economics (1)
- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (1)
- Genetics (1)[3]

At the end of the 2020-2021 academic year, Aggie Ambassador officers were invited to respond to the following reflection questions:

Reflection Questions:
1. What would you say your strengths are after being an officer? Do you think you identified new strengths this year?
2. Do you feel like you improved as an officer since Fall?
3. Did you feel like you accomplished your goals?
4. Do you have any specific suggestions for ways we could improve the officer student experience in future years?

Students will improve their local area, campus, home region and/or global communities
     a. Through cultivating leadership skills
     b. Engagement in community development and service
     c. Understanding self as part of a larger community

Through cultivating leadership skills:
Students described strengths they developed through their role as Aggie Ambassador officers which fostered opportunities to identify, demonstrate, and practice leadership skills.

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[3] Genetics is a major in the College of Biological Sciences at UC Davis

Specifically, students described strengths around collaboration, flexibility, adaptability, empathy, communication, and foresight to act when needed to facilitate successful goal completion as a team.

When asked to elaborate on the strengths they acquired as a result of their role as Aggie Ambassador Officer, as well as any new strengths they developed throughout the yearlong program, students shared the following:

> *"I was able to work with all members of the team and combine ideas between other Officers to accomplish a goal or idea."*

> *"If someone was struggling with getting something done or was dealing with a personal issue, I was willing to take on a heavier load so they could focus on what they needed to."*

> *"I gained or developed even further a variety of strengths as a team member but also independently, such as collaboration, communication, adaptability and creativity. With the difficulty of a virtual year, I identified patience as a strength this year."*

To gauge the experience of the Aggie Ambassador officer team in fostering opportunities and providing resources to cultivate leadership skills, it is important to first operationalize what exactly "leadership skills" include. Additionally, it is valuable to consider the program participant's perspectives on leadership skills as well as the program's view of leadership skills. The Aggie Ambassador officer program provides participants understanding of leadership skills through the language used to describe the program and its objectives, as well as through "Cleeting"[4] discussions with participants and a range of events. The program's webpage describes participants as "exceptional leaders that promote the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences to potential students, peers, campus community, and our society". Additionally, in its "About Us" section, the program is described as providing participants "an active role in the outreach and promotion of all majors within the college" and that Aggie Ambassador officers "work to improve their leadership development and communication skills by participating in student panels, college workshops, and by assisting in events". In other words, understanding of what constitutes leadership skills and how they are measured is presented through a multilayered lens that includes students' local area, home region, and global community.

From a participant perspective, the reflections above demonstrate ways that the Aggie Ambassador Officer program fosters opportunities for students to cultivate leadership skills, individually and as a collective team. Students identified important leadership skills such as collaboration ("I was able to work with all members of the team and combine ideas"; "I was willing to take on a heavier load so they could focus"), communication ("I identified patience as a strength"), empathy and care for others ("If someone was struggling... or dealing with a

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[4] Cleeting is the term used for weekly class meetings. Students may participate in Aggie Ambassadors for units under AED 98 or AED 198 or socially not for academic credit.

personal issue"). The examples of collaboration and communication as features of leadership skills, as described by the Aggie Ambassador officers themselves, reflect the effectiveness and integrity of the Aggie Ambassador Officer program in addressing Student Learning Outcome 3.

Engagement in community development and service:
Limitations due to COVID-related campus operation status impacted the ability to measure this outcome. The virtual format did not provide opportunity for community service during the 2020-2021 academic year. In years past, the Aggie Ambassador officers would be able to help coordinate and participate in various projects and outreach during the academic year.

Understanding self as part of a larger community:
Our assessment also seeks to gauge the effectiveness of the Aggie Ambassador officers in meeting Student Learning Outcome 3 by identifying ways the program facilitates understanding of self as part of a larger community. When Aggie Ambassador Officers were asked if they felt they had improved as an officer from fall to spring, they indicated they had and provided details about areas of improvement they could see in themselves as officers, as well as individuals and peers. That Aggie Ambassador officers were able to reflect on improvements as an officer as encompassing ways of engaging with others in collaboration and communication indicates the understanding of self as part of a larger community. As the Officer responses below demonstrate, improving and growing as an Aggie Ambassador Officer is about more than the self – it's about the self in community with others.

"I think that learning to adapt and meet people where they are at when communication styles are at odds is a useful skill that made me a better officer as the year progressed."

" I have improved a little as an Officer since Fall by taking on more responsibilities and connecting more with my fellow Officers."

"I truly do believe that I improved as an officer because I opened up more to my team as the weeks continued. I pushed myself to provide more opinions during meetings and lead several conversations or activities."

"If someone was struggling with getting something done or was dealing with a personal issue, I was willing to take on a heavier load so they could focus on what they needed to."

As the excerpts above reflect, the Aggie Ambassador Officer program enabled students to improve their local community through learning to "adapt" and utilize different communication styles. Additionally, students felt this program helped them to open up to teammates, as they were encouraged to contribute their opinions and "lead" activities and conversations. Learning about differing communication styles and acquiring the intercultural and interpersonal competencies to successfully navigate differing communication styles are necessary strengths that both allow for and demonstrate understanding of self as part of a larger community. The fourth excerpt above also highlights how the Aggie Ambassador Officer program supports

Student Learning Outcome 3 and understanding of self as part of a larger community by fostering empathy as a component of leadership, collaboration, and teamwork. Through understanding others, Aggie Ambassador Officers gained understanding of their own personal strengths and contributions to their local area, campus, and communities.

Program Limitations and Challenges

This particular year posed challenges and limitations relating to campus operations status. The lack of available outreach and service events limited the opportunities that Aggie Ambassador Officers had to develop skills associated to those areas.

Recommendations for Future

Based upon our assessment this year, we have a few recommendations to consider for future years. We would recommend personal reflections of the Aggie Ambassador Officers throughout the academic year. There could be a beginning reflection at the officer retreat or before the academic year begins, reflections done at the end of Fall and Winter quarters, and a final one done at the end of the academic year. An alternative to consider to reflections would be group interviews or focus groups. We also recommend taking time to align Aggie Ambassador Officer experiences to the learning outcome to see where there may be opportunities to enhance the experience or reevaluate whether the outcome ought to be assigned to Aggie Ambassador Officers for assessment. Lastly, we recommend looking for opportunities to track Aggie Ambassador Officer next steps and what they participate in after being an Aggie Ambassador Officer. There was recently an Aggie Ambassador LinkedIn group created for students that could help understand more about post-graduation plans. We could also consider what officers participate in at UC Davis after serving as an Aggie Ambassador Officer. This information could help understand more in depth what the contribution to local communities looks like and what role their Aggie Ambassador Officer experience played in those experiences.

References
https://caes.ucdavis.edu/students/clubs/aa

Student Learning Outcome 4

Aggie Ambassadors: Class Speakers

Prepared By: Corrine Hawes, Danielle Huddlestun, Tracy Diesslin, and Vien Cantorna

"I learned [not to be] afraid to advocate on behalf of yourself to take full advantage of [the] resources available."
–Student Feedback

Overview

Aggie Ambassadors is a student organization that is directly run out of the Dean's Office that focuses on Leadership, Outreach, and Community. The Student Leadership Program Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator oversee the organization. The organization is both a class and a club, students are able to enroll for units and have to complete a number of requirements in order to earn a Pass for the class and some students will attend meetings as an extracurricular activity when their schedule allows. The class is under Agricultural and Environmental Education (AED 98/198) and it is offered every quarter and meets once a week for 50 minutes. Approximately three to four speakers are invited each quarter to speak in class, these speakers have included Aggie Ambassador alumni, UC Davis graduate students, industry professionals, staff and faculty members from CA&ES, and Associate Deans from CA&ES. These speakers are invited to present on their career path and educational journey, their research in agricultural and environmental sciences, careers available in their field, and innovations and challenges facing their field today, in addition to student opportunities and campus resources. Depending on the size of the Aggie Ambassadors class, a round table style has been used as an alternative to a panel style. Individual faculty speakers mainly presented in a lecture style. After each class speaker finished their presentation, a Q&A session is held to answer any questions Aggie Ambassadors may have. During the 2020-2021 academic year, the number of speakers was limited to one to two due to the online format. In Fall 2020, there were two speakers and a career panel (in both sections). In Winter 2021, there was one career panel and one speaker and in Spring 2021 there was one speaker and one Associate Dean's panel. In order for Aggie Ambassadors to effectively serve as student ambassadors for the CA&ES, they must have opportunities to learn about campus resources, the College's role in agriculture and environmental sciences, and its impact on the world today, as well as opportunities to engage with experts in these fields.

Student Learning Outcomes

The Aggie Ambassadors: Class Speakers program meets the following Student Learning Program Outcomes (the SLOs addressed in this section are italicized below):

1. Students will create an integrated course of study in alignment with their academic, professional, and personal goals (b) Participate in academic, professional, and/or co-curricular activities that align with their educational goals
3. Students will improve their local area, campus, home region, and/or global communities (c) Attend events that will expand own knowledge and experience of world views (d) Understand self as part of a large community

4. *Students will analyze their skills and abilities necessary to achieve their goals (c) Intentionally reflect on personal development*

Through attending class speaker presentations and participating in discussions and Q&A sessions with guest speakers, Aggie Ambassadors will:

- Learn more about the fields of agricultural and environmental sciences, particularly the challenges that exist in the fields today
- Gain a greater awareness of campus resources and opportunities that can support their educational goals
- Explore their own personal interests in agricultural and environmental sciences, and further reflect on academic and professional goals

Assessment

Students in Aggie Ambassadors enroll in the course for one or two units. In order to earn a passing grade, students must complete discussion prompts about the class and respond to two classmates. For one unit, students must respond to at least three different discussion posts and for two units, students must respond to at least six different discussion posts. The syllabus provided at the beginning of the quarter outlines these expectations and provides acceptable and unacceptable response examples which are included below.

Example: Prompt- How would you define leadership and what are guiding principles you believe in when it comes to leadership?

ACCEPTABLE ANSWERS:

Prompt Response: I believe that leadership is a process and based on an observable set of skills that with constructive feedback can be improved on over time. I believe that everyone has the ability to be a leader – no matter the skill set, title, or experience. Depending on situations sometimes different characteristics are needed from those people involved. For example, in a time pressure situation someone who is able to quickly decide and take intentional actions would be more favored over those who take time to think through decisions and tend to look at it from different angles which could eat up time in a time sensitive situation.

Response to another member: Wow, that is an interesting way to think of it. I have always been intimidated by the word "leader" and "leadership" because I tend to be shy and not speak my mind as much as others. I've never thought about how my other skills (aside from being able to take a step back) could be viewed as others as leadership. This was a good reminder about a workshop I once attended about being an introverted leader and I really should revisit some of the content from that workshop to help boost my confidence!

UNACCEPTABLE ANSWERS:

Prompt Response: I think people can only be leaders if they hold a title of power like "president".

Response to another member:
"I agree. That is similar to me."
"That sounds cool."

All posts should include at least three thoughtful, intentional, and detailed sentences. The purpose of the discussion posts is to complement the speaker program goals listed in the Student Learning Outcomes section above and encourage further engagement with the speakers and other students in the class. The discussion posts are meant to provide an outlet for students to reflect on the material, broaden their perspective by reading the responses of others, and apply key themes to their own educational journey.

Students' comments on the Canvas discussion board to the weekly prompt, and their responses to other students' comments, were all reviewed. These findings do not reflect any specific student or student group. All data looked at had identifying student information completely redacted. There were a total of 131 students enrolled throughout the academic year with a range of students being enrolled for one, two, or all three quarters. A total of 545 deidentified posts from 127 students (response being a response to the prompt and two responses to class mates) were reviewed from 10 speaker prompts from Fall 2020, Winter 2021 and Spring 2021. The breakdown of the speakers and prompts is listed below:

Faculty & Staff:

Faculty and Alumna – Fall 2020

Prompt: [They] talked about the importance of collaboration in order to solve the "wicked or complex problems within rangeland management. This touches on the College of Agricultural and Environmental Science's dedication to offering a wide range of majors to help provide students an interdisciplinary view of the various fields. Think about your major/field/future career and any current issues. What are 2-3departments/fields/areas that would be integral to solve any "wicked" problems or help the field to be successful? What made you select them?

Faculty and Associate Dean – Winter 2021

Prompt: [The faculty] spoke a lot about the implications of meat production across the three divisions of the college and some of your questions also hinted at the implications of meat production across human, agricultural, and environmental sciences. Pending your major/field of interest/potential career path (choose one even if you are in between a couple of ideas), how do you see the implications span across the three divisions of the college (human/agricultural/environmental)? If you think it does not implicate one area, why do you think that or what is hard for you to connect? Do any of these overlaps interest you? If so, which ones and why? If you are already involved in research on campus, what have you been working on?

University Staff – Winter 2021

Prompt: [They] talked about some opportunities for students in [their] talk. Even though things are not "normal" currently, what is one thing would like to get involved in before you graduate Davis and what are you hoping to gain from this OR what is one thing you have already done at Davis that has greatly impacted you (for better or worse)?

Faculty – Spring 2021

Prompt: During yesterday's presentation we were able to hear from [a faculty]and learn about the connection of agriculture to cities. What was something new you learned from the presentation? What is your perspective on the transformation of farm land to common areas in big cities like Boston? Did anything surprise you about the presentation? Can you name a location that has amazed you with their architecture?

Industry Professionals & Alumni

Industry Professional and Alumna – Fall 2020

Prompt: [They] were able to share a lot of the opportunities [they] took advantage of while [they] were a student at UC Davis. This ultimately led to provide her both tangible experience and leadership skills to help her find her career path. Even though things are not "normal" currently, what is one thing would like to get involved in before you graduate Davis and what are you hoping to gain from this OR what is one thing you have already done at Davis that has greatly impacted you (for better or worse)?

Industry Professional and Alumna – Fall 2020

Prompt: In [the] presentation, [they] discussed the importance of mentors in her life and how they shaped her personal and professional direction. Who has influenced you? How have they influenced you? Have they influenced your ideas about major direction and/or career options?

Panels

Career Panel – Fall 2020

Prompt: You had the opportunity to hear from a few different working professionals about their experiences and career journey. The panelists represented a variety of different careers and may touch on one of the three divisions within the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: agricultural sciences, environmental sciences, or human and social sciences. Some of you may have heard from panelists working in fields of interest to you while others may not have heard directly from somebody representing a career that you're interested in pursuing. Regardless of how you may have connected to an individual panelist, we encouraged you to think about how their experience or journey may related to your own.

Career Panel – Fall 2020 (Different Section)
Prompt: You had the opportunity to hear from a few different working professionals about their experiences and career journey. The panelists represented a variety of different careers and may touch on one of the three divisions within the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: agricultural sciences, environmental sciences, or human and social sciences. Some of you may have heard from panelists working in fields of interest to you while others may not have heard directly from somebody representing a career that you're interested in pursuing. Regardless of how you may have connected to an individual panelist, we encouraged you to think about how their experience or journey may related to your own.

Career Panel – Winter 2021

Prompt: During Cleeting 8, we learned about a variety of careers with different educational pathways and work schedules. If you could pursue any career, what would it be and why? In order to be successful in that career what are some skills that you would need to cultivate? Could those skills be used for any other potential careers that interest you?

Faculty Panel – Spring 2021
Prompt: Today you had the opportunity to chat with three [faculty] from the CA&ES. What were three main takeaways that you had from your discussions with the [the faculty]? How can you take what you discussed today and apply it to your academic and/or career goals?

Methods

We found that the frameworks of growth mindset (Dweck, 2008) and critical hope (Duncan-Andrade, 2009), created the foundation for building criteria for evidence of the student learning outcome. The juxtaposition of growth mindset and critical hope offers a more inclusive and decolonized lens from which to analyze student responses, with an attempt to account for different developmental stages and unique lived experiences that are represented. Growth mindset suggests that intelligence is not fixed, encouraging individuals to learn from their environment and embrace challenges (Dweck). Under the premise of growth mindset, individuals subscribe to the belief that they can continually improve and change through reflection and learning (Dweck). In the framework of critical hope, educators reject the myth of meritocracy and empower students holistically with *material hope, socratic hope, and audacious hope* (Duncan-Andrade, 2009). Together, these different 'hopes' account for the environmental challenges, courage and resilience, and belonging within a community that are invaluable to creating space for students' intentional personal reflection. Using both growth mindset and critical hope, we created a system for coding student responses for engagement in self reflection. In the table below, justification for each criteria is described.

Table 1: Evidence of Student Learning Outcome 4C

| Criteria	Growth Mindset	Critical Hope
1. Evidence of embracing challenges	Dweck states that individuals who learn from challenges utilize a growth mindset.	Duncan-Andrade states that material hope is the practice of engaging with environmental challenges and/or stressors.
2. Evidence of engaging with others, learning from others' success, and/or networking	Dweck states that individuals can learn from people around them and use others' success as inspiration for growth.	Duncan-Andrade states that audacious hope is solidarity and sharing with others through community and belonging.
3. Evidence of desire to learn something new and/or something more	Dweck states that continuous improvement and interest in learning is characteristic of having a growth mindset.	Duncan-Andrade states that socratic hope is the courage and resilience to continue forward, when courage and resilience are the only options.

FINDINGS

While we originally intended to review only how students were engaging in personal reflection, the theoretical frameworks allowed for deeper understanding the what, when, and how of self reflection. The findings show that many of the prompts allowed students to be inspired and learn from others. Furthermore, the nature of the course could be creating an inclusive student community where students feel comfortable engaging with their peers. The findings show an emphasis on the cohort success, versus individuals a whole. Despite the pandemic and campus closure, the discussion board provided an outlet for students to interact in a positive way. An appreciation for the vulnerability of students sharing their perspectives does not go unseen. Of the 127 student responses reviewed from the 10 speaker prompts, 103 responses, or 81.10%, showed that students intentionally reflected on their personal development.

Of the sample sets reviewed, we found evidence of each of the three criteria listed below as follows:

Table 2: Evidence of intentional reflection on personal development in the speaker prompts

Evidence	% Of Student Responses	# Of Student Responses
Criteria 1: Embracing challenges	23.62 %	30
Criteria 2: Inspired and engaged with others	62.99%	80
Criteria 3: Desire to learn	42.51%	54

Figure 1: % of Aggie Ambassador Students Who Intentionally Reflected on Personal Development
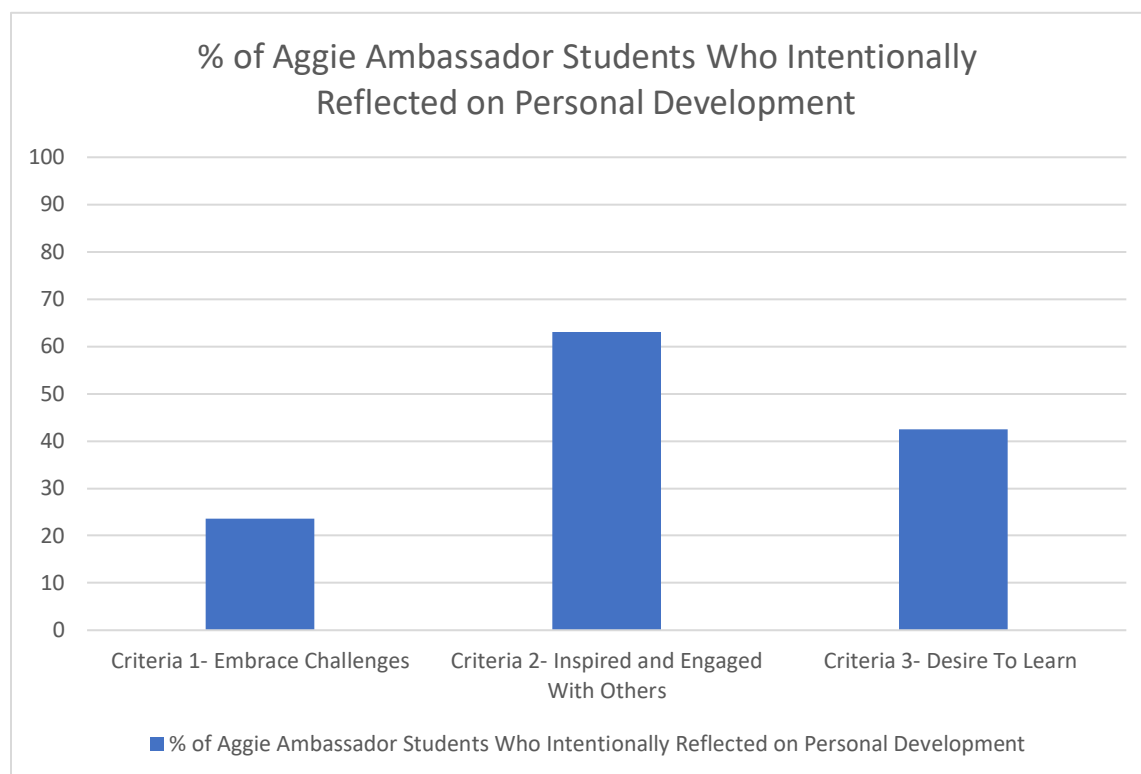
Examples of student responses that demonstrate intentional reflection for each of the criteria include:

Criteria 1—Embrace Challenges:

"My main take away was to take breaks and enjoy our time as an undergraduate. The reason I believe this is important is because I feel like lately I've put excessive pressure on myself regarding academics that has put me [on] the borderline [of] burn out. This will help in the long run with our career goals because it will help in not wanting to give up, [be] successful with your current classes, and it will help [keep] our mental and emotional health stable."

Criteria 2—Inspired and Engaged with Others:

"After hearing him speak I have realized that traveling is important and can change a person's life and perspective. After hearing him speak it made me want to explore the world more and become more culturally aware of others."

Criteria 3—Desire to Learn:

"Before graduation, I would love to get involved in a research lab. I feel that this would be an incredibly beneficial experience for me considering that I hope to attend graduate school following graduation and to work in a lab in the future. In order to make myself a more competitive applicant with actual experience in the field I hope to pursue and eventually working, I think that working in a lab would provide me with an understanding of the type of work I would be doing and the commitment/responsibility that goes into it."

Program Limitations and Challenges

For the findings, it is important to consider that students may be achieving the student learning outcome; however, due to the nature of the prompt, may not be showing this in their response. In addition, the student responses reflect students in their first, second, third or fourth year in college. With this in mind, we acknowledge that not all students are in the same development stage. We could assume a student close to graduating may better demonstrate the student learning outcome than a first-year student, for example.

Additionally, though growth mindset and critical hope were not used in preparing prompt assignments, the theories were effective in establishing criteria to measure students' engagement in intentional personal reflection. It is necessary to acknowledge that the theoretical frameworks encourage thinking outside of systemic barriers and the coding of qualitative data into quantitative findings is a limitation.

Recommendations for Future

The discussion posts were created with the Aggie Ambassador program goals in mind. The posts encouraged an opportunity for the students to reflect on what was learned and connect with the material. Not all speaker prompts were created to specifically align with growth mindset and the criteria selected. Moving forward, we recommend keeping these criteria in mind when establishing the discussion posts.

In addition, this year was the first opportunity for students to engage in Aggie Ambassadors as an entirely online course. The findings show that a hybrid class structure may better support students in achieving the student learning outcome. Online discussion posts allow for students to express their thoughts and opinions in a less-intimidating way, than if the discussion was in person. In addition, responding to discussion posts online allows students who need more processing time to take their time in developing a thoughtful response.

References

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