Pre- and Post-term Surveys on Academic Confidence
CARP | Fall 2015
Report prepared by Academic Institutional Research Office
San Francisco State University

Background

During the 2015-2016 Academic Year, the Campus Academic Resource Program (CARP) received a one-time budget increase to increase the number of student support services offered to SF State undergraduate students. The goal of CARP's services is to increase student confidence in their ability to understand the class material. Student confidence has previously been shown to correlate with increased academic performance (Shoemaker, 2010).

Methodology

The survey was composed of three questions based on the model established by Shoemaker (2010). Responses were scored on a scale from 1 through 9, with 9 being the most positive response. The questions were as follows:

- How <u>motivated</u> are you to perform well in most of your classes at San Francisco State University, regardless of the course difficulty or the subject matter (like math, writing, science, social sciences, etc.)?

- How <u>confident</u> are you that you will perform well <u>in most of your classes</u> at SF State?

- Now think about <u>the class for which you are seeking tutoring</u> help. How much <u>confidence</u> would you say you have in your ability to perform well in this class?

Students who received CARP's services took the survey during their first interaction with CARP during the Fall 2015 semester (referred to as the "pre-test"), and were given the opportunity to do the same survey at the end of the Fall 2015 semester (referred to as the "post-test"). 132 students took both the pre- and post-test. Their responses are discussed below.

Results

For **all courses** combined, the pre- and post-term survey responses for each question were compared using paired sample t-tests. Only the pre- and post-term survey responses for the question on <u>confidence in performance in the class for which tutoring was sought</u> were significantly different ($p<.05$). The mean *increased* from 6.15 to 6.59.

The 132 sets of pre- and post-term survey responses were distributed over 57 courses. There were very few sets of responses per course. Only for the following two courses were there 10 or more students who responded to the pre- and post-term surveys:

In only BUS 300 (n=14), there were <u>no significant pre/post differences</u> in any of the three questions.

In only MATH 60 (n=10), there were <u>no significant pre/post differences</u> in any of the three questions.

In all of the MATH courses combined (n=27, the largest number of cases in any course prefix), there was a significant difference (p<.01) in the question on <u>motivation</u>, with the mean *decreasing* from 7.44 to 6.56

Conclusion

Previous research has shown a correlation between student confidence and academic performance (Shoemaker, 2010). And earlier analysis of CARP students' performance demonstrated that their grade performance was as good as that of students who did not receive any tutoring assistance (Academic Institutional Research Office, 2014). Here the data tell us that there is a statistically significant increase in student confidence in the courses for which they received tutoring (pre-term compared to post-term means) in the Fall 2015 semester. We didn't investigate the correlation between confidence and academic performance among CARP students, but if Shoemaker's findings hold, we could conclude that the increase in student confidence in the courses for which SF State students received tutoring is related to improved academic performance in those courses.

References

Academic Institutional Research Office. **Tutoring Services at San Francisco State University: Testing the Impact of CARP and LAC on Student Grades.** San Francisco State University, 2014; 1-5.

Shoemaker, Candice A. **Student Confidence as a Measure of Learning in an Undergraduate Principles of Horticulture Science Course**. *Hort Technology*, 2010; 20: 683-688.