

CLAREMONT EVALUATION CENTER



Claremont Graduate University

Evaluation of Norco College's
PACES (Pathways to Access, Completion, Equity and Success) Project

HOLISTIC STUDENT SUPPORT SURVEY REPORT



SUBMITTED BY:

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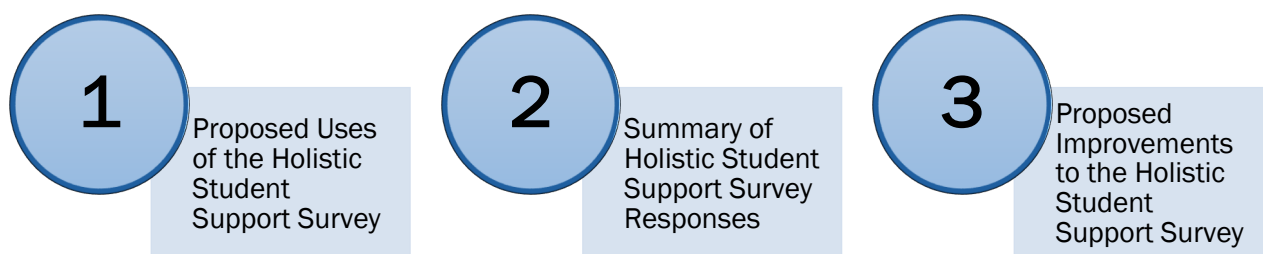
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NORCO COLLEGE PACES HOLISTIC STUDENT SUPPORT SURVEY REPORT

Introduction

To support the Pathways to Access, Completion, Equity, and Success (PACES) grant, Norco College has updated and re-structured their online new student orientation process to include embedded surveys throughout the process (titled the Holistic Student Support Survey) where students are asked to provide critical information. Based on their survey responses, Norco College representatives engage in a series of targeted follow-ups to connect students with Norco College and city/state/federal resources to address their needs, interests, and plans as they begin their academic career at Norco College.

As part of our evaluation collaboration in 2020-2021, the Claremont Evaluation Center (CEC) has partnered with Norco College to assess the ease of use, application, and analysis of information gathered on the Holistic Student Support Survey. In the following report, there are **three core sections**:



SECTION 1: Proposed Uses of the Holistic Student Support Survey

How could this Holistic Student Support Survey be used for program evaluation?

The Holistic Student Support Survey is a single evaluation measure that could be maximized to answer key evaluation questions or used in conjunction with other data sources to address Norco College's information needs. Below are some examples of how the Holistic Student Support Survey might be used for program evaluation. It should be noted that the survey's use will be dependent upon the evaluation questions of interest, as well as what information is gathered on the survey.

1. **Enhance understanding of Norco College's student population:** Given the timing of survey completion by students, prior to their first classes at Norco College, the student responses on this survey provide a detailed understanding of the student population, including their interests, responsibilities, and needs upon entry to Norco College. This information should be reviewed on a regular basis by Norco College leaders to ensure that the services and priorities of the college align with the needs of the incoming students. Prior to the fall and spring semesters, data summary presentations or reports could be provided to college leaders to give them background information about the students entering each semester. This survey would also be an opportune time to ask critical questions about students to identify their risk for leaving school or failing to complete their program of interest. For example, this information could be used to create a "risk" level, based on prior information from Norco College students

or published literature about college drop-out. These risk indices could be used to identify students most at-risk for not completing their course of study and inform the provision of equitable services to those who may require supplemental support to promote success.

2. Evaluate the process of using survey data to inform service engagement and student need satisfaction:

As it currently stands, these surveys are completed during each student's engagement with the virtual orientation process. Daily, responses are downloaded by members of the Student Success team and there is a comprehensive system for responding to and following up on an incoming student's individual responses (as outlined in the Holistic Student Support Survey Practitioner's Guide). However, the process whereby staff members follow-up on student responses and students take action based on staff recommendations have yet to be evaluated. The following evaluation questions come to mind:

- *Do students act based on the information provided by the staff, including meeting with an advisor, visiting or reaching out to on-campus services (e.g., financial aid office, food pantry), or engaging with online resources available (e.g., financial education workshops)? If not, why are students not taking action?*
- *Do students feel welcomed by on-campus service groups/offices?*
- *Do students continue to access information and services throughout the semester and during their academic careers at Norco College?*
- *Do staff feel that this process is working? Are there ways that they could be reaching students or responding to survey responses more effectively?*
- *What are staff experiences with using this survey information to tailor their conversations with students? What other information might be useful to staff in their work that could be added to the survey?*

3. Follow-up to offer evidence of program accountability and impact:

In the longer-term, connecting students to the appropriate campus services (based on their survey responses) is intended to promote a number of important longer-term outcomes for students. By identifying student needs early, this intervention is intended to ensure that student needs are met, students have a more positive experience at Norco College, students have more clarity about their career and educational plans, students receive better grades, and students persist at Norco College until transfer or completion. It is possible to track these outcomes over time for students who have engaged in this process to explore whether their outcomes are better in comparison to those who did not participate in this online orientation and survey process or chose not to engage with the resources shared with them. Tracking the success of the complete process from orientation to graduation, transfer, or workforce entry will provide information to satisfy accountability requirements and offer insights about the impact of these processes for Norco College students. Information about the outcomes associated with this integrated process may be of interest to a wide audience of educational groups, including other colleges, federal education administrators, educational researchers/evaluators and so on.

SECTION 2: Summary of Holistic Student Support Survey Responses

In this section, we will provide a brief summary of the survey responses from the most recent iteration of Holistic Student Support Survey.

SURVEY SAMPLE

The Holistic Student Support Survey is administered to Norco College students as an embedded component of their online new student orientation. The current version of the survey was launched on March 1st of 2021 and the following section summarizes student entries into this survey from that date until August 22nd, 2021; these responses represent new students who completed the orientation during the spring and summer of 2021. A total of **1,562 responses** were entered during this timeframe, including 1547 responses to the English version and 15 responses to the Spanish version. The following offers a summary of the responses across all sections of the survey.

PART 1: CAREER PLANNING

Please select the option that best describes how you feel about career decision making:

Response		N	% (N = 1559)
Uninformed	I have not spent much time thinking about my career goals or deciding what I want to do in the future.	205	13.1%
Undecided	I have done some research and narrowed down my options for which career I would like to pursue, but have not yet made a firm decision.	774	49.6%
Decided	I am certain about which career field I would like to enter at this time, I selected a major, and I have identified jobs of interest in that field.	580	37.2%

PART 2: FINANCIAL PLANNING

Did you apply for financial assistance through the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or Dream Act Application?

Yes	No	Unsure
945 (62.9%)	409 (27.2%)	148 (9.9%)

Please mark which public benefits you or anyone in your household currently receives (mark all that apply):

Response	N	% (N = 1562)
Not Applicable / Decline to State	1210	77.5%
Unemployment Benefits	122	7.8%
SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) / CalFresh	112	7.2%
SSI/SSP (Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment)	43	2.8%
GR (General Relief) or GA (General Assistance)	39	2.5%
TANF (Transitional Assistance for Needy Families) / CalWORKs (Cash Aid)	19	1.2%

Please indicate which financial topics you are interested in (mark all that apply):

<i>Response</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% (N = 1562)</i>
I would like information about scholarships and other funding opportunities	530	33.9%
I want to save money for things like my education, purchasing a car, and/or emergencies	496	31.8%
I want to create a spending plan or budget for my time in college	457	29.3%
I am not interested in receiving financial planning support	388	24.8%
I would like assistance completing the FAFSA or Dream Act Application	347	22.2%
I want to learn about borrowing money and student loans	268	17.2%
I want to repair or establish credit	205	13.1%

PART 3: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

I would like to speak to someone about the following support services (mark all that apply):

<i>Response</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% (N = 1562)</i>
Not applicable/decline to state	952	60.9%
Employment Do you need assistance with finding employment that works with your school schedule?	277	17.7%
University Research Do you need help exploring universities to transfer to?	197	12.6%
Health and Wellness Do you have concerns about your personal health, such as physical, emotional, eating/sleeping, relationships, anxiety, depression, alcohol/drugs, etc.?	151	9.7%
Transportation Do you have transportation to and from the college?	100	6.4%
Technology Do you have access to a computer and the internet?	99	6.3%
Housing Do you have unstable living situations?	76	4.9%
Disability Accommodations Do you have a disability or other health concern for which you may want assistance?	69	4.4%
Food Do you struggle to feed yourself and/or your family?	59	3.8%
Safety Do you have concerns about your personal security?	46	2.9%
Childcare Would you like assistance with accessing childcare resources?	43	2.8%

PART 4: CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

I would like more information about the following support programs (mark all that apply):

<i>Response</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% (N = 1562)</i>
Not applicable/decline to state	896	57.4%
Promise Program A financial support program to help first-time college students complete their educational goal in a timely manner.	261	16.7%
Honors A support program for student scholars (with high school or college GPAs over 3.00) who have a passion for learning and are planning to transfer to a university.	215	13.8%

EOPS/ CARE/ NextUp	A cluster of academic support programs that assist students disadvantaged by language, social, economic, and educational circumstances. The programs primarily serve students from low-income backgrounds, first-generation, single parents, and former foster youth.	159	10.2%
Engineering Pathways	A support program for students seeking transfer to any four-year university to pursue a baccalaureate degree in computer science or any engineering field.	129	8.3%
TRiO SSS and SSS-RISE	Support programs for first-generation students, low-income students, and students with documented medical or psychological disabilities designed to enhance their academic skills, increase retention, and improve the probability of completion.	105	6.7%
CalWORKs	A support program for students with children that works in collaboration with the Department of Public Social Services to assist students with their education, training and job skills.	94	6.0%
Phoenix Scholars	A support program that provides financial and educational resources to current and former foster youth.	40	2.6%
Veterans Services	A support program that provides resources and direct assistance for all veterans, active duty military members, and VA dependents.	25	1.6%

I would like more information about the following learning communities and groups (mark all that apply):

<i>Response</i>		<i>N</i>	<i>% (N = 1562)</i>
Not applicable/decline to state		1108	70.9%
Puente	This learning community is an academic, counseling, and mentoring program of support for students to build the skills necessary for success in both academic and career goals.	186	11.9%
Women's Lean in Circle	This group is intentional about understanding the experiences of marginalized women and providing the necessary support for students to thrive in their personal and academic endeavors.	142	9.1%
Unity Zone	This center supports the LGBTQ+ and undocumented student populations. Students gather in the Unity Zone to support one another academically and emotionally in a safe space.	85	5.4%
Men of Color Scholars	This group is designed to support our Men of Color students from the time they apply until the time they graduate or transfer to a four-year university.	72	4.6%
Umoja	This learning community is designed to increase academic success among all students with an emphasis on the African-American population. A major key to student success is through fostering a sense of community.	48	3.1%

I would like to speak to someone about joining or starting a Student Club or Organization:

Yes, send me more information.	No, I am not interested at this time.
270 (18.5%)	1188 (81.5%)

ACADEMIC PLANNING SURVEY

Which term do you plan to start classes?

Term	N	% (N = 1437)
Fall 2021	1074	74.7%
Summer 2021	344	23.9%
Winter 2022	9	0.6%
Other	10	0.7%

I am considering the following college major(s). (If unsure, write “undecided”.)

Note. The codes/categories used to organize the written responses to this question represent the core majors offered by Norco College.

Response	N	% (N = 1437)
Undecided	479	33.3%
Business / Logistics / Real Estate	201	14.0%
Biology /Environmental Science	154	10.7%
Computer Science/Game Science	99	6.9%
Could not be categorized by Norco College majors	92	6.4%
Psychology	89	6.2%
Engineering, Drafting, Architecture	85	5.9%
Administration of Justice	39	2.7%
Child Development and Early Childhood Education	39	2.7%
Kinesiology, Health, Physical Education	31	2.2%
Art	27	1.9%
Mathematics	21	1.5%
Sociology	19	1.3%
Electronics & Electricity	17	1.2%
Communications	13	0.9%
Political Science	11	0.8%
Chemistry	9	0.6%
English	9	0.6%
History	9	0.6%
Music	7	0.5%
Physics	7	0.5%
Construction and Facilities Maintenance	6	0.4%
Social and Behavioral Sciences	6	0.4%
Machining	4	0.3%
Philosophy	4	0.3%
Spanish	3	0.2%
Anthropology	2	0.1%
Supply Chain Automation & Warehousing	1	0.1%
Manufacturing	0	0.0%

I am considering the following career(s). (If unsure, write “undecided”.)

The extensive range of written responses to this question limited our ability to categorize and code these responses for interpretation. Of note, there were **552 “undecided” responses** to this question (including “none”, “not sure”, and “unsure” responses) **out of 1449 written responses (38.1%)**.

These are subjects where I have academic strengths (mark all that apply):

<i>Response</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% {N = 1562}</i>
English / Literature / Reading	474	30.3%
Math	409	26.2%
Science / Biology / Chemistry / Geography / Physics	373	23.9%
History / Social Studies	368	23.6%
Art / Theater / Music	318	20.4%
Physical Education / Sports	285	18.2%
Technology / Computers	279	17.9%
Psychology / Sociology / Anthropology	275	17.6%
Business / Finance / Accounting	231	14.8%
None / Decline to State	219	14.0%
Communication Studies / Public Speaking	167	10.7%
Foreign Language / American Sign Language	146	9.3%
Economics	117	7.5%
Career and Technical Education (CTE) / Trades	101	6.5%
Philosophy / Religion	96	6.1%

These are difficult subjects for me where I can grow and improve (mark all that apply):

<i>Response</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% {N = 1562}</i>
Math	667	42.7%
English / Literature / Reading	391	25.0%
Science / Biology / Chemistry / Geography / Physics	377	24.1%
Communication Studies / Public Speaking	304	19.5%
None / Decline to State	240	15.4%
Economics	228	14.6%
Technology / Computers	220	14.1%
History / Social Studies	204	13.1%
Foreign Language / American Sign Language	200	12.8%
Art / Theater / Music	122	7.8%
Psychology / Sociology / Anthropology	102	6.5%
Career and Technical Education (CTE) / Trades	96	6.1%
Philosophy / Religion	78	5.0%
Physical Education / Sports	74	4.7%
Business / Finance / Accounting	69	4.4%

Would you like information about tutoring services and other academic supports?

Yes	No	I'm not sure
647 (45.0%)	417 (29.0%)	373 (26.0%)

Have you ever passed Advanced Placement (AP, score of 3 or higher), International Baccalaureate (IB, score of 4 or higher), or College Level Exam Preparation (CLEP) exams, OR have you attended or received credit from any other colleges or universities?

Yes	No
369 (25.7%)	1068 (74.3%)

In a typical seven-day week, I spend about this many hours working for pay:

<i>Response</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% (N = 1452)</i>
None / Decline to State	716	49.3%
1-5 hours	51	3.5%
6-10 hours	69	4.8%
11-20 hours	126	8.7%
21-30 hours	204	14.0%
31-40 hours	200	13.8%
41-50 hours	75	5.2%
50+ hours	11	0.8%

What other out-of-school activities or responsibilities do you have and how much time do you spend on each?

There was a total of 974 written responses (English version responses only) and 537 of these responses were coded for analyses. The non-coded responses did not provide enough to categorize, including those who noted the hours but not the activity (e.g., “15-30 hours”), those who did not have any activities to note (e.g., “I have no other responsibilities”), or those that noted activities that did not lend themselves to clear codes (e.g., “tacos-5 hours”).

<i>Activity Codes</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>% (N = 537)</i>	<i>Example Responses</i>
Employment	144	26.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I have a job- 20 hours a week</i> <i>I have work for 7 hours, 4 days a week</i> <i>I make deliveries and work hourly for around 6-9 hours</i>
Sports	118	22.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Boxing around 4 hours a week</i> <i>Equestrian sport, 10-15 hours per week</i> <i>I spend about 12 hours a week on hockey</i>
Family responsibilities	97	18.1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I take care of my parents when I am at home</i> <i>kids gymnastics 3 hours a week</i> <i>Spending time with loved ones 6+ hours</i>
Hobbies/Crafts	53	9.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Drawing and painting, I spent probably 2 hours</i> <i>video games - a few hours/daily</i> <i>Performing with a band - 10 hours weekly</i>
Exercise	48	8.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Gym 4 hrs each morning</i> <i>I love to exercise</i> <i>Weight Lifting, 3-4 hours a week</i>
Chores/home responsibilities	34	6.3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Helping spouse manage household.</i> <i>Cooking and cleaning</i> <i>I have responsibilities at home, about 2hrs a day</i>
Religious Activities	34	6.3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Sunday School Teacher minimum 2 days a week</i> <i>Volunteered at my local mosque and spend 4 hours volunteering.</i> <i>I run a website for a church, I spend around 4 hours working on it weekly.</i>
Babysitting/ Childcare	18	3.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I babysit my nephew about two days a week</i>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>watching my siblings and helping my aunt</i> • <i>Babysitting my special needs cousins 20-30 hours a week</i>
Volunteering	16	3.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I volunteer at the hospital 4 hours 1 times a week</i> • <i>Community Service. About 15 hours a week</i>
Taking care of pets	11	2.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have a small group of chickens, dog, and cat that need little maintenance- max 2hours.</i> • <i>Fostering Kittens</i>

SECTION 3: Proposed Improvements to the Holistic Student Support Survey

How could the Holistic Student Support Survey be updated or improved for maximum use and relevance?

Based on a thorough review of the survey, as well as analysis of survey trends from the spring/summer of 2021, our team developed the following list of potential revisions to the survey to improve the interpretation and use of information gathered from students on the survey. Because Norco College has a more detailed understanding of the survey items and the rationale behind their development and use, these proposed suggestions are only possible changes, given our knowledge of the survey and its use.

1. Translate open-ended boxes into close-ended questions or checkboxes, when possible.

- Consider changing the question about majors (*I am considering the following college major(s). If unsure, write UNDECIDED*) into a drop-down box or check all that apply question with all the potential majors available at Norco College in a list. This will allow students to see all the potential majors and ensure that they are entering an accurate response to this question. This will also simplify analysis or interpretation of this question by ensuring that the answers are accurate and consistent with the available majors at Norco College. Furthermore, it might be prudent to add “at Norco College” at the end of the question to clarify that this question refers only to their time at Norco College, rather than some future potential degree they would like to obtain elsewhere. Approximately 6% of responses to this question (92 responses) were not able to be categorized because they did not align with any of the available majors at Norco College. Other students responded to this question with the type of degree they would like to obtain (e.g., “associate”) and others responded with course names (e.g., “AS521”). Examples of non-categorizable responses included:
 - Liberal studies*
 - Lawyer*
 - Geography*
 - Ocean Sciences*
 - Social Work*
 - Statistics*
 - Theology*
 - STEM*
 - Update the question about out-of-school time activities (*What other out-of-school activities or responsibilities do you have and how much time do you spend on each?*) to be a close-ended survey item given our analyses of the most-frequent responses in the summary above.
- 2. Consider revising the question about activities or responsibilities to ensure that student responses to this question offer the relevant information requested.**

Current Question	What other out-of-school activities or responsibilities do you have and how much time do you spend on each?
Potential Revision	Other than working for pay, what other out-of-school activities or responsibilities do you have that might impact your schedule for courses for the upcoming semester and how much time do you spend on each?

- We would recommend noting that this question does not apply to “work” or “employment” because many students noted employment in response to this question. Despite the directly preceding survey question about employment (*In a typical seven-day week, I spend about this many hours working for pay?*), 144 responses (26.8% of coded responses) noted “employment” as one of their activities. The high prevalence of employment as a response for this question would suggest that it needs to be clearer that this survey item is not referring to employment or work for pay.
 - We would also recommend noting the timeframe (e.g., “for the upcoming semester”) because some students noted activities that would be completed prior to enrolling at Norco College (e.g., high school courses).
 - Lastly, given our understanding of how this question is used, we would recommend noting that this question is *only* asking about activities that “might impact your schedule for courses for the upcoming semester”. Most responses to this question were activities that likely had flexible hours/schedules (e.g., chores, exercise, hobbies). When students offer these responses to this question, they do not provide the critical information about activities that would impact their academic schedules, and this renders their responses mostly useless. Additionally, if this item is revised so that responses are offered in a close-ended manner, it would be ideal to have students note the hours for each activity in a separate space for text entry to improve interpretation.
3. **Consider removing “Not Applicable / Decline to State” responses from check all that apply questions.** This particular response is not useful to the Norco College representatives who are responding to student survey responses; rather, this response creates noise in the response download file around the useful information in student responses. Furthermore, students will often select this response in addition to other responses, which does not make logical sense.
 4. **Consider removing questions about “academic strengths” and “difficult subjects”** (e.g., *These are subjects where I have academic strengths [mark all that apply], These are difficult subjects for me where I can grow and improve [mark all that apply]*). The two questions asking students to note their strengths and difficult subjects are challenging to interpret (the responses are exported as a large list in a single cell) and there is seemingly little follow-up that is motivated by these responses. This information would be better collected from students during the one-on-one meetings with their Student Support Team and/or college advisors, rather than asking them to respond to these lengthy lists on this survey.
 5. **Consider adding additional questions to better understand the student population.** It may be useful to add additional questions to the survey that will offer a more comprehensive picture of the incoming students for each semester. Depending on the types of data already being tracked about students and the availability of that data, it might be useful to consider whether the following questions could help the college to understand their student population and identify students who may require supplemental support:
 - *Are you a first-generation college student?*
 - *What is your Race/Ethnicity? What is your age?*
 - *Why did you apply at Norco College? Why did you decide to enroll at Norco College?*