

# **First-Year Experience 2013**

## **Summary Report**

### **Overview**

Palomar College launched its inaugural class of First-Year Experience (FYE) students in Fall 2013. The primary goal of the FYE program is to provide students with the support and resources necessary to transition successfully into college and stay in college. The program is housed in the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) at Palomar College, on the San Marcos campus. Staffing in the program includes a supervisor, a faculty FYE coordinator, an instructional dean (Languages and Literature), and four classified staff positions of TLC Specialist, TLC Assistant, Office Specialist, and Office Specialist III.

### **Challenges in our Initial Year**

At the start of the Fall 2013, 3 people were working on the FYE program: the FYE Coordinator (60% time), the TLC Supervisor (who is managing many other projects), and a 45% Office Specialist. The TLC San Marcos building was not yet open, so the staff members were scattered about campus. The lack of a central location led to students having difficulties finding the staff members. The two FYE Counselors were in an office in the Natural Sciences building, far away from the main campus hub. Students reported having problems finding the counselors' office. The TLC San Marcos finally opened in January 2014. Having one central location for our FYE Staff and Counselors has helped FYE students come in and get the assistance they need.

Additionally, staff was being hired throughout the 2013-2014 year. Three positions were filled: the TLC Specialist, the TLC Assistance, and Office Specialist. Hiring and training new staff took a lot of time. The program is now in its second year and is realizing the benefits of having a single location and with full staffing.

### **Recruitment into the Program**

The FYE program was marketed to incoming students through Palomar College's 44 feeder high schools, through the existing Summer Bridge program, and through General Counseling at Palomar College. Many of the students in the first cohort were recruited through Summer Bridge and from counseling referrals at Palomar. As of August 27, 2013, 113 students had applied; 104 students were accepted into the program for Fall 2013. That is, 92% of our applicants entered in the program during the fall semester.

### **Orientation**

An important component of the FYE program is orientation. Two main orientations were offered to students: one in the morning and one in the evening. Each orientation lasted a total of three hours. Families were invited, and several attended.

Upon arrival, students checked in and received their FYE folders with student services information and a USB drive. Then President Deegan and VP Cuaron made welcoming remarks; both the FYE and FR Coordinators welcomed the students as well. One of our FYE Counselors went over the FYE Student Responsibility Contract with the group. The students then signed the contract and turned them in.

Students then participated in a series of short workshops. Shayla Sivert (Dean of Languages and Literature) led a workshop on Blackboard, eServices, and Palomar College email. Elvia Nuñez from the Transfer Center presented a workshop on the services at the Transfer Center and provided important transfer information.

Students were then separated into groups of 25 or so and went on a campus tour, which included a visit to the Career Center. At the end of the campus tour, we directed students to the ASG Office in the Student Union so they could pick up their free Student Activity Cards. The Student Activity cards were funded by an on-campus mini-grant from the Office of Student Affairs. 60 of our students attended one of our two formal orientation events. The rest received individual orientations given by our FYE Counselors.

## Demographics

**Gender:** 48% male and 51% female (1% listed unknown).

**Average age:** 19

Ethnicity	Percentage
African America	5%
American Indian	1%
Filipino	2%
Pacific Islander	3%
	Hawaiian (Pacific Islander) 1% Samoaan (Pacific Islander) 1% Pacific Islander - Other 1%
Asian American	4%
	Japanese 1% Korean 2% Vietnamese 1%
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>62%</b>
	Mexican-American, Chicano 47% Central American 1% South American 3% Hispanic - Other 10%
White	27%
Chose Multiple Ethnicity	16%
Unknown (did not indicate)	12%

## Educational Plan

For the FYE 2013 cohort of 104 students, 89 students had an Educational Plan for Spring 2014. That is, at the end of Fall 2013, 85.6% of FYE students had an Ed Plan.

## Persistence

For FYE 2013, the Fall 13 to Spring 14 persistence was 86.5% (90 out of 104). For first-time college students who entered Palomar in Fall 2012, persisted to Spring 2013 but not participate in our FYE program, the rate was 72.1%.

For FYE 2013, the Fall 13 to Fall 14 persistence was 61%. According to the Palomar College 2012 Factbook, the persistence from Fall to Fall for Fall 2008 credit students was 49.5% and 49.1% for the Fall 2009 credit students. The 2008-2009 quoted cohort is the last cohort listed in the Palomar College Factbook.

### Math/English/ESL Course Success

All data was obtained via a query from PeopleSoft for the FY13 student group.

#### Fall 2013

Subject	Number of Students Enrolled	Number of Students with a Passing Grade (A,B,C,P)	Percentage Passing	Number of Students with a Failing Grade (D, F, FW, NP)	Percentage Failing	Number of Students with a W	Percentage with W
English	59	40	68%	14	24%	5	8%
ESL	10	8	80%	1	10%	1	10%
Math	79	79	62%	27	34%	2	3%

#### Spring 2014

Subject	Number of Students Enrolled	Number of Students with a Passing Grade (A,B,C,P)	Percentage Passing	Number of Students with a Failing Grade (D, F, FW, NP)	Percentage Failing	Number of Students with a W	Percentage with W
English	41	23	56%	15	37%	3	7%
ESL	7	6	86%	1	14%	0	0%
Math	51	26	51%	22	43%	3	6%

### FYE GPA

Fall		Spring	
GPA Range	Number of Students	GPA Range	Number of Students
0.00 – 2.00	36	0.00 – 2.00	47
Above 2.00 – 2.50	9	Above 2.00 – 2.50	10
Above 2.5 – 3.00	14	Above 2.5 – 3.00	13
Above 3.00 – 3.5	13	Above 3.00 – 3.5	13
Above 3.5	18	Above 3.5	7

For Fall 2013, 60% of our FYE students had a GPA of 2.00 or higher. For Spring 2014, 47.8% of our FYE students had a GPA of 2.00 or higher.

## Number of Units

	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<b>Part-time</b>	30	31
<b>Full-time</b>	60	59

We can see from the table above that about 66% of FYE students were enrolled full-time in both Fall and Spring.

## FYE Counseling Contacts

85 of our FYE students saw a counselor at least once for Fall 2013, or 81.7% . 65 of our FYE students saw a counselor at least once for Spring 2014, or 72.2% .

	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<b>0 counseling appointments</b>	20	25
<b>1 counseling appointment</b>	44	26
<b>2 counseling appointments</b>	40	39

## FYE Workshop Attendance:

	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<b>0 workshops attended</b>	63	82
<b>1 workshop attended</b>	34	5
<b>2 workshops attended</b>	5	3

## FYE Tracks and Required Courses

FYE students are required to take a math, English, or ESL track. This means that if a student self-selects a math track, they will take a math class in fall and another math class in spring. The goal is to get FYE students through at least one of their basic skills sequences in their first year, as students often put off taking their required English/ESL/math classes. For the fall semester, FYE students are also required to take either a counseling class, preferably Counseling 110, if they have placed into college-level reading, or a reading course if they have placed below college level reading.

**Fall 2013:** 97 of the 104 FYE students were enrolled in a math, English, or ESL class in fall. That is 93.3% of our FYE students fulfilled their track requirement in fall.

**Spring 2014:** 71 of our 90 students were enrolled in a math, English, or ESL class in spring. That is, 77.8% of our FYE students fulfilled their track requirement in spring.

**Overall:** The table below lists the number of students who complete their FYE math, English or ESL tracks for both fall and spring semesters. It also includes the number of students who took reading or counseling in the fall.

<b>Courses completed for FA13 and SP14</b>	<b>Number of FYE 2013 students</b>
English only for both Fall and Spring	10 students
ESL only for both Fall and Spring	8 students (note: 1 student completed ESL 103 for fall and took Eng 100 for spring. I counted her in the ESL #)
Math only for both Fall and Spring	20 students
English & Math for both FA and SP	19 students
Reading for Fall 2013	22 students
Counseling 110 for Fall 2013	33 students

A goal for FYE 2014 is to improve the track completion numbers as well as the number of students who complete the fall reading or counseling requirement. With full staffing and a full complement of counselors working with the program, student outreach is expected to improve and positively impact track completion rates.

### **FYE Year-End Event**

On Thursday, May 8 2014 we held an end of the year Promotion Ceremony for our FYE students. Families were invited and dinner was provided. We had a special guest speaker, Dr. Rudolfo Jacobo, who spoke to our FYE students and mingled with the families afterwards. Students were given a promotion certificate.

## **FYE 13 Wrap-Up**

We scheduled a FYE 13 Wrap-Up meeting at the end of the spring semester on May 21, 2014. Due to the Cocos Fire in San Marcos, the Palomar College campus was closed that day. We rescheduled the meeting on July 17, 2014. The attendees were Cindy Anfinson (FYE Coordinator), Debra Avila (TLC Supervisor), Anel Gonzalez (TLC Specialist), Rosalinda Tovar (TLC Assistance), Jeanna Piña-Bayaca (Office Specialist III), Dalia Lopez (TLC Office Specialist), along with Cari Martinez and Dana O'Callaghan, both FYE counselors.

The topics we discussed are below.

- I. What worked well in the program?
  - Hands-on contact
  - Emails
  - Help with financial aid
  - Helpful staff
  - Calling students
- II. Workshops?
  - Maybe schedule them during different times to increase attendance.
  - If possible look at student's schedules and see when workshops fit
  - Maybe two workshops required in the first semester, 1 in the second
  - Count a financial aid visit in the TLC as a workshop
  - Use summer as one of their counseling contacts
  - Can we use Foundation Grants if a student does well in their classes and attends workshops/counseling, can they get a gift card to the Bookstore or something?
  - Enroll students in a raffle who attend 2 workshops
  - A connected series of workshops: life skills, sciences, English/ESL, something for single parents, live healthy series
  - Note taking for math and science. Check with STEM they may already do this.
  - Career – Study Skills – Self Care – Community/Networking workshops
  - Training student ambassadors – can we get Foundation funds?
  - Can we get business sponsors?
- III. Counseling
  - Too few hours
  - Not as much connection with students due to lack of hours
  - Maybe a phone appointment if they have seen a counselor the first time
  - OK for students to see Cari in Escondido? Yes.
  - It was helpful knowing what counseling times were available on SARS and being able to schedule own appointments.
  - First counseling contact is a needs assessment
- IV. Who were our FYE students? Anyone we felt we missed when marketing our FYE program? Dana pointed out that it was hard during EAP to introduce FYE. There is so much to do during an EAP appointment that FYE is hard, if not impossible to fit in.
- V. Do we drop students from the program? If so, what triggers a drop? No.
- VI. What should we give our FYE students? Brainstormed some ideas