

Fall 2015

## ACS/UNST Exploratory Studies Status Update

Portland State University. University Studies Program

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**ACS/UNST Exploratory Studies  
Status Update  
Fall 2015**

This report examines the activities of the Exploratory Studies Program which was established during Fall 2015. There were 240 Exploratory (undeclared students) during Fall 2015, 188 of whom were enrolled in FRINQ. However, because we believe that all freshmen can benefit from Exploratory curriculum, Advising and Career Services partnered with UNST to deliver decision making and career curriculum in all FRINQ courses, potentially reaching ~1400 students.

**Student Profile**

There are not many differences across the various demographic data for Exploratory Studies students. While the percentage of female Exploratory students is slightly more than the percentage of male Exploratory students, the difference is consistent with the overall PSU population and therefore not significant. There were also no differences based on first-generation college status or language status.

**Exploratory Studies Program**

Across all Exploratory Studies Program activities, detailed below, 166 Exploratory students were engaged and an additional 419 students either participated in a curricular activity or dropped in at the HUB.

***Curriculum***

As of the Fall 2015 term there are nine Freshman Inquiry themes. Themes include: Portland, Design and Society, Globalization, Health, Happiness and Human Rights, Power and Imagination, Race and Social Justice, Sustainability, Ways of Knowing, and Work of Art. We reached 8 of the 9 Freshman Inquiry themes within the Exploratory Studies Program, totaling of 13 out of 40 courses. Through the above mentioned themes 429 FRINQ students were reached through presentations that occurred in either a main class or mentor session setting. 62 students were Exploratory students. About half of the presentations were delivered in mentor session and half were delivered in main session.

***Advising and Career Services***

During the Fall 2015 term, a total of 140 Exploratory students were advised at least once through Advising and Career Services. Two students were seen multiple times.

***Student Services Hub***

Throughout the Fall 2015 term there were 100 visits to the Student Services Hub. While some students dropped in more than once, 48 Freshman, 5 Sophomores, 11 Juniors, and 11 Seniors dropped in at least once. Additionally, 4 drop ins were comprised of Post-Bac students, Graduate students, and Alumni. Six of the drop in students were Exploratory students. Though

far fewer students dropped in more than once (9 students), data indicates they consistently met with the same adviser. This further suggests that students are establishing relationships with a specific adviser in the Student Services Hub.

The Student Services Hub made two separate workshops available to PSU students during the Fall 2015 term: Internships 101 and Scholarships 101. There were 2 Senior students that attended the Internships 101 workshop and 1 Freshman Exploratory Studies student that attended the Scholarships 101 workshop through the Student Services Hub.

	<i><b>Total Students</b></i>	<i><b>Exploratory</b></i>	<i><b>Other Freshmen (FRINQ)</b></i>	<i><b>Other</b></i>
<i><b>N</b></i>		<i><b>240</b></i>	<i><b>1171</b></i>	
<i><b>Total Served</b></i>	<i><b>564</b></i>	<i><b>166</b></i>	<i><b>367</b></i>	<i><b>31</b></i>
<i>FRINQ Course visit</i>	<i>429</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>367</i>	
<i>Advising</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>140</i>		
<i>HUB - drop in</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>HUB Workshops</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>2</i>
<i>Other activities</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>		

## **Moving Forward**

As we review this data and consider the Exploratory Studies program during fall term, there are a few considerations we want to keep in mind as we move forward.

### *ACS Work*

- Advisers who were scheduled in the HUB kept the same schedule each week of the term. This means that a student who dropped in on a Tuesday afternoon would always see the same adviser. We want to keep this practice in place in order to facilitate student connections with individual advisers.
- We are still weighing whether it makes sense to deliver curriculum in main or mentor sessions. Advisers believe the small group setting of the mentor session is more conducive to conversation and connection with students. However, that is triple the time commitment of content delivery in main session. Particularly as we look forward to a roll out in SINQ courses, we have to keep this in mind.

### *Hub Operations*

- Although signage for and construction on the HUB was unfinished during fall term, students still found it.
- We are disappointed in student participation rates for workshops. However, we anticipate that when construction is completed in the HUB that a regular schedule of workshops will roll out so that students can count on activities on certain days.

*Student Outreach*

- We were able to reach more than half of exploratory freshmen in fall term alone. We also reached 367 other freshmen.
- Many fewer sophomores dropped into the HUB than freshmen. As we move forward, we need to think about outreach to Exploratory and other sophomores and new transfer students who might benefit from the easy access to an adviser that they would find in the HUB.