

# **NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION**

CRAFTON HILLS COLLEGE, YUCAIPA, CA

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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## **OVERVIEW**

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Throughout 2007 the new student orientation process and curriculum was altered. The impetus for this project was to evaluate which aspects of the Orientation were useful to students, and what aspects should be modified. Four-hundred-ninety-four students completed a one page evaluation for Orientation sessions held between mid-June and mid-August 2007.

The Orientation process has been reviewed and revised to ensure that the process is effective for students as possible. The process, implemented during summer 2007, involved faculty and staff from a variety of departments across campus. Students attended an informational session that included a tour of the campus. It should be noted that attending an Orientation session, while strongly advised, is completely optional for new students.

Evaluation forms for orientation sessions included four open-ended questions. No demographic or identifying questions were asked.

The purpose of this report is to disseminate findings from student evaluations of the modified orientation sessions to relevant administrators and to those counselors and faculty who participated in new student orientation sessions. This report presents findings across all students who responded to the survey.

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## **RESULTS**

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When asked for something positive that came out of Orientation, 48.38% of students who completed an evaluation believed that the tour was beneficial because they learned more about CHC and what the college offers. Nearly one quarter of participants (22.87%) had created an educational plan or arranged their class schedule by the end of the Orientation session. A small percentage of students (7.29%) specifically mentioned feelings of excitement or a newfound confidence in regard to attending CHC.

Other major themes that arose when students were asked for something positive that came out of Orientation were (in rank order by frequency of response):

- ❖ Obtained information; had questions answered (8.70%)
- ❖ Learned how college/units/classes work; knowledge of schedule and catalog; learned what to expect (5.67%)
- ❖ Learned where to get help, such as tutoring and financial aid (5.06%)
- ❖ Received counselor assistance (4.05%)
- ❖ Gained understanding of the application and registration processes (3.85%)
- ❖ Learned how to transfer to a 4-year college/university (2.23%)
- ❖ Increased awareness of important dates and deadlines (0.61%)

As shown in Table 1, the majority of students had no confusion at the end of their orientation session. Table 2 shows that the majority of students thought that nothing would make Orientation better.

**Table 1**

Top 5 Areas of Confusion

Areas of Confusion	Frequency (N=494)	Percent
	(Missing=63)	12.75
None	189	38.3
What classes to take	69	14.0
Financial Aid	28	5.7
Physical campus (locations)	25	5.1
Choosing a major/goals	24	4.9

**Table 2**

Top 5 Areas of Improvement

Areas of Improvement	Frequency (N=494)	Percent
	(Missing=49)	9.9
None	192	38.9
Provide Refreshments	56	11.3
More elaborate tour (e.g. go inside buildings)	34	6.9
Shorten Orientation/Be more direct	32	6.4
More one-on-one time with counselors	30	6.1

When asked what information they would like more of, 16.19% said they would like to know more about transferring or class scheduling; 13.16% said “nothing”; 8.91% would like more information on getting involved in sports and/or clubs; 8.70% said financial aid, and 5.7% said they would like more information regarding the allied health and public safety programs offered (i.e. Fire, EMT, Respiratory Therapy, and Radiology).

Below are some responses students gave to the open-ended questions:

- ❖ “I found out what classes I should concentrate on.”
- ❖ “I learned the campus and set up my classes.”

- ❖ “It was educational. I enjoyed everything. The tour really helped.”
- ❖ “A good experience. I got a lot of understanding on how to approach my path to success.”
- ❖ “I have a better understanding of the programs Crafton has to offer.”
- ❖ “I learned more about the campus. I also learned a lot about how the college works.”
- ❖ “I gained confidence in my understanding of what needs to be done to be successful.”
- ❖ “I left with an increased knowledge and eagerness to attend Crafton College.”
- ❖ “I got answers to many of my questions and had an excellent time overall.”

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## CONCLUSIONS

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All in all, the new student Orientation sessions received positive feedback. Utilizing the form as a way to examine the formative evaluation of the process allowed those organizing the sessions to make mid-course corrections as necessary. For example, the students’ comments led staff to supply food at the evening sessions. It is recommended that Orientation sessions be evaluated on a continual basis to catch any major issues in a timely manner. Now that some general categories have been developed it would be possible to create a survey that has fewer open-ended questions that would have allowed for greater quantitative analyses. Although the Orientation sessions are already rather long, it would be possible to survey students about what they would like to know most at the beginning of the sessions in order to allow for more tailoring of the information provided. Additionally, it would be worth examining the information provided to students regarding where to get help after the Orientation session. These are things the students would like to learn more about and we can see what is currently being discussed. For those students who would like additional information providing a space for the contact information would allow for follow-up by college staff.

There are a few limitations to the results provided above that should be noted. First, not all students who participated in the Orientation sessions completed an evaluation form. In particular, if students had already registered they did not stay until the end and receive one to fill out. Secondly, no questions were asked about the actual presenters at orientation or even the main lead presenter. So, the results of the survey might be at least in part a reflection of how students felt about the presenters themselves. Additionally, students may have not completed all of the items on the survey because they were all open-ended. Finally, no demographic or student characteristic questions were asked so there is no way to know whether there were any differences on the survey by gender, race-ethnicity, or any other student characteristic.