MyAdmissions QuickSurvey Results

By Tom Hinds, Undergraduate Admissions

Undergraduate Admissions, in an effort to be more responsive to student needs, conducted a QuickSurvey of MyAdmissions pre-enrollment website users for fall 2004. Of the 6,256 possible students surveyed, 1,571 or 25% responded. The survey group was first-time UC Davis freshmen and transfer students who used the MyAdmissions website between September 30 - October 6, 2004. Based on the responses, the MyAdmissions site was generally favorably received and perceived as “easy to use.” Even when solicited for critical feedback, only 10% of the respondents had suggestions or comments.

A copy of the QuickSurvey item follows.

This survey is directed at first-time UC Davis students and will be used to improve the MyAdmissions website. Which of the following best describes your experience with MyAdmissions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Easy to use/No problems</th>
<th>649 Respondents</th>
<th>41%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy to use/A few problems</td>
<td>820 Respondents</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to use</td>
<td>82 Respondents</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t use</td>
<td>5 Respondents</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents did it all</td>
<td>15 Respondents</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those students indicating that they had used MyAdmissions were asked to make suggestions for improvement. About 10% did so. Their suggestions were clustered into like categories as described below:

**Do you have any suggestions for improving MyAdmissions?**
Suggestions broke into 12 categories, with some suggestions crossing over into more than one category. There were 158 comments total (10% of respondents). Short descriptions of the comments from each category are below.

1) **Design** (24 comments)
   
   Users that made comments felt that the design could be confusing. Comments included that it was too complicated, too many links, and not enough instructions. There was additional frustration at the number of transaction sites (MyAdmissions, MyUCDavis, SISWeb).

2) **Account/E-mail setup** (9 comments)
   
   Mostly frustrated with the design of the account/e-mail setup pages and lack of instruction on how to complete the tasks.

3) **Dynamic updating/Deadlines** (refers to the Transaction page) (35 comments)
   
   This generated the most and the clearest feedback. Respondents were frustrated that not all transactions updated dynamically and felt that information was not updated in a timely enough manner.

4) **Content** (25 comments)
   
   There was a miscellaneous collection of suggestions regarding site content.

5) **Positive Feedback** (20 comments)
   
   Considering we weren’t soliciting any positive feedback, the number of comments was excellent!

6) **Security/Technical** (10 comments)
   
   Miscellaneous comments/issues.

7) **Connection/Compatibility** (12 comments)
   
   AOL and dial-up users experienced frustration.

8) **Guaranteed Transfer Option** (GTO) (2 comments)
   
   Two comments were made on unrelated subjects.

9) **Non-UA MyAdmissions sites** (26 comments)
   
   Most site-specific comments involved either the Housing or Financial Aid Web sites.

10) **Other Communications** (SISWeb, my.ucdavis.edu, etc.) (9 comments)
    
    This refers to non-dynamically related sites (that we either link to or are linked from). No consistent comment except the design complaint that there are too many transaction sites (SISWeb, my.ucdavis.edu, MyAdmissions), and that the terminology surrounding these sites is not explained well enough.

11) **No Category** (5 comments)
    
    These were glib or puzzling feedback.

12) **Not MyAdmissions related** (11 comments)
    
    Miscellaneous comments and comments by people that thought they were reviewing the my.ucdavis.edu site, not the MyAdmissions site.
Conclusions

Based on the data, it appears that the MyAdmissions site was generally positively received. Ninety-three percent of respondents characterized the site as “Easy to use” and fewer than 10% of the respondents had suggestions or critical comments, even when solicited for such feedback.

However, it was apparent that some improvements can be made:

- **Content updating.** Users were frustrated that content on the transaction page and auxiliary pages (e.g., housing) were not updated quickly enough. Even if it were not possible to update content quicker, supplying dates when users should expect to return and providing some means of notification to the users that new information has been posted would be helpful.

- **Dynamic transactions.** The inconsistency on the transaction page from some transactions being dynamically updated and others not creates uncertainty for some users. Making all transactions dynamic, if possible, would solve this issue.

- **Design.** Some users found the design confusing, with too many links and not enough instructions. It would be helpful to re-run usability studies to determine where information could be added/consolidated.

Recommendations

MyAdmissions should address the AOL issue, either by changing the site or by communicating to AOL users that they should use a third-party browser (such as Explorer) instead of the proprietary AOL browser. Other specific miscellaneous suggestions, such as the comment that AP scores are showing up in the wrong place for transfer students, should also be addressed.