

Bridging the Gap: Building a Successful Transition Program for Freshman International Students



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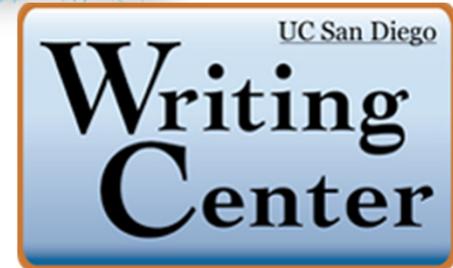
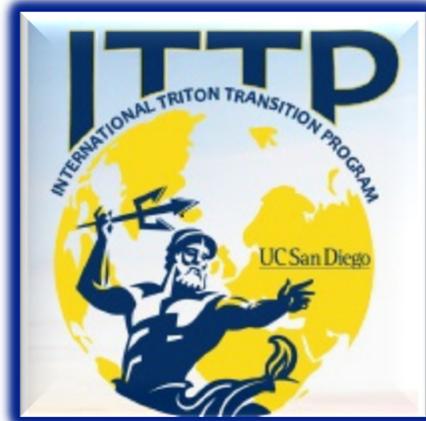
November 2013

Increase in International Students at the University of California

- “...a crucial revenue stream...” – UC Berkeley Chancellor Robert J. Birgeneau
- 2012: 58% system-wide increase in international-student freshman admissions; 78% increase at UC San Diego
- 2013: 29% system-wide increase in international-student freshman admissions
- 2013 freshman admission rate at UC San Diego: international students 43%; California residents 33%
- Fall 2013: approximately 770 incoming international freshmen at UC San Diego, as compared to 160 in Fall 2010



UC San Diego



International Triton Transition Program (ITTP) 2012

- 80 students
- Lived on campus in student dorms
- Classes
 - Academic Writing Skills Class (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)
 - Culture Class (Tuesday, Thursday)
- Afternoon and weekend activities
- Collaboration with:
 - English Language Institute (UCSD Extension), Admissions, Six Colleges, Student Affairs Technology Services, UCSD Box Office, Conference Services, Student Health, Recreation, Career Services, Center for Student Involvement
- TOTAL: \$2,500
 - Cost to student: \$1,000
 - UC San Diego subsidized \$1,500
- Marketing/outreach



2012 ITTP Weekly Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7-8:15 breakfast	7-8:15 breakfast	7-8:15 breakfast	7-8:15 breakfast	7-8:15 breakfast	7-8:15 breakfast	7-8:15 breakfast
8:30-11:30 Academic Skills Class	8:30-10:20 Culture Class 10:20-11:30 UCSD Activity	8:30-11:30 Academic Skills Class	8:30-10:20 Culture Class 10:20-11:30 UCSD Activity	8:30-11:30 Academic Skills Class	10:00-4:00 All day Activity SD Zoo	Free Day
11:30-12:30 Lunch	11:30-12:30 Lunch	11:30-12:30 Lunch	11:30-12:30 Lunch	11:30-12:30 Lunch		
1:00-5:30 Balboa Park	Free Afternoon	1:00-5:30 Downtown	Free Afternoon	1:00-5:30 Activity Pacific Beach		
5:30 back at UCSD		5:30 back at UCSD		5:30 back at UCSD		
5:30-6:45 Dinner	5:30-6:45 Dinner	5:30-6:45 Dinner	5:30-6:45 Dinner	5:30-6:45 Dinner	5:30-6:45 Dinner	5:30-6:45 Dinner
6:45 -> free 7-9 RA Activity	6:45 -> free 7-9 RA Activity	6:45 -> free 7-9 RA Activity	6:45 -> free 7-9 RA Activity	6:45 -> free 7-9 RA Activity		7-9 RA Activity



International Triton Transition Program 2012: Excerpts from Student Journals

- “Least interesting thing: academic writing class.”
- “Writing class was really boring.”
- “Grammar is the thing that we’ve been doing throughout our life.”
- “What we studied in 8th grade in our home country.”
- “The material we study feels very redundant.”
- “I try to keep myself awake in class! I see many people putting their heads down and napping.”
- “I think it’s probably best to cancel this class in the future.”

Only 36 out of the initial group of 80 continued to attend class regularly.

International Triton Transition Program 2012: Academic Writing Placement Results

- Exempt from the Entry-Level Writing Requirement: 5%
- Placed in the standard Basic Writing track: 13%
- Placed in the ESL Basic Writing track: 82%

Students from ITTP 2012 seeking Writing Center support in 2012-2013 (individual sessions and group workshops): 28%



International Triton Transition Program 2013

- **Biggest change:** writing class curriculum (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)
 - Mandatory Writing Center appointments
 - Mandatory TA meetings
 - Conversation groups
 - More assessment measures
- “Themed” weeks
 - *Classroom communication & teamwork*
 - *Enrollment & academic advising*
 - *Research opportunities/working with faculty*
 - *Student life: getting involved on campus*
- Tuesday/Thursday classes – “Introduction to U.S. College Life”
- Activities
- 80 students
- Total cost: \$2,500
 - Cost to student: \$1,500 (increase of \$500)
 - UC San Diego subsidized \$1,000 (decrease of \$500)



ITTP 2013 Writing Course Learning Objectives

Students will...

- become familiar with all stages of the writing process.
- be able to summarize and analyze short academic essays.
- be able to respond to short arguments with positions of their own.
- be able to use evidence to support their positions.
- be able to work responsibly with academic sources.
- be able to use instructor, tutor, and peer feedback to revise their work.
- be able to reflect thoughtfully on their own writing and learning.



ITTP 2013 Data Collected

- Academic writing pre- and post-tests: writing an argument in response to a short reading passage
- Pre and post writing about academic integrity and plagiarism
- Pre and post instructor evaluations of students' classroom communication
- Final instructor evaluations of achievement of learning objectives
- Students' weekly journal entries addressing program-related topics
- Students' written reflections on their learning and writing processes
- Student satisfaction surveys
- Attendance data



International Triton Transition Program 2013: Students Reflect on Writing and Learning

- “The way I structure my argument is, I think, one of the biggest advantages of the essay... [but] my language is sometimes too rigid, my word choice imperfect.”
- “Sometimes I come up with various ideas but cannot immediately present them in fluent sentences.”
- “I still need to keep improving my critical thinking skills. Maybe a clear outline and more thorough arrangement are needed before writing.”
- “I can’t quickly find the evidence to support my thesis. Maybe what we need to do is to read more, think more, and accumulate more.”
- “I want to talk more about how to connect examples to my main reasons.”
- “By rewriting my drafts based on comments from TA and peers I improved a lot, but sometimes I’m still struggling to make my idea clearer to readers.”



Analytical Writing Placement Results 2012 vs. 2013

	ITTP 2012	ITTP 2013
Exempt from the Entry-Level Writing Requirement	5%	16%
Placed in the standard Basic Writing track	13%	29%
Placed in the ESL Basic Writing track	82%	55%

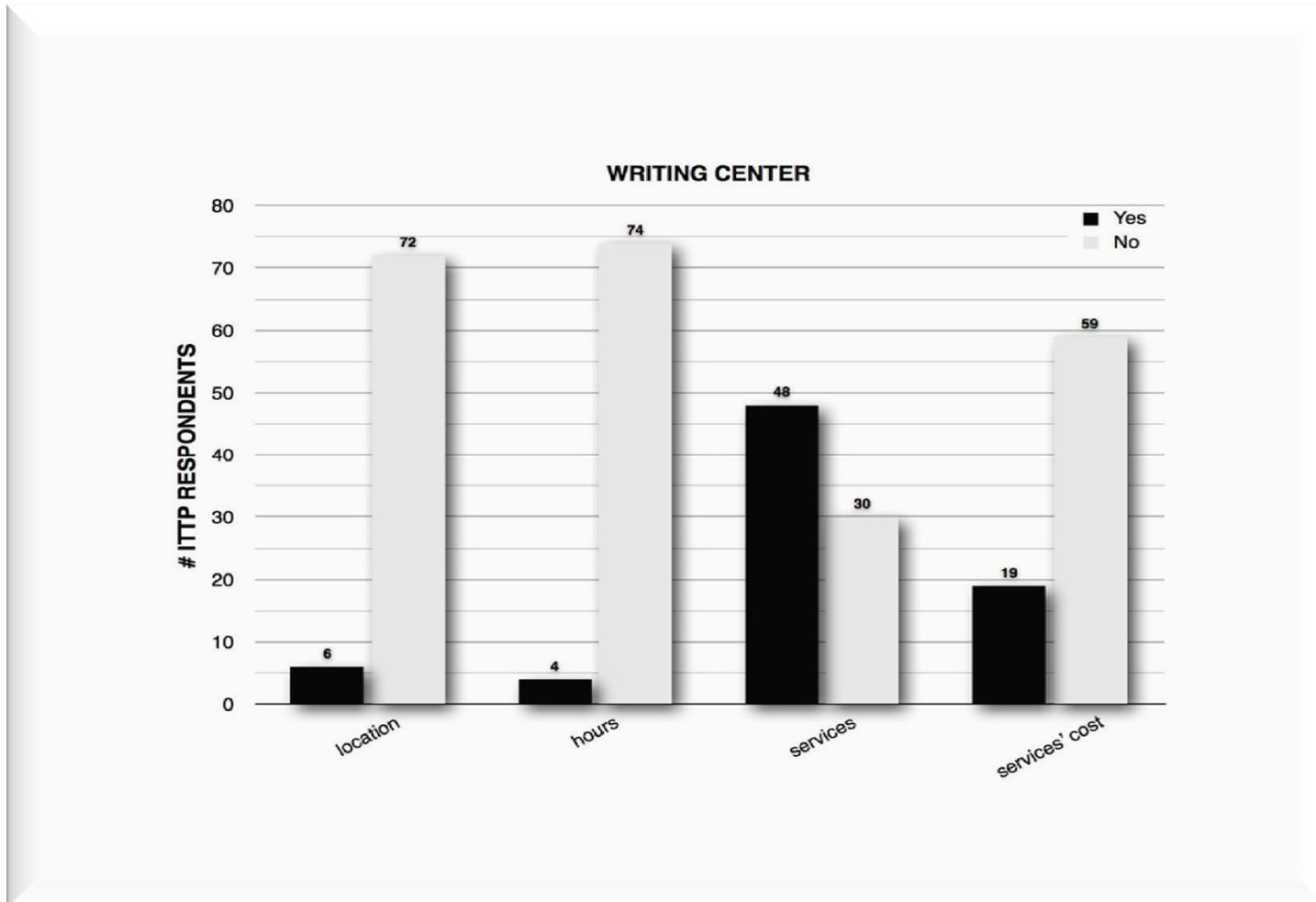


Tracking ITTP Participants in 2013-2014

- ❖ Academic performance throughout the year
 - ❖ Performance in writing courses
 - ❖ Use of Writing Center
 - ❖ Engagement in campus life
- ❖ Violations of the university's academic integrity policy



Writing Center Usage



The Question of Data: Measuring the Effectiveness of the ITTP

- What everyone wants to know: Is the ITTP effective?
- Issues wrapped up in this particular question:
 - Dose response
 - Duration of treatment
 - Is *any* effect of the program measurable?
 - How many times must we measure the particular metric we're interested in studying (e.g., analytical writing capability)?
- How do we use the data we have collected?



International Triton Transition Program 2013: Student Reflections

- “This is how orientation should be – spending 4 weeks in a different city of a different country with complete strangers. And calling them friends in the end. This is awesome!”
- “When I was a part of ITTP, I became a more confident and college-ready student.”
- “ITTP is a great opportunity for international freshmen as it gives you a steady platform and base to a good college experience. This program is a stepping stone towards an independent life.”
- “The ITTP Program has been more helpful than I expected. I now know where to go for career services, medical service and the international student service center. I believe these services will help me achieve success at UCSD.”



International Triton Transition Program 2014

- “Writing and Learning” class: now credit-bearing
- “Introduction to U.S. College Life” classes
 - More guest lectures on American history and society
- Activities
 - Team-building/communication skills
 - More local community volunteer opportunities
- Funding: Campus will provide \$500; program cost to remain roughly the same
- Marketing/outreach



UC San Diego



Thank You!

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