ADEC (Alcohol and Drug Education Consultation) Program Participation: GPA Analysis

USC’s Health Promotion and Prevention Services (HPPS) offers several services promoting overall health, as well as those targeting students with drug and/or alcohol problems. In one program – Alcohol and Drug Education Consultation (ADEC) – students meet one-on-one with consultants after being referred to the program by Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (SJACS), Residential Education, Fraternity and Sorority Leadership Development or Athletics. The meetings have the goals of ensuring that students are aware of the seriousness of the actions that brought about the referral or sanction, educating students on the academic effects of drug and alcohol abuse, and promoting better overall health.

In this report, the second of these three goals is addressed by looking at student academic performance before, during, and after the semester in which they had their ADEC experience. Due to data availability and the time sensitivity of the report, only SJACS data were used (these represent the majority of cases referred.) The student learning outcome in this case would be that students will improve their academic performance based on their ADEC interaction. Because of the variability of many factors – the seriousness of the offense, the time during a semester a student participated in the program, and differences in student academic preparedness and academic program – a causal relationship is difficult to demonstrate. Still, if on a semester-to-semester basis, we can see that participating students consistently gained academically, and, at a later point, we see longer term improvement, then there is support for the benefits of the consultation program.

Based on the records provided by SJACS, 114 students participated in ADEC in fall 2009 and 146 students participated during spring 2010. For the two terms, there are 260 students. No student appeared on both lists.

Grade information was found for all but eight students. Of the 252 remaining students, four were graduate students and two were listed as enrolled but had no GPA data. These six students were excluded from the analysis to make comparisons more valid. This left 107 fall ADEC students and 139 spring ADEC students.

Characteristics of ADEC Students

These 246 students have the following distributions:

- 142 fall-admitted freshmen and 10 spring-admitted freshmen
- 15 fall-admitted transfer students (all sophomores)
- 40 returning sophomores
- 24 returning juniors (including 8 who entered as transfers)
- 14 returning seniors (including 4 who entered as transfers)
  o Freshmen are clearly over-represented (23% of overall population; 64% of ADEC population)
  o Transfer students are under-represented (26% of overall population; 11% of ADEC population)

- 171 males
- 75 females
  o Males are over-represented (50% in overall pop; 70% in ADEC). This is fairly consistent across class.

- 233 non-international students
- 13 international students
  o International students are under-represented (10% of overall pop.; 5% in ADEC)

- Among non-international students, 60% were white, an over-representation compared to the overall pop. (43%)
• Among non-international students, 47% were from outside of California, an over-representation compared to the overall pop. (37%)

• Students in the Marshall School (23% of ADEC, compared to 19% in overall pop.) and the College (42%, compared to 37%) were over-represented

• Annenberg students (5% of ADEC, 8% of overall pop.) were under-represented

Retention

Of the 107 students enrolled in the fall, two students graduated prior to spring and one student, though enrolled in spring, had no grade information. Of the remaining 104 students, 101 returned in the spring - a 97.1% retention rate, comparable to the overall population

The three non-returning students included one freshman (GPA=1.64) and two sophomores (cumulative GPAs = 2.90 and 3.34)

Grade Point Average

Below, GPA data for ADEC and non-ADEC students are presented. For the fall 2009 ADEC group:

• The fall 2009 and spring 2010 GPA information below is based on the 101 students enrolled in both terms.

• The pre-fall 2009 cumulative GPA and spring 2009 GPA data includes students enrolled in spring 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010.

For the spring 2010 ADEC group:

• The fall 2009 and spring 2010 GPA information below is based on the 139 students enrolled in both terms.

• The pre-spring 2010 cumulative GPA data includes students enrolled in at least two semesters prior to spring 2010.

Because of small numbers per class, sophomores, juniors, and seniors were combined into one group each term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2009 ADEC (58 FR; 43 non-FR)</th>
<th>Spring 2010 ADEC (86 FR; 53 non-FR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Fall 2009 Cumulative GPA</td>
<td>Pre-Spring 2010 Cumulative GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen in ADEC</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall freshmen</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-freshmen in ADEC</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall non-freshmen</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GPA results for fall 2009 ADEC students:

• Freshmen who went through ADEC in the fall did have a slightly higher GPA in spring but freshmen GPA typically improves from fall to spring. The change is statistically significant (p<.05) but is not of a greater magnitude than the overall freshman change from fall to spring.

• Non-freshmen ADEC participants had an increase of .03 GPA points, compared to .01 for the overall non-freshmen population. The improvement for ADEC non-freshmen is statistically significant (p<.05), where as the change for other non-freshmen is not.

• Also, non-freshmen showed a decrease in GPA from spring 2009 (the term before their ADEC involvement) to fall 2009 (the term of their involvement)
• The lower pre-fall 2009 cumulative GPA may appear unusually low but remember that of these 43 students, nearly half (21) were sophomores in 2009-2010, meaning that they were freshmen in 2008-2009 and freshmen have lower GPAs, on average.

GPA results for spring 2010 ADEC students:
• Students participating in ADEC in the spring have lower GPAs than fall participants and lower GPAs than the rest of the USC population
• Non-freshmen experienced significant improvement (p<.05) from fall 2009 (the term prior to their ADEC involvement) to spring 2010 (the term of their involvement). Freshmen improved very slightly (not statistically significant).

It is evident that the students participating in the ADEC program are generally performing lower than the rest of the student population, no matter the group or semester. This is true prior to their involvement with ADEC. In all cases, ADEC participants are showing similar or greater GPA improvement from term to term, although data – especially for the spring 2010 group – are limited at this point.

Based on pre-USC academic data, ADEC students had higher combined SAT scores (math + reading + writing = 2002) than did the overall USC population (m + r + w=1968). These students also had lower high school GPAs (3.58, compared to 3.62 for the overall population). These differences are small but they may point to a trend of students performing lower than expectations being more likely to get involved in the sort of incidents that trigger ADEC involvement.

Other available ADEC data - timing of incident, timing of hearing (early vs. late in semester) – were investigated – but no real differences emerged. It will take another few semesters’ worth of data to show longer term effects of ADEC participation for these students. It will also be interesting to see fall 2010 retention data for both sets of students, as more students depart USC between spring and fall than during the academic year.