

## Student Success Advocates Qualitative Assessment: 2014-2015?

Table 1: What is most valuable?

Theme	Student Comments
<i>Listening/Caring</i>	By far the reflection, and opportunity to talk to someone who listens.
	Even if I'm doing well with school, she always has an open ear that I can vent to and relieve stress.
	I think just being comfortable talking some things through with someone. It has been one of, if not the most valuable.
<i>Information/Resources</i>	Having an individual with the resources and experience to help me accomplish my goals more efficiently and with greater emphasis than could have been done by my own efforts alone.
	Having help to compile all the resources I need into one place, and setting up a plan of action to take the next step in furthering my student career.
	Her contact she gave me for the job shadow provided me with one of the most valuable experiences I have had in my pre-professional career.
<i>Decision-Making Assistance</i>	Simply her giving me a push to make up my mind and declare a major.
	Helping me to figure out a good schedule to promote success for the next semester. Also, helping me to manage daily stressors in my life.
	Major selection and narrowing down to the things I liked... It was very helpful.
<i>Follow-Up</i>	I valued the time I had discussing opportunities for me to grow with my Student Success Advocate. She made lists with me that helped me find direction and motivations to accomplish the goals that I set for myself. Also, by setting up a follow up meeting she gave me the necessary pressure to work on the steps that we set up for me to accomplish my goals.
	The fact that I can still email her and she will steer me through the right direction.
	The Student Success Advocate followed up our conversation with potential internships I might be interested in. I interned last summer with one place she recommended. I wouldn't have known about the position otherwise, and am very grateful for her effort.

Table 2: How is the SSA useful?

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<b>Theme</b>	<b>Student Comments</b>
<i>Information/Resources</i>	It gave me the push I needed to go out and talk to the resources on campus that helped me understand better the direction that I wanted to go.
	It provided me with resources I never new was available, such as scholarships for different departments and offices. It opened up my access to many links and research opportunities. I'm in touch with my career counselor because of one meeting, and she has helped me build my interview and career skills. I am exposed to scholarships that I didn't hear about from just one meeting. In addition to succeeding academically, the passing on knowledge of student clubs and interests also helps build my social life.
	There is so much information that was thrown at me at orientation that I was a bit overwhelmed. She directed me to areas that I didn't know where to find the information.
<i>Support</i>	Because I felt comfortable talked to her about the problems I was having and found solutions to the problems.
	She always has an answer to questions or will spend time talking through a problem with me.
	My time at school is nearly complete, so it may not have been as crucial for me as for others, but I am thankful that she was able to help me navigate the site that gave me difficulty.
<i>Ensuring Success</i>	I am actually doing things that I would have only been thinking about at this time, had we not met.
	I was unsure of whether or not my major could lead to a career I would be happy with. She helped me combine my out-of-school interests with my area of study.
	It gave me confidence to keep doing what I am doing.

Table 3: What have you done differently?

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Student Comments</b>
	I have looked for more engagement opportunities on campus and have set up appointments with various people that can help me accomplish my

<i>Engagement</i>	goals. My Student Success Advocate gave me access to on-campus resources.
	I have picked myself up off the group and got things done. I got involved and learned to enjoy making new friends, while reconnecting with old ones. I built my self-esteem and self-worth from the ground up and have been pleased with the progress I have made. I'm not afraid to talk to or approach people and have been happier with my college transition. I'm also trying to be healthier, by exercising and diet. The acknowledgement of these achievements and support helps a lot. I have referred this program to many of my friends.
	I've tried to become more involved on campus and take advantage of all of the opportunities and resources open to students.
<i>High Impact</i>	I began looking at Learning Abroad opportunities and internships for the summer.
	I have been able to be a part of the Undergraduate Research opportunities program, and because of that, have been sent to numerous conferences in Utah and Baltimore. There is no way to overstate how incredibly important that will be in the long run for my academic career.
	I interned at the IRC, which I wouldn't have done without meeting with the Student Success Advocate. I also feel better about my major and minor.
<i>Financial Support</i>	I have checked into other sources for scholarships and checked into other scheduling conflicts with my future schedule.
	I have looked into financial opportunities and have a better context for my college experience.
	I've used the resources for students at the "U" (student supplement & checking for scholarship).
<i>Commitment</i>	I feel more confident on my path towards graduation.
	I have reflected on what I want to major in and looked into more volunteer opportunities.
	I visited the career center and remained in one of my classes when otherwise I would have dropped them all.

Table 4: Overall Impressions

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Student Comments</b>
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<i>Care</i>	I like that people are taking an interest in my success.
	I would [contact them again] because they are a resource who has your best interest in mind while helping with career path.
	The Student Success Advocate was open with me about her experiences and honest about what she thought that I could handle course-load wise. She also cared for all aspects of my well-being. I loved that she inquired into my sleep and exercise habits, too.
<i>No Rush</i>	She was easy to talk to, and I didn't feel rushed.
	Unlike meeting with a counselor, the Student Success Advocate has information about anything you wanna know about the campus and you don't feel rushed with talking to them.
	I meet with her regularly and she's always happy to see me. I don't feel rushed.
<i>Comfortable</i>	I like how it was judgment-free. It helped me open myself up a little more. After all, you need to put yourself out there for college.
	She was so approachable and engaging. I felt that she really cared for my interests and challenges when we met and continuing on genuinely wants me to succeed.
	I enjoyed talking to somebody, and really appreciated the fact that she sought out students instead of the reverse.
<i>Answer Anything</i>	She will always have an answer for my question, and that is always useful.
	If I ever have a question that I am unable to find the answer to I would feel very comfortable contacting my advocate.
	If I need an easy way to know what is on campus, or what to do if I have a question, then I know I can email or set up an appointment with her.
	I would like her to know how I am doing and how her advice and information has influenced them. If I'm struggling, I know what she'll be there to try and help me sort it out. The fact that she didn't dominate the meetings I had with her also made it a very easy-going, no-judgment conversation about some personal things in my life. Even around campus she still says "hello"; to me and asks how I'm doing. It's showing that she cares, which is something a lot of students need.
	She is a fixture in my college experience now. I am better off as a student

<i>Relationships</i>	for having contacted her.
	The Student Success Advocate that I have met with several times has become a really amazing mentor for me, and I have always had a wonderful time.

The following representative qualitative comments illustrate the difference that working with an SSA can have on students' experiences.

When asked what they had done differently after meeting with an SSA, students responded:

I have been more aware of the spaces on campus that I occupy and am now conscientious of how I can positively impact those spaces. Speaking with my Student Success Advocate made me feel better about myself because it made me realize that "hey wow, I do a lot for this school and I should accredit myself more". I am learning to invest in myself and to understand that everything I do, I do because I want to and not because I feel obligated to.

I found more resources than I thought were available for scholarships and funding which in turn left be able to continue schooling here are the University of Utah.

I started to do some activities in the university, like yoga, and outside the university too, with a volunteer work. And it helped me to find research opportunities and internships.

I have worked on taking steps towards figuring out my major and other opportunities to take advantage of on campus.

I am involved with more people and making wonderful new friends. It really helps to get by in the world because of it. I am also taking more initiative in planning events, which I never saw myself every doing, but it's really great nonetheless.

Became involved with a very exciting leadership program. - Became involved and in contact with a newspaper campus opportunity.

The above comments illustrate how SSAs connect students to the deep learning experiences available on campus. From encouraging students to engage in undergraduate research, to engaging with Career Services, SSAs assist students in understanding the resources that are available for enhancing both their time at the University and the value of their degree.

One of the most significant accomplishments related to our work with students is the fact that students who have engaged with Student Success Advocates feel like the University *cares about them*. At a large institution, where it is easy to feel like one in a crowd and no one even knows your name, the SSAs' work with students stands out. The following representative comments from the

satisfaction and outcomes survey illustrate the amazing impact SSAs have on students' feelings about the University of Utah.

When asked what was most valuable about their interaction with the SSA, students responded:

They related very well with me and were not judgmental, it's good having someone you feel is on your level and part of your generation, it's more comfortable than going around to different offices and the flexibility of meeting anywhere almost anytime is fantastic!

It was just a simple, fun meeting where I could express myself fully and find ways to better my character.

I liked how holistic the approach was. We talked about everything, not just school, which I appreciated.

It was fantastic to have a friendly face that knew a lot about activities and student groups on campus. I also felt reassured to know someone cared about my success and involvement on campus.

It was really helpful to talk a majors and fitting in classes with someone who is more neutral than the advisors for each major or the honors college because they tend to be really focus on you completely the requirements in their department whereas the student success advocate was more concerned with really figuring out what is best for me.

It was the sincerity that my Student Success Advocate expressed to me that touched me the most. Like, doing this wasn't just a job to her, it was a true passion and she genuinely wanted to get to know me better and to find ways to help me out. Just the encouragement from her for me to be better and to do more was enough because it is not everyday that you meet someone who is willing to only talk about your strengths/challenges and who pushes you to succeed.

It was very helpful to have someone on campus helping me through a difficult time. I felt supported, encouraged, and less isolate; she offered direction and helped locate the people and offices needed to resolve my issue. I could speak freely and in confidence, and explore my options.

Meeting with Bryce made me feel important, it reassure me I was in the right place at the right time. Even though there are thousands of students in campus, there was someone within that made me feel welcome, and cared for.

Stephanie was very caring and empathetic with my situation, which made it easy to find realistic solutions to my financial situation. She was constantly checking in to make sure that everything was going ok, and offering her schedule in case I needed to come in and talk.

These data indicate that Student Success Advocates not only act as resources on campus, but they promote the common good of our community by engaging students in ways that are holistic, caring, and consistent.