

SOAR Evaluations 2009: Summary

SOAR (Student, Orientation, Advising, and Registration) is Utah State University's mandatory transition and enrollment program for incoming students. At SOAR, students participate in a number of activities directed toward facilitating their academic, geographic, and social transition to Utah State University, culminating in academic advisement and course registration. Though several different types of SOAR sessions are available to students, each SOAR session covers the same information. This document provides a summary of student assessment for those common elements, and includes aggregate data taken from all SOAR sessions.

When students arrive at SOAR, they attend optional workshops and meet with a small group to learn about academic policies and procedures. Later, they learn about university requirements, meet with an academic advisor, and register for classes. Students turn in SOAR Evaluations, which are found in their SOAR packets, at the end of the day in exchange for Aggie Ice Cream. Below is a summary of the overall number of students who attended each workshop, the average amount of credits, and an overall assessment of students' knowledge of university policies and procedures. The number of evaluations returned by students attending Express SOAR in the summer of 2009 was 1,449.

Workshops

Four optional workshops are offered to new students in the morning of each SOAR day prior to the official welcome to Utah State University: Housing, Connections, Financial Aid, and Life as an Aggie. These workshops are offered during two time blocks. Of the students who indicated on their SOAR evaluation that they had attended one or more workshop, 96.2% found the workshop(s) they attended helpful. Out of the 1,449 evaluations, 680 indicated attendance of at least one workshop. The table below displays the percent and number of students in attendance at each workshop.

Workshop	Percent	Number
Housing	15.7%	107
Connections	48.5%	330
Financial Aid	20.7%	141
Life as an Aggie	39.0%	265

Registration Outcome

On the SOAR evaluation in response to the question, "I am currently registered for ___ credits," the average was 13.41 credits.

Policies and Procedures

On the SOAR evaluation, students were asked to respond “yes” or “no” to questions regarding their knowledge of university policies and procedures. The table below displays the percent and number of respondents who answered “yes” out of 1,449 evaluations.

Policy/Procedure	Percent of “Yes” responses	Number of “Yes” responses
Know how to modify class schedule	91.2	1321
Know how to contact academic advisor	85.7	1242
Received student ID	90.1	1314
Know how to check tuition and fees	85.7	1242
Know when the tuition deadline is	91.2	1330
Understand how to pay tuition and fees	88.3	1279
Know where and how to purchase textbooks	89.6	1298
Know where to park and how to get a parking pass	84.8	1229
Have housing arrangements made on or off campus	88.3	1280
Know how to check USU email account	88.1	1276
Had questions about USU satisfactorily answered	90.1	1308

Early Registration

If students register for SOAR by May 1, they get the opportunity to select classes early as part of the SOAR registration process. The number of people who indicated on their evaluation that they registered early (prior to May 1) was 1042. Of those 1042 responses, 84.5% indicated that they found early registration helpful.

Student Comments

In addition to quantitative data, we collect and record student comments about the orientation experience and implement them to the best of our ability.