STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES WEBSITE EXPERIENCE STUDY

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STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
WEBSITE EXPERIENCE STUDY

SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES

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C·O·E CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE For Labor Market Research

COMMUNITY COLLEGES
SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES
CAREER EDUCATION

California Community Colleges

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES WEBSITE EXPERIENCE STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

• Center of Excellence (COE) commissioned this study to understand prospective and current students' experiences with accessing student support services online.

• The survey asked participants to locate the student support services landing page and information about academic counseling, career center services, and student health services.

• Report summarizes themes, provides an overview of the participants' experiences and makes recommendations based on

METHODOLOGY

Informational Interviews:

- Conducted informational interviews with members of the general public

- Examined the 1) student landing page, 2) academic counseling pages, 3) career center pages, and 4) student health services pages

Website Experience Survey:

- Developed a website experience survey using qualitative data from informational interviews

- Recruited 30 participants for the survey through a snowball sampling process

- Three participants were assigned to each of the 10 San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges.

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

To develop this study's survey questions, we used the interviewees' feedback about the most recognizable student support services to focus the survey on the following sections:

1) Student support services main (landing) page

2) Academic counseling pages

3) Career center pages

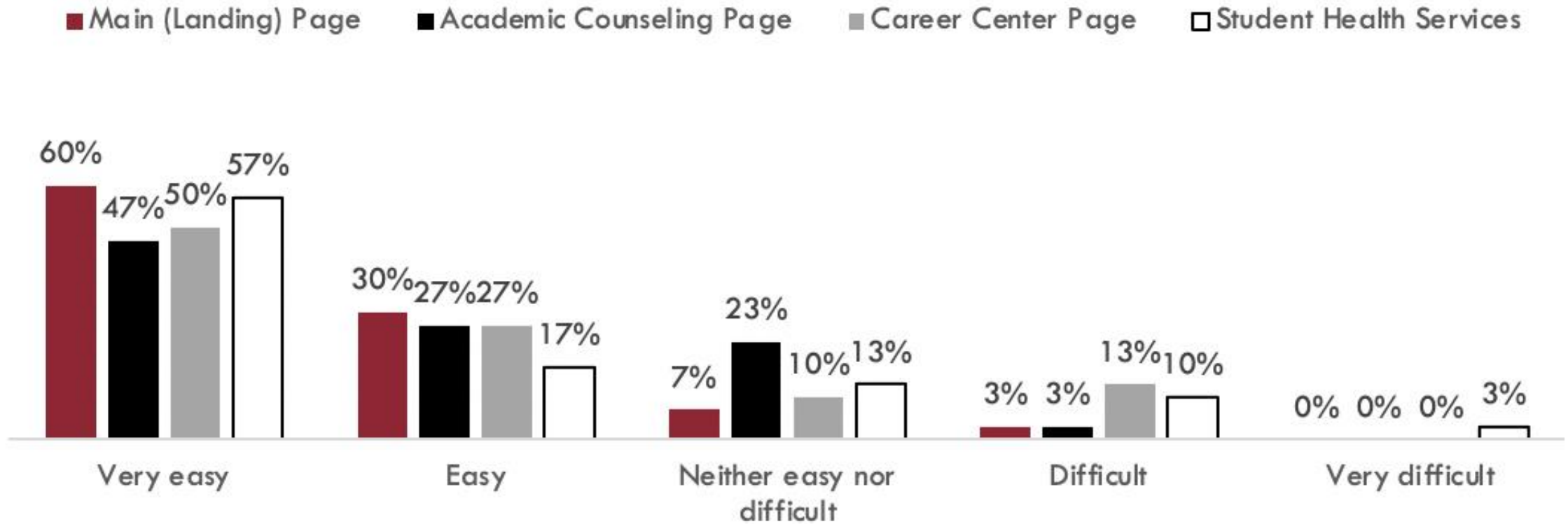4) Student health services pages

5) Virtual chatbot

Interviewees also recommended analyzing the following attributes to assess user experience of the colleges' websites:

- Ease of Locating Landing Page and Specific Student Support Services Pages
- Comprehensive Lists and Descriptions of Services
- Contact Information and Appointment
- Virtual Chatbot

| SURVEY QUESTION	SECTION			
	Student Support Services (Main)	Academic Counseling Page	Career Center Page	Student Health Services Page
How easy or difficult is it to find the [section] page?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Is there a comprehensive list of all student support services offered by the college?	✓			
Is there a detailed description of the types of [section] offered?	✓	✓	✓	✓

Which of the following information is included on the webpage? Select all that apply:
   A. Contact information
   B. Hours of operation
   C. How to schedule an appointment
   D. None of the above
		✓	✓	✓

Please explain whether or not this webpage contains the information you would expect to see.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Please tell us any suggestions you have for improving the [section] webpage.	✓	✓	✓	✓

WEBSITE EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Exhibit 2: Ease of Locating Student Support Services Pages

Legend: Main (Landing) Page | Academic Counseling Page | Career Center Page | Student Health Services

|	Very easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very difficult
Main (Landing) Page	60%	30%	7%	3%	0%
Academic Counseling Page	47%	27%	23%	3%	0%
Career Center Page	50%	27%	10%	13%	0%
Student Health Services	57%	17%	13%	10%	3%

WEBSITE EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Exhibit 6: Detailed Descriptions of Services within Academic Counseling, Career Center, and Student Health Services Pages

Legend: ■ Academic Counseling ■ Career Center ■ Student Health Services

Had detailed descriptions: 77%, 83%, 83%

Did not have detailed descriptions: 23%, 17%, 17%
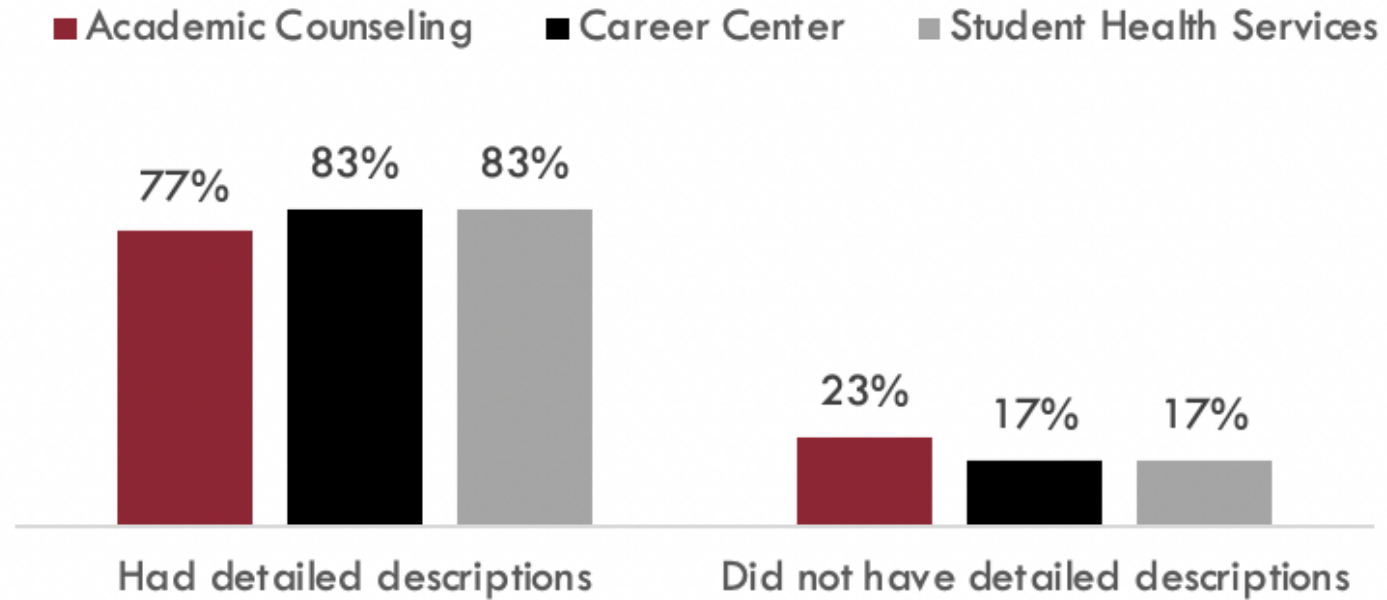
WEBSITE EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Exhibit 11: Overall Satisfaction with Navigating Student Support Services Webpages

- Very satisfied: 27%
- Satisfied: 47%
- Somewhat satisfied: 27%
- Not satisfied: 0%
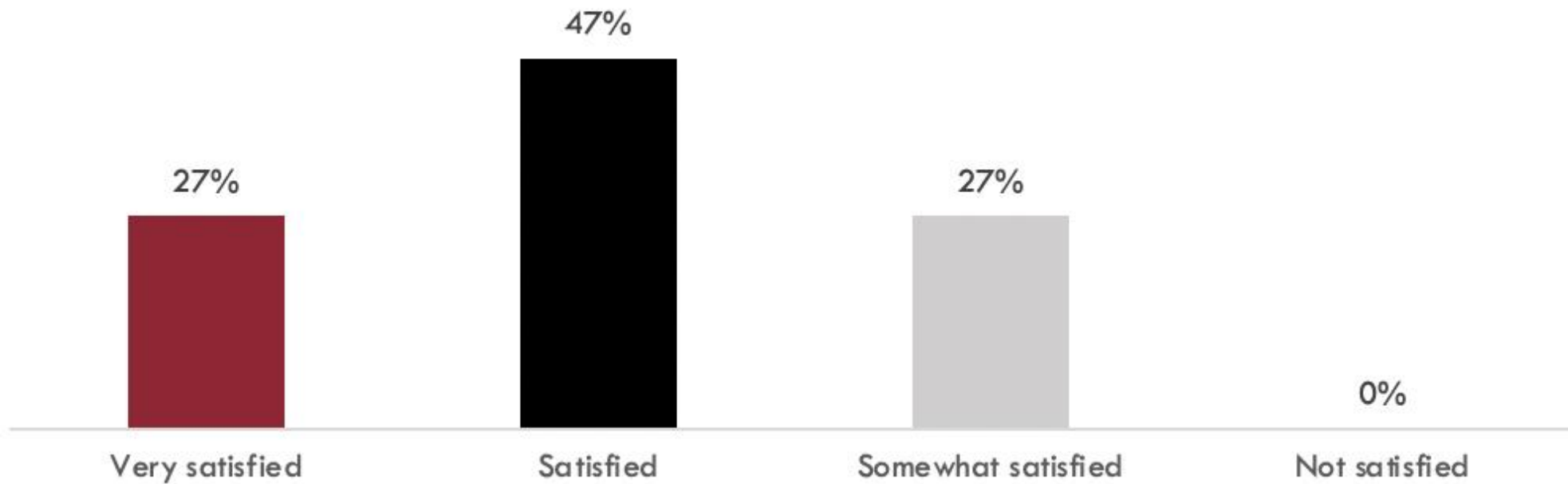
WEBSITE EXPERIENCE SURVEY QUOTES

- "The page itself wasn't easy to find. I found it using the search bar, which was pretty easy but only assuming you know what you are searching for. Then I was able to find it by scrolling to the bottom of the website. I would suggest maybe including it as part of the dropdown menu on the student services tab."

- "While there is a comprehensive list of all of the services offered, it would be helpful if there was a short description of the service under each hyperlink."

- "[What] I was uncertain about was the understanding of where to go for mental health concerns such as stress and anxiety. Even though the Health and Wellness sections speak about personal counseling vs. general or educational counseling, [I] am unclear if all students would understand this. I would be concerned that the term 'counseling' for both could create some confusion."

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding: Community colleges can improve the public's user experience by:

- Improving navigation between the landing page and specific student support services pages
- Including a comprehensive list of services
- Providing concise descriptions
- Using professionally made materials and visually appealing layouts

Recommendation #1: In collaboration with students, assess and revise student support services pages using the reflection questions developed from this study.

Finding: Because more than one department offered "counseling" or "advising" services, participants repeatedly shared their confusion about where to find academic or career counseling services.

Recommendation #2: Consider including a hierarchy of student support services on the main navigation bar and reducing duplicative language across pages.

Finding: Each college uses different terminology to describe its services, and the language may be clear to staff, but not to students or the general public.

Recommendation #3: Develop a regional lexicon for student support services that the general public can understand.

Finding: Participants had difficulty using the virtual chatbot to schedule online appointments or to locate information about student support services.

Recommendation #4: Modernize the scheduling process and supplement existing information with direct contact from a community college staff member.

SUMMARY

Are these findings consistent with your experience?

- Improving navigation, including a comprehensive list of services, providing concise descriptions, using professionally made materials and visually appealing layouts are necessary enhancements.

- Students are confused about where to find academic or career counseling services because multiple departments offered "counseling" or "advising" services.

- Colleges use different terminology to describe services, and the language may be clear to staff, but not to students or the general public.

- Virtual chatbot is difficult to use when scheduling online appointments or locating student support services information.

Are these recommendations feasible to implement?

1: Assess and revise student support services pages using the reflection questions developed from this study.

2: Consider including a hierarchy of student support services on the main navigation bar.

3: Develop a regional lexicon the general public can understand.

4: Modernize the scheduling process and supplement existing information with direct contact from a community college staff member.

NEXT STEPS

- Soft deadline of June 30, 2023, to complete our report that captures the data from the student student support services experience survey

- Our last meeting of this advisory group will be in May

  1. We plan to share preliminary findings from the survey

  2. We will discuss the upcoming Counselor Institute and a community of practice developing around it we'd like to invite you into