

POST-SECONDARY STUDENT FOCUS GROUP

LAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF ORANGE

NOVEMBER 8, 2001, 3:00 - 4:00 PM

SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE FOCUS GROUP

How do students make career decisions in high school? What was helpful in making a career decision and what would improve the career-counseling program in high school? How useful is the counseling process at Lamar Orange and what can be done to improve it?

FOCUS TOPICS

- How did you make your career decision and who exerted the most influence?
- How effective were people and tools in helping you make a career decision?
- How would you improve the career decision-making process in high school?
- What do you consider the most important elements of Lamar's counseling process?
- How would you improve the Lamar counseling process?

SUMMARY

How did you make your career decision and who exerted the most influence?

- Chance decision made after job interview
- Love of computers
- Parents influenced
- Close friend of the family
- Aptitude assessment in high school
- Childhood impressions

How effective were people and tools in helping you make a career decision?

- Majority of participants agreed that there was very little career guidance in high school
- Only a select few received guidance
- Work-based learning was most important
- Counselors offered mainly college information but college selection was not connected with career choice
- High school counseling was focused on scheduling with no orientation toward a career path

How would you improve the career decision-making process in high school?

- More field trips. Students need more physical; visual things from people in business.
- Stress more about jobs that are available, as time goes by the job market changes and they need to better prepare the students. Career night does not emphasize jobs and details related to those jobs.
- Offer more electives related to career awareness and preparation
- Career fair where people who are engaged in a business can talk to students about careers in that business
- Need to emphasize career planning earlier and more often in high school. Sometimes students think they have a long time to make decisions.
- Bring more business people into classrooms.
- Introduce more community needs to students.
- Identify skills required for careers.
- More help on identifying scholarships

What do you consider the most important elements of Lamar's counseling process?

- Majority of participants agreed that help with scheduling classes was the only counseling element they ever used.

How would you improve the Lamar counseling process?

- If they had a specific counselor for each degree it would be helpful.
- Need to know before each semester what courses are required for the degree. Degree plans change too much and students are not informed of changes.
- Need to offer all courses related to degree plan every semester so students can stay on track to graduate
- Industry based information is best source for career projections.
- Advisory should be comprehensive.
- Internship would be helpful in college and high school.