



CAFFEINE & CONNECTIONS:

Non-Traditional Student Engagement with their Professors



Methodology:

Each student completes an assessment before and after meeting with their professor to measure their perception of:

- The degree of engagement with or connectedness to UNT
- The degree to which they are proud to be part of UNT

Introduction:

A significant part of students' college experience is getting involved on campus, but students also need to feel connected academically. "Coffee & Convos," started in late Fall 2014, is a pilot program created to grant non-traditional students the opportunity to engage their professors in conversations outside of the classroom and begin building relationships with professors to encourage them to feel more engaged at UNT.

Results:

"Currently, I feel engaged with or connected to UNT"



"I am proud to be a student at UNT."



Discussion:

While we cannot prove a direct correlation, it is clear that non-traditional students indicated a slight increase in their engagement with, connectedness to, and pride in UNT. While this is a step in the right direction, Off-Campus Student Services can do better to increase not only the quantity of users, but also user perceptions. UNT has a population of close to 8,000 non-traditional students, and the participants in the pilot program cannot accurately predict how the majority of the population would respond.

Conclusion:

Currently, we are focusing on how to get more students to utilize the program and more professors to engage their students through the program. We are discussing how we can inform more students about this program and "meet them where they are." For next school year, we may implement personal contact/invitations to participate in the program, advertising in the commuter parking lots, and/or direct mail. With increased participation, this program's outcomes can become a more accurate representation of our non-traditional population.