Major & Course Navigation Project Preliminary Results
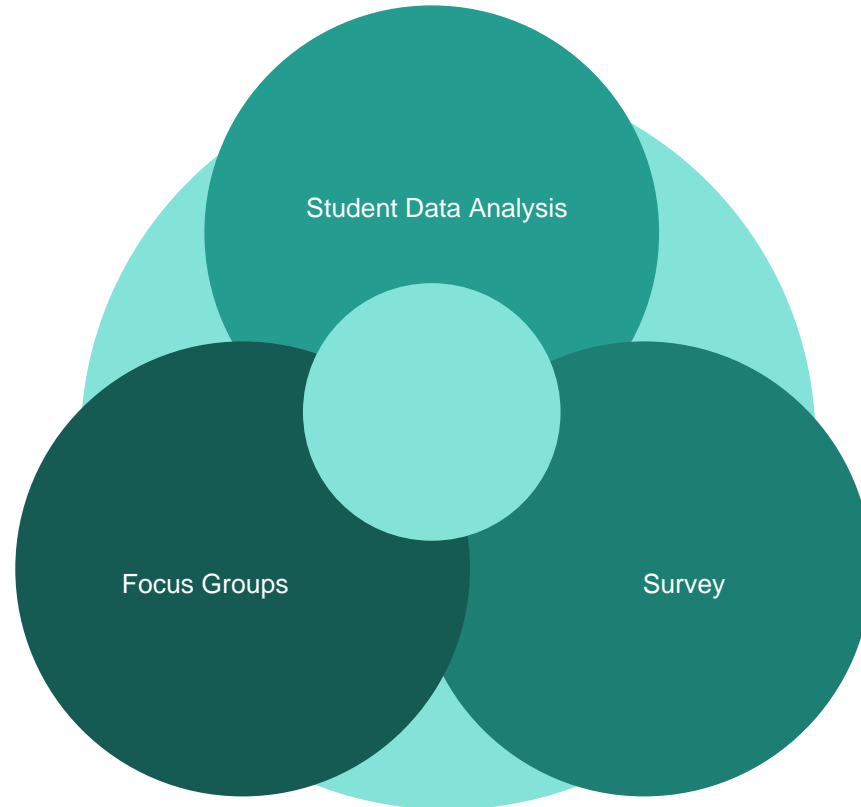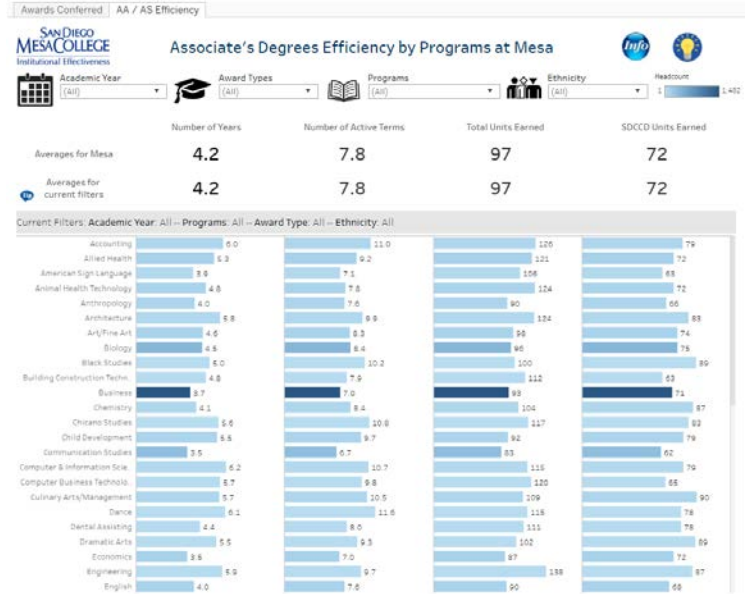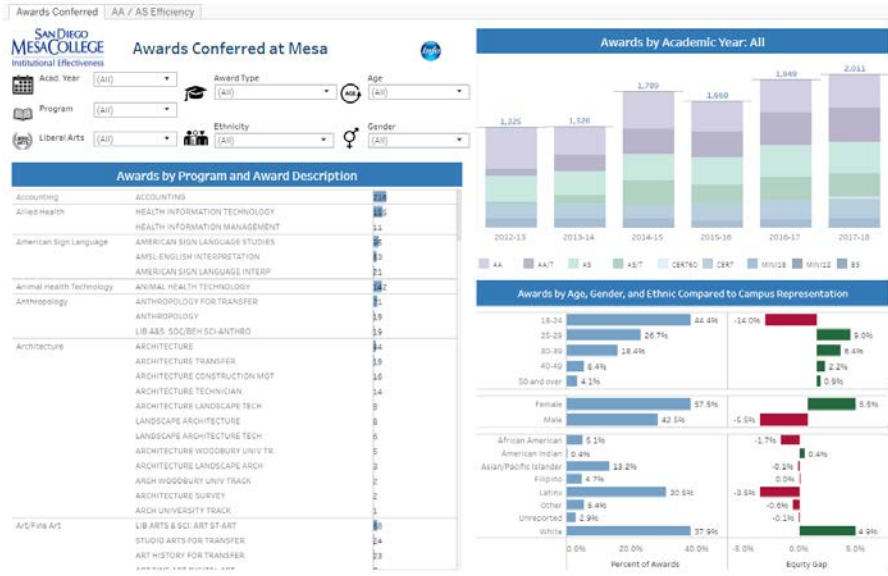
Last updated 03/26/2019

Mixed Method Approach

Data Tools Available

Methodology Overview

Focus Groups

- Consensus-based methodology
  - identify common issues, generate solutions, and inform decision-making.
- Facilitate structured dialogue around a narrow set of topics
  - prioritize responses and reach consensus
- 15 Focus Groups were conducted with 92 students
- Recruitment email sent to ALL students

Survey

- Development based on Focus Group themes
  - Information, Challenges, Strategies
- The survey was sent to a random sample of 2,000 students who were enrolled at Mesa College during Fall 2018.
- We received 379 responses for a response rate of 19%.

The Unknown

Data exists	Unknown	Data exists
Application Major Selection Registration	Experiences Navigating major changes and course selection	Successful completion of degree, transfer, workforce skill development
		Excess units, lack of progress, dropout, stop out
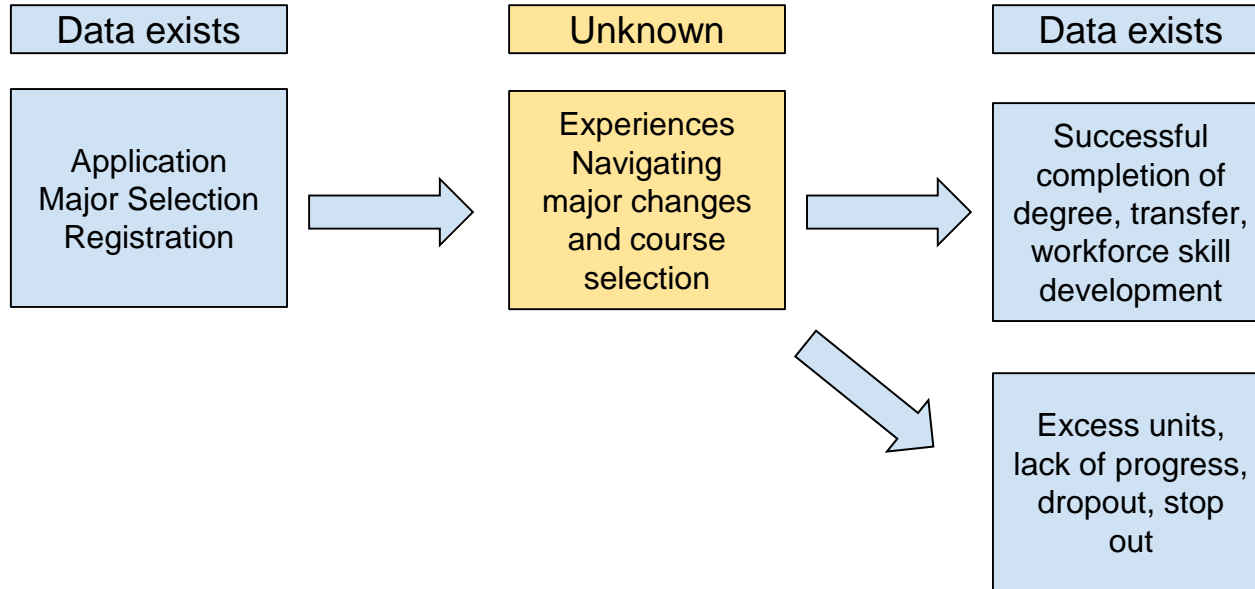
Focus Group Participants

- Target audiences: Current students, Completers, Leavers
  - 72% were current Mesa students
- ⅔ reported they had not changed their major
- 25% were in their first 2 terms, 36% were in term 3 or 4
- Mixture of majors
  - 25% Social/Behavioral, 16% STEM, 12% CTE
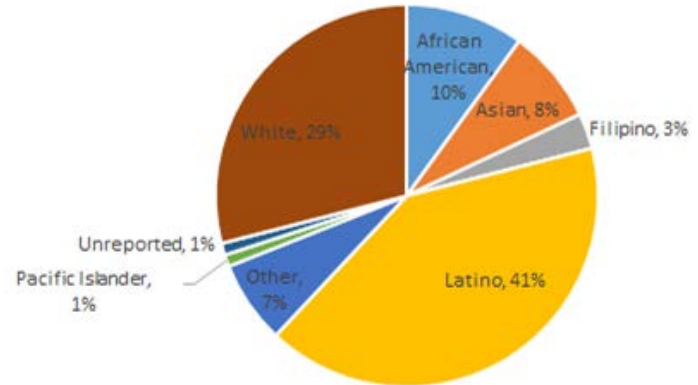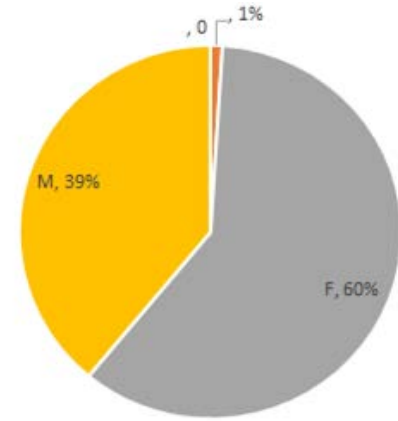
Survey Respondents

Enrollment Status

Enrollment Status	
Continuing Student	75%
First-Time Student	9%
First-Time Transfer Student	7%
Current High School Student	5%
Returning Transfer Student	2%
Returning Student	2%

Full-time 41%

Part-time 59%
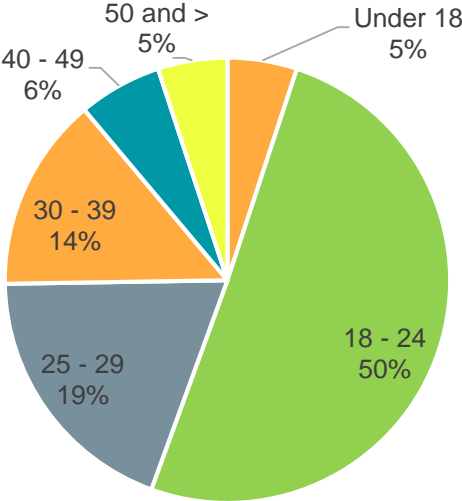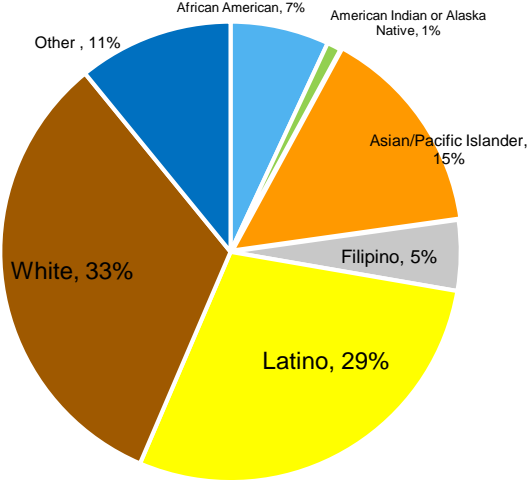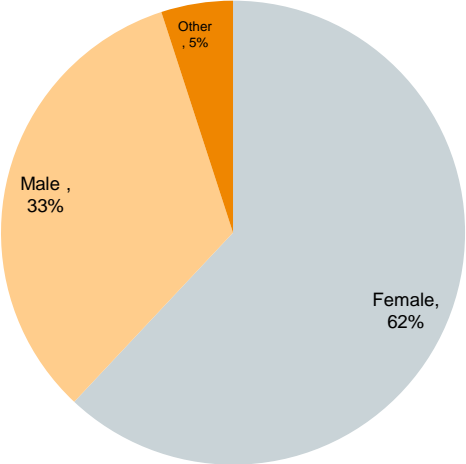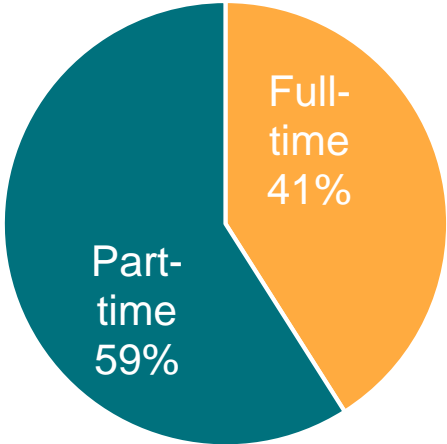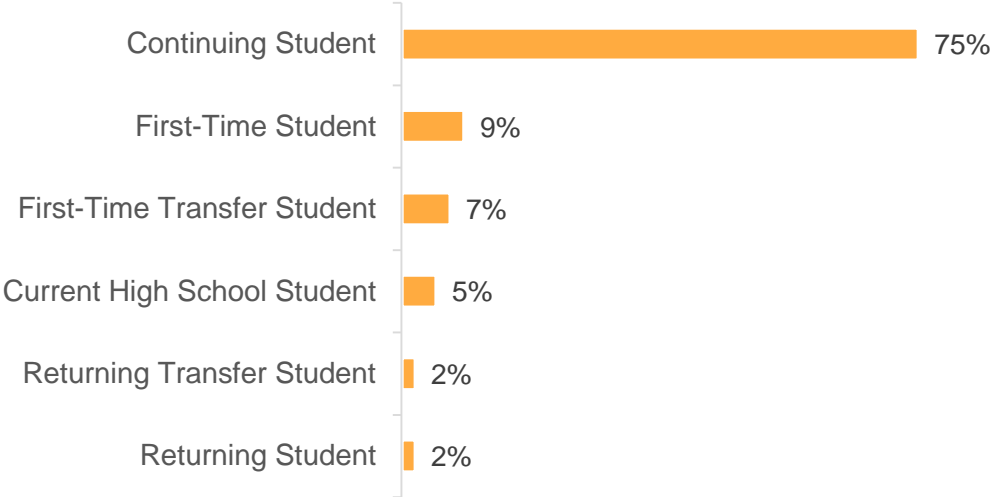
n=364

Education Objective

(Application)

Objective	Percent
BA/BS after Completing AA/AS	44%
New Career Preparation	13%
Undecided	12%
BA/BS w/out Completing AA/AS	10%
4 Yr College Student	7%
AA/AS w/out Transfer	5%
Voc Cert/Degree w/out Transfer	2%
Current Job/Career…	2%
Certificate/License Maintenance	1%
Basic Skills Improvement	1%
Educational Development	1%
HS Diploma/GED Certificate	0%

(Matriculation)

Objective	Percent
BA/BS after Completing AA/AS	51%
Unreported	38%
AA/AS w/out Transfer	5%
BA/BS w/out Completing AA/AS	5%
Undecided	1%
Voc Cert/Degree w/out Transfer	1%
Basic Skills Improvement	0%

n=364

Units Completed

n=364

Focus Group Themes

Question	Major Themes
What information did you use to choose your major?	Career Experience in the field Passion/Interest Exploration Learning/Growth/Skill Development
How close is the major you identified on your application to what your major is today? ● 5= exactly the same ● 3 = similar course req./skills ● 1 = totally different field/req.	Average score = 3.8 5 = 57% 4 = 10% 3 = 8% 2 = 4% 1 = 21%

Has your major/educational goal changed since you first enrolled at Mesa College?

No, it has remained the same	50%
Not yet, but I might change it	10%
Yes, to something related	19%
Yes, to something completely different	21%
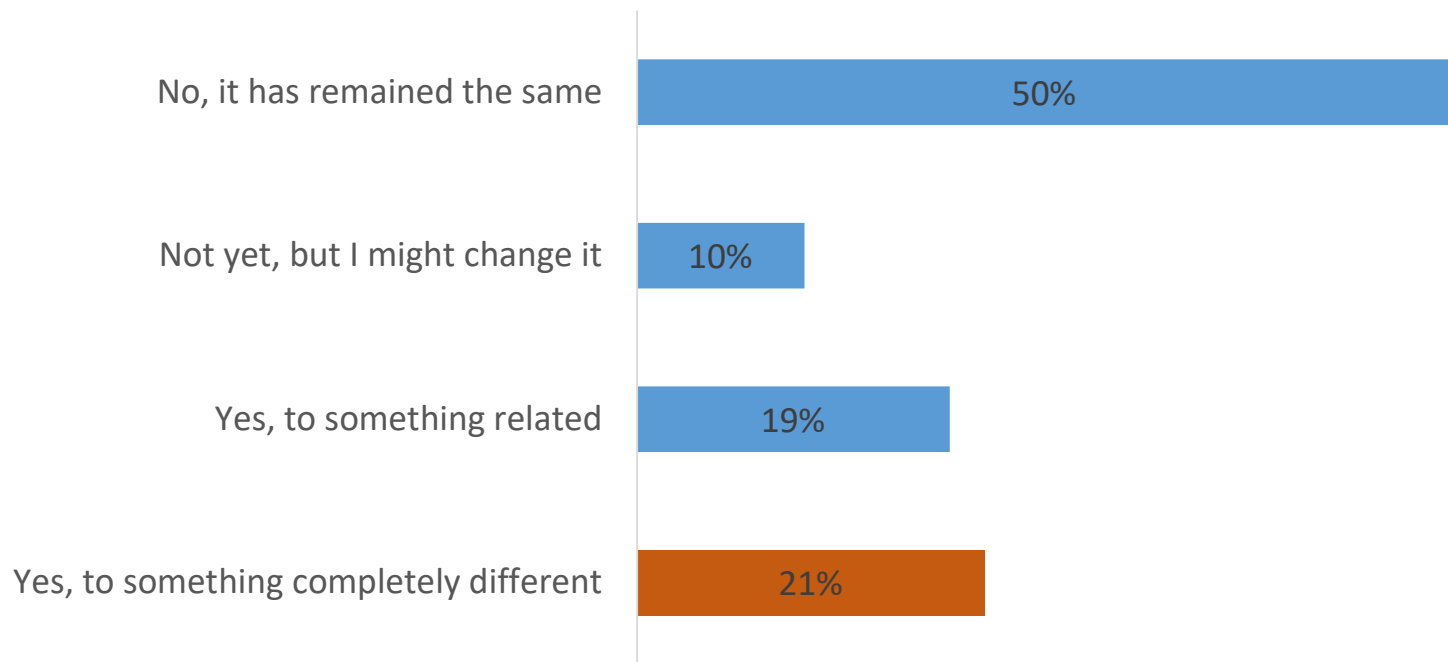
n=373

Major Change and Units Completed

	Cumulative Units							
	0-15	**16-30**	**31-45**	**46-60**	**61-70**	**71-80**	**81-90**	**91+**
No, it has remained the same	59%	55%	39%	51%	44%	20%	48%	50%
Not yet, but I might change it	19%	12%	6%	2%	4%	13%	---	---
Yes, to something related	13%	18%	26%	20%	26%	33%	15%	20%
Yes, to something completely different	9%	15%	30%	27%	26%	33%	37%	30%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
n=364	n=113	n=67	n=54	n=41	n=27	n=15	n=27	n=20

What information did you use to choose your major?

Career

" I needed a job with a decent income potential"

Experience in the field

"I had the opportunity to go for supervisor but I needed more education…
I am reinvesting in myself"

Passion/Interest

"I decided to follow my passion which is writing"

Learning/Growth/Skill Development

"I want to feel challenged"

Which of the following was the <u>most important factor</u> in your choice of major / educational goal?

Factor	Percentage
Alignment with passion/interest	46%
Future income expectations	21%
Availability of future job in the field	14%
Seeking career growth/advancement	10%
Career advice from family, friends, mentors, counselors, etc.	3%
Previous experience (job or coursework)	2%
Cost of education	2%
Other (please specify)	2%
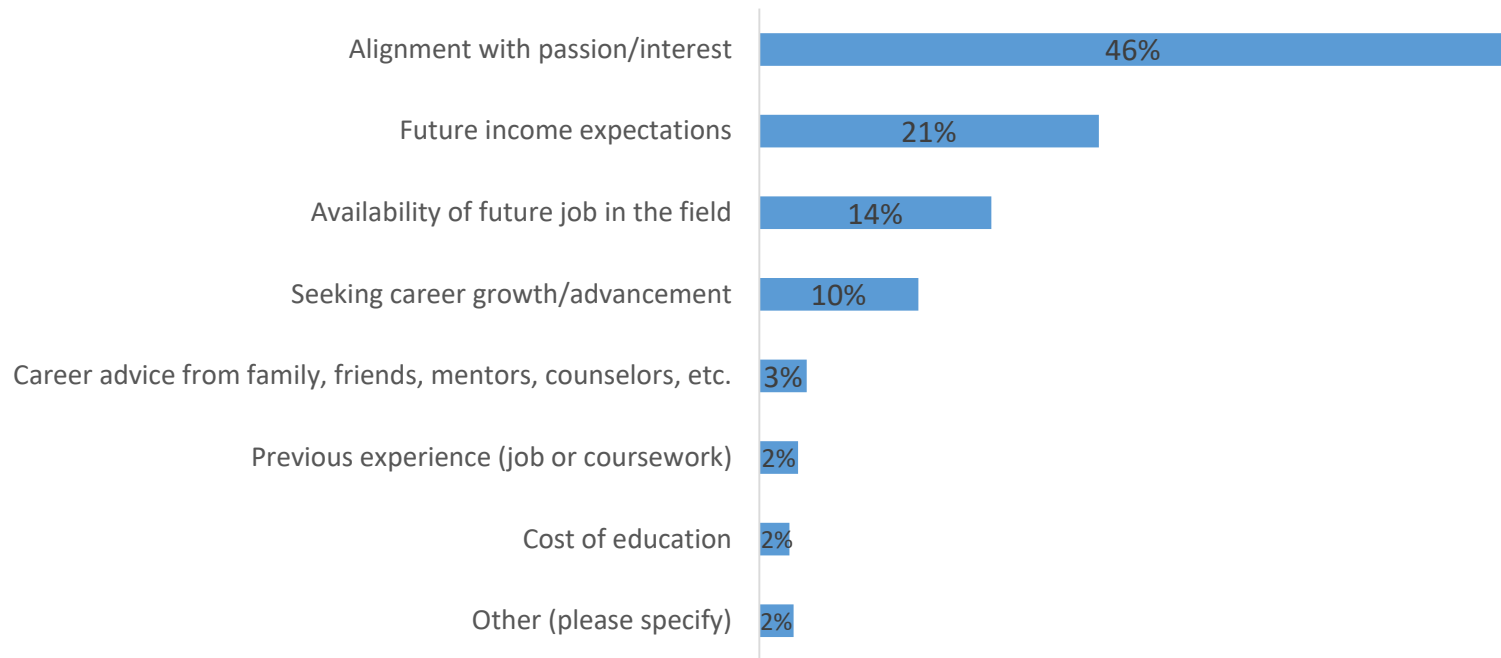
n=364

Age Group and the Most Important Factor for Major / Career Choice

	Under 18	18 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 and >
Alignment with passion/interest	41%	51%	45%	42%	22%	58%
Availability of future job in the field	12%	13%	15%	13%	22%	16%
Career advice from family, friends, mentors, counselors, etc.	6%	3%	3%	---	4%	---
Cost of education	12%	1%	1%	2%		
Future income expectations	12%	21%	20%	27%	26%	11%
Previous experience (job or coursework)	---	3%	3%	2%	4%	---
Seeking career growth/advancement	12%	7%	11%	13%	13%	11%
Other	6%	2%	1%		9%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
n=364	n=17	n=182	n=71	n=52	n=23	n=19

How did you first learn about your major course of interest?

Category	Percentage
Internet search (i.e. Google search, Mesa College website, sdccd.edu, assist.org, etc.)	31%
Family/friend	23%
High School career exploration	12%
Counselor	10%
Introductory course	8%
Catalog	4%
★ Current job training / growth	3%
★ Passion/enjoy	3%
Faculty	2%
Other	4%
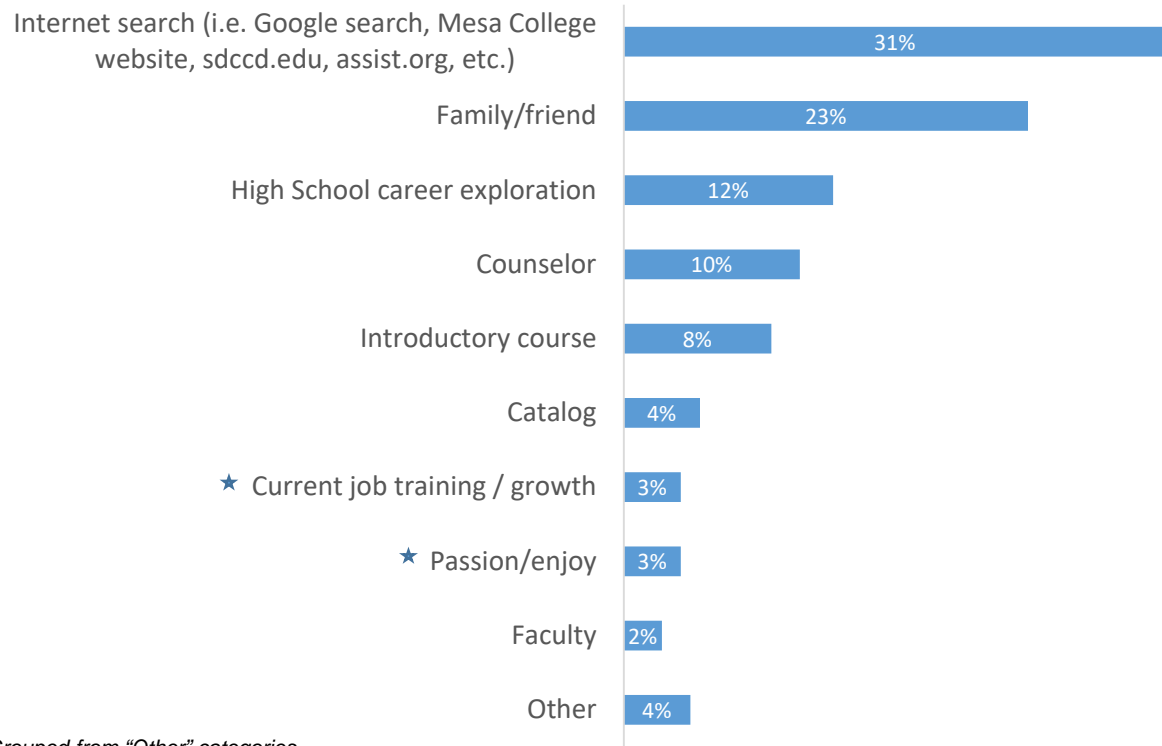
★ *Grouped from "Other" categories*

n=373

Think-Pair-Share

- What (if anything) surprises you?
- What is your major take-away?
- How does this inform your practice?

Challenges/Strategies

Question	Major Themes
What challenges/barriers have you faced, if any, around your major and course selection?	Class Availability Communication/Information Financial Challenges Transportation External Responsibilities Counseling Challenges Major Requirements
What strategies/knowledge have used to help you navigate course selection and choices around your major?	Seek out Information See a counselor Seek out resources Organize self/manage time

Most Common Challenges

Class Availability

- *"I want to take classes for my major but certain classes are only available some semesters… the classes that are available have conflicting schedules"*

Communication/Information

- *"Lack of knowledge on the best path, shortest path"*
- *"Mesa online stuff is confusing… outdated information"*

Counseling Challenges

- *"I had a Counselor tell me I needed to take something I didn't need to take. I took it twice even though they were named differently"*

Major Requirements

- *"Not enough classes for STEM majors."*
- *" There needs to be more sections for required courses"*

Impact of Students' Challenges

Bar chart showing the impact of various student challenges, measured by number of semesters added to complete degree.

Challenge	0 (handled challenge without adding semesters)	1 semester	2 semesters	3 semesters	2 years or more
Schedule conflicts	69	62	62	16	14
Limited class offerings	67	61	54	20	17
Canceled course sections	96	62	27	9	2
Low on registration priority list	97	32	40	15	11
Difficulty affording textbooks	83	28	35	10	29
Class not offered at all	85	52	28	7	10
Making ends meet (cost of living, other expenses)	66	34	24	15	42
Personal or family challenges	55	41	31	21	31
Technical issues with registration	124	30	16	5	1
Work related challenges	60	36	29	18	31
Lack of/inconsistent information about major requirements	74	32	9	17	32
Had no one to guide me	77	44	12	12	18
Unclear expectations from professors	84	32	5	6	30
Difficulty affording tution	88	18	18	10	20
Poor communication between departments on campus	75	32	6	11	22
Insufficient information about resources provided on campus	90	31	3	9	12
Transportation challenges	87	14	19	13	11
The timing of financial aid disbursements vs. payment deadlines	64	28	19	9	19

Student's Challenges – Top 10

Challenge	0 (handled challenge without adding semesters)	1 semester	2 semesters	3 semesters	2 years or more
★ Schedule conflicts	69	62	62	16	14
★ Limited class offerings	67	61	54	20	17
★ Canceled course sections	96	62	27	9	2
★ Low on registration priority list	97	32	40	15	11
★ Difficulty affording textbooks	83	28	35	10	29
★ Class not offered at all	85	52	28	7	10
Making ends meet (cost of living, other expenses)	66	34	24	15	42
Personal or family challenges	55	41	31	21	31
★ Technical issues with registration	124	30	16	5	1
Work related challenges	60	36	29	18	31
Lack of/inconsistent information about major requirements	74	32	9	17	32
Had no one to guide me	77	44	12	12	18
Unclear expectations from professors	84	32	5	6	30
Difficulty affording tution	88	18	18	10	20
Poor communication between departments on campus	75	32	6	11	22
Insufficient information about resources provided on campus	90	31	3	9	12
Transportation challenges	87	14	19	13	11
The timing of financial aid disbursements vs. payment deadlines	64	28	19	9	19

★ *Variables that we can potentially control*

■ 0 (handled challenge without adding semesters) ■ 1 semester ■ 2 semesters ■ 3 semesters ■ 2 years or more

Strategies

	Challenges	Top three strategies		
Top 3 most common	Schedule conflicts	Take other classes in the meantime (n=88)	Plan ahead (n=87)	Take classes at a different college (n=69)
	Limited class offerings	Plan ahead (n=103)	Talk to Counselor (n= 101)	Take other classes in the meantime (n=98)
	Cancelled course sections	Take other classes in the meantime (n=51)	Talk to Counselor (n=46)	Seek out information online (n=39)
Top 3 most impactful*	Making ends meet	Work and go to school (n=113)	Study part-time (n=52)	Seek out alternative source of income (n=43)
	Personal or family challenges	Talk to others / ask for help (n=75)	Take online classes (n=53)	Plan ahead (n=43)
	Work related challenges	Take online classes (n=64)	Study part-time (n=54)	Talk to others / ask for help (n=47)
	Lack of / Inconsistent information about major	Talk to counselor (n=88)	Seek out information online (n=85)	Talk to faculty (n=35)

"Most impactful" is defined as adding at least a year to students' educational journey

Major requirements
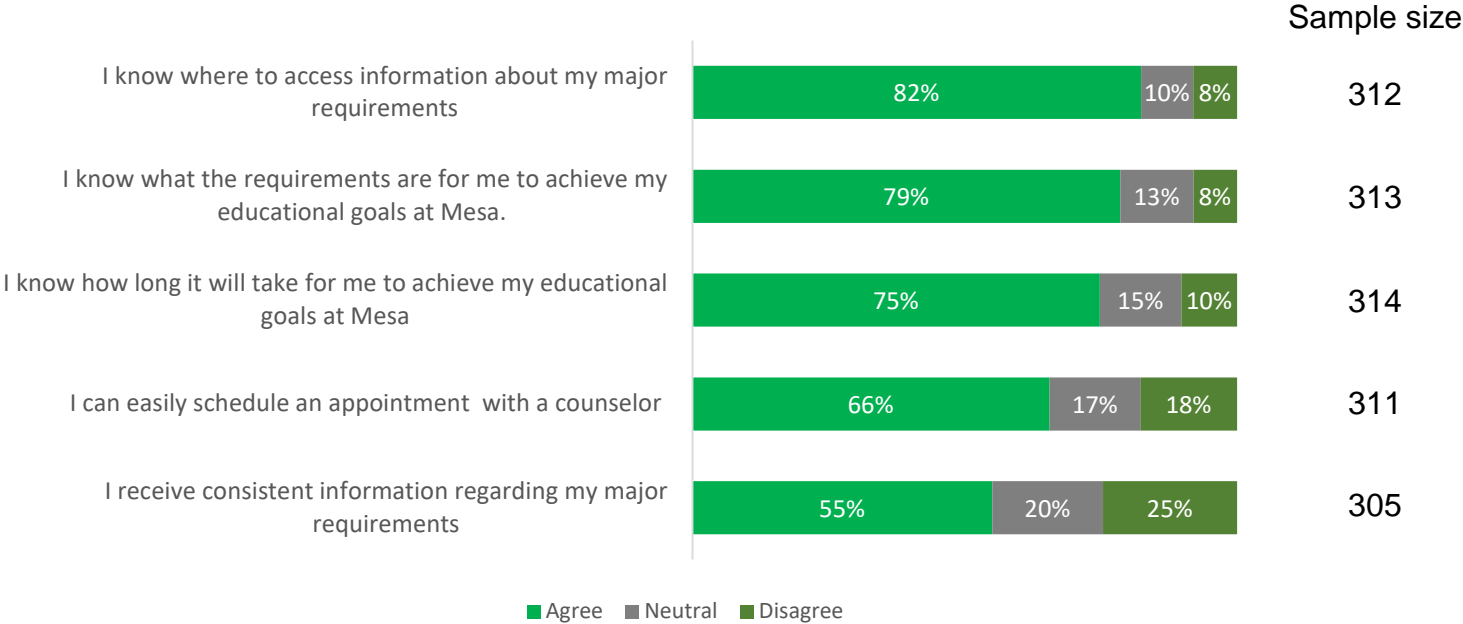
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Sample size
I know where to access information about my major requirements	82%	10%	8%	312
I know what the requirements are for me to achieve my educational goals at Mesa.	79%	13%	8%	313
I know how long it will take for me to achieve my educational goals at Mesa	75%	15%	10%	314
I can easily schedule an appointment with a counselor	66%	17%	18%	311
I receive consistent information regarding my major requirements	55%	20%	25%	305

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

Think-Pair-Share

- What (if anything) surprises you?

- What is your major take-away?

- How does this inform your practice?

What's working/Recommendations

Question	Major Themes

What's working, if anything, in helping you make choices around your major and course selection? (people, programs, information, etc.)	Campus Programs
	   ● E.g. EOPS, DSPS, VRC
	Tutoring
	Counseling
	Equity Services
	   ● STAND, Farmer's Market

What suggestions do you have to college leadership to improve the supports/services around Major and course selection?	Information
	   ● Improved access to, more consistent, more reliable
	Low/no Cost options for services/supplies
	   ● Texts, access codes, parking
	Counseling
	   ● Required, Specialized, more access, more reliable
	Schedule

Programs Helpfulness

Programs	Heard of it and used it (unhelpful resources)	Heard of it and used it (helpful resources)	Heard of it, but never used it	It does not apply to me	Never heard of it
Program 1					
…					
…..					
Program 29					
TOTAL	**221**	**1001**	**1446**	**824**	**3275**

Program/Service Usage

- 26 of 29 programs had usage of less than 30%
  - Only 3 Programs had usage above 50%
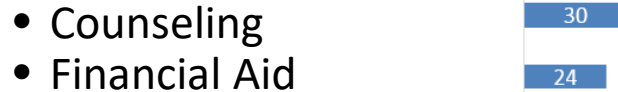- 13 programs with more than 50% of students indicating they had never heard of it

Programs *Sort by "Heard of it and used it (helpful resource)"* *Highlights are the top 2 program per each category*	Heard of it and used it (unhelpful resource)	Heard of it and used it (helpful resource)	Heard of it, but never used it	It does not apply to me	Never heard of it	Total
Counseling Center	13%	69%	14%	3%	2%	100%
Library Services	4%	63%	16%	6%	12%	100%
Financial Aid	10%	53%	21%	11%	3%	100%
Health Services	4%	22%	54%	5%	15%	100%
Transfer Center	4%	22%	38%	6%	29%	100%
MT2C/Tutoring	5%	20%	28%	9%	38%	100%
Career Center	6%	17%	57%	8%	13%	100%
Testing Center	4%	17%	28%	9%	42%	100%
Evaluations	8%	16%	22%	9%	46%	100%
STEM Center	1%	14%	33%	5%	48%	100%
EOPS	4%	12%	31%	19%	33%	100%
The Stand	1%	12%	11%	4%	72%	100%
Peer Navigator	5%	11%	12%	7%	64%	100%
Promise	2%	11%	9%	9%	69%	100%
Disability (DSPS)	3%	9%	30%	39%	19%	100%
Veterans	3%	9%	19%	41%	28%	100%
CRUISE	1%	9%	13%	5%	72%	100%

Programs Helpfulness: Top Programs by Categories

- **Heard of it and used it (helpful services)**
  - Counseling — 162
  - Library services — 147
  - Financial Aid — 124
- **Heard of it and used it (unhelpful services)**
  - Counseling — 30
  - Financial Aid — 24
- **Heard of it but never used it**
  - Career Center — 134
  - Health Services — 125
- **Never heard of it**
  - ADVOC8 — 205
  - SEEDS — 194
  - UMOJA Mesa Academy — 191

What would you change at Mesa to benefit the greatest number of students?
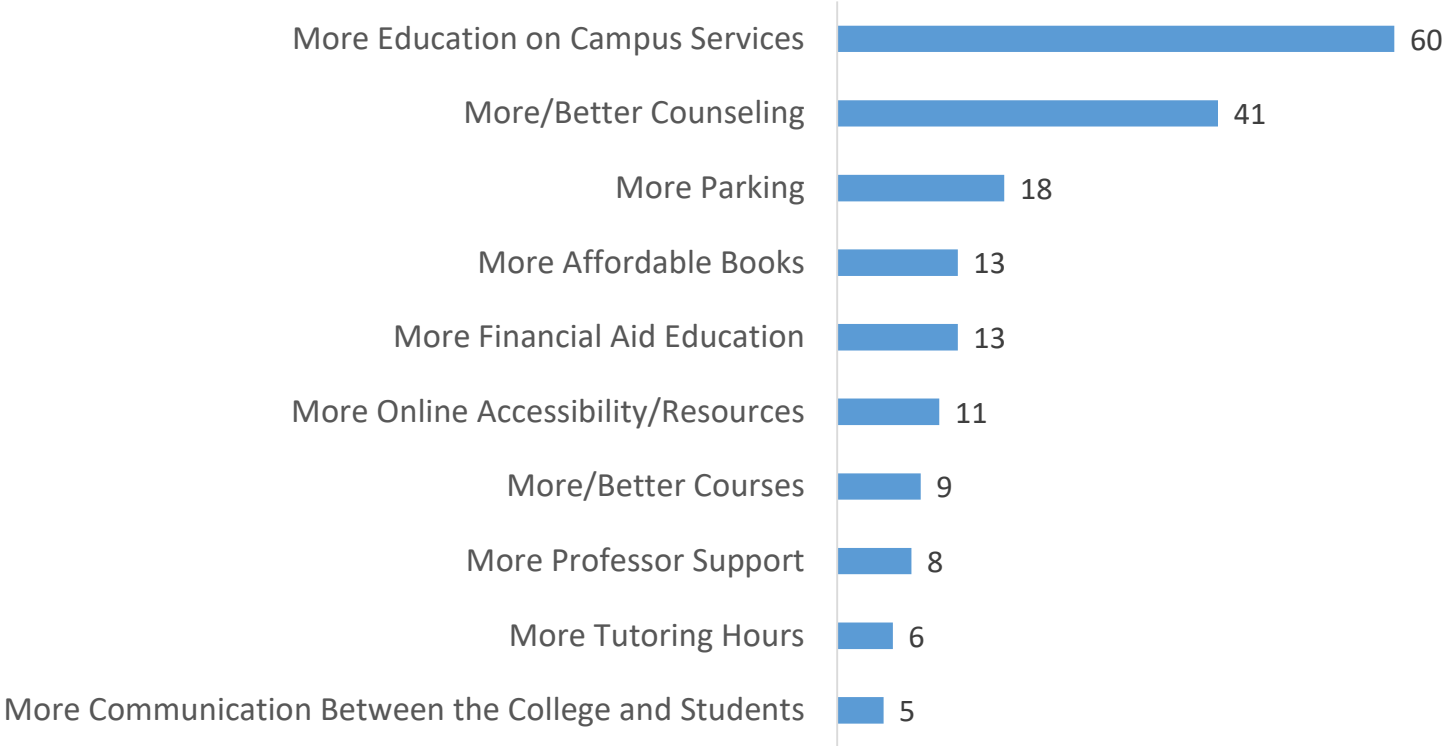
Category	Value
More Education on Campus Services	60
More/Better Counseling	41
More Parking	18
More Affordable Books	13
More Financial Aid Education	13
More Online Accessibility/Resources	11
More/Better Courses	9
More Professor Support	8
More Tutoring Hours	6
More Communication Between the College and Students	5

Think-Pair-Share

- What (if anything) surprises you?
- What is your major take-away?
- How does this inform your practice?

Wrap-up

- What is working? Not working?
- How can we use these data while we design Guided Pathways?
  - What is 1 thing we can do differently?
- What else do we want to know?

Questions?

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