2016 Decide WVU Days Survey_April 2_FINAL.04.18.16

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/urem

Recommended Citation
University Relations, "2016 Decide WVU Days Survey_April 2_FINAL.04.18.16" (2016). University Relations/Enrollment Management. 36.
https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/urem/36

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by The Research Repository @ WVU. It has been accepted for inclusion in University Relations/Enrollment Management by an authorized administrator of The Research Repository @ WVU. For more information, please contact ian.harmon@mail.wvu.edu.
Methodology

A brief online survey was created to gauge attendees’ satisfaction with the April 2, 2016, Decide WVU Day Open House.

The survey was emailed to 642 students and approximately 1,500 parents/guardians. Just over 100 attendees completed the survey; less than one-third of the surveys were completed by high school students. Parents/guardians comprised the majority of respondents.
Executive Summary
Executive Summary

Overview
Much like the March 12 Discover WVU Days Open House, the April 2 Open House was a success. Attendees represented 13 states, with the majority from Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. The vast majority of attendees gave the session an “A” rating and are certain WVU is the school they will attend.

The reaction to a less-structured day was mixed. Some appreciated the ability to experience the campus, but others felt the event was unorganized.

Sessions
The sessions were well-liked, though there is room for improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Excellent/Very Good Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Student conversations:</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Honors Program:</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Adventure WV:</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Excellent/Very Good Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Student Activities:</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Transfer Admissions:</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Housing:</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary

Likes/Dislikes
Attendees most appreciated their ability to visit their academic department and learn more about financial aid. The Housing and Student Activities sessions were disappointing to some because those sessions were deemed incomplete.

Room for Improvement
Attendees identified four major areas for improvement:
- Transportation - The lack of transportation is problematic because it creates crowds, causes attendees to be late to events and provides attendees with a less than positive overall experience.
- Group size - Groups that are too large depersonalize the experience for attendees.
- Communication - Whether events are highly structured or unstructured, it’s best to let attendees know that ahead of time. They want to know what to expect and plan accordingly.
- Timing - Attendees want the opportunity to experience all the activities they consider relevant, as well as the ability to decline those they deem not helpful.
Detailed Findings
The April 2 Open House had 113 attendees from 13 states. Most survey respondents (72%) are parents/guardians; only 27% are high school students. One is a transfer student.
About three-fourth (76%) gave the April 2 Open House an “A” rating. Less than two in ten (18%) rated it a “B.” The remainder, 7% gave it a “C.”
Student Activities, Student Conversations, and Adventure WV were the most-attended sessions. With the exception of Housing, the sessions were rated excellent/very good by at least 70% of session attendees.

Q. Please rate the following sessions you attended during the Decide WVU Days Open House.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honors Program</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure WV</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Admissions</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Conversations</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Activities</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=17) (N=48) (N=86) (N=7) (N=69) (N=75)
When attendees were asked what they found most helpful about the Open House, most appreciated the ability to tour their academic department and meet its faculty and students.

“Karly was able to begin narrowing down what type of engineering she may want to study.”

“It was helpful to him to talk to actual professors for that discipline. He could see the type of work he will be getting into.”

“The talk and tour of the engineering department were amazing. The students and staff did an exceptional job, and we were thrilled to see your program offers the same hands-on opportunities to compete in things like concrete canoe challenge, eco car, and more.”

Financial Aid was the second-most appreciated session.

“The meeting with the financial aid staff was the most helpful to me. They not only helped me to understand the expenses of housing and meals but also the expenses of tuition in full detail. I also thought that the staff did a great job of answering all my questions. I walked out of their office with complete understanding of tuition and ways I could pay for WVU.”

Q. Which session(s) did you/your student find most helpful. Please explain your response.
Those sessions identified as being least helpful were the Housing and Student Activities.

“Housing was mediocre at best ...not enough of a guided process. If you wanted to visit a dorm that was available you did it on your own. I thought this could have been much better. I also think that the Evansdale campus and destination was undersold and not an integral part of the presentation. It feels like they are second-class citizens.”

“Housing wasn't very exciting. No pics of dorms. Seemed more about how to sign up for housing.”

“Student activities - panel was willing to discuss activities, but without knowing what the activities were, that was difficult. We were expecting the session to be about the various types of activities and clubs and to be in much greater detail.”

“I expected something more on the idea of the Information Fair where I could learn about various clubs and activities that West Virginia U offers - instead I heard about four current students' clubs and the activities they were involved in. I still have no real idea what may be out there for my interests. At least if there were flyers with a list of clubs and contacts, along with activities WVU offers to students.”
Just 10% of attendees did not visit their/their student’s academic department. All but 4% found that visit extremely/very helpful.
Prior to their attending the Open House, most attendees were “extremely” (39%) or “very interested” (36%) in their/their student attending WVU. Just over one in five (23%) were somewhat interested. Surprisingly, two students indicated they were not very/not at all interested in attending WVU.

After attending the Open House, three in four (75%) indicated WVU is their top choice; it’s among their top choices for 19%. Another 5% have not decided, and 2% are disinterested in WVU.
Attendees found it valuable to be able to visit their academic department. Others, though fewer, appreciated learning about financial aid and housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department visits (29)</th>
<th>Financial Aid (12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Academic department visit. My daughter is more excited than ever after meeting some of the professors and hearing about expectations.”</td>
<td>“The meeting with the financial aid staff was the most helpful to me. They not only helped me to understand the expenses of housing and meals but also the expenses of tuition in full detail. I also thought that the staff did a great job of answering all my questions. I walked out of their office with complete understanding of tuition and ways I could pay for WVU.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Engineering department. Karly was able to begin narrowing down what type of engineering she may want to study.”</td>
<td>“Financial Aid helped explain the different types of aid we received.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Being able to talk with current students about the major and department gave good insight as to the level of work required and the options available to the students in the future.”</td>
<td>“The Financial Aid session gave a thorough explanation and walk-through of the different financial aid available.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing (5)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I learned of the roommate match.com feature of the process.”</td>
<td>“Housing helped me understand what options were available to us.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Which session(s) did you/your student find most helpful. Please explain your response.
Some found the Housing and Student Activities sessions lacking.

**Housing (7)**

“Housing was mediocre at best... not enough of a guided process. If you wanted to visit a dorm that was available you did it on your own. I thought this could have been much better. I also think that the Evansdale campus and destination was undersold and not an integral part of the presentation. It feels like they are second-class citizens.”

“Housing. Slides were small type and there was too much information for those just learning about the app process. A one-page handout would have been very helpful.”

“Probably Housing - while a lot of important information was shared, it was not in a very good format nor was the talk very interesting.”

“I will say the whole online Housing process seems like it could be handled better and be easier to navigate through. There is something cumbersome about it, and it’s not the most user-friendly online registration module I’ve seen.”

**Student Activities (6)**

“Student activities - panel was willing to discuss activities, but without knowing what the activities were, that was difficult. We were expecting the session to be about the various types of activities and clubs and to be in much greater detail.”

“I visited Student Activities and was not that excited. I wish I attended something else I missed out on. I expected something more on the idea of the Information Fair where I could learn about various clubs and activities that West Virginia U offers - instead I heard about four current students' clubs and the activities they were involved in. I still have no real idea what may be out there for my interests. At least if there were flyers with a list of clubs and contacts, along with activities WVU offers to students.”

Q. Which session(s) did you/your student find least helpful. Please explain your response.
Most attendees who acknowledged being delighted or disappointed with their experience at WVU expressed delight.

**Delights**

- The people (20)
  - Friendly/nice/welcoming
  - Helpful
  - School spirit
- Well-organized (8)
- Department visit (5)
- Beautiful campus (3)

**Disappointments**

- Transportation (6)
  - Not many PRTs running
  - Long lines for buses
  - Lack of signage
- Lack of help (4)
  - Navigating the campus
  - No student ambassadors sit downs at meals
  - Not all dorms are included in tour
  - No campus tour available

“Meeting the very personable and engaging people at every point in our visit, from the director of admissions at WVU Dining event on Friday to assist. band director and Honors College dean at Breakout sessions on Saturday. We were very impressed with the warmth and welcoming atmosphere of the college; WVU definitely moved up the ranking of finalists of my son for his future!”

“We felt this day was very well-organized and allowed opportunity to have ALL of our questions answered. Honestly, we have not had this great of an experience at the other colleges we were looking at. Well done.”

“We had hoped to ride the PRT over prior to lunch, but were told there weren't many cars running and there would be a wait. We were directed to the bus pickup point, but not really informed about how that was going to work. There were no buses there when we arrived and a very long line. We were already afraid we'd miss one of the first afternoon sessions, so we drove over ourselves. We saw a couple of signs for parking, but nothing that was very definitive. It became very frustrating driving around in circles trying to find a parking spot.”

“The parking options and signage Friday night were non-existent. We were given the option to have dinner at Evansdale and signed up for it so it would have been nice to find it. We gave up.”

“The PRT was a disaster. There should have been a knowledgeable person to direct the novice riders. People were trying to board at the exit spot and doors wouldn’t close because it was too crowded.”

“The line was way too long for the bus.”
Some embraced the less-structured format. Others were a bit lost without structure.

“It was great to be able to have the “run” of the campus to get a feel for the buildings, transportation and around campus, etc.”

“Loved having the freedom to move about the campus.”

“I loved that we could just explore. This helped to ease my anxiety about the lay of the land.”

“The lack of structured itinerary led to an incomplete visit for our family. We would have preferred to have a day structured by WVU Admissions to ensure that we were exposed to everything that prospective students and their families need to know. If a particular agenda item doesn’t apply to our family, give us the ability to opt out of that single line item. Making the day mostly an a la carte event puts the onus on each family to stitch together and execute a good plan for the day. Unfortunately, we failed to pull that off and as a result, our son now has a less than stellar first impression of your university and what it has to offer.”
Q. If you could make one change to improve Decide WVU Days, what would you suggest?

When asked how WVU could improve Decide WVU Days, attendees addressed transportation and communication issues.

**Improve transportation (5)**

“We didn't have time to do everything we wanted because of the backup. We waited at two different bus stops and eventually got on the PRT.”

“I would have to say the one change I would make would be to make parking at the Downtown campus more accessible or have a better transportation plan in place. As someone who has health issues, having to walk up a very steep hill to access the Mountainlair was very hard on me and upsetting for my family.”

**Improve communication (4)**

“Have a master meeting with everyone to explain the day. You had to sort of figure out on your own how to get around and when.”

“Offer a little more direction to how to get to certain places because the campus is huge and slightly confusing.”

“Let parents know to plan their day prior to arriving. I was a little overwhelmed in the beginning not really knowing where to start or what I needed to do.”

“More students at dinner in the dorm to talk with about things. More people at Admissions at the Mountainlair to help answer questions about the financial aid/529 if there is anyone that knows about this to discuss things with.”
Others suggested improvements related to the timing of the sessions or number of participants.

**Don’t overlap sessions (4)**

“I wanted more time to attend the p.m. sessions ... they were so tightly back-to-back (I had to stay late in one to ask some additional questions) and missed the second one. There were two others I wanted to attend, but we also wanted to have time to ride the PRT that day to see what it would be like to go between campus's - as he will probably have to do that daily. So I really could only attend 1 session - wasn’t sure how late the PRT was going to be open as it seemed like everything ended at 4 pm that Sat. I would suggest making the day before a day available to do things on own (check out the two campuses and their amenities/ ride PRT for example). That way we could attend all of the sessions on Sat."

“We felt we didn’t have enough time for everything. We could have used more time. Maybe a Decide a WVU weekend?”

**Have smaller groups (3)**

“Maybe have a fewer number of students to come to Decide WVU Days and then have more of the Days to accommodate smaller crowds. This makes the event more accessible and valuable to each group. If my son could have gone to more than one academic session it would have been extremely helpful. Maybe have an opt-in day on Fri. in which students can visit another academic dept. I needed him to see Engineering and CPASS but not enough time.”

“Offer more of them so the groups would be smaller, When touring, everyone couldn’t fit in the dorm room, lab, etc., that the guide was talking about.”

“Better organization for Friday night. Other schools offer a sleepover with interaction with other students so they get a real feel for the school. Might want to consider that.”

Q. If you could make one change to improve Decide WVU Days, what would you suggest?