Bear Down Camp (BDC) AY2023-24 First-Time Full-Time Cohort Retention Report

Overview

Bear Down Camp (BDC) supported by the Associated Students of the University of Arizona (ASUA) provides various activities led by student counselor to help incoming freshmen or first-year students of the University of Arizona to acclimate and transition to a university environment. Students will learn about academic and on-campus resources which include involvement opportunities, educational and health resources, history and traditions, and general information about the University of Arizona. This transitional camp will also help students gain their first college support system, friendships, and network.

Methods

A total of 263 students participated in Bear Down Camp in August 2023, of which 255 students were identified as first-time full-time (FTFT) cohort and included in the following analysis. This analysis aimed to understand the impact of BDC participation on first-year student retention to fall 2024. The propensity score matching (PSM) was used as a statistical technique to create a peer comparison group. Eligible non-participants were matched with factors that influenced student success outcomes (e.g. ethnicity, first-generation, gender, Pell grant recipients, residency, high school GPA, campus living status, and campuses).

Results

Propensity score matching (PSM) results show that compared to similar peers, BDC FTFT participants in fall were 6 percentage points more likely to return on the next academic year (see Table 1).

Table 1. First-Time Full-Time (FTFT) cohort

2023-24	Retention
BDC Participants (N=255)	93%
Peer Comparison Group (N=255)	88%

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BDC 2023 FTFT Cohort Demographics			All FTFT (*N* = 8,574)
	N	%	*N* (%)
Race/Ethnicity			
African American	5	2%	362 (4%)
Native American/ American Indian	1	<1%	166 (2%)
Asian	9	4%	458 (5%)
Hispanic	33	13%	2,469 (29%)
International Student	-	-	383 (4%)
Pacific Islander	-	-	13 (0.2%)
Two or more races	19	7%	467 (5%)
White	185	73%	4,140 (48%)
Unknown / Other	3	1%	116 (1%)
Gender			
Female	168	66%	5,040 (59%)
Male	87	34%	3,534 (41%)
Living on Campus			
Yes	244	96%	5,702 (67%)
No	11	4%	2,872 (33%)
Generation Status			
First-Generation	31	12%	2,507 (29%)
Continuing Generation	224	88%	6,067 (71%)
Residency			
AZ Resident	92	36%	4,729 (55%)
Out-of-State	163	64%	3,845 (45%)
Pell-Recipient			
Pell-Recipient (FCD)	19	7%	2,202 (26%)

Non-Recipient	236	93%	6,372 (74%)
High School GPA (Mean)	3.61		3.52

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