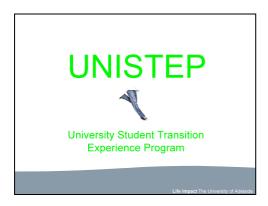
UniStep: another step towards engaging and retaining students

12th Pacific Rim First Year in Higher Education Conference 2009



Orientation - 3 Tiers

- Traditional O'week Activities
- Reality Bites Sessions
- Extended semester 1 orientation

Reality Bites

Transition to university issues

- Differences
- Jargon
- Referencing
 Time Management
- MyUni

Senior Students

- Own Experience
- Tips

Semester Program

Physical Orientation

- Soap Box Performers
- Library Tours
- · Campus Tours

General

- Life Lessons 101
- Balance: Study and Life

Academic

- Getting Started on uni
 - study
- Taking Good Lecture Notes

Social

- · Taste of Uni
- End of term BBQ

UniStep Promotion

Publications

- Orientation guide
- Student Union diary

Signage A frames

- Banners
- Session signs

Orientation Week

Give aways

- Brochures
- Welcome Centre

Electronic

- Weekly email
- MyUni
- First Year Website

UniStep Evaluation

Informal

- · Student emails
- · Student feedback at events and sessions

Formal

- Week 5 Online Survey
- · Week 12 Online Survey

Overwhelmingly positive response

"I would just like to thank you for your help in making my first year of uni as 'freak out free' as possible!"

Slide 1: UniStep (University Student Transition Experience Program)

- University of Adelaide has for many years offered a week long, centralised, orientation program
- In 2008 the Transition Unit piloted an extended 6 week orientation program for commencing first year students
- Positive feedback encouraged the continuation and expansion of the program in 2009

Slide 2: Orientation – 3 Tiers

- In 2009, in addition to the traditional orientation week sessions and events, a second tier was added with 'transition to university' sessions called Reality Bites
- Information sessions and activities were organised and promoted to students as part of the semester 1 extended orientation program

Slide 3: Reality Bites

- 9 sessions attracted a total of 1025 first year students
- The sessions consisted of Transition staff presenting information on issues affecting first year students and a panel of senior students spoke of their experiences at uni and gave helpful tips

Slide 4: Semester Program

 UniStep included a range of activities and sessions designed to help students become familiar with the campus and the academic and support services available and to provide opportunities for students to engage and connect with each other

Slide 5: UniStep Promotion

- In 2009 significant increase in the promotion of UniStep
- Weekly updates on first year website
- Weekly door prize for students attending sessions
- Weekly email helped to personalise somebody cares

Slide 6: UniStep Evaluation

- Feedback sought informally at events and formally through 2 online surveys
- Prize draw for survey respondents
- Total of 1339 students (23.29% of all first year students) responded to the surveys
- Time Management session in both surveys was found to be the most worthwhile session
- Over 72% of respondents agreed that UniStep had increased their awareness of support services
- Over half of the survey respondents who had thought about leaving during the first semester agreed that UniStep had influenced their decision to stay
- Overwhelmingly positive responses