Smart Searching, Smart Snacking Pilot

Students who attended the 5pm workshops were provided with healthy snack choices during the Spring 2015 semester. The content of the workshops was not altered. These 5pm workshops were dubbed, “Smart Searching, Smart Snacking.”

Students who attended the Smart Searching, Smart Snacking workshops were surveyed. Highlights from the survey begin on page 3. If you would like to see all student comments, I have them in Evernote and will share them as a Word or Excel file soon.

Purpose of Smart Searching, Smart Snacking Pilot

To reduce barriers for students attending evening workshops.

To convey to students that the library cares about their learning (Curriculum Committee Meeting, 3/2/15).

The previously scheduled linked credit courses that were part of the Pathways to Transfer program were cancelled for the Spring 2015 semester. The Department Chair scheduled more evening workshops as an information literacy instruction option for students attending the evening Pathways to Transfer English courses. Concerned that timing of the evening workshops could become a barrier to students who needed to eat between classes and work (or between classes), I was asked to provide snacks at the 5pm workshops for the Spring 2015 semester.

Curriculum Committee Involvement

The Smart Searching, Smart Snacking pilot was discussed at the Curriculum Committee meeting on March 2, 2015.

The Curriculum Committee provided the following guidance:

- Place the snacks in the back of the room for students to make their own selections
- Purchase enough supplies for full classes
- Purchase perishable items and evaluate after the pilot
- Make a strategic action instead of a learning outcome
- Department Chair suggested a budget of $1,500 for the semester
- Department Chair emphasized this was not a marketing tool
- Department Chair shared that she had encouraged Pathways to Transfer professors to tell their students to come to the workshops

The Curriculum Committee brainstormed the following questions for possible inclusion on the student survey:
• How did you feel about having snacks in the classroom? (YES- include this question, Curriculum Committee, 3/2/15)
• Did a theme about smart snacking encourage you to attend the workshop?
• Did you attend because snacks were provided?
• Would you have been able to attend if the snacks were not provided? (YES – include this question, Curriculum Committee, 3/2/15)
• Include an open feeling question.

The Curriculum Committee brainstormed the following strategic actions:

• Students express a value for the library.
• Students recognize that the library values them and wants to support their success. (YES – this should be the strategic action, Curriculum Committee, 3/2/15)
• Do students know that we care about them and their learning?

The Survey

I sent the following email and a draft of the survey to the Curriculum Committee. The survey begins on page 3.

- EMAIL -
I have made some changes to the questions because the strategic action (we decided not to do an SLO, but a strategic action instead) that the committee came up with was "Students recognize that the library values them and wants to support their success." The questions we came up with at the meeting didn't really match this.

Plus, I was getting some feedback from Eva about the survey, and we thought it was odd for students to jump to the conclusion that the library values and supports their success because there are bananas at the workshop. Maybe they will, but it's a pretty lofty goal. Plus (again), the original strategic action that we wrote in our meeting wasn't actionable.

So instead, the strategic action should be more like, "the library will determine whether or not to continue providing snacks at the evening workshops."

FYI, the questions that we came up with at the curriculum meeting were:

1. How did you feel about having snacks in the classroom? (open)
2. Would you have been able to attend if snacks were not provided? (check marks)

I'm adding questions #3 and #4.

Pauline
mailto:pswartz@mtsac.edu
Results

123 responses total

Tell us what you think about the snacks!

1. Would you have been able to attend the workshop if snacks were not provided?
   □ Yes, **112 responses, 91.05%**
   □ No, **10 responses, 8.13%**
   Blank, **1, .08%**

2. How did you feel about having snacks available during the workshop?

HIGHLIGHTS

. It was refreshing, and I just worked out, so I needed more food.
. I think it's a good idea for students who are here all day.
. I felt like it was more inviting. Made me feel like they cared more about me being there. I didn't feel like I had to be there. It was more like I wanted to be here.
. Grateful. By this time I'm starving. I would have skipped this and gone home to eat.
. Very nice. Let's say someone didn't eat and there was food provided. We should never learn on an empty stomach.
. It's a pleasant addition to library workshops. It also allows students to focus more.
. It made the atmosphere relaxed and comfortable, and it was pleasant.
. Made environment more relaxed. Class was quite enjoyable, not what I was expecting.
. It is nice for hungry students to eat and be able to concentrate.
. I like the idea of free snacks; life saving for those who don't have time to eat in between classes.
. Great because it was convenient, knowing I came straight from football practice. Snacks are healthy also.
. I think it's very thoughtful.
. I think it's a good idea. I believe students wouldn't be able to stay focused on an empty stomach.
. It was extremely pleasant. Just knowing that I was thought of when I didn't have to be was wonderful.
. The snacks gave me energy. Was a little tired from being here since 8:00 this morning.
. It helped me keep focus.
. Made me happy because I was starving and feeling weak already.
. It was amazing, because I was not expecting it.
. Good selection of snacks. Really appreciate it.
. Great for students on a time crunch.
3. Do you think healthy snacks can help boost your energy to learn during the workshop?

☐ Yes, 122 responses, 99.18%
☐ No, 1 response, .08%

Comments:

HIGHLIGHTS

. Thank you for the amazing workshop. I will be coming to more. Also thank you for the snacks.
. Have snacks at all workshops!
. Eating keeps me alert. I'd rather have a snack while learning than suffer silently and not pay attention/really absorb what the teacher is saying.
. Great snacks, no crumbs, didn't feel guilty because they were healthy
. I really liked that you guys provided healthy snacks, not only junk food.
. Workshop was wonderful. Instructor was helpful. Leaving today as a happy student.
. There's a party in my tummy.
. Sugar snacks make me feel sluggish.
. Yes because it provides glucose for your body.
. I was hungry before I came. Helped.
. Yes. It can help boost your energy. It makes you focus more in class or any other thing like sport is also good for always a healthy snack.
. Everything was great and I had a great time.

Most common comments were thank you, keep doing this, it helped me stay focused or energized.
4. If we continue providing snacks, what kinds of snacks should we get?

After reading the first few batches of surveys, I purchased more nuts, fruit snacks, water, and juice. I also purchased fresh fruit, hummus, yogurt, and cheese, but some of the perishable items were more difficult to manage.

HIGHLIGHTS

. Less sugar snacks. Ones with good ingredients.
. apples, yogurt, water, grapes, and bananas
. healthy snacks, granola bars, yogurt, anything healthy really
. granola bars, oranges, water, and crackers
. apples and oranges
. protein bars, bananas, water, and yogurt
. The snacks provided were fine.
. fruit snacks
. fruit snacks, apples, bananas, juice
. Baked hot cheetos, little juices, love the trail mix :)
. nuts, water, fruit, trail mix
. Fruit! Raisins! Nuts! Water! Juice! Trail Mix!
. vegetables with dip
. I think the snacks that are already provided are perfect.
. Love the Naked Juice, Kind bars, and trail mix.
. I think the snacks provided were very good and had a lot of choices. Trail mix, Kind bars, and juice are great.
. I love junk food but the promotion of healthy snacks is a wonderful idea.

Many students wrote to keep the same snacks as already provided or wrote similar things (nuts, juice, granola bars, etc.). A few students didn’t care about healthy choices and suggested these:
. chips (many students suggested chips, with a few specific suggestions for jalapeno kettle chips)
. chocolate
. ice cream
. pizza bites
. more candy
. Jolly Ranchers

I started putting out candy, and several students wrote, “no candy.”