

“Top Ten” Institutional Self-Assessment Questions for Evaluating the Quality of New-Student Orientation

For each item, assess the effectiveness of the stated practice at your institution on a scale of 5 (very effective) to 1 (not effective)

| Orientation Practice | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Is the orientation program delivered in a <i>personalized</i> manner that validates students as <i>unique individuals</i> and treat them as "whole persons?" | | | | | |
| 2. Are new students are oriented to <i>people</i> (not just buildings and information) and given the opportunity <i>interact</i> meaningfully with: | | | | | |
| • academic advisors | | | | | |
| • support staff | | | | | |
| • peers | | | | | |
| • faculty | | | | | |
| 3. Are new students exposed to experienced and trained <i>peer leaders</i> as part of the orientation process? | | | | | |
| 4. Does the program provide students with <i>relevant, "just-in-time"</i> information that applies directly to their <i>current needs</i> and informs their <i>immediate choices and decisions</i> ? | | | | | |
| 5. Are both the offices of <i>Student Affairs</i> and <i>Academic Affairs</i> involved in the planning and delivery of new-student orientation, ensuring that the program has both an <i>academic</i> and <i>student life</i> focus? | | | | | |
| 6. Is new-student orientation <i>required or optional</i> ? (If required, how effectively is attendance/participation <i>monitored and enforced</i> ?) | | | | | |
| 7. Is the program <i>customized</i> to meet the specialized needs of student <i>subpopulations</i> (e.g., commuters, non-traditional students, transfer students)? | | | | | |
| 8. Does new-student orientation include a component designed for students' <i>parents</i> and <i>family</i> members that involves discussion of the role they can play in supporting their first-year student's initial adjustment and subsequent success? | | | | | |
| 9. Do first-year students experience an <i>inspirational, celebratory ritual</i> at college entry—e.g., a <i>convocation</i> or <i>induction ceremony</i> —at which time the college formally welcomes new students and their family into its community? | | | | | |
| 10. Is the pre-term orientation program meaningfully <i>connected</i> to new students' first-term experiences (e.g., co-curricular programming and/or course work), so that students experience some sense of transitional <i>continuity</i> to and through their first term in college? | | | | | |