

## **Indiana State University Student Counseling Center**

### **A Report of Outcomes of Student Counseling Clients using the Counseling Outcomes Assessment Study (COAS)**

#### *Problem*

The SCC's 2007 assessment study was the internal Counseling Outcomes Assessment Study (COAS). The SCC collected a random survey of 52 current students who have attended anywhere from 2 to 21+ counseling sessions was completed in April 2007. The purpose of the assessment was to evaluate whether or not SCC clientele had learned to create a sense of identity, positive coping skills, emotional management, built self esteem, and had counseling helped them improve academic performance and stay at ISU. The hypothesis of the study was that no matter what number of session a client had attended, clients would acknowledge learning in 13 different counseling behavior areas. Positive support would then lend credence to the SCC's effectiveness and ability to achieve its mission.

#### *Methodology*

The assessment asked clients "yes or no" questions concerning specifically: coping strategies; to think more effectively to control distressing emotions; if they strengthened self-management skills; gained greater self understanding or identity; to develop a healthier lifestyle (a Student Health Promotions question); improved their relationships; recognize and express emotions better; improved academic performance; improved self-confidence and self-esteem; improved understanding of diversity; and gained a clearer sense of life direction.

#### *Results*

The results showed the Student Counseling Center drew rave reviews from its clientele. The COAS showed the Student Counseling Center performed quality services, under dramatically increased demands, and did an exceptional job according to most students. Customer Satisfaction Comment Cards also added that students felt the SCC did a good job updating environment of the facility and made students comfortable with its total refurbishing project.

The recent SCC Outcomes Study results showed definitively:

96% learned effective coping strategies;

92% learned to think more accurately and reduced distressing behaviors;

79% strengthened self management skills

75% made a successful important decision

87% strengthened their self-understanding or self-identity;

65% improved their healthy lifestyle by reducing problems with sleep, lack of exercise, unhealthy eating, and abuse of alcohol or drugs;

75% improved their relationships;

77% were better able to appropriately express their emotions

46% improved their academic performance level

71% improved their self confidence or self esteem

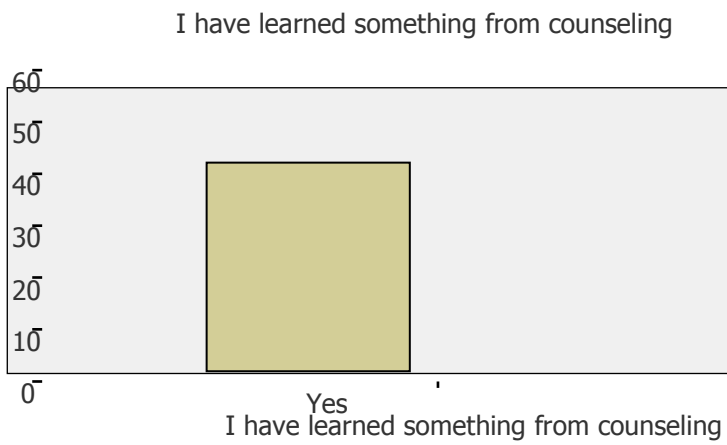
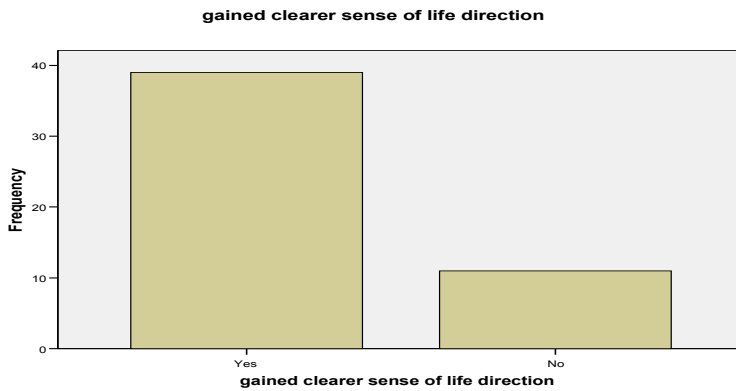
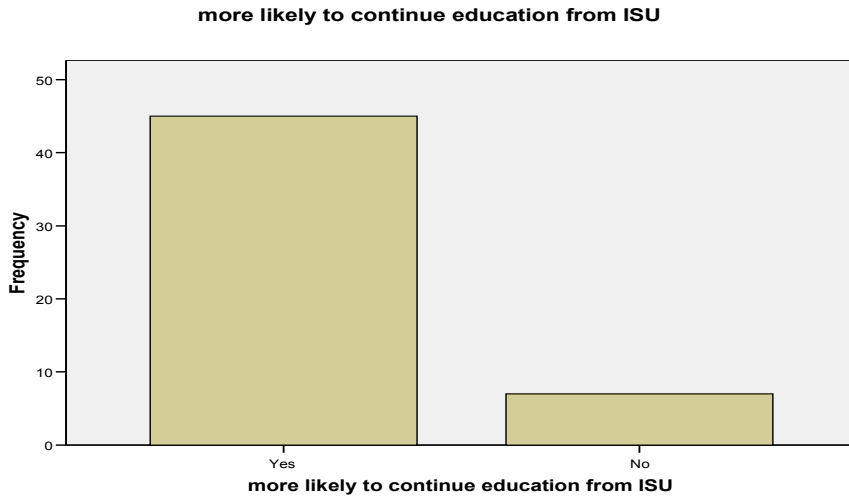
71% said they gained a clearer sense of direction in their lives;

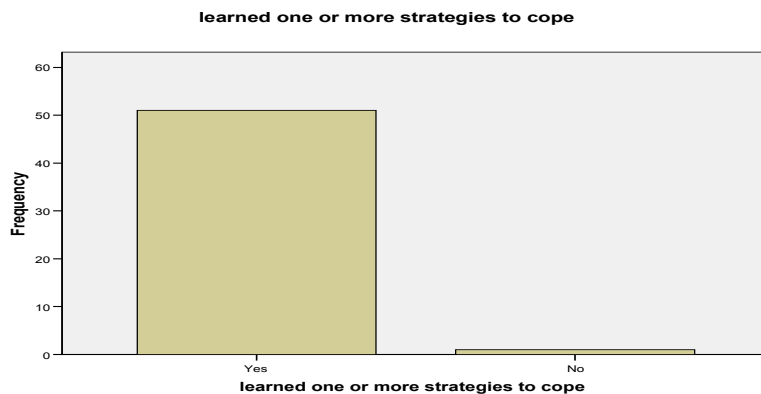
83% stated they were more likely to continue their education and graduate from ISU due to the help they received at the SCC.

75% increased their understanding and appreciation of diversity

71% gained a clearer sense of their life direction

35% (new clients who had had less than 4 sessions) felt it was too soon to tell if they had learned appropriate coping skills from counseling  
However only 3% reported they hadn't learned anything yet from counseling.





### *Conclusion*

The Counseling Outcomes Assessment Survey indicated the Student Counseling Center gave excellent service to students in the areas of relationships, personality development, managing emotions and reducing symptoms of emotional disturbance. Of the clients who participated in the survey, most responded that the Counseling Center helped them learn a strategy to cope and improved their chances of retention at ISU. All stated they learned something from counseling

### *Discussion*

However, the future performances of the SCC and SHP to continue to effectively cover the ISU student demand and additionally reach more students is directly dependent upon receiving the additional budgetary enhancement recommended by the UAR. In order for the SCC and the SHP to make greater changes in operations and successful outcomes in terms of delivering more and better quality services, both units need to receive the UAR's recommended increases of funding of operations, salaries, and positions. The current SCC and SHP staffs are already operating at the top and at the limits of their availability to provide services. Professional burnout was a major concern of the UAR and they felt it was imperative of the university to take action to assist these services to expand, by receiving an infusion of resources of staff and funds. The UAR was also seriously concerned that the national trend of increasing demand for counseling and health services plus the trend of increasing severity of student problems would soon overwhelm both services. In order for the SCC and the SHP to continue to accomplish their missions effectively, efficiently and continue to produce positive effects on student emotional ability, increased academic performance and increased likelihood of retention at ISU, these units need improved fiscal backing to provide the staff and resources to meets the demands of the students of Indiana State University. These assessments underline the significance of the impact of the Student Counseling Center and the Student Health Promotions Program to university enrollment and fiscal success in the future.