

## **Report on *First Time Freshman Orientation and Parent Informational Sessions (August 25, 2015)***

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On August 25<sup>th</sup>, Mid Michigan Community College held a First Time Freshman Orientation along with Parent Informational Sessions and campus tours. This event ran concurrent with the Community Party, all of which occurred at the Mount Pleasant campus from 2:00 to 6:30 pm. August 25<sup>th</sup> was also the first day for bookstore charges using Financial Aid funds for textbooks and supplies.

For the Orientation, 118 students responded via RSVP request to reserve a spot during one of the four sessions which lasted approximately an hour. Of those 118 students who sent in an RSVP, 58 actually attended the orientation (49% of the RSVP responses). In addition to the 58 who reserved seats, another 23 students attended after hearing the WCFX radio spot or because they were on campus to purchase their textbooks. This makes for a total of 81 students who attended Orientation. In addition, 15 parents attended the parent information sessions to get more information regarding what to expect as a parent of a new college student. Hillary Phillips presented the College 101 orientation sessions while Judy Crawford presented the parent info sessions. Judy also advertised the orientation event on the WCFX radio spot that occurred during the event.

Of those students who attended the orientation session, 61 identified themselves as first time freshman, 14 identified as transfer students, and three identified themselves as returning students. There were two students that attend from the Harrison campus and one from the Huron ISD. The students listed various programs of study, but a majority of them listed health occupations such as Nursing, Radiography, and Physical Therapy Assistant and several also identified themselves as 'Undecided'. Overall, the attendees rated the sessions content as being useful to them as a new college student at a 4.49 out of 5.

When asked to identify the main reason they chose to attend the orientation, 65 students responded that they were interested in learning more about what to expect my first year of college. Five students indicated that they had questions that they weren't able to ask during their advising appointments. Nine students replied that they were interested in having a chance at winning one of the bookstore gift cards that we were giving away and 11 said that their parents suggested they attend.

Overall those involved feel that this event was a great success and the turnout was greater than we anticipated. Although an incentive to attend was offered (a chance to win MMCC bookstore gift cards), this was not indicated as the main reason for attending this event. It seems that a majority of these incoming freshman wanted to know more about what to expect and how to prepare for their first semester in college. It may be worth considering running a larger scale orientation for first time freshman in order to better prepare incoming freshman and manage the retention of these new students by being proactive in providing them the information they need to be successful college students.