

interact

COLLEGE OF THE DESERT

FAILURE TO ENROLL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

Knowing More About Why Students Don't Complete the Intake Process or Stay

When it comes to communicating with prospective and returning students, impressions and experiences are important. Not only are effective communication practices crucial to enrollment and retention efforts, they also influence the general reputation of a college.

Facing competition from four-year institutions and private career colleges, it is common for a community college to tout its accessibility: smaller, sleeker, and more focused than the big local university or the faceless corporate career institute. But accessibility doesn't just mean smaller class sizes and easier admissions requirements. It's also the ease with which students can access the appropriate staff, services, and information.

Knowing what causes prospective students to not register, enroll, or attend is key to addressing student issues and removing barriers to enrollment growth.

The purpose of this research was to interview prospective students that did not enroll after applying to College of the Desert. The differences and similarities of these people and their experiences were examined to determine where issues and barriers exist within the intake system.

Methodology

In November 2018, College of the Desert (COD) supplied a list of prospective students that applied but did not enroll between the 2015-2016 and 2017-2018 school years.

In December 2018, Interact conducted a total of 50 phone interviews from this list. Each participant was asked a series of questions (and follow-up questions) to rate their experiences and determine their motivations and impressions of College of the Desert. As instructed, we capped the number of respondents who indicated that they went on to another institution instead of enrolling at COD to 12 (24% of the total survey). It should be noted that Spring Registration opened between the time the list was pulled and a few (4) of the students who were not registered in November had registered by December.

The following report provides an analysis and summary of those interviews and identification of issues noted as a result of the research.

General Results and Impressions

The research highlights both the strong and weak points of College of the Desert. Overall, it suggests that while College of the Desert boasts many impressive positive qualities, it does have several key issues that should be addressed to improve enrollment rates after application, and thereby also improve overall intake results.

Findings

Positive Impressions and Opportunities to Improve Experiences and Opinions

Positive Impressions – The majority of the respondents (42 out of 50; 84%) indicated that they have positive impressions about College of the Desert. Many specific comments made by respondents reflected general positive feelings about College of the Desert, including good experiences with faculty and staff, classes and programs, campus atmosphere, and word-of-mouth impressions from people they know.

Experiences That Influenced Opinions – Experiences influencing respondents' opinions fell under the following categories: 1) application and registration process (33%); 2) friends or personal decisions (21%); 3) college counselors, or staff (17%); 4) not enough information in general was given to them (8%); 5) professional or work experiences (8%); or 5) issues with the location of or transportation to the college (4%). Only four respondents (8%) indicated that they did have specific unanswered questions that should have been resolved by College of the Desert before they enrolled, but had not been resolved to their satisfaction.

Regret About Choice to Not Enroll – Nine of the respondents (9 out of 50; 18%) expressed regret over their choice to not enroll after applying. This suggests that there is a number of prospective students that could be persuaded to enroll if their concerns are addressed before they leave.

Main Reasons for Not Enrolling

The respondents indicated that their reasons for applying but not enrolling varied. The most frequently mentioned categories of responses included (in order of most to least frequent):

- 1) financial reasons, income problems, or having to work instead (25%)
- 2) life circumstances or personal issues (17%)
- 3) scheduling, timing issues, or lack of available classes (12%)
- 4) transportation issues or inconvenient location (12%)
- 5) attending or transferring to a different institution (10%)
- 6) problems with the application or registration process (8%)
- 7) changed mind, chose not to return, or procrastination (5%)

Overall, almost all of the respondents (48 out of 50; 96%) gave definitive answers to this question.

1) Financial Reasons, Income Problems, or Having to Work Instead – The most common response from those we interviewed was that they need to or have to work. Financial problems are key issues for many students, but for some prospective students, it is the key issue preventing them from actually enrolling and attending.

2) Life Circumstances or Personal Issues – For some prospective students, College of the Desert does not provide compelling enough arguments to overcome their life circumstances or personal issues.

3) Scheduling, Timing Issues, or Lack of Available Classes – Trying to schedule classes around work or other responsibilities is another major obstacle to many of those prospective students that did not enroll.

4) Transportation Issues or Inconvenient Location – Some respondents indicated that the reason they did not enroll was that it was inconvenient for them to get to the college for various reasons.

5) Attending or Transferring to a Different Institution – Several respondents indicated that the reason they did not enroll was that they decided to attend or transfer to a different 2-year or 4-year institution of higher learning.

6) Problems With the Application or Registration Process – Somewhere during the application and registration process, a few prospective students met with difficulties that they could not surmount.

7) Changed Mind, Chose Not to Return, or Procrastination – For some prospective students, College of the Desert does not provide compelling enough arguments to overcome their choices or lack of motivation.

Currently Attending, Did Enroll, or Will Be Attending Soon – Four of the respondents (8%) mentioned that they are currently attending, did enroll, or will be attending soon at some point during their phone interview. These outlier responses likely indicate that some people on the list did enroll between the time when the list was generated and when the survey was conducted.

Other Issues

Negative Perceptions – Some prospective students identified specific negative perceptions or experiences at College of the Desert in their responses that influenced their decision to not attend. These negative perceptions included ten (10) comments about several perceived issues: 1) availability and scheduling of programs and classes (six responses); 2) parking (two responses); 3) counseling (one response); and 4) issues with transferability of credits (one response).

What Should Change – Less than half (40%) of the respondents indicated that College of the Desert should work on a variety of things to improve its service to prospective students. The most frequently mentioned improvements were: 1) application, enrollment, and registration process (8 responses); 2) counseling and customer service (4 responses); 3) availability of classes and programs (3 responses); and 4) follow-up communications (2 responses). Singular responses included financial aid assistance, flexible scheduling, parking, student diversity, and the college website.

Recommendations

For Prospective Students Who Did Not Enroll Due to Financial Issues or a Need to Work

General Steps – Financial issues including a lack of funds and the need to work to generate income, are the most common reasons identified by students choosing not to attend COD. For this reason, we recommend a more robust communication plan on student financial options, including FAFSA, California, and your own Foundation in order to promote scholarships and other assistance through the college.

Specifics – We recommend a creating and implementing a comprehensive communication plan that assumes students want to attend COD and only need financial assistance. This plan should be launched earlier than your normal recruitment campaign, to give students time to apply for funds and understand the resources they can access. It should include all financial options available from BOG to Foundation Funds and FAFSA. It should include short-term loans, payment plans and other bridge services provided by the college. Create inexpensive giveaways (bookmark, single page flyer etc.) that be sent and left everywhere so the information goes well beyond the college. We strongly recommend highlighting financial support unique to COD in these efforts, which will likely include promotion of your foundation and local scholarships.

For Prospective Students With Scheduling or Timing Issues, or to Alleviate a Lack of Available Classes Keeping Them from Enrolling

General Steps – Students in the study also spoke of the need to work to support themselves and their families and to generate the funds to pay for college. This is a financial reason (need to work) but it will not be solved by scholarships or grants. These students are tied to their work schedule, which means they can only take classes when their work life permits. For them, the issue is class scheduling and program offerings available when they can take classes. This is typically the late afternoon, evening and weekend offers. These students can afford to come, some with a little financial assistance, but they struggle to find classes they want or need, during the times they are available. It is likely this problem is more widespread as students have acclimated to the college schedule and reorganized their lives to make it fit. We only interviewed students who were unable to do so.

Specifics – First, we recommend reviewing your class schedule looking at your two-year cycle as well as semester and program offering to ensure than full-time student who must attend during non-traditional class times due to with their daytime work schedules can finish a two-year program in three years. Part-time students who attend at non-traditional times should be able to finish on a schedule that matches their course load. Attend half-time... finish in 4 years. While this may not match the typical college pattern, it is one that matches student expectations.

In addition, if you have not recently done scheduling research with internal and external audiences, this would be a good time to do so. Internal research should be done with current students (daytime and nighttime students) and external research with incoming or former students. This will allow the college to examine how to recapture lost students, and encourage current ones to increase their credit load.

For Prospective Students Who Changed Their Minds, Chose Not to Return, Had Life Circumstances, Personal Issues, or Are Just Procrastinating

General Steps – There is a significant number of students who did not attend who regret that decision (18-20%). Some are not attending college anywhere and others have gone to a different college. The fact they regret their choices means there may be an opportunity to recapture them. This can be done by implementing an ongoing communication dialog with them on the benefits of COD. For-profit colleges NEVER take a potential student off of their “list.” We are not recommending that as it is both costly and irritating. However, keeping staying in touch with students for 3 to 5 years (depending on the number of students involved) is an effective way to both keep them informed and re-recruit them.

Specifics – College of the Desert needs to continue to use persuasive and informational messaging through all available platforms to proactively influence those who took the first step to apply but do not subsequently enroll. Direct Mail, email, community event and social media are the most obvious platforms. In addition, the college may want to consider recruiting current students (Ambassadors) to reach out using email, texting and phone calls. This high touch effort should not be overdone, but integrated with a comprehensive communication plan that continues year-round. This effort should increase the college’s image and assist in recapturing lost students.

For Prospective Students Who Decided to Attend or Transfer to a Different Institution

General Steps – As mentioned earlier, there is a small group of students who regret going to a different college. This number may be larger (or smaller) than suggested by this research, as the sample for this research (N=50) was not large enough to provide an appropriate confidence interval. That said, it appears that once students applied the communications were predominately informative, simply providing students with their next step in the process. From the student perspective, there were few (if any) “soft” touches with high emotional content, demonstrating the “hospitality” of the college and somewhere during the process, students opted out for another school. We believe College of the Desert would benefit from follow-up research and the development of what we call, a Hospitality plan. For these reasons, we recommend a doing additional research with students who are attending other community colleges.

Specifics – We recommend doing an additional set of phone interviews, this time solely with students who applied to College of the Desert, but chose to attend other community colleges. We are looking for the difference between onboarding processes, offerings and experiences, that drew students from your school to theirs. Armed with this information, we can address those issues directly. Clearly, if they are attending a college for a specific program which you do not offer, their choice was a program-based, and little can be done. It is more likely that other colleges may have used a combination of high touch recruiting and location-based marketing to lure your students. Those issues can and should be address through marketing and training, following the research.

For Prospective Students Who Had Problems With the Application or Registration

General Steps – Every college has an onboarding system which makes perfect sense to them given the law, their needs, their employees, the layout of the campus, and their Student Information System. For prospective students, this can appear to be a Gordian Knot that is impossible to unravel. College of the Desert is not alone in this as most colleges have issues that make their onboarding process seem opaque to students. However, the colleges that re-align their systems to welcome students, reduce fear, and encourage resiliency will be the ones that gain in reputation and enrollment.

We recommend a review of your onboarding process and the development of a Hospitality Plan which will help guide and welcome prospective students through the system.

Specifics – We recommend reviewing your intake pipeline from inquiry to day one of classes from two perspectives. The first perspective is the mapping of all your regular and scheduled communications during the intake process. Paper, emails, phone calls, texts... what happens when, what is the message, who is it from, what is its goal and what is the Informational and Emotional (welcoming) mix. How long a time is there between messages, especially when a student applies early? Are they from people or offices? These messages should be examined and mapped into your Onboarding Communication Plan. Armed with this information, the entire plan should be rewritten so that students never go longer than 10 days without a “touch” and so these messages exude “hospitality.”

Secondly, we recommend what we call “Student Experience Research” or you might call a “secret shopper.” This type of research allows you to see and measure the gaps not only in communications, but in student experience and flow. Is the next step clear? Is it close or across the campus? Are the signs clear? Are the paper clear? Do people (students, faculty staff) make me feel welcome? All this information will result in the reshaping of your onboarding process as well as your onboarding communications.

Finally, out of all the research and information should also come a Hospitality Plan as well as Faculty and Staff training. Gone are the days when registering was considered part of the “rite of passage” to college attendance. Now we know that students are shopping for a college and they will go where they feel most welcome and mostly likely to succeed. A Hospitality Plan will be based on this research and others. Ultimately it will bring together caring faculty and staff, facilities, marketing and leadership, matched with a simple onboarding process with appropriate communications, to create an all-encompassing sense of Welcome that will set College of the Desert apart from its competitors and pull students through onboarding to graduation. Once developed, faculty and staff will need to be trained in ways to welcome students as recommended in your plan.

For Prospective Students Who Had Negative Perceptions

General Steps – Students in this study had negative perceptions of several areas. These included: 1) parking; 2) availability and scheduling of programs and classes; 3) issues with transferability of credits; and 4) counseling. While these were not huge numbers, we recommend a joint student/staff review of concerns and possible solutions.

Specifics – College of the Desert should do an internal student satisfaction survey to examine perceptions of all services. This may be as simple as a list of services and experiences with a single rating (one a scale from one to 10 how would you rate parking, with 1 being very bad and 10 being great) and a text box that says “how can we improve it?”. Or, it can be more complex and measure student satisfaction on numerous scales and measure it against student expectations.

Finally, it should be noted that virtually every student in every college in the country says parking is a problem. College of the Desert is not alone in this. However, every problem identified from parking to transfer can be improved. Improvements designed to address these and other issues could help to alleviate long-term impacts on enrollment.

FAILURE TO ENROLL DATA OVERVIEW

Observations

The following observations and results are based on 50 individual telephone interviews with prospective students who applied to COD, but did not enroll. Within each question, the responses were aggregated across the prospective students to form themes that illustrate their experiences with the college and aspects of their lives that led to non-enrollment.

Two sets of percentages are presented below 1) to give the reader a clearer sense of the commonality of experiences across those who were interviewed and 2) to illustrate, to some extent, the importance of those experiences. The first set of percentages (labeled “respondents”) is based on the number of people who stated that they had experienced a certain outcome. In these cases, the percentages are based on a total of 50. The second set of percentages (labeled “responses”) is based on the total number of responses provided within each question to give the reader a clearer sense of how the specific contents (e.g., issue, theme, problem, concern) of the responses sort themselves out in terms of frequency of occurrence.

Attended Another College Since Applying (N = 50 “respondents”)

- The survey was intentionally capped at 12 respondents (24%; n = 12) who indicated that they attended another college since the time they applied to College of the Desert

Direct Experience (N = 50 “respondents”)

- Half (50%; n = 25) of respondents surveyed indicated that they did not have direct experience with College of the Desert before applying
- Of those who had direct experience, ten (20%; n = 10) stated that they visited the campus, five (10%; n = 5) attended or took classes previously, five (10%; n = 5) mentioned indirect experiences (friends or family), three (6%; n = 3) talked directly with counselors or staff members, one had taken assessment/placement tests, one applied for financial aid, and one stated that they are currently enrolled
- Of the respondents (50%; n = 25) who indicated that they did not have direct experience with College of the Desert before applying, almost half of these (44%; n = 22) mentioned that they did not have any indirect experiences. The others stated that they knew about it through family or friends, or that their experience was limited to applying or online

Why Did They Choose to Apply? (N = 60 “responses”)

- Close location or convenience of scheduling comprised the most responses (42%; n = 25)
- For a specific program or programs (20%; n = 12)

- Furthering educational goals in general or for a transfer path (20%; n = 12)
- Because of a positive general impression of the college or for personal reasons (5%; n = 3)
- Needed a new direction or better career/job (5%; n = 3)
- A requirement of high school or through dual enrollment (3%; n = 2)
- As a less expensive option (3%; n = 2)
- A single respondent indicated they applied to participate on a sports team

Why Did They Not Enroll? (N = 59 “responses”)

- Financial reasons, income problems, or having to work instead (25%; n = 15) was the most frequently mentioned category of responses to this question
- Other reasons included:
 - life circumstances or personal issues (17%; n = 10)
 - scheduling, timing, or lack of available classes (12%; n = 7)
 - transportation issues or inconvenient location (12%; n = 7)
 - attending or transferring to a different institution (10%; n = 6)
 - problems with the application or registration process (8%; n = 5)
 - currently attending, did register, or will be attending soon (7%; n = 4)
 - changed mind, chose not to return, or procrastination (5%; n = 3)
 - no definitive answer was given (3%; n = 2)

Is There Anything College of the Desert Do To Improve? (N = 50 “respondents”)

- Less than half (40%; n = 20) of respondents answering this question indicated something that the college should be working on to improve

What Should College of the Desert Do To Improve? (N = 20 “responses”)

- Of those respondents who recommended improvements, the categories of responses included (in order of frequency mentioned):
 - the application and registration process (36%; n = 8)
 - counseling or customer service issues (18%; n = 4)
 - availability of classes or programs (14%; n = 3)

- lack of follow-up communications (9%; n = 2)
- Singular comments included lack of financial aid assistance, flexible scheduling for working students, parking, student diversity, and the college website

What Experiences Influenced Opinions on What College of the Desert Should Do To Improve? (N = 24 “responses”)

- Experiences influencing respondents’ opinions fell under the following categories:
 - application and registration process (33%; n = 8)
 - friends or personal decisions (21%; n = 5)
 - college counselors or staff (17%; n = 4)
 - no definitive answer (8%; n = 2)
 - not enough information (8%; n = 2)
 - professional or work experiences (8%; n = 2)
 - issues with the location of or transportation to the college (4%; n = 1)

Is There Anything That College of the Desert Should Make Sure Never Changes? (N = 50 “respondents”)

- A little less than one-sixth (16%; n = 8) of respondents indicated that there are things that should never change

What Should College of the Desert Make Sure Never Changes? (N = 8 “responses”)

- Of the responses that indicated things that should never change, the most frequently mentioned category of responses was the friendliness and honesty of staff (38%; n = 3)
- Other singular responses included accessibility, assisting newcomers or those in need, availability of different campuses in the area, and the way the college treats their staff

Did You Have Questions About College of the Desert That Were Not Answered? (N = 50 “respondents”)

- Four respondents (8%; n = 4) indicated that they had specific unanswered questions that all should have been resolved by College of the Desert before they enrolled, but were not

What Are They Doing Instead? (N = 50)

- More than half (60%; n = 30) of respondents answering this question mentioned that they are employed or are looking for work

- Other less frequently mentioned categories of responses included:
 - currently attending at an unspecified institution (18%; n = 9)
 - attending elsewhere (12%; n = 6)
 - delaying their return or planning on attending later (8%; n = 4)
 - decided to retire (2%; n = 1)

What Led To Their Decision, and Were There Any Other Factors? (N = 67 “responses”)

- By far, the largest category of responses (49%; n = 33) indicated that the respondents made their decisions due to financial or money issues, including issues with housing or a need to work or find a job
- Other factors included problems with availability of classes around other commitments, specific family or life issues, wanting to further their education, choice or preference of another institution, moving out of the area or issues with traveling, generally hoping to attend in the future, or that they were actually currently attending or had already graduated

Would They Ever Have Considered Attending? (N = 50 “respondents”)

- Almost all (88%; n = 44) of the respondents answered that they would have considered attending, despite whatever changes in those intentions happened since originally applying

Why Would They Consider Attending? (N = 46 “responses”)

- Almost half (44%; n = 20) of those respondents who would have considered attending indicated that either they plan on or will attend later (24%; n = 11) or they would or maybe would like to attend in the future (20%; n = 9)
- The other reasons why respondents would consider attending included convenience or location (20%; n = 9), if they can get what they need (20%; n = 9), or a general positive opinion or like of the college (7%; n = 3)
- Two indicated that they actually are currently attending (4%; n = 2), two mentioned unspecified reasons (4%; n = 2), and one respondent indicated that they already finished/graduated

Why Would They Not Consider Attending? (N = 6 “responses”)

- The six respondents who said that they would not have considered attending made comments that fell under four categories: no time to attend or scheduling issues (33%; n = 2), working instead (33%; n = 2), they took the class they needed elsewhere (17%; n = 1), or that they currently are attending (17%; n = 1) (which is a contrary outlier response)

How Do They Feel About Their Choice (To Not Enroll or Otherwise)? (N = 50)

- Most comments (82%; n = 41) indicated positive impressions about their choice to not enroll
- Of the other respondents (18%; n = 9), some had regrets, were unsure about the future, expressed that they felt like they did not have a choice due to financial or personal issues, or they did not express an opinion (which identified their response as neither positive nor negative)

What is Their General Impression of College of the Desert? (N = 50 “respondents”)

- Most comments (84%; n = 42) indicated positive impressions
- Only two respondents mentioned negative impressions (4%; n = 2), while six expressed no opinion either way (12%; n = 6)

Positive Things Heard About or Experienced at College of the Desert (N = 50 “respondents”)

- Specific comments made by many (72%; n = 36) of the respondents reflected general positive feelings about College of the Desert, including good experiences with faculty and staff, classes and programs, campus atmosphere, and word-of-mouth impressions from people they know
- Fourteen (28%; n = 14) of the respondents did not mention anything positive that they had heard about or experienced at the college

Negative Things Heard About or Experienced at College of the Desert (N = 50 “respondents”)

- More than three-quarters (80%; n = 40) of the respondents did not mention hearing about or experiencing anything negative at College of the Desert
- Ten (20%; n = 10) respondents mentioned specific negative things, which fell under the following categories: bad or no parking, classes that fill up too quickly or are hard to get into, problems with transferability of credits, issues with counseling, or that not enough classes are scheduled in the evening

Where Do They Get Information About College of the Desert? (N = 53 “responses”)

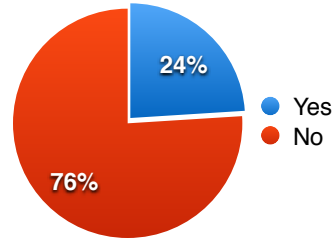
- Main sources of information included the following categories (in order of preference): the college website or online (49%; n = 26); from family, friends, and other college attendees (34%; n = 18); first-hand on campus (11%; n = 6); from instructors and staff (4%; n = 2); or unspecified (2%; n = 1)

FAILURE TO ENROLL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Filter Question

Filter Question 1. Have you attended another college since the time you applied to College of the Desert?
(N = 50)

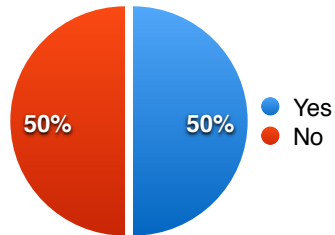
FQ1 - Responses		
Response	# of Responses	Percentage of Total
Yes	12	24.0%
No	38	76.0%
N	50	100%



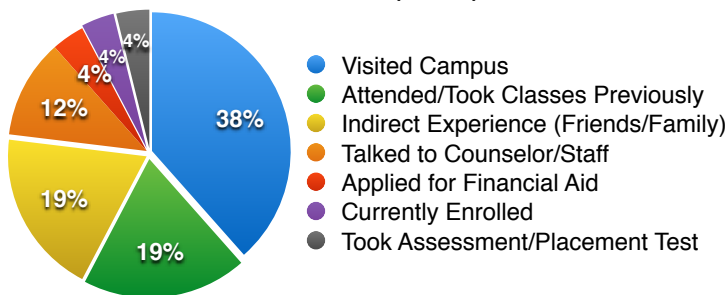
Protocol Questions 1-16

Question 1. Did you have direct experience with College of the Desert before you applied last year?
(N = 50)

Q1 - Responses		
Response	# of Responses	Percentage of Total
Yes	25	50.0%
No	25	50.0%
N	50	100%

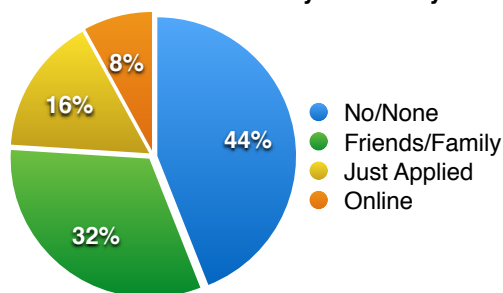


Question 1a. IF YES: What kind? (N = 26)



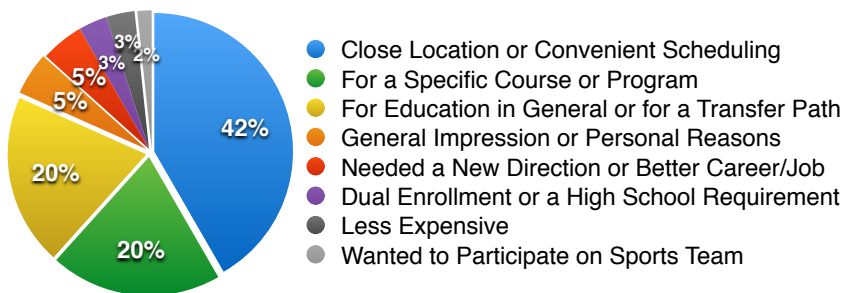
Q1a - Responses	
Attended the college	I visited the campus frequently
Counselor's office	I visited the campus to enroll, but could not enroll
Friends and family	My sister went there
Friends recommended	Other students
Gone in to take my assessment test	Personally attended
I am currently enrolled right now	Personally visiting the campus
I applied for financial aid	Took a class
I had attended a few years ago	Via my children who went there
I met with a counselor to review the courses and changed my mind	Visited the college
I took two summer classes	Went to campus
I visited the campus (x4)	Went to campus and spoke with the office there

Question 1b. IF NO: Have you had any indirect experience? (N = 25)



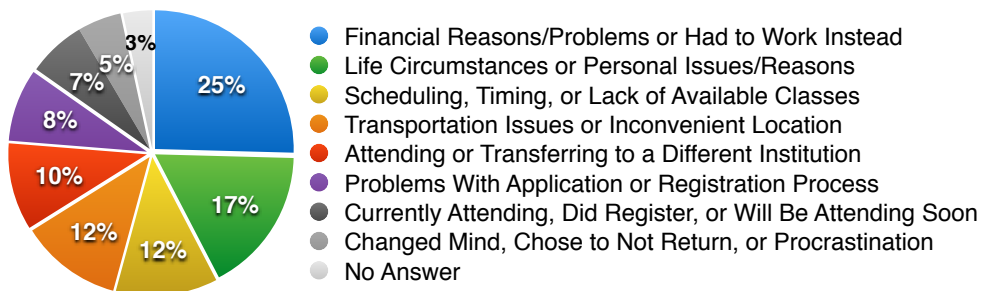
Q1b - Responses	
First time there when I applied	I have friends that attended
Friends	I just applied at the school
Friends went there	I just applied
From my son, he attended classes recently and my daughter tried to go there also	Just online
	My sister used to go there
I did not speak with anyone	No (x4)
I had trouble with paperwork and no one to help	None (x6)
I have a friend that attended	Signed up online
I have friends and family that went there	Yes, my sister goes there

Question 2. Why did you choose to apply to College of the Desert? (N = 60)



Q2 - Responses	
Because I needed a certain course	It was close by and had a nursing program
Because I wanted to play for the women's basketball team	It was close by (x2)
Because I was trying to get a certification that was 11 courses but was not able to get into any of the classes; I tried three years to get in	It was just to use as a filler
Because it was close by	It was less expensive than others
Because it was closest to me	It was my section option
California accredited college	It was something that was required for the juniors at my high school
Credits not transferring to university	It was the closest college near me and had a good track record
Firefighter program was of interest to me	It's the closest college to me
I do not remember; I think I applied as a dual enrollment	It's so close
I lived in the area, but the waiting list is long	Nearby
I lived locally and a good school	Personal reasons
I needed a summer school course	Quickbooks course was what I wanted
I recently moved to the area	That is where the program I wanted was; it is also close by
I want to take a math class that they offered	The only community college where I am from
I wanted to get a better career	The only local college in the area
I wanted to go back to school	The other colleges were just too far
I was trying to figure what direction I wanted to go in	They had a course I wanted to take
I will continue to be a full time student	They were local
In my area, it is the only school to offer welding classes	Thinking about going back
Interested in classes they offered	This was close by
It is close by	To advance education
It is close to my home and inexpensive compared to the other schools	To better my education and better job
It is close to where I live	To further my education; administrative
It is the only junior college in the area; I wanted to go back to school and better myself	To obtain extra credits
It was close and convenient	

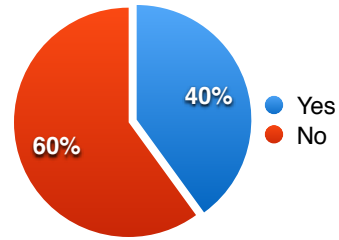
Question 3. After you applied, you did not enroll. What led to your choice to not attend? (N = 59)



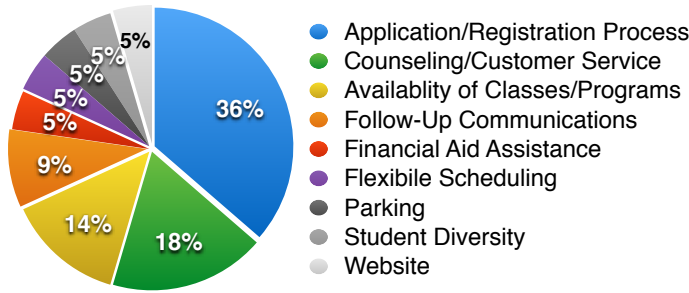
Q3 - Responses	
Accepted at CSUSC at Palm Desert	I needed to work (x2)
Because of personal reasons	I took a class
Because transportation was going to be an issue	I tried to register but life happened
Employment got very busy	I want to attend now, I couldn't when I applied before
Financial problems	I wanted to go somewhere else
Financial reasons	I was not able to get any assistance, the FASFA was very difficult, I ended up giving up; My son also gave up on classes this year, because the classes were too hard to get into; No one gave him a plan of what he needed to do; It is hard to get appointments with the councilors or to get them to call you back
Had second thoughts, I have kids	
I am going to attend next semester	
I am still trying to register but it is very confusing; I was told to call and never did	
I could not afford it	I was not able to get any classes
I could not get in the class I wanted	I went another college
I decided to go to a different school; it was more convenient	I went to a different school
I decided to work instead	I went to another college
I did attend	It was hard to get into the classes
I did register	Life events made me chose to work more to make ends meet
I ended up moving	Money issues, could not get FASA in time
I got a full time job	My employment picked up
I got sick and was hospitalized for several months.	Not applicable
I got stuck on the application because they asked for so many information	Personal issues
I had a baby and timing wasn't good	Taking care of my wife
I had car problems	The class was full
I had issues with work	The classes I wanted were not convenient
I had personal issues	The website was very confusing and I could not complete the application
I had to work	Too busy
I had to work and get a car before attending	Traveling would have been too much
I moved to another city	Yes

Question 4. Is there anything that you believe College of the Desert should work on to improve? (N = 50)

Q4 - Responses		
Response	# of Responses	Percentage of Total
Yes	20	40.0%
No	30	60.0%
N	50	100%



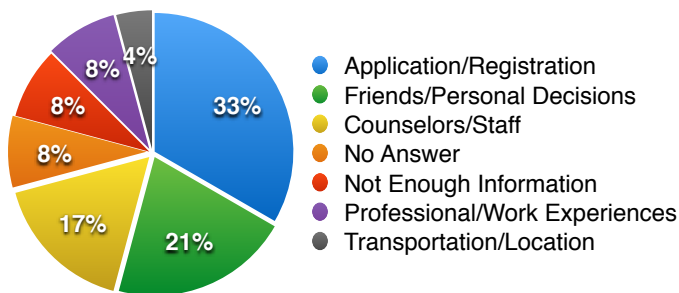
Question 4a. IF YES: What is it? (N = 22)



Q4a - Responses	
A contact number for questions on application	It was an easy application process
Application process	It was very frustrating to talk to people
Diversity of the students	Make the registration process easier
Emailing back; I emailed them about my password and never heard back from them	More flexible schedules for people who work
Follow-up on the college end	Parking, hard to park and get the parking stickers; also class sizes
Have more open available spots for classes	Registration process
I had trouble with the paperwork and there were no counselors to assist me	The counselor office needs more time on Fridays
I think the availability of the classes could be better	The process to apply; website was very complicated
Improve on really helping others; The councilors should be more helpful with the helping their students, guide them; Communicate with them, talk with them, listen to them and find the time to do so	The questionnaire was confusing
	They could lay out the programs and courses better for students applying
	Yes, financial aid assistance

Question 4b. IF NO: Continue to Question 6

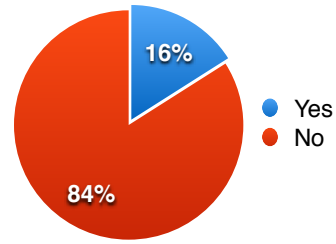
Question 5. What experience did you have that influenced your opinion? (N = 24)



Q5 - Responses	
Friends	More staff
Friends and others	No answer (x2)
I am a professional	Needed to work
I did not complete the application	Personal (x2)
I did not have enough information to complete the financial aid packet	The only campus available was Palm Springs; it was too far for me; they need a campus near the valley
I had a hard time finding open classes when I was looking	Took a different route
I tried to go myself and could not get any help with anything I needed and classes were always full	Very helpful, everyone was able to answer any questions in a timely fashion
I was not getting the information that I needed	When I was registering for classes I felt that I needed to speak with a counselor so I could register for the correct classes
Just not being able to get into classes	
Just not being able to get into my account	When I was trying to register, it was not clear

Question 6. Is there anything that College of the Desert should make sure never changes? (N = 50)

Q6 - Responses		
Response	# of Responses	Percentage of Total
Yes	8	16.0%
No	42	84.0%
N	50	100%



Question 6a. IF YES: What is that? (N = 8)

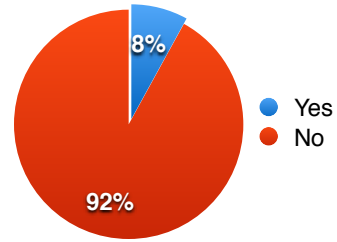


Q6a - Responses	
Accessibility	None I can think of
Easy to apply	The fact that they offer different campuses throughout my area
Everything! They are very friendly	The way [they] treat their staff
I liked how honest the teachers are	They do try to find help for the newcomers, or try to not charge tuition to those in need.

Question 6b. IF NO: Continue to Question 7

Question 7. Did you have questions about College of the Desert that were not answered? (N = 50)

Q7 - Responses		
Response	# of Responses	Percentage of Total
Yes	4	8.0%
No	46	92.0%
N	50	100%

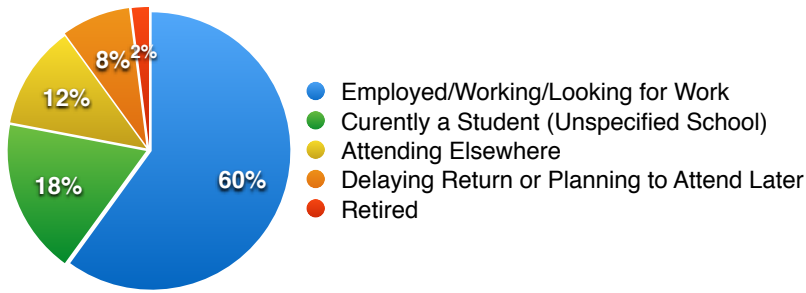


Question 7a. IF YES: What were they? (N = 4)

Q7a - Responses
Can people take classes while attending another college?
Counselors office needs help
How to register for next semester? Even if you have less than 15 credits left to graduate?
I went to talk with a counselor for the math class I needed to review and they did not agree about reviewing it; I was disappointed; Algebra

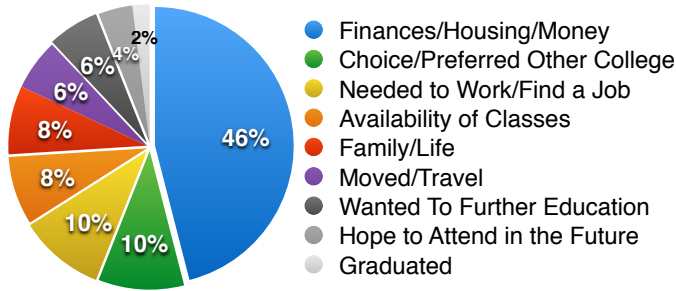
Question 7b. IF NO: Continue to Question 8

Question 8. What are you doing instead? (N = 50)



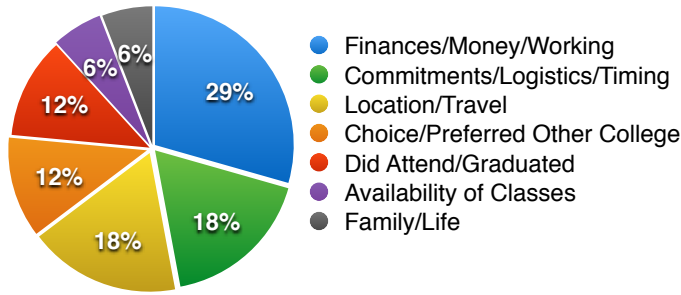
Q8 - Responses	
Attending a school in LA	I am working (x3)
Attending another college right now	I am working full time
Attending school	I am working full time instead
Cal State at San Bernardino	I attend another school at this time
Currently attending	I bought a business and trying to do better in other things; I would still like to attend to get a leg up on life
Currently enrolled	I just applied to College of the Desert for this year
Currently working to buy a car	I just gave up and I am working in my field, the medical field
Employed (x3)	I just got out of the hospital in January and I am working
Employment; I have applied for the January semester 2019	I work
Full time work	I'm a student (x2)
I am a student in LA	I'm still in school
I am attending another college	I'm working now
I am currently a student	Majoring to business administration
I am employed	Real estate agent
I am looking for work	Right now I am just working
I am retired	Working (x11)
I am waiting to see if I can go back to College of the Desert	Working full time
I am working and saving a little	

Question 9. What led to that decision? (N = 50)



Q9 - Responses	
Finances (x5)	I preferred the college, my choice
Financial [reasons] (x3)	I talked to the coach and was able to get housing
For my family	I went back to doing what I was doing before
Further my education	It was my first choice
Hope to attend next year for the upcoming semester	Life
I could not afford college	Money
I just wanted to work instead.	Money needed
I got to work to live	Money situation
I graduated	My parents
I had to pay rent and feed myself	Need for money and support myself
I just moved	Need to take care of myself and family
I just needed to get a job	Not applicable
I liked the college I chose more	Not enough classes
I moved there	Support living
I need financial stability	The course I wanted was available (x2)
I need income	The courses they offer
I need money	There was no point to keep trying; I gave up, I needed to work and eat and make money
I need the income	
I need to finish the registration process	To be financially fit
I need to get my car fixed	To further my education
I need to review Algebra	Travel; one community college
I needed to find a job	Tuition

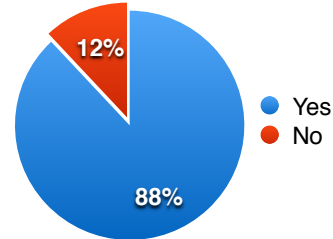
Question 10. Were there any other factors influencing your decision? (N = 17)



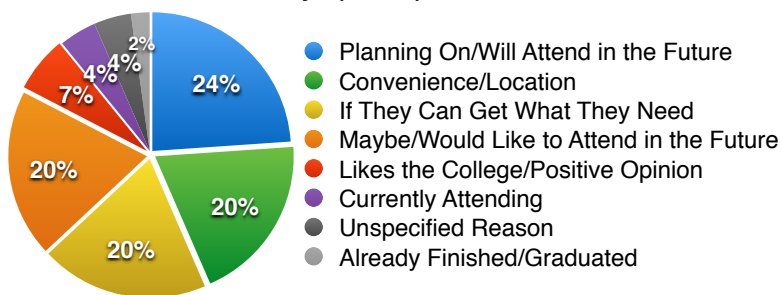
Q10 - Responses	
Cost	Money (x2)
Graduated	No (x28)
I also wanted to go to a four year college	No just needed transportation
I could not get into classes	No; I did attend
I needed income	No, just basically the traveling
It is what I had to do, I have to make a living; I went back to what I knew	No, just timing and working
Just the fact that the website is not user-friendly	None (x3)
Life	School is not the place for me
Location	Too much on my plate
Logistics	Yes, money

Question 11. Would you ever have considered attending College of the Desert? (N = 50)

Q11 - Responses		
Response	# of Responses	Percentage of Total
Yes	44	88.0%
No	6	12.0%
N	50	100%

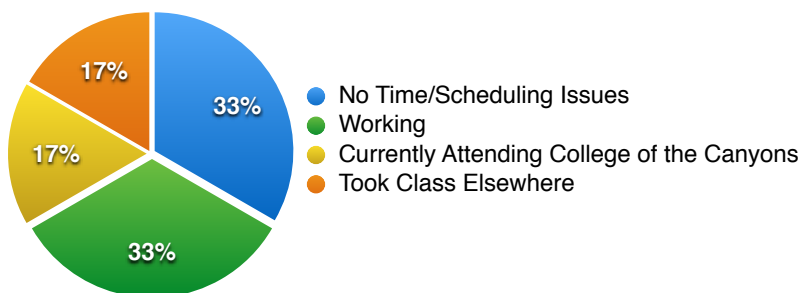


Question 11a. IF YES: Why? (N = 46)



Q11a - Responses	
As soon as I can get some financing	I will attend in the summer months
At some point	I will re-apply
Because it is close	I will soon; I would like to take the HVAC program
Because it was close	I would like to
Convenience	I would like to; maybe set up an appointment to meet with someone
I am attending	If I could get extra credit then yes
I did attend and graduated in 2003	If I need another class
I have applied for Jan 2019 semester	If they have something I need
I have applied for January semester	It is a good school
I have re-applied to start in Jan 2019	It is just a matter of time
I have	It is local
I like the college	It was professional
I love the area	Location is close to me
I may apply again for 2019	Location is good
I may in the near future	Maybe for a summer class
I plan to reapply in 2019	Maybe in the future
I reapplied and waiting to hear on financial aid	Need transportation though
I thought about it but I never actually went through with it	When my life circumstances allow I will return
I want to reapply	Yes
I want to	Yes I would
I wanted to join the basketball team	Yes, I will reconsider if I officially move out there

Question 11b. IF NO: Why not? (N = 6)



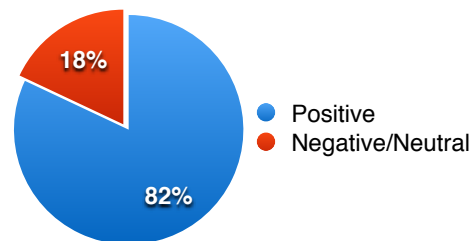
Q11b - Responses	
I am all set; I took Quickbooks elsewhere	No time
I am now	Probably not, [I] prefer to work
I earn money now	Scheduling issues

Question 12. How do you feel about your choice now? (N = 50; Yes: N = 43; No: N = 7)

Q11	Q12	# of	Percentage of Total
Response	Response	Responses	Yes Responses (Q11)
Yes	Positive	35	81.4%
Yes	Negative/Neutral	8	18.6%
N	All	43	100%

Q11	Q12	# of	Percentage of Total
Response	Response	Responses	No Responses (Q11)
No	Positive	6	85.7%
No	Negative/Neutral	1	14.3%
N	All	7	100%

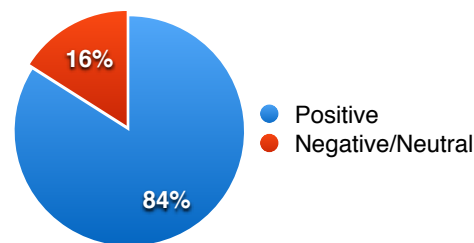
Q11	Q12	# of	Percentage of Total
Response	Response	Responses	All Responses (Q11)
All	Positive	41	82.0%
All	Negative/Neutral	9	18.0%
N	All	50	100%



Q12 - Responses	
YES responses from question 11 (35 out of these 43 respondents indicated positive feelings)	
Fine (x2)	I feel okay
Good (x3)	I feel really good
Great (x3)	I like it, if I stayed in CA, I would continue
I am doing what is best for me at the moment; I am happy with my choice	I still do not know what I want to do so I have no idea
I am fine with it	I think I made the right choice
I am fine with my choice	I want to come back
I am not too happy about it and I hope to make plans to go back	I want to go to school but cannot find the means
I am okay with the choice	I'm fine with it
I am still pretty happy about my choices	I'm glad I stuck with my choice
I did not get the classes I wanted, I did not get into the school; the choice was made for me	I'm pretty happy with my decision
I did what I had to do	It is what I needed to do
I don't know [un]till I hear from financial aid	Neutral
I feel fine; I am working and keep myself busy; I just hope my son goes back and does not give up like I did	OK (x9)
I feel good	OK; will pursue another time
I feel like there is still time for me to finish my education and that I can always go back when I'm ready	Rather be in class than work
NO responses from question 11 (6 out of these 7 respondents indicated positive feelings)	
I feel good about it	Neutral
It was a good decision	OK (x4)

Question 13. What is your general impression of College of the Desert? (N = 50)

Q13 - Responses	# of Responses	Percentage of Total Responses
Positive	42	84.0%
Neutral	6	12.0%
Negative	2	4.0%
N	50	100%

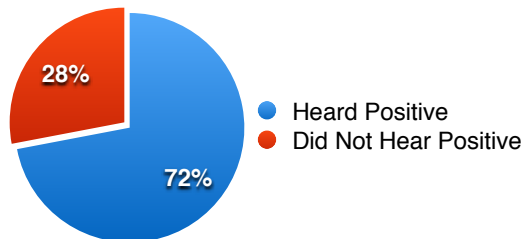


Question 13a. Why do you think that? (N = 50)

Q13 and Q13a - Responses	
Positive Impressions (84% of respondents)	
A good small college	I really enjoyed my professors when I was there and the campus is very nice
All my friends go there	I refer a lot of people to go there
Beautiful campus and friendly people, and good location	I thought it would be a good school
Everything was great	I wish I was there
Favorable	I would recommend
For me I need to further my education	It is a beautiful school
Good for courses I might want	It is a good college, and convenient; they expanded the campus
Good school (x4)	It is a good community, and in my range
Good school; lots of programs	It is a good school (x2)
I am biased because I have to be student to have an impression; other than that it was a nice school	it is a good school to start the college experience
I am looking forward to going next semester	It is a great community college
I believe it is a good atmosphere	It is a really nice school. it is big and a lot of nice people there
I grew up around the college and always knew it was an option	It is well managed; I feel like they offer a lot of resources and give you a lot of information
I have a good impression	It seems like a good school
I hear it is a good school	It was OK
I hear it is great; it is close by	Positive feedback
I heard no negatives	To get my degree
I like the campus	Very good college and nice campus; all my kids went there
I liked it	Very nice
Negative Impressions (4% of respondents)	
No parking spaces	Not good
Neutral Impressions (12% of respondents)	
I do not have anything bad to say, except that they were not very helpful to me or my son; They do have a good reputation though	I have no impression since I did not attend
I do not know much about it	I never visited before
I do not really know	None

Question 14. What positive things have you heard about or experienced at College of the Desert?
(N = 50)

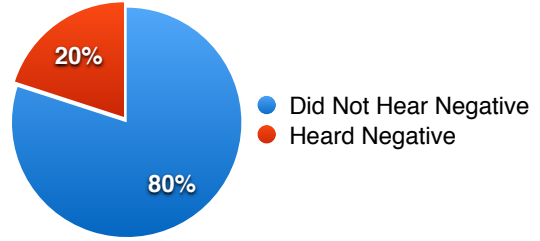
Q14 - Responses	# of Responses	Percentage of Total Responses
Heard Positive	36	72.0%
Did Not Hear	14	28.0%
N	50	100%



Q14 - Responses	
Positive things heard about or experienced (72% of respondents)	
A lot of the students came to work at our store. Beyond that same as usual, same as any other school	It still open so it must be doing well
All positive feedback	It was a good school
Close to home	Local
Friends and family liked it	Mostly from friends; classes are good
From my children who loved it	My friend had a really a good teach[er] there; He was an English teacher, he was really encouraging
Good school (x2)	My friends speak highly of it
Good tuition	My nephew has encouraged me to re-apply
Great environment for learning	New people, one on one with teachers
I have been told it is a good school	Overall nice campus, great staff, and very inclusive
I have friends who love it	That I should go
I have gotten online tutoring	The HVAC class was great
I have two friends of mine that graduated from there and they are doing well	The job connection is nice
I heard that there is engagement from the instructors which I like	They are very helpful, classes are good and so are the teachers
I heard that there is good teachers	They help with giving people opportunity to further their education
I heard that they were really good and a lot of classes to offer	Variety of programs
I liked the online bit	Yes, from friends and family
I've experienced some really good professors who took a personal interest in me and inspired me; the other students seemed to come from a similar background as mine	Yes
It is a nice campus and the basketball team is really together	
Positive things NOT heard about or experienced (28% of respondents)	
I have not heard anything good or bad	No I never got that far
I just moved here and do not know many people	No, took a class years ago
No (x5)	Nothing specific (x2)
No answer	Waiting to hear about financial aid
No feedback	

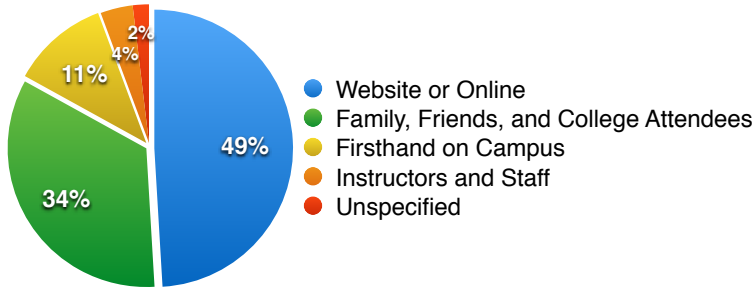
Question 15. What negative things have you heard about or experienced at College of the Desert?
(N = 50)

Q15 - Responses	# of Responses	Percentage of Total Responses
Did Not Hear	40	80.0%
Heard Negative	10	20.0%
N	50	100%



Q15 - Responses
Negative things heard about or experienced (20% of respondents)
Bad parking
Classes are too full too quick
I could not get into any classes
I heard that it takes a while to get classes
I've heard about friends of mine that wanted to transfer, but all their credits could not be transferred to the new school
Not being able to get into classes; a lot of people tell me that they do not like the school
No parking
Overcrowding in the classes
The counselors office is not well run
They do not offer many evening classes
Negative things NOT heard about or experienced (80% of respondents)
All my friends really like it
I have not heard anything
No (x21)
No answer
No feedback
No, none at all
None (x8)
Not so far
Nothing
Nothing that I can remember
Nothing so far
Nothing specific (x2)

Question 16. Where do you get most of your information about the college? (N = 53)



Q16 - Responses	
Basketball coaches	Online and went personally to the campus
Both of my siblings went there and a lot of my friends go there too	Online and on campus
Closest one	Online and other students
Either online or asking friends who are attending the school	Online and via friends
Friends (x3)	Online catalog
From alumni	Online, on their website
I lived out here for a long time	Online; friends
I was getting it online, on their website	Other students and online
It was all on the website, I just followed what the website said	Passed through friends
Mostly online, through friends, and directly from the school	Present students feedback and online
Mostly through my friends and roommate	Relatives, online
My friends	Right off their website
My kids	Seen some ads about it
My sister	Talking to my friends about it
On campus	Teachers or admins
On the internet on their website and hearsay from others	Went to the small campus for literature
Online (x14)	

APPENDIX A

FAILURE TO ENROLL PROTOCOL

Prospective Student - Applied But Did Not Enroll

Introduction

Hello, I'm calling from Interact Communications on behalf of College of the Desert, and would like to speak to _____(NAME)_____.

- a. When the NAME contact is on the line, continue
- b. If the NAME contact is not available, schedule a follow-up call if possible, then end call politely

Would you take a few minutes to talk to me about your experience with College of the Desert?

- a. IF YES: Continue to question 1
- b. IF NO: Thank you for your time. I appreciate it. (End call politely)

Have you attended another college since the time you applied to College of the Desert?

- a. IF YES: Only collect 12 total "YES" responses. After 12... Thank you for your time. I appreciate it. (End call politely)
- b. IF NO: Continue to question 1

Protocol

1. Did you have direct experience with College of the Desert before you applied last year? (Note: Usually firsthand knowledge, personally visiting the campus, attending previously, etc.)

- a. IF YES: What kind? (Continue to question 2)
- b. IF NO: Have you had any indirect experience? (Note: Usually from family, friends, etc.)

2. Why did you choose to apply to College of the Desert?

3. After you applied, you did not enroll. What led to your choice to not attend? (Ask probing questions for reasons or factors in their decision)

4. Is there anything that you believe College of the Desert should work on to improve?

- a. IF YES: What is it?
- b. IF NO: Continue to question 6

5. What experience did you have that influenced your opinion?
6. Is there anything that College of the Desert should make sure never changes?
 - a. IF YES: What is that?
 - b. IF NO: Continue to question 7
7. Did you have questions about College of the Desert that were not answered?
 - a. IF YES: What were they?
 - b. IF NO: Continue to question 8
8. What are you doing instead?
9. What led to that decision?
10. Were there any other factors influencing your decision?
11. Would you ever have considered attending College of the Desert?
 - a. IF YES: Why?
 - b. IF NO: Why not?
12. How do you feel about your choice now?
13. What is your general impression of College of the Desert?
 - a. Why do you think that? (Ask probing questions to determine examples or sources of this opinion)
14. What positive things have you heard about or experienced at College of the Desert? (Ask probing questions to determine examples)
15. What negative things have you heard about or experienced at College of the Desert? (Ask probing questions to determine examples)
16. Where do you get most of your information about the college?

Conclusion

Thank you for your time. I appreciate it. (End call politely)