

Central New Mexico Community College

College Coaching Training Survey: Summary of Findings

Hallie B. Lienhardt & Brandon J. Breunig, Center for Financial Security

Introduction

Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) is developing a program to train specialists in coaching services specifically designed to help students navigate the academic and financial obstacles of the college experience. This is an expansion of their already successful financial coaching trainings program. These trainings have been a leading force in the growth of the financial coaching field in the United States. Along with their experience with financial coach training, they have extensive experience surrounding academic and financial issues relevant to college students. CNM is looking to expand on these complementary spheres of experience to develop this new training program.

In 2014, CNM developed a set of surveys from a 2009 survey set worked on by CNM, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Financial Security (CFS), and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This new survey measures the effects of CNM's college coaching trainings on participants' attitudes, knowledge and behavior outlooks. This brief summarizes the primary findings of these surveys using data from March, 2014-June, 2014. A more detailed report is also available. That report includes information about survey methodology and findings. The content of this brief is broken into five sections:

1. A short synopsis of the data collection procedures;
2. information about who participated in CNM's trainings;
3. changes in respondent attitudes and knowledge;
4. a section about respondents' behavioral outlooks and training impact; and
5. conclusions.

Data Collection

In order to measure changes in respondents attitudes and knowledge this study employed two waves of surveys. The first was administered just before the trainings began. The second was administered immediately after the participants' final session of the trainings. They were

Key Findings

CNM's trainings are associated with

- Positive changes in respondents' attitudes towards students. (e.g. greater agreement that students have the ability to "set and meet their own goals").
- Increased self-reported knowledge across all 11 career and financial topics included in the surveys. This was especially true for topics that respondents understood the least.
- Positive behavioral outlooks with regard to the use of coaching techniques in work with students.
- Increased satisfaction with own career condition and their opportunities for growth.

Other Findings

- Respondents report that that will be able to provide higher quality of service to students.
- The COACH Model and Powerful Questions are reported to be the most impactful techniques in future work with students.
- Respondents report that coaching techniques will be highly impactful in future work with students.

both administered on paper. Data was collected from three different training sites across six separate trainings. Participants were encouraged to fill out the surveys but were not required to. Their quality of training was not affected by this decision. One hundred twenty-five surveys of the baseline-survey (wave 1) and 110 of the post survey (wave 2) were completed. One hundred and two of these surveys were matched on an individual level across the two waves of survey data. Attrition can always

be an issue in multi-wave surveys, however evidence in the full report suggests that this impact was negligible.

Who participated in CNM's Trainings?

Educational attainment among respondents was quite high. Almost all respondents had at least a bachelor's degree at 93%. This is more than three times the national average (28%)¹. The experience levels of respondents were distributed toward the more experienced end of the spectrum. About a quarter of respondents reported having 3 years or less experience, 17% had 4-7 years of experience, and the majority (59%) had more than 8 years of experience in their field. In short, CNM's trainings have reached a highly educated, highly experienced group of trainees.

Looking at the respondents' roles within their organizations reveals that over three quarters of them work directly with students (75.5%). Of the five pre-defined categories, "student service providers" amounted to 52% of the respondents. Second highest were "coaches" at 15%, then "administrators" at 13%, and "program managers" at 11%. Overall, the vast majority of trainees involved in the program work directly with students.

Why did you attend the trainings?

"I hope to learn how to empower students and establish a network of school supporters."

"I transitioned from an academic advisor role to coach at my institution. Even before the transition I wanted to learn coaching to broaden my skillset."

"As the manager of an adult based education program, I want to learn how to better prepare our students for college so they will succeed." Source: CNM Baseline Survey

Turning to the organizations that respondents work for, the survey found that the majority of employers were community colleges (76%), 14% worked for K-12 educational institutions, and 3% worked for Universities. The rest worked for community based organizations and various other organizations. Notably, large organizations made up a substantial portion of the respondents' employers.

Changes in Attitudes and Knowledge

Data from the baseline-surveys and post-surveys, which were administered on paper before training and then immediately after the last session of training,

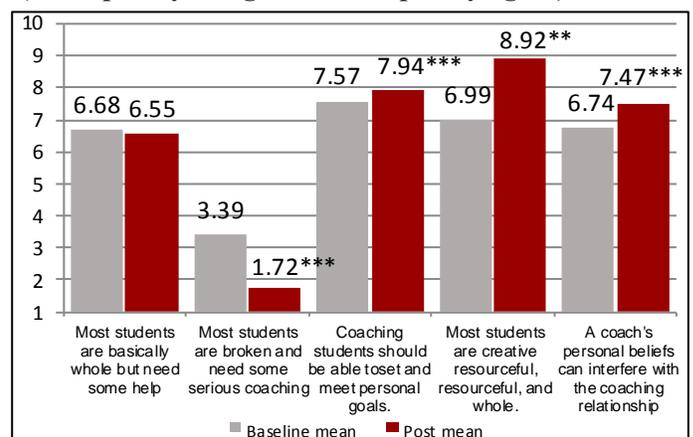
Almost half (48%) of all respondents reported working for organizations that served more than 10,000 clients annually. More than one third of organizations serve 25,001-50,000 clients annually.

respectively, measured the effect of the trainings on participants' attitudes towards students and their knowledge of key topics related to college coaching.

The survey asked respondents to report how much they agreed with five different statements about students and their beliefs on a 10-point scale where 1 is completely disagree and 10 is completely agree. All but one of the measures fell in line with the training program aims and showed statistically significant results. Overall, the trainings were associated with positive changes in respondent attitudes. They became more reflective of coaching's emphasis on students being creative, not broken, and capable of setting and reaching goals. Figure 1 shows a comparison of baseline- and post-survey measures. Respondents also reported being more aware of how their personal beliefs can affect the coaching relationship.

Both surveys asked respondents to rate their knowledge on a 4-point scale, 1 being "nothing" and 4 being "a lot". This was done for ten different topics related to academic and financial issues relevant to college students. College coaches do not function as experts in coaching, but it is still helpful for coaches to be familiar with financial and academic topics applicable to students. In all ten knowledge areas respondents reported

Figure 1. How much do you agree with the following? (1 completely disagree, 10 completely agree)



Notes: CNM Matched Baseline-Post Survey, n = 98. Statistical Significance determined with one-sided t-tests *<.10, **<.05, ***p<.01.

statistically significant increases at the highest level of confidence.

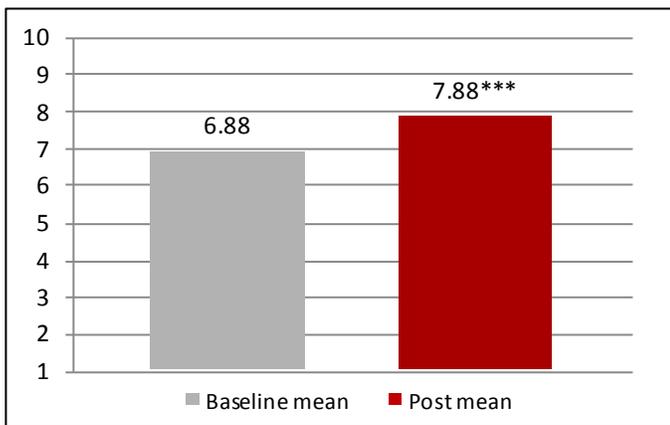
¹ United States Census Bureau. (2012). "Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009." <http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p20-566.pdf>

Interestingly, respondents felt more comfortable about their careers and their opportunities for growth after taking the trainings. Figure 5 shows mean responses from the baseline- and post-surveys. Possible responses ranged from overwhelmed (1) and comfortable (10). There was a statistically significant increase of 15% in how comfortable respondents felt after finishing the trainings. This further suggests the trainings to be of value to potential coaches and suggests that trainees find these techniques to be useful, marketable job skills.

Changes in Behavioral Outlooks

The post-survey asked respondents about behavioral outlooks to assess the effects on future behavior that CNM’s trainings are designed to influence. Respondents were asked to report their behavioral outlooks and rate the impact that the trainings will have on future work with students. The post-survey asked respondents to rate how often they plan to use coaching techniques after the trainings as well as how often they used coaching techniques prior to trainings. Possible responses ranged

Figure 2. How do you feel about your current career and opportunities for growth? (1=overwhelmed, 10=comfortable)



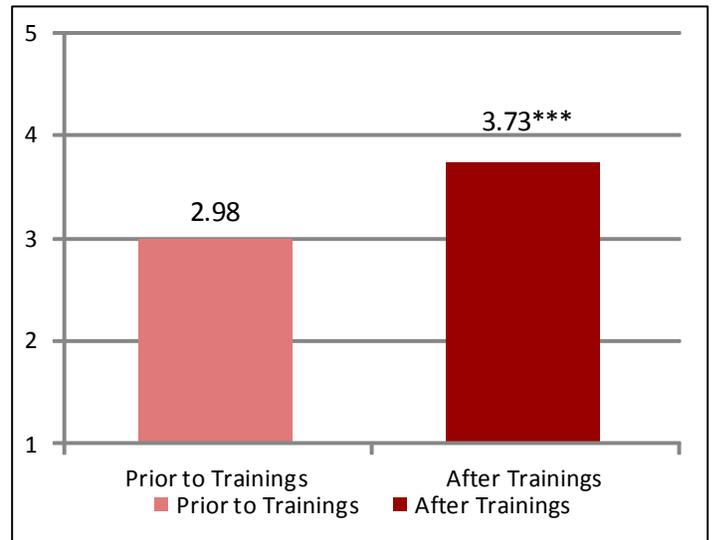
Source: CNM Baseline-Post survey data, n = 98. Statistical Significance determined with one-sided t-tests. ***p<.01

from never (1) to always (5) for both measures. Figure 3 illustrates this comparison. The mean response prior to trainings was 2.98. After attending the training, respondents predicted use of coaching techniques was 25% higher when compared to prior use of coaching technique. This increase is a positive sign that respondents find techniques taught in the trainings to be of great use in their work with students and readily applicable.

On a 3-point scale respondents were asked to respond from “Will do less,” (1) to “Will do more” (3) in reference to three different techniques used with students. Table 1 shows what respondents report they

intend to do in the future. All three results show positive changes in approach. For instance, the vast majority

Figure 3. Mean of use of Coaching Methods versus Behavioral Outlook (1=never, 5=always)



Source: CNM Training Post Survey, n = 101. Statistical Significance determined with one-sided t-test. ***p<.01

(74%) of respondents report that they will provide less direct advice; providing direct advice is counter to general coaching principles. These results show the effectiveness of the training and the desire of respondents to implement positive coaching habits.

Table 1. Changes in Respondent attitudes towards Approaches with Students after Training

Approach	% of Respondents			N
	Less	Same	More	
Actively Listen to students	0%	24%	76%	98
Provide direct advice to students	74%	22%	4%	99
Allow silence (dead air) in discussions	11%	35%	54%	100

Source: CNM Training Post Survey

Respondents were also asked to rate the impact of seven coaching techniques on their future work with students and responses were given on a 10-point scale between “no impact” (1) and “high impact” (10). All mean responses were above 7.5. The highest rated techniques were powerful questions (9.05) and the COACH model (8.83). The fact that these were highly rated by professionals who work with students is a positive sign. On the same 10-point scale respondents were asked to rate other aspects of

their work lives. In all areas they reported impact above 7.6 and the most impact was reported in being better able to meet clients' needs (8.13).

What are any accomplishments you credit to Coaching Training?

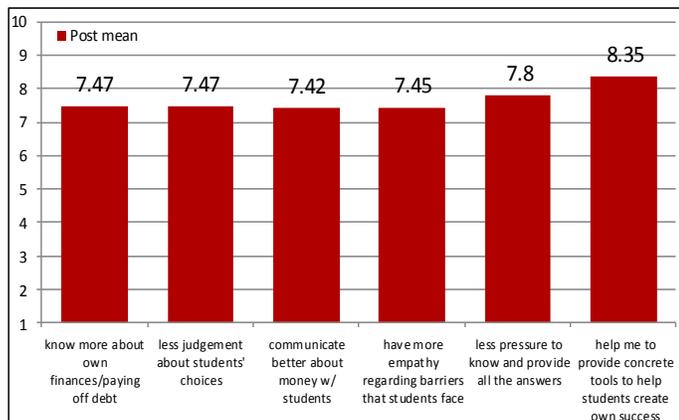
"Using the COACH method helped me coach a student who had become stagnant in our program to move toward success."

"Have begun to listen more and not jump to providing advice. This has resulted in less tension over what needs to be done & created more ownership for my client."

"Becoming more effective, by providing better and high quality time to my students, in order to help them attain their educational Goals." Source: CNM Post survey

Lastly, respondents were asked about seven aspects of their personal or professional lives. The mean responses show that respondents found coaching techniques to be impactful in these areas. Figure 5 shows the mean responses for each of the seven areas of impact. The area of most impact was in helping participants to provide students with tools which allow them to create their own success (8.35). This area is central to the student coaching model. Additionally, for future trainings respondents selected that they would benefit the most from further training in powerful questions, challenging, and taking charge.

Figure 5. How do you anticipate using coaching techniques will impact you professionally and personally (1= no impact, 10 = high impact)?



Source: CNM Training Post Survey, n = 100

Conclusion

The survey findings provide evidence of positive outcomes in respondents' attitudes, knowledge, and behavioral outlooks that are associated with CNM's college coaching training. Almost all baseline-post survey measures showed statistically significant improvements in attitudes and knowledge.

Importantly, the survey results indicate that CNM's trainings had a large effect on behavioral outlooks. The results also show that the trainings increased knowledge about important educational and financial topics and changed participant attitudes toward students. Respondents report that they expect to see positive changes in their future work with students through use of coaching techniques and they even feel more comfortable with the condition of their careers and their opportunities for growth. Multiple measures indicate that participants believe in empowering students to achieve their own goals which is key to the coaching model. Respondents also report that these techniques will be useful and impactful in their work with students and in their own lives as well.

Future efforts to assess college coaching trainings can continue to build on the findings in this brief and add to the progress in the college coaching field. CNM's stellar record in training hundreds of financial coaches provides an excellent foundation for their development of college coaching training. By employing their extensive experience working with students and their background in coaching training, this is a logical and positive step for CNM and the results identified in this brief attest to the promising future of college coaching training for CNM.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the generous support of Central New Mexico Community College for funding the data collection and analyses that went into this report. We acknowledge the work of CNM's coaching trainers and staff, led by Ann Lyn Hall and Peggy Garcia Marquez, in collecting the survey data and leading the trainings.



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

UW-Madison School of Human Ecology

Nancy Nicholas Hall

1300 Linden Drive, Suite 4285

Madison, WI 53706

cfs@mailplus.wisc.edu

cfs.wisc.edu

[Facebook.com/UWMadisonCFS](https://www.facebook.com/UWMadisonCFS)

[@UWMadisonCFS](https://twitter.com/UWMadisonCFS)