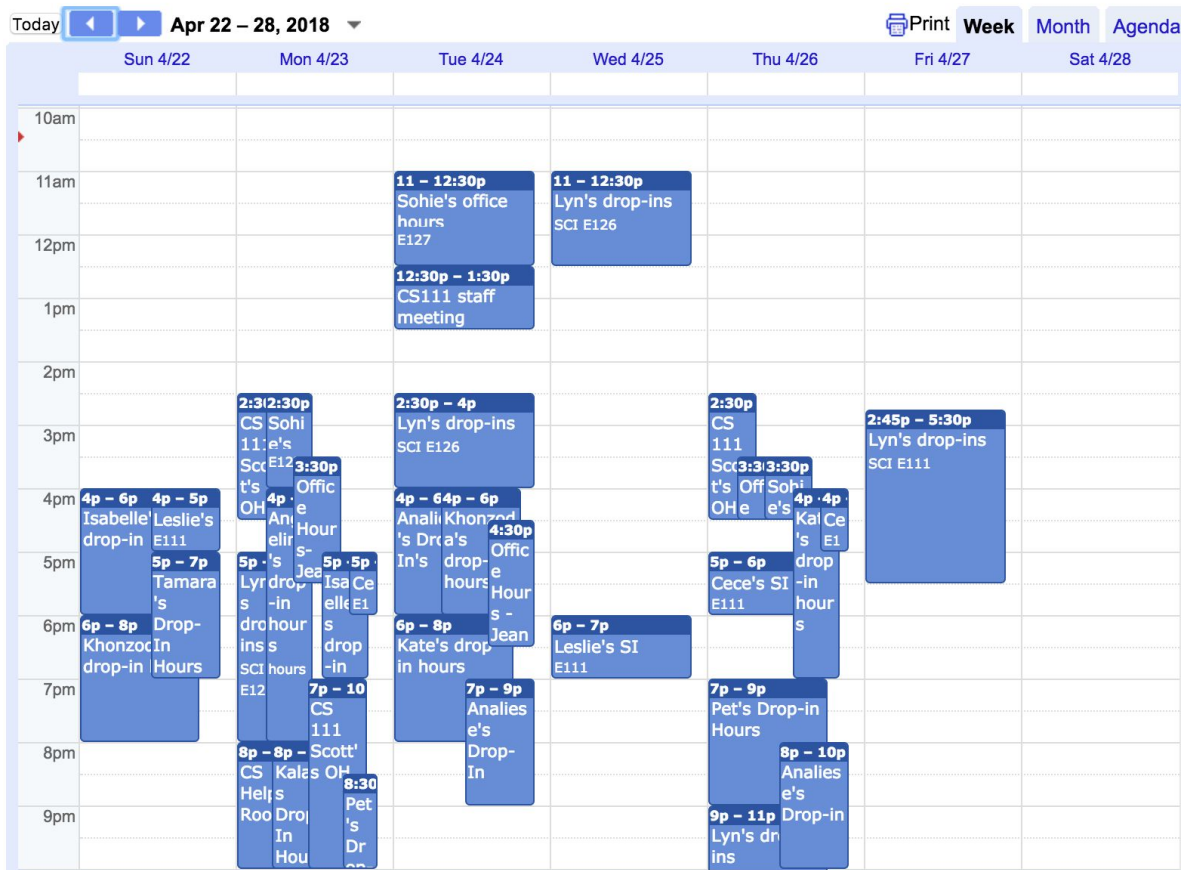


# Student Advocate Program

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CS111

# Resources in CS111



Each week in CS111:

- 40 hours of help available outside classes
  - Problem set
  - Reflection
  - Quiz
  - Reading slides before lectures
- 
- Faculty Office Hours
  - SI
  - Help Room
  - Peer Mentor Meetings

# Resources Survey

## (fall '17)

Anonymous survey

Questions about:

- Comfort accessing resources
- Scheduling conflicts
- Frequency accessing resources
- Perceived helpfulness of resources
- Demographics

## CS 111 Resources Survey

These questions were created with the help of educational psychologists. They are intended to identify areas that are going well and areas that are causing issues. Your honest answers will make these answers valuable.

Remember, this portion doesn't collect personal names or email addresses.

Indicate how comfortable you feel or would feel doing each of the following:

	1 - Very uncomfortable	2	3	4	5 - Very comfortable
Asking a question during lecture or lab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Answering a question during lecture or lab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending peer mentor meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending SI sessions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending help room	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending a professor's office hours when I have a specific question	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Aggregate Results

- 46% of students agree or strongly agree with the statement, “I feel overwhelmed by everything I have to do for the class.”
- Students felt more comfortable attending a professor’s office hours when they had a specific question than when they felt very lost/confused
- 8% of students report never having attended help room
- 47% of students report never having attended SI
- 40% report never having attended peer mentor meetings

# Low Income Students (n = 16)

- Feel less comfortable attending peer mentor meetings, SI, help room, and professors' office hours when they feel very lost or confused (than non-low-income students)
- 38% of low-income students say they would feel uncomfortable or very uncomfortable attending a professor's office hours when they feel very lost or confused, while the same is true for only 12% of non-low-income students
- Low-income students agree less with the statements, "when I have a question or feel confused about course material, I know where to go for help," "I feel proud of my work so far," and "I feel connected to others in the course"
- They are more likely to have never attended SI (75% have never attended) and peer mentor meetings (63% have never attended)

# Student Advocate Program

- Match CS111 students with students who already took the course (“Student Advocates”)
- Currently piloting program (12 students invited to participate, 13 qualified students not invited)
- 9 participating students (2 declined to participate, 1 dropped course)
- Participants requested advocate based on bios
- Student advocates do not help with course content
- Meeting with student advocate replaces peer mentor meeting some weeks (not extra commitment for students)

# Program Goals

1. Improve course outcomes for participating students by helping them successfully utilize course resources
2. Foster connection, build confidence
3. Enhance communication between students and faculty/staff to better identify & address barriers to success

# Challenges of Implementation

- Meetings taper off throughout the semester - unclear how often or when to meet
- Challenge to schedule meetings (particularly because the course is already so demanding)
- Awkwardness of discussing course performance
- Feeling unhelpful because of knowing students are struggling and being unable to help with course content
- Challenge to build genuine connection, particularly with infrequent meetings



# What Students Seem to Struggle with:

- Scheduling conflicts (finding time to attend resources)
- Fast-paced nature of the class (too fast to catch up, and being behind is a compounding problem)
- Feeling resources aren't helpful because they are geared towards students with greater understanding
- Feeling afraid to attend resources does not seem to be an issue

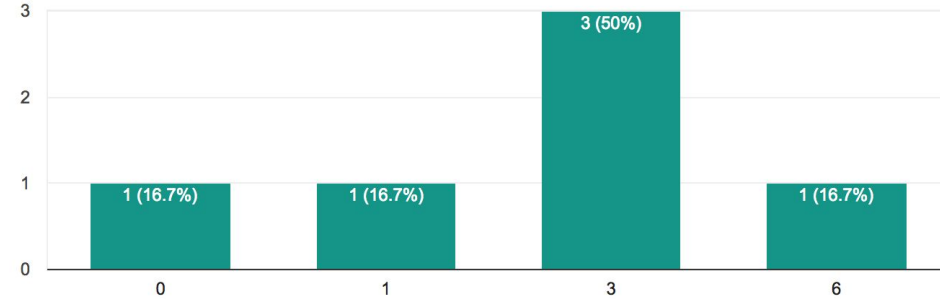
# Results

- Re-implemented resources survey, including new question about participating in Student Advocate Program (could not match responses to individuals' grades or identify control group)
- 6 responses from students who participated in the program

# Frequency of Meetings

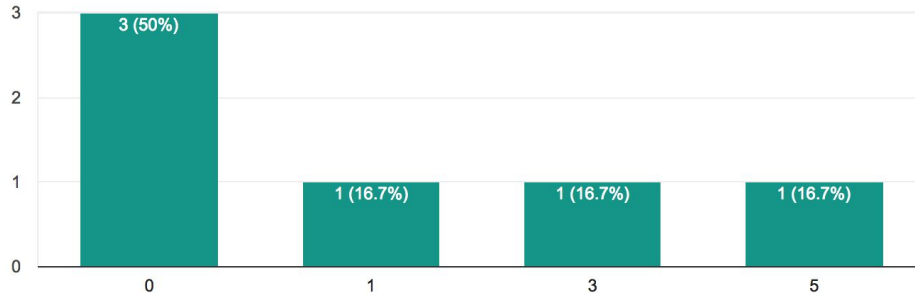
Approximately how many times did you meet in person with your student advocate?

6 responses

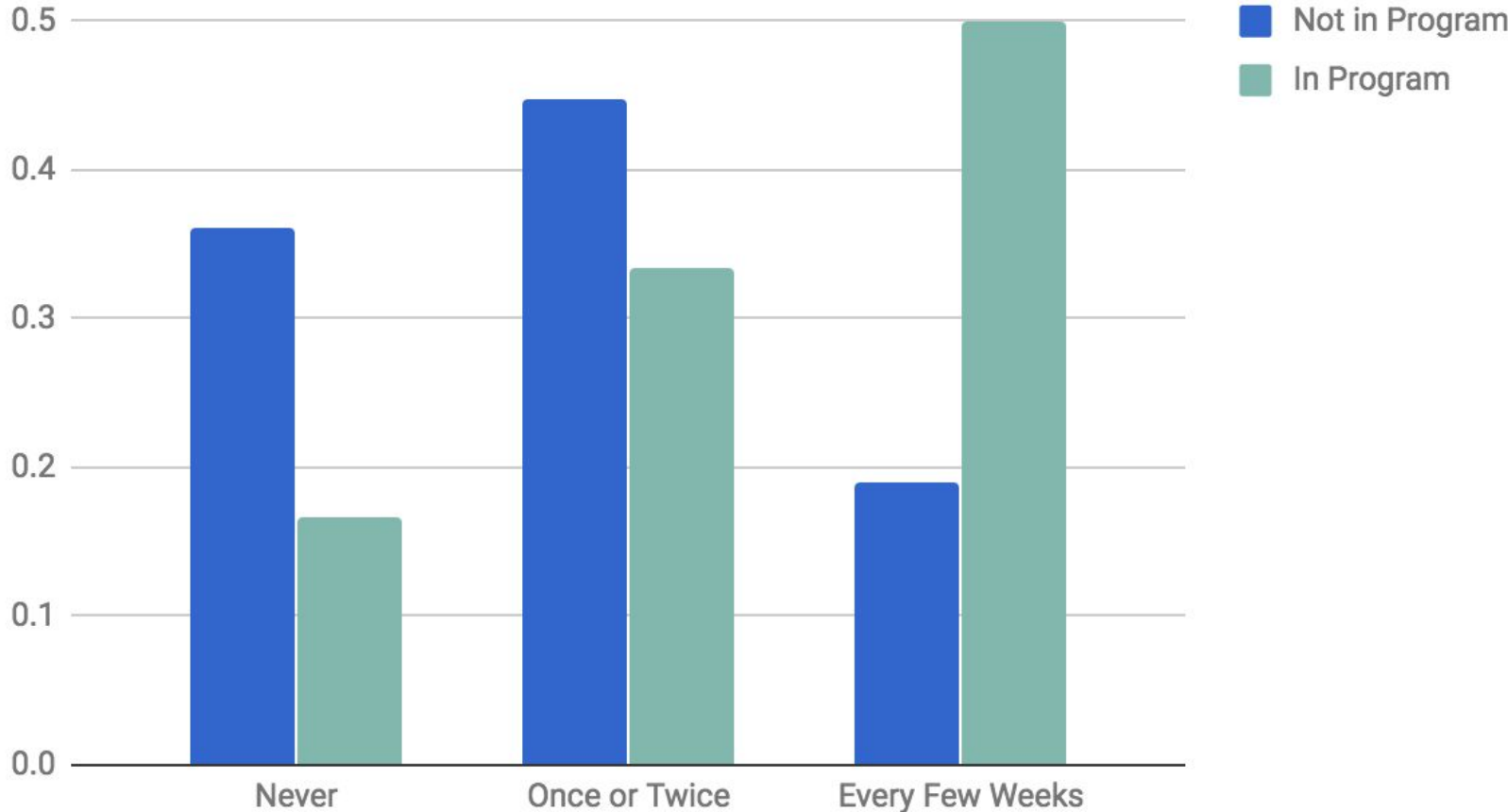


Approximately how many times did you communicate electronically with your student advocate about the course? Please do not include electronic communication simply to set up meetings.

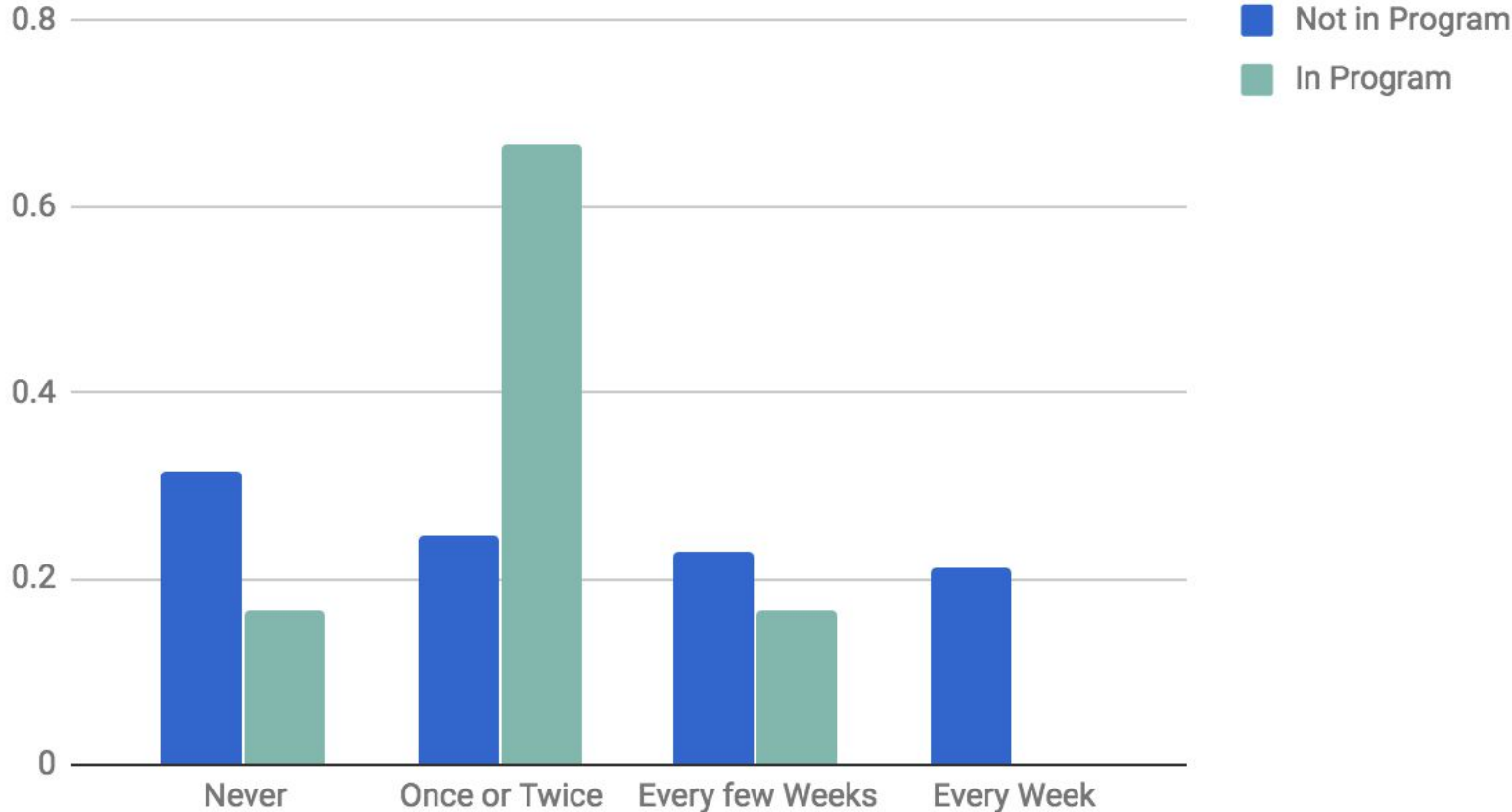
6 responses



# SI Attendance



# Peer Mentor Meeting Attendance



# Participants' Impressions:

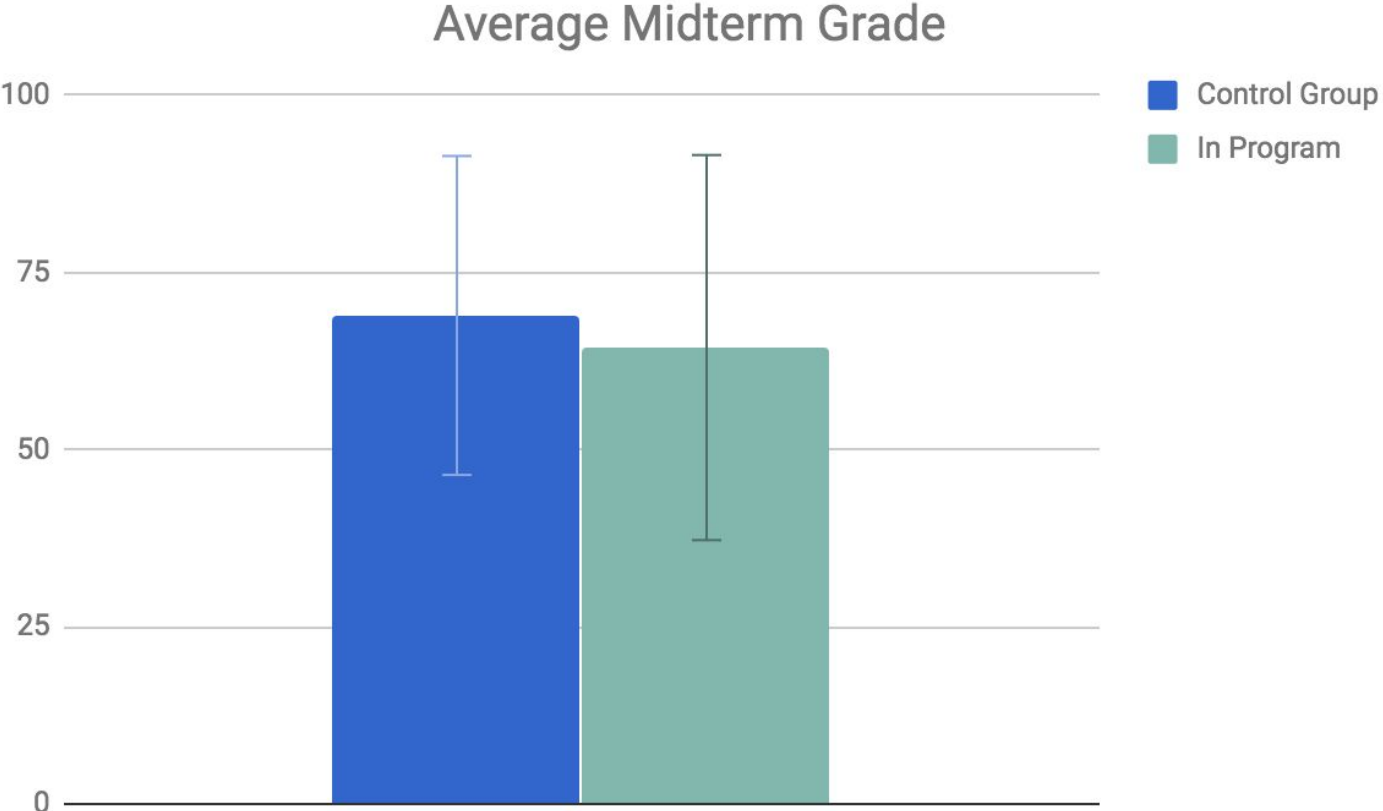
“Personally, I only participated in this program for participation credit and it was more flexible than the peer mentor group program. I've learned to advocate for myself already and since there are many CS 111 resources, it seems too overwhelming to consist of talking to someone about how you are doing in the class.”

“A program that reviewed material would be more beneficial, but I really liked my student advocate! She made me feel better, even if meetings did not help my performance in the course. :)”

“Helpful to know other people struggled with the course also”

“Maybe this program should only be for the people struggling in the class. Those who do not feel comfortable enough to attend office hours or help room.”

# Midterm Grades



# Retention

Did the program cause students to stay in the course who might otherwise have dropped the course?

- 1 student invited to join the program dropped the course
  - dropped before end of first week of classes
- 3 students in the control group dropped the course
  - 2 during add-drop period (unclear when)
  - 1 after midterm
- Small sample makes this challenging to evaluate



# Challenges

- Whom to invite into program and when (early in the course may be important, but we can't confidently predict who would benefit from the program)
- How to match student and advocate (based on student choice? based on schedules?)
- Are CS111 resources helpful for the students in the program (if most of the students attending SI have deep understanding of course content, would SI be helpful for students who are more confused)?
- **Pace of CS111:** “Additionally, I would just like to stress how the fast pace nature of the class makes it hard to stay up to date on topics. If you struggle one week it is very hard to find time to review that material when there is already another pset to worry about (let alone reflections, quizzes, etc.). I think this structure lends itself to exacerbating poor performance over time rather than offering multiple opportunities for mastery.”

# Where to from here?

- Examine content & resources available in CS111 to make sure they are accessible to a broad range of levels of understanding
- Learn more about the experiences of students who struggle or drop the course
- Continue to consider how we train tutors & what form resources take outside of the CS classroom