

The Oasis Wellness Center and Student Outcomes

The Oasis Wellness Center offers a variety of services to CSUN students aimed at increasing well-being, with services ranging from nutrition counseling to nap pods to acupuncture. In this report, we examine whether utilizing Oasis services is associated with positive academic outcomes.



Data

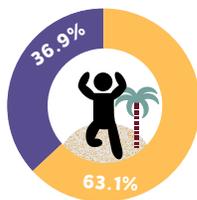
The analysis includes 73,245 undergraduates who were enrolled at CSUN between the Fall 2015 and Spring 2019 semesters. Visit data were provided by the Oasis Wellness Center. All other data capturing student demographics and academic outcomes were compiled by the Office of Institutional Research.

How often do students visit the Oasis Wellness Center?

Approximately 2.1% (1,576) of enrolled undergraduates at CSUN visited the Oasis Wellness Center during the time period in question. The vast majority of those students (1,456; 92.3%) only visited once in a semester. Among Oasis visitors, approximately 63% are female, 45% identify as Latinx, 56% are first-generation college students, and 57% are Pell recipient students. Visitor demographics are largely representative of the overall campus demographics.

Demographics

...by Gender



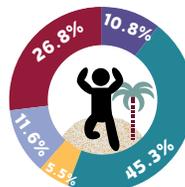
Oasis Visitors



All CSUN Undergraduates

Female Male Nonbinary Unknown

...by Race/ Ethnicity



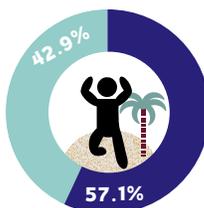
Oasis Visitors



All CSUN Undergraduates

Latinx Black Asian American White Other Race/Ethnicity

...by Pell Status



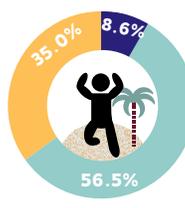
Oasis Visitors



All CSUN Undergraduates

Pell Non-Pell

...by Generational Status



Oasis Visitors



All CSUN Undergraduates

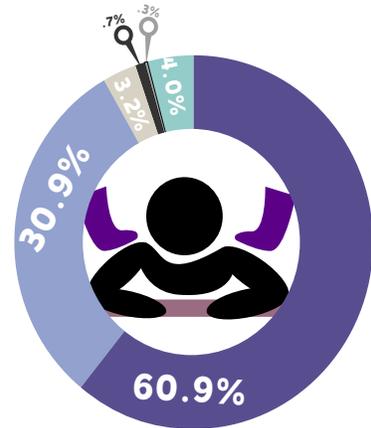
First Generation Continuing Generation Unknown

There were 3,241 total visits by 1,576 students during the time period in question. The most utilized service was massage therapy (61%), followed by acupuncture (31%).

Oasis Services Utilized

(undergraduate students)

- Massage Therapy
- Reiki Healing
- Acupuncture
- Misc
- Nutrition
- Wellness Coaching



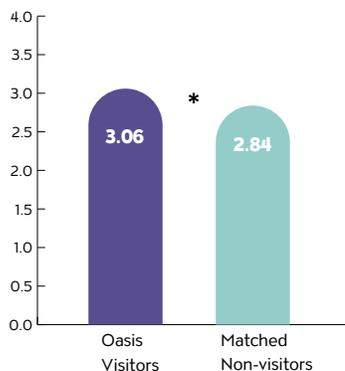
Findings Semester outcomes

In order to examine the relationship between Oasis visits and academic outcomes, we compared term GPA and probation rates of students who went to Oasis during any given semester with students who did not visit Oasis during that semester. Since students who opted to go to Oasis may be different from those who did not in ways that might be associated with academic outcomes, we used a technique called propensity score matching to compare students who visited the Oasis Wellness Center with a matched sample of students who did not. Propensity score matching allows us to statistically match visitors with non-visitors on background characteristics that may partially account for the student outcomes under study. For the purposes of this report, we matched on: Gender, Ethnicity, Pell Status, First generation college Status, GPA prior to entry to CSUN**

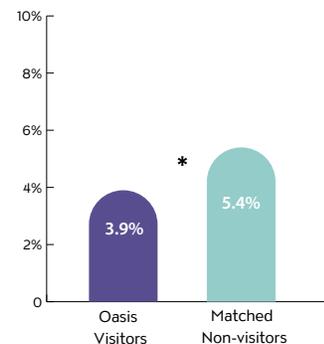


We found that students earned higher term GPAs if they visited the Oasis during the semester, compared to the matched group of students who did not. Similarly, students who visited the Oasis also had lower probability of being on academic probation than the matched non-visiting group.

Term GPA



Academic Probation Probability



* Statistically reliable difference (p < .05)

**High school GPA for students who entered as first-time freshmen; GPAs for transfer students only included first-time transfer students.

We further examined whether more frequent services used at the Oasis are associated with improved academic outcomes. Using propensity score matching, we compared the Oasis visitors who went only once per semester with those who visited the Oasis multiple times in a semester, matching on key student demographics. We found no statistically reliable difference on term outcomes associated with multiple visits. In other words, improved academic outcomes are associated with visiting the Oasis, but this relationship does not seem to vary by the number of Oasis visits.

Academic Outcomes Among First-Year Students

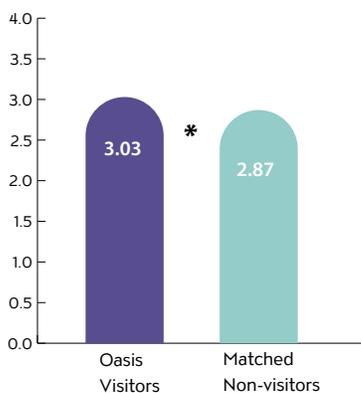
Having established that visiting the Oasis is associated with improved academic outcomes on a semester-to-semester basis, we then investigated whether utilizing the Oasis services is associated with better academic outcomes among first-year students specifically. We focused on first-year outcomes in particular because they are among the top predictors of ultimate likelihood to complete the degree. The analysis focuses only on the first-year outcomes (first-year campus GPA, first-year probation status, third-term continuation) of undergraduate students (both freshmen and transfers) who entered CSUN between the Fall 2015 and Spring 2019. Visits during summer breaks are excluded from the analysis.

Out of 40,909 first-year students during this period, 504 (1.2%) visited the Oasis in their first year. Another 456 (1.1%) visited the Oasis after their first year. We again used propensity score matching to match first-year students who visited the Oasis in their first year with those who did not. We matched students on demographic characteristics, including sex, ethnicity, Pell status, first-generation status, and prior GPA.

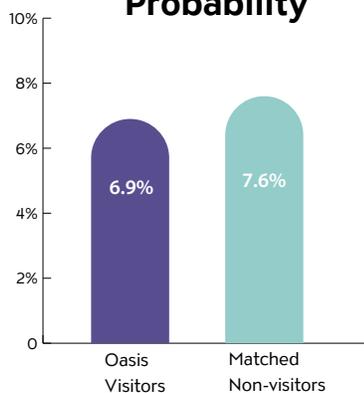
After controlling for these key characteristics, **we found that first-year students who visited the Oasis have statistically reliable higher first-year GPA than the matched group of students who did not visit.** This aligns with our findings above that visitors of the Oasis earned better grades. However, there are no statistically reliable differences in their probation rate or third-term retention rate.



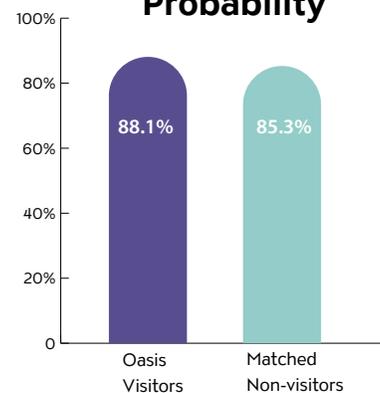
First-Year GPA



First-Year Probation Probability



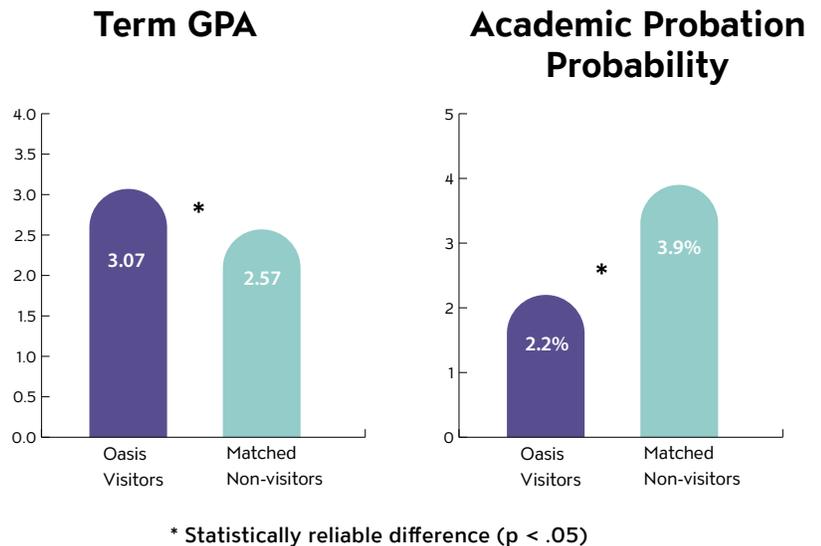
Third-Term Retention Probability



* Statistically reliable difference ($p < .05$)

Academic Outcomes among Students in Second Year or Later

We also examined whether visits to the Oasis are associated with academic outcomes after a student's first year. We therefore conducted propensity score matching to match students who visited the Oasis after their first year (total 533 Oasis visits among 450 students) with students who did not, based on their key demographic characteristics (sex, ethnicity, Pell status, first generation status, prior GPA). The results suggest that students who visited the Oasis after their first year still have higher term GPA and lower likelihood to be on probation than the matched group of their peers who never visited the Oasis.



Takeaway

In summary, we found that visiting the Oasis is associated with **higher term GPAs** and a **lower probability of being on academic probation**. Among first-year students specifically, visiting Oasis is associated with **higher first-year GPAs**.

Further, students who visited the Oasis just once in any given semester exhibited similar positive academic outcomes as students who visited multiple times in a semester. Students who visited the Oasis later on (i.e. after their first year) also saw better term outcomes, comparable to those who visited as early as their first year. **Taken together, these results suggest that students may not have to visit the Oasis frequently, or early on, to see its benefits on academic outcomes.** Encouraging students to take advantage of the Oasis' services not just for their general well-being, but also for positive academic outcomes, might therefore be a good strategy, especially given the low proportion of students who do go to the Oasis.

It is important to note that the majority of students do not visit Oasis frequently, if at all, so it is possible that there is a more nuanced relationship between visits and academic outcomes that is being limited by the small sample size. The small sample size also did not allow us to examine how the use of specific services the Oasis offers might be associated with students' academic outcomes. Future investigations with more Oasis visit data may help clarify these issues.