

The Creighton University Immersion Experience: A Day in the Life

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Introduction

Creighton Immersion is a component within the University's summer orientation program. Immersion provides an opportunity for incoming students to experience a typical day in the campus life of a Creighton student by going to class, exploring technology, and dialoguing with peers and Jesuit priests. During the day, participants have access to faculty in a classroom setting, receive perspectives about Creighton from recent graduates, are exposed to the mission and traditions of the institution, and are introduced to departments that support learning and student development.

Background

In 2004, the Creighton University new student orientation team reinvented Summer Preview, its summer orientation program. The immersion experience that emerged from this effort is designed to facilitate the transition of incoming students and their families to the campus and to college life. Before describing the immersion experience in detail, it is important to provide some basic information about Creighton University and its summer orientation program.

Creighton is a Jesuit, Catholic institution that enrolls 4,000 undergraduate and 3,000 graduate and professional students. Approximately 60% of all new students are planning a major in the health sciences. Summer Preview is unlike many orientation programs in that course registration is not a part of the orientation, nor is the participation mandatory. Nonetheless, approximately two thirds of Creighton's incoming students attend a session. The full Summer

Preview is a two-day event, but an abbreviated one-day session is also offered. Program content includes academic information, transitional programming, social and interpersonal development, family programming, and institutional mission and values. In addition to the student program, a parallel family program is offered to orient the family members of new students to Creighton.

The CU Immersion experience is an intentional component that assists Creighton in fulfilling the mission of orientation programs as articulated by CAS Standards (2006):

Orientation Programs must include facilitating the transition of new students into the institution; preparing students for the institution's educational opportunities and student responsibilities; initiating the integration of new students into the intellectual, cultural, and social climate of the institution; and supporting the parents, partners, guardians, and children of the new student.

This intensive and intentional experience is offered to expose students to the rigors of academics at an academically competitive institution, while also introducing new students to institutional values. Additionally, it serves as a springboard for students to jumpstart their academic careers by reducing fears, answering questions, and sparking enthusiasm about joining the Creighton community in the fall.

How it Works

When a student registers for Summer Preview, they indicate whether they are interested in the health sciences and the school/college of enrollment. During a Summer Preview session, incoming students will spend the afternoon taking part in the Immersion. Participants are divided into groups based on their college/school and whether or not they are interested in the health sciences. Led by upper-class Summer Preview guides, the participants experience a mock "day in the life" of a Creighton student. Each group attends two mock classes, participates in a session on using technology, receives an orientation to the library, meets with a Jesuit priest, and visits with recent graduates.

Mock classes have primarily focused on core curriculum choices that the majority of new students will complete in their first year such as introduction to