

LOWER-DIVISION COURSES: EFFECTIVENESS AS A RECRUITMENT TOOL IN MARKETING EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Declaring a college major represents a significant life decision. Selecting a major is particularly difficult if students have not yet had coursework related to their subject of interest. In many business programs, the introductory marketing course is offered in the junior year. One approach to engage students earlier is to offer elective courses to freshman and sophomore students. This study aims to determine the longer-term impact lower-division elective courses have on the recruitment to marketing programs and retention of students. This study is a follow up to a previous multi-method study that focused on student perceptions and academic program selections immediately after completing one of the lower-division courses. In this study, we investigate short-term outcomes of these courses with a survey of students; the longer-term outcomes will be explored via interviews of graduating seniors. Survey data shows that 21% of respondents (of 73) taking lower-division courses changed their academic plans. The same students declared a marketing minor or sales certificate, and a few declared a marketing major. The results show the top influencers students identified, such as instructor, course content, guest speakers, and real-world activities in class. The study offers recommendations for educators and for future research.

Keywords: student recruitment; marketing education; lower-division courses.

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