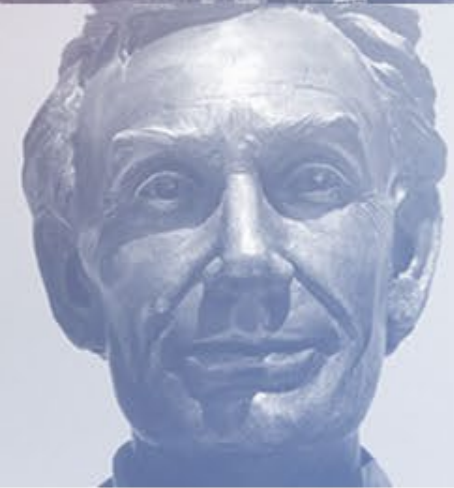# Implementation of a Student Contact Center

University of Illinois System

- UIUC – Urbana-Champaign
- UIC – Chicago
- UIS – Springfield

Fall 2023 Enrollment: 94,861 students

Challenges

➢ Extended call waiting times
➢ High rate of abandoned calls
➢ Inadequate email response times
➢ Staff burn out due to high call volumes
➢ Duplication of efforts

Solution

Implementation of the Student Contact Center (SCC)

Solution

Implementation Timeline:

➤ December 2021 – 1st cohort hired and began training (5 students)
  ➤ January 2022 - SCC Manager
    ➤ April 2022 – 2nd cohort hired/training delayed until Fall (5 students)
      ➤ March 2023 – 3rd cohort hired and began training (7 students)

Solution

In August 2022:
- Received 5,827 calls
- Answered 4,108
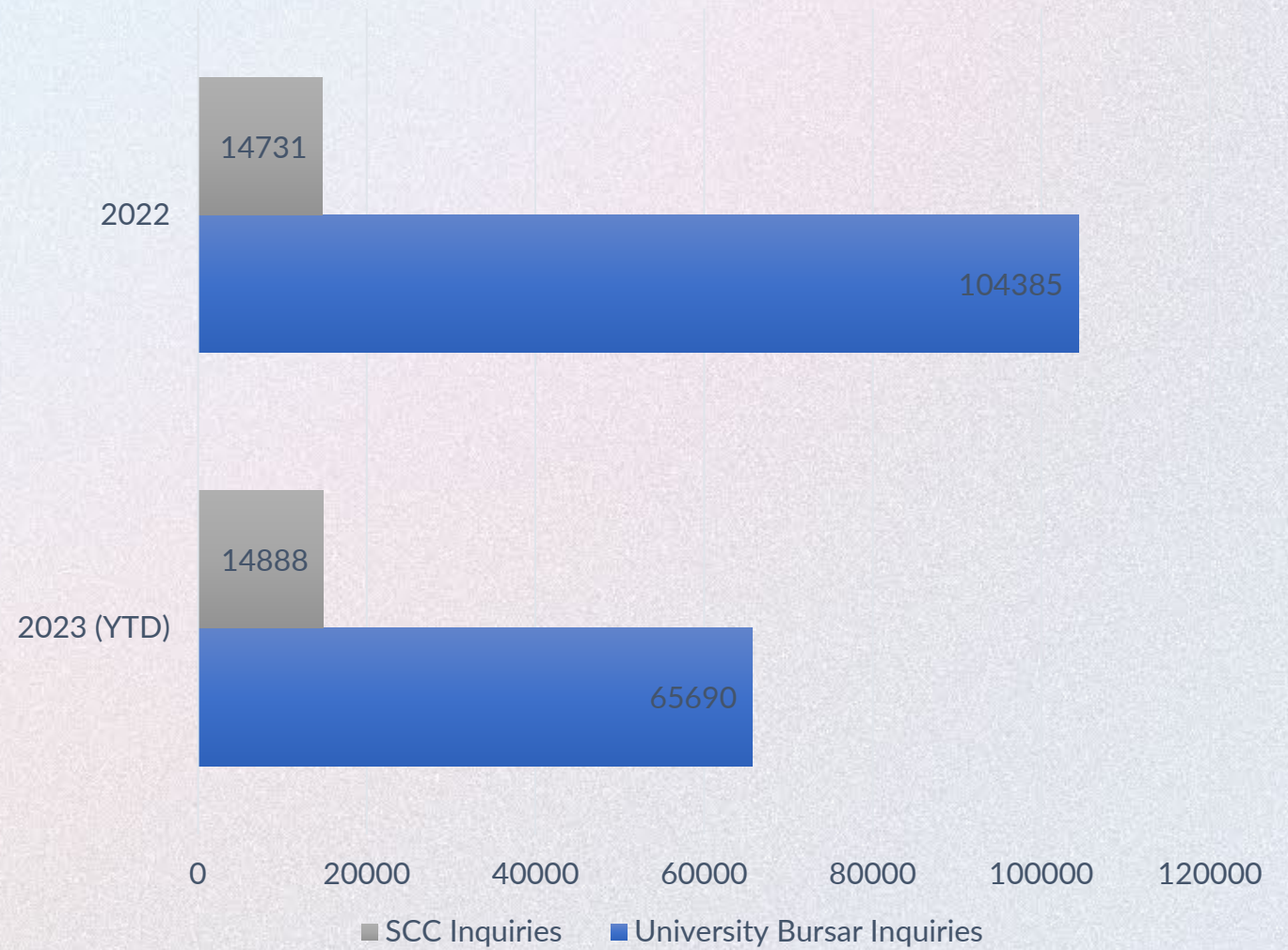- Dropping the abandoned call rate to 30%.

In August 2023:
- Received 6,241 calls
- Answered 5,179 calls
- Dropping the abandoned call rate to 17%

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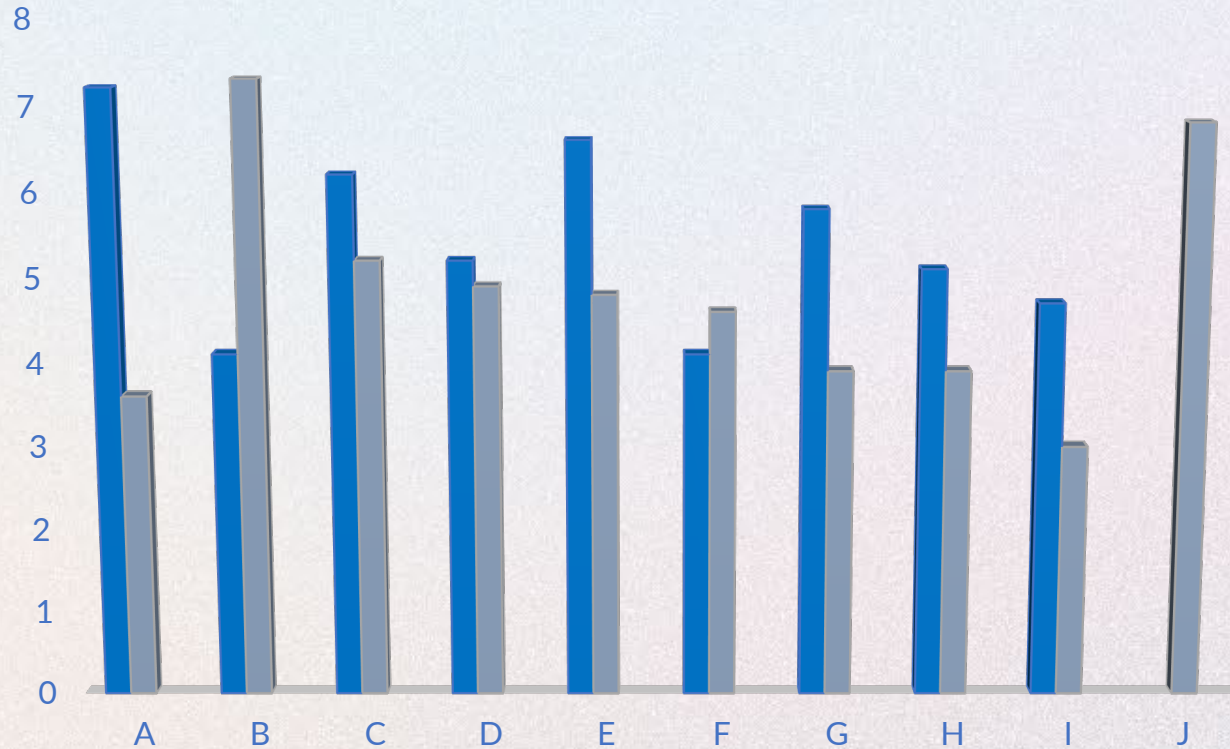
Customer Inquiries

2022 Total Inquiries Handled: 104,385
SCC Inquiries Handled: 14,731

2023 (YTD) Inquiries Handled: 65,690
SCC Inquiries Handled: 14,888

2022
- SCC Inquiries: 14731
- University Bursar Inquiries: 104385

2023 (YTD)
- SCC Inquiries: 14888
- University Bursar Inquiries: 65690

Legend: ■ SCC Inquiries ■ University Bursar Inquiries

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STUDENT CONTACT CENTER
CPH AVERAGE

2022 Contacts Per Hour
Student Advocate "A" 7.2 CPH
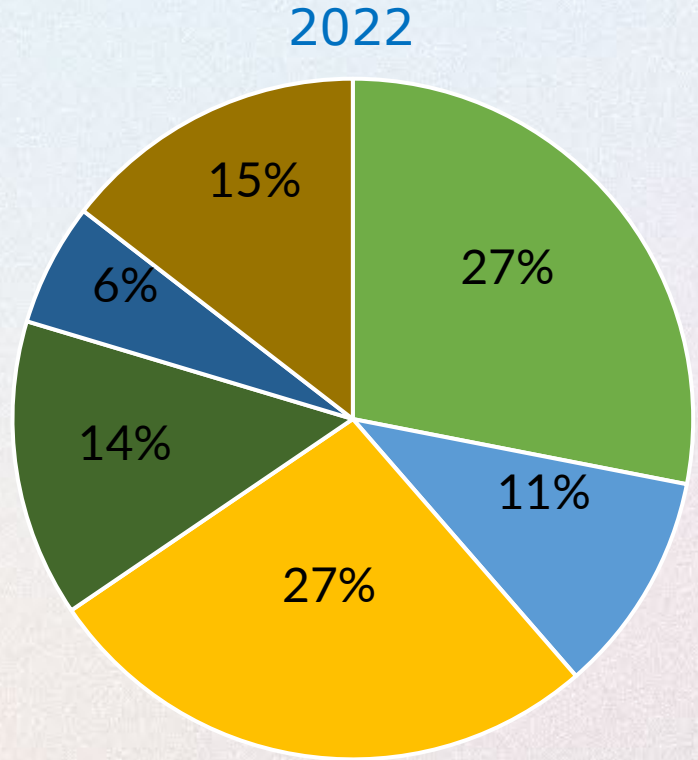Student Advocate "E" 6.6 CPH
Student Advocate "C" 6.2 CPH

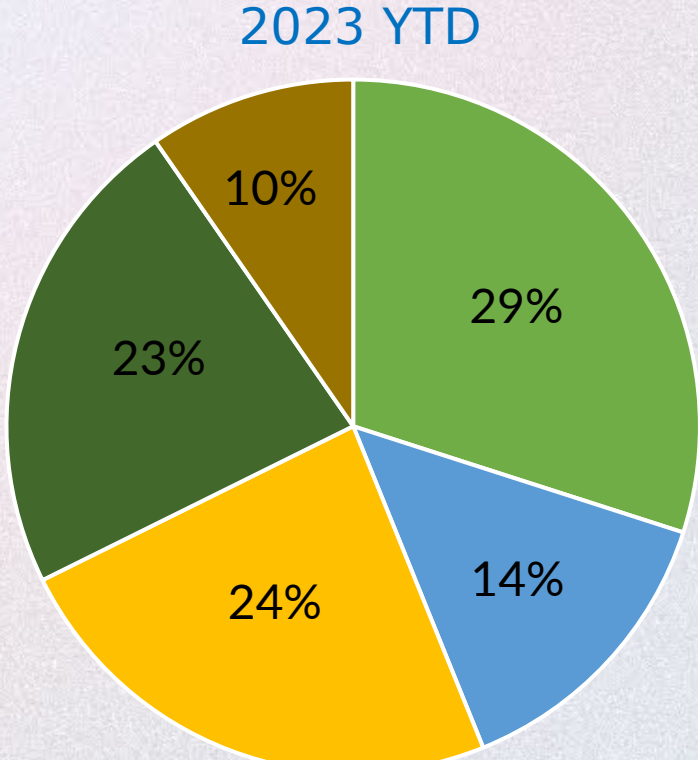2023 (YTD)
Student Advocate "B" 7.3 CPH
Student Advocate "J" 6.8 CPH
Student Advocate "E" 5.8 CPH

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Percentage of Contacts answered by Department

2022 | 2023 YTD

2022: UIC 27%, UIS 11%, UIUC 27%, SCC 14%, Other 6%, Manager 15%

2023 YTD: UIC 29%, UIS 14%, UIUC 24%, SCC 23%, Manager 10%

Legend: UIC, UIS, UIUC, SCC, Other, Manager

SCC Training Program

➢ 6-week progressive training program

➢ Professional Development courses

➢ Preparation for workforce after graduation

SCC Training Program

➢ 6 Online Training Sessions – Resources and Systems

➢ In-person Training - Touchpoint Phone System

➢ Quizzes on Resources

SCC Professional Development

➢ 12 LinkedIn Courses during off-peak times

➢ 3rd year Complete National Customer Service Association (NCSA) *"Certified Customer Service Professional"* Course

SCC Career Preparation

Senior Year:
➢ Resume building
  ➢ Cover letter creation
    ➢ How to search for a job
      ➢ Preparation/practice for an interview

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SCC Benefits

- ➤ Flexible hours on campus between classes
- ➤ Networking with coworkers and management
- ➤ Learning problem solving skills and people skills
- ➤ Building a resume working in a professional office
- ➤ Many full-time employees began as student employees

SCC Benefits

Student Employees come from diverse backgrounds and are pursuing different career paths.

Majors:
Education
Finance/Business
Political Science/Pre-Law
Applied Health Science
Accounting
Communications

What our Student Employees enjoy most about working here:

"My favorite part is the sound of relief from Spanish speaking parents when I say I can speak Spanish or when I speak Spanish because I can tell they don't speak English well."

"I like the community and environment in the office. Everyone is so friendly and always up to help out or chat."

"Working at the Bursar is a satisfying experience because it helps me navigate the complexities of tuition and fees with students and simplify the process for them."

"The thing I like most about working for Bursar is the development it brings along. I've grown more confident working with others to find solutions over the phone and/or through email."

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"The thing I like most about working for Bursar is interacting with customers over the phone and being able to help them work through their problems. I also love that my co-workers are always willing to help me when I am struggling."

"My favorite thing about working at Bursar is the laid-back environment I get to work in. The rest of the staff is fun to work with and so helpful when I need it."

"My favorite thing about working for the University Bursar is the people I get to meet and interact with. The culture there is like no other!"

"The thing I like most about Bursar is how understanding, encouraging, and welcoming everyone is. When I first started, all the information I had to learn was intimidating, but thanks to everyone in the office, I was able to comfortably ask questions."
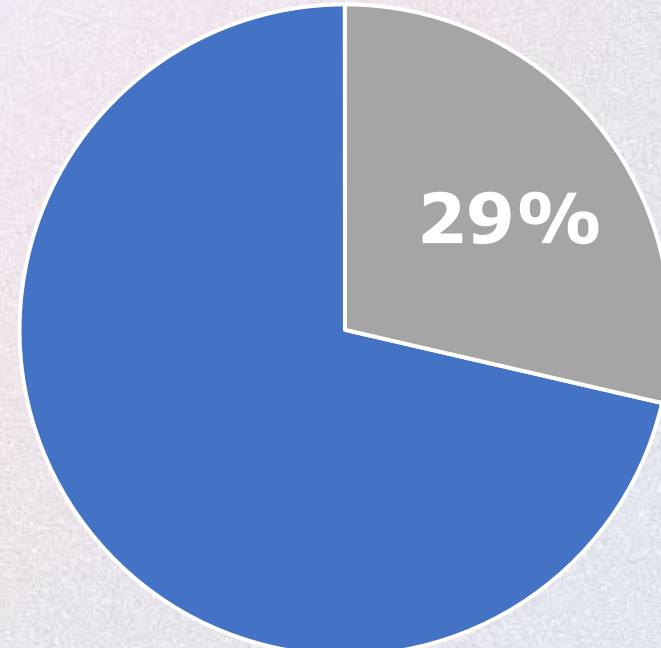
SCC Success

84,420 Customer Inquiries
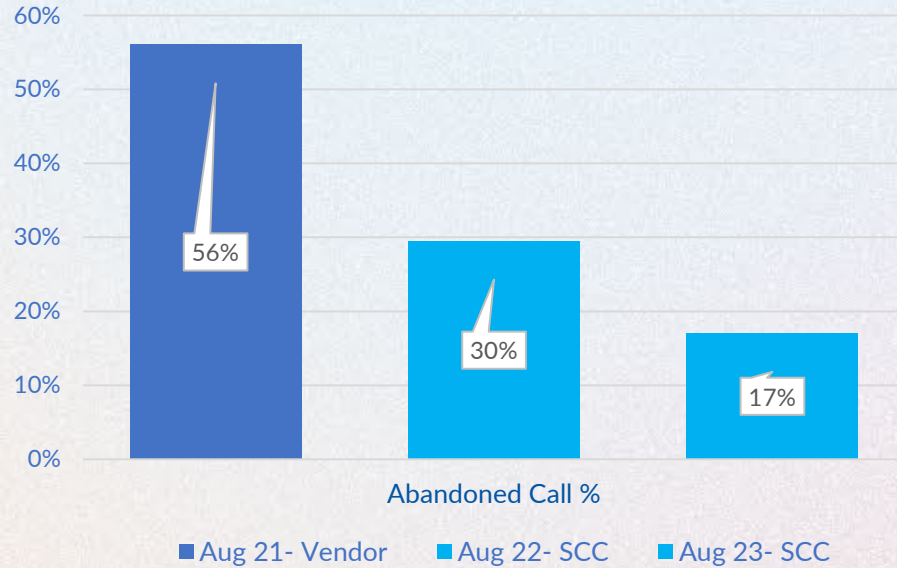August 2022 - May 2023

21%
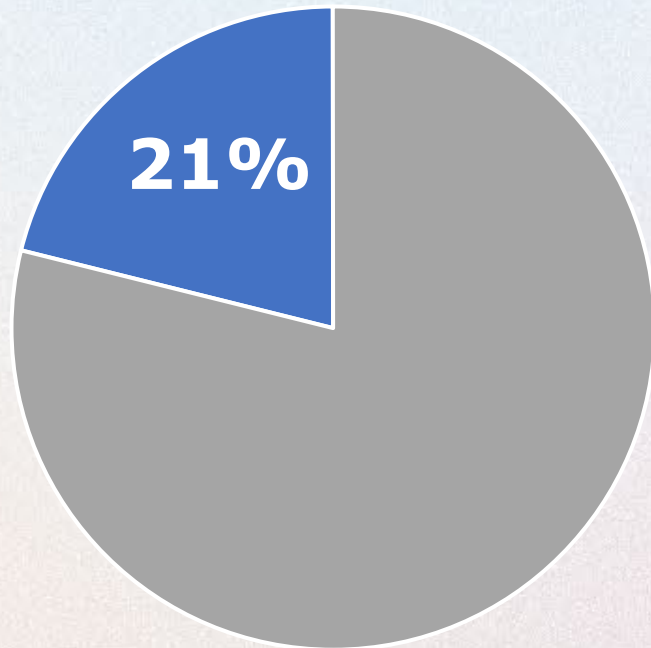
■ SCC ■ CS Staff

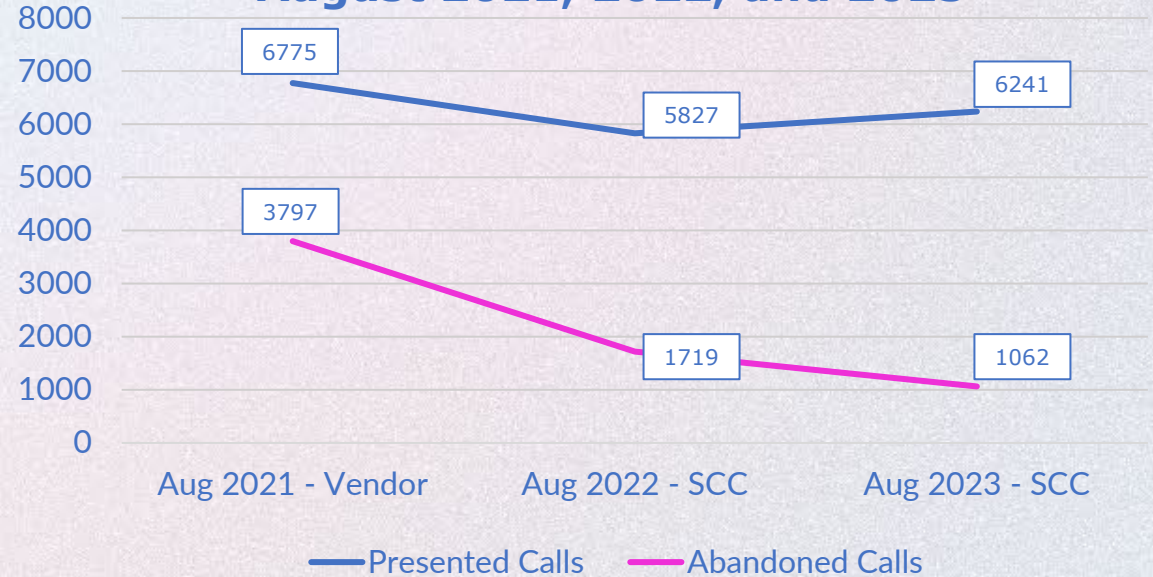25,289 Customer Inquiries
May 2023 – August 2023

29%

■ CS Staff ■ SCC

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SCC Success

Abandoned Call % Comparison August 2021, 2022, and 2023

- 56%
- 30%
- 17%

Abandoned Call %

■ Aug 21- Vendor ■ Aug 22- SCC ■ Aug 23- SCC

Presented and Abandoned Call Comparison August 2021, 2022, and 2023

	Aug 2021 - Vendor	Aug 2022 - SCC	Aug 2023 - SCC
Presented Calls	6775	5827	6241
Abandoned Calls	3797	1719	1062

—— Presented Calls   —— Abandoned Calls

➢ Less Customer Frustration
➢ Improved Email Response Time
➢ Improved Staff Morale

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Questions?