

## Chapter Four – Assessment & Improvement in Student Services

### *\*Evidence of achieving goals*

For the Student Services Division as a whole, student satisfaction is measured through the Student Services Survey. The average satisfaction level for all program areas is 90% (with a range from a low of 83% to a high of 97%). This overall satisfaction measure indicates that the division as a whole is achieving a strong level of services to students. While the Division hasn't established a minimum desired satisfaction level, the overall 90% is considered strong and healthy.

Recent CCSSE data show that five areas received scores above the mean as compared to other small colleges across the nation. Those areas include academic advising, peer tutoring, financial aid advising, child care and job placement.

In the Admissions & Records area, a goal of working collaboratively with other offices on specific measures was completely achieved and the two goals of effective & efficient registration and strong & effective customer service approached achievement. Improvement was reflected in all five of the achievement measure areas related to student satisfaction. In the two areas where processes were evaluated, both approached goal.

The Athletic Department created five goals for the area. Three of the five goals were achieved and two approached achievement. Many of the goals for the athletic department involved creating tracking systems and identifying baseline numbers. For example, the end of year eligibility rating for freshmen was 82% and a goal was established to achieve 90%. The graduation rate for sophomores was identified as 28.5% and a tentative goal has been established to reach 40%. The tracking system that has been identified will significantly improve the department's ability to support and monitor students.

Six goals and sixteen outcomes were established by the Counseling & Advising Department as part of their program review. For these goals, twenty indicators of achievement were set. Of these, twelve were measured this year with nine being achieved and three approaching achievement. Notable among these is providing an effective advising program, and coordinating an effective counseling program. Currently 84% of students find counseling services to be effective and the goal for counseling staff is that this reaches 90%.

Disability Support Services established four goals with five of ten indicators of achievement measured this year. Of those indicators, four were achieved and one approached achievement. The others indicators will be accomplished in 2010-2011. Because the 2009 survey revealed that 6 percent of students were unaware of disability support services, efforts were made this year to change that and the number of students reporting they were unaware decreased to four percent in 2010.

In Financial Aid, five goals were established with two of them directly related to processes that cannot be completed until Fall, 2010. Of the remaining goals, survey evidence showed that, with the exception of one indicator of 89%, all other satisfaction indicators met or exceeded 90%. Financial aid file review outcomes were very positive with less than 1% waiting longer than six weeks to be responded to. Appeals never exceeded a two week response time and with the exception of one month of data, professional judgment requests were responded to within the 2 week target. Considering financial aid applications were up 68%, the achievement of these indicators is remarkable and to be commended.

The Student Activities and Leadership Program established five goals with three substantially achieving goal and two approaching achievement. The goals established represent a significant shift in assessing

the true purpose of Student Activities and Leadership and are strong measures for this program. Intentional student dialog, evaluation, training and observation have been implemented.

For the Student Success Program review, five goals were determined with sixteen indicators of achievement. Of those sixteen, twelve were achieved with the remaining approaching achievement. It is significant to note that both the mentoring and FYE courses contributed significantly to quarterly retention. In 2008-09 the baseline average retention rate was 67%. In 2009-10, FYE students had 79% retention and students participating in the mentoring program had 85% retention. It appears that these programs have a significant impact for a quarter or two but that the retention rate is not sustained over three or more quarters.

Part of the Student Success program has included the Learning Center. Four of five learning Center goals were achieved. A significant increase of use was reported with the Student Services Survey with an increased use of 13%. And 100% of students indicated the Learning Center was very important or important to their success. The vast majority (85%) are satisfied with services.

The TRiO Student Support Services program which focuses on transfer students has met or exceeded four goals. The goal of a 50% persistence/retention rate was met with a very strong 82% and the objective of a 79% of students in good academic standing with met with a strong 86%. The transfer rate goal was 30% and the program achieved a 59% transfer rate. Friends of TRiO (which serves all students but focuses on non-transfer oriented students) has a state mandated persistence rate of 65% and a good academic standing rate of 75%. A 92% rate was achieved in both areas. In the Opportunity Grant Program, which serves work force students, 25% are required to reach a 45-credit tipping point and to date 28% of these students have done so.

### *\*Examples of Changes and improvements as result of assessments*

In Admissions and Records, the achievement measures will need to be adjusted to reflect the new scale ratings used in the Student Services Survey. Two surveys that were unable to be completed this year will be accomplished next year. In the transcript evaluation arena which garnered the lowest rating, changes have been made in methods of communicating with students about the evaluation results.

The Athletic Department responded to the information regarding a low graduation rate by working with the Student Success office to create an academic support program called "Complete and Compete". The goal of the program is to intensify advising contacts, require participation in FYE courses and improve tracking of progress during the quarter. The department would like to spend another years gathering data prior to setting firm achievement goals.

Changes planned in the Counseling & Advising Center include such things as changing and increasing training of student workers, revising class activities to insure mastery of key skills by students, and responding to requests of entry advisors.

The rating scale for Disability Support Services proved to be imperfect as many students who did not receive services rating satisfaction with staff. Those questions will need to be revised to generate more accurate information about student satisfaction. It also became apparent that there are many students served that are not "officially considered disabled". Some method of assessing those services needs to be developed.

Measures were limited to just a few months for the Financial Aid indicators so it will be important to have measurements of progress over an entire year. This will better enable the staff to determine needed changes. There is strong satisfaction with processes at this point in time.

In the Student Activities and Leadership Program, a comprehensive assessment tool to guide and document student development is being developed as well as planning for workshops and training around the program's goals.

The Student Success Program will be working with FYE faculty and mentors to re-work student learning objectives and to find ways to emphasize self-responsibility and motivation. In addition there will be expansion of the early alert program and a peer mentoring approach will be tried. In conjunction with the athletic department, this program will implement the "Complete and Compete" academic success effort in 2010-2011.

The success of the Learning Center has revealed a strong need for increased space and more hours for writing support. Learning support options for off campus students needs to be marketed in a more effective manner as well.

Adjustments will be made to the New Student Calling Program directed by the Friends of TRiO personnel to eliminate duplication of information that has occurred as a result of the mandatory FYE courses being implemented. In the Opportunity Grant Program each of the goals for the program have been met or exceeded. Some of the data collected for the Opportunity Grant needs to be adjusted and reviewed so that the college can better focus on the need for additional funding from the SBCTC.