Foundations of Excellence

Final Report

2010-2011 Refresh Self-Study of the First College Year at Texas A&M University-Kingsville

11/1/2011
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas A&M University-Kingsville participated as part of the National Select Cohort with the Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year self-study in 2006, resulting in a report that was generated in 2007. The results of that report were not shared with the entire campus community and the self-study did not result in an action plan. After a Texas A&M University System governance audit in 2007, Texas A&M University-Kingsville has an almost entirely new leadership team in upper administration: Steven Tallant, President; Rex Gandy, Provost; Marilyn Fowlé, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Terisa Riley, Vice President for Student Affairs; and Scott Gines, Vice President for Institutional Advancement. The new leadership team wanted to initiate a new First Year Experience self-study to improve student success. Upon learning that our university had participated in the Foundations of Excellence in 2006, we were given the option of participating in a refresh model of the self-study. Also, the new leadership team wanted to ensure that our university completes all aspects of the refresh model of Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year assessment and implements the recommended action plan. The following report exhibits the commitment from Texas A&M University-Kingsville to improve the first year college experience for freshmen by fully implementing recommendations from the Foundations of Excellence self-study in the 2011 Refresh Self-Study.

During the fall of 2010, President Steven Tallant asked Dr. Terisa Riley and Dr. Rex Gandy to co-chair a committee to investigate student success on our campus. Drs. Riley and Gandy engaged John Gardner as a consultant to assess all aspects of student success at A&M-Kingsville, which began with a site visit by John Gardner. He spent two days on the campus of Texas A&M University-Kingsville where he assessed all aspects of the first year experience and many other aspects of our university. Dr. Gardner submitted his findings to Drs. Gandy and Riley, suggesting that they form an Excellence in Undergraduate Education Committee comprised of faculty, staff, administrators, and students from all facets of our campus. In addition to Gardner’s recommended 9 Foundations of Excellence Dimension Committees, he also recommended forming 7 additional subcommittees: Core Curriculum; First Year; Leadership; Service Learning; Rural; Transportation; and Women’s Climate.

Since our university had participated in the Foundations of Excellence Self-Study in 2006, the 2011 self-study pursued a focused summer schedule to revisit all aspects of the 2006 report. Drs. Gandy and Riley appointed personnel for membership on the Excellence in Undergraduate Committee and created the summer meeting schedule. Additionally, John Gardner recommended that a new position be created, the sole function of which would be to oversee student success and the First Year Experience. Dr. Nancy KingSanders was selected through an interview process as the Associate Vice President for Student Success who was then charged with implementation of the refresh self-study for Foundations of Excellence.

The process of participating in the Refresh Model of Foundations of Excellence (FoE) in the First Year of College has helped our university revisit our strengths and weaknesses with regard to the experience in the first year of college. Based upon our assessments, we have developed a strategic action plan that should enhance student learning and persistence in the first-year of
college. This refresh model of the self-study has been an institution-wide endeavor that has coordinated multiple viewpoints from across campus and will hopefully lead to substantive institutional change and improved student success in the first year of college.
INTRODUCTION

Participation in the Foundations of Excellence® can greatly enhance learning and retention of first-year students as well as set priorities for resource allocation. Foundations of Excellence is a comprehensive, externally guided self-study and improvement process for the first year. The centerpiece of Foundations of Excellence is a model comprised of a set of principles that are termed Foundational Dimensions®. These Dimensions, developed by the Policy Center on the First Year of College (now John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education) and vetted by over 300 four- and two-year institutions, guide measurement of institutional efforts and provide an aspirational model for the entirety of the beginning college experience (initial contact with students through admissions, orientation, and all curricular and co-curricular experiences). These Dimensions also provide an intellectual foundation for the entirety of the undergraduate experience.

The Foundations of Excellence process is the signature work of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The engine of The Foundations of Excellence process is a campus-based task force - a group with broad representation from across the campus. The work of the task force begins with a campus audit of the first year for new students (Current Practices Inventory) and normally continues with a nine- to twelve-month process of evaluation using the Foundational Dimensions and related performance indicators (P.I.'s), and culminates in the development of a strategic action plan for campus improvement. However, since Texas A&M University-Kingsville participated in the refresh model of the self-study, our process of evaluation was shortened to four months. As a participant in the Foundations of Excellence process, we had access to a wide array of services and support, including the FoEtec Web site.

There are four key components in the Foundations of Excellence® model made available to campuses participating in either the self-paced self-study or the Inaugural National Select Cohort. Following are brief descriptions of each component.

- **Foundational Dimensions.** The Foundational Dimensions are defining characteristics of institutional effectiveness in promoting learning and success for all new students. "Learning and success" include content mastery and academic skill building, higher order cognitive skill development, psychosocial development, persistence, and degree completion. These Dimensions form the aspirational model, the centerpiece of the Foundations of Excellence process.

- **Current Practices Inventory.** Participating campuses begin the self-study by using a structured process, provided by the Policy Center, for reviewing current practices, policies, and assessment efforts that most impact new students. This campus audit is a broad initial overview of a campus’s first year.

- **Performance Indicators.** Since the Dimensions are broad constructs, a set of performance indicators defines specific ways for a campus to measure its level of achievement of each of the Dimensions. The performance indicators focus the campus self-study on elements of greatest importance in achieving institutional excellence in the first year. Responding to performance indicators requires that campuses use a variety of
qualitative and quantitative forms of evidence to include local and cross-institutional measures and professional judgments.

- Action Plan. The self-study is intentionally focused on the development of a campus action plan. The action plan includes acknowledgement of a campus’s strengths that need to be protected and nurtured, and specific recommendations for changes that will address a campus’s weaknesses.

PURPOSE

It was essential for Texas A&M University-Kingsville to assess students’ First Year Experience and generate an action plan for the critical beginning college experience. Many students are arriving at our university underprepared for college, both academically and emotionally. The reasons for this are varied and mostly beyond the control of the university. With current economic conditions and pressure from the state legislature and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to increase retention and student success at our university, it is essential that Texas A&M University-Kingsville assess our current practices with regard to the First Year Experience and to generate an action plan to promote strengths and correct weaknesses. We have a duty to any student that is admitted to Texas A&M University-Kingsville to offer resources to help them succeed at our university and upon graduation, join the professional workforce as a proud Texas A&M University-Kingsville alumnus.
The Texas A&M University-Kingsville Foundations of Excellence Task Force was formed in March of 2011 with the following structure:

### Foundations of Excellence Task Force Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Position</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivian Golightly</td>
<td>Director, Assessment and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirsten Compary</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rex Gandy</td>
<td>Provost (ex officio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terisa Riley</td>
<td>Vice President, Student Affairs (ex officio)</td>
</tr>
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The Task Force recommended an Excellence in Undergraduate Education Committee as shown below:

### Excellence in Undergraduate Education Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair</td>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Student Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-Chair</td>
<td>Rex Gandy</td>
<td>Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair</td>
<td>Terisa Riley</td>
<td>Vice President, Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>John Burnett</td>
<td>EE/AO Compliance Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Kirsten Compary</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Michelle Garcia</td>
<td>President Faculty Senate, Associate Professor, Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Vivian Golightly</td>
<td>Director, Office of Institutional Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Mary Gonzalez</td>
<td>Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Michael Grayson</td>
<td>Professor, College of Business Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Dolores Guerrero</td>
<td>Dean, Honors College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Paul Hageman</td>
<td>Professor and Chair, Music Department</td>
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<td>Comptroller</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Amanda Knight</td>
<td>Director, Athletic Compliance</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Laura Knippers</td>
<td>Associate Director, Admissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Bill Kuvlesky</td>
<td>Assistant, Dean, Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Tom Martin</td>
<td>Director, Housing</td>
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<td>Jennifer Minke</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Robert Paulson</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Ralph Perri</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Alberto Ruiz</td>
<td>Dean, College of Education and Human Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Rian Scarborough</td>
<td>Student, Vice President of Student Government Association</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Dustin Schwandt</td>
<td>Student, President of Student Government Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ralph Stephens</td>
<td>Finance</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Yvonne Trachta</td>
<td>Director, Alumni Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>George Weir</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
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The Excellence in Undergraduate Education Committee had bi-monthly meetings which occurred on May 11, May 25, June 8, June 22, July 6, July 20, August 3, August 17 and August 31, 2011. During each meeting, progress reports from the dimension committees and subcommittees were presented to the Excellence in Undergraduate Committee.

May 11, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Transportation Subcommittee Report

May 25, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Cancelled

June 8, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
John Gardner’s Assessment Report

June 22, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Faculty Dimension Progress Report; Transportation Task Force Progress Report, Learning Dimension Progress Report; Organization Dimension Progress Report

July 6, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Improvement Dimension Progress Report; 1st Year Subcommittee Progress Report; Philosophy Dimension Progress Report;

July 20, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Transitions Dimension Progress Report; All Students Dimension Progress Report; Core Curriculum Subcommittee Progress Report,

August 3, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Diversity Dimension Progress Report; Leadership Dimension Progress Report

August 17, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Service Learning Subcommittee Progress Report; Roles & Purposes Dimension Progress Report

August 31, 2011 – 1:30 PM New Dining, Rm. 1
Rural Subcommittee Progress Report; Draft of Action Plan

Membership of the dimension and subcommittee reports is listed below, followed by the summer meeting schedule.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Philosophy Dimension</th>
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<td><strong>Chair</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Member</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ex officio</strong></td>
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| **Assistant Dean, College of AgNRHS** | **Assistant Dean, Dean of Students** |
| **Assistant Professor, College of Education & Human Performance** | **Executive Assistant, Arts& Sciences** |
| **Student** | **Academic Advisor** |
| **AVP Student Success** |  |
## Organization Dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Vivian Golightly</td>
<td>Director, Institutional Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Mauro Castro</td>
<td>Professor, Chemistry Department</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Veronica Garcia</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Melissa Guajardo</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Rian Scarborough</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
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## Learning Dimension

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<td>Hilda Moreno</td>
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## Faculty Dimension

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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
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## Transitions Dimension

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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ezinne Offordile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Mario Hernandez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Paul Hageman</td>
<td>Professor and Chair, Music Dept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Laura Knippers</td>
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<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
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### All Students Dimension

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<td>Clarissa de la Paz</td>
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<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>AVP Student Success</td>
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### Diversity Dimension

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<td>Rosa Cordova</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Sung-won Park</td>
<td>Professor and Chair, Computer Science-Electrical Engineering</td>
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<tr>
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### Roles and Purposes Dimension

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<tr>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Christian Ferris</td>
<td>Director, Career Services</td>
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<td>Venki Uddameri</td>
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<td>Martin Brittain</td>
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### Improvement Dimension

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<td>Millie Slaughter</td>
<td>Assistant Registrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex officio</td>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>AVP Student Success</td>
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## Core Curriculum Subcommittee

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<tr>
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<th>Position/Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Michael Grayson</td>
<td>Professor, College of Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Shannon Baker</td>
<td>Chair, Dept. of History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>John Chisholm</td>
<td>Associate Dean, College of Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Paula Hanson</td>
<td>Comptroller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Amanda Knight</td>
<td>Director, Athletic Compliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Susan Roberson</td>
<td>Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ali Dortaj</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex officio</td>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>AVP Student Success</td>
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## First Year Subcommittee

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Paul Hageman</td>
<td>Department Chair, Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Rex Gandy</td>
<td>Provost</td>
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<td>CIO</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>Rian Scarborough</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ashley Mena</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Sandy Vargas</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Mary Ann Oldham</td>
<td>CPA, Hahn and Oldham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex officio</td>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>AVP Student Success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Service Learning Subcommittee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Kirsten Compary</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Michelle Garcia</td>
<td>President Faculty Senate, Associate Professor, Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Dolores Guerrero</td>
<td>Dean, Honors College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Duane Gardiner</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Thomas Bingham</td>
<td>Kleberg Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Alice Byers</td>
<td>Director, Kingsville Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Albert Ruiz</td>
<td>Dean, College of Education and Human Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Christian Ferris</td>
<td>Director of Career Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Victor Carrasco</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ezinne Offordile</td>
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<td>AVP Student Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Subcommittee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Robbie Brown</td>
<td>Hahn and Oldham CPA, Sunrise Rotary Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Michelle Garcia</td>
<td>President Faculty Senate, Associate Professor, Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Laura Knippers</td>
<td>Associate Director, Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Therese Crocker</td>
<td>Former Principal, De La Paz Middle School, Riviera, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Sandra Garcia</td>
<td>Executive Director, Research and Sponsored Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Bill Kuvlesky</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ashton Crocker</td>
<td>Graduate Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Dustin Schwandt</td>
<td>President, Student Government Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation Subcommittee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Terisa Riley</td>
<td>Vice President, Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Paula Hanson</td>
<td>Comptroller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Jennifer Minke</td>
<td>Associate Director, Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Ralph Stephens</td>
<td>Executive Director, Strategic Sourcing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Maria Hernandez</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
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<td>AVP Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Climate Subcommittee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Terisa Riley</td>
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<td>Member</td>
<td>John Burnett</td>
<td>EE/AO Compliance Officer</td>
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<td>Tina Livingston</td>
<td>Director Budget Office</td>
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<td>Alexandra Calderon</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>AVP Student Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>Roles and Purposes Dimension MSUB 304</td>
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**PROCESS**

The dimension and subcommittees of the Foundations of Excellence Self-Study met throughout the summer to refresh the self-study that was conducted in 2005. The Excellence in Undergraduate Committee voted to use first year experience data from surveys that we had already conducted, rather than using Educational Benchmarking Surveys. The reasons for not administering Educational Benchmarking Surveys included: 1) assessing the first year experience during the summer schedule when many students were not available on our campus; 2) The Office of Institutional Research had administered several surveys during the past academic year that contained pertinent data for assessment of the First Year Experience; 3) Cost of Educational Benchmarking Surveys which is outsourced apart from the Foundations of Excellence.
Surveys that were used to create data for the Foundations of Excellence Self-Study include: CIRP (Cooperative Institutional Research Program); Mid-Year Housing, NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement); SRIs (Student Rating of Instruction); SSI and IPS (Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and Institutional Priorities Inventory); Interviews; and Focus Groups were used to gather data from all campus constituencies that committees then analyzed using a framework of performance indicators across the nine foundational dimensions identified by the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education as critical to student success.

While each of the nine Dimension Committees focused on a specific aspect of the first year and made recommendations to improve that dimension, the Excellence in Undergraduate Committee noticed common themes that emerged between the nine dimensions. The overarching self-study results eliminate duplication and fragmentation and deliver well-coordinated, coherent programs and services. Specific areas to target for improvement are appropriate first-year structures, placement in courses, exposure to diversity, and leveraging assessment. The overall recommendations of the steering committee were to develop and implement an integrated first-year experience for all incoming students and create a centralized administrative structure with responsibility to administer and coordinate all first-year programs and services in ways that integrate teaching, support services, and co-curricular activities.
MAJOR FINDINGS BY DIMENSION
Philosophy

A1: PHILOSOPHY DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT
Foundations Institutions approach the first year in ways that are intentional and based on a philosophy/rationale of the first year that informs relevant institutional policies and practices.

*The philosophy/rationale is explicit, clear and easily understood, consistent with the institutional mission, widely disseminated, and, as appropriate, reflects a consensus of campus constituencies. The philosophy/rationale is also the basis for first-year organizational policies, practices, structures, leadership, department/unit philosophies, and resource allocation.*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Kuvlesky</td>
<td>Assistant Dean, Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toni Alvarez</td>
<td>Assistant Dean of Students</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Bain</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, College of Education and Human Performance</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janis Bryant</td>
<td>Executive Assistant, College of Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mario Hernandez</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Kelzenberg</td>
<td>Academic Advisor</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>AVP Student Success</td>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMITTEE SCOPE
The scope of the Philosophy Dimension was to identify if there is a common over-arching philosophy for the First Year Experience and if not to write a philosophy which is recommended for implementation and publication by Fall 2012.

REVIEW PROCESS
The Philosophy Dimension enlisted comments from all department chairs and Deans with regard to having a First Year Experience Philosophy. Additionally, the Philosophy Dimension examined the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Web site, catalog, and departmental publications.

CURRENT SITUATION
All Web sites of Colleges and departments at Texas A&M University-Kingsville were examined for a statement of philosophy of first year student success (FYSS). No such philosophy was
evident in any of these Web sites or departmental publications. Several areas were identified that affect the First Year Experience: varying expectations for faculty interaction with first-year students; a lack of faculty and staff training to assist them in working with first-year students and understanding their issues; philosophies for dealing with first-year students vary from College to College; a lack of technology to support first-year student learning; a general lack of campus awareness of issues particularly relevant to first-year students; and the presence of barriers preventing first-year student utilization of student support resources.

A common theme emerged, reflecting a general lack of coordination of services and support for first-year students on the Texas A&M University-Kingsville campus. The campus lacks a coordinated campus-wide philosophy for first-year students. However, as noted in the inventory of First-year Programs and Interventions within the Current Practices Inventory, many programs exist campus-wide which serve new students. While specific policies affecting specific groups of students exist, no framework has been developed to improve a service to all first-year students. There are policies set in individual departments, but the strategies of communication in disseminating the information campus-wide are limited.

METHODS
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

1. An appropriate philosophy for the First Year Experience at Texas A&M University-Kingsville must be developed and implemented.
2. A philosophy of the First Year Experience must be enthusiastically embraced by the entire Texas A&M University-Kingsville community of faculty, staff, students, and administrators.
3. The primary goal of the First Year Experience initiative must be the successful transition of first year students into university life.
4. Mentoring plays an important role in the First Year Experience and needs to be provided by trained faculty, academic advisors, and upperclassmen peer mentors.
5. First year students need to clearly understand the expectations of them regarding academic and social responsibilities, together with maintaining their academic success.

RECOMMENDATIONS
PROPOSED ‘FIRST-YEAR PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT’

The committee recommends the following philosophy statement for first year student success (HIGH PRIORITY):

*First year student success at Texas A&M University-Kingsville is a priority that is actively and enthusiastically embraced by the entire A&M University-Kingsville community where the primary goal is to successfully transition freshmen into university life. Texas A&M University-Kingsville provides a supportive, engaging, challenging educational environment through first year initiatives which focus on student engagement. As a First Year Javelina, freshmen are expected to meet the clear expectation that they take responsibility for the achievement and maintenance of their academic and personal success.*
ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

Texas A&M University-Kingsville must communicate the newly created philosophy for the first year experience to the entire campus community. The goal of this philosophy must include challenging, engaging, academic initiatives and environments with support services and resources.

- Examples of student engagement activities
  - Faculty-led activities in class, such as field trips
  - Social, cultural, and recreational activities led by student organizations, student services, Colleges and departments

A2: ORGANIZATION DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations Institutions create organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to the first year.

These structures and policies provide oversight and alignment of all first-year efforts. A coherent first-year experience is realized and maintained through effective partnerships among academic affairs, student affairs, and other administrative units and is enhanced by ongoing faculty and staff development activities and appropriate budgetary arrangements. (Organization)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vivian Hughes Golightly</td>
<td>Director of Planning and Assessment</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauro Castro</td>
<td>Regents Professor, Department of Chemistry</td>
<td>Faculty Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronica Garcia</td>
<td>Academic Advisor</td>
<td>Staff Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Guajardo</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant College of Business Administration</td>
<td>Staff Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rian Scarborough</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Student Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMITTEE SCOPE

The scope of the Organization Dimension Committee was to address organizational issues from a prospective freshman’s first point of contact in high school and continuing through a freshman’s first day of class as a registered student. These time periods are identified as Access and Enrollment. The scope of the committee’s work also includes review and assessment from the freshman’s first day of class through the first year. This time frame has been labeled First Year Experience. The committee’s goal is to make recommendations to improve efficiencies, reduce confusion, and eliminate redundancy of these two phases.
REVIEW PROCESS
CURRENT SITUATION

The current organization structure would be best described as centralized/de-centralized. While many first year experience programs are housed in University College, important programs are de-centralized to the other undergraduate colleges as well as to other support divisions.

ACCESS AND ENROLLMENT

To address the enrollment process, the committee analyzed the steps and offices that provide services or “touch-points” to the incoming students. Fifteen departments were identified as having contact with students prior to enrollment. Committee members agreed to interview members of each department, and the committee prepared a list of questions to identify the requirements of each department and the sequence a student should follow in visiting the departments.

Designated committee members interviewed the identified departments to gather information on the freshman-student experience. Specifically, our goal was to determine what a student must have completed before being served by the department and what students must complete to be considered clear for admission to the university. The information was gathered uniformly based on predetermined questions to assist in identifying areas of similarity, duplication, or gaps in service. A flow chart was prepared for the steps and “touch points” required for enrollment. Concerns and challenges were identified in the process of application and admission to the university.

Findings from departmental interviews were analyzed and preliminary recommendations are suggested in this report to address possible ways to improve lines of communication as well as integration of services within the current structure. Indications are that processes are not integrated to provide clear communication and guidance for students.

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

To address first-year support, the committee prepared an overview of the current resources and programs that target first-year students.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE – FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

ENROLLMENT INTERVIEW

The Organization Dimension Committee identified 15 different organization units or “touch-points” that interact with students or “touch them” on their journey to get enrolled at A&M-Kingsville. The Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey results were analyzed to gain insight into the perception of the campus community regarding our students especially to try to evaluate units that provide first-year support. Finally several student surveys, the “Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey,” conducted in Fall 2010, and the “National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Multi Year Benchmark Report,” published in August 2011, the Retention
Survey administered Fall 2010 and Spring 2011, and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey were reviewed.

The most significant finding of the interviews was the perceived lack of engagement between the student and the institution, the institution’s inconsistent communication with students about deadlines, and the institution’s inconsistent enforcement of admission policies. These findings create adverse experiences for all students, but particularly for a first-time student, as it makes a discernible negative impression about A&M-Kingsville’s level of service and the student’s first academic experience. Students are allowed to apply beyond the admission deadline and pay a late fee, which they presume will allow for all paperwork to be completed in a timely manner. They then may miss other requirements like testing, advising, and placement because blocks are lifted due to their lateness, which creates a chaotic first experience with the registration process and reduces the likelihood of being ready for the first day of classes. Students also apply late for financial aid, which they need to be able to pay for tuition and fees. They then discover that the time delay to be awarded creates more pressure as they work to avoid being dropped for nonpayment. By not adhering more strictly to institutionally posted deadlines, we create an experience for a first-year student that sets the struggling student up for failure. For a first-year student to appropriately focus on the academics of the first day, they must have the registration and financial-aid issues resolved early.

The second key finding was the role that the admission process plays in admitting and enrolling students. The admission process can be cumbersome as there are several important documents that must be received prior to finalizing a student’s application. Anecdotally high school transcripts tend to be a key document as the Office of Admission appears to misplace student transcripts and students must submit multiple times for them to be processed properly. Also, students do not always receive consistent information when they call to check their admission status.

NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Each year the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) asks students at hundreds of colleges and universities to reflect on the time they devote to various learning activities. The topics explored are linked to previous research on student success in college. As a measure of student satisfaction with their experience at TAMUK, the committee evaluated several responses to questions in the “National Survey of Student Engagement” (NSSE) taken in 2011. After review of all questions, the committee selected those that addressed organizational issues. The following is a summary of the questions and responses.

- **Q8b**: Quality of relationship with faculty. Response: 59% of freshmen and 67% of all students surveyed indicated that the faculty was helpful, available, and sympathetic.
- **Q8c**: Quality of relationship with administrative and personnel offices. Response: 38% of freshmen indicated that the offices were helpful, considerate, and flexible.
- **Q12**: Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution? Response: 80% of freshmen responded good to excellent.
- **Q13**: How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution? Response: 86% of freshmen responded good to excellent.
• Q14: If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending? Response: 87% of freshmen and 87% of seniors indicated that they would.

Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey

In Fall 2010, the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Office of Institutional Research was engaged at the request of the university administration to oversee the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction™ Survey (SSI) and the Institutional Priorities Survey™ (IPS). The rationale for administering these surveys was to inform planning for enrollment management, student affairs, financial affairs, and academic affairs areas.

Student satisfaction assessment is an integral part of assessment regularly conducted by institutions of higher education. By collecting satisfaction data about students and student satisfaction, campuses are able to determine where they are best meeting student needs and where there are areas for improvement.

The SSI asked students to indicate both the level of importance that they place on an item, as well as their level of satisfaction that the institution is meeting this expectation. The IPS asked faculty, administration, and staff to indicate the level of importance and the level of agreement that they believe the institution is meeting the student expectation. The combination of importance/satisfaction or agreement data is very powerful, allowing institutions to review satisfaction levels within the context of what is most important. The IPS closely parallels the SSI and has items that are carefully worded to mirror the items on the SSI. Some of the topics included in both surveys are effectiveness of academic advising, campus climate, concern for the individual, effectiveness of instruction and programs, and safety and security.

The categories that most pertained to organizational issues were Academic Advising Effectiveness (assesses the academic advising program, evaluating advisors and counselors on their knowledge, competence, approachability, and personal concern for students), Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness (measures the competence of admissions counselors, along with students' perceptions of the financial aid programs), Registration Effectiveness (assesses registration and billing, including how smooth the registration process is), Student Centeredness (measures the institution’s attitude toward students and the extent to which they feel welcome and valued), Campus Support Services (assesses the quality of support programs and services), Campus Life, (assesses the effectiveness of student life programs offered by the institution, ranging from athletics to residence life. This scale also assesses campus policies and procedures to determine students' perceptions of their rights and responsibilities), Safety and Security (measures the campus’ responsiveness to students’ personal safety and security), and Campus Climate (evaluates how the institution promotes a sense of campus pride and belonging.)

The SSI was administered in Fall 2010 via the Web. The Noel-Levitz Company hosted the surveys and sent out invitations and reminders. Six thousand five hundred and seventy eight (6578) students were invited to complete the SSI. One thousand three hundred and fifty two (1352) students (21.3% response rate) completed the survey. Texas A&M University-Kingsville student responses were compared to 89,408 students from 94 Southern 4-year public
institutions surveyed with the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory between the fall of 2007 and the spring of 2010. Demographic breakdown by class level, race, residency status, academic profile and other dimensions were obtained.

**Demographic Report**

The following is a demographic breakdown of the students who responded to the SSI:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
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</table>
| Native American      | 0.31 | 0.31%
| Caucasian            | 23 | 23%
| Hispanic             | 57 | 57%
| Other                | 7  | 7%  |
| **Class Load**       |    |     |
| Full-Time            | 85 | 85%
| Part-Time            | 16 | 16%
| **Class Level**      |    |     |
| Freshman             | 18 | 18%
| Sophomore            | 13 | 13%
| Junior               | 17 | 17%
| Senior               | 21 | 21%
| Grad                 | 29 | 29%
| **Residence**        |    |     |
| Residence Hall       | 25 | 25%
| Own House            | 20 | 20%
| Rent off campus      | 36 | 36%
| Parents              | 12 | 12%
| Other                | 6  | 6%  |
| **Institution was my** |  |     |
| 1st choice           | 63 | 63%|


In 2010, 97% of the A&M-Kingsville questions demonstrated a response more positive than the national average.

Although A&M-Kingsville scored higher than benchmark universities in most categories, it is important to note and understand the challenges that students identified. Challenges are items with high importance and low satisfaction or large performance gap. These are specifically identified as items above the mid-point in importance and in the lower quartile (25 percent) of satisfaction scores or items above the mid-point in importance and in the top quartile (25 percent) of performance gap scores. The challenges are listed below in increasing order of importance minus satisfaction gap. According to Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Interpretive Guide, challenges are the areas that students care the most about, which they also feel can be further improved upon by the campus. These areas need to be discussed, explored, prioritized, and responded to. The relevant responses follow.
# Higher Satisfaction Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Life</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Satis / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. A variety of intramural activities are offered.</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>5.39 / 1.41</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. The intercollegiate athletic programs contribute to a strong sense of</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>5.68 / 1.40</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school spirit.</td>
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<td>31. Males and females have equal opportunities to participate in</td>
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<td>5.68 / 1.38</td>
<td>0.19</td>
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<td>intercollegiate athletics.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. I can easily get involved in campus organizations.</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>5.63 / 1.40</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. The student handbook provides helpful information about campus life.</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>5.61 / 1.38</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Freedom of expression is protected on campus.</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>5.69 / 1.36</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>5.52 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their leisure time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. New student orientation services help students adjust to college.</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>5.57 / 1.48</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Student disciplinary procedures are fair.</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.66 / 1.38</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Residence hall regulations are reasonable.</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>5.35 / 1.49</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual.</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>4.99 / 1.64</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students.</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>4.82 / 1.73</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>4.89 / 1.83</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>4.73 / 1.72</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>space, lighting, heat, air, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. Student activities fees are put to good use.</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>4.84 / 1.81</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Academic Advising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Advising</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Satis / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major.</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>5.94 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My academic advisor is approachable.</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>5.90 / 1.53</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Major requirements are clear and reasonable.</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>5.79 / 1.33</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td>5.74 / 1.53</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.</td>
<td>6.39</td>
<td>5.50 / 1.60</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Campus Support Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Support Services</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Satis / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Library staff is helpful and approachable.</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>5.70 / 1.33</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Bookstore staff is helpful.</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>5.60 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Import</td>
<td>Satis / SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Tutoring services are readily available.</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>5.66 / 1.40</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Academic support services adequately meet the needs of students.</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.48 / 1.41</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Library resources and services are adequate.</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>5.45 / 1.49</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. There are adequate services to help me decide upon a career.</td>
<td>6.35</td>
<td>5.41 / 1.52</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Computer labs are adequate and accessible.</td>
<td>6.46</td>
<td>5.37 / 1.64</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scale</strong></td>
<td><strong>Import</strong></td>
<td><strong>Satis / SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gap</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Centeredness</strong></td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>5.50 / 1.19</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Most students feel a sense of belonging here.</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>5.37 / 1.45</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>5.71 / 1.40</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>5.62 / 1.42</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Administrators are approachable to students.</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>5.35 / 1.46</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The campus staff are caring and helpful.</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>5.49 / 1.45</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. This institution shows concern for students as individuals.</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>5.46 / 1.52</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus Climate</strong></td>
<td>6.32</td>
<td>5.49 / 1.10</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. This institution has a good reputation within the community.</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>5.89 / 1.26</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Most students feel a sense of belonging here.</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>5.37 / 1.45</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I feel a sense of pride about my campus.</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>5.70 / 1.43</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Freedom of expression is protected on campus.</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>5.69 / 1.36</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus.</td>
<td>6.21</td>
<td>5.57 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>5.71 / 1.40</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. I generally know what's happening on campus.</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>5.30 / 1.54</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>5.62 / 1.42</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Administrators are approachable to students.</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>5.35 / 1.46</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.</td>
<td>6.46</td>
<td>5.61 / 1.40</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Faculty care about me as an individual.</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.45 / 1.53</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The campus staff are caring and helpful.</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>5.49 / 1.45</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. This institution shows concern for students as individuals.</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>5.46 / 1.52</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The campus is safe and secure for all students.</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>5.60 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.</td>
<td>6.53</td>
<td>5.46 / 1.54</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available.</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>5.20 / 1.67</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Import</td>
<td>Satis / SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seldom get the &quot;run-around&quot; when seeking information on this campus.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>4.78 / 1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.52</td>
<td>5.53 / 1.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concern for the Individual**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Satis / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td>5.74 / 1.53</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling staff care about students as individuals.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>5.35 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty care about me as an individual.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.45 / 1.53</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>4.99 / 1.64</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This institution shows concern for students as individuals.</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>5.46 / 1.52</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.52</td>
<td>5.53 / 1.48</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Satis / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library staff is helpful and approachable.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>5.70 / 1.33</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff in the health services area are competent.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>5.53 / 1.47</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I generally know what's happening on campus.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>5.30 / 1.54</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling staff care about students as individuals.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>5.35 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The personnel involved in registration are helpful.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>5.55 / 1.45</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The campus staff are caring and helpful.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>5.49 / 1.45</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>5.20 / 1.67</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seldom get the &quot;run-around&quot; when seeking information on this campus.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>4.78 / 1.93</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lower Satisfaction Items**

**Registration Effectiveness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Satis / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>5.65 / 1.47</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The business office is open during hours which are convenient for most students.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>5.59 / 1.44</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The personnel involved in registration are helpful.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>5.55 / 1.45</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>5.39 / 1.69</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billing policies are reasonable.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>4.87 / 1.72</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recruitment and Financial Aid**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Satis / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions counselors accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>5.41 / 1.51</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE: Only 18% of the respondents were freshmen. Cross-tabulated data for freshmen are available.

NOEL Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS Faculty/Staff Survey)

The IPS was administered in Fall 2010 via the Web. The Noel-Levitz Company hosted the surveys and sent out invitations and reminders. Seven hundred and seventy seven (777) full-time employees were invited to complete the IPS. Three hundred and fifty (350) (45.0% response rate) employees completed the IPS. The IPS asked faculty, administration, and staff to indicate the level of importance and the level of agreement that they believe the institution is meeting the student expectation. The combination of importance/satisfaction or agreement data is very powerful, allowing institutions to review satisfaction levels within the context of what is most important. The IPS closely parallels the SSI and has items that are carefully worded to mirror the items on the SSI. Some of the topics included in both surveys are effectiveness of academic advising, campus climate, concern for the individual, effectiveness of instruction and programs, and safety and security.

It is important to utilize the information provided by both the Institutional Priorities Survey and the Student Satisfaction Inventory when reviewing our results. While the Student Satisfaction Inventory data can stand alone, the Institutional Priority Survey data were not intended to stand alone, but rather to be interpreted in combination with the SSI data.

Like the SSI, the IPS data analyses are comprehensive and the interpretation of the results is quite straightforward. Three mean scores are reported for each item: level of importance (of the expectation), level of agreement (that the expectation is being met), and the performance gap between the two. The means for level of importance and level of agreement result from summing each respondent’s rating and dividing by the number of respondents. Then a performance gap score is calculated for each item by taking the mean importance rating and subtracting the mean level of agreement rating.
The relevant responses follow. (Done by Faculty and Staff)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Agree / SD</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Centeredness</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>5.29 / 1.10</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Life</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>5.19 / 1.20</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Effectiveness</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>5.36 / 1.00</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and Financial Aid</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>4.62 / 1.36</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Support Services</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>4.96 / 1.26</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>5.20 / 1.21</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Effectiveness</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>5.05 / 1.23</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>4.94 / 1.14</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for the Individual</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>5.19 / 1.17</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Excellence</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>4.82 / 1.25</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness to Diverse Populations</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.31 / 1.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Climate</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>5.28 / 0.99</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) conducts two different nationally standardized assessment surveys, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey. The NSSE obtains information about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide to engage students in educationally effective activities for enhanced learning and personal development. NSSE is administered every third year and is normed with participating institutions nationally.

The CIRP Freshman Survey provides a detailed profile of our entering freshmen class as well as national normative data for students in similar types of institutions along with the national normative profile. The CIRP is administered biannually. Additional statistical and analytical data are available in OIR and on their Web site, but the campus community is largely unaware of it and/or does not make use of it. However, there is some concern about widely publishing raw data that might be misconstrued by off-campus and/or on-campus constituencies. Some administrative units in student and academic services use these data more than the faculty or staff at large. Further, because the general campus community does not make use of these data, there is instead a tendency for the community at-large to form opinions and make decisions based on anecdotal evidence through their experience in micro-communities across campus.

- Ideas for orientation that came up in discussion:
  - Some schools have a freshman orientation that last from 2-5 days. Freshmen students are welcomed early and move into residence halls a few days before continuing students. New Student Orientation is viewed as an exciting experience where students can get ready for both classes and out of classroom experiences, meet current students, staff, and faculty, and begin friendships with other new students.
Welcome week is a series of events that focus on institution tradition and is a great tradition at many universities – it’s a time to get acquainted with students’ new homes, to make new friends and to explore all the exciting ways to learn, in and outside of class. The committee felt that our welcome week should be more focused on building a relationship with the student and emphasizing institution tradition.

Web sites are used to define the first-year experience, with checklists, steps, and useful information for students entering the university. Many examples of successful Web sites exist. One good example can be found at Georgetown University http://nso.georgetown.edu/index.html.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION ITEMS

- Establish a communication plan based on the students’ point in the admission process (prospect, inquiry, admitted, transcripts evaluated, eligible for orientation, advising, scholarship and financial aid, and registration), other. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Create first-time-freshman checklist for first-time freshmen and provide it electronically on the dedicated Web site. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Incorporate faculty and student teams into recruiting visits. This would bring program-specific information to the recruiting process. A selection process would be established to select appropriate and willing students and faculty members. For faculty members, this would be promoted as university service and would be a one-year commitment. Both students and faculty members would travel with the recruiting team. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Implement a 100% online processing procedure of all first-time students who apply by the posted deadlines. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Establish a goal of a 5-business-day transcript-evaluation turnaround. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Establish a first-year steering committee comprised of representatives from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Enrollment Services to coordinate the various key factors impacting new students. This committee could be made up of members of the All Student committee with some additional members. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Oversee integration of marketing efforts through brochures, Web sites, and other materials targeting new students. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Oversee adherence to deadlines and coordination of dates in regard to recruitment, admissions, financial aid, and orientation. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Require that all phones be answered during business hours; GET CUSTOMERS OUT OF THE PHONE TREE (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Have student bills (housing and tuition) ready to roll at first and subsequent Hoggie Day event. (HIGH PRIORITY)
A3: LEARNING DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations institutions deliver intentional curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that engage students in order to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the desired outcomes of higher education and the institution’s philosophy and mission:

*Whether in or out of the classroom, learning also promotes increased competence in critical thinking, ethical development, and the lifelong pursuit of knowledge.*

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dolores Guerrero</td>
<td>Dean, Honors College</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Grayson</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, College of Business Administration</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Martin</td>
<td>Director, Housing</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilda Moreno</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam Rauch</td>
<td>Academic Advisor</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
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**COMMITTEE SCOPE**

The scope of the Learning Dimension Committee was to examine the extent of learning in the first year both in and out of the classroom across the university as evidenced by performance indicators identified through the Foundations of Excellence self-study. These indicators included examining the existence of first-year goals and the degree to which the university monitors whether teaching methods in the first-year courses result in engagement in learning. The committee also investigated the degree to which the university identifies and addresses causes of failure, withdrawal rates, course outcomes, and appropriateness of placement for first-year students. The committee then made recommendations to improve institutional practices of establishing and maintaining intentional curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that lead to successful academic outcomes and retention of first-year students.

**REVIEW PROCESS**

**PI 3.1: Learning goals**

To what degree has the campus established common learning goals specifically for the first year? Very Low/None

To what degree has the campus documented outcomes for common learning goals for all first-year students? Very Low/None

**CURRENT SITUATION**
The university has a common set of goals for the campus as a whole through core values and mission statements but there are no specific learning goals for the first year. Beyond the General Education Core Curriculum goals and objectives, some academic departments and disciplines articulate learning goals specific to their areas, but there were no learning goals specific to the first year experience.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Although there are no specific learning goals for the first year, there are college, department, and discipline established learning goals across campus. These can serve as a starting point in conjunction with the General Education Core curriculum goals.

CHALLENGES

- Establishing agreed upon learning goals and implementation of assessment.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Reviewed catalog, strategic plan, NSSE, Noel Levitz, CIRP.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

1. Develop common learning goals and outcomes specifically for the first year.

PI 3.2: Engaging students

To what degree does the institution document instructional methods used in each of the five high enrollment freshmen courses and evaluate their effectiveness in engaging students in learning?

English 1301........................ Medium
Algebra 0300......................... Medium
History 1301......................... Medium
Reading 0300......................... Medium
Mathematics 1314................. Medium

CURRENT SITUATION

There are no formal plans specifically designed to ascertain the level of student engagement in individual courses or to evaluate a teacher’s effectiveness in encouraging engagement. However, the following information, as listed under opportunities below, is gathered by departments and could be used to measure some elements of student engagement and teacher effectiveness.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Course syllabi are collected for every section of the course by the department and college. Instructional methods are documented in each syllabus.
- Student learning outcomes are established for all courses.
- Grade data for individual courses is available.
- Course evaluations (SRIs) are completed by students for all courses.
- Center for Teaching Effectiveness offers weekly professional development opportunities.
- Annual faculty evaluation process is in place whereby department chairs review faculty performance based on SRIs.

CHALLENGES

- Variance in course syllabi exists across sections of same courses.
- Documenting of SLOs has not been consistent.
- Defining and determining how a teacher’s effectiveness in student engagement will be defined and measured.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

- Focus group with faculty teaching previously identified first year courses.
- Course Syllabi
- NSSE, CIRP, Noel Levitz

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

1. Establish a mechanism such as focus groups for faculty who teach first year courses to discuss best practices and document and evaluate instructional methods for engaging the first year student.
2. Improve procedures for documenting and evaluating student learning outcomes across all sections of courses.
3. Utilize civic engagement and service learning activities to promote student engagement during the first year.

PI 3.3: Learning outcomes

To what degree does the institution document and evaluate Student Learning Outcomes across all sections of each of the five high enrollment freshmen courses?

English 1301......................... Medium
Algebra 0300......................... Medium
History 1301......................... Medium
Reading 0300......................... Medium
CURRENT SITUATION

All courses document Student Learning Outcomes. The data is collected by all general education courses each semester. The committee found it difficult to access the information as some of the data is forwarded to the Provost’s office while others remain in department or college. The university general education committee is working on standardizing how the data is collected and collated.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Most departments are collecting student learning outcomes through a pre-test /post-test process

CHALLENGES

- Documenting of SLOs has not been consistent.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Course Syllabi

NSSE, CIRP, Noel Levitz

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

1. Improve procedures for documenting and evaluating student learning outcomes across all sections of courses.
2. Based upon SLO data, initiate procedures that improve changes based on results.

PI 3.4: Courses with High DFWI Rates

To what degree does the institution attempt to address the causes of high DFWI rates in the courses reported in Table G2 of the “Current Practice Inventory”?

Medium

CURRENT SITUATION

Student support systems currently in place are tutoring labs available during daytime and evening hours.

Supplemental instruction has been in place for quite some time. SI was established to help students in difficult courses of study. In Spring 2011, the difference in students with passing grades of A, B, C, D between SI attendees was 383/451 (84.9%) and the non-attendees at 296/524 (56.48%).
An audit of DFWI rates by courses was analyzed each semester.

A survey of students who did not persist was conducted.

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

Supplemental instruction is in place.

Discussion of an early alert system is ongoing.

Survey of “leavers” has been developed and “course non-completers” is available for further data collection.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Upon collection of data, strategies should be developed for consistently addressing the identified issues.

**SOURCES OF EVIDENCE**

- NSSE, CIRP, Course Grade Reports, Exit Survey

**RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)**

- Continue to collect and analyze audit data for DFWI rates each semester.
- Create university wide procedures for addressing the causes of high DFWI rates in first year courses.

**PI 3.5: Placement**

To what degree does the campus intentionally place first-year students in the appropriate courses to address deficiencies in academic preparation?

High

To what degree does the campus intentionally place first-year students in the appropriate courses to provide sufficient academic challenge for above-average students?

High

**CURRENT SITUATION**

Students are placed into first year courses through various placement tests which address students who are academically successful and challenged. Additionally, students can earn credit for courses based on their ACT/SAT scores. The university has recently created the Honors College for academically high achieving students while students who are deficient in academic preparation have developmental courses in Algebra, Reading, and Writing available.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- The newly created Honors College is available to offer academic challenge to above average students.
- Students who need additional academic preparation have resources such as developmental courses, tutoring, and disability support services available.

CHALLENGES

- Previously, only ACT/SAT scores were used as placement criteria for developmental courses. New placement criteria are being developed and will need to be implemented acquiring accurate placement scores in a timely manner for placement into both developmental and honors courses.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Developmental Education Plan; Incoming Student Profile Sheets

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

1. Inform campus community regarding new policies and procedures for the placement of first-year students with deficiencies in academic preparation.

PI 3.6: Special programs

To what degree does the institution measure first-year students’ learning outcomes for each of the following?

First-year seminar................................................................. Low
Learning communities.......................................................... Low
Leadership programs......................................................... Low
Service learning................................................................. Low
Student Affairs functions and initiatives other than Residential Life......................... Low
Residential Life (if campus houses 33% or more of first-year students)......................... Low
Out-of-class activities linked to academic courses or programs............................... Low

CURRENT SITUATION

The committee felt that although all of these special programs are in place there was no evidence as to how learning outcomes were being measured. This was linked with performance indicator PI 3.1 as there are no common learning goals specifically for first year students identified by the university.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- First year seminar courses are in place and can be reorganized to a common course for all first year students.
- Learning communities have been added across interest areas and could easily be linked to first year learning goals once the goals are established.
- There are several opportunities for developing leadership through SGA, student organizations which can be expanded to include first year students.
- Service learning is an initiative on campus and should be incorporated into first year learning experiences.
- Student affairs creates specific activities for first year students such as Welcome Week and Javelina Camp.
- Resident life provides student engagement activities which could readily be linked to common learning goals for first time students.
- Out of class activities linked to academic courses and programs are being offered and could readily be linked to learning goals in order measure outcomes.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Noel Levitz, New Student Housing Survey, CIRP, NSSE, Course Syllabi

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

1. Review and revise the 1201 first year seminars for uniformity and consistency across courses, while allowing for the emphasis of academic majors.
2. Based on the first year common learning goals, identify and/or develop measurable outcomes for all special learning opportunities such as learning communities, leadership programs, service learning, student affairs functions/initiatives, residence life, and out of class activities.

A4: FACULTY DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations Institutions make the first college year a high priority for the faculty.

*These institutions are characterized by a culture of faculty responsibility for the first year that is realized through high-quality instruction in first-year classes and substantial interaction between faculty and first-year students both inside and outside the classroom. This culture of responsibility is nurtured by chief academic officers, deans, and department chairs and supported by the institutions’ reward systems.*
### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Todd Lucas</td>
<td>Assistant Dean, College of Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mohamed Abdelrahman</td>
<td>Associate Dean, College of Engineering</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Daniel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle Garcia</td>
<td>President, Faculty Senate</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Gonzalez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda Montalvo</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cory Scarborough</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greta Schuster</td>
<td>Associate Professor, Dick and Mary Lewis Kleberg College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
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### COMMITTEE SCOPE

The Faculty Dimension Committee was formed as an exploratory (discovery) committee to obtain the faculty’s perception of the First Year.

### REVIEW PROCESS

- No formal data was collected specifically for this report.
- Committee members provided experiences, perceptions and recommendations.
- Informal interactions with faculty members were used to gauge feelings and perceptions of faculty members beyond the committee membership.
- The President of the Faculty Senate was able to provide faculty perceptions based on input from Faculty Senate meetings and the executive committee of the Faculty Senate which met throughout the summer.

### CURRENT SITUATION

#### PI 4.1 Importance of the First Year:

To what degree does the institution make the first year a priority?

Low

- Resources are not allocated to support first year instruction.
- No rewards for high quality instruction in first year courses.
- Faculty in some departments see assignment to first year courses as a penalty (1201).
- Faculty not rewarded for substantial out-of-class interaction with first year students.
• There is little possibility of faculty being rewarded for advising first-year students when professional advisors are used until junior status.
• 1201 courses are not working in some colleges to enhance first year students. Modifications to 1201 courses to increase their functionality should be considered, but with consideration to the special roles they play in some colleges such as engineering.

**PI 4.2 Campus-level Encouragement:**

To what degree do senior academic leaders\(^1\) encourage faculty to do the following?

- Pedagogies of engagement in first year courses vary widely between colleges with the use of part-time and full-time faculty.
- Limited understanding of campus-wide learning goals for first year students. Varies by discipline significantly.
- Faculty is not encouraged by administration to understand the characteristics of first-year students or the broad trends and issues in the first year.

\(^1\) Senior academic leaders include the provost and vice-president for academic affairs, associate provosts, deans, associate and/or assistant deans.

**PI 4.3 Unit-level Encouragement**

To what degree do unit-level academic administrators\(^2\) encourage faculty to do the following?

- Faculty are not informed of or encouraged to use successful pedagogies in first year courses at the department level by the chair.
- In many cases, faculty are unaware of the Texas Success Initiative, Developmental Education Plan, or Importance of the First Year Experience Student Success Seminar.
- Chairs do not encourage understanding or explain discipline-specific trends and issues related to entry level courses.
- No formal mentoring system for department chairs.
- Lack of comprehension related to trends, issues & inconsistencies in Pedagogies.
- Inconsistent management style and implementation of goals with prior A&M-Kingsville administration, although the current administration is rapidly addressing student success issues.

\(^2\) Unit-level administrators include department chairs and program heads.

**PI 4.4 Expectations:**

To what degree are expectations for involvement with first-year students clearly communicated to the following groups? Newly hired full-time faculty\(^3\), Newly hired part-time/adjunct instructors\(^3\), Continuing full-time and part-time/adjunct faculty\(^3\).

- Continuing and newly hired faculty are given performance expectations during interviews and annual reviews but the topic of expectations and involvement with first year students is not formally part of this process.
• Expectations for faculty involvement in the First Year Experience are not clearly communicated in the new faculty investment program.
• Teaching is not a prominent factor in annual performance evaluations.
• No incentives for faculty to teach freshmen courses.

Limited task force evaluation to new faculty whose responsibilities include teaching first year students

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

• The faculty is aware of the administrative changes on campus and is hopeful that those changes will encourage more emphasis on successful teaching in the annual evaluation.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Performance Indicators

PI 4.1:
• Low retention rate for university. (CPI)
• High DFWI rate in high enrollment 1st year courses. (CPI)

PI 4.2:
• Center for Teaching Effectiveness

PI 4.3:
• Lack of feedback to individual faculty on a regular basis and annually.

PI 4.4:
• The Annual Report places higher value on grants and publications than teaching.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

• Charismatic Faculty to interact with 1st year students. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Provide department chairs with "High Energy" training. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Develop think tank groups (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Reduce the occurrence of different messages sent to different groups by administration creating misinformation. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Change pessimistic or negative outlook (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Rotate Chairs, make the department/unit chair job a rotating position. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Tie to tenure and promotion through "Teaching" section of portfolio. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Tie performance of faculty on first year courses on retention to performance evaluation. (HIGH PRIORITY)
Other Comments Raised as Part of Discussions

- Teaching is not as highly valued on faculty evaluations as publications and grant awards.
- Negative outlook on forward progression of the university due to the belief that there is a lack of accountability and shared responsibility by the academic leadership. Faculty perceives that the administration holds them responsible for problems with student success.
- Current communication structure is not working to adequately inform faculty of university goals and the strategic plan.

A5: TRANSITIONS DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations Institutions facilitate appropriate student transitions through policies and practices that are intentional and aligned with institutional mission.

Beginning with recruitment and admissions and continuing through the first year, institutions communicate clear curricular and co-curricular expectations and provide appropriate support for educational success. They are forthright about their responsibilities to students as well as students' responsibilities to themselves and the institution. They create and maintain curricular alignments with secondary schools and linkages with secondary school personnel, families, and other sources of support, as appropriate.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kirsten Compary</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Hageman</td>
<td>Chair, Music Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Knippers</td>
<td>Associate Director, Admissions</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>George Weir</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mario Hernandez, III</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ezinne Offordile</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The Transitions Dimension was tasked with working through the Transitions portion of the Foundations of Excellence framework, focusing on how students transition to the collegiate environment at A&M Kingsville.
REVIEW PROCESS

The transition committee reviewed the 2007 Foundations of Excellence report, specifically focusing on the items that were reported as needs and determining the current status. The committee then moved to a review of the performance indicators provided in the Foundations of Excellence framework, ending the review with a list of some recommended action items.

CURRENT SITUATION

The committee is in agreement that many of the recommendations from the 2007 report were not sufficiently addressed. As such, the current situation mirrors the situation from 2007 with some alterations or updates. Below is a listing of the performance indicators from the framework, along with a current status report.

P I 1: Communication Methods:

To what degree does the institution effectively communicate the lived experience of first year students?

Specific evaluation of the following is included in this performance indicator:

- Institutional Web site
- Online communication technologies (e.g., instant messaging, blogs, YouTube, e-mail, Facebook)
- Admissions print materials and other media
- Marketing (e.g., radio, TV, print advertisements)
- Campus tours for prospective students

The committee members were tasked with reviewing the A&M Kingsville Web site and competitor Web sites with incoming and first year students in mind. The committee agreed that we do a below average job of showing students what the lived experience is like on the Web site. However, Javelinapride.net does a better job sharing the lived experience through the blogs and videos but there is uncertainty about how students find out about the site, which is a separate site from the institutional website. The committee also commented on the overall upkeep of the Web sites. The Web sites are not all upgraded to the new standard, and the committee found out of date information. Lastly, the committee thought the use of technology (Talisma, Facebook, and Javelinapride.net) were all areas where we perform better than average, as well as in the new marketing campaign and the attention given to students during campus visits.

An interesting anecdotal observation by the students on our committee, related to the distinction between “prospective” and “current” students on our Web site, is that there is uncertainty as to when a student moves from being a prospective student to a current student. The committee concluded that there is likely a period where a student views themselves as a “new student”, no longer a prospective student but yet not a “current student”. As an
institution there is no clear delineation that is communicated to incoming students on where they find information that is specifically geared to that subset of our student population.

**PI 2: Communications to Students:**

To what degree does the institution communicate effectively with first year students?

Specific evaluation of the following is included in this performance indicator:

- Institutional mission
- Institution’s academic expectations
- Definitions, disciplinary processes, and consequences regarding academic integrity
- Out-of-class engagement opportunities
- Employment on and off campus (including advantages and disadvantages)
- Entry requirements for specific academic majors
- College costs and financial aid (during recruitment and admissions)
- College costs and financial aid (during the first year in order to plan for subsequent years)

The committee participated in a demonstration regarding the uses of Talisma, and agreed that it is a tool that has had positive impacts on sharing targeted information to students, and this is a significant improvement to note from the 2007 report; however the use of Talisma is not standard across the colleges and sets up differing experiences for students who are transitioning to A&M Kingsville. Talisma is also used when essential information needs to be disseminated to a student's preferred e-mail address, given that the institutional provided e-mail address has not been designated as an official form of communication.

The committee believes that communication sent to students through Talisma can often be overlooked or misplaced, and the communication is not always clear. As an example, one piece of information that students are sent just after being admitted to A&M Kingsville is their student identification number (Banner Identification). Students who miss the communication regarding their Banner Identification or are unable to locate their Banner Identification during the transition process are challenged to find ways to locate their Banner Identification when needed. A discussion with the Registrar indicates that often when students call the Registrar’s Office inquiring about assistance in locating the Banner Identification, there is confusion between the Banner Identification, student identification number and the username for computer login that begins with “k”. Better differentiation or a change in moniker of one of the identifiers would be helpful to first-year and transitioning students.

With the recent development of the Center for Student Success, strides have been made to more effectively communicate with first year students. The addition of the mentoring program allows for greater dissemination of resources and referrals to first year students. There is also increased communication in the 1201/1301 courses through the colleges. The recent implementation of the First Year Javelina Commitment is a step toward students more fully understanding the academic expectations.
The institutional mission is currently under review and should be widely disseminated and posted once the revision is complete. At the current time the mission is not effectively distributed and is difficult to locate.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville has a great deal of engagement opportunities outside of the classroom, but it has been noted in other committees, as in this one, that communication silos exist throughout campus. The lack of a comprehensive campus calendar, a common portal, and the current use of department or college based communication compounds the perception that there is a lack of activity on campus or in Kingsville. The calendar and portal are both expected to be implemented later in Fall 2011 or early Spring 2012 semesters.

In terms of employment opportunities, the current situation for on-campus employment is a bulletin board outside of Financial Aid. The communication regarding the advantages of on-campus employment is limited. Opportunities for off-campus employment are not readily available to the campus community. There is also a sense of a lack of visibility of the information for employment as it is not available online at the current time.

The committee agreed that there is an average amount of information regarding the entry requirements for majors, particularly through communications in Talisma and through the undergraduate catalog. The information is also shared through the advising sessions students have with their professional advisors. The committee also reviewed information regarding the cost of attendance. It is agreed that in a comparison with other regional institutions A&M Kingsville is on par with what others provide on their Web sites, although there is inconsistent information on the A&M-Kingsville Web site (Admissions cost of attendance versus the Financial Aid cost of attendance Web sites).

P I 3: Connections with Families:

To what degree does the campus establish connections with families of first year students?

Specific evaluation of the following is included in this performance indicator:

- Targeted communications about institutional expectations and procedures
- Inclusion in orientation
- Inclusion in other events and networks as appropriate

Family connection is a current work in progress. While Admissions mailings are targeted to students, it is assumed by the committee that parents are also reviewing materials. However, given the number of students who come to Hoggie Days that have parents who are more comfortable listening to presentations through a Spanish speaking orientation team member, the committee inquired regarding the availability of admissions materials in Spanish; none are available. Parents are now also provided the opportunity to be a member of the Javelina Parent Association and as the program further grows and develops this will become a stronger source of communication to parents/supporters of our students.
P I 4: Communication to Others:

To what degree does the campus communicate to secondary school personnel and other support networks regarding their role in facilitation of student success in the first year of college?

Specific evaluation of the following is included in this performance indicator:

- Secondary school personnel
- Other support networks

The committee, through the information provided by the Admissions staff member on the committee, learned that there are a few programs that assist in communication with secondary school personnel while very little is being done to reach out to other support networks that have influence with first year students. Some of the strongest programs identified that assist with helping make connections with first year students are high school visit days, face-to-face visits of admissions staff to some regional high schools, connections through departments conducting outreach to regional schools through established programs/activities that bring in high school groups and teachers, and through the outreach of Special Programs through Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science, Talent Search, and their other programs.

P I 5: Facilitating Student Connections:

To what degree does the campus structure and implement a first year in which students establish connections?

Specific evaluation of the following is included in this performance indicator:

- Faculty (especially out-of-class)
- Upper-level students
- Other first-year students
- Student affairs professionals
- Academic support services

The committee believes that there are two areas where A&M-Kingsville performs below average: making connections with faculty (out of class) and upper-level students. While some academic departments strive to make connections to first-year students, the trend of not having students join a college or a major until they are upper-level students may not allow for meaningful first year connections to be made first inside the classroom then carrying out to the out-of-classroom experience. It is also the sense of the committee that for those departments that work with first-year students, the level of commitment varies by department. The example the committee discussed in this respect was the person who teaches the 1201-type course. In some departments these courses are taught by seasoned faculty members with a proven track record with first-year courses, while others have adjunct faculty or faculty members whose load is not full teach the first-year courses.
An intentional connection with upper-level students is an area that is currently being addressed through the peer mentoring program. At the time the committee reviewed the information the program was in the process of being developed. The only other evidence we could consistently identify where connections were intentionally made between upper-level students and first year students was with students involved in supplemental instruction staff, tutoring staff, residential life staff, Javelina Camp staff or students connected to the admissions staff (tour guides and orientation team, as examples).

The committee believes the campus does an average job connecting first-year students to other first-year students through Welcome Week, Javelina Camp, Hoggie Days, academic success courses, Living-Learning Programs, and academic support programs such as supplemental instruction, the Learning Assistance Center and Hoggie Aces.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The campus is well situated to respond to the issues presented above, and in many instances work has already begun. With the creation of the Center for Student Success and the pilot programs currently underway, many of the transition programs modeled by other institutions are being developed, such as the peer mentoring program. Further coordination of academic advising and the foundation course (1201-type) will assist in responding to the challenges faced by first-year students. However, many challenges remain. Talisma promises to be a helpful tool in the admissions and communication process, yet it is not used consistently. Students are then experiencing different levels of attention during the admissions process. Conflicting information regarding the financial commitment of students must be coordinated to allow for a consistent message and an accurate picture of the financial commitment of attending A&M-Kingsville. While not specifically addressed in any of the performance indicators above, clarity of information from Financial Aid and the service provided to students through the same, must be addressed in order to increase student satisfaction with not only the first-year but subsequent years as well. Significant issues with Financial Aid and the timing of changes and messages prior to and during the start of the Fall 2011 semester have been reported to several members of the committee and the administration.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

- Admissions materials
- Talisma presentation
- 2007 Final Report- Foundations of Excellence
- Web site Reviews

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION ITEMS

- Coordinate communications with prospective and first-year students through increased use of Talisma and the designation of e-mail as an official form of communication. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Link javelinapride.net in a more significant way to the institutional Web site to provide a stronger picture of the "lived experience". (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Complete the migration of Web pages to the new format, and provide guidelines/expectations for the review and updating of the Web sites once completed. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Recognize “new students” or “first year students” on the Web site with a separate section, linking with Student Success, Student Affairs, Academic and other resources specifically designated for students in transition. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Provide publications in Spanish, particularly publications geared toward parents. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• When the mission has been updated, include on the Web site, provide on the portal and blackboard, and consider placement of the statement at strategic locations on campus. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Publicize engagement activities through Ad Astra and the Luminis portal when both new products are implemented. Use of the two systems must be made an institution priority in order for successful integration to the campus community. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Continue to develop the Javelina Parent Association, including information in Spanish, to further the connection of parents/support units of our students to the campus. Continue to educate parents regarding academic expectations, particularly on how college is different than the high school experience. Continue to evaluate and increase the number of parent related sessions at Hoggie Days to further develop the parent/support culture and their understanding of the collegiate experience, academic expectations, and campus resources. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Increase the connection with regional/feeder high schools, through the development of a campus visit program and the development of intentional connections between high school counselors/administration and the admissions or other staff. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Identify other areas of outreach that have influence over students and provide information about the A&M-Kingsville experience (churches, community engagement groups, etc.) (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Further study is needed on how to best engage students in their academic departments, particularly for those departments/colleges that require separate application or are available to upper-level students. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• As the redevelopment of the 1201-type courses continues, evaluate the experience level of faculty involved in the direct instruction of those courses, to ensure quality teaching at the critical point of first-year students. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Include career exploration with advising during first and second year, particularly in light of the implementation of the Degree Works program. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Consider re-naming either the Banner Identification number or the use of the technology login that begins with “k”, to lessen the confusion between what number is used in which setting. Further distinguish between the Banner Identification Number and the user identification number. (HIGH PRIORITY)
Designate e-mail as an official form of communication and promote the use of the institution provided e-mail address for all official university communications. (HIGH PRIORITY)

A6: ALL STUDENTS DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations institutions serve all first-year students according to their varied needs.

The process of anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs is ongoing and is subject to assessment and adjustment throughout the first year. Institutions provide services with respect for the students’ abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences. Institutions also ensure a campus environment that is inclusive and safe for all students.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jo Elda Castillo-Alaniz</td>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The All Students Dimension Committee reviewed current practices at the university directed toward the needs of first-year students and looked for opportunities for improvement.

REVIEW PROCESS

The All Dimension Committee process consisted of reviewing Noel-Levitz Results – January 2011, A&M-Kingsville Spring 2011 retention survey results, department/program surveys and interviewing directors and/or coordinators of specific programs focusing on the following subpopulations: underprepared students, 1st generation college students, nontraditional students, commuters, transfer students, students with children, and honors students.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PI 6.1 Identified Needs of Individuals

Academic

All first year students are placed in academic courses based on their ACT/SAT scores. Students with deficient scores such as ACT 18 & below and/or SAT 469 & below are placed in Developmental Reading, Writing, and/or Mathematics courses based on each criterion. Students whose placement scores indicate that they are not ready for college level courses are
restricted from courses such as Biology, Chemistry, English, History, Mathematics, and Political Science/Psychology. According to the first year cohort student profile seen in the “Current Practices Inventory”, about 18% (326) students are placed into only one developmental course and about 70% (905) are placed into two or more developmental courses.

First year students are eligible to participate in the Honors College with a minimum ACT of 24 or SAT of 1100 (verbal/math); a High School GPA of 3.5 or above, and class rank (top 10% or better). Current students and transfers will require minimum GPA of 3.5 to be considered for the Honors College. This particular cohort is recruited via the university’s Talisma communication system, Preview Days, and Hoggie Days orientation program.

All first time students who do not maintain “Satisfactory Academic Progress” (above a 2.0 GPA and/or 67% ratio of passed hours), are sent a “Warning Probation” letter from the Financial Aid Office in accordance to the SAP policy and require attendance at life management sessions conducted via the Student Health and Wellness department.

Social/Personal

Subpopulations such as minority, 1st generation college, nontraditional, and veterans are identified through financial aid status and are also recruited via the seven university TRiO programs which provide students with both academic and social/personal services.

The Student Affairs division composed of University Housing and Residence Life, Campus Recreation and Fitness, Student Health and Wellness, Office of Student Activities, Memorial Student Union, Career Services, and Special Programs conducts various satisfaction surveys to identify students’ social/personal preferences and gauge the student’s knowledge acquisition via programs/activities.

SOURCE OF EVIDENCE

Student Affairs - Student Voice Surveys, Noel-Levitz Results- January 2011

CHALLENGES

The committee did not have sufficient time to analyze the effectiveness of the SAP policy and developmental courses in reading, writing and math.

PI 6.2 Addressed Needs of Individuals

Academic

All first year students have various resources that assist them to succeed in their academic environment.

- Learning Assistance Center offers free tutoring specializing is writing, mathematics, introductory science and writing-intensive classes.
- TRiO Programs (Special Programs Department) – Seven TRiO programs (Classic Upward Bound, Upward Bound – Math & Science, Educational Talent Search, Student Support
Services, CCAMPIS, Educational Opportunity Center, and McNair Scholars) that are federally funded by the U.S. Department of Education provide assistance to first generation, low-income students, non-traditional students with children, disability students, and veterans for the opportunity to succeed in a collegiate environment. With individualized tutoring, and academic skills workshops, some of the TRiO programs have succeeded in establishing up to 90% retention rates which supersede the first-year student retention rate of 83% which is seen in the “Current Practices Inventory” (2010 Fall to 2011 Spring Retention Rate).

- **Counseling Services (Student Health and Wellness Department)** provides academic skill building workshops to prepare first-time students for their collegiate work. Academic workshops such as time management, note taking skills, study methods, test taking tips, and test anxiety are offered to all students. In addition, the counseling unit coordinates the retention U-Turn Program and offers assistance to students who need assistance in overcoming academic difficulties. The U-Turn program utilizes various assessments to explore the different aspects of the student. Academic assessments utilized are as follows:
  - The VARK Learning Styles online assessment helps identify how one processes, retains, and recalls information.
  - The Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) helps identify academic strengths and weaknesses of students.

- **Honors College** students participate in 3 core curriculum classes which will increase up to five in the Fall 2011. The classes are limited to 15 students allowing the student to employ critical thinking and increase faculty interaction. Benefits include research experience in an academic area leading up to a senior thesis/project and honors courses listed on the student’s transcript. The Honor’s College has established a Student Council Advisor Group that addresses academic issues and/or concerns and serves as a voice for the implementation of future components within the college.

- **Living Learning Communities (University Housing and Residence Life Department)** – provides first-time students the opportunity to reside in eight themed communities such as Engineering, Music, Fitness and Wellness, Wildlife & Animal Science, Leadership, Honors, Fashionista, and Technology. Students receive individualized tutoring and a study/computer lounge to supplement their academic performance. The LLC’s 2010-2011 Fall to Spring retention rates and GPA’s are significantly higher than the university’s freshman class.

- **Disability Resource Center (Student Health and Wellness Department)** –assists with academic accommodations and provides auxiliary aids to registered students with disabling conditions, as defined by Section 504 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, who are otherwise qualified to meet the institution’s academic requirements. In addition, the DRC office coordinates the “Student Intervention Program – SIP” to monitor and assist students with their academic progress.

- **Freshman Seminars**—1201, 1300, 1301 courses are taught to assist first time freshmen and transfer students with academic and transitioning information so they can thrive in the academic environment. These courses are taught by selective faculty so the first time student gains firsthand knowledge.
**SOURCE OF EVIDENCE**

Noel-Levitz Results – January 2011; U-Turn Program Executive Report; Living Learning Communities Annual Report; and TRiO Program’s Annual Federal Reports.

**CHALLENGES**

Freshman Seminar curriculum is not standardized; thus, some first time freshman may only receive academic skill training and be excluded on life management information which is crucial for surviving transition to college.

**Social/Personal:**

A&M–Kingsville offers students various resources to better manage their complicated and time-pressured lives:

- **Counseling Services (Student Health and Wellness Department)** offers personal counseling for students who may be experiencing personal stresses such as relationship difficulties, self-esteem issues, depression, stress, suicidal thoughts, and any other issue causing distress. Assessments utilized cover these areas: depression, anxiety, suicidal behavior, personality styles, and drug/alcohol abuse. In addition, the Counseling Staff extends evening/late night services to residential students who are identified by Residence Life staff or UPD as experiencing a crisis.

- **Educational Workshops (University Housing and Residence Life)** are offered throughout the academic year to residences so they can learn solutions to better manage their life experiences. Examples of some workshops include alcohol/drug, stress management, money management, time management, fitness and nutrition, and sexual responsibility.

- **Child Care (CCAMPIS – Special Programs)** – provision services are offered via the CCAMPIS program to low-income parents in the post-secondary education system. Approximately 40 Students with children are offered subsidized childcare services via three local daycare facilities. In addition, the CCAMPIS program offers one-on-one advising, tutoring, and life management workshops tailored to this specific subpopulation. Program’s annual analysis has shown 88% retention rate among the participants.

- **Evening Child Care at the Marc Cisneros Center for Young Children** is provided for students enrolled in evening classes during the academic year. The program is funded, in part, by a U.S. Department of Education grant. The intent of the program is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children of university-student parents on evenings they attend class.

- **Shuttle Services** – Dean of Students office coordinates daily shuttle services to local banks, grocery store (HEB), and Wal-Mart. In addition, a special shuttle service is provided to the airport and the social security office which are located in the surrounding communities.
CHALLENGES

Although there are resources that offer workshops on money management and work related issues, there is no evidence to identify a specific program and/or department that focuses on solutions to daily experiences in those areas. In fact the Noel Levitz Results (January 2011) indicated that students rank low satisfaction in financial services.

PI 6.3 Student Experiences

Individualized attention from faculty/staff

Faculty/Student ratio is 16 to 1 which offers first time students opportunities to engage with faculty during their classroom experience. In addition, first time freshman and transfer students receive one-on-one academic advising during Hoggie Days orientation program. In the Noel Levitz Results (January 2011) students rated academic advisors knowledgeable about requirements in their major, academic advisor is approachable, and faculty are usually available after class and during office hours as a strong aspect of A&M-Kingsville.

Academic support outside the classroom:

- **Supplemental Instruction** helps students successfully complete their coursework. The supplemental instructor attends class, introduces themselves, and holds weekly study sessions outside of class to ensure that the student understands the course material. For a complete list of supplemental instructors and supplemental instructor classes, follow this link http://www.supplementalinstruction.com/

- **TRiO programs** offer first-generation students cultural/educational trips to enhance their social and intellectual growth and provide the opportunity for future graduate school opportunities.

Living Learning Communities offers their participants:

- **Opportunities for campus involvement:**

  - **The Office of Student Activities** is committed to the social and academic growth of our students by providing a variety of programs that are cultural, educational, and entertaining for the TAMUK campus. The Office of Student Activities also helps coordinate the activities and functions of more than 100 registered student organizations such as departmental clubs, special interest clubs, honorary societies, religious groups, Greek organizations and sports clubs.

  - **Special Events (Office of Student Activities)** such as Javelina Welcome Week and Family Week-end offer the student an opportunity to connect with the campus through activities and reaffirm the decision that attending A&M-Kingsville was the right choice. During both special events, the academic colleges sponsor activities that engage the students to interact with academic faculty and staff.

  - **Exposing and Cultivating Emerging Leaders (ExCEL)** a freshman program designed to develop Texas A&M-Kingsville’s leaders of tomorrow by enhancing integrity, giving inspiration, and providing a positive environment for the growth of leadership and social
skills necessary to maximize one’s Javelina potential. ExCEL offers a variety of opportunities for freshmen students to enhance their knowledge of the campus.

Inclusive campus environment:

- **Hoggie Days Orientation Program** is designed to help the first-time freshman and transfer student feel comfortable and confident when they begin their collegiate journey at A&M-Kingsville. Students will have the opportunity to meet peer leaders, academic deans, some faculty members, and academic advisors. In addition, students will receive information on campus resources and Javelina Pride.

- **Javelina Camp** is a high-intensity three-day experience designed specifically for incoming Freshmen. Students who participate in Javelina Camp learn about the spirited traditions of Texas A&M-Kingsville, spend time in small “packs” centered on bonding and connecting with students in an interactive setting, participate in team competitions, reflect on their personal college goals, and most importantly have fun with other future students. In August 2010, over 200 first-time freshman attended the Javelina Camp and rated the event as highly successful.

2010 Javelina Campers personal experience quotes are as follows:

> “I loved it! Becoming Friends with everyone in my pack made me feel at home when I started off here at Texas A&M-Kingsville.” – Dani Balderas

> “Javelina Camp helped me feel comfortable around campus and feel a part of a family.” – Demarcus Kelly

> “Camp taught me a lot about the university and I met great people who helped me prepare for my freshman year.” – Tarin Baity

Transfer Students:

- **Transfer Student Program** provides Texas A&M-Kingsville transfer students, of all classifications, with the help they need to make their college career flourish, become active with their surroundings, understand all the resources available to them, and make it an experience of a life time. Social and Educational workshops are sponsored throughout the academic year.

**SOURCE OF EVIDENCE**

Student Voice Surveys (Javelina Camp and Hoggie Days Orientation Program); Noel-Levitz Results (January 2011).

**CHALLENGES**

In the Noel-Levitz Results (January 2011) students expressed low satisfaction with faculty’s interaction with individual students. Respondents reported that they consider it high
importance for faculty to be “fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.” In addition, the respondents ranked low the number of sufficient activities during the week-ends.

**PI 6.4 Subpopulations**

The committee ranked the university’s responses as “high to very high” in meeting the needs of the following subpopulations:

- **Ethnic/Racial Minorities** – Yearly funding is allocated to celebrate and bring awareness toward various ethnic cultures. All students have the opportunity to learn more about Hispanic, Asian, and African American cultures through activities and speaking engagements. In addition, the Women’s Enrichment Program establishes a gender equity environment that encourages personal growth via individualized services, skill building training, and educational outreach. Signature events include “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, Take Back the Night, Breast Cancer Walk/Run, and Women’s History Month. Rank – High

- **Developmental Students** – University College (now the Center for Student Success) provides underprepared students with faculty trained in working with this particular population, supplemental instruction (SI), tutoring services, and four full-time advisors. Rank – High

- **Honors Students** – The university has made incredible strides to this subpopulation with a new Honor’s residence hall (Fall 2011) and a name change from a program to now an “Honor’s College”. Rank – High

- **International Students** – International Students Services offers a mandatory orientation for international undergraduate and graduate students. During orientation students receive information in the following areas:
  - Registering for classes-on-line via the web.
  - Services provided by Student Health and Wellness (health services, counseling, testing, services for students with disabilities).
  - International Admissions and services provided.
  - U.S. Postal Service information and proper procedures for mailing.
  - Career Services and services available to students (preparing for interviews, creating a resume, job searches, career fairs).
  - Understanding university rules, regulations and academic procedures.
  - Maintaining proper immigration status as an international student.
  - Process for obtaining a social security card.
  - Student Activities and student organizations at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.
  - Adjusting to life in the United States and learning about social customs.
  - International Student Services are services available to all international students.

In addition, the office of International Students Services provides international students a location to address concerns/issues, and receive guidance & support through their transition at A&M-Kingsville. **Rank – High**
• **First-generation Students** – In reviewing the performance measures of the TRiO programs, it is apparent that these federally funded programs offer excellent services for first-generation college students. With high retention rates, the TRiO programs can be classified as a “Best Practice” that effectively reaches more subpopulations than other campus departments. Rank – Very High

The committee ranked the university’s responses as “low” in meeting the needs of the following subpopulations:

• **GLBT students** – UNITY student organization provides an environment which fosters a sense of belonging, support academic and career advancement, develop leadership, serve as a resource for and promote the interests of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transsexual, and Questioning (LGBTQ) community. However, in comparison to other universities, the GLBT students do not know “allies” within the university community that can be supportive of their social/emotional needs. **Rank – Low**

• **Commuters** – Even though A&M-Kingsville has a large commuter population, the university has not adequately addressed the needs of the commuter students in terms of connecting with students in residence halls, locations to study or relax between classes, and weekend activities. The new Blue and Gold Transit System should prove extremely helpful for the commuter students as well as the new commuter lounge. **Rank-Low**

**CHALLENGES**

Without evidence to identify if the GLBT students’ needs are being met, it is hard to gauge if the university is effective in serving this community. In regards to commuters, this subpopulation has a higher potential of transferring to another university because their needs are not a high priority for the university.

**PI 6.5 Physical and psychological safety**

Numerous surveys supported the All Students Dimension committee to rank the campus environment safety (physical and psychological) as low. The Noel Levitz Results, Residence Housing’s Spring 20211 Survey, and the National College Health Assessment II study (2010-2011) all indicated that the respondents ranked the university’s performance measurements in assuring overall safety as not up to par.

**A7: DIVERSITY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Foundations Institutions ensure that all first-year students experience diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities.

*Whatever their demographic composition, institutions structure experiences in which students interact in an open and civil community with people from backgrounds and*
cultures different from their own, reflect on ideas and values different from those they currently hold, and explore their own cultures and the cultures of others.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antonia Alvarez</td>
<td>Associate Dean of Students</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<td>John Burnett</td>
<td>EE/AO Officer</td>
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<td>Rosa Cordova</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The Diversity Dimension Committee examined the structures the university has in place to expose first year students to diverse ideas through curricular and co-curricular activities, create opportunities to interact with individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds, and effectively communicate expected standards of behavior for a diverse, open and civil campus community.

The committee surveyed department chairs, assistant / associate deans, student affairs offices, and select faculty to create an inventory of diversity-related activities and initiatives. The committee also reviewed student data from recent Noel Levitz and CIRP surveys, student demographic data in the University Fact Book, and the A&M-Kingsville and A&M System Strategic Plans. Also reviewed were the syllabi of select freshman introductory courses, recommendations in John Gardner’s report after his campus visit in 2011, diversity-related information on A&M System member schools’ Web sites and recent best practices research and trends. Committee members also provided their reflections and observations from their personal experiences at the University.

REVIEW PROCESS

PI 7.1 Diverse Ideas

To what degree does the institution assure that first-year students experience diverse ideas and world views through initiatives based in the curriculum? **Low**

To what degree does the institution assure that first-year students experience diverse ideas and world views through initiatives based in the co-curriculum (campus sponsored out-of-class activities)? **Medium**
To what degree does the institution assure that first-year students experience diverse ideas and world views through initiatives integrated across the curriculum and co-curriculum (e.g., service learning, arts and cultural experiences)? **Low**

**CURRENT SITUATION**

At the present time, there is little coordination of specific learning objectives or topics currently in the curriculum for freshmen classes besides the academic subject matter. Therefore, there is great variance in the topics, educational activities and teaching styles implemented in classes that are typically part of the first year experience. A review of a sampling of freshmen introductory course syllabi available in the Evidence Library revealed that few courses cover diversity as a specific topic. Of the fourteen reviewed, only one (College of Business) referred to a chapter on Diversity to be covered in class from the textbook. However, many syllabi included topics that could be easily refocused to include diversity-related themes. Several discussed the role / impact of society or culture on their major. A number of the courses referred to building communication skills, interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, academic success skills and/or ethics in addition to the academic content specific to their major. In addition, most had a statement on how to seek disability services.

There are a wide variety of co-curricular opportunities at A&M-Kingsville that would help expose student participants to diverse ideas.

1. The university allocates a modest operating budget to various cultural heritage committees (Asian Pacific Heritage Committee, Black Heritage Committee and Hispanic Heritage Committee) to help celebrate their respective months. Committee membership includes faculty, staff, students and community representatives. Through their planning efforts they sponsor a vast array of activities meant to inform, challenge, entertain and engage students and the campus community. Recent activities are too numerous to mention (refer to Evidence Library). In 2010-2011, they included a book signing for an author of Korean Fairy Tales, Asian Mask painting activity, a field trip to the Museum of Asian Cultures, National African American Read-In, Black Heritage Knowledge Bowl involving teams of university and high school students, a Brown Bag presentation on the role of Hispanics in the military from the American Revolution to the present, the 3rd Annual Art Walk and Music Fest in downtown Kingsville, and a panel discussion on the 14th Amendment facilitated by three political science department faculty.

2. The Women’s Enrichment Program (under the auspices of Student Health and Wellness) sponsors programs to promote a gender equity environment and opportunities for personal growth. Their signature events include Breast Cancer Awareness Walk/Run; Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, celebrating Women’s History Month and a Take Back the Night activity to increase awareness and help to end sexual assault, domestic and gender violence.
3. Student Health and Wellness also sponsored a Women4Women Retreat in the spring semester. The retreat was 6 hours long and attended by 97 women. Topics included empowerment through sexual health information, self-esteem awareness, and communication for healthy relationships. The event was funded through a grant for HIV education.

4. Campus organizations often sponsor events that focus on social justice issues such as civil rights the César Chavez Annual March by the Pre-Law Society; hunger, a Can Structure Competition by PEP Talk as part of an annual canned food drive; poverty, “One Day Without Shoes” sponsored by the TOMS@TAMUK student organization, and numerous fundraisers for charity and community service projects, including the “Bigger Event” campus wide community service project organized by the Student Government Association.

5. There are also a wide variety of student organizations that appeal to diverse student interests including the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, International Student Association, Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources & Related Sciences, Women of Diversity, College Republicans, Society of Women Engineers, Ballet Folklorico and UNITY.

6. The Presidential Performing & Visual Arts Series offers events geared to introduce attendees to performers from different genres and forms of creative expression.

7. Some academic departments also sponsor events that help contribute to the university’s cultural scene. The music department offers performances in different types of music such as Mariachi, Latin Jazz Ensemble, choir, classical music, and a Jazz Workshop that features noted jazz musicians. The art department has numerous art exhibits and guest lectures by artists of different media. Theatre Arts majors perform in plays that appeal to different audiences (Shakespeare, musicals, comedies, children’s plays, etc.). The International Affairs Group under the leadership of Dr. Richard Hartwig and with the assistance of other political science faculty sponsor three to five free lectures each semester at noon on select Fridays in a brown-bag lunch format. The topics are varied and relate to global affairs, often by visiting guest lecturers.

8. There is a new focus on further developing and enhancing the recently reconstituted Women & Gender Studies Program, which could result in the availability of additional courses and activities related to such topics as women’s studies; masculinity studies; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) studies; feminist theory; and “queer” theory (the study of human sexuality in cultures and in history).

9. Working with at-risk, first generation college students, many of which are freshmen, Student Support Services highly encourages student attendance at multi-cultural events, major campus activities and also takes participants on educational field trips (i.e., other campuses, the capital, and other out of town cultural events).

10. Since 1988, the university has offered a Faculty Transculturation Program designed to help faculty and professional staff gain a better understanding of the history and culture of the Hispanic student body. Participants attend weekly seminars on Mexican American history, culture, learning styles, literature, etc. presented by Latino scholars. Participants also attend a two-week language-culture immersion experience in Cuernavaca, Mexico.
The attitude of faculty and staff to the student body and the role that faculty and staff are willing to play in fostering academic excellence is a key factor in student success during the first year experience. As was noted in the John Gardner report, A&M-Kingsville students interviewed perceived faculty as being available and willing to help. Gardner however, did express concern about faculty and staff perceptions about student abilities and what he called the “… varying levels of respect, or lack of it, I encountered in faculty and staff, for both the community and its students. In any such visit I make there is inevitably some degree of “student bashing”, a form of concern about student motivation and under-preparedness. But on this campus where there are dramatic differences between the most characteristic racial and ethnic groups represented by the faculty and senior administration, and those within the student body, I left concerned that the expectations you have for your students may not be consistently high or positive enough. Fundamentally, this all comes down to a belief in the dignity, merits, potential ability to learn, that is possessed by our students. I felt that some people were seriously challenged in this regard. There were repeated references to “the culture of South Texas” as being an impediment to student success.” (Page 4, Gardner Report).

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Texas A&M University-Kingsville is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with a rich history of providing a comprehensive undergraduate experience for students of South Texas and beyond.
- Some faculty are passionate about diversity and incorporate aspects of this theme in their instructional delivery and have demonstrated a willingness to provide their expertise and service to planning campus-wide events and activities.
- The recently formed Center for Student Success is poised to play an important role in influencing the formulation of key topics and learning strategies in courses that are part of the first year experience.
- The Center for Teaching Effectiveness provides faculty development sessions and resources.
- There is a growing body of research / best practices available on the role of diversity in student success and how to incorporate diversity in the curriculum.
- The Texas A&M System Strategic plan calls for promoting recruitment and retention programs that will help develop a more diverse student population (Imperative 2.1).

CHALLENGES

- Because Texas A&M University-Kingsville is a Hispanic Serving Institution, the importance of addressing diversity needs in a comprehensive manner is at times taken for granted or overlooked. Diversity is not mentioned in the A&M-Kingsville Strategic Plan.
- Obtaining buy-in from faculty to implement diversity-related topics into their curriculum.
- Developing more collaboration with faculty who already may feel over-burdened when planning campus activities to complement the first year experience curriculum.
Further increasing faculty and staff expertise on methodology and pedagogy for developing creative student engagement class activities and projects, co-curricular multi-cultural experiences and leadership activities.

• Increasing attendance of first year students at diversity-related events.
• Increasing campus awareness about the needs of students with disabilities, GLBTQ students and understanding of other cultures.

SOURCE OF EVIDENCE

• Information in the Evidence Library
• Student data from recent Noel Levitz survey
• 2010 CIRP survey
• Student demographic data in the University Fact Book
• The A&M-Kingsville and A&M System Strategic Plans
• Reviewed the syllabi of select freshman introductory courses
• Recommendations in John Gardner’s Report
• Diversity-related information on A&M System member schools’ Web sites
• Recent best practices research and trends

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

• Ensure opportunities exist for first year students to acquire knowledge about diversity-related topics, facilitate interaction among different groups and develop awareness of resources available to under-represented groups.
  o Include a diversity component in the curriculum of the first year experience.
  o Modify current planning cycle to better connect current diversity-related programs/activities with faculty to enhance infusion into the curriculum of the first year experience.
  o Encourage diversity-related topics in residence hall programming, student leadership programs, and student employee training activities.
  o Provide faculty development opportunities in designing purposeful student engagement activities that promote service learning, exposure to the arts, and multi-cultural experiences with better intentionality.
  o Review the information and awareness activities about underrepresented groups such as students with disabilities, GLBTQ students and understanding students from other cultures.

• Identify obstacles to success and learning for diverse populations for utilization in the development of relevant student learning objectives, infusion in the curriculum and faculty development so as to strengthen the first year experience program.
  o Conduct a campus climate student survey utilizing the Diverse Learning Environment Survey Instrument.
  o Further develop staff and faculty expertise and resources on how diversity impacts student success and retention and the identification of best practices to assist diverse populations.
Utilize assessment results to develop appropriate initiatives integrated within the university’s student success / retention efforts and the first year experience.

**PI 7.2 Interactions**

To what degree does the institution structure opportunities for first-year students to interact with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own within the following categories?

Faculty / staff at the institution:  **Medium**

Other students at the institution:  **Low**

Individuals outside the institution:  **Medium**

**CURRENT SITUATION**

Small class sizes generally make it easier for students to interact with their faculty both in class and after class. Some departments also plan special events in early Fall to help new students interact with faculty outside the classroom.

Other than participation in class or membership in student organizations, there are few opportunities for freshmen to interact in meaningful ways with their peers, with a few notable exceptions. Residential students have more opportunity to interact with other students in the dining hall, by attending hall programming activities or living in living learning communities. Students participating in Javelina Camp and other leadership programs such as ExCel, have a unique opportunity to interact with other students outside their comfort zone. However, as noted by the students in the committee, in general students tend to socialize primarily in groups such as by race, hometown, country of origin or group affiliation (Greeks, athletes, ROTC, etc.).

As mentioned above, the university offers a wide variety of activities and special events which provide students many opportunities to interact with guest speakers and presenters from outside the institution through the work of the cultural enrichment committees, the International Affairs Group, and departmental initiatives. Other examples include:

- The University Lecture Series sponsored through Student Affairs brings speakers to the campus;
- The Lucille Kruse Reading Series, named in honor of language and literature department supporter Lucille Kruse, strives to bring notable authors to campus to read their works.
- An Egyptian professor recently discussed the role of Arab Women in literature during the Arts & Sciences Dean's Colloquium;
- The Olan Kruse Lecture Series Endowment Fund was established in 2003 for the purpose of bringing distinguished physicists to Texas A&M University-Kingsville to make presentations on current events in physics and astronomy.
The College of Agriculture sponsors the Killam Deer Lecture through an endowment established for the purpose of bringing prominent researchers in the areas of wildlife conservation and management to speak on campus.

Freshmen Convocation is held in early Fall to welcome students to the University. A guest speaker is featured during the ceremony.

To encourage students to get involved in campus life, some faculty include attendance at extracurricular events as part of their class assignments. A review of a sampling of freshmen introductory course syllabi available in the Evidence Library revealed that half of the classes specifically encouraged participation in attending educational or cultural events on campus and/or Freshman Convocation through an assignment or for extra credit.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- The number of students living on campus has increased.
- The selection of living learning communities available to students in the residence halls has increased.
- Javelina Camp is a popular freshman activity.
- Freshman Convocation

CHALLENGES

- Not all faculty are able / willing to become more involved with students through involvement in outside of class projects, attending campus activities, participating on planning committees with students or serving as student organization advisors.
- The cost of attending Javelina Camp makes it not easily affordable for some students.
- In the 2010 CIRP Freshman Survey, 34.3% of the respondents rated their chance of participating in student clubs/groups as “very little chance” or “no chance.”
- There are few structured opportunities for freshmen to interact in meaningful ways with their peers.

SOURCE OF EVIDENCE

Reviewed information available in the Evidence Library

CIRP 2010 survey results

Information about the activities of the cultural committees

Marketing and Communications Web site / Archives
RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

- Provide meaningful opportunities for first-year students to interact with individuals from different cultures and background.
  - Enhance planning by cultural committees to increase interaction, participation and sense of inclusion by the campus community
  - Sponsor a student diversity conference to further increase awareness and interpersonal communication skills
  - Expose first year students to the availability of study abroad or the National Student Exchange Program as potential opportunities for new educational experiences
  - Provide diversity training for faculty, staff and students
  - Provide an incentive for faculty to participate in diversity-related activities i.e., community service events; cultural celebrations, advise diversity groups, etc., as a requirement, credit for service, and/or element for evaluation.

PI 7.3 Behaviors

To what degree does the institution convey to first-year students the standards of behavior it expects for participants in a diverse, open, and civil campus community? Low

CURRENT SITUATION

The university informs students about conduct expectations during student orientation, at hall orientation meetings for residential students, and through distribution in the Student Handbook, which contains the student code of conduct.

However, the university has not had a coordinated approach in place for conveying to students the university’s aspirations and expectations for having civil discourse, open dialogue and respect for the differences of others.

Some faculty convey their expectations about student conduct in the classroom through their syllabus and discussion of expectations on the first class day. A review of a sampling of freshmen introductory course syllabi available in the Evidence Library revealed that one third of the faculty specifically mentioned expectations about mutual respect, scholarly debate and/or respect for other ideas in the classroom. Seven of the fourteen courses surveyed also mentioned developing effective communication skills and ethical development as course objectives.

In the 2010 CIRP Freshman Survey, 47.9% of the respondents rated themselves above average, 44.6 % rated themselves as average, and 7.5% rated themselves below average in their “Ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues.”

Committee members related that as a general rule, the majority of the students at A&M-Kingsville were respectful and related well with each other. However, there were at times tension and conflicts between different groups that could be attributed to cultural differences, misperceptions, lack of familiarity and poor communication and conflict resolution skills.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

• Opportunities for informing students about expectations could be integrated into the first year experience learning objectives.
• The Center for Student Success has instituted a Javelina Pledge that all freshmen must sign to indicate their commitment to the responsibilities of a first year student.
• The Center for Teaching Effectiveness provides faculty development sessions and resources that could be utilized to inform interested faculty on how to encourage civility in their classrooms.
• The Peer Educator Program under Student Health and Wellness is currently working on a new initiative to address this issue in their workshops with students to increase their awareness about hurtful behavior and empowering bystanders to respond proactively to the situation.

CHALLENGES

• There are currently few structured activities in place for freshmen, where this topic could be addressed.
• The increased student use of social media increases the opportunity for negative messages and behavior to be broadcast to a larger audience, thereby increasing the potential for offending more students, more easily demeaning the intended target and glamorizing uncivil behavior.

SOURCE OF EVIDENCE

Reviewed information available in the Evidence Library
CIRP 2010 Survey results
Texas A&M University Student Handbook

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

Develop and communicate a clear and consistent message about the importance of diversity at A&M-Kingsville.

• Establish a Diversity Council (university-wide; under the President’s Office) to help coordinate diversity efforts, focus on emerging needs, and celebrate accomplishments.
• Establish a Web site that focuses on diversity, inclusion and other related initiatives to better communicate the university’s initiatives.
• Recommend that faculty include a statement on classroom conduct expectations, mutual respect, tolerance for differences and other civility issues.
• Review marketing materials, university Web sites, etc. to ensure that we are sending appropriate and welcoming messages;
• Prepare bilingual materials (esp. at Orientation for parents); Web sites equipped with Google translator or similar software;
• Promote greater awareness of community behavioral expectations by developing a communication plan and marketing campaign.
• Sponsor more activities and initiatives designed to help ease tension between different student populations through interactive awareness sessions targeted to key groups to increase tolerance of cultural differences, identify myths and stereotypes, stress communicating respectfully and to help foster understanding and inclusion.

A8: ROLES AND PURPOSES DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations institutions promote student understanding of the various roles and purposes of higher education, both for the individual and society.

These roles and purposes include knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning to become engaged citizens, and learning to serve the public good. Institutions encourage first-year students to examine systematically their motivation and goals with regard to higher education in general and to their own college/university. Students are exposed to the value of general education as well as to the value of more focused, in depth study of a field or fields of knowledge (that is, the major).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Jaya Goswami</td>
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<td>President, Student Government Association</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The scope of the Roles and Purposes Committee was to study how effective the university is at helping students understand and embrace the varied purposes of higher education for their
lives, particularly enhancing personal growth, gaining future employment, bettering society, and becoming active community members.

REVIEW PROCESS

- Primary source of evidence employed was evaluation of course syllabi for 1201/1300/1301 courses
  - Convenience sample of course syllabi from fall 2010
  - Select syllabi included, representing first-year courses in all colleges
  - Assessment rubric developed by committee to evaluate inclusion of all questions posed for this dimension (see attached rubric)
  - Syllabi for fall 2010 used in order to include all courses – not all 1201/1300/1301 courses are offered during spring / summer terms
- Supplemented by review of NSSE, Noel-Levitz, and CIRP survey data
- Informal survey and assessment of support services offered to first-year students (e.g. Career Services, Student Activities, Student Government, etc.)
- Informal interviews with providers of additional experiences for first-year students e.g., American Democracy project, QEP funded projects for civic engagement, etc.
- Review of current university Mission Statement
- Data compiled in master spreadsheet and analyzed by committee members (see attached master spreadsheet); additional sources of data integrated into spreadsheet
- Data / evidence limited in that students, faculty, and staff were not directly surveyed to obtain their perceptions re. questions to be addressed for this dimension

CURRENT SITUATION

Primary Findings:

- Future employment opportunities and information related to personal growth (e.g., acquisition of skills re. time management, communication, and professionalism; role of lifelong learning; attendance at/participation in university events) were highly supported by evidence gathered – these areas were clearly incorporated through multiple venues for students across colleges and programs on campus.
- Personal goal setting by students was included in over 80% of 1201/1301 courses, as evidenced in reviewing course syllabi and are likely included informally in all courses; this was augmented by activities provided through additional venues such as Career Services (via Discover, individual conferences with students, etc.)
- 59% of course syllabi included evidence of support for students’ self-examination of reasons for attending college. While less than two-thirds of syllabi covertly addressed coverage of this, other venues, such as Hoggie Days and Javelina Preview Day presentations, GEAR UP, Career Services activities and presentations, etc. address this with first-year students
- Evidence collected indicated that opportunities for community involvement and contribution to the betterment of society was directly addressed in only 41% of courses reviewed. This area, historically, has not been a primary focus of 1201/1300/1301
courses. However, coverage of this has been enhanced by QEP funding and other campus activities, such as the American Democracy Project, and through other venues, such as Living Learning Community activities. In addition, activities related to civic engagement and service learning may likely be included to a greater extent in upper level courses.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

• Even though purposes regarding knowledge acquisition for personal growth, future employment, engaged citizenship, and serving the public good are explicitly outlined in certain parts of the institution’s mission and philosophy statements, no explicit statement exists specifically for first-year students. There is an opportunity to create such a philosophy statement solely for first-year students.

• In regard to knowledge acquisition for future employment, there are opportunities for faculty members and different campus entities to have this conversation with students and to make the connection between course work and future life goals and employment. This can be done in course syllabi or through course competencies and course assignments and projects. This, in turn, presents a great opportunity to incorporate service learning in the curricula across disciplines.

• The current situation reveals that positive and helpful programs are presently available for first-year students. Career Counseling, through both presentations and interactions with students in 1201, 1300, and 1301 classes, appears to have a positive impact in helping first year students understand purposes and motivations for attending college, as well as in assisting students in identifying future career options. There are various programs that offer many opportunities to students, but the problem is that students, faculty members, and staff members of other campus programs are not fully aware of all the opportunities.

• Centralization of academic advising, as well as development of the proposed peer mentoring program could provide support in addressing the rationale behind required competencies, course work, and academic requirements for different programs of study. Success of these initiatives and programs may be dependent on providing a sufficient number of advisors to assist all the students in such a fashion.

• Development of a common first year series of courses (i.e., university 1101 and 1102) will benefit students, if faculty teaching these courses receive requisite training, institute a common focus, and develop activities and assignments for these courses that support and enhance student understanding of the roles and purposes associated with the pursuit of a university education.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

• 1201/1300/1301 syllabi from fall 2010
• A&M-Kingsville Mission Statement
• NSSE survey data
• Noel-Levitz data
• CIRP data
• Informal survey and assessment of support services offered to first-year students through Career Services, Student Activities, and Student Government
• Informal interviews with providers of additional experiences for first-year students including American Democracy project and QEP funded projects for civic engagement
• Undergraduate Catalog
• Student Handbook

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Most areas in this dimension are likely to be more completely addressed as the university moves toward the proposed 1101/1102 courses and initiates the peer mentoring program
• Providing training for and continuing dialog among faculty responsible for first-year experience classes is recommended, so faculty are clearly aware of all areas to be included in these courses and more purposeful in articulating the importance of the role and purpose of higher education, both in general and specifically at Texas A&M University-Kingsville
• Additional administrative and/or financial support should be provided to foster development of civic engagement/service learning during the first-year experience
• Students should be encouraged to join and participate in student organizations – this provides opportunities for students to participate in both leadership training programs and community service/civic engagement activities sponsored by student organizations
• Assisting students in understanding their goals and reasons for attending the university will be important in enhancing student motivation, retention, and academic success.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

• Include a common two semester first-year-experience course for all students (i.e., university 1101 and 1102). This may be an improved way of providing information to first-year students that can afford them the opportunity to reflect and improve their internal motivation levels concerning their education.
• Create a forum where different departments and programs from Academic Affairs and Student Affairs can collaborate and share ideas, successes, and opportunities regarding first-year students.
• Through collaborative efforts, create a first-year philosophy statement and reinforce the philosophy through marketing efforts.
• Increase the number of advisors in the Academic Advising Center so first-year students can have more individual attention.
• Create an online resource for programs of study and required competencies for each degree plan with explanations of real-world applications and future employment opportunities/possibilities.
• Explicitly include keywords (knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning for engaged citizenship, learning for serving the public good) in mission statements and philosophies.
• Reinforce future career opportunities through different venues – Career Services, first-year courses, and AVID – as well as other venues to reach all first-year students. Perhaps include such a component in a freshman seminar required course for all first-year students and continue to focus on career opportunities for students during university Hoggie Days, Javelina Preview Days, etc.

• Encourage faculty members to include General Education Core competencies in the course syllabi and review them with students.

• Encourage faculty members to make connections among course competencies and objectives and future life goals and career paths.

• Incorporate service-learning activities geared toward future career opportunities and civic responsibility in first-year courses, including the proposed first-year-experience course.

A9: IMPROVEMENT DIMENSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing first-year improvement:

This assessment is specific to the first year as a unit of analysis—a distinct time period and set of experiences, academic and otherwise, in the lives of students. It is also linked systemically to the institutions’ overall assessment. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision making, and ongoing improvement of programs and policies as they affect first-year students. As part of the enhancement process and as a way to achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as with research and scholarship on the first college year.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The Improvement Dimension Committee was tasked with reviewing data from current university programs directed toward first-year students, analyzing the programs’ impact, and offering suggestions for further improvements for those programs.

REVIEW PROCESS

The committee investigated 12 different units that were identified as pivotal in ensuring student success:

- Supplemental Instruction;
- Learning Assistance Center;
- Pre-major professional advisement;
- University goal classes (general education);
- Quality Enhancement Program (QEP);
- Admissions and Enrollment Management
- Student Affairs
  - University Housing
  - Counseling Center
  - Recreational Sports and Services
  - Student Judicial Affairs
- Library

SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT

To what degree does each initiative include systematic assessment? Systematic assessment is “appropriately timed, focused, and based on data collection and analysis methods that provide high-quality information for decision making.”

The following questions were asked of units:

1. Does your unit systematically collect any kind of first-year student assessments? Please list them.
2. When are first-year student assessments conducted?
3. What is done with the data collected from first-year student assessments?
4. Where is the data stored?
5. Is this data disseminated to students and the university community?
6. What policies and procedures does your unit follow to respond to the data collected from first-year student assessments?

CURRENT SITUATION

ACADEMIC PROFILE OF ENTERING STUDENTS

Academic information on entering students is collected through the admission process. This information includes class rank, ACT and SAT scores, type of high school curriculum, high school GPA, and placement scores on the approved Texas Success Initiative placement examination. A
great deal of analysis is currently being done on this data by Office of Institutional Research (OIR), but the campus community is largely unaware of it and/or does not make use of it.

RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES

Overall retention rates for first time students are reported in several external reports including the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) reports, Texas Legislative Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and the Texas Legislative Budget Board. This information is essential to ensure the institution is on target to meet the expected benchmarks set by the state for the Closing the Gaps expected graduates. Retention Rate is the percent of students who enroll in the university as first time in college in a given year (cohort) who return to the university in the second year.

Graduation Rate is the percent of students who complete all degree requirements within a fixed timeframe, typically measured over a 4-year or 6-year period.

Although graduation rates are reported in the aggregate, the published graduation rate does not really capture the work done by the university. Retention and graduation rates are calculated on first-time in college and so don’t take into consideration the students who stop-in, transfer in, take classes part-time, or continue to eventual graduation. The cohort system is the normal way to calculate retention and graduation.

FINDINGS

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER (LAC)

The LAC includes a process of assessment intended to measure the impact student participation in the program has on students’ GPA, retention rate, and completion rate. To do this, data are queried from the Banner student-information system. Participants also assess the quality of the activities delivered and provided by the LAC. Students are asked to complete an electronic survey to assess whether or not students feel that they have benefited from the program and what changes can be made to better the experience.

QEP

Current assessment methods in place to assess the Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) are coordinated by Dr. Duane Gardiner, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, using a variety of methodologies to determine the impact of program initiatives. The current assessment plan includes evaluation by the QEP Assessment Team, which rates artifacts, reviews the data, and provides an analysis of the results; and other ongoing data collection throughout the semester.

PRE-MAJOR ADVISEMENT

The committee interviewed advisors and could not identify any assessment in place for first year students and/or the first year experience at either the department level or the College level.
The following surveys represent those that are routinely administered by the university. The results are used by individual departments and many are benchmarked with like institutions. Participation in these surveys is entirely voluntary. OIR collects and reports a variety of quantitative and qualitative measures specific to the 1st year experience. Assessments are conducted by OIR full-time staff members as well as student mentors. The response rate for most surveys administered to program participants averages about 25% of each cohort. Data extracted from the institution’s student-information system are considered accurate. The data collected include: GPA and completion rate of program participants (administered at end of semester); Persistence rates in the first year (analyzed at continually throughout the year). Other assessments that are administered by OIR include the following:

CIRP—Cooperative Institutional Research Program

- **Who?** First-year students
- **How administered?** Paper survey, by cohort
- **When?** Handed out in class in October. Faculty administer the CIRP

Measures demographic characteristics of incoming students; expectations of the college experience; secondary school experiences; degree goals and career plans; college finances; attitudes, values and life goals; reasons for attending college. A report is available in June/July.

MAPP or The ETS® Proficiency Profile

- **Who?** Juniors and Seniors
- **How administered?** Paper
- **When?** Spring

Collects information on students proficiency in critical thinking, reading, writing and mathematics in the context of humanities, social sciences and natural sciences and academic skills developed, as opposed to subject knowledge taught, in general education courses. Results are available at the end of August.

NSSE—National Survey of Student Engagement

- **Who?** First year and senior students, by cohort
- **How administered?** Online
- **When?** Spring

This survey asks students about their participation in the programs and activities that contribute to their learning and personal development; level of academic challenge; active and collaborative learning experiences; student-faculty interaction; enriching educational experiences; and supportive campus environment questions. A report is available in August.

SRI – Student Rating of Instruction
Student ratings of college teaching were designed for purposes of improving teaching practice or performance. Formative evaluation refers to information that is gathered for the purpose of improving teaching. Student ratings provide feedback that instructors can use to make positive changes in their courses or teaching practice. The diagnostic information provided by such feedback can identify strengths and weaknesses as perceived by students in a particular context. Over time student ratings have also increasingly been used to assist in personnel decisions. A report is available and sent to instructors and faculty administrators within one week of the close of the online SRI.

SSI and IPI – Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and Institutional Priorities Inventory

- **Who?** All undergraduate and graduate students
- **How administered?** Online
- **When?** Fall

The SSI and the IPI collect satisfaction data about students and help university management determine the status of the university by asking students about their level of participation in the programs and activities that contribute to their learning and personal development; level of academic challenge; active and collaborative learning experiences; student-faculty interaction; enriching educational experiences; and supportive campus environment questions. A report is available in August.

USS and GSS — Undergraduate and Graduate Student Survey

- **Who?** Graduating Seniors and Graduating Graduate Students
- **How administered?** Paper survey, by cohort
- **When?** May, August, December

This survey measures satisfaction with the college experience; student involvement; cognitive and affective development; student values, attitudes and goals; degree aspirations and career plans; Internet, electronic mail and other computer uses. The report is available on an ongoing basis.

**STUDENT SERVICES**

CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey

- **Who?** All students, randomly sampled
- **How administered?** Paper and online versions available
- **When?** Spring, every other year

Measures patterns of alcohol and drug use; demographic data; secondary effects of substance use; attitudes and values; assessment of campus environment; housing preference; relation of
substance use to patterns of sexual behavior. A report is available in late spring in the year of administration.

HIV/AIDS

- **Who?** All students
- **How administered?** Paper
- **When?** Intermittently

Collecting information on at-risk behavior and knowledge base of students. Results are available at the end of August.

MID-Year Housing Survey

- **Who?** Students living on campus
- **How administered?** Through an on-line survey.
- **When?** November

The Mid-Year Housing Survey measures student satisfaction in such areas as room assignments and the change process; dining services; safety and security; hall and/or apartment programming; room/floor environment; sense of community; satisfaction with residence life program and housing experience. Also asked predictor questions of persistence in halls. A report is available December 15.

National College Health Assessment (NCHA-II)

- **Who?** Random sample of general student
- **How administered?** Online and Paper eventual online only
- **When?** Fall

This survey measures alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; sexual health; weight, nutrition and exercise; mental health; personal safety and violence. The report is available in the late fall.

**GENERAL EDUCATION**

The former chair of the General Education Committee was contacted and the following was reported as the current situation for general education assessment. Since Spring 2007 pre and post tests have been administered in most General Education courses each semester. Data has been forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, who has been responsible for compiling the data in the form of a report.

In Fall 2007, the General Education Committee considered applications from departments wishing to add additional courses to the General Education curriculum, which had been revised in Spring 2007 to include a new Global Learning requirement. In an effort to offer faculty more leadership in selecting assessment methods, the General Education committee approved assessment plans that utilized course-embedded assessment techniques rather than relying solely on pre and post-tests. The Committee hoped that this would be the first step in
transitioning the General Education assessment from pre and post-tests to course embedded models.

In Fall 2008, the General Education Committee communicated with department chairs regarding their Spring 2007 assessment results. The Committee made recommendations regarding how to improve assessment results, as well as how to increase the number of students completing the pre and post-tests. 2011 General Education assessment will be reevaluated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and changes will be made at that time.

**Library**

The first-year students attend the Freshman Experience classes; the library is part of these courses twice during the semester. Students are given an assignment by the Library; it is up to the professor’s discretion whether or not to grade it. Some professors request further training in library skills for the students.

Currently the Library is creating Qwizdom (clicker response method) PowerPoint models for each class. They ask pre & post questions to assess if students understand what is being taught. Since they do not interact with the students more than once or twice they do not have a class list to link the student to the response. The data is held in the library and is available to the professors upon request. The Library would prefer to teach these classes on a regular basis in order to collect more formal and consistent assessment.

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

The greatest need identified by the committee is to combine activities and initiatives for first-year students under a coordinated umbrella with its own staffing and areas of responsibility in order to create a true, unified first-year-experience program. First-year students and the first-year experience are currently handled by different units or departments, but in a disparate manner. Current assessment activities provide data that neither demonstrate impact nor can be used for purposes of improving student success. Again, assessment of each program or initiative does not provide the institution with sufficient information to know whether these programs are truly effective or not. Currently, programs appear to be gathering data for the sake of gathering data and for the purpose of justifying that the staff is producing programs that are being utilized by students. Data are currently being generated through individual programs and may only be shared with program staff members and supervisors in the specific school, college, or division. Use of assessment is currently not adequate to be able to identify weaknesses in the first-year-experience initiatives or how they truly impact first-year students.

A coordinated first-year-experience program should determine and clarify the purpose and mission of the combined, coordinated experiences. The first-year program should also set expected outcomes for the program and for student performance or behaviors. Furthermore, investigation of these programs shows a gap in the cooperation and coordination between (a) the academic challenges that Academic Affairs is facing in trying to ensure students succeed academically, and (b) the Student Affairs division. These divisions should be working together
closely to develop relevant and targeted support programs that help make students successful in and out of the classroom.

The greatest challenge in dealing with the current disconnectedness is the institution’s ability to generate accurate data. Data in the student-information system is often incorrect and therefore results in erroneous outcomes. Furthermore, when faculty and staff members need information, it generally has to be requested as an adhoc request to the Office of Institutional Research and is generated as a stand-alone individual report. Usually, faculty and staff members at large are not aware of the reports and data being generated.

Very little information is generated specifically on first-year students. The institution has the opportunity to learn more about the entering first-year cohort of students but must make a conscientious effort to query the data by this cohort as a practice, rather than afterthought. Only when more data are gathered specifically for these cohorts can an analysis of trends occur.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW

The Improvement Dimension Committee contacted several program directors and coordinators of the identified initiatives having the most impact on first-year students. They all shared their assessment processes with the committee members looking for evidence to demonstrate the extent to which each program conducts systematic assessment of their students, programs, and services.

One of the strengths was that assessments are being conducted but the weakness occurs in that the assessments are not necessarily being acted upon. The problem arises because the university does not currently have policies in place that require units to follow-up or act upon findings. This problem is further exacerbated by the lack of coordinated data collection and dissemination across units about the first-year experience and about why students leave. Without coordinated data on why students leave, faculty and staff members are forced to depend on anecdotal information about the issue.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

- Develop a comprehensive assessment plan for the first-year experience. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Determine what data and information about first-year students are currently being collected identify the gaps, and disseminate the information to responsible and associated units. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Establish a comprehensive and continuous program review of the first-year experience modeled after the current academic program review processes. (HIGH PRIORITY)
- Establish a first-year experience committee to guide and monitor all assessment. One suggestion was to convert the “all-students” dimension committee to a permanent first-year experience committee. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Develop an exit interview survey that is administered to graduating seniors. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Expand opportunities for faculty and staff professional development on campus that pertain specifically to the first-year experience. (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Develop e-portfolio system for students to reflect on their education and their goals (HIGH PRIORITY)
• Streamline assessment instruments administered across campus to eliminate redundancy and overlap. (HIGH PRIORITY)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Texas A&M University-Kingsville has many positive programs, resources and services for first year students. However, there is a lack of coordination of the programs, resources and services for first year students. Many departments or units attempt to address student success without adequately communicating their intent to other responsible parties. Additionally, there is a great amount of data collected regarding student success which is either not analyzed or not shared with the entire campus community. This results in a negative sentiment on campus where each department or unit is pointing the finger of blame at each other, rather than cooperating to improve student success.

The overarching theme to improve student success entails: improving communication across campus, especially between academic affairs and student affairs in terms of resources and programs for first year students; enforcing deadlines for admission; implementing a fair and widely communicated developmental education plan; early identification of students who truly need developmental courses; implementing a summer bridge program for students who need developmental courses; faster processing time for admissions and transcript articulation; better communication from our university to prospective students; and improved customer service in all offices which connect with first year students.

The following suggested action items are recommendations generated during the summer of 2011 from the Foundations of Excellence refresh self-study. The recommended action items are listed under the responsible committee to address the needed action as well as in the individual dimension or subcommittee report. The Eight Recommended Implementation Committees include: Academic Affairs Committee; Communication Committee; Diversity Committee; Enrollment Management Committee; First Year Experience Committee; Leadership Committee; Recruiting Committee; and Service Learning Committee.

Suggested Action Items

Academic Affairs Committee

1. Student Learner Outcomes
   • Based upon SLO data, initiate procedures that improve changes based on results.
     • Based on the first-year common learning goals, identify and/or develop measurable outcomes for all special learning opportunities such as learning communities, leadership programs, service learning, student affairs functions/initiatives, residence life, and out of class activities.
- Improve procedures for documenting and evaluating student learning outcomes across all sections of courses.
  - Develop e-Portfolio system for students to reflect on their education and their goals.
- Encourage faculty members to include General Education Core competencies in the course syllabi and review them with students.
  - Recommend that faculty include a statement on classroom conduct expectations, mutual respect, tolerance for differences and other civility issues.

2. Assessments
   - Students
     - Streamline assessment instruments administered across campus to eliminate redundancy and overlap.
     - Create university wide procedures for addressing the causes of high DFWI rates in first year courses – Collect and Analyze Audit Data for DFWI rates each semester.
     - Conduct additional student surveys to continually receive student input and work to make their time in college a more complete and pleasant experience.
   - University
     - Further study is needed on how to best engage students in their academic departments, particularly for those departments/colleges that require separate application or are available to upper-level students.
     - Assess new initiatives that have been established in Academic Year 2012 to include: such as transportation services, commuter lounge, peer mentor program, early alert program, AVID program and RAD program.

3. Professional Development
   - Provide department chairs with "High Energy" training.
   - Rotate Department Chairs; make the department/unit chair job a rotating position.

Communication Committee

4. Communication
   a. Internal
     - Development of a mechanism for campus conversations to incorporate leadership into the overall climate of Texas A&M University-Kingsville at all levels of the student experience. The task force would need to formed and have conversations on the current status of leadership at the university. Compile a formal report for the university.
     - Conduct focus groups to address specific areas that were identified in the Noel-Levitz –Results (January 2011) as high importance and low satisfaction among the students. In particular, draw attention to areas
such as campus safety and security, wireless technology, financial aid process, faculty interaction with students, and computer labs. Focus groups can be conducted among the different colleges to understand the perspectives of each academic area and explore if there are specific areas that need to be addressed among the colleges.

- Coordinate communications with prospective and first-year students through increased use of Talisma and the designation of e-mail as an official form of communication.
- Create a forum where different departments and programs from Academic Affairs and Student Affairs can collaborate and share ideas, successes, and opportunities regarding first-year students.
- Reduce the occurrence of different messages sent to different groups by administration creating misinformation.
  - Require that all phones be answered during business hours; GET CUSTOMERS OUT OF THE PHONE TREE
- Recognize “new students” or “first year students” on the Web site with a separate section, linking with Student Success, Student Affairs, Academic and other resources specifically designated for students in transition.
- Designate e-mail as an official form of communication and promote the use of the institution provided e-mail address to which the communication is sent.

b. External

- Inform campus community regarding new policies and procedures for the placement of first year students with deficiencies in academic preparation.
- Publicize engagement activities through Epsilen and the Luminis portal when both new products are implemented. Use of the two systems must be made an institution priority in order for successful integration to the campus community.
- When the mission statement has been updated, include on the website, provide on the portal and blackboard, and consider placement of the statement at strategic locations on campus.
  - Explicitly include keywords (knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning for engaged citizenship, learning for serving the public good) in mission statements and philosophies.
- Create an online resource for programs of study and required competencies for each degree plan with explanations of real-world applications and future employment opportunities/possibilities.
- Oversee integration of marketing efforts through brochures, websites, and other materials targeting new students.
- Prepare bilingual materials (esp. at Orientation for parents); websites equipped with Google translator or similar software.
- Review marketing materials, university websites, etc. to ensure that we are sending appropriate and welcoming messages.
- Complete the migration of web pages to the new format, and provide guidelines/expectations for the review and updating of the websites once completed.
- Identify other areas of outreach that have influence over students and provide information about the A&M Kingsville experience (churches, community engagement groups, etc.)
- Promote greater awareness of community behavioral expectations by developing a communication plan and marketing campaign.
- Link javelinapride.net in a more significant way to the institutional website to provide a stronger picture of the "lived experience".
- Establish a communication plan based on the students’ point of view in the admission process (prospect, inquiry, admitted, transcripts evaluated, eligible for orientation, advising, scholarship and financial aid, and registration), other.

Diversity Committee

5. Administration
   - Establish a Diversity Council (university-wide; under the President’s Office) to help coordinate diversity efforts, focus on emerging needs, and celebrate accomplishments.
     - Establish a website that focuses on diversity, inclusion and other related initiatives to better communicate the university’s initiatives.
     - Examine the social/personal needs of the GLBTQ community and establish some effective services to assist this subpopulation in feeling comfortable and safe on campus.
     - Identify and sponsor more activities and initiatives designed to help ease tension between different student populations through interactive awareness sessions targeted to key groups to increase tolerance of cultural differences, identify myths and stereotypes, stress communicating respectfully and to help foster understanding and inclusion.
     - Develop and communicate a clear and consistent message about the importance of diversity at TAMUK.
       - Organized effort is needed with Diversity Programming, including Heritage Committees.

Enrollment Management Committee

6. Enrollment Management
   - Oversee adherence to deadlines and coordination of dates with regard to recruitment, admissions, financial aid, and orientation.
• Establish a goal of a 5-business-day transcript-evaluation turnaround.
• Have student bills (housing and tuition) ready to roll at first and subsequent Hoggie Day event.
• Implement a 100% online processing procedure of all first-time students who apply by the posted deadlines.
• Consider re-naming either the K-number or the use of the technology login that begins with “k”, to lessen the confusion between what number is used in which setting. Further distinguish between the K-number and the user identification number.
  o Create first-time-freshman checklist for first-time freshmen and provide it electronically on the dedicated Web site.
  o Develop an exit interview survey that is administered to graduating seniors.

First Year Experience Committee

7. Marketing
  o Link javelinapride.net in a more significant way to the institutional website to proved a stronger picture of the “lived experience”.
  o Continue to develop the Javelina Parent Association, including information in Spanish, to further the connection of parents/support units of the student to the campus.
    ▪ Continue to evaluate and increase the number of parent-related sessions at Hoggie Days to further develop the parent/support culture and their understanding of the collegiate experience, academic expectation, and campus resources.
    ▪ Continue to educate parents regarding academic expectations, particularly on how college is different than the high school experience.

8. Faculty
  o The first-year experience must include challenging, engaging, academic initiatives and environments with support services and resources, and faculty-led activities in class (i.e., field trips)
    ▪ Incorporate leadership in student organizations to develop future leaders and to conduct retreats for students.
  o As the redevelopment of the 1201-type courses continues, evaluate the experience level of faculty involved in the direct instruction of those courses, to ensure quality teaching at the critical point of first-year students.
    ▪ Review and revise the 1201 first-year seminars for uniformity and consistency across courses, while allowing for the emphasis of academic majors.
  o Need for charismatic faculty to interact with first-year students.
9. Support Staff

- Emphasize Importance of Quality Teaching for tenure and promotion in Annual Report.

- The First-Year Experience must also include social, cultural, and recreational activities led by student organizations, Student Services, Colleges and Departments.

- With high underprepared student population, the university needs to consider a summer bridge program similar to the TRiO-Upward Bound Program which is currently reflecting higher retention rates than A&M Kingsville.

- Increase the number of advisors in the Academic Advising center so first-year students can have more individual attention.

Leadership Committee

10. Student Engagement

- Create comprehensive listings of all leadership opportunities and house them under Student Activities.
  - Assist students in understanding that leadership can be obtained by providing forums and or seminars throughout the year.
  - Identify additional administrative and/or financial support for leadership opportunities for students.
  - Incorporate leadership in student organizations to develop future leaders and conduct retreats for student organizations, including conference attendance.

11. Leadership Curriculum

- Encourage faculty members to include leadership in the general education core courses and connect the process for students.

- Market leadership in the colleges and in the departments so that students coming into the university are clearly aware of leadership opportunities.

Recruiting Committee

12. Recruiting

- Incorporate faculty and student teams into recruiting visits. This would bring program-specific information to the recruiting process. A selection process would be established to select appropriate and willing students and faculty members. For faculty members, this would be promoted as university service and would be a one-year commitment. Both students and faculty members would travel with the recruiting team.

- Increase the connection with regional/feeder high schools, through the development of a campus visit program and the development of intentional connections between high school counselors/administration and the admissions or other staff.
Service Learning Committee

13. Student Engagement
   o Identify grant funding or budget resources for the establishment of a Center for Academic and Civic Engagement to more fully develop opportunities for service learning and other community service opportunities, as well as overseeing other related campus opportunities.
     - Include the Chamber of Commerce in communication about activities and the ability to request assistance for service learning projects.
     - Connect the Chamber of Commerce and the Center for Academic and Civic Engagement to assist in promoting service learning throughout the Kingsville community.
     - Utilize civic engagement and service learning activities to promote student engagement during the first year.
   o To overcome the communication and coordination barriers present, as well as to provide a common resource for service learning expertise, the committee recommends the development of a clearinghouse for service learning through establishing one location for resources and information related to service learning.
   o Enhance campus communication regarding service learning through use of the portal and the campus calendar. Provide service learning “corners” in the South Texan and the Hog-E Weekly publications.

14. Course Recommendation
   o Incorporate service-learning activities geared toward future career opportunities and civic responsibility in first-year courses, including the proposed first-year-experience course.
   o Encourage service learning in the curriculum through multiple avenues: Internships, student teaching, etc.
   o Curricular requirements to include an institutional graduation requirement of “service learning” through the designation of courses that fulfill service learning requirements.
   o Encourage faculty members to make connections among course competencies and objectives and future life goals and career paths.
B1: CORE CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT
This subcommittee focuses on core curriculum.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michael Grayson</td>
<td>Professor of accounting, and chair of the Department of Accounting and Finance</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon Baker</td>
<td>Associate professor of history; Chair, Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Chisholm</td>
<td>Associate Dean and Professor, Chemical and Natural Gas Engineering</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Knight</td>
<td>Assistant athletic director for academics</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paula Hanson</td>
<td>University comptroller</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Roberson</td>
<td>Professor of English, and assistant dean of College of Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice president for Student Success</td>
<td>Ex-officio</td>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The committee addressed the following matters/questions:

- What should be the purposes of a general education core curriculum at A&M-Kingsville?
- Are these purposes the same all across A&M-Kingsville, or are there separate purposes for different parts of the university?
- What actually is the core curriculum at A&M-Kingsville?
- How well or poorly does the actual core curriculum accomplish the purposes we have set out?
- Is there some way of improving the core curriculum to better fulfill the purposes we have set out?
- Why do we think these proposed changes will better fulfill the purposes we have set out?
- How will we gather and evaluate evidence after the fact to determine whether these changes indeed do better fulfill the purposes we have set out?
- How often should we reconsider the core curriculum?

REVIEW PROCESS

Former General Education Core Curriculum Committee Chair was member of committee.

Reviewed all course syllabi of general education core classes.

CURRENT SITUATION
Defined purpose of core curriculum as promoting life-long learning and broadening the foundational knowledge of all A&M-Kingsville students.

Waiting for results of Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board state-wide recommendations for General Education Core Requirements.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Doing a complete review of the core curriculum, including coverage and testing, would be a monumental task. Additionally, it would quickly become out of date, as the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is working on making modifications to the core curriculum.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

The committee members reviewed general education core requirements from Texas A&M University, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University-Commerce, and West Texas A&M University. Additionally, the committee reviewed the current A&M-Kingsville catalog and core curriculum requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW

- Encourage faculty who teach core-curriculum courses to better illustrate how the materials in these courses are useful (whether presently useful or potentially useful in the future) to students in their lives – both personal lives and work lives.
- We need to have a campus culture that places value on learning. We need to have some way of reaching out to all employees to for good ideas about how to assure that everyone here works toward that goal. Whatever we do should be based on appreciation and rewards, not on punishments or disallowing things.
- Update the Developmental Education Plan to require that students who need Developmental Writing or Reading must complete those courses as pre-requisites for reading and writing intensive courses.
- The university should consider having one or more summer programs for certain at-risk students before they are formally admitted. These programs might include developmental courses, or participating in a learning community.
- There are a number of students who come to A&M-Kingsville to major in engineering, but when they arrive as students, they do not have sufficient math skills. They do not take any developmental math course(s) until they are already here for fall semester of their freshman year. Consider running a math boot camp during the summer to get these students up to the level where they do not have to take a developmental math course during their first fall semester. This will not work for every incoming student, but the math boot camp can be recommended to incoming students even without requiring that they attend the math boot camp.
- An overall feeling is developing that we need to do more to encourage faculty to interact with other faculty from various disciplines, not just those faculty in their own building, and not just those who teach the core curriculum. Many of the large,
successful technology-oriented companies have spaces and eating areas which are intentionally designed to encourage people to meet others who work there, even though they do not work together.

- The committee likes the idea of establishing learning communities whereby students take multiple courses together.
- If there were to be sufficient demand for it, A&M-Kingsville might be well advised to have math courses designed for engineering and/or physics students, because they have particular needs that other students taking math courses do not have.
- Advanced Placement (AP) course information is not shown on the profile sheet which advisors use when telling students to enroll in developmental courses. The AP course information (not just test scores) should be shown, because for high-quality high schools, the fact that the student took an AP course – whether or not the student took the AP test – is sufficient for us to reasonably predict that the student does not need to be in a developmental course in that particular subject.
- Incoming students’ transcripts and test scores should be articulated in a timely manner.
  - Expanding on the immediately preceding item, the transcripts and test scores should be articulated before Hoggie Days.
  - Have someone assess the admissions function and office for constructive comments. We believe, based on the experiences of some of the members of this subcommittee, that the admissions process needs to be completed sooner and with greater accuracy.
  - Insist that students complete their core courses before their last semester to prevent any last minute registration problems which could prevent graduation.
  - The university has only five rooms to accommodate classes of seventy-five (75) or more students at a time. When building new buildings or remodeling existing buildings, consider allowing for classrooms which can accommodate large classes. If necessary, make these rooms flexible by allowing them to be subdivided into multiple smaller rooms.
  - The Center for Teaching Effectiveness could present live workshops at the beginning and end of each semester for professors who have not taught before.
  - There needs to be follow-up by the university once we know that a student receives one or more U grades among the five-week grades.
  - Engineering has a sufficient number of students so that in the core-curriculum courses, separate sections which are more math-intensive could be offered.
  - Consider offering more extensive placement testing of incoming students so that we can prepare student-specific advising concerning what courses to take. This should allow for students to not be placed into developmental courses when not appropriate, while strengthening them in areas where needed.
  - Consider expanding computer-based training as appropriate.
  - Although not directly related to the core curriculum, we believe units within the university can consider providing non-credit offerings. If these offerings have zero credits, then they do not count for purposes of the 120 hours required for a degree. However, they can be helpful in accomplishing the aim of further developing our students.
Perhaps we should have some campus-wide mixers for the students. The purpose is to encourage them to interact with people from outside their own disciplines.

Consider the possibility of team-teaching some of the core-curriculum courses.

To the extent feasible and practical, core courses should incorporate writing. We recognize that as class sizes become larger, it becomes more difficult to do this.

Regarding the completion of core courses, we believe the individual academic units (colleges, departments, etc.) should decide when they need their students to complete the core courses. Some units may need their students to complete the core courses in a shorter amount of time than other units, while some units may need to get early contact with their students and allow the students to take the core courses over a longer time frame.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

ACTION ITEMS

The committee feels that the draft recommendations should be action items. The questions remain concerning what to do, when, and where the resources will come from to implement them. Fortunately, we believe that many of these recommendations ought to be relatively inexpensive to implement.

B2: FIRST-YEAR SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The First Year Subcommittee was formed on the recommendation of Dr. John Gardner to increase campus understanding of the First Year Experience and examine all resources and programs that are particular to First Year Students. Additionally, the First Year Subcommittee examined the developmental education plan with regard to correct placement of incoming freshmen students and how that affects student success.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Hageman</td>
<td>Chair, Music Department</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Weir</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Paulson</td>
<td>CIO</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvonne Trachta</td>
<td>Director of Alumni Affairs</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rian Scarborough</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
</tr>
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</table>

SUUBCOMMITTEE SCOPE

The First Year Subcommittee was charged with revising the Developmental Education Plan. Additionally, the committee was asked to assess all freshman student success initiatives.
REVIEW PROCESS

The Committee reviewed the current Developmental Education Plan and revised the information within the plan. The primary area of change was to redesign the test scores and the array of scores that were to be used in placing students into developmental education courses. Dr. KingSanders made the suggested revisions in the plan and it was submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The Committee realized that it was beyond the scope of the committee to assess all of the student success initiatives on campus. So, the committee attempted to identify the different First Year Experience initiatives on campus and to determine the entity that was responsible for the implementation and assessment of that activity. The following chart lists a wide array of such activities and the different entities deemed responsible for the implementation and assessment of such activities.

FRESHMAN STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Success Initiatives</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Classes</td>
<td>Student Success, Math, L&amp;L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Assistance Center</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Instruction</td>
<td>Colleges, Departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with Major</td>
<td>Colleges (at present)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1201 Classes</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living and Learning Communities</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honors Classes</td>
<td>Honors College</td>
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<td>Engagement Activities</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome Week</td>
<td>Alumni Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send-Off Parties</td>
<td>Alumni Affairs</td>
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<td>Freshman Fiesta</td>
<td>Student Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Fling</td>
<td>Student Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homecoming</td>
<td>Student Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bigger Event</td>
<td>Student Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Carnival</td>
<td>Student Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concerts</td>
<td>Office of Admissions</td>
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<td>Admission Process</td>
<td>Office of Financial Aid</td>
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<td>Financial Aid Process</td>
<td>Campus Housing</td>
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<td>Work Study</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dormitory Life</td>
<td>Student Affairs/Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dining Services</td>
<td>Ad Astra, Colleges, Depts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Entertainment/Activities</td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Availability</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Hoggie Days
Javelina Preview Days
Scholarships
Communication (Talisma)
Class Sizes
New Initiatives (Future)
DegreeWorks
Luminus
One-Stop Shop

Enrollment Management
Enrollment Management
Financial Aid, Colleges
Enrollment Management
Colleges, Departments
Enrollment Management
Marketing and Comm.
Enrollment Management

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

The committee recommends that each activity be assessed by each responsible party to determine the success of each initiative. Based upon the assessments, the responsible entities should use the data to make changes for improved effectiveness. Also, the committee recommends that this list continue to be updated and adjusted to reflect the changes occurring on campus.
B.3 LEADERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Good leaders usually possess a combination of many positive traits and characteristics that come together to form and define their leadership style and philosophy. To assist in the development of tomorrow’s effective leaders, we need to empower and challenge those who we lead.

PHILOSOPHICAL STATEMENT

At A&M-Kingsville, leadership is a process, built on competence and accountability, for the pursuit of excellence. Leaders inspire and influence others to come together, be their best and agree on a vision for the future. Leaders innovate to achieve their vision with the ultimate goals of improving organizations, communities and societies.

At TAMUK we see the Leader in YOU!

Take a risk, innovate
Aspire to be your best
Make an impact
Understand the power of others
Knuckle down and Lead

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Committee Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kirsten Compary</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>Co-Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary L. Gonzalez</td>
<td>Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs</td>
<td>Co-Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duane Gardiner</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed Abdelrahman</td>
<td>Associate Dean, College of Engineering</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Mena</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin Martinez</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandy Vargas</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

COMMITTEE SCOPE

The Leadership Subcommittee was tasked with reviewing data from current university programs and leadership opportunities directed towards students. Analyzing programs’ impact and offering suggestions for further improvements for our students as leaders in our University.

The leadership committee was formed as an exploratory (discovery) committee to collect information on leadership opportunities at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Discussions were conducted to develop a philosophical statement/framework of leadership and SWOT analysis of
leadership. Additionally this subcommittee started the process to collect leadership opportunities at the university and create a statement.

**COMMITTEE CHARGE**

Leadership is listed in our mission statement- how do we produce leaders? This is the charge given to the subcommittee and we had discussion on other items to include in our charge. We agreed that we need to identify current practices, examine future opportunities and make recommendations to start to construct a plan to assess the framework of leadership at the university.

- i. What kind of leadership do we want to produce?
- ii. What strategies are going to employ?
- iii. How will we know when we’ve achieved our goal?

**Define Leadership**

The committee spent several weeks in examining the statement and each word to ensure we are covering the focus of leadership at the university. We reviewed several other universities and leadership components. In our recommendations it is evident that we must create a leadership centered area on campus or an office that is designated the holder of these current and new opportunities as we move forward.

**What do we do that supports the mission and our definition?**

Sources of evidence are basically at present a list of events and programming we conduct to help develop leadership at the university. They are an array of events and programs that are conducted year to year. The committee agreed that developing a statement was a good place to start and to receive further direction from the administrative leadership. The committee also expressed that leadership is formed and the core dimension committees would probably have an exhaustive list of leadership opportunities as it transcended into all aspects on campus. The major goal in the upcoming year is to create a marketing piece that ensures that students, staff and faculty get the message that leadership is alive at the university and we must formulate the culture of leadership and send these messages to everyone at the university.

**REVIEW PROCESS**

1. Extensive discussion on definition of leadership
2. Development of SWOT analysis by the committee
3. Creation of general philosophical statement on leadership
4. Recommendations on where we need to go with Leadership

**CURRENT SITUATION**

There are numerous opportunities across campus and the need to development a core repository for these opportunities. The committee expressed the lack of a conduit to facilitate the leadership charge for students. A possibility of having the newly created position of AVP for
Student Success as a recipient of all leadership opportunities to create an ongoing list and have the ability to Google leadership on the TAMUK website and receive a centered response with a comprehensive picture of leadership at the university. The AVP for Student Success has recently formed a committee to examine leadership curriculum at the university and this committee is will start to move in the direction of leadership in the curriculum.

**SOURCE OF EVIDENCE**

- Extensive discussion that should continue to examine the current state of leadership at the university
- Review of current programs and events mostly in Student Affairs along with different programs or events in individual colleges
- The recent collection of events and opportunities for SACS accreditation provides an overview of opportunities but the university lacks a formal brochure or centered approach to leadership. Though leadership is in our mission statement which is changing we need a philosophical stance on leadership for students.
- Exhaustive listing of leadership events and opportunities from reviewing the website and receiving emails from key persons on campus

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

According to the summary report prepared by John Gardner, Student Affairs already offers certain “leadership” non-credit activities. But, the lack of academic credit for the study of leadership shows that the University is not deliberately taking sufficient proactive steps to deliver on the promise of its mission statement. He recommends that the College of Arts and Sciences appoint a working group to explore the new discipline of Leadership Studies, the work and resources of the International Leadership Studies Association, and some colleges and universities that currently offer such cognates, minors, and majors. These are curricular initiatives which are always linked to intentional co-curricular opportunities for the practice of leadership, which have been shown to be particularly attractive for recruiting female students, and in which leadership students achieve commendable retention and graduation rates.

The university had John Gardner, with Foundations of Excellence review our campus and one of the recommendations was to have a Leadership Curriculum. The committee has been formed and Dr. KingSanders has hired someone to coordinate the effort and draft a proposal for a Leadership curriculum. The committee is comprised of several academic and student affairs professional that will help in development of the future of Leadership in our curriculum. The following list is mostly events and programming which are fully defined in the report.

- South Texas Leadership Conference, Orientation Leader Training, Javelina Camp Leader Training, EXCEL, Student Leadership Training for Greeks, Campus Activities Board, Student Government Association, Peer Educator Program Leaders, Who’s Who Recognition, Ring Ceremony
- Orientation Leaders, Leadership Tour Guides, Communication Call Center Leaders, Colligate G Force Mentors, Peer Mentor Training, Leadership Work Study Training,
Javelina Preview Mentors, Service Ambassadors, Presidential Ambassadors, McNair Scholars Program

- Band Leadership camps, Summer programs, Leaders Training
- Each College hosts leadership opportunities in their respective disciplines throughout the university
- Fred Garland Lectureship Awards, ROTC leadership forums and Badge awards, Leadership Doctoral programs, the newly formed “Honors College”
- Numerous Undergraduate Scholarly training through federally funded programs and throughout camps in the individuals colleges

RECOMMENDATIONS

Development of a mechanism for Campus conversations to incorporate leadership into the overall climate of Texas A&M University-Kingsville at all levels of the student experience. The task force would need to formed and have conversations on the current status of leadership at the university. Compile a formal report for the university.

- To formally incorporate and develop a strategy for effective leadership across the academic disciplines and the entire university
- Market leadership in the colleges and in the departments so that student coming into the university are clearly aware of leadership opportunities
- Additional administrative and/or financial support for leadership opportunities for students
- Assisting students in understanding that leadership can be obtained by providing forums and or seminars throughout the year
- Encourage faculty members to include leadership in the general education core courses and connect the process for students
- Incorporate leadership in student organizations to develop future leaders and conduct retreats for student organizations
- Incorporate conference attendance for Student Organization Leadership
- Create a brochure of leadership opportunities in student affairs and academic affairs
- Create comprehensive listings of all leadership opportunities and house them in the AVP for Student Success office.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATION FOR LEADERSHIP AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE

Texas A&M University-Kingsville finds itself engaged in multiple leadership opportunities, yet highly dispersed efforts in leadership development. Some leadership development programs are targeted at freshmen, upper classmen, graduate students and others at pre college youth. Still another approach is used with participants in programs in which there is an integrated leadership development component. The need for a coherent framework was expressed in various ways. The committee members felt that leadership development programs suffered from the lack of a clearly articulated unifying vision. Others cited a lack of evidence of lasting change resulting from leadership development programs and the need for long-term evaluations. The committee sensed a need to focus on a systematic development by utilization
of a task force with more time to interview key administration and gather a comprehensive picture for long term change. Inclusion of this in our strategic plan would be a vital process.

Therefore overall recommendation is the creation of a task force charged with articulating a conceptual framework to guide existing and future university and community-based leadership development efforts. Further, it was projected that a unifying framework could contribute to (a) a common language that programs and participants involved in leadership development could use to share experiences and results with each other; (b) a design for assessing the impacts of the many variations of leadership development programs, and for identifying factors instrumental in creating lasting change; and (c) a stronger basis from which faculty and staff could develop experiences, and establish partnerships with others, both on and off-campus, engaging in community-based leadership development.

The members of this task force would need to be students, faculty, Director level staff and some administration. Included would need to be some community leaders with expertise in community leadership development. The ideas that emerge from the discussions and the creation of accompanying literature will form the vision, values, and principles of the framework that follows. A task force final report could result for the future direction of leadership at the university.
### SWOT ANALYSIS CONDUCTED BY SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

#### S
- Student Involvement
- Organization, Opportunities, Leadership
- Structural Leadership Programs
- Student Leadership Programs, Student Opportunities
- Quality Academic Programs
- Forums for assertive leadership

#### O
- Reconstruction of Community and University Partnership
- Marketing our stories and Successes
- Development of overall plan
- Organization and Involvement
- Structural Leadership Progress, and Potential to grow
- Focus on Exterior and Interior Funding, and Budget Restrictions and Change
- Communicate and talk to Faculty
- Reconstruction of Community growth

#### W
- Lack of overall Application and Leadership
- Lack of Coordination
- Lack of Traditions
- Lack of Plan, and Not Operation Mission
- Lack of Committees own Leadership
- Lack of Faculty Development in Leadership
- Lack of Student engagement

#### T
- Competing priorities
- Individual student characteristics
- Outside Competition for Students
- Low Donor and Alumni support
- Community support and opportunities

### B.4 SERVICE LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kirsten Compary</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duane Gardiner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alberto Ruiz</td>
<td>Dean College of Education and Human Performance</td>
<td>Member</td>
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</table>
SUBCOMMITTEE SCOPE

The committee was charged originally with differentiating between community service project and service learning. The committee, while in the midst of one of our first meetings, however broadened out the scope of our discussions to studying our current service learning culture and making recommendations on how to improve the visibility of service learning on the A&M Kingsville campus, as well as setting goals and assessment that might ultimately lead the campus to designation as a service learning institution.

REVIEW PROCESS

The committee began by working to define “service learning” in order to better understand the scope of discussion and recommendations. The committee then developed a comprehensive listing of known service learning related experiences provided by Texas A&M University-Kingsville. The committee then conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to assist in the development of the current situation and recommendations outlined below.

CURRENT SITUATION

Service learning, for the committee’s purpose, included any function of a student’s experience that blended service to others with a learning component.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville offers a great number of service learning opportunities, but it was quickly realized during the committee’s development of the list of opportunities that communication challenges exist related to the publicizing and awareness of what is available. Students actively engage in these opportunities in significant ways and they report that the activities enhance their overall satisfaction with their college experience and anecdotally report that they wish they had known about opportunities earlier in their collegiate career, tying the need for greater awareness to the first-year experience. With the adjustment of the former QEP program to Service Learning, there is also an institutional commitment to providing resources for service learning activity, yet the campus lacks a structure for long-term sustainability of a service learning culture.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Texas A&M University-Kingsville is well suited to become a campus that is recognized for outstanding commitment and participation in service learning and campus engagement.
Student participation and assessment of the opportunities is high, yet the coordination is lacking and communication is challenging. The committee identified that there are opportunities to apply for recognition as a service learning campus, and the criteria for such would provide guidelines and framework, with further study, to further institutionalize service learning on the campus.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- To overcome the communication and coordination barriers present, as well as to provide a common resource for service learning expertise, the committee recommends the development of a clearinghouse for service learning through establishing one location for resources and information related to service learning. (short-term)
- Identify grant funding or budget resources for the establishment of a Center for Academic and Civic Engagement to more fully develop opportunities for service learning and other community service opportunities, as well as overseeing other related campus opportunities. (Long-term)
- Encourage service learning in the curriculum through multiple avenues:
  - Internships, student teaching, etc. (Short-term)
  - Curricular requirements to include an institutional graduation requirement of “service learning” through the designation of courses that fulfill service learning requirements. (Long-term)
- Enhance campus communication regarding service learning through use of the portal and the campus calendar. Provide service learning “corners” in the South Texan and the Hog-E Weekly publications.
- Include the Chamber of Commerce in communication about activities and the ability to request assistance for service learning projects. (Short-term)
- Connect the Chamber of Commerce and the Center for Academic and Civic Engagement to assist in promoting service learning throughout the Kingsville community (Long-term)
- Develop assessment plan on service learning as applicable to the recommended action items.

**B5: RURAL SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

Foundations institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing first-year improvement:

*This assessment is specific to the first year as a unit of analysis—a distinct time period and set of experiences, academic and otherwise, in the lives of students. It is also linked systemically to the institutions’ overall assessment. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision making, and ongoing improvement of programs and policies as they affect first-year students. As part of the enhancement process and as a way to achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are*
familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as with research and scholarship on the first college year.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robbie Brown</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashton Crocker</td>
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<td>Bill Kuvlesky</td>
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<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy KingSanders</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Student Success</td>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
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SUBCOMMITTEE SCOPE

The Rural Subcommittee was tasked with identifying obstacles that hinder the retention rate and success of students coming from rural areas. This was subsequently expanded to include all students and community-wide as well as campus-specific opportunities.

REVIEW PROCESS

Committee met weekly from June through August. Early meetings focused on campus issues, with discussion centering on comments from students over a period of several years and from the two student members of the committee. When focus shifted to community-wide topics, members of the community, including representatives from local government and business organizations, were invited to share dialogue and identify areas where cooperation could be beneficial to all concerned parties.

CURRENT SITUATION

The committee’s discussions focused on possible reasons that students are not graduating at a higher rate – either dropping out of college or transferring to other institutions. The discussions covered a range of topics, from recruiting potential students, the admissions process, completing financial aid applications, programs to assist current students, and shopping/dining/entertainment options.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- Students not living in Kingsville have different needs than those living on-campus or near campus. These range from simply needing a comfortable place to relax/study between classes, to having scheduling challenges for work-study.
- Difficulty for students without automobiles to be able to perform simple tasks in town.
- Improve “customer relations” in Office of Admissions and Financial Aid.
- High School graduates not prepared for college.
- Nothing to do. Students get BORED!!
- Local public entertainment facilities are underutilized
- Lack of communication between university and community at large.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Anecdotal Information from both community and university personnel
NSSE, CIRP

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen relationship between community and university
Communicate community events to all university people: students; faculty; staff
Communicate university events to community of Kingsville

OVERVIEW

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

- Implement Student Discount Program as soon as possible.
- Dedicate facilities conducive to students not living in Kingsville who are in campus all day, Amenities could include lockers, showers, snack and study/rest areas.
- Develop a high-quality Career Center with increased internship opportunities
- Develop work study programs specifically for students not living in Kingsville.
- Offer in-town transportation for students, to off-campus housing, retail, dining and entertainment venues. (Already underway)
- Develop closer working relationships with high school counselors- Admissions and Financial Aid specifically.
- L. E. Ramey Golf Course – work with Kleberg County to better utilize the course. Opportunities range from free unrestricted green fees for students (in exchange for a flat fee from university) to development of PGA sanctioned Golf Management program, involving several university departments.
- J. K. Northway facility – work with Kleberg County to hold more events there. Immediate possibilities including Roping Competitions and Agriculture Judging events.
- Create more of a college town atmosphere, all over town, but especially downtown.
- Continue to explore opportunities for commercial, retail and residential development close to campus.
• Offer in-town transportation for students, to off-campus housing, retail, dining and entertainment venues. (Already underway)
• Conduct additional student surveys to continually receive their input and work too make their time in college a more complete and pleasant experience.
• Committee to continue going forward, meeting monthly. Add representatives from the City of Kingsville, Kleberg County, and various business leaders, as well as high-level administration members from the university – The committee needs decision makers to have hands on involvement.

B.6 TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing first-year improvement:

This assessment is specific to the first year as a unit of analysis—a distinct time period and set of experiences, academic and otherwise, in the lives of students. It is also linked systemically to the institutions’ overall assessment. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision making, and ongoing improvement of programs and policies as they affect first-year students. As part of the enhancement process and as a way to achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as with research and scholarship on the first college year.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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<tr>
<td>Dr. Shane Creel</td>
<td>Director of Risk Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paula Hanson</td>
<td>Comptroller</td>
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<td>Maricelda Zapata</td>
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<td>Mariselda DelaPaz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crispin Trevino</td>
<td>Interim Dir of Student Affairs Auxiliary Services</td>
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<td>Felipe Garza</td>
<td>Chief of Police</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vincent Louis</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
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<td>Justin Munoz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margie Delbosque</td>
<td>Director—Kleberg Co. Dept of Human Services</td>
<td>Ad-hoc member</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Garcia</td>
<td>Operations—Kleberg Co Dept. of Human Services</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selina Kieschnick</td>
<td>College of Business Administration</td>
<td>Member</td>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The Transportation Task Force was tasked with investigating two new transportation programs: 1) Campus Shuttle System, and 2) Transportation Program which would bring commuter students to campus from remote locations.

REVIEW PROCESS

The committee members met weekly over the summer of 2011, and created two sub-committees—assessment subcommittee and marketing subcommittee.

A needs assessment was created to determine need for riders and timing of schedules for bringing commuters to and from Corpus Christi’s Del Mar College campus. 11 individuals responded to the survey (results attached).

An assessment was conducted with faculty/staff to determine ridership for commuting to campus (results attached).

CURRENT SITUATION

Situation prior to formation of the Transportation Task Force was very limited. TAMUK had one shuttle van that took students to the social security office in Alice occasionally, provided transportation to the airport in Corpus Christi, Texas and Greyhound bus station, and two or three days/week the shuttle would transport students to HEB, banks, and Wal-Mart.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- The Kleberg County Department of Human Services wrote a grant to TxDOT to provide extensive transportation programs to improve professional and personal development of citizens.
- Possible to institute a student fee to provide transportation.

CHALLENGES

- No public transportation (taxi, bus, etc.) existed.
- No budget or student fee money was allocated for any type of transportation program.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Texas A&M University Facilities/Grounds Master Plan

Surveys—needs assessment of Corpus Christi students and A&M-Kingsville faculty and staff

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a campus-based shuttle to provide safe, convenient transportation throughout the campus during the week.
• Create a shuttle system which will give students access to Kingsville and the local surroundings.
• Create a shuttle system which will allow individuals who live outside of Kingsville to get to campus for classes or work.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

Conduct a needs analysis to determine expansion of Kingsville Connection program to facilitate transportation for commuters from Alice, Beeville, Robstown, and Raymondville/the “Valley” areas.

Conduct satisfaction surveys of riders for the Blue and Gold Connection to make improvements to the campus shuttle and to determine if goals are being met.

ACTION ITEMS

Implemented a new student fee to be collected beginning fall 2011 of $20/person/semester.

Worked with Kleberg County Department of Human Services to contract for shuttles and drivers

Created the Blue and Gold Express—a campus based shuttle system which operates from 7 a.m. to Midnight Monday-Friday

Added shuttle runs to the CC airport and Greyhound bus station by appointment (additional fees)

Added excursion shuttles to take students to entertaining and cultural events.

Created the Kingsville Connection—a shuttle which transports students, faculty, and staff between Kingsville and the Del Mar College campus Monday-Friday.

B.7 WOMEN’S CLIMATE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Foundations institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing first-year improvement:

This assessment is specific to the first year as a unit of analysis—a distinct time period and set of experiences, academic and otherwise, in the lives of students. It is also linked systemically to the institutions’ overall assessment. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision making, and ongoing improvement of programs and policies as they affect first-year students. As part of the enhancement process and as a way to achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as with research and scholarship on the first college year.
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<td>Dr. Jaya Gaswami</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Associate Vice Provost for Student Success</td>
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COMMITTEE SCOPE

The Women’s Climate Subcommittee was tasked with 1) Assessing the climate and culture at Texas A&M University-Kingsville with regard to supporting the recruitment and retention of women as students, faculty, and staff; and 2) Creating strategies to increase the satisfaction and work or learning environments of women.

REVIEW PROCESS

The committee members met bi-weekly beginning in summer 2011 and plan to continue through completion of assessment and creation of strategies.

Two surveys were created by Bernice Sandler to assess campus climate for women at the levels of students and faculty. Dr. Sandler, a renowned expert in this field, allowed our university to use and modify the surveys in any way to gather sufficient data to make institutional changes. The committee reviewed and modified the survey for students and will do the same for the survey for professionals, and will use results to create strategies to make the climate more supportive for women.

CURRENT SITUATION

Situation prior to formation of the Women’s Climate Subcommittee was that there was anecdotal evidence that women students felt unsafe on campus. Some females spoke about issues of hostile environments and inappropriate behaviors by males at President Student Round Table forums in 2010-11. Also, a survey of potential students and their parents revealed that women do not, in general, “like” Texas A&M University-Kingsville, but the results did not elaborate on areas of concern.
Also, the primary students who were adjudicated for significant inappropriate conduct on campus (assaults, harassment, drugs, etc.) were African American females.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Changing the physical features of the campus environment (safety) has been a priority for administration and will be supported.
- Surveys provided by Bernice Sandler will help to gather information regarding perceptions and identify gaps in knowledge or areas for improvement.

CHALLENGES

- No information has been collected to determine the causes of the “chilly” campus climate for women.
- Changing perceptions takes quite a bit of time and will not happen quickly enough to really impact current enrollment (retention or persistence).

RECOMMENDATIONS

None yet—waiting to see results of surveys

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS (HIGH PRIORITY)

Conduct a campus climate survey for students in October 2012.
Review campus climate survey findings in November
Meet in work groups to determine strategies to improve campus environment for students.

ACTION ITEMS

Revise the campus climate survey for faculty to meet the needs of our population.
Submit survey to faculty and staff for responses.
Meet to review and create strategies.
Meet quarterly to review strategies and changes.
Reassess both populations in one year to determine if perceptions have changed.
Conduct focus groups with students, faculty, and staff regarding campus climate.
Research civility theories and models for implementation.
Increase judicial actions and give appropriate punishments/consequences in cases of harassment, assault, etc.