

**DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2005-2006**

**AUGUST 1, 2006**

## **DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS**

### **Annual Report 2005-2006**

Energy in the Division of Student Affairs during the past year was primarily focused on four areas: developing a spirit of involvement, facility design and development to support a more vibrant campus life, assessment of the student experience to identify and respond to barriers to student retention, and implementing health and wellness programs and services in response to data from the CORE Alcohol Survey and the National College Health Survey.

#### **Developing a Spirit of Involvement**

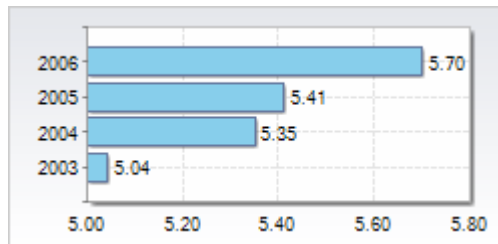
Foremost in this category of activity are the comprehensive student leader training programs that are designed for all division student employees, for students in elected or volunteer leadership positions, and participants in programs structured by the Center for Student Leadership that are open to all students. In summary, division staff provided 34,973 hours of training for 2,949 students, consisting of a variety of topics on leadership and organizational behavior, diversity, and role specific training for groups such as orientation counselors, group fitness instructors, resident advisors, building managers, and leaders of clubs and organizations. In addition, staff taught five course sections of “Leadership, Service and Ethics” in Communication Studies, and nine sections of Freshman Seminar. These efforts are all designed to provide student leaders with the skills to help other students make connections with each other and the University’s resources that enable success. Finally, after a two year approval process that involved collaboration with six different academic departments, an undergraduate Certificate in Leadership Studies Program was established through the Center for Student Leadership. The assumption of leadership roles in our global society requires much more than just a portfolio of leadership skills. This program provides an opportunity for students to learn leadership over time and in multiple contexts to develop an understanding of the leadership process through the lenses of several disciplines and experiences.

Staff from Student Activities, Dean of Students Office, and Housing collaborated with student government and the Athletic Department to develop and market the “Niner Nation” concept to create an all inclusive spirit group. Students voted on the name in the general student government elections and a Niner Nation Committee was formed under the leadership of the Office of Student Activities to promote the concept in summer orientation and throughout the year through events including the initiation of tailgating before men’s home basketball games, giveaways, and apparel.

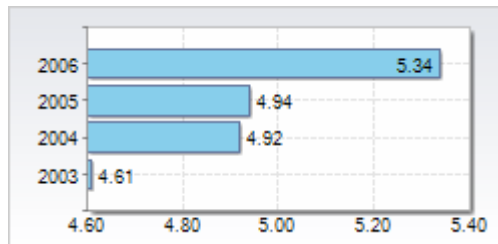
Student senate was restructured during the summer of 2005 and under strong student government leadership, this group, working closely with the student body president and his executive council had a considerable impact on student involvement. The senate emphasized visibility, teamwork and training all members on responsibilities and avenues for action. These actions resulted in a thriving and engaged senate which produced 34 bills and resolutions compared to only seven from the previous year.

The “Connections Model” in University housing was implemented in 2003 to refocus the time and energy of the live-in professional and undergraduate staff. Under this model, staff training shifted emphasis on making more one on one and community connections for all residential students. The following year creation of the Freshman Residential Curriculum that specifies academic and social learning objectives for all new residential students focused staff resources on the special needs of new residents. As a result of these efforts, the national residential satisfaction survey conducted in 2005-2006 demonstrated significant increases in overall satisfaction as well as specific improvements in satisfaction with staff and programs.

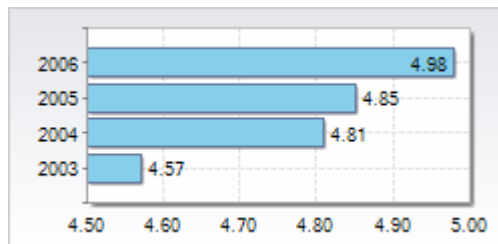
Satisfaction with RAs overall performance (scale 1 to 7):



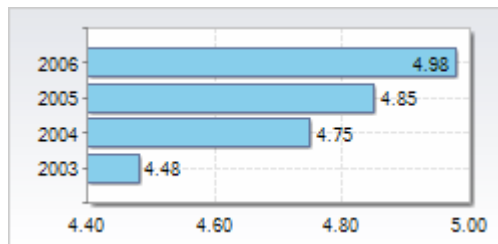
Satisfaction with RAs efforts to get to know you (scale 1 to 7):



Satisfaction with educational programming opportunities (scale 1 to 7):



Satisfaction with cultural programming opportunities (scale 1 to 7):



“Get Connected” is a program implemented in 1997 to better connect commuting freshmen to the university in the hope of increasing their retention rates by creating a mechanism for campus agencies and programs to reach out to students who indicate interest in their programs and services through a survey administered as a part of orientation. The program was expanded to include all new freshmen and transfers, including those enrolling in January. Participating agencies in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs have been encouraged by the Get Connected Matrix Team to increase the number of targeted contacts with new students, especially during the first six weeks of classes resulting in a dramatic increase in such contacts over the past two years as illustrated in the charts below. These increases appear to have a significant relationship to one year retention rates between those students who participate in the survey and those who do not:

Program Year	# Contacts	Survey Yields	
		Freshmen	Transfers
2003	231	92%	79%
2004	348	94%	73%
2005	402	94%	77%

Note: Increase in outreach contacts recorded for the 2003-2005 years

Program Year	On Campus Freshmen Retained for Spring		Commuter Freshmen Retained for Spring	
	GC = Yes	GC = No	GC = Yes	GC = No
2003	95%	90%	90%	84%
2004	95%	90%	92%	83%
2005	94%	91%	89%	80%

Note: Primary effect on commuters appears to be retention

In addition to Housing’s continuing involvement with the Learning Communities program, two learning communities that were conceived in Student Affairs were fully implemented this past year. The Dean of Student Office is responsible for the Community Service Learning that is designed to connect commuting freshmen through service activity. This community was fully enrolled this past year and assessment of the program demonstrated high marks from participants in their estimates of gain in several skill areas. The experience also demonstrated an increased commitment to service on the part of participants

Likewise the Leadership Learning Community, which is a joint effort of Housing and the Center for Student Leadership was fully enrolled and although any major is eligible, participants enrolled in common classes, including a Freshman Seminar with an emphasis on leadership. Students also participated as a group in co-curricular activities including both the Venture high ropes and ground courses and the Conversations in Leadership Lectures as examples. Participants in this community also reported significant estimates of gain in several skill areas as a result of their LC experience and substantially exceeded their predicted grade point average and that of a control group.

### **Student Life Facilities Design and Construction**

Although price escalation in the construction industry further delayed the University's ability to provide needed student life facilities for the growing population of traditional aged students, several Student Affairs staff involved in these projects became inexorably joined with Facilities Management and Financial Services staff in Business Affairs to maintain forward progress on several projects:

The **New Student Union**, perhaps the most critical of these, was delayed due to funding issues and the need for increased authorization approval. Design efforts continued throughout the year and the project funding has now been approved and construction should begin early next year.

**Greek Village** is now under construction with opening delayed at least one semester, but is finally on a fast track schedule to open in January. This is after several delays due to a failed bid process, followed by a protracted negotiated construction contract to reduce the project size due to cost increases, and a jurisdictional dispute over the inspecting authority for the construction process.

The **New Health Center** is under construction, and it is anticipated to be complete by January. However, construction cost issues resulted in several unfinished areas of the building and issues remain on how to fund the completion of these areas.

Architect selection was completed for **Phase IX Student Housing**, but has been put on hold pending the completion of a revised master plan for campus housing.

### **Assessing the Student Experience and Improving Retention**

In addition to retention efforts that focus on students making "connections" on campus, a major undertaking of Student Affairs Research this year was to develop a means to assess a number of issues that were identified by faculty and staff in an internal review of the 2005 AASCU Graduation Rate Outcome Study that the University participated in. Concerns were expressed for better coordination of student support services, that help often did not arrive on time for students in difficulty, and that we needed to learn more about how to support our transfer students. A small working group of the major academic support service providers and Student Affairs Research developed a process to early identify students who needed help in their first term and to connect those students to appropriate support services in a timely way. This resulted

in the development of the Academic Engagement Survey that was administered to all new freshmen and transfer students in their sixth week of classes to determine their comfort with different aspects of the University and their own performance. Core support services from throughout the campus were mobilized to contact students directly who indicated factors that were hampering their ability to form academic and social connections or were identified by the team as at risk academically or in danger of early attrition due to their response profiles. As examples, Student Affairs Research contacted students who indicated that they did not know who their academic advisor was, the University Center for Academic Excellence contacted students who reported experiencing difficulty in one or more classes, and the Office of Student Success and Retention (OSSR) contacted students thinking about not returning for the next term. This project also resulted in the creation of a web-based integrated data set that combines the survey data with student demographics, academic performance data, and retention data. This allows academic units to conduct research on their own students without the need to wait for centralized reports. Research findings were shared with the Academic Council and several college faculty groups during the year.

Another major effort launched this past year was in response to retention data that demonstrated the high attrition rate among freshmen who were on probation at the end of their first semester. The Office of Student Success and Retention first developed a communication plan designed to provide a roadmap on how to get in good academic standing. This spring, all freshmen on probation were invited to participate in a Peer Mentoring Program in which students met regularly with OSSR staff and peer mentors to identify problem areas and develop individualized action plans aimed at assisting students getting off of probation.

OSSR is also leading a Transfer Student Advisory Committee which identified a list of barriers for transfer students based upon data from the Academic Engagement Survey and from focus groups that were conducted in the spring semester. This group is now working on developing interventions to ameliorate these barriers and ways they can be best delivered.

The **Wellness Matrix Team** was formed in 2003 with the charge to promote the development and integration of wellness programs on campus. This team of faculty and staff from across the campus focused on collecting data on student behavior and attitudes related to wellness issues during the first year and one half through administration of the National College Health Assessment and the CORE Alcohol Survey. This data led to the formulation of four subcommittees to develop programs and policies around four areas of focus:

#### Substance Abuse Prevention

- This subcommittee presented results of the CORE Alcohol survey to Freshman Seminar instructors during their spring workshop along with strategies for discussing alcohol and drug issues in their classes.
- This group applied for and received a grant to implement a smoking cessation program that used a “Wanted: Quitters” theme, which had much success in targeting Greek organizations.
- This group also administered the Faculty Campus Alcohol Survey and the 143 faculty who returned the survey were provided the results and information about campus resources and referral tips.

- This group received \$30,000 in grant funds to begin a social norms marketing campaign aimed at reducing harm associated with alcohol and drug use as the data from the CORE survey indicates that there is far less drug and alcohol use on campus than what students perceive.

#### Disordered Eating and Body Image

- This group organized a panel presentation “If Looks Could Kill: Media’s Influence on Body Image” attended by 150 students and placed nutritional information throughout the dining halls
- A disordered eating treatment team was established, consisting of the medical director and the dietician from the Health Center and two psychologists from the Counseling Center and created a protocol for treatment of students with eating disorders.

#### Suicide Prevention

- This subcommittee developed and expanded a suicide prevention training program for the residence hall staff.
- This group also improved the Counseling Center’s online information related to suicide prevention including an on line screening program for psychological crises.
- This group is identifying faculty liaisons in several academic departments for targeted suicide prevention awareness and referral training.

#### Relationship Violence

- Members of this subcommittee developed sexual assault protocols with campus police and will now begin to focus on developing educational programs aimed at reducing relationship violence.

### **Other Notable Indicators of Significant Division Activity**

- Health Center overall student contacts increased by 20 percent, largely the result of the Mandatory Health Insurance Program that was initiated during the year. Two hundred ninety-three students enrolled in this program.
- Students seeking Counseling Center services increased by 12 percent this year and included a 17.2 percent increase in group counseling. The Counseling Center’s consulting psychiatrist conducted 146 psychiatric evaluations this year, which was an increase of 62.2 percent over last year. In addition, she completed 336 medicine management sessions which is a 125.5 percent increase over last year.
- Staff in housing compiled 1,112 programs, 361 of which occurred within the first six weeks of each semester.
- Student demand for intramural and fitness activity continues to stretch facility resources as illustrated in the following numbers:

In just the eight major team sport seasons of the Intramural Program, there was a 23.4 percent increase in participations over last year.

There were 31,879 overall intramural participations in 41 sports that included 1,108 teams.

Fitness Center participations increased from 128,495 in 2004-2005 to 136,575 in 2005-2006.

It was necessary to increase group fitness classes from 39/week to 49/week to accommodate the increase in participations from 10,277 in 2004-2005 to 17,028 in 2005-2006.

In addition there was a 12 percent increase in students involved with sport clubs (522 students).

- The Dean of Students staff organized a special orientation program for students displaced from Gulf Coast universities and organized a campus wide fund raiser to provide scholarship assistance for these students and for UNC Charlotte students whose families suffered as a result of hurricane Katrina. The staff also hosted meetings with these students and other campus resources and a dinner.
- Venture offered 449 events (a 12 percent increase from 2004-2005) serving 7,292 participants (9 percent increase).