

Providing the Appropriate Academic Support Services A White Paper for Strategic Planning Discussion

General Statement from Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education:

Student support services programs in higher education are dedicated to promoting learning, personal development, and retention for college students. Effective programs and services for students require practitioners who understand the foundations of higher education, the educational value of academically enhanced student affairs programs, and the standards of professional practice; can create and implement environments that are conducive to student learning and development; and are able to provide students with viable systems that encourage and enhance learning and personal development. To be effective, these programs must be well organized and professionally administered.¹

Appropriate academic support services promote student learning in varied dimensions:

- **Course and classroom support** (e.g., Library resources, service learning, disabilities accommodations, and academic technology services),
- **Essential administrative functions to ensure access** (e.g., enrollment services, testing, and international student services).
- **Generalized skills enhancement** (e.g., tutoring services, study skills workshops),
- **Personal development and planning necessary for success** (e.g., academic advising, re-entry student programs, mentor programs, orientation, career preparation, and personal counseling), and

Appropriate academic support services are characterized by the following qualities:

- **Comprehensive**—supporting a range of services to that address general and specific needs of a campus community, including legally required services
- **Convenient**—located for ease of access and available when students need the service (to include 24/7 remote access capabilities)
- **Personal**—respectful of the student as an individual
- **Professionally Validated**—grounded in proven theory and practice to ensure student success
- **Purposeful**—supported through articulated cognitive, affective and behavioral learning outcomes
- **Supportive of Personal Accountability**—enforced through consistent and fair mechanisms with an appreciation for the development of student autonomy
- **Timely**—delivered efficiently in an intentional and thoughtful, developmental manner that is responsive to student needs throughout the course of a student's academic experience;
- **Widely Accessed**—supported through effective working relationships by faculty and staff who know how to make appropriate referrals and understood by students for self-referrals

Through the delivery of appropriate academic support services, the University is assisted in realizing its mission:

- to create “a learning environment which encourages all members . . .to expand their intellectual, creative, and social horizons”
- “to realize our [or our students'] potential”
- “to develop a passion for life-long learning”
- “to encourage personalized student learning”

Selected examples of recent progress in providing appropriate academic support services include the following:

- Central location for Library and Tutoring Center services
- Coordinated services for remedial students through First Year Programs and Advising department and the College of Arts, Letters and Sciences (Math and English departments)
- Expanded service-learning program
- Improved communication and discussion about services for student success through the Student Success Center Committee

- One-stop shopping access through the provision of many essential services in Mary Stuart Rogers Educational Services Gateway Building

Based on existing data review (including the Division of Student Affairs CAS Assessment of 2002 and SNAPS²), work through the Student Success Center Committee, system wide initiatives and priorities, and trends observed about current students, **the following are areas that are recommended for further attention:**

- Academic technology
- Advising
- Career services, especially employer relations, internships and workshops
- Degree progress/graduation success
- Disabilities support
- Extended service hours
- Further study and intervention plans for specific student cohorts, including first generation college students, out-of-area students, students of color, remediation students, and re-entry students
- Transfer student admissions
- Tutoring services

To address the areas above, as well as to further enhance appropriate academic support services, **the following activities might be considered:**

- Review of the Division of Student Affairs CAS Assessment materials³
- Identification of appropriate assessment activities for non-assessed units and implementation of assessment according to articulated timeline
- Review of relevant data (SNAPS, EBI⁴, advising surveys⁵)
- Development and review of learning outcomes for support service units
- Implementation of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)⁶
- Participation in the BEAMS (Building Engagement and Attainment for Minority Students) project sponsored by AAHE
- Support for continued emphasis on academic expectations as part of the orientation experience and convocation
- Development of exit or graduation interview process
- Emphasis in Student Affairs to enhance career and advising services
- Support for campus graduation and advising initiatives⁷
- Support for Faculty Development Center programs related to appropriate academic support services
- Continued progress on the First Year Experience Program
- Support for the campus Academic Technology Plan and attention to opportunities available through the CSU system Academic Technology Planning Committee initiatives
- Support for the initiatives and actions identified through the CSU system *Progress to Graduation Report*⁸
- Continuation of the Student Success Center Committee to identify projects and opportunities to enhance student success; add new project to review service hours

¹ Council for the Advancement of Standards Self-Assessment Guide, Introduction

² Student Needs And Priorities Survey—CSU system 1999

³ to be available on the web. Assessments available for advising, EOP, SSS, Housing, International Student Services, Campus Activities, Recreational Sports, Stockton Student Health Services, Student Union, Counseling, Student Affairs Management Team, and Disabled Student Services

⁴ Educational Benchmarking Institute survey in Housing 2001

⁵ Qualitative and quantitative surveys are presently being administered

⁶ The NSSE measures the extent to which entering students and senior students exhibit behaviors that have been proven to correlate to student success. The survey will be administered on campus in 2003 as part of our BEAMS project grant.

⁷ These initiatives are being developed through a shared governance process involving Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and the Academic Senate.

⁸ Expected issue date of February/March 2003