Mission Statement

The Division of Student Affairs provides innovative quality programs, services, and environments that facilitate student success, learning, citizenship, and involvement within communities.

Executive Summary

The Office of the Vice President provides leadership for the Division of Student Affairs in the management of fiscal ($50.5M) and human resources (260 EFT professional staff and 641 student employees); establishing goals for strategic planning and assessment; encouraging staff development that promotes professional growth and advances leadership opportunities; and, providing the vision for programs and services that enhance the student experience. The Office of the Vice President also maintains close working relationships with the Office of the Provost and other administrative units. In addition to supervising Division departments, staff in the Office of the Vice President are responsible for a variety of administrative functions including implementation of the Division’s Strategic Plan; assessment of organizational structure and program alignment; stewardship of fiscal resources; recruitment, evaluation and training of personnel; communication, both internal and external to the Division; ensuring compliance with regulatory/accreditation standards; and, review of existing policies and development of additional policies relevant to professional practice. Fulltime staff include the Vice President for Student Affairs, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Multicultural Programs, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Administration, Business Manager II, Assistant to the Vice President and Director of Communications.

Major New Initiatives Implemented Within the Last Five Years

Strategic Planning and Assessment

A new Division five-year strategic plan was initiated, designed and implemented in alignment with the Georgia State University 2011 University Strategic Plan. Overarching Division strategic goals include: 1) creating and delivering innovative student experiences to promote learning and success; 2) enhancing the global competency of Georgia State students; and, 3) developing and promoting a distinctive model of active, engaged citizenship incorporating service, leadership and experiential learning. Division assessment efforts continue to focus upon both operational effectiveness and student learning with resulting assessment data used to drive continuous improvement in all Division departments.

Programmatic Initiatives

The Broadening Student Engagement Initiative focuses on increasing participation of historically underrepresented groups in leadership roles, campus activities programming, and the division’s cohort of student employees. This initiative is tied to Student Learning Outcomes involving Intercultural Competence and is measured by assessment tools. As a part of the process, discussions with students in various settings emphasize the importance of seeking diversity and determining the most productive ways to achieve the goals needed.

Programmatic Reorganization

The Division implemented a reorganization in 2012 to align Leadership Programs, the Office of Civic Engagement and the Georgia Career Information Center with University Career Services to create a linkage between volunteerism, leadership development and career preparedness. This effort addresses the clear and demonstrated preference among major corporations for new employees who have proven leadership abilities combined with community service experience.
Also in 2012, a new position of Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Multicultural Programs was created to supervise the existing areas of Disability Services, African American Student Services and Programs and Intercultural Relations. The Assistant Vice President is also charged with the creation of a Multicultural Programs Office to provide related services and programs.

In 2008, the duties of the Director of the Counseling and Testing Center were expanded to include supervision of all Psychological and Health Services (Counseling and Testing Center, Psychiatric Services, Student Health Clinic and Student Health Promotion) with supervision of the Director of Psychological and Health Services moved to the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. This new structure promotes a much greater level of service to students and establishes programmatic linkages between the physical and mental health needs of students. More recently, in 2011 a new service delivery model for psychological/clinical services was launched. This initiative was designed to establish same day walk-in services for student clients, reduce waiting list for initiation of clinical services, increase the percentage of clients being seen by licensed providers, bring the services of the Counseling Center into alignment with aspirational standards of accrediting agencies, and provide greater flexibility in staffing the center with providers with special expertise as needed while operating within the existing budget. Early indications demonstrate the new model has succeeded in meeting the aforementioned goals.

In 2008, a major initiative to enhance campus activity programming was undertaken. Funding for the venture required the approval of an increase of the Student Activity Fee. Winning student support of the fee enhancement has enabled the institution to produce comprehensive campus activities programming appropriate for an institution of Georgia State’s size, complexity and diversity. Signature events begun under this new initiative include a lecture series featuring national figures, arena scale concerts, enhanced late-night alcohol free programming, and exclusive access for GSU students to significant Atlanta attractions including “GSU Nights at” the Atlanta Zoo, the Georgia Aquarium, High Museum of Art, Six Flags Over Georgia and other venues. Additionally, the fee increase doubled funding for student organization programming which has in part contributed to the growth of the community of student organizations from approximately 275 to more than 400 chartered student organizations.

Facilities Enhancements:

Housing capacity has risen dramatically during the period (from 2400 to 4200 beds). The pre-existing inventory, which consisted entirely of modular apartment units has been greatly enhanced with the addition of facilities more appropriate for the development of traditionally aged undergraduates. Patton Hall (2010) was the first residence hall designed for community living. It consists of suite style units without kitchens, large commons areas and the University’s first dining hall. Also in 2010, the University embarked on its first residential Greek Life experience with the construction of nine fraternity and sorority townhouses adjacent to the Patton Hall complex. The acquisition of two hotels adjacent to the University Commons enabled the University to develop its second community-living residence hall complex, Piedmont North (2011). Substantial site improvements (2012), including the construction of the University’s second dining hall, and the addition of recreation, postal and laundry facilities transformed the complex into a comprehensive residence hall community.

The Indian Creek Recreation Center, an off campus recreation and retreat center, is undergoing a comprehensive upgrade. The antiquated lodge has been demolished and a state of the art meeting facility is under construction. The new Indian Creek Lodge will be the University’s first LEED Certified building. Additional upgrades include the development of a large challenge course featuring three towers in a wooded setting with a supporting educational center and the creation of a large activity field.
Land has been acquired and planning is under way for the development of downtown intramural fields adjacent to the University Commons. This will enable many of the field sports which are now conducted off campus to occur on the main campus.

The Student*University Center has remodeled and re-furnished all commons areas during the period, including The Courtyard, Panther Place, Cinefest Theatre, Main Lounge, and Ballroom. The University’s first Multicultural Center is being developed in space vacated by the Housing Department. In support of program realignment, the Office of Civic Engagement and Leadership Programs have occupied remodeled space vacated by the Honors College in the University Center.

Communications:

The Division established an in-house marketing department for printed and web media that in the past would have been sent to a third party. Individual training and development sessions are offered to Division personnel to emphasize use of university branding guidelines. The Division participated on a university-wide team to create and develop PAWS portal and created content for all departments in Division represented in the portal.

The Division successfully migrated 30 departmental web sites into Wordpres, the new content management system for the University (2013). Over 17 web editors were trained to enable each department to maintain their own content. The Division is now able to utilize tracking analytics for all websites to improve upon the communication and delivery of services and programs to the campus community and external audiences.