Department Annual Report

Student Services

2012-2013

Student Support Services

Document Prepared By:

Whitney Harper
Department Information

Current year goals

1. Increase program Exposure College wide
   SSS has been the best kept secret at GRCC. Many departments come in contact with program eligible students but are unfamiliar with the services we offer to advance this struggling population. We serve 350 annually but often have difficulty filling this requirement. The goal is to familiarize all college departments with SSS. Program staff has and will continue to implement new and innovative ways to introduce SSS to faculty, student life, enrollment center, tutoring, labs and other areas of the college that will come in contact with eligible students.

   Outcome: SSS counselors completed presentations as most academic department staff meetings. We spoke in all CLS 100 courses, presented to tutoring and tutoring labs. More referrals are coming in from faculty in various academic departments due to our faculty department staff presentations. We feel the college is becoming more familiar but more work needs to be done in college wide exposure efforts. We will continue meeting with academic department meetings that we were unable to attend, meet with adjuncts, ASL, library, admissions, and financial aid.

2. Technology Loan Program
   SSS serves low income students and our program in particular is comprised of 70% of full Pell Grant recipients. As a tool for low income students to be successful, SSS currently offers laptops through our loan program for students who cannot afford this technology. We were able to offer this service to our low income students through an AT&T $25,000 grant we were awarded in 2008. With these funds, the program was able to purchase 50 Lenovo S10 laptops (compact) and 16 i-Touches. SSS loans the equipment at the beginning of each semester and typically we run out of all the equipment in one week. As a result of this well-received service, the equipment is showing wear and tear and often not functionable. We are seeking new opportunities to get new laptops for our computer loan program. We are looking into grant programs offered by Verizon, Gates, Lumina, Kellogg and Texas Instruments. We are also working with the Grants office to identify possible opportunities we are not aware of. We will also be working with the GRCC foundation to identify any local opportunities to pursue.

   Outcome: SSS program staff worked closely with Lisa Dopke in the Grant’s Office to identify opportunities to apply for funds that would provide our low income student population with
computers to better increase their chances of academic success. We found grants through Texas Instruments, The Gates Foundation, and Verizon. Unfortunately, these grants were geared towards more high school laboratory settings and we could not tailor the SSS program to fit the parameters of each specific grant. The current laptop loan program continues, however the equipment is close to disrepair. There are approx. 18 laptops still available from the AT&T technology grant. Lisa continues to look for possibilities in the future. SSS has also worked with the Grand Rapids Community Foundation in looking for possible donors.

Internal collaborations and partnerships

Project 1: SSS worked with the ESP’s in several departments to be put on department meetings. We also communicated with Department Head’s to discuss content and time frames of the presentations.

Project 2: SSS worked closely with the Grant’s Office and GR Community Foundation. We also discussed possibilities with Justin Jones and David Anderson in IT.

External collaborations and partnerships

N/A

Departmental needs for support from other departments within the college

Project 1: SSS needs faculty and staff to consider the SSS program when working with their student population. Almost half of the student body at GRCC is first generation. Many of which are eligible for our program. We need the support of faculty and staff to be familiar with the SSS program and provide a referral.

Project 2: SSS would like the Grant’s Office and the Foundation to consider the needs of low income first generation students when searching for grants and donations. Our student population is typically poor retainers and considering the success of our students will ultimately improve our retention, persistence, and graduation rates.

Program accreditation Updates

The Annual Performance Report for Academic Year 2011-2012 was submitted March 2013. We successfully met and exceeded our program objectives of the Department of Education TRiO program. They are as follows:

**Student Learning Outcome 1: Persistence**
53% of all participants served by the SSS project will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate and/or transfer to a 4-year institution during the academic year. **2011-2012 ACTUAL: 84%**

**Student Learning Outcome 2: Good Academic Standing**
79% of all enrolled participants served by the SSS project will meet the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at the grantee institution. **2011-2012 ACTUAL: 95%**

**Student Learning Outcome 3: Graduate and Transfer Rates**
1. 7% of new participants serve each year will graduate with an associate’s degree or certificate within four (4) years. **2011-2012 ACTUAL: 42%**

2. 11% of new participants served each year will transfer with an associate’s degree or certificate within four (4) years. **2011-2012 ACTUAL: 31%**

**Student Achievements & Awards**

- Todd Johnson, a TRiO/SSS student was awarded the **Milo Brown Scholarship.**
- Carly Misech was honored with the **Salute to Women Award: Student.**
- Michael Vitales and Deborah Cobbs were selected by the **2013 Keith Sherin Global**
- Michael Vitales-Lanuza won the **Gilman Scholarship**
- Michael Vitales-Lanuza. He won the **MAEOPP study abroad $1000 scholarship**
- Emily Smitter won the **Anthony LaPenna scholarship.**
- 11 SSS students were selected for the **MICUP** program for the summer: Ashley Fox, Eyasmine Walton-Durst, Yolanda Cruz-Olguin, keyler Lerchen, SyQuan Tran, Binu Baral, Antonia Garcia, Benjamin McClellan, Rolando Bocanegra, Breanna Cook, Andrew Janke.
- Emily Smitter won the **Brian Kloet Campus Involvement award** (an SSS student has won this two years in a row)
- Brent Folsom won the **Outstanding Biology Student of the Year** award
- Rolando Bocanegra won the **Martin Luther King Jr. Spirit Award.**
- Eyasmine Walton-Durst was awarded the **Michael Flannagan Scholarship** for tutors (the biggest honor for tutors).
- We had two recipients acknowledged **Phi Theta Kappa** that are graduating in May: Breanna Cook and Victoria Vitales-Lanuza.
- We also had three **Delta Pi Alpha** students that are graduating in May with this honor: Tam Bui, Brent Folsom, and Jennifer Mangus.
- Breanna Cook was awarded $17,000 in scholarships to attend Aquinas.

**Other department updates**
SSS has a TRiP program were we reach out to serve our community. In the 2012-2013 academic year, a total of approx. 40-50 students participated in approx. total of 35 hours of Academic Service Learning by engaging in our TRiP’s program. We donated our time and effort to:

- The Grand Rapids Veteran’s Hospital
- The Kid’s Food Basket
- The Baxter Community Center
- Grand Rapids Children’s Museum
- The Ronald McDonald House
- Haiti Children’s Network
- Grand Rapids Food Pantry
- Gilda’s Club

**Faculty & Staff**

Departmental Professional Development Activities (Contractual Obligations for Departmental Faculty Development/6 hours)

**Event:** Appreciative Advising Model  
**When:** September 19th and 26th  
**Total PD Hours:** 6

Amanda Cuevas, Director of Frederik Meijer Office of Fellowships at GVSU, presented to counselors the Appreciative Advising Model. GRCC selected this professional development opportunity due to a desire to find positive ways to increase student retention and completion rates. Appreciative Advising harnesses the power of the organizational development theory of Appreciative Inquiry and the positive psychology literature to provide a framework for increasing adviser and student success. Appreciative Advising is the intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials. It is perhaps the best example of a fully student-centered approach to student development. There are 6 phases advisors implement with students:
Disarm: Make a positive first impression with the student, build rapport, and create a safe, welcoming space.
Discover: Ask positive open-ended questions that help advisers learn about students' strengths, skills, and abilities.
Dream: Inquire about students' hopes and dreams for their futures.
Design: Co-create a plan for making their dreams a reality.
Deliver: The student delivers on the plan created during the Design phase and the adviser is available to encourage and support students.
Don’t Settle: Advisers and students alike need to set their own internal bars of expectations high.

Amanda spent the first session defining and discussing application techniques of the Disarm, Discover and Dream and the second session doing the same for the last three phases; Design, Deliver and Don’t Settle. Participants were exposed to current research on the effectiveness of this model, divided into groups to practice application techniques and had time for reflection and questions.

The feedback received was mostly positive. Many remarks addressed perceptions that this model reinforces practices that are beneficial for student success and affirmed some that they are already implementing some of the AA techniques. Participants appreciated the raffle activity that took place each session. Among items to win, was the Appreciative Advising Manual. Several comments addressed counselor’s appreciation to have the opportunity to share tools and techniques used amongst each other. These ideas were captured on poster paper and later transcribed on a word doc and disseminated to all participants.

Outcome for SSS: We re-created our end of the year student satisfaction survey to reflect the principles of Appreciative Advising. We have more open ended questions for students so they have the opportunity to reflect how day to day advising has shaped their educational journey and the accomplishment of their goals. We have found the intake process more enjoyable for
the student and the staff. We are learning far more about the student and ways in which they need to be advised.

Faculty Professional Development Activities- Year End Summary

Whitney Harper:

1. **Conferences attended and presented:**
   - National Children and Family Relations Annual Conference: Presenter
   - AHEAD Institute in Long Beach, CA - 1/31 - 2/2/13
   - Appreciative Advising Training (at GRCC)
   - Motivational Interviewing
   - Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Annual Conference: Presenter

2. **Committees and CAP projects:**
   - Associate Dean of Student Success ESP: Committee Leader
   - Scheduling Software (Advisortrac Software Replacement): Committee Leader
   - CAP 1.1.1 MACRAO Certificate
   - MI-CAPP Regional Member
   - USA Funds Grant Team

3. **Grants**
   - Student Support Services
   - MICUP

4. **Certifications**
   - Certified Family Life Education (April 2013)

5. **Education**
   - Ph.D. Candidate (ABD) Human Development Family Studies, Michigan State University

6. **Community Projects**
   - DHS Foster Care Support

Anna Maria Clark:
1. **Conferences you attended or presented at**

- Latin@ Scholars Success Conference (Aquinas)
- MI-CAPP Lansing Capitol Hill Visit/Student Leadership Conference
- TRiO Priority 5 Training (May 6 – 7)
- Appreciative Advising Training (Amanda Cuevas) – Fall 2012
- Focused on Students @ GVSU: Study Abroad and Writing for Competitive Scholarships

2. **Committees, task force or Board you are a member of**

- CAP 1.1.3 (Erin Busscher)
- MI-CAPP Scholarship Reading / Ad hoc volunteer

3. **Community service you are active in:**

Through TRiPS (TRiO Partners in Service) – Coordinated and participated in: Power of Education Foundation Fundraiser (Elementary School in Haiti), Connor’s Night @ GR Children’s Museum, GR Home for Veterans (Funding was granted by Student Life) – Bingo, Ronald McDonald House: Baking cookies, Baxter Community Center: Fix-It Day

4. **Campus Visits (accompanied students)**

Coordinated Campus Visits to: GVSU, MSU, Ferris BR (Health Professions)

5. **Workshops**

Presented: Study Abroad is for You and Ever thought about doing research?

6. **Grant Collaboration**

Collaborated with Sarah Krajewski (Biology) – Judith Larsen (Grants Office) and Chris Anderson (Michigan Tech) joining their effort to pursue an NSF Education Grant.

Liaison MICUP Grant with Michigan Tech

**Jenny Keessen:**

1. **Conferences attended:**

   - AHEAD Institute in Long Beach, CA - 1/31 - 2/2/13
   - Appreciative Advising Training (at GRCC)
   - Motivational Interviewing

2. **Committees:**
Orientation Management Team  
Search Committee for Associate Dean for Success and Retention

3. Community Service:

Presented at Career Day for NorthPointe Christian Middle School  
Judge Speech Meet for NorthPointe Christian Elementary School  
Attended FSU campus visit

Faculty Development Plans for Upcoming Year

Professor Development:

MARGARET WEHRENBERG’S PROGRAM FOR MANAGING ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

Margaret Wehrenberg, Psy.D., is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and is the author of The Anxious Brain. An expert on the treatment of anxiety and depression, she also has extensive training and expertise in the neurobiology of psychological disorders. In addition to clinical work, she has written articles for The Psychotherapy Networker magazine, is the author of Stress Solutions: Ten Effective Strategies to Eliminate Your Stress, and has produced Relaxation for Tension and Worry, a CD for breathing, muscle relaxation and imagery to use with anxious clients. Her new book (2007) is published by W.W. Norton, The Anxious Brain: The Neurobiological Basis of Anxiety Disorders and How to Effectively Treat Them.

The Counseling, DSS, OSP, and SSS programs are looking into having Dr. Wehrenberg present to us on “The 10 Best Ever Anxiety Treatment Techniques.”

Student Support Services Department Plan 2013-2014:

Goal #1: CLS 100 designated for First Generation students

CLS 100 designation for First Generation Students: A continual issue needing addressed is low program visibility. Due to limited program awareness, we are often scrambling to find students to serve. We want to be strategic and admit students who will benefit the most by our program services. Beginning Fall 2013, we will develop a CLS 100 course that is specifically designed for first generation students. With a CLS 100 for first generation students, this population will receive specialized information and students that meet the additional eligibility requirements for the SSS program will be recruited. The program director of SSS will teach this section. Curriculum will be tailored specifically to the needs of this population to increase their retention and completion rates.

Goal #2: Develop workshops for First Generation Students College wide

First generation students are high risk to drop out of college and continue the cycle of poverty in which their families live. Many factors are attributed to their poor success. Research has demonstrated that student engagement is one of these factors. This population does not get involved in clubs,
organizations, or activities. Developing or tailoring workshops offered on campus specifically targeting first generation students may improve their student engagement on our campus. Our staff (counselors, peer mentors, student workers) will develop and accompany first generation students on different events and facilitate workshops for this population as well. Examples include: cultural activities, educational events, academic workshops and social events.

**EOL/Release Time Work**

Program Director Responsibilities:

- Completed Department Plan 13-14
- Accomplished Project Goal of Department Plan 2012-2013: Increase program Exposure College wide
- Completed Academic Program Review Plan
- Developed assessment tools to measure Program Outcomes of Academic Program Review Plan
- Completed Academic Program Review Assessment
- Revised SSS program Intake process and forms to reflect Appreciative Advising Model
- All SSS Staff completed Motivational Interviewing training (Arranged by Director)
- SSS developed a Subject Guide with Library Faculty for First Generation Students to access. Guide encompasses tools for success tailored for this population
- 10 SSS students were selected for the MICUP program
- Many letters of recommendations written by program staff (Director lead and assigned)
- Coordinated a New Student orientation for Kenowa Hills High School for incoming GRCC students who are First Generation

**BCO for SSS and MICUP**

- All Budgets on Target

**Grants**

- Completed APR for AY 2011-2012

**Financial Aid Distribution to SSS program students**

- 70 Students were awarded minimum Pell amount

**Supervision of Peer Mentors**

- Supervision of 3 peer mentors
Supervision of ESP

- Magdalena Montes-Spruit received both her mid-year and annual ESP performance evaluation

OUTCOMES:

Program Director Responsibilities:

More referrals are coming in from faculty in all academic departments due to our faculty department staff presentations.

Our Student Satisfaction survey results indicated that students are very satisfied with our program services and appreciate our personalized services as well as the group activities.

The intake process has more open ended questions for students so they have the opportunity to reflect how day to day advising has shaped their educational journey and the accomplishment of their goals. This survey also helps us measure if we are successfully addressing the phases of this model.

We have found the intake process more enjoyable for the student and the staff. We are learning far more about the student and ways in which they need to be advised.

Many SSS program students were awarded scholarships and leadership awards as a result of our letters of recommendations. This effort also resulted in 10 SSS MICUP students being selected.

Five HS students and one school counselor attended the New GRCC/SSS student orientation

Grants:

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**Faculty & Staff Accomplishments/Awards**

Whitney Harper presented her research on An Ecological Approach to Examining Substance Use in African American and Caucasian American Middle School Students at the Annual National Children and Family Review Conference October 2012

Whitney Harper presented her research on Case Studies on Becoming a Couple: A Qualitative Study on Commitment Motivation in Couples at the Annual Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference.

Whitney Harper received her Certified Family Life Educator certification April 2013

**Faculty & Staff Community Service**

See Faculty Development

**Assessment of Student Learning**

**Program Learning Outcome(s) assessed this year**

Upon completion of the program, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the need to seek assistance when experiencing academic difficulties and follow through with accessing academic support programs at GRCC (Personal Responsibility).

Program students will take the initiative to reach out to their advisor/counselor for assistance during academic difficulties. Students will be proactive in their understanding of support services on campus by meeting with their advisor/counselor at least three times per semester.

**Measures of Student Learning**

To assess for student proactivity, first a needs assessment was developed by the SSS and the Institutional Research department. This survey was disseminated by way of email, blackboard and in office. The purpose of this survey was to evaluate the effectiveness of program services and determine how often students are receiving our services. The survey was also designed to collect information for program improvement. The survey consists of open ended and likert formats.

**Initial Data and Findings**
The findings from the survey were very significant. A total of 72 students responded to 7 likert rated questions and offered comments on three questions. Students found academic advising type appointments the most helpful in their success as a student in our program. This included career, transfer and financial aid advisement. The second most helpful service was our counseling services. We scored overwhelmingly “Excellent” in both of these categories. Qualitative data was also available. Comments included; “Whitney, Jenny, and Anna Maria are all so knowledgeable, encouraging, and simply amazing at what they do. I want to thank them as they impacted my life in so many positive ways. I would have not graduated without all of their help.” Another comment “I don’t know what I would be doing if TRIO wasn’t there for me. I am so glad they are especially for ESL students. Hats off to you guys for helping us so much. Keep up the hard work.” As well as, “I came into this program knowing absolutely nothing, now I am so much more confident in the pursuit of my higher education.” Finally, “There is not a single bad thing that I could say about the TRIO program. All the advisors and peer mentors are great. I have received nothing but encouragement and inspiration for me to move forward and continue with college. I probably would not be where I am today without my advisor.” Due to this feedback, we will emphasize these services to students as a way to encourage more program visits.

The finding, especially the comments, also helped us identify areas of growth. Students expressed some confusion with what services the program offers, as they did not take advantage of SSS as regularly as others. SSS struggles with reaching all 350 of our program students as this is an elusive population. We are continually searching for ways to engage the student in which we see less often. Comments that were an indication of this include, “I have not visited with my counselor yet.” Also, “I never got further with advising other than what school I wanted to attend.” Finally, “The system should be better at alerting students of its benefits.” We will use this information to find ways to better communicate with our program students in which they find more useful. We typically email and use blackboard but some of our students can not be reached with way.

We have been implementing the model “Appreciative Advising” to better engage our students at the very intake. We hope this will be more open, safe, and encouraging by where our students remember their experience with us and come back!

Curricular or Pedagogical Changes Implemented AND Data and Findings (post improvement/change)

We had all three of our TRiO/SSS counselors attend this 2 day training. This model fit so well with the TRiO philosophy that we re-structured the entire intake process for students who are applying to the program. The form now consists of probing questions that require the student to “travel” through the phases of appreciative advising beginning with the DREAM phase. We have found the intake process more enjoyable for the student and the staff. We are learning far more about the student and ways in which they need to be advised.
We re-created our end of the year student satisfaction survey to reflect the principles of Appreciative Advising. We have more open ended questions for students so they have the opportunity to reflect how day to day advising has shaped their educational journey and the accomplishment of their goals. This survey also helps us measure if we are successfully addressing the phases of this model.