

The Office of Student Affairs: Supporting Students And Their Success (Academic Year 2006-2007)

Executive Summary

Accomplishments

Throughout the 2006-2007 Academic Year the Office of Student Affairs' (OSA) operations and initiatives continued to reflect that Office's constant commitment to student success through enhanced and expanded support services to students. While all of Student Affairs' operations are dedicated to student success, the vast majority of its activities can be categorized into three primary stages of a student's college experience: recruitment, retention and graduation.

Accomplishments throughout the division vary widely in strategy and execution, but share the two primary tenets of engaging and supporting students in order to promote student success. A small sample of the Office of Student Affairs accomplishment and activities follows with more complete information provided in the body of the report.

Since a productive and dynamic college experience begins well before the first day of classes, the Office of Student Affairs - through its Office of Outreach and Recruitment offers high school students the opportunity to sample college campus life through its College Now program. Hunter's College Now program achieved over 100% of its enrollment targets; it also increased the percentage of College Now students who go on to enroll at Hunter as college students by 18%. Further, Outreach and Recruitment enhanced and intensified recruitment efforts to both targeted and general populations.

Chief among OSA efforts are vital, comprehensive advising services delivered in a multitude of venues including individual and targeted group sessions, e-advising, Advising on the Go (advising offered on-site at congregation areas including the cafeteria and other popular Hunter locations) and the implementation and utilization of the DIG (Degree Information for Graduation) program. The advising staff was enlarged through the addition of five (5) new advisors providing students with better access to both urgent and on-going advisement.

To support part-time degree completers, the Part-Time Student Support Program was piloted and provided financial support to students close to graduation resulting in seven (7) earlier graduations and nine (9) degree accelerations.

The Dean of Students' Advisory Council was formed to provide the Dean of Students with information and feedback from students regarding a wide array of student issues. The Council was instrumental in the design of Advising on the Go, the redesign of electronic communication with students and community building efforts at Hunter College.

The Office of Student Affairs upheld Hunter College's commitment to academic excellence through the increase of mean SAT/CAA averages to 1125 and 86.6 (respectively) for incoming freshmen; enrollment was maintained at 20,800 students.

OSA's administrative divisions including admissions, financial aid and the registrar's office focused on the streamlining of operations, processes and procedures in order to continually deliver student-centered services. These offices increased the use of technology in communications, application and request processing to offer services efficiently, effectively and on a twenty-four (24) basis.

Recruitment/Pre-Enrollment

Recruitment/Outreach

The Office of Recruitment and Outreach which includes the Welcome Center and the College Now program achieved a high level of success over the past academic year. A partial list of its accomplishments in 2006-07 include:

- Reorganization of Open House to highlight programs for high achieving students and programs that provide access/support to minority students.
- Admissions Advertising Awards from Admissions Marketing Report (a national publication).
 1. Gold Award- Recruitment Video- "The Hunter Experience"
 2. Silver Award- for a Hunter College Print advertisement
- In collaboration with School of Nursing- held well attended (approximately 100 students) transfer student workshop regarding nursing admissions and coursework.
- Honors college- created and implemented underrepresented student conversion event- increase in yield to 45% (up from 33% last year).
- Hosted specialized tours for minority students identified from PSAT list.
- College Now
 1. Successful implementation of the CN ambassador program increased applications at 80% of "ambassador schools" and has allowed us to diversify our enrollments to better represent/serve all of our partner schools.
 2. Conducted outreach to current seniors to encourage them to apply to Hunter College
 3. To date: 11 students have indicated a desire to accept the CN summer scholarship to attend Hunter College
 4. Hosted 3 well attended "parents night" to introduce CN students/parents to Hunter College undergraduate programs
- Reformatted campus tours to include a panel of speakers who discuss: Honors College, Teacher Academy, Internships, Study Abroad, and Athletics.

Office of Admissions and Testing

A vital component of the recruiting/pre-enrollment process at any College is the work of the Admissions Office. Over the past academic year, the Office of Admissions and

Testing at Hunter College continued to uphold Hunter's commitment to academic excellence through:

- the increase of mean SAT/CAA averages to 1125 and 86.6 (respectively) for incoming freshmen;
- enrollment was maintained at 20,801.5 students,
- the minimum transfer criterion of a 2.3 grade point average 2006/2007 admission cycles.

Additional Admissions and Testing accomplishments include:

- Implementation of the MyChoice website (All degree-seeking students record their intent to enroll) and this collected data is placed on shared servers for other enrollment service operations to access.
- In Fall 2006, MyChoice message confirmations were automated.
- All admissions applications, including the application for graduate readmission, were given a web presence and students were given web-access to their transfer course evaluation via their Esims account.
- The graduate degree web application has been updated and is available to students in a self-managed format.

Advising Services

Chief among winning retention efforts are vital, comprehensive advising services delivered in a multitude of venues. During the 2006-2007 Academic Year, the Office of Advising Services offered a wide array of innovative advising services. These included traditional advising, individual and targeted group sessions, e-advising, and Advising on the Go (advising offered on-site at congregation areas including the cafeteria and other popular Hunter locations). the implementation and utilization of the DIG (Degree Information for Graduation) program. Over 7,136 students were served by Advising Services on a walk in basis through the 1119 Advising Office, an additional 100 received advisement through Advising on the Go.

Advising's Accomplishments included:

- The advising staff has been enlarged and services enhanced through the hiring of additional advising staff including a Director of Transfer Advising, five (5) advisors, and an advisor responsible for e-advising initiatives. Beginning in the Fall, every incoming freshman student will be assigned a specific advisor.
- The launch of the Advising on the Go program described earlier in this report.
- The College wide Advising Conference "Shared Responsibility; Shared Success."

Office of Financial Aid

For many of Hunter's students, continuing their education after high school is only possible with financial aid. Hunter College's Office of Financial Aid effectively and efficiently handled a daily average of 1,000 financial aid forms over the past academic year.

- The OFA has successfully incorporated learning seminars sessions for cross training with the OASIS. This allows for constant cross training between OASIS and the OFA to ensure that proper information is disseminated to students.

- Further, the OFA has successfully implemented the CUNY imaging system for files. After over one year of installations and technical updates, the office has a fully functioning imaging system for file storage. Daily batches of files are scanned and backed up onto a secure network which is also backed-up by CUNY.

Student Support Services

For students to be truly successful they must experience progress and satisfaction in a multitude of areas not limited to their academic pursuits. The Office of Student Affairs provides services that teach students the tools and strategies to lead a well balanced and fulfilling life through its Personal Counseling Services, Health and Wellness Program and AccessABILITY program (serving students facing physical, emotional and psychological challenges) Career Development Services and the International Students Office all of which provide a full range of targeted support to Hunter's students. Outreach regarding these programs to students, staff and faculty was increased to ensure knowledge of the programs on campus. Accomplishments in these vital student support areas include:

- Enhancement of Personal Services through enhancement of staff and coverage through the hiring of a new full-time personal counselor and the use of master level social work and counseling interns from colleges in the surrounding area.
- A wide variety of topical wellness workshops and health services including flu shots, cholesterol screening and glucose testing offered by the Health and Wellness staff which was enhanced through the upgrading/hiring/contracting of health services personnel including a nurse practitioner.
- The International Students Office increased student access to information related to international student status and services and developed and presented topical workshops and issue groups for international students.
- Career Development Services has established new relationships with a wide variety of organizations including Macy's Executive Training Program, American Red Cross New York Chapter, Chase Bank, MetLife and others.

Student Life/Athletics/Children's Learning Center/Residence Life

Student Life, Athletics, the Children's Learning Center and Residence Life program offer students opportunities to engage in college campus life. Accomplishments include:

- The Student Life staff created a Student Activities Office leading to increased contact with student organization and enhanced the scope and availability of programming sponsored by the Office of Student Activities.
- Athletics had a stellar year with the many accomplishments/wins in the field as well as a national champion. In addition rental revenue was increased. The Athletics staff was stabilized through the filling of vacancies including an Associate Athletic Director for Recreation Fitness and Intramurals, Assistant Athletic Director for Facilities/Operations a Sports Information Director and various head and assistant coaches.

- The Children’s Learning Center continued to increase enrollment and won renewal of its DOH certificate for “school age” program.
- Residence Life upgraded its webpage and online application for ease of use. Further, increased supervisor and contact with dorm residents was achieved through the addition of assistant Residence Assistants on every floor.

Other Student Affairs Initiatives Related to Retention

The Dean of Students’ Advisory Council was formed to provide the Dean of Students with information and feedback from students regarding a wide array of student issues.

- The Council was instrumental in the design of Advising on the Go, the redesign of electronic communication with students and community building efforts at Hunter College. Next academic year the Council will pilot its student to student coaching initiative whereby upper classmen mentor, coach and help incoming freshmen navigate life at Hunter College.
- Welcome Week 2006 - The first Welcome Week event was held in Fall of 2006 and was very well received by students, faculty and staff. It provided incoming students with people to greet them and answer questions, snacks and drinks, giveaways, and the opportunity to meet each other.
- College Preview – In the summer of 2006 the College Preview program was piloted. Through the program, six entering freshmen took one college credit bearing class and attended two Broadway shows with Student Affairs staff and advisors. One caveat that resulted was the inability of students to pay for summer courses and the ability to use certain funding and payment methods for these costs. If the program is reintroduced/expanded for the summer 2008 the below funds would be needed.

Graduation

Registrar’s Office

The Registrar’s Office serves as the backbone of the College, registering students, recording grades, and verifying graduation status. During academic year 2006-2007 the Registrar:

- processed 32,008 official transcripts,
- processed and monitored over 6,000 permit requests, processed 22,200 grade changes,
- and reviewed approximately 4,000 applications for graduation among other Registrar duties.

The Registrar’s Office also:

- successfully launched the DIG (Degree Information for Graduation) program also known as Degree Works. DIG is an on-line advising tool that allows students to

review their earned credits in comparison to what is still required to graduate. DIG was rolled out to students, faculty and staff through a series of events, workshops and training sessions.

Part-Time Student Support Program

- To support part-time degree completers, the Part-Time Student Support Program was piloted and provided financial support to students close to graduation resulting in seven (7) earlier graduations and nine (9) degree accelerations. Student Affairs is currently recruiting for next year and hope to increase the number of participants by at least 20%.