

**Texas A&M International University
Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)
for Administrative or Educational Support Units**

Unit Name:

First Year Success Program

Unit Type:

Administrative Unit

Educational Support Unit

Assessment Period Covered:

March 1, 2008 to January 31, 2009

Unit Coordinator (Preparer of Report):

Kristen Standage, EdD

List Other Report Contributors (if applicable):

The annual review is directed at the following goals of the Texas A&M International University 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. Please list goals below:

Goal 1: Academics

Develop, maintain, assess, and improve academic programs, administrative/educational support services and student services, to admit, retain, and graduate students who achieve established learning outcomes designed to prepare them for success in their chosen careers.

Institutional Mission

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

Administrative or Educational Support Unit Mission

The Texas A & M International University First Year Success Program is dedicated to student retention by enhancing the educational, career, and personal success of first-time students attending as freshmen or as transfer students of higher levels. Student success is promoted by coordinating an array of services that are responsive to our students' unique needs, and by personally linking the students to the appropriate service, such as tutoring, counseling, job-seeking, test preparation, financial aid and other University support services. This is accomplished by an array of communication formats, such as face-to-face advising at time of need, bi-weekly meetings with individual students, and phone calls to disseminate relevant information.

Provide summary of the last cycle’s use of results and changes implemented

This statement should specify if the outcomes addressed were a continuation of previous ones, new outcomes, or modified versions of previous outcomes. In addition, the statement should include a concise analysis of the assessment data collected during the previous year, a brief explanation of actions taken to address specific outcomes, an evaluation of how these actions contributed to the improvement of the unit, and any recommendations formulated. Assessment data must be viewed and discussed by the unit during this process.

All of the outcomes were a continuation of the previous outcomes with changes in the delivery of the assessment instruments. The student mentors continued with the change in structure to bi-weekly meetings with all of the freshmen students in the Spring and Fall 2008 semesters. We have had a tremendous increase in the number of responses to our Mentor satisfaction survey and are more assured of our results. We changed the procedure for the survey implementation to the last week of class and asked the UNIV instructors to distribute the surveys. This resulted in 400% increase in the number of surveys received. As a consequence of the results and comments, we increased the training provided at the weekly mentor meetings to include additional information on advising and communication skills. We are experimenting with a weekly meeting schedule for the students in the UNIV 1101 classes this spring (2009), due to the comments received from the students. For our second outcome, the percentage return from the instructors was disappointing however the satisfaction rate was excellent (100%). Our last outcome continued to meet our goal, but due to the increase in the numbers of students each mentor met with, and the continued changes in the content of the UNIV classes, the mentors were requested to provide very few workshops in the spring and fall semesters.

List of unit-level outcomes

It is recommended that units rotate through their entire set of outcomes over a multi-year period. Units may focus on one or two outcomes each year, as deemed appropriate.

1. The First Year Success Program will provide satisfactory services to entering freshmen.
2. The student mentors will provide satisfactory services to the faculty of UNIV 1101 and UNIV 1102.
3. The First Year Success Program will conduct academic and University-related workshops for entering freshmen students.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

Outcome(s): *Identify the outcome(s) that will be focused upon this year.*

The student mentors will provide satisfactory services to the entering freshmen in the UNIV 1101 and UNIV 1102 courses.

Methods of assessment to be used:

Identify and describe the type of assessment(s) that will be used and how the data will be obtained. During this assessment period, has your unit used any of the following measures for assessment of outcomes? Indicate “Y” if currently being used; “N” if not currently being used but interested in using; and “NA” if not applicable.

Type of Measure	Y	N	NA	Specify which type of measure was used and what outcome the measure was applied to:
<u>Volume of Activity:</u> (Number of clients served, circulation data, etc.)	Y			The number of forms returned is used to insure the results are representative of the freshmen class served
<u>Efficiency:</u> (Turnaround time for filling requests, timely service or prompt response, etc.)				
<u>Service Quality:</u> (Error rates, accuracy of information provided, etc)				
<u>Client Satisfaction Survey</u> (Student, employer, alumni, customer, etc.)	Y			Student satisfaction survey for mentoring services
<u>Feedback:</u> (Suggestion box, focus groups, evaluation forms, etc.)				The comments written by the students are used in training sessions with the mentors
<u>Review of existing data:</u> (Routine records or reports, institutional data, audits, etc.)				
Staff discussions or evaluations of services to clients				The comments written by the students are used in training sessions with the mentors
Standards/guidelines provided by professional associations				
Standards set by federal, state, county, city or system regulations				
External evaluations or auditors				
Benchmarks or comparisons with peer institutions				
Other				

Criteria/Benchmark(s):

Specify, if deemed appropriate to assess outcome(s). Criteria/ benchmark(s) may be optional, especially if qualitative measures are used for data collection.

Entering freshmen will indicate at least a 92% satisfaction rate with the services provided by the First Year Success Program mentors.
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Section II: Analysis of Results

What were the results attained?

Describe the primary results or findings from your analysis of the information collected. Were the results used to improve the unit services or operations? Please specify:

An overall satisfaction rate of 89% was obtained. We received 1,192 surveys (506 in the spring and 686 in the fall) which was a 400% increase over the previous year. This is an 80% return rate, so we are much more confident in the results than we had been with the results in 2007. There continue to be students who are dissatisfied with the overall approach to the mandatory UNIV course requirement and the mentor meetings and we realize we won't change that. A review of the comments does provide some concern, however, that some of the students may believe the survey form is for the class as well as the mentor. We will change the form to increase the clarity, as well as request the instructors to emphasize that the form is ONLY for the mentors. The comments as well as the ratings provided topic areas for additional mentor training (and will be incorporated in the new mentor training as well). These comments range from individual mentor performance to overall content areas of the meetings.

What were the conclusions reached?

Include a brief description of the procedure used for reaching the conclusion(s) based on the evidence collected and describe the process used to disseminate the information to other individuals. For example, if the discussion took place during the annual retreat, include a summary from those deliberations using the Meeting Minutes template found on the Project Integrate web page at <http://www.tamtu.edu/integrate/docs/Minutes-Template.doc>. Once completed, submit the minutes to assessment@tamtu.edu.

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Mentors were provided with their individual survey forms at the beginning of the next semester.

Describe the action plan formulated. (The plan may be multi-year in nature.)

Based on the conclusion(s), describe the action plan to be implemented to improve or maintain unit services and operations, including resources needed and a timeline for implementation.

We will continue to update and expand the training provided to the mentors, both initially and continuously throughout the semesters. We will be going through another large turnover this spring as we again lose 70% of the mentors to graduation. In addition, the freshman application rate at present is 56% higher, in comparison to last year at this time, and there is a 47% increase in the number of accepted freshmen. If this trend continues, we will need at least two additional mentor positions to cover the sessions required. These additional two positions would not be filled until the August training period, instead of the normal spring hiring, to insure that the need is actual.

Section III: Resources

Resource(s) to implement action plan:

Describe the resources that will be needed to implement the action plan. Also indicate if the resources are currently available, or if additional funds will be needed to obtain these resources.

Funding

- New Resources Required
- Reallocation of current funds

Physical

- New or reallocated space (we currently have a classroom allocated for mentor meetings, this will be verified to continue for the fall – we have space allocated for FYSP in the new Student Success Building, but that will not be available in the fall of 2009))

Other

- Primarily faculty/staff time
- University rule/procedure change only

Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan – or Compact, if relevant)

Each mentor works 19 hours weekly, and in this time frame, can meet with 25 students. (The mentors meet with 25 students one week, a different set of students the following week, and alternate throughout the semester for a total of 50 students per mentor.)They also must complete the paperwork required to submit grades to the UNIV instructors weekly, and keep the student folders current. There is a required two hour meeting weekly, as well. The current number of positions approved is 18, which will serve 900 students a semester. An increase of 2 mentor positions will allow us to serve an additional 100 students.

Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:

Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation):

The student mentors will provide satisfactory services to the entering freshmen in the UNIV 1101 and UNIV 1102 courses.

New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below):

The academic advising component of FYSP will meet with each sophomore student who is undeclared as to his/her major as of January, 2009 (as entered in BANNER).

Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification):

Date Completed: 1/31/09