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

Unit Name:

International Student Services (ISS)

Unit Type:
   _X__ Administrative Unit   ___ Educational Support Unit

Assessment Period Covered:

March 1, 2008 to January 31, 2009

Unit Coordinator (Preparer of Report):

D.E. VerMilyea

List Other Report Contributors (if applicable):

ISS staff

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.
1.3 Increase student retention and graduation rates

GOAL 3: Service
Maintain, strengthen, and expand service to all University stakeholders.
3.3 Promote a culture of service within the University, extending to the local, national and international communities.

GOAL 7: Internationalization
To strengthen and enhance TAMIU's position as the international university in the Texas A&M University System and the State of Texas.
7.3 Increase recruitment of international students and visiting scholars and immerse them culturally and legally into the University setting.

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

International Student Services
Mission: To provide excellence in service to international students by ensuring compliance with the University and Federal regulatory requirements throughout their matriculation process. In addition, it promotes campus and community internationalization by organizing interactive events.

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.

The use of Homeland Security's Students and Exchange Visitor Information System SEVIS was once again the data base used to evaluate goal 1.3 of the TAMIU Strategic Plan Objective. The goal was met within the 30 day mandatory deadline.

The use of the ISS Evaluation and Suggestion Form (ESF) was also used again. However, the method of distributing the form was modified by sending an email notice to patrons to visit the ISS web site to complete the form. The modification was initiated to increase the number of returned ESF forms, however, this strategy did not achieved a higher return rate and has weakened the reliability of the data collected.

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.   SEVIS data submitted on time and accurate
2.   Patron Evaluation and Suggestion Form results are within the 90% range of "Excellent" to "Very Good" range

Section I: Planning and Implementation

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

The outcome to maintain a 100% SEVIS registration of visa students within the mandatory deadline will be achieved.
The outcome to increase the return of the ESF forms will be the goal to achieve.

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:
Volume of Activity: (Number of clients served, circulation data, etc.)	Y			SEVIS rosters
Efficiency: (Turnaround time for filling requests, timely service or prompt response, etc.)	Y			SEVIS rosters
Service Quality: (Error rates, accuracy of information provided, etc)	Y			Record audit and review
Client Satisfaction Survey (Student, employer, alumni, customer, etc.)	Y			ISS Evaluation and Suggestion Form (ESF) SurveyMonkey.Com
Feedback: (Suggestion box, focus groups, evaluation forms, etc.)	Y			Suggestion box located on the wall and SurveyMonkey.Com
Review of existing data: (Routine records or reports, institutional data, audits, etc.)	Y			Periodic review
Staff discussions or evaluations of services to clients	Y			Annual review
Standards/guidelines provided by professional associations	Y			SEVIS and NAFSA standards
Standards set by federal, state, county, city or system regulations	Y			SEVIS
External evaluations or auditors	Y			SEVIS data audit
Benchmarks or comparisons with peer institutions	Y			Calendar due dates set by TAMIU and SEVIS
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.*

Maintain certification from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) / United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) permitting TAMIU to enroll international students.

At least 50% of patrons to complete the ESR

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:*

ISS was able to meet the SEVIS deadlines and maintain the DHS certification. Continuation of the efforts is projected.

The 50% return of ESRs was not achieved even when staff diligence was applied to sending out notices to complete the ESR. An analysis of the process shows that while the email was sent to patrons, very few (13%) responded. A review of this failure showed that patrons placed little importance on the survey opportunity.

The second half of the reporting period shows that the percent of return was ideal. 83% responded. However, the sample size was so small that the reliability is not valid. An analysis of this failure shows that the office sign-in log was not adequately staffed or maintained. Work assignments distracted from the staff maintaining an accurate log and this resulted in a low sample size.

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.tamiu.edu/integrate/docs/Minutes-Template.doc. Once completed, submit the minutes to assessment@tamiu.edu.

The use of the SEVIS Alert Reports and SEVIS Roster List Reports will continue to be used to determine the achievement of the desired outcome of meeting DHS/USCIS guidelines.

The procedures to achieve the desired results for the ESR must be changed. New emphasis on the importance of the patron sign-in log will be applied. Staff assignments, as well as requesting additional staff to carry out this assessment, are urgently being requested.

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.

The action plan to address the low patron response is to request a staff assignment to the specific task of maintaining the sign-in log and sending out the email notice to each patron within five days of their office visit. Additional staff will be requested to insure coverage of this assignment.

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
- X   New Resources Required
- ☐   Reallocation of current funds

Physical
- ☐   New or reallocated space

Other
- X   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)

> GOAL 3: Service: to maintain, strengthen, and expand service to all University stakeholders.
> 3.3 To promote a culture of service within the University, extending to the local, national and international community will best be achieved with sufficient staff and balanced work load assignments throughout the year.   The current work load and limited staff assigned in ISS will continue to have a negative impact on meeting ideal quality service.
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> The current ISS resources are focused on maintaining the DHS/ USCIS certification. This permits the achievement of 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 and part1.3 Increase student retention and graduation rates.

Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:

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

> Continuation of assigning resources to insure the Certification from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) / United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) permitting TAMIU to enroll international students. This certification must be maintained in order for TAMIU to have international students enrolled.

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

> At least 50% of patrons complete the ESR

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

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> Date Completed: 01/28/2009