

Final Report

Program Review
of
Weber State University
Campus Recreation

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Introduction

In January 2011, Campus Recreation at Weber State University underwent a 5-year program review. As the external evaluator of the three member Review Team, I have been asked to prepare feedback for the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Executive Director of the Union. This report will provide a review and recommendations based on the self-study, prior research of Weber State University, interviews and individual meetings with faculty, staff and students, tours of the campus and operation and meetings with the Director of Campus Recreation and the Campus Recreation staff.

Preceding the onsite review, the Review Team was provided with a copy of the departmental self-study document along with other materials to assist in the understanding of how Campus Recreation operates. The Review Team formulated questions and discussed methodology via e-mail and a phone conference call prior to the on-site visit. An agenda that included time and opportunity to talk with the Associate Vice President and Vice President of Student Affairs, the Executive Director of the Union, relevant faculty, staff and students was provided. Another part of the process was a campus tour of all operational facilities and significant time with the Campus Recreation student users and student employees.

As a result, this report evaluates Campus Recreation at Weber State University while providing feedback on observations, interviews, and general issues of concern and final recommendations from the Review Team. Included are perceptions the team feels can improve the overall operation of Campus Recreation. This evaluation will provide overall comments on strengths and areas of improvement.

With this introduction, it is necessary to emphasize that the issues that emerged are in no way an indication of the dedication and passion to, or the quality of work of, the current leadership team or the staff of Campus Recreation. It was evident that this team values their mission to the university as a whole and that of providing excellent service to the students.

Standards

While there are no general policies, codes or standards for the operation of Campus Recreation there is a national organization, National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA), which provides resources, trends, professional development and training opportunities. NIRSA believes in a very holistic approach to the education of the student in that it is the sum of all the

experiences that provides their development. To assist in the development of programs and staff NIRSA supports that Campus Recreation programs actively work with other organizations such as Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), Council of Higher Education Management Associations (CHEMA), Inter-Association Task Force on Alcohol and Other Substance Abuse Issues (IATF) and NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education as examples. NIRSA supports over 4,000 recreational professionals and works with 700 campus and universities serving over 11 million college students each year.

History

Campus Recreation has been in a state of flux for the past several years and is a relatively new program having only been developed in 1973. The initial program focus was intramurals, aquatics, weight lifting and drop-in play and reported to the Health, Physical Education, and Dance academic department. In 1975 the program expanded to include Club Sports and Outdoor Programming. In the mid-eighties the unit was moved to Student Services while still being housed in an academic facility. The 1990's saw a growth in staff and the responsibility of facility scheduling and monitoring entry points. A Director was named to head up the unit while also overseeing the student health center and student housing. In 2008 the Director retired and in the fall of 2008 a new Director was hired adding stability to the program.

Growth of the operation followed by a vacillating management resulted in program units functioning as silos thus the immediate focus has been reuniting areas into an integrated unit. Steps toward unification included the development of a purpose statement and core values, a review and adjustment of some staff offices and a focus on staff roles and expectations.

Overall Analysis of Campus Recreation

In addition to the internal administrative staffing integration noted, there are external operational challenges with the academic unit, Health Promotion and Human Performance (HPHP) that outwardly appear to hinder a strong collaborative effort. Initial discussions included building trust, operation/mission awareness and proficiency as collaborative units. Critical to both operations was the development of a Risk Management Plan specific to each programming areas and each operational area for numerous scenarios. On the national level, Campus Recreation faces similar issue to other departments. Identity development, shared space, overcrowding, funding and balancing programs with needs are just a few of the issues.

Programs and Services

As noted in the self-study, the department of Campus Recreation consists of five key programs: Aquatics, Club Sports, Fitness and Wellness, Intramural Sports, and the Outdoor Program. Secondary programs do exist within several of these. Drop-in usage of several areas should be

highlighted as a large aspect of this operation as well. Usage in the past two years in several of the programs has increased (Fitness and Wellness, Aquatics and Outdoor Programs). Scheduling conflicts for Club Sports, Intramurals and Drop-in was noted by several as a limitation to usage. Details for each program can be reviewed in the self-study.

Strengths

After the discussion with the various constituents as well as the Campus Recreation staff there is visible evidence of strong administrative support and committed recreational user support from the students, faculty and staff. The new Director has been very transparent in her vision and intentional with her management style. Staff are developing short and long range plans and goals, are setting appropriate priorities of needs and services and preparing for the future. The Campus Recreation staff is highly proficient and qualified in their areas of expertise and due to vacant staff positions are able to cross over and assist. They are very passionate about their role within Campus Recreation and understand their purpose as it relates to the Weber State University Mission.

Concerns

In order to support the numerous users of Campus Recreation strengthening the bond between this department and HPHP would increase performance and external perceptions in both units. Administrative factors such as planning, organization of work, problem solving, evaluation, supervisory control and risk management as well as decision making could be more effective for both. Sharing of realistic knowledge and competencies could be communicated and professional demeanor modeled and maintained on a consistent basis.

Sharing an operation offers its own challenges. Reports and meetings during the day frequently noted problems with scheduling such as overbooking, cancellations on short notice, perception of favoritism of scheduling groups, and lack of organization or communication with the schedule. Another was the pool and mechanical issues that affect the operation on a regular basis, the need for a set and dependable schedule and then locker-room and guard office capabilities.

Internally Campus Recreation should review administrative policies and practices, staff roles and responsibilities, marketing and branding as well as facility and equipment maintenance and upkeep.

Recommendations

Unit Mission, Goals and Outcomes

a. Collaborative Efforts

- *Develop plan to increase positive continual communication with HPHP*
- *Define relationship and clarify expectation with HPHP through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding*
- *Define relationship and clarify needs with Athletics*
- *Establish working relationships with city of Ogden and other academic and student life units*
- *Actively participate in committees; provide strong representation on the state, university and national level*
- *Establish a name as the “go to” unit*
- *Develop as a major asset to the university*
- *Expand role of Campus Recreation Advisory Committee*

b. Establish Dependable Scheduling, Policies and Procedures

- *Investigate a technology supported scheduling system such as EMS or Now-Up-To-Date*
- *Explore technology method to develop a consistent on-line registration and management program particularly in Intramurals and Swimming Programs*
- *Request a seat at the table for regularly scheduled meetings to review operational related subjects*
- *Assist with the development of an emergency response guide (area and program specific) Areas to be included are:*
 - *Fire*
 - *Tornado and Weather Emergencies*
 - *Earthquakes*
 - *Power Outage*
 - *Emergency Contacts and Phone Numbers*
 - *Flooding*
 - *Civil Disturbances*
 - *Gas-Leak-Fumes-Vapors*
 - *Suicide Threat-Psychological Emergency*
 - *Students of Concern*
 - *Active Shooters*
 - *Suspicious Package*

- *Fire and Fire Extinguishers*
 - *Crime Prevention Resources*
 - *Hazardous Materials*
 - *Medical Emergencies*
 - *Bomb Threats and Checklist*
 - *Campus Map*
 - *Employee Injury Procedures*
 - *Accident Report Procedures*
 - *Critical Incident Stress Management*
 - *Assess and communicate program and operational needs with partners semesterly*
- c. Use Data to Assess Usage Patterns in Participation
- *Note significant trends for programming development and planning*
 - *Identify individuals for outreach*
 - *Target marketing to individuals and groups*
 - *Explore programmatic service initiatives to target under-represented populations*
 - *Assess current or future collaborative opportunities*
- d. Align Campus Wellness Programs and Services with Campus Recreation Initiatives
- *Reinitiate Campus Wellness Task Force*
 - *Research and expand new partnerships for programming development*
 - *Define inclusive and review program efforts to meet varying needs*
 - *Initiative a campus-wide healthy lifestyle promotion*
 - *Explore partnership with BASICS*
 - *Develop a holistic wellness model that emphasizes the campus as a whole vs. the athletically inclined*
- e. Image Development
- *Establish an identifying mark for Campus Recreation as a whole*
 - *Use this identification to establish a visual association*
 - *Act to review and construct consistent web pages*
 - *Pursue opportunities to utilize interns, marketing, design and journalism classes for the development of graphics and marketing*
 - *Asses need for and review the addition of a part-time student employee(s) to work in marketing of program*

- *Pursue scholarships or financial assistance for graphic designers and web maintenance*
- *Develop signage and branding at a common “front door” to Campus Recreation*
- *Expand branding into the arena proper*

Leadership and Staffing

a. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- *Prioritize hiring of two open staffing positions (Aquatics and Fitness and Wellness)*
- *Review responsibility of financial clerk and the expansion of their role within the office proper*
- *Review current function of support staff in relation to the director and full-time staff and determine if there is an imbalance of responsibilities. Are there tasks within each that can help balance or assist?*
- *Continue emphasis of the Campus Recreation model as a whole first and the importance of each unit as the sum*
- *Increase involvement with faculty in clubs and organizations*

b. Student and Staff Development

- *Investigate and enhance use of technology for training opportunities*
- *Educate work force to be risk management conscious and confident in responses*
- *Explore ways to increase customer service through cross-training HPHP Customer Service and Campus Recreation staff*
- *Enhance job skill development through collaborate opportunities through academic relationships and other student affair units*
- *Build upon diversity training and expand to student employees*

c. Staff Management

- *Maintain visible and open progression towards the development of a cohesive department*
- *Recognize individual and team accomplishments*
- *Review responsibilities and department needs in relation to Secretary 3 position*

Financial Resources and Budget

- a. Fiscal Responsibility
 - *Assess data relating to revenue generation*
 - *Increase use of Federal Work Study students*
 - *Seek grant/collaborative unit funding sources internally and externally*
 - *Develop one, three and five year equipment replacement plan*

- b. Assess Current Practices
 - *Develop measurable goals which review marketing strategies*
 - *Continuous review of programs and expenses in relation to cost and potential reductions*
 - *Plan for program and facility reductions assessing the implication*
 - *Assess under-utilized programs for the potential to add new services*
 - *Define clear pricing structures*
 - *Develop consistent billing procedures and processing for pool usage*

- c. Realize Income Potential in Collaborative Focused Programming
 - *Seek and participate in grants with academic units*
 - *Review potential income with community-focused programs*

Facilities, Equipment and Technology

- a. Technology Utilization
 - *Realize productivity and efficiency capabilities through technology*
 - *Research and create effectual assessment tools*
 - *Create consistent on-line registration process*
 - *Propose assisting HPHP to organizationally manage reservation system*

- b. Equipment Maintenance
 - *Partner with HPHP to work with Equipment Maintenance Staff Member*
 - *Develop and maintain equipment inventory to determine future and immediate needs*
 - *Plan for down time and storage of fitness equipment*
 - *Enhance equipment inventory report to project usage and performance for future purchases*

- c. Expansion of Operation
- *Continue to explore and garner support for arena proper expansion*
 - *Ensure plan for a separate facility*
 - *Develop more organized utilization of arena storage*
 - *Review physical disjoint of staff due to varying office locations*
 - *Initiate discussion of pool usage, failing mechanics, inadequate inclusive locker rooms and ineffective lifeguard offices*
 - *Common front door to operation will affirm Campus Recreation presence*

Ethical and Legal Responsibilities

- a. Multiple Use Facility
- *Usage of arena by multiple groups creates the potential for serious injury*
 - *Review usage and develop policies by outside groups during prime operational hours*
 - *Establish usage agreements and maintain consistency in policies of usage*
 - *Development of area and program specific risk management is critical*
 - *Recurring review and training of student and staff is essential*
- b. Shared Pool
- *Develop consistent review, repair and maintenance of mechanical equipment*
 - *Recurring short notice pool closings or scheduling adjustment resulting in unhappy patrons and usage complaints*
- c. Current Training and Certification of Staff
- *Continuous review of safety and equipment practices coupled with documentation and certification requirements for staff*
 - *Continuous review of physical operation with documentation*

Assessment and Evaluation

- *Conscious planning for yearly strategic planning review*
- *Purposeful incorporation of university and Student Affairs goals into review*
- *Defining measurable goals for assessment*
- *On-going revision and quarterly review of strategic plans, practices, initiatives, and goals*
- *Inclusion of long term plan for sustainability of Campus Recreation*
- *Introduce quarterly budget reviews for pro-active present and future planning*
- *Strategize to gain ownership of name and program*