

**Weber State University
Shepherd Union
Student Involvement and Leadership
Site Review Team Report**

Introduction

The onsite team that focused on the area of Student Involvement and Leadership included two internal members:

Dr. Leah Murray, Associate Professor, Political Science

Alison Barlow Hess, Public Relations Director

And one external member:

Margaret Vos, St. Cloud State University

During the three day visit, July 18 – 20, 2011, 11 meetings were conducted involving the following 28 supervisors and stakeholders:

Dr. Jan Winniford, Student Affairs Vice President

Bill Fruth-Director, Shepherd Union

Associate Directors:

Monika Rodie, Union Operations and Wildcard

Chad Mosher, Scheduling Events & Conferences

Nancy Collinwood, Student Involvement and Leadership Director

Tara Peris, Clubs & Organizations Coordinator

Aaron Newman, Assistant Director of Student Involvement & Leadership

Adrienne Gillespie, Diversity and Unity Center Coordinator

Norm Tarbox - Vice President of Administration

University Stake Holders:

Dane LeBlanc, Chief of Police

Jeanne Gambal- Sorority Advisor

Pat Wheeler-Academic Advisor - College of Business

Student Involvement and Leadership Support staff;

Jackie Edwards, Secretary Student Involvement and Leadership

Suzy Flint, Community Engagement Center Support Staff.

Cara Jones, Office Specialist, Community Involvement Center

Students:

WUSA Presidents-

Kyle Braithwaite 2011-12

Victoria-Vickie- Thompson 2010-11

Tyler Latham, 2009-10

Anna McCarty, Leadership Vice President 2011-12

Leslie Baldwin, VIP Chair Head Start 2009-12

Landon Stoker, Emerging Leader Mentor

Brady Harris, Davis Campus Senator

Keri Peterson, Retired Co-Director Community Involvement Center

Forest Crawford, Assistant to the President for Diversity

Sharon Judd-Scholarship coordinator

Maria P Cook-Women's Center Director

Linda Kaiser Purchasing technician

Jolene Fraser-Payroll

Overall analysis of Student Involvement and Leadership:

Observations:

- The new improved Shepherd Union has more than exceeded its goals and was described as the emotional center of campus. Involvement in student leadership and organizations and clubs has increased by leaps and bounds.
- SIL staff has strong connections to students. The staff is passionate, caring and they challenge students to perform at their peak and allow them to succeed and occasionally fail as part of the learning process. The staff is described by student leaders as change agents with a focus on student-centered development.
- Students feel empowered and supported. Innovation is encouraged and fostered.
- Student development through mentoring and training was repeatedly praised by students, faculty and staff.
- Strength Quest was a core initiative that was highlighted and should be continued.
- Over the past three years, initiatives, collaborations and trainings have improved campus relations, outcomes of programs and services and have created an overall sense of ownership and pride with the programs and services produced by SIL.
- Diversity and Unity Center is held in high regard by faculty and staff with expectations regarding outreach and training to be an integral part of their mission.
- Students feel that the opportunities that they have experienced are life changing. All three Student Government presidents felt that their leadership positions provided an "internship" type experience, with one past president claiming that his involvement was directly related to his professional

position with Hill Air Force Base when he graduated from Weber State University.

- Student leaders are taken seriously and appreciate the ability to be represented at faculty senate meetings. This is a practice that student government leaders from across the country envy.
- The attendance of the Student Affairs Vice President at the WUSA meetings sends a powerful message of not only support but empowers the student leaders in their leadership roles. They feel that they matter and are important voices at the table.
- Shepherd Union Board membership could include more student representatives. A process to identify and appoint qualified and dedicated leaders should be established.

Program Review Standards

1. Unit Mission, Goals, and Outcomes

The unit has a mission and overarching goals/outcomes statements which are consistent with and which support the University and Division mission statements and goals.

- Programs, services and staff are very student focused.
- Student involvement has increased over the past three years especially in the areas of Leadership and Greeks.
- Though the assessment is embraced by the center, more analysis of outcomes needs to be developed. The numbers from surveys are there, now the stories need to be developed to support the outcomes. For example, the Convocation program is not only valued but reflects the new University's mission statement, "excellent educational experiences for its students...in and out of the classroom" however no surveys are conducted regarding the impact of each program, nor was it highlighted in the SIL self-study.
- Convocation surveys need to be developed and conducted after each speaker measuring the impact of the program as well as the learning outcomes of the experience.
- The changing of the timing for the awarding of scholarship funds has forced student leadership elections to take place in February. This early election process increases the amount of turnover as most students are unsure of the level of their involvement almost seven months before their positions begin. Student elections usually take place later in the spring which ensures a stronger commitment and follow through.

2. Programs and Services

The unit provides a set of core programs/services which are central to and consistent with the unit's mission and goals. These programs/services are responsive to the

needs of the unit's constituents, are cost-effective and, when appropriate, are supported by other units or agencies both within and outside the University.

- Diversity and Unity Center collaborates with many campus groups and departments in providing programming. Due to the minimal budget the financial collaboration is essential.
- The Leadership Academy gets consistent praise from students and clearly fits the mission of SIL. The Leadership Academy, however, needs to capture and articulate the students' passion for leadership training through assessment.
- Convocation is an excellent program but should be planned out at least one semester in advance in order to allow faculty to incorporate the speakers into their curriculum, classroom discussions and potential classroom visits. It is a highly valued program that should be continued.
- LGBT needs should be managed through the Diversity and Unity Center with outreach to the Davis Campus.

3. **Leadership and Staffing**

The unit has a sufficient number of well-qualified employees (professional, support, student) to effectively provide the core programs/services offered by the unit. Employees have clear and current job responsibilities. Employees are oriented to their roles, receive appropriate leadership and supervision, are provided with ongoing professional development opportunities, and are regularly evaluated.

- Support staffing needed in Diversity and Unity Center in order to provide a customer-service centered atmosphere.
- Staff has a lengthy list of "additional duties as assigned" that provides support and service across the division as well as for the university. This level of work should be evaluated and managed as the quality level of core duties is difficult to sustain.
- Job descriptions need to be updated to reflect the work load.
- Job titles should be revised to reflect the work. The titles are lengthy and do not capture all aspects of their responsibilities. Perhaps just shortening the titles to associate, assistant and coordinator.
- Organizational chart needs updates and revisions. Diversity Committee is missing.
- Director of SIL should be invited to the management table on a regular basis in order to connect the work of that area to the rest of student affairs.
- The coordination of work between the Davis Campus needs to be discussed and developed. There are opportunities to complement the work that SIL is involved in. SIL needs to be actively involved with the programs, services and training that occur at the Davis Campus. This coordination will provide support to the WUSA as well as to the students who attend Davis. The issues with Davis may be more staff and faculty focused than a concern for the students.
- The change in the CIC, which included the reduction of a co-director to just one director, will impact the staffing level within the SIL. Consideration should be given to adding a full-time programming position to the department. This

would alleviate the amount of late-night programming that is presently assigned to the director.

- CIC was a concern with student leaders; they do not want to lose the strong volunteer, out-of-classroom experience they have embraced. They do not want to tie all service projects to classroom learning. They want to continue the tradition of heartfelt service with no academic component. A discussion with student leaders regarding the need for the change as well as reassurance of the student's involvement should be communicated immediately.
- CIC assistant director's success will be impacted by the amount of coordination with the SIL staff. Joint staff meetings would be beneficial and would increase the flow of information.
- The CIC faculty director position should be rotated every 3 years. This is a practice that should be continued.
- Division assessment must be a priority and is ongoing. The importance of quantitative as well as qualitative surveys including pre and post event assessments which could include a reflection piece would provide a longitudinal picture of the impact of the programs and events
- Ongoing workshops and/or discussion groups regarding ways to implement assessment should be offered division wide.

4. **Financial Resources and Budget**

The unit has a well-defined and participatory budget planning process. This process results in sufficient resources to meet the unit's core programs/services, staffing, facility, equipment, and technology needs.

- Should match resources to need. For example, to be more fiscally responsible, several years ago, the Leadership Academy was relocated back to campus from its meetings in Park City or Sun Valley. The move saved thousands of dollars -- money that was then available to other areas of leadership. However, the leadership budget has remained stagnant for many years, so even with the Leadership Academy relocation, leadership lacks the funding required to sustain its level of programming.
- Diversity and Unity Center budget has remained flat for many years. An increase in budget would send a powerful message to the university community that diversity is important as well as enable an increase in overall programming.
- No dedicated marketing person or budget identified for the union or the programming. Though the quality of the advertising is good, the missing aspect is not having identified the needs of the clients nor the development of a marketing plan.
- SIL could benefit from a grant writing position as very little monetary support comes from grants. The staff recognizes the potential but does not have the expertise nor the time to research and write grants.

5. **Facilities, Equipment and Technology**

The unit has safe, accessible, and current physical facilities, equipment, and technological resources to support its core programs/services and personnel.

- Diversity and Unity Center needs improved lighting
- Support the creation of a student space in the Bell Tower lounge where students can gather, meet and work. The increased traffic pattern through that entrance would provide an excellent opportunity to highlight student involvement.
- Office space within the CIC is dual purpose which has sometimes resulted in an unwelcome environment. Staff needs the space to be quiet in order to complete their work and yet students who use the space see it as a social space. The space should be examined and evaluated and a workable solution developed, so that it functions both for staff and for the involved student leaders.
- Student Involvement and Leadership website needs to be improved and updated to reflect the ongoing programs of the area as well as to support the documentation of involvement and also to manage all applications and forms.

6. **Ethical and Legal Responsibilities**

The unit is aware of and compliant with statutory and professional ethical and legal standards which apply to the unit's core programs/services, personnel, facilities, equipment and technology.

- Strong support of ongoing training programs for student leaderships that has been developed over the past three years. Continue to involve the departments from across campus in the training especially the police department and business services.

7. **Assessment and Evaluation**

The unit has clearly defined and measurable core program/service and student learning outcomes which are consistent with the unit's mission and goal statements. These program/service and student learning outcomes are regularly assessed through both direct and indirect measures, and the results of assessment are shared among constituents and are used for decision-making and planning.

- Development of surveys that capture the outcomes of the leadership training programs.
- Development of assessment to measure the impact of Convocation.
- Evaluate the data in regards to student involvement and summarize the impact of that involvement.

- All SIL programming, including diversity, should include some assessment, quantitative- head counts- and an exit survey for all events. Because they are so overwhelmed already, the SIL staff should have help with assessment and be given an easy to administer template they could use, so they don't have to "reinvent the wheel."

8. **Summary**

The unit has clearly articulated what they learned through the self-study process including concrete recommendations for their individual programs and services. The unit has set priorities for improvement and refinement and has made recommendations of items for the review team to consider.

- The Student Involvement and Leadership staff is a team of outstanding, dedicated members of the Division of Student Affairs.
- Assessment needs to be continued. The staff is committed in doing assessment. It is the ongoing process of developing the tools needed to measure learning outcomes and to assist in the development of new initiatives.
- Allocation of funding for the three areas should be analyzed and consideration should be given to reallocation of funding if budget increases are not possible. The student population and their needs continue to grow. Therefore, the budget allocation should follow.
- Staffing levels should be increased to meet the increase of special projects and university initiatives.

August 18, 2011