To: Virginia Broaddus, PhD, Provost

From: Kimberly LaBoone, PhD

Re: Academic Services Report Annual Report

Date: 5/15/2013

**INTRODUCTION**

In order to present twelve months of data for Academic Services, this report covers May 2012 – April 2013. Information is reviewed by the month as well as comparisons by semesters (fall 2012 and spring 2013) to analyze the services provided. Finally, summary information and totals are offered for the 12 month period highlighted in this report. This report features data from three program units housed in Academic Services: academic support and testing, Disability Students Services (DSS), and the Writing Center.

**Academic Support Services**

Usage by MONTH

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Total |
| Accuplacer Assessments | 29 | 96 | 122 | 129 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 40 | 19 | 0 | 6 | 50 | 494 |
| Assessments (makeup) | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 19 | 20 | 15 | 0 | 15 | 25 | 22 | 130 |
| Assessments (language) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 38 |
| Assessments (non-Trinity) | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| Student Appointments | 1 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 8 | 4 | 74 | 34 | 32 | 36 | 218 |
| Student Employee Mtgs | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 39 |
| Academic Success Sem  Students attending | 0  0 | 0  0 | 1  10 | 0  0 | 9  101 | 6  18 | 6  11 | 0  0 | 2  20 | 7  50 | 6  40 | 4  30 | 41  280 |
| Tutoring Requests | 0 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 52 | 22 | 9 | 0 | 22 | 30 | 13 | 2 | 166 |
| Walk In Tutoring Visits | 0 | 13 | 7 | 3 | 41 | 25 | 39 | 8 | 18 | 46 | 31 | 34 | 265 |

Comparison of Usage by SEMESTER

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* | *Summer2012* | *Spring 2012* | *Fall 2011* |
| Accuplacer Assessments | 75 | 172 | 310 | 106 | 165 |
| Assessment (makeup) | 62 | 50 | 12 | 41 | 38 |
| Assessment (language) | 12 | 20 | 2 | 57 | 22 |
| Student Appointments | 176 | 33 | 14 | 105 | Not recorded |
| Tutoring Requests | 67 | 93 | 5 | 135 | 178 |
| Math Ctr /Tutoring Walk-In | 129 | 116 | 0 | 63 | 62 |

**Discussion**

Data points worth examining include the number of placement assessments administered, tutoring requests, and Math Center/Tutoring Walk-in visits. Although the number of Accuplacer assessments always peaks during spring and summer months as students finalize their decisions about which college they will attend, the number of assessments has decreased this spring when compared to last spring despite the fact that more assessment dates were offered this spring. A review of the data for tutoring trends reveals a downward turn as well. Some of the decline in requests for tutoring appointments may be explained by the fact that access to tutors has improved by providing expanded walk-in hours. However, the increase in the number of walk-in and Math Center visits does not make up for the decrease in tutoring requests. Overall usage shrank when combining the number of requests with the number of visits for each semester; that is, usage for 2013 (405) is down approximately 8% of the 2012 (438) usage. While the loss is slight, an evaluation of users’ satisfaction may provide important revelations.

Students on Academic Probation: Number of Contacts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* |
| Probation Students | 262 | 197 |
| Contact w/ ASC | 113 | 41 |
| Workshop Attendance | 120 | 14 |
| Consultations/Meetings | 176 | 19 |

Students on Academic Probation: GPA Details by Number of Contacts

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | n | Fall GPA Range | Fall Cum GPA | Spring Cum GPA | Spring Sem GPA |
| 0 contacts | 107 (51%) | 0.0 – 1.979 | 1.234 | 1.786 | 1.370 |
| 1 contacts | 17 (8%) | 0.0 – 1.999 | 0.558 | 0.797 | 0.653 |
| 2 contacts | 24 (12%) | 0.0 – 1.997 | 1.007 | 1.448 | 1.210 |
| 3 contacts | 20 (10%) | 0.0 – 1.936 | 0.868 | 1.464 | 1.400 |
| 4 or more contacts | 40 (19%) | 0.0 – 1.982 | 1.221 | 1.747 | 1.652 |
| Total/Overall\* | 208 | 0.0 – 1.999 | 1.115 | 1.627 | 1.350 |

\*Total/overall data was computed using all cases (not an average of the categories)

**Analysis and Discussion**

The focus for spring 2013 was on providing more assistance and contacting a greater number of the students on academic probation/watch/warning. This semester, the Director worked with advising as well as worked with DSS and the Writing Center to increase the support provided to this group. This was achieved through weekly case management meetings between Academic Services and Advising; conversations included updates from other university officials such as faculty and specialists, DSS, Writing Center, and First Year Experience via official reports and formal/informal conversations. The core group, the Director and two advisors, attempted to divide the list to assign primary responsibilities for oversight of each individual on the list. The idea was so that each student on the list would have face-to-face conversations, or talk by phone when meeting in person was not possible, with a member of the group several times during the semester. Unfortunately, we were not able to achieve our goal to touch 100% of the students listed, but we were able to communicate with the majority of the students in the targeted group. As documented above, the Director increased the contact she made with students from 21% of the students listed in fall to 43% of the students listed in spring. The team is working to develop an instrument which is updated each time a listed student has contact with key administrators. Tracking students in this manner may lead to evidence of strategies that improve the retention of students. During summer, the team will meet to discuss the process and how to refine the process so that we achieve better results in fall 2013.

The number of times students meet with a professional seems to play an important role in the student’s academic success. More than half (107) of the listed students did not have any contact with Academic Services, but it is encouraging to note that 19% (40) of the students had four or more contacts. The chart provides an overview of pertinent details for probation student visits to Academic Services. Visits constitutes participation in workshops/seminars and individual consultations. Students on probation are required to select three workshops on topics related to their academic struggles such as time management, study skills, test anxiety, test-taking strategies. Students may meet with the Director to discuss course progress or how to apply strategies they learned in workshops to their individual situations. The goal is to help students to identify and reduce the unsuccessful behavior associated with their academic immaturity.

Students on Academic Probation: GPA Progress

**Discussion**

The above graph charts fall 2012 and spring 2013 cumulative GPAs for the 208 students in the target group. Further, this presents the difference in the cumulative GPA for the target group from the fall semester (average GPA 1.15) to the spring semester (average GPA 1.627). During the fall semester 37 of the students had cumulative 0.0 GPAs, but this dropped by 54% in the spring when 17 of these students GPAs were 0.0. Moreover, the two students increased their cumulative GPAs to above 3.0 during the spring.

**Disability Student Services**

DSS Contact by MONTH

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *CONTACT TYPE* | *May* | *Jun* | *Jul* | *Aug* | *Sep* | *Oct* | *Nov* | *Dec* | *Jan* | *Feb* | *Mar* | *Apr* | *Total* |
| Student Meetings (>15min) | 48 | 45 | 53 | 115 | 121 | 78 | 93 | 74 | 208 | 80 | 72 | 24 | 1011 |
| Exams Proctored | 24 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 22 | 37 | 78 | 71 | 1 | 56 | 44 | 65 | 403 |
| Consults w/ faculty | 12 | 6 | 19 | 8 | 35 | 38 | 28 | 24 | 51 | 48 | 29 | 12 | 310 |
| Other contacts \*(phone calls & <15m mtg) | 55 | 50 | 35 | 45 | 55 | 45 | 75 | 56 | 46 | 45 | 58 | -- | 565 |

DSS Contact by SEMESTER

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *CONTACT TYPE* | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* | *Summer 2012* | *Spring 2012* | *Fall 2011* |
| Student Meetings (>15min) | 384 | 481 | 146 | 357 | 324 |
| Exams Proctored | 166 | 210 | 27 | 119 | 168 |
| Consults w/ faculty | 140 | 133 | 37 | 77 | 124 |
| Other contacts (phone calls & <15m mtg) | 149 | 276 | 140 | 110 | 530 |

DSS Enrollment by DISABILITY

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* | *Spring 2012* | *Fall 2011* |
| Physical | 23 | 44 | 50 | 46 |
| Cognitive | 59 | 60 | 73 | 71 |
| Psychological | 52 | 23 | 30 | 32 |

Note: some students have 2+ diagnoses

DSS Enrollment by COLLEGE

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* | *Spring 2012* | *Fall 2011* |
| CAS | 72 | 53 | 36 | 39 |
| CED | 17 | 15 | Not recorded | Not recorded |
| EDU | 11 | 13 | 18 | 15 |
| NHP | 6 | 7 | Not recorded | Not recorded |
| SPS | 31 | 25 | 52 | 50 |
| TOTAL | 137 | 113 | 106 | 104 |

**Analysis and Discussion**

The focus of DSS is to always ensure that students who have disclosed documented disabilities have equal access to programs, services, activities, and campus facilities. The primary activities involve meeting with students, faculty and staff to discuss students’ legal rights as well as to help clarify and define the responsibilities of students seeking services and support as well as the individuals providing this assistance. It is worth noting that interactions with faculty increased dramatically this year (273) in comparison to last year (201). Although documentation is not recorded in this manner, attention and discussions regarding a handful of students require a great deal of attention because of the delicate nature of certain students’ situations. Proctoring exams for students with accommodations is also time-consuming. The most challenging aspect of proctoring the exams is the administrative demands such as scheduling appointments, scanning completed exams, and following up with faculty regarding proper administration of exams.

The DSS Enrollment by DISABILITY and by COLLEGE charts include counts of the active DSS enrollment student database. Students are considered active and maintained on the database until they officially withdraw from the institution, graduate or until they have not enrolled in classes for 2 consecutive semesters excluding summer. The exception to this rule is for CED students employed by Maryland School for the Deaf who register periodically due to the nature and requirements of their course work. These records remain active for 3 years. As such, fifty-one of the students counted here were not enrolled in classes during spring 2013. In addition, April record keeping, noted in the DSS Contact by MONTH chart, may not be consistent with previous procedures because the Assistant Director resigned prior to the end of the spring semester. Thus, there may be some differences in record-keeping and data collection which produced a different data perspective. **Writing Center**

Writing Center Usage by MONTH

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *May* | *Jun* | *Jul* | *Aug* | *Sept* | *Oct* | *Nov* | *Dec* | *Jan* | *Feb* | *Mar* | *April* | *Total* |
| Conferences by Director |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Email  Face to Face  Class Visits  Workshops  Students attending | 15  39  1  -  - | 9  74  2  -  - | 12  58  1  -  - | 27  23  8  -  - | 44  169  7  -  - | 42  177  5  -  - | 48  151  1  -  - | 57  74  2  -  - | 24  17  2  -  - | 46  103  5  14  43 | 49  107  0  14  26 | 32  167  0  6  26 | 638  1159  34  34  95 |
| Conferences by K. D’Angelo | - | - | - | - | 7 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 28 |
| Conferences by J. Rivers | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 38 |

Writing Center Activities by SEMESTER

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* | *Summer 2012* | *Spring 2012* | *Fall 2011* |
| Email | 151 | 161 | 36 | 100 | 188 |
| Face to Face | 394 | 520 | 171 | 507 | 453 |
| Class Visits | 7 | 21 | 4 | 17 | 17 |
| Workshop Pp | 95 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| TOTAL | 647 | 702 | 211 | 624 | 658 |

Writing Center Usage by TIME OF DAY

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Time* | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* | *Summer 2012* | *Spring 2012* | *Fall 2011* |
| 9 – 11 am | 37 | 61 | 12 | 37 | 51 |
| 11 am – 1 pm | 109 | 82 | 20 | 74 | 94 |
| 1 – 3 pm | 84 | 124 | 28 | 102 | 116 |
| 3 – 5 pm | 73 | 128 | 39 | 132 | 124 |
| 5 – 7 pm | 86 | 127 | 46 | 147 | 146 |
| 7 – 9 pm | 5 | 72 | 26 | 17 | 42 |
| TOTAL |  |  |  |  |  |

Writing Center Usage by CLASS STATUS

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Spring 2013* | *Fall 2012* | *Summer 2012* | *Spring 2012* | *Fall 2011* |
| First Year | 90 (23%) | 129 (21%) | 42 (24%) | 139 (33%) | 116 (20%) |
| Sophomore | 65 (16%) | 113 (19%) | 26 (15%) | 112 (27%) | 64 (11%) |
| Junior | 55 (14%) | 117 (20%) | 27 (16%) | 8 (2%) | 124 (22%) |
| Senior | 91 (23%) | 118 (20%) | 39 (23%) | 90 (21%) | 131 (23%) |
| Graduate | 93 (24%) | 117 (20%) | 37 (22%) | 71 (17%) | 138 (24%) |
| TOTAL | 394 | 594 | 171 | 420 | 573 |

**ANALYSIS and DISCUSSION**

The focus of the Writing Center this year was twofold with measures for faculty and others for students. The focal point for faculty centered on providing assistance for developing better writing assignments. For the students, attention was given to increasing the number of students served in the Writing Center. The Writing Center Director determined that the needs of the majority of the 1159 students who visited the Writing Center for individual conferences fell into five main categories: research and databases, grammar and usage, APA and other citation styles, narrowing topics, and main ideas. On the other hand, faculty rarely consult the Writing Center for advice and guidance on the best means to assist their students.

In an effort to better serve students, the WC Director attempted to serve more students by offering workshops on the commonly discussed topics mentioned above. Each workshop presented information on one of these topics or a related subtopic to a small group of students for the purpose of providing guidance from the WC Director while allowing opportunities for students to share their questions and concerns with one another. Students also practiced their writing skills, received feedback on drafts and made revisions to writing assignments. These workshops allowed the WC Director to attend to similar needs of students in a timesaving format by grouping students together for collaboration, support and instruction. Although the number of students served spring 2013 in the Writing Center increased over the number of students served in Spring 2012, it is too soon to conclude that the addition of these workshops will be able to address the needs of more students.

Although the number of students served in the Writing Center did not increase as a result of offering workshops this spring, it is worth noting that the distribution of students seeking assistance during Spring 2013 has shifted. Attendance this semester has been primarily graduate students (24%) followed by an equal distribution of first year and senior level students. Part of this stems from the fact that seniors and graduate students constitute the majority of the workshop attendance. It seems upper level students may find these programs are more suited to their independent learning styles or it may be that word-of-mouth promotion of the workshops favored upper class students. Despite the focus on group style workshops which would seem to serve more participants than the one-on-once consultation style which was used in past semesters, the overall participation rate decreased. That is, attendance in the Writing Center declined for the current semester (394) when compared to Fall 2012 (594) and Spring 2012 (420) which may be a result of displacing appointment slots in favor of offering workshops. Trends will undergo additional review in the coming semesters.

The ways which students use the WC varies by academic level. First year through sophomore level students generally seek assistance from the Center for help in editing and revising writing assignments even though proofing and editing services are not provided. Some juniors, the majority of seniors and graduate students request assistance with higher level writing functions such as structure issues and clarification of research assignments and the research process. Many students’ questions have to do with their lack of confidence in their own writing skills and often they are trying to avoid plagiarism and formatting/citation errors.

The WC Director would like to ultimately impact the writing behavior of students as evidenced by a decrease in the number of plagiarism violations at Trinity. As such, the WC Director also sought to address potential faculty needs by presenting a workshop on how they might enhance writing assignments. In addition, he revised the Writing Center website to include a new section for faculty and participated in a meeting with the Writing in Disciplines (WID) committee. The faculty workshop experienced moderate success. Although attendance was low, the participants contributed to an energetic discussion on how to engage students using creative writing assignments. The website includes a page “For Faculty” which provides information about the Writing Center and a form for faculty to refer students to the Center for assistance. Future plans include where the WC Director will comment on student writing issues and other topics to support faculty as they develop writing assignments.

CONCLUSION and NEXT STEPS

During the past 12 months, Academic Services programs have experienced growth in some areas (e.g. contact with probation students, make up and special accommodation assessments, and contact with students with disabilities) while other areas have seen usage decline (e.g. tutoring requests and Writing Center visits). In the coming year the focus of Academic Services will be to continue serving students while upholding the mission of Trinity. Academic Services is committed to providing support to our students in an effort to increase retention by ensuring students have the academic skills needed to succeed in the classroom. To have a greater impact on retention, programs and services must reach out to more students and provide greater assistance. Nevertheless, program success should not be measured by number of students alone, but must also include measures for appraising quality service and student satisfaction. As such, each program has developed goals for the coming months and academic year to enhance support and improve the learning potential of our students.

The Director of ASC will continue to focus on assisting students on academic probation, watch and warning. As such, revitalized initiatives will encourage these at-risk students to utilize tutoring in addition to other support programs. As mentioned above, the team focusing on probation will work together this summer to devise a plan for better assisting students. This will include differentiated recommendations for students based upon their GPAs and the amount of time they have been at Trinity (i.e., students who have completed 1 semester may not have the same recommendations as students who have been here for 2 years). The Director will collaborate with the Vice President for student Affairs to build bridges between academic programs and ASC programs. Most Student Affairs professionals welcome opportunities to collaborate with academic programs so this may be an opportune time to pilot ASC residential programs.

Disability Student Services may leverage its change in staffing as a time to assess whether programmatic changes are needed. Concerted efforts to recruit a leader who will continue to support for students with documented disabilities will undoubtedly pay off. This candidate must be able to meet the demands of faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders while implementing best practices which adhere to student development and special education theories.

In the Writing Center, the Director will continue developing programs for faculty and students. There are plans to enhance the Page for Faculty on the WC site. The Director’s Blog will feature topics of interest to faculty as it relates to student writing and designing assignments for students. Faculty will be encouraged to share and contribute to the virtual conversation thru their posts. The workshop for faculty will be revised and offered again during the fall and spring semesters utilizing support from Writing Specialists. The student workshop topics will be differentiated to address the needs of various learners and to address diverse skills levels. For example, some programs will feature assistance for more advanced students such as seniors and graduate students, students completing capstone projects, students writing a 5 paragraph essay, or those who need help developing a topic. The WC Director will also provide handouts created for students who want information, but do not want to attend a workshop of individual consultation.

Once again, evaluating program success and effectiveness are key to fostering the success of Trinity’s students. During the summer students will have an opportunity to share their thoughts about select services such as tutoring and the Writing Center to identify areas for growth.