Beyond the Classroom 2010:
Annual Assessment Report for the Division of University Affairs
The Division of University Affairs at Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) is composed of sixteen departments, including: Campus Recreation, Divisional Operations, Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, Counseling and Career Services, Disability Services, Health Services, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Multicultural Affairs, Orientation Programs, Student Affairs Programs, Student Services, Residence Life, Baker Pattillo Student Center, Student Publications, University Police and the Office of the Vice President for University Affairs.

**Mission**

The Division of University Affairs supports the development of a learner-centered environment for SFA students by providing co-curricular PROGRAMS that create opportunities for students to engage in active learning; by the creation of a friendly and welcoming environment through ACTIVITIES that strengthen students’ connections to the institution and each other; and by providing SERVICES to enhance the success of our students as they pursue their academic and personal goals.

**Methodology**

In the Spring of 2008, the division initiated a collaborative effort to develop program learning outcomes. These outcomes are intended to frame the general categories of learning that take place within each program within the division. The nine program outcomes that came from this process are listed on the next page.

While every program will not necessarily produce learning outcomes in each area, taken together, they provide an overall picture of student learning within the division as a whole. During the summer of 2008, each area developed specific learning outcomes statements for each functional area to be assessed and proposed the methodology that would be used to assess them. These assessments were enacted during the fall of 2008 and continue today. The results of this assessment is synopsized within this document and presented as a whole in the accompanying CD.

Whenever possible, direct assessment measures were used. Direct assessment is defined as a process employed to gather data that required subjects to display their knowledge, behavior or thought processes. The key is that it provides direct evidence of learning. Indirect assessment was also used. Indirect assessment refers to assessments that supplement and enrich what can be learned from direct assessment studies, such as surveys, focus groups or other means of gathering student opinions about what they have learned and whether or not it has met their needs. When time and other available resources prevented the gathering of direct assessment data, indirect assessment data is presented.
Citizenship
Through civic engagement, community service and classroom experiences, students acquire a contextually-rich understanding of complex issues and an increased sense of social responsibility. Students are prepared for the challenges and opportunities of a democratic society and learn to serve fully as citizens of the state, nation and world.

Communication
Students gain skills to help them to communicate effectively and professionally, using written, oral, and artistic means and through current technology. Students learn to listen actively and effectively, to read with comprehension, to evaluate ideas and to form meaningful interpersonal relationships.

Cultural Competence
By interacting with others who are different from themselves, students gain an increased appreciation for diversity and attain valuable skills for success in a pluralistic society. Beyond tolerance, students increase their understanding of the beliefs, values and worldviews of others.

Ethics and Values
Students define, refine and clarify their values – learning to balance their personal interests with the interests of others and society as a whole. With openness to the transcendent, students refine their spiritual/religious beliefs and learn to keep congruence between these beliefs and their actions.

Leadership
Through a variety of experiences, students will learn to maximize their own individualized talents and skills to collaborate with others and to motivate them towards a common goal.

Life Skills
From maintaining and balancing a budget to effectively managing one’s time, students learn to build strategies for leading productive lives in college, graduate school, their careers and beyond.

Self Knowledge
Through experiences and reflection, students discover a sense of purpose, gain the ability to realistically appraise themselves, enhance self-esteem and become increasingly independent and interdependent. These skills are useful in selecting a career and helping the student to set and meet both educational and personal goals.

Scholarship and Inquiry
A broad-based educational foundation allows students to experience intellectual growth by encouraging students to think critically, creatively and independently. Students become committed to better understanding and advancing the knowledge of their chosen field. They graduate prepared for the rigors of graduate study, for their careers and for lifelong learning.

Wellness
Students learn to practice healthy behavior and attain a satisfying and productive lifestyle that balances physical, emotional and spiritual well-being with the demands of their life as a student and beyond.
Learning Outcome Saliency
There is a wide and robust array of student learning taking place within the Division of University Affairs. It is also clear that the student learning outcomes project is reaching students, and their awareness of what they are learning from our programs is increasing. And yet, it has been difficult to impact continued growth. Some learning outcomes seem to have plateaued. Prompting continued growth in these areas will need to be a key goal next year.

The saliency of each learning outcomes follows. It is telling that both the National Survey of Student Engagement and Beyond the Classroom survey suggest that about 70% of SFA students are engaged in something outside of the classroom and that most measures of saliency that follow hover around the 70% mark. It would seem that in order to raise student awareness of learning, we will need to continue to engage more students.

For the third consecutive year, Ethics and Values has been an outcome that appears far less salient to SFA students. This may be that this is an area in which they feel they don’t need improvement and so it is less important to them. However, decades of research reveals that college is a significant time for ethical development. In the coming year, the new SFA Way should shed new light on this learning outcome. It will be interesting to see any changes in this outcome next year.

There was also a slight (but significant) decline in Intercultural Communication. The number of data reported for this outcome was also significantly down. It appears that as a division we need to place an increased emphasis on tracking intercultural learning in areas other than the multicultural center.

**Citizenship:** As a result of participating in campus activities, I pay closer attention to important issues facing my community, the nation or the world.

**Communication:** As a result of participating in campus activities, I feel better able to communicate my thoughts and ideas to others.

**Trend Analysis:** After a significant increase in 2009, the outcome for Citizenship stayed essentially at the same level as last year.

**Trend Analysis:** The outcome related to Communication also saw a significant increase in 2009. This outcome also stayed essentially at the same level as last year. Considering the large jump and the high level, this is a favorable outcome.
**Cultural Competence:** As a result of participating in campus activities, I better understand the cultures of others.

**Trend Analysis:**
This outcome leveled off somewhat last year. This may be due to a vacancy in the Director of Multicultural Affairs position which lasted most of the fall semester. The new director will implement a new program this year that focuses on Cultural Competence that is expected to make an impact.

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**Ethics and Values:** As a result of participating in campus activities, I feel I behave more ethically than I did before.

**Trend Analysis:**
The outcome related to Ethics and Values continues its upward climb. Having started so low, this growth is heartening. However, there is considerable room for growth in comparison to other outcomes. The new SFA Way program may impact the saliency of this outcome.
**Leadership:** As a result of participating in campus activities, I feel more capable of leading others.

**Trend Analysis:** The Leadership outcome continues to be more relevant with students. The small uptick this year may be related to an increase in overall leadership programming including the Lumberjack Leadership Academy, ODK Leadership Conference and Leadership Lunches.

**Life Skills:** I believe that participating in campus activities has given me skills that I can use throughout my life.

**Trend Analysis:** The lack of growth in the Life Skills outcome may relate to how high it already is in comparison to many other learning outcomes. The decline is not statistically significant.

**Self-Knowledge:** As a result of participating in campus activities, I better understand my individual strengths and weaknesses.

**Trend Analysis:** Self-Knowledge continues an upward trend. This may be bolstered by the Week of Reflection program which took place shortly before this survey was released.
Scholarship and Inquiry:  
As a result of participating in campus activities, I feel that I am better at evaluating information to determine what I believe.

Wellness: As a result of participating in campus activities, I feel better prepared to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Trend Analysis:  
Scholarship and Inquiry also continues to increase in saliency. This is also a focus of the Week of Reflection program which took place shortly before this survey was released. Encouraging students to think about what they are learning and how it changes them is a theme of this program.

Trend Analysis:  
Wellness is an outcome that is well-represented in programs such as Campus Recreation and the Health Clinic, but it still appears to be a lesser concern among involved students in general.
Citizenship

• Of the students who participated in the judicial process with the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, 97% were able to correctly explain why laws and rules are important to society in general and to the university specifically. Upon six-week follow-up, including all respondents, 93% agreed they have a better understanding of the value of rules and laws in society, 93% agreed they place a greater value on rules and laws in society and 97% could list one reason societies have rules. In addition, 93% agreed they had a deeper appreciation for how negative behavior affects others, and 81% agreed they had a better understanding of how their actions impacted the SFA community.
• During the 2009-2010 school year SFA students completed 122,416 hours of community and campus service, and 92.49% of our students surveyed said they had performed some type of community service in the past year.
• Among the students who identified themselves as student leaders, 78.02% felt their experience as a student leader has made them more involved in community service and serving others.
• Among students who engaged with University Police, 62.5% indicated they are more likely to follow the Student Code of Conduct, and the same percentage indicated they are more likely to follow the Laws of the State of Texas.
• Eighty-three percent of students who completed the Beyond the Classroom survey agreed or strongly agreed that the Health Clinic had helped them understand the importance of access to healthcare. This is up from 76% in 2008.

Communication

• Participating employers who participated in on-campus interviews during the 2009-10 academic year evaluated the students with whom they met. Nearly 81% said that students had effectively promoted themselves.
• Ninety-six percent of work-study students surveyed expressed an increased ability to communicate professionally in a workplace setting.
• Eighty-six percent of students who participated in counseling (2009-2010 Academic Year) stated they have a greater ability to express and manage their thoughts and feelings more effectively.
• Students presenting their ideas to the Student Activities Association were rated by the officers of the organization and rated on a scale of 1 to 5. These students saw a 1.552 increase in communication scores from their first presentation to their second presentation. More importantly, those students who scored in the lowest 25% of first presentation scores saw the highest increase with an average jump in presentation scores of 2.84.
Intercultural Competence

- Ninety-six percent of students (2009-2010 academic year) stated that they have an increased ability to work with those who are different from themselves.
- Fifty-four percent of respondents indicated that as a result of participating in the programs and services of UPD they learned to be more respectful of people from other cultural backgrounds.
- Of students surveyed about their experiences in the residence halls, 63% said that they have had a great deal of interaction with residents who are different from themselves.
- Among the 224 students who identified themselves as being leaders in one or more student organizations on the Beyond the Classroom survey, 77% expressed agreement with the statement, “I have a higher commitment to tolerance of other cultures.”
- Eighty-two percent of students who regularly read The Pine Log newspaper report to having an improved understanding of other cultures.
- Seventy-seven percent of participants in the Lumberjack Leadership Academy who completed the pre-assessment indicated that they were confident in their ability to confront unfair, unjust or uncivil behavior in others; at the conclusion of the Ignite Leadership Retreat, 92% were confident that they could do this.
- Eighty-five percent of Peer Involvement Advisors indicated that they were less likely to stereotype others as a result.

Ethics and Values

- Ninety-five percent of students with conduct violations were able to correctly identify their personal behaviors that were in conflict with the Student Conduct Code.
- Eighty-seven percent of student leaders surveyed by Student Affairs Programs indicated that their co-curricular experiences improved their ability to act in alignment with their own values.
- In analyzing 131 “minute papers” written by student leaders, we found the top three values expressed were school spirit/pride (85%), integrity/honor (58%) and kindness/friendliness and caring (42%).
- Seventy-six percent of SFA freshmen who completed the “AlcoholEDU” assessment indicated that they are committed non-drinkers.
- Eighty-five percent of students who participated in the Week of Reflection survey said that the program increased their commitment to meeting their personal goals. Eighty-three percent said it increased their commitment to their educational goals.
Leadership

• Among students who identified themselves as student leaders, 91.48% said that their leadership experiences had improved their ability to collaborate and work in groups.
• Eighty-five percent of students who attended the Ignite Leadership Retreat could remember their five areas of strength identified by the Gallop Strength Finder.
• A survey of students involved in formal leadership programs sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs Programs found that 95% of participants felt they had gained the experience necessary to lead others to a common goal.
• Eighty-five percent of students who participated in the Lumberjack Leadership program expressed confidence in their leadership abilities in the pre-test for the program, after the Ignite Leadership Retreat, 100% expressed confidence in their leadership abilities.
• Eighty-six percent of Peer Involvement Advisors indicated that as a result of serving in this role, they are more confident in seeking leadership roles on campus.
• Prior to the Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Conference, only 23.68% of respondents to the pre-conference survey strongly agreed that they were comfortable calling themselves a leader. On the post-conference survey, 77% felt strongly that they should be called a leader.

Life Skills

• Career Services stresses the importance of a handshake with potential employers in communicating confidence. Eighty percent of recruiters at the Career Fair (2009-2010) rated students’ handshakes as above average to high. This is up from 71% in 2008-2009.
• Eighty-five percent of students (2009-2010) stated that they have made changes as a result of counseling which will allow them to be more productive and proficient to reach their personal goals.
• In the 2009-2010 academic year, 97.8% of participants at career services workshops stated they left the workshop they attended with a better understanding of professional standards; 100% stated the workshops provided valuable insight to further their professional development; 100% stated the information provided encouraged them to attend workshops on other career-related topics, and 100% stated they have begun to think about how to sell themselves to potential employers through verbal skills.
• Eighty-nine percent of students responding to the NIRSA recreation survey said that they had learned to manage their stress better as a result of the campus recreation program. This is compared to a national benchmark of 84% (with 53 other schools participating).
• A 2009 survey indicated that 80.95% of the Disability Services clients who requested assistance in managing their disabilities stated that they know more options for managing the impact of their disability after utilizing the services provided by Disability Services.
Self-Knowledge

• For the Fall 2009 career fair, 33.9% of students stated that they were not confident in their ability to contact potential employers before they participated in the fair. After they participated in the Fall 2009 career fair 94.36% stated that they feel a greater degree of independence and empowerment in their ability to contact potential employers (2008-2009).

• Eighty-five percent of students (2009-2010) who participated in counseling expressed improved self-esteem.

• Eighty-six percent of students responding to the NIRSA benchmarking survey reported that their participation with Campus Recreation increased their self confidence. This is compared to 81% of students nationally (with 53 institutions participating).

• There was an increase in the percentage of respondents who said they are able to name three people they are friends with at SFA after completing Orientation. The pre-Orientation survey had 39.57% with a "Strongly Agree" response, and the post-Orientation survey had 65.56% (an increase of 25.99%). The response rate for "Moderately Agree" also increased from 15.11% on the pre-Orientation survey to 18.13% on the post-Orientation survey (an increase of 3.02%).

• Of students responding to the Beyond the Classroom report, 83.34% indicated that as a result of participating in the programs and services of UPD they are better able to recognize and avoid behaviors which place their safety in jeopardy.

• One hundred percent of Peer Involvement Advisors (PIAs) indicated that, as a result of serving as a PIA, they had higher self-esteem. All PIAs for 2009-10 participated in this survey.
Scholarship and Inquiry

• Among student workers surveyed, 92.8% stated that they learned something that was relevant to their field of study.
• Of the 2221 students who participated in Orientation, the composite grade point average was 2.323. The composite GPA of the 142 students who did not participate in Orientation was 2.038.
• Students who participated in our sponsored programs on averaged performed better in the classroom than their peers. The all-campus average for all students was a 2.62; in comparison our students had:
  - Omicron Delta Kappa (3.52)
  - Traditions Council (3.02)
  - All Greek Women (3.00)
  - Student Government (2.86)
  - Pom Squad (2.82)
  - Student Activities Association (2.81)
  - Jack Attack (2.68)
  - Jack Camp (2.68)
• Ninety-four percent of students who completed the AlcoholEDU assessment said it was never all right to get drunk on school nights, and 98% said they would not consume alcohol the night before they had a test or project due.
• A grade analysis of Disability Services clients from Fall 2009 produced the following results:
  - Freshman (55 total) 2.26 (compared to 2.32 overall)
  - Sophomore (50 total) 2.64 (compared to 2.64 overall)
  - Junior (43 total) 2.84 (compared to 2.74)
  - Senior (48 total) 2.91 (compared to 2.87)
• The all-Greek average was even with the all-student composite GPA for the first time in nearly 30 years of measuring this outcome.
• Of the 811 students who were referred to the Early Alert program in the fall, 76% returned for the Spring Semester.
• Of the nearly 100 students who received Peer Involvement Advising in the Fall, 95% returned for the Spring semester (as compared to 89% of students in general).
• Eighty-five percent of students who took part in the Week of Reflection program said it made them want to learn more from their classes.
Wellness

• Patient visits in the Health Clinic are up almost 14% from 2009. In 2009, there were 14,706 total patient visits. In 2010, there were 16,913 total patient visits.
• ARAMARK conducted an online survey of campus dining. There were 166 respondents who consider their main cafeteria as the Student Center, and 80 respondents who consider their main cafeteria as East College Cafeteria. The students were asked to grade the nutritional information provided at each location. Thirty-three percent rated the quality of information in the Student Center Cafeteria to be excellent (compared to 27% in the previous year), and 24% rated the information in the East College Cafeteria to be excellent (compared to 20% in the previous year).
• Among students participating in counseling, 85.7% stated that they have taken steps to make healthy and more balanced choices regarding emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual health.
• Ninety-six percent of participants in the judicial process agreed they had a better understanding of the impact of negative behaviors on their personal wellness goals as a result of their judicial experience.
• Seventy-eight percent of students who completed the NIRSA benchmarking survey reported that their participation with Campus Recreation increased their interest in staying fit and healthy. This compares to the national benchmarking figure of 64.05% (with 53 institutions participating).
• Among members of student organizations, 81.17% said they were better prepared to assess risk in their lives or the life of their organization.
• In fall of 2009, 2327 incoming freshmen completed AlcoholEDU. Students were tested in a pre-test, post-test on the physiological effects of alcohol on their bodies. Students got an average of 29% answers correct on the pre-test and answered 75% correctly on the post-test (an increase of 47%).
Using Assessment Data to Make Improvements

• Decades of assessment indicated that Greek grades were a significant concern at SFA. In response, the Dean of Students visited with each Greek Council encouraging them to improve the GPAs of their organizations and council. The Office of Student Affairs Programs created the Greek Standards Project and encouraged chapters to practice “selected recruitment” in which they choose not to accept students who are unlikely to succeed academically. In addition, one council chose to raise academic standards. As a result, the all-Greek GPA was at the same level as the SFA composite GPA for the first time since this statistic has been measured (more than 30 years).

• Institutional Research has determined that more than half of SFA students are first-generation college students. Previous literature shows that these students are less likely to know about or utilize services. As a result, University Affairs has created services that are geared toward helping students know about university resources. These services include the Involvement Center which boasts a 95% Fall-to-Spring retention rate for students who participate in Peer Involvement Advising, the Early Alert program which retained 75% from Fall to Spring and the Ask Jack program which provides a resource for seeking information about all programs on campus.

• In pursuit of the learning outcome, “The student will make appropriate use of technology to enhance learning processes,” the Department of Residence Life added labs in Hall 14, Hall 16, Griffith, Kerr, Lumberjack Village, Lumberjack Lodge and Wisely during the past year.

• Previous data related to completed suicide indicated an alarming trend. In response, Counseling Services began training faculty, staff and students on QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) and has trained 630 members of the campus community. Ninety-nine percent of participants stated they are now able to recognize more ways to help others who might be suicidal, and the same percentage indicated that they now have more information on depression and suicide and have acquired tools with which to help friends, co-workers, etc. There hasn’t been a suicide of a currently enrolled student since the program was begun in 2008.

• In evaluations from the Career Fairs during the 2008-2009 academic year, recruiters indicated a relatively low opinion of students’ professional behavior. In contrast, students rated themselves much higher than recruiters. In response, Career Services offered workshops during the 2009-2010 academic year to teach students about professional behavior. When analyzing the data for the 2009-2010 academic year, we noticed that recruiters rated professional behavior higher, and in some cases significantly higher, than the previous year. Also, there were no significant differences between recruiters’ and students’ perception of professional behavior, indicating that students did learn how to accurately portray themselves as professionals to recruiters at the Career Fairs.

• In an effort to meet their stated objective to effectively train campus recreation staff, the department has stepped up efforts to ensure that staff are certified with American Red Cross CPR / First Aid. Campus Recreation had 172 student employees last school year whose positions dictated that they should receive their certification. As of July 2010, 169 of them have received their American Red Cross certification. This meets their goal of having 98% of all student staff certified with American Red Cross CPR / First Aid.
Conclusion: The Division of University Affairs seems to be moving in the direction of creating a true culture of assessment. One example is in the area of surveys. In 2008-09, the departments within the division conducted 39 surveys using our Student Voice partnership. In 2009-10, that number jumped to 58. In this year, we also saw an increase in rubric evaluation, data mining and other direct assessment techniques. The division also formed an assessment committee to guide our assessment efforts. This report contains the most robust reporting of our learning outcomes to date and bolsters our claim that students are more aware than ever of what they are learning from our programs.

As we seek to continue to develop into a culture of evidence, we’ll need to be mindful of over-surveying our students. We must also ensure that we do not collect more data than we can use. Clearly the purpose of assessment data is to improve the experience of students and to improve our ability to deliver our learning outcomes. This is an important goal for next year.

We must also improve in our ability to produce direct evidence of student learning. This may help us to make choices as to where to direct our assessment efforts. A primary direct measure should be retention rate. The university’s strategic plan calls for an increase in first-year retention to 70% by 2012. Knowing the retention impact of our programs becomes an important measure of success and learning.

Assessment Committee:
Dr. Adam Peck (chair), Dean of Student Affairs
Michael Preston, Student Affairs
Chuck Lopez, Disability Services
Dr. Terrence Frazier, Multicultural Affairs
Dr. Peggy Scott, Student Rights and Responsibilities

Jennifer Ewing, Career Services
Kenny Norris, Campus Recreation
Pat Spence, Student Publications
D’nese Haddox, Residence Life
Brooke Rodine, Orientation Programs