

Owens Community College

**Measuring Learning Outcomes within Co-Curricular
Student Activities**

Student Activities Quality Team

September 2010 – August 2011

Student Activities Quality Team Members

Name	Title	Role
Angela McGinnis	Director, Advising	Champion/Trainer
James Katzner	Manager, Student Activities and Conduct	Co-Team Leader
Karen Shultz	Manager, Testing Services	Co-Team Leader
Denise Shuster	Chair, Social/Behavioral Sciences	Scribe
Deborah Gavlik	Director, International Programs and Services	
Lynn Hoehn	Coordinator, Job Location and Development	
Douglas Mead	Chair, Fine and Performing Arts	
Stefanie Orians	Admissions Representative	

Executive Summary

The Student Activities Quality Team convened on September 21, 2010 and was charged with creating a plan to “articulate and measure learning goals for out of class activities.” Following is the report completed by this team.

The team went through several versions before arriving at its final project statement: **To develop a plan for measuring learning within co-curricular student activities to improve the student educational experience.**

The team conducted initial research into the history of Student Activities at Owens Community College as well as opportunities within the past 5-6 years that have allowed for further growth and development. Currently, all student activities at Owens (both Toledo and Findlay campuses) are measured strictly by informal attendance tracking. The committee was interested in exploring how this process could become more structured and consistent and align more closely with the Owens Core Competencies.

The information presented herein includes a Force Field Analysis and Gantt Chart for the proposed recommendations as well as cost estimates for increased staffing and card readers. The committee also considered standard assessment practices, research from various colleges and universities that have utilized card swipe machines, and information gathered from Institutional Research and other appropriate campus stakeholders. The team used this information to formulate a list of recommendations.

An analysis of the data resulted in the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Increase personnel by elevating the vacant part-time position in Student Activities from 24 hours to full-time.

Recommendation 2: The Office of Activities will adopt the three learning goals determined by the committee.

After determining that Student Learning Outcomes would not provide adequate data to measure learning within co-curricular student activities (due to the lack of direct measurement tools), the team developed three Learning Goals by which to assess these events and activities:

Diversity: Students will understand individual and group differences and recognize the value of a diverse society.

Self-Understanding: Students will reflect on personal values and actions.

Critical Thinking: Students will generate pertinent questions and examine relationships between ideas.

Recommendation 3: Purchase multiple card-swipe devices that can be integrated with Banner to track student attendance at events.

Recommendation 4: Assess goals using surveys, focus groups, etc.

Recommendation 5: Review Student Activities Fee every three years to ensure adequate funding to maintain quality and quantity of programming.

Though each of these recommendations is important, they all hinge on increasing personnel. Without another full-time staff person, the Office of Student Activities will not have the human capacity to implement the plan.

The Quality Team believes that these recommendations would allow the College to measure learning within co-curricular student activities, which would further enhance the student educational experience. Adopting the three learning goals would give Student Activities a focus for programs and assessment. The swipe-cards would enable them to more accurately track student attendance at events and follow-up with surveys, questionnaires, etc. Furthermore, reviewing the Student Activities fee periodically will help ensure consistent, adequate funding for programming in the future.

The team found this collaborative experience rewarding and would like to thank both the AQIP Planning Council and AQIP Quality Council for allowing us to participate in this process of continuous improvement.

Background Information

In 2007-2008, Owens Community College administered the Foundations of Excellence assessment to understand how it can better serve students during their first year of college. Students were surveyed about their perceptions of the College's efforts during their first year of college; faculty and staff were asked about their perception of how the College serves first-year students. Owens analyzed results of the survey to identify ways to improve the first year experience. In the final report, one of the *high priority* recommendations was to “articulate and measure learning goals for activities outside of class.” This Quality Team was formed to follow through on this recommendation by developing a plan for assessing student learning outside of the classroom. The team was not asked to focus solely on first-year students, presumably because co-curricular learning impacts students at all stages of their education. Furthermore, with the integrated nature of the college, it would difficult to target just first-year students.

As an institution of higher education, Owens provides many opportunities for students to learn outside of class, including Service Learning, Career Services, Student Clubs and Organizations, Student Activities, Student Government, and more. Because previous Quality Teams have examined Service Learning and Career Services, this team initially decided to focus on activities emanating from the Office of Student Activities (i.e. Student Government, Student Clubs and Organizations, and Student Activities). However, because the learning outcomes related to participating in Student Government and clubs/organizations, such as developing leadership skills and event planning, can be different from those involved with attending activities, the team decided to focus on just Student Activities. Recognizing that some Student Activity events focus mainly on having fun and lack a significant educational component, the Quality Team chose to look just at those Student Activities that are co-curricular in nature.

Project Statement

“To develop a plan for measuring learning within co-curricular student activities to improve the student educational experience.”

Operational definitions for terms related to this report can be found in Appendix A.

BACKGROUND - History of Student Activities at Owens Community College*

**Some information regarding the history of Student Activities is not well documented and is based on the memory of individuals involved at the time. Consequently information and dates may be inaccurate.*

Owens Community College has a long history of providing student involvement opportunities for its students. Even as far back as the mid-1960's when the college was still in its infancy and was comprised of the Toledo Campus, Owens established a Student Senate as a voice of the students. In addition, students attending Owens during this decade spent time socializing at the "barn" and participated in activities such as ping pong, pool, and cards and attended college sponsored dances. The college also rented a warehouse near campus that served as a student union. In 1975, the college demonstrated its further commitment to student life by opening the Student Activities Center (later named Alumni Hall), which provided a space for students to participate in sports and other activities. The Student Activities Center (SAC) included a grill, ping pong and pool tables, and tennis courts. Dr. Bill Ivoska was hired part-time in 1977 to provide oversight for the SAC during the evenings. At that time, most student clubs were tied to majors (ex. Marketing Club) and most planned student activities were tied to the curriculum. In addition, Patty Bascom directed plays that were staged in College Hall room 100, and she also formed a Thespian Club.

In the 1980's, Owens created the first position devoted to student activities, a role filled by Jerry Carder, former admissions director. At that time the only competitive sport at the college was basketball. Mr. Carder ran the SAC and coordinated intramural athletics. When Mr. Carder left, Owens hired Lisa Binkowski as Director of Student Activities, a position she held until she resigned in 1993. During her tenure, Ms. Binkowski hired Michael Rickard to oversee intramurals and athletics. Mr. Rickard would later become the college's Athletic Director.

During the 1990 North Central Association (NCA) site visit, the accrediting body noted that students they met with indicated that they believed there was a need for a women's sport (at the time, the only organized sport was men's basketball). They also expressed an interest in developing a student government, and thought there was a lack of activities on campus. As a result, NCA requested that the college create a strategic plan for increasing student activities. At that time Dr. Ivoska, then Executive Director of Student Development, asked Ms. Binkowski to create the plan. A report for a follow-up NCA Focus Visit indicates that the Department of Student Activities developed several initiatives in response to the 1990 visit. These included developing more family-oriented programming geared toward non-traditional students, re-envisioning a Student Senate, forming new honorary societies, and developing a needs assessment for students, focusing on the delivery of Student Activities.

In November 1993, Lynn Hoehn was hired as the Intramural/Student Activities Specialist. Ms. Binkowski resigned that same year and was replaced by Mr. Rickard. At that point, the

intramural program was fairly well established. While continuing to offer a variety of intramurals throughout the year, Ms. Hoehn worked to develop more family-oriented Student Activities and establish policies and procedures for Student Organizations, including Student Senate. Most of the activities were fundraisers and included events such as Halloween Family Fun Night, Easter Egg Hunt, food collection for the Food Bank, Holiday Craft Bazaar, and Haunted Ship on Wills B. Boyer. Money from the fundraisers was used to support student organizations and their events.

To provide greater guidance for and oversight of student organizations, Ms. Hoehn developed a Student Clubs and Organizations Handbook and required clubs and organizations to register with the Office of Student Activities. With the growth in activities and organizations, Ms. Hoehn also established procedures for posting notices on bulletin boards throughout the Toledo campus. She published the *Student Noteboard*, a weekly newsletter with information pertinent to students, which was eventually replaced by *The Outlook*, the student newspaper.

During the 2000's, the college significantly expanded facilities devoted to providing students with spaces to meet, play and learn. This included opening the Student Health and Activities Center (SHAC) in 2000, with its fitness center, performance courts, and student courts. In 2003, The Center for Fine and Performing Arts (CFPA) opened allowing students to get involved in art, music and theatre related activities. Both facilities are located on the Toledo campus.

With the opening of the SHAC, Mr. Rickard was named Director of Athletics, while Ms. Hoehn became the Intramural/Fitness Specialist. Additional staff was also hired to support the facility. Ms. Hoehn's new responsibilities included offering fitness assessments and developing fitness programs, such as Drop-in Fitness Classes for students, faculty, and staff. In 2004, the Intramural/Fitness Specialist position was eliminated.

Around the same time, Dermot Forde was hired as Coordinator of Student Activities to plan events and oversee student clubs and organizations. Mr. Forde tried to focus on a more traditional Student Activities model knowing that evening programming was not as much an option as it would have been at a traditional four-year residential university. He would often try to book artists and various entertainers for lunchtime events knowing that they were in the area for evening shows at local four-year universities. In addition, Owens became a member of National Association of Campus Activities (NACA), which allowed the college to take advantage of discounts and block booking of artists and speakers. This meant that Student Activities could expand and enhance its offerings. Under the leadership of Mr. Forde, the Department of Student Activities offered an expanded array of programs for students and established the Owens Community College Student Government. Events included comedy shows, a hypnotist, Relay for Life, Black History Month events, homecoming weekend, and Martin Luther King Day programming.

In December 2003, Mr. Forde was re-assigned to Academic Advising as the Selective Health Advisor. James Welling moved to the SHAC and became the Athletic Director. Mr. Rickard reported to Mr. Welling and was responsible for overseeing Student Activities as well as supervising athletic events.

OPPORTUNITIES

Recent Staffing

Over the past 5-6 years, the College has put more resources into staffing Student Activities, and the Department of Student Activities now has dedicated staff on both campuses who work hard to plan, organize, and oversee a wide variety of student activities and student clubs/organizations. This has allowed for the continued expansion of the department's initiatives. In 2005, John Byers was hired as a full-time Coordinator of Student Activities to oversee all Student Activities programming, clubs and organizations, and Student Government. A year later, student worker positions were in place providing coverage for a total of 40 hours a week. By 2009, 1 part-time (35 hours per week) employee, plus Student Workers who work up to a total of 40 hours per week were in place. In January 2011, another part-time employee was added though student worker hours dropped to a total of 20 hours a week. However, one of the part-time workers left the College in March and has yet to be replaced, and as of July 1, the other part-time position has been reduced to 24 hours per week.

On the Findlay campus, activities were originally planned and executed by an assortment of staff in Enrollment Services, along with the club Students Involved with assistance from the Coordinator of Student Activities on the Toledo campus. There was no Findlay person dedicated specifically to Student Activities. However, in 2007, through a Perkins Grant, a part-time (10-15 hours per week) Student Activities person was hired. In 2009, this position then became institutionally funded by the college and was combined with another part-time position in Career Education to form a temporary full-time position. Having a full-time employee on campus doing Student Activities allowed for expanded programming and the growth of student clubs. In January 2010, Student Activities was paired with Student Conduct in terms of job responsibilities and six months later the position became permanent. Budgets have also allowed for a Student Worker to be hired for 15 hours a week on the Findlay campus.

Student Activities is fortunate that there are also many willing students and staff at Owens who volunteer to help at larger events such as Fall Fest, Halloween Alternative, and Spring Fling on both campuses. (Please see Current Student Activities Staffing.)

Student Activities Staffing, July 2011

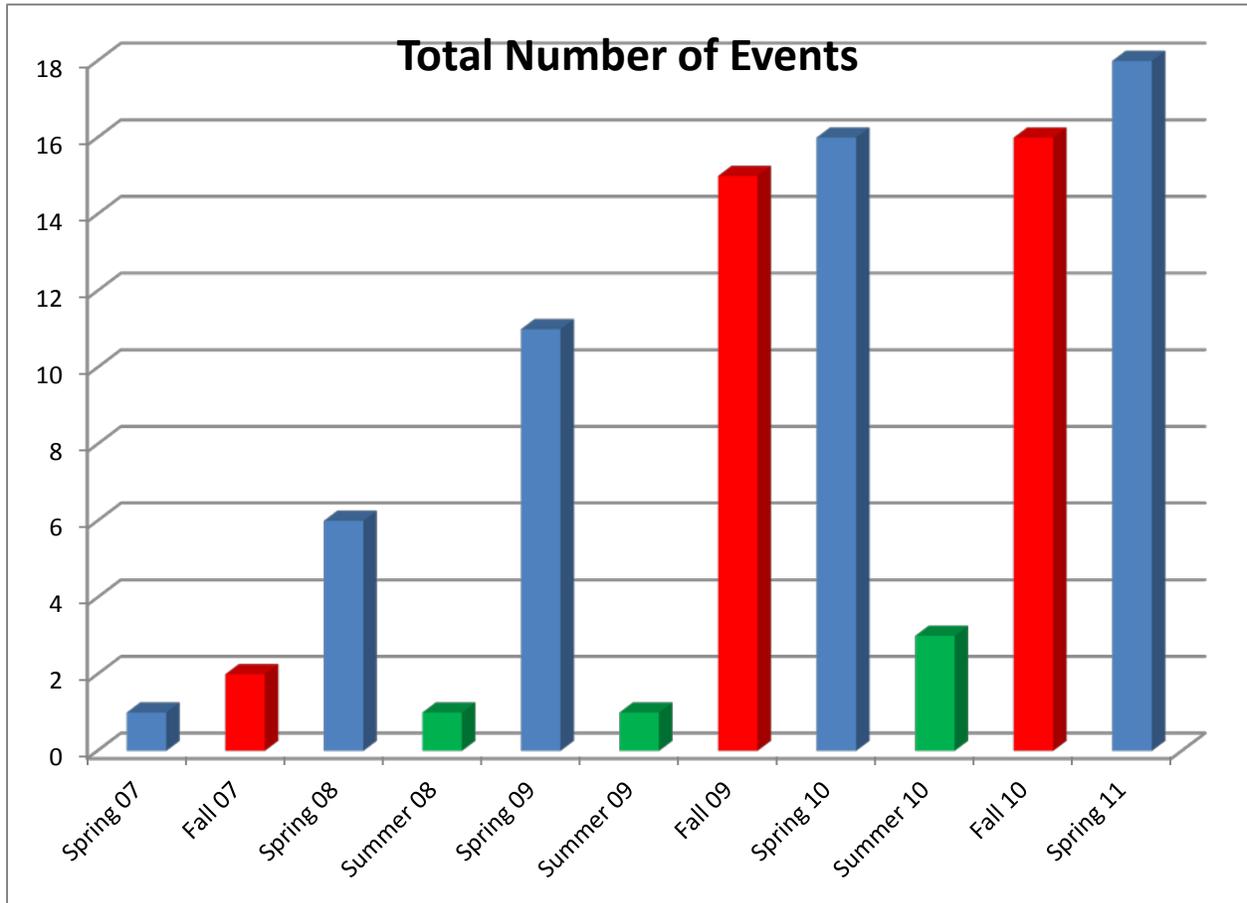
Toledo Campus	Findlay Campus
Director of Student Involvement (Full-Time)	Manager of Student Activities and Conduct (Full-Time)
Student Activities Assistant (24 hours/week) unfilled	Student Worker (15 hours/week)
Student Activities Assistant (24 hours/week)	
Student Worker (18 hours/week)	

Growth in Student Activities

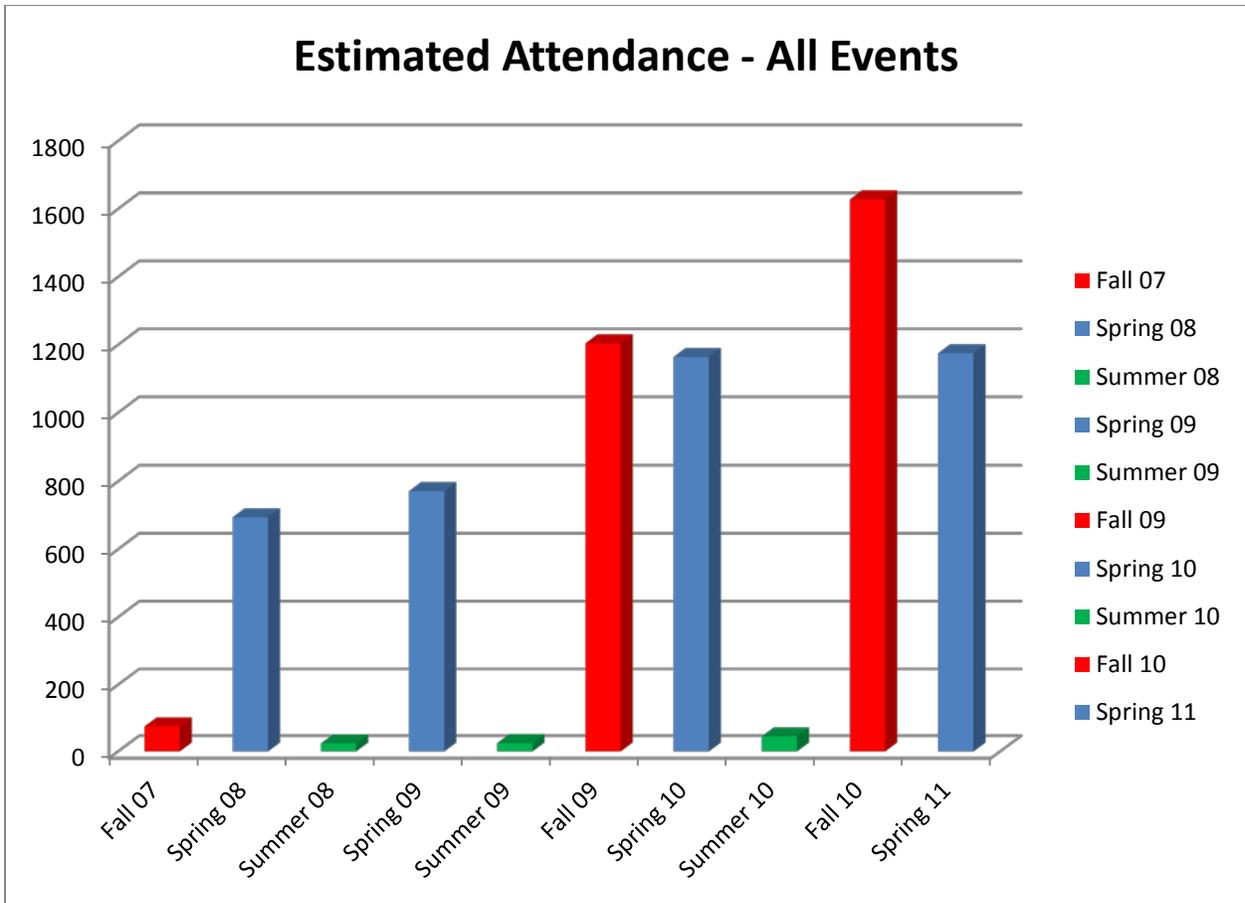
The quantity and quality of Student Activities events has continued to grow in recent years, partly due to the increase in transfer students at the college which began when Owens became a comprehensive community college in 1994. With the influx of more traditional-aged students directly from high school, there was more demand for Student Activities programming. Though there is no formal or consistent method for assessing events, the Toledo and Findlay campuses each have developed different processes of gathering data.

The Toledo campus summarizes activities sponsored by Student Activities and Student Government in reports which are submitted to the Board of Trustees. These Board Reports sometimes incorporate estimated attendance as well as information that clubs submit about their events and activities. At the end of the year, the office generates a cumulative list of events and activities sponsored by Student Activities and student clubs as well as a similar list for Student Government sponsored programs. Events range from passive programs, such as staffing informational tables at New Student Orientation, to large campus-wide events such as Spring Fling. Some items have measures attached to them in the form of estimated numbers (attendance, giveaways, donations); however, there is no formal assessment of programs.

Since fall 2007, the Findlay campus has tracked Student Activities by writing brief summaries after each event. This allows for a relatively accurate count of the number of events on campus during each semester as well as the approximate attendance at each event. The data suggest that both the number of Student Activities events and the aggregate attendance at events have increased over the years. (See graphs A1 and A2.)

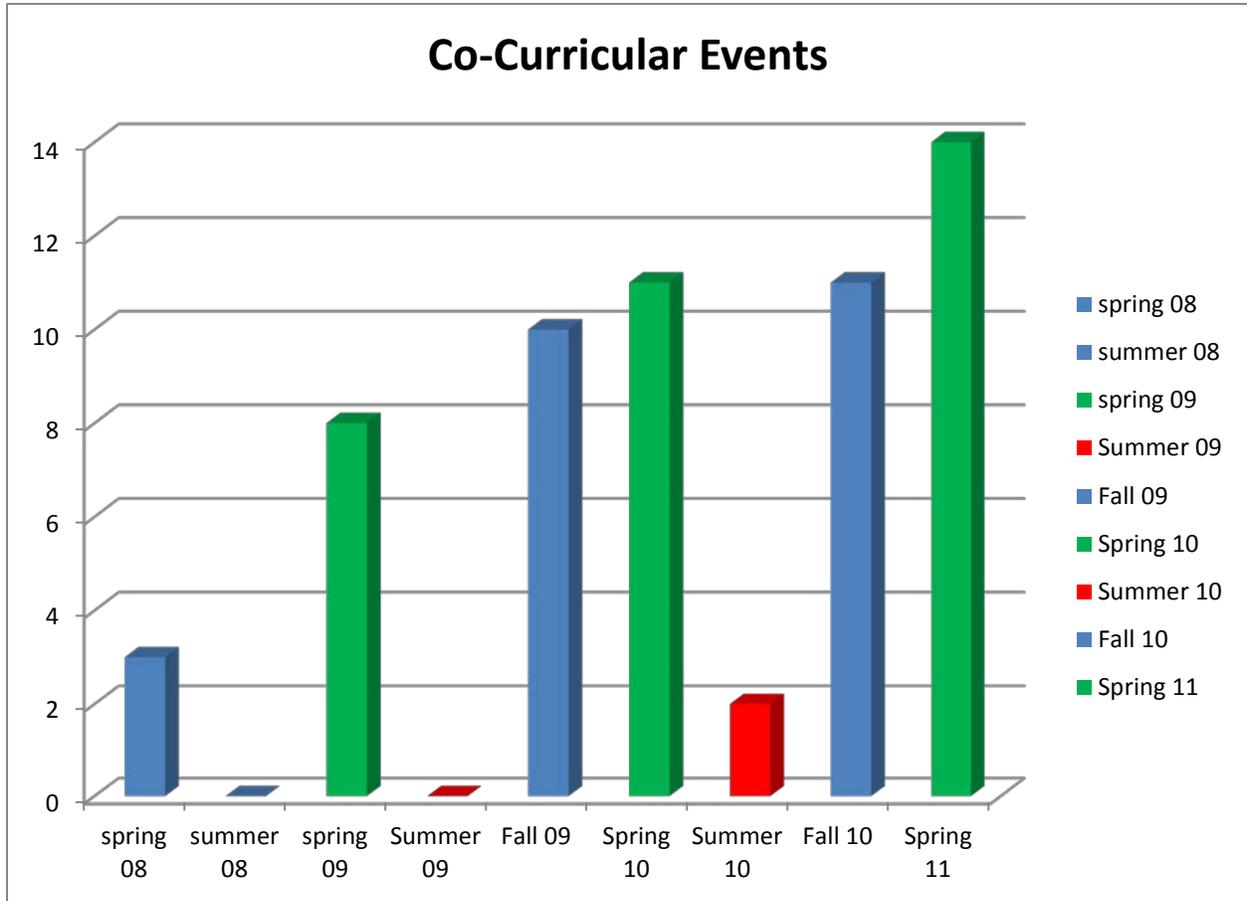


Graph A1: Number of Student Activities Events on Findlay Campus

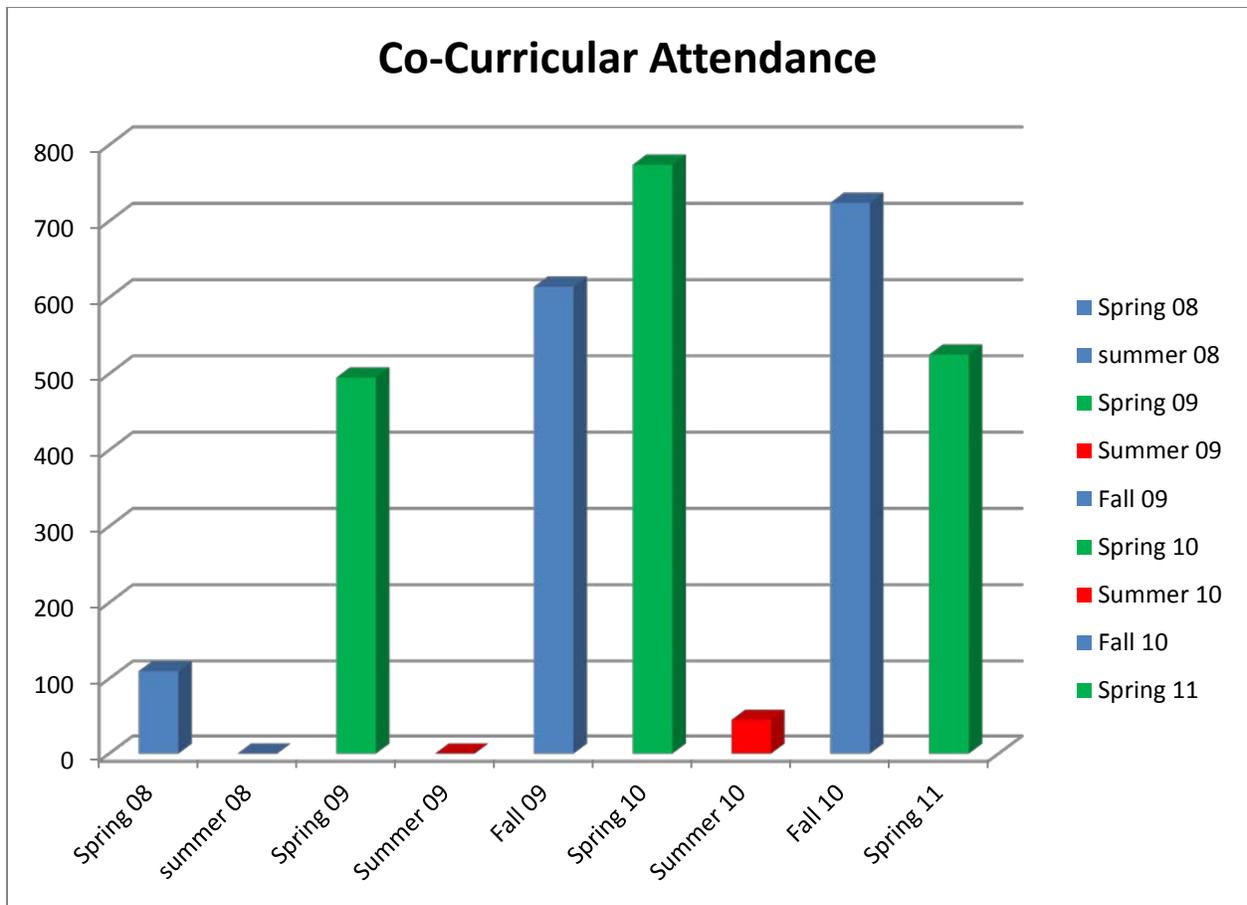


Graph A2: Attendance at Student Activities Events on Findlay Campus

When looking at just co-curricular activities, the trend is similar, with the exception of spring 2011 when attendance at several events was impacted by weather. (See graphs B1 and B2)



Graph B1: Number of Co-Curricular Student Activities Event on Findlay Campus



Graph B2: Attendance at Co-Curricular Events on Findlay Campus

Examples of co-curricular Student Activities at Owens:

- Powwow and lecture presented by the American Indian Education Center
- Bridges out of Poverty demonstration
- DUI Simulator
- Documentary films and discussion
- Sex Signals; improvisation and discuss regarding relationships and date rape
- Black Jews Dialogues: comedy sketches and discussion about diversity
- Sean Stephenson: “Time to Stand”
- Edna Brown, State Senator
- Dell Suggs: Leadership programs
- Jenny Boylan: Transgender professor, novelist, memoirist
- Environmental Fair
- Volunteer Fair

In July, 2009, the Department of Student Activities developed a mission statement to reflect its role in supporting and promoting student development. It states, “To advance the mission of Student Services, we develop and support diverse, social, cultural, and educational programs, clubs, and activities that engage students in the total college experience.”

Funding

In recent years, Student Activities has benefited from an increase in financial support from the College. Originally, Student Activities received approximately \$31,000 in yearly operational funding (\$24,000 Toledo, \$6,500 Findlay), which allowed for a limited number of events on campus. However, in 2007, in order to support Student Activities programming, the college instituted a Student Activities fee of \$.50 per credit hour, up to \$5.00 per semester per student. Fifty-five percent of this funding now supports campus clubs and organization, 30% goes toward Student Government, and 15% supports Student Activities events. These fees generate approximately \$140,000 per fiscal year. This has allowed for an expansion of programming and the growth of student clubs and Student Government, while enabling the Department of Student Activities to provide a much richer student life experience at Owens. Furthermore, the department no longer has to focus its activities around fundraising events to sustain itself.

Collaboration

Student Activities currently collaborates with various instructors and academic departments on programming initiatives to help strengthen curricular ties. Recently, each campus established a Student Activities Round Table with representatives from various schools and departments to share ideas and discuss programming and promotion of events. While finding a meeting time has been difficult, Student Activities continues to work with faculty and chairs on an individual basis.

As Diagram 1 indicates, co-curricular Student Activities can be initiated from within the Department of Student Activities or within an academic department. As Student Activities staff gather ideas and plan for future events, they consider whether or not they would tie into the curricula of specific departments. If so determined, they approach the department(s) about working together. Similarly, as academic departments develop ideas for programs and speakers, they will often approach Student Activities about potential collaboration.

Student Activities also works closely with FYE and SSC instructors to promote student involvement on campus. Each semester staff members make presentations in many FYE and SSC classes about the benefits of being involved and the opportunities that exist on campus. Furthermore, some instructors require that students attend at least one campus event. Collaborating with instructors and strengthening curricular ties has also helped increase attendance at Student Activities events by creating greater buy-in and support from instructors throughout the college, who come to events and encourage students to attend.

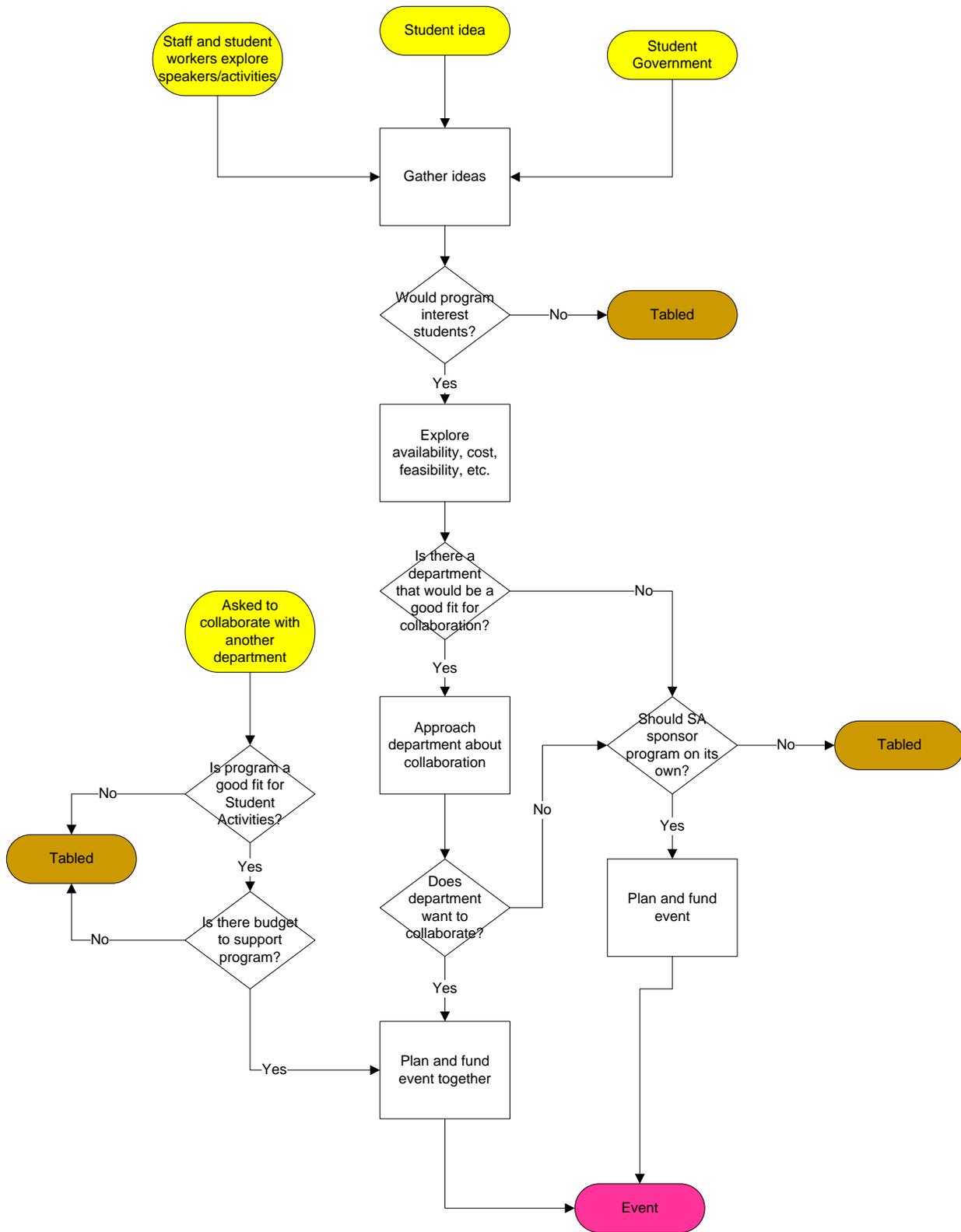


Diagram 1: Flowchart of Student Activities

CHALLENGES

Benchmarking

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) provides guidance to college departments, such as Campus Activities Programs, on creating learning and development outcomes for students. It breaks down the outcomes into six domains: knowledge acquisition, cognitive complexity, intrapersonal development, interpersonal competence, humanitarian and civic engagement, and practical competence. These domains and their dimensions informed the Quality Team's discussions about student learning outcomes.

Through further literature review and inquiries with other schools, the team found that while there are resources about how to measure student involvement in co-curricular activities, there are not many institutions that are currently measuring or assessing student activities. Institutions surveyed by the team included Bowling Green State University, the University of Toledo, Rhodes State Community College, Cuyahoga Community College, Sinclair Community College, Columbus State Community College, and Terra Community College. None had implemented a formal system to measure learning outcomes for Student Activities, though Tri-C has been studying the correlation between participation in campus activities and athletics and retention. Thus, there is not much information for the college to draw upon in creating and implementing a plan for evaluating student learning through co-curricular student activities.

Dearth of Specific Data

While there is evidence that the number of Student Activities events and student involvement in them has increased over the years, the data is incomplete. The Office of Student Activities has no formal way of tracking events and attendance and instead relies on estimates. They gather information from submissions to Board Reports and year-end departmental event summaries, which can be cumbersome and imprecise. Furthermore, there is no assessment of what students learn through their involvement in co-curricular student activities. Learning outcomes are only tracked when clubs members attend conferences or travel for co-curricular activity, as they must submit a reflection piece about their experience.

Analyzing Causes for Current Outcomes

There was a great deal of debate concerning whether the team should set Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) or Learning Goals within this project. The team had concerns about setting SLOs as there were not goals in place. It also proved difficult to find direct measures regarding leadership development, diversity, civic engagement, interpersonal relationships, critical thinking, and self-understanding that would be specific to Student

Activities. These measures would be difficult to identify and costly to implement. Lastly, it is difficult to separate those SLOs covered in courses and those in activities. The students who attend activities are also in courses which may cover these outcomes, so it becomes difficult to ascertain if the SLOs were met by the course or the activity. Since Student Activities supports the academic side in terms of SLOs, it was decided that the team would define and measure *goals* within Student Activities as opposed to SLOs.

In the process of identifying the desired learning goals for students who participate in activities, the team brainstormed a list of possible learning outcomes for student activities. These included the following: listening to others ideas, leadership development, planning/organizing events, cooperation/teamwork, diversity, communication, retention, civic engagement/community service, intrapersonal development (self worth/feeling valued), career development, developing relationships/social competence, and budgeting experience. This list was based on the mission of the Office of Student Activities, the current focus of programming, and the purpose of student clubs.

Next, the team decided to narrow down this list of learning goals to create a more manageable number to measure. A consensus decision was made to eliminate the goals that fit more with student clubs and to focus on those activities with an educational component that are tied to the Owens curricula. The rationale behind this decision was that student clubs impact a more limited number of students and would be better served as a project for a future Quality Team. The team consulted with Debra Rathke, Director of Institutional Research, about sending a survey to college stakeholders to determine what they think are the most important learning goals for student activities. However, due to the quantity of surveys being administered at Owens currently (ex. CCSSE, Noel Levitz, etc.), at Deb's suggestion, the team agreed it would be best to forego conducting a survey at this time. Instead, Deb suggested using guidelines of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and best practices at other institutions to guide the creation of learning goals for student activities. Deb shared with the team examples of learning outcomes for student activities from other institutions.

With this information in hand, the team then narrowed down the list of goals to the top six. These included leadership development, diversity, civic engagement, interpersonal relationships, critical thinking, and self-understanding. Sub groups of team members then researched and/or wrote definitions and/or outcomes for these goals. During this process, several additional goals were eliminated including leadership development, interpersonal relationships, and civic engagement since these are more directly addressed in student clubs and only to a limited extent in co-curricular student activities. Thus the team adopted the following three learning goals for Student Activities:

Diversity: Students will understand individual and group differences and recognize the value of a diverse society.

Self-Understanding: Students will reflect on personal values and actions.

Critical Thinking: Students will generate pertinent questions and examine relationships between ideas.

Improvement Theory and Implementation

The Quality Team brainstormed what resources Student Activities might need in order to measure these learning goals. As the team discussed and explored different methods to measure the goals, they recognized that the college would need some way to capture attendance at events and follow up with students afterwards. Research revealed that other schools, including The University of Kentucky and Virginia Tech University, are using card-swipe machines to track student participation at campus events and reward students who attend. The team learned that the most basic card-readers cost around \$30 and only track numbers. More sophisticated card readers that could integrate with Banner and allow students to key in OCID or Social Security numbers if they don't have their Owens ID cards, cost about \$150. Integrating with Banner would allow the potential to develop extracurricular transcripts for students in the future, which was also suggested in the Foundations of Excellence Report. Card readers can be stand alone systems that can collect the data without a computer, or they could be a reader system that requires a connection to a computer when scanning is taking place. A card-swipe system could potentially replace the current Student Activities Tour Book which is used to encourage students to attend events by offering rewards to those who do. This would save money and align with college efforts to go green by eliminating paper usage and printing costs.

Use of Card Swipe System

At an event, there would be one or more “scanning stations/locations.” Student Activities Staff, student workers, club leaders, and others would assist in having students swipe their ID cards. Swiping would be an optional choice for students, encouraged by the incentives to assist in tracking attendance numbers and measuring learning goals. Card swipes would be used to encourage attendance much like the current “Tour Book” system as who attend events could be entered into drawings for prizes. Furthermore, the data gathered would allow Student Activities staff to send surveys, questionnaires, and other evaluations to students who attend events. Attendance information collected through card swiping would be integrated into Banner for use in research and reports run by Institutional Research.

The number of card swipes per event would depend upon the size of the event, the number of staff/student leaders able to assist with swiping, and the number of card swipe systems purchased for OCC.

With this information in mind, the team developed an initial list of 5 recommendations:

1. Increasing personnel in the Office of Student Activities to help facilitate measuring of learning goals.
2. Adopting the 3 learning goals related to diversity, self-understanding, and critical thinking.
3. Purchasing multiple card-swipe devices that can be integrated with Banner to track student attendance at events.

4. Assessing of goals using surveys, focus groups, etc.
5. Increasing the Student Activity Fee.

To garner feedback on these recommendations, the Quality Team met with representatives from IR and Student Activities. Debra Rathke, Director of Institutional Research, discussed ways in which IR could support assessing the learning goals through focus groups, interviews, questionnaires, etc. She shared with the team that Owens had acquired a license for SNAP, a sophisticated computer based survey tool. Ms. Rathke indicated that as an event evaluation, Student Activities could develop questions and IR would help them both launch and collect the data through SNAP. Swipe-card data could allow the surveys to be sent only to those who attended the events being evaluated.

Because the Quality Team realized that the Office of Student Activities would be charged with implementing any ensuing recommendations, it solicited input from John Byers, Director of Student Involvement and Nicole Lance, Part-Time Assistant in Student Activities. Furthermore, James Katzner, Manager of Student Activities and Conduct on the Findlay Campus, was a member of the Quality Team and provided input and guidance throughout this project. Through the discussion with Mr. Byers and Ms. Lance, the team learned that current staffing levels would be a major impediment to any plan to measure student learning. Mr. Byers indicated that one of his staff members, who had been working 35 hours per week, left at the end of March and has not yet been replaced. That coupled with Student Worker attrition, has left the office at 60% of its former staffing level. Furthermore, his other part-time staff member would be limited to 24 hours per week starting July 1, 2011. At this point, unless staffing is increased, Student Activities events will be scaled back so that they can be managed at current staffing levels. With regard to the Student Activities Fees, Mr. Byers said that he believes the funding generated by the fees is adequate to support current programming. However, because it is a fixed fee per credit hour, rising costs may pose challenges in the future.

As a result of these discussions with IR and Student Activities, the Quality Team decided to alter its fifth recommendation slightly, while keeping the other four intact.

The final recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation 1: Increase personnel by elevating the vacant part-time position in Student Activities from 24 hours to full-time. The team believes this is vital to the success of the plan to measure student learning in co-curricular Student Activities. Currently, Student Activities has 46 fewer worker hours than it did four months ago due to the vacant position and limits to part-time hours. Without increased staffing, an already taxed Office of Student Activities would not have the time and resources to measure the student learning goals. Furthermore, having another full-time employee will decrease turnover and thus lower training costs as new employees would

need to be trained in developing measurements (surveys, questionnaires, etc.), using scanner system, and analyzing data.

Recommendation 2: The Office of Student Activities will adopt the 3 learning goals.

Recommendation 3: Purchase multiple card-swipe devices that can be integrated with Banner to track student attendance at events.

Recommendation 4: Assess goals using surveys, focus groups, etc.

Recommendation 5: Review Student Activities Fee every 3 years to ensure adequate funding to maintain quality and quantity of programming.

The Quality Team believes that these recommendations would allow the College to measure learning within co-curricular student activities, which would further enhance the student educational experience. Adopting the three learning goals would give Student Activities a focus for programs and assessment. The swipe-cards would enable them to more accurately track student attendance at events and follow-up with surveys, questionnaires, etc. Furthermore, reviewing the Student Activities fee periodically will help ensure consistent, adequate funding for programming in the future.

Though each of these recommendations is important, they all hinge on increasing personnel. Without increased staffing the Office of Student Activities will not have the human capacity to implement the plan.

To further analyze these recommendations, the Quality Team did a Force Field Analysis of each.

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS – STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Recommendation 1: Elevating vacant part-time position in from 24 hours to full-time

DRIVING FORCES	RESTRAINING FORCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuity of staff – both college and outside people would know who to contact and have a relationship with a stable staff member. • Increased offerings would be available if there was more staff – this would lead to more publicity for the school, more community outreach, and opportunities for recruitment • Greater ability to track and gather data on events and attendees • Current vacancy of part-time position • Less turnover and less training would reduce costs • Ability to assist all campuses and learning centers • Succession plan for Student Activities • Retention of students – engaged students have a better likelihood of being retained. • <i>The remainder of recommendations hinge on this position</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment period for those currently working as responsibilities shift • Training and professional development of new staff • Budget

Action Steps:

1. Find budget lines and get necessary approvals
2. Define duties and scope
3. Follow hiring process
4. Train employee

Recommendation 2: Adoption of Student Learning Goals for Student Activities

DRIVING FORCES	RESTRAINING FORCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Little cost• Creates a focus for measuring learning• Aligns with College and Student Activities mission and vision• Aligns with the core competencies• Aligns with CAS• Assists with overall student learning• Allows a way to determine best use of college resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time of the people involved• Buy in from Student Activities• Perception that this is limiting the activities offered• Perception that measurement will be used as an evaluation method of the people involved• Resistance to change

Action Steps:

1. Communicate the learning goals to all of the Student Activities staff
2. Allow Student Activities staff to adopt or modify
3. Communicate learning goals to the campus community
4. Periodic review of learning goals

Recommendation 3: Card Swipe System

DRIVING FORCES	RESTRAINING FORCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System could be utilized to gather data on events and those who attended • Movement towards a paperless tour book – cost savings in long run • Best practices at other institutions • Support retention through ability to better connect and engage students • Increase use of student IDs • Allows the college to build an extra-curricular activity transcript • Can support other areas by tracking participation and allow for easy follow-up (examples: student leadership events, service learning, tool-kits, etc.) • High impact for a low cost • Ability to weave this into fee structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning new technologies • Staff needed to develop appropriate scripts/protocols • Tech support of products • Staff needed to use it • Budget

Action Steps:

1. Budget approval for system
2. Identify system which best meets institutional needs
3. Purchase equipment
4. Have IT set up equipment and scripts/protocols
5. Train staff on equipment
6. Train people in data retrieval

Recommendation 4: Assessment of Learning Goals in Student Activities

DRIVING FORCES	RESTRAINING FORCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foundation of Excellence recommendation• Consistent with the College’s focus on assessment• Consistent with trends in student services• Allows a way to determine the best use of college resources• Aligns Student Activities with college mission, vision, and key campus initiatives (Noel-Levitz, Foundations of Excellence, etc.)• Assists with overall student learning• Allows a way to determine best use of college resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff’s time and resources• Resistance to change• Perception that measurement will be used as an evaluation method of the people involved

Action Steps:

1. Development of assessment instruments
2. Implementation of assessment instruments
3. Collection of data
4. Utilization of data to form action plans

Recommendation 5: Scheduled Periodic Review of Student Fees

DRIVING FORCES	RESTRAINING FORCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains the quality of events on campus • Maintains quantity of events on campus • Follows practices in other college areas (academics, IT, etc.) • Little cost to review • Fees have had little to no adjustment since they were started • The fee structure is not tied to any automated increases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training needed to be able to ensure good data • Staffs’ time and resources • Potential increase in fees for students

Action Steps:

1. Determine time line for review
2. Gather data
3. Present to Vice Provost with recommendations as needed.

Costs and Benefits

The recommendations of the Quality Team involve both direct and indirect costs. One direct cost is upgrading one of the part-time position in Student Activities to full-time. Savings garnered from having one vacant position since the end of March and the other position scaled back from 35 to 24 hours per week on July 1, 2011 could be used to help fund this upgrade. Christopher Giordano, Dean of Student Life, estimated that the cost of converting the vacant Student Activities Assistant position to full time would be around \$25,000 - \$28,000. This cost would be partially offset by the savings that would be realized as the result of reduced staff turnover, mainly hiring and training costs. The other direct expense is purchasing a swipe card system, the cost of which would depend upon the type of system bought. If the swipe card system eventually replaces the Student Activities Tour Book it would save approximately \$147 per semester in printing costs, and enhance the College's efforts toward creating a greener campus. Indirect costs for the team's recommendations would include support from other departments needed to implement the plan: Information Technology writing scripts for coding in Banner, and Institutional Research training and supporting Student Activities staff in using SNAP and interpreting results.

Despite the additional expenditures associated with the recommendations, the plan will benefit the college and Owens students in many ways. First of all, information gathered in assessing co-curricular Student Activities will be used to enhance the Owens experience for students. The Office of Student Activities can use the information to inform its programming and ensure that students are learning through co-curricular events. Information about who attends which events could enable Student Activities to develop programs designed to get other populations involved. Having the information in Banner will also create the potential for developing extra-curricular transcripts for students, an idea that has been discussed at the college. Furthermore, having another full-time staff member will lead to greater stability in the Office of Student Activities, which will enhance the departments' ability to continue to provide quality programming, informed by the data gathered, and consistently support Student Clubs and Organizations.

At the college level, the recommendations will help align the Office of Student Activities with Owens' increasing emphasis on assessment. It will also put the college at the forefront of assessment in Student Activities. While other colleges may be moving in this direction, very few appear to have implemented an assessment plan.

How Results will be Monitored and Measured

At specific times the Quality Team should meet with Student Activities to serve in consulting capacity to see if the recommendations are effectively measuring student learning. Adjustments in the implementation of the recommendations may be required to work within the constraints of staff time.

Recommendation 1: Elevating vacant part-time position in from 24 hours to full-time

Results will be known if or when position approval and hiring is completed for the position.

Recommendation 2: Adoption of Student Learning Goals for Student Activities

Monitoring the adoption and communication of the student learning goals to the campus community will be the responsibility of the Office of Student Activities who will carry out these tasks.

Recommendation 3: Card Swipe System

The purchase of the card swipe system will be monitored by the Office of Student Activities and Information Systems with the support of the Quality Team. Student Activities will work with Information Technology to develop and implement of a process for using the system.

Recommendation 4: Assessment of Learning Goals in Student Activities

Assessment will require coordination with Institutional Research for instrument development and data collection. Student Activities will work with IR to coordinate this process. Results of the status of successful development, implementation, and data collection will be monitored by Student Activities.

Recommendation 5: Scheduled Periodic Review of Student Fees

Review of student fees will be done on a regular basis by the Office of Student Activities in consultation with the Dean of Student Life. Recommendations for any fee changes will be made to the Vice Provost.

The Gantt Chart indicates the steps and timeline for implementing the recommendations.

IMPLEMENTATION CHART - STUDENT ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	2012												2013		
	Pre-Jan. 2012	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.		Dec.	Jan. +
One additional full-time staff person															
Find budget lines and get necessary approvals															
Define duties and scope															
Hire staff person															
Train employee															
Card swipe system															
Budget approval for system															
Identify system which best meets institutional needs															
Purchase equipment															
Have IT set up equipment and scripts/protocols															
Train staff on equipment															
Train people in data retrieval															
Adoption of Student Learning Goals															
Communicate learning goals to Student Activities' staff															
Allow Student Activities staff to adopt or modify															
Communicate learning goals to the campus community															
Periodic review of learning goals															
Assessment of Learning Goals															
Development of assessment instruments															
Implementation of assessment instruments															
Collection of data															
Utilization of data to form action plans															
Schedule Periodic Review of Student Fees															
Determine time line for review															
Gather data															
Present to Vice Provost with recommendations as needed															

Engrafting Improvements

The Quality Team has solicited input from the Office of Student Activities throughout this process. The team believes that the recommendations in this report have the support of Student Activities and that the office staff will engraft them into departmental priorities. Student Activities will hold the majority of the responsibility for implementing the recommendations and monitoring their status, with support from IR and IT.

Suggestions for Other Team Projects

Because there is no formal archived history of Owens, this Quality Team found it challenging to piece together the history of Student Activities and student involvement. The history of an institution is an integral and vital part of its culture and legacy; the past shapes and informs the present as well as the future. Therefore, the team recommends that the college consider having a team develop a plan for creating an archive. Also, after this team's recommendations are in place, the college should consider forming a Quality Team to look at student learning through involvement with student clubs and Student Government.

APPENDIX A

Quality Team Definitions

Active Participation: Student is present and engaged in activity.

CAS: Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

“The mission of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) is to promote the improvement of programs and services to enhance the quality of student learning and development. CAS is a consortium of professional associations who work collaboratively to develop and promulgate standards and guidelines and to encourage self-assessment.” (p. 3)

Club Advisor: A member of the Owens faculty, staff, administration, or alumni whose responsibility is to provide guidance, support, and general oversight for a student club.

Co-Curricular Student Activity: An activity that is aligned with the Owens Community College curriculum, supervised by an Owens employee, sanctioned by the college, and open to all students in which the Office of Student Activities was involved in implementation.

Critical Thinking: The ability to ask questions, find connections between concepts and solve problems personally, professionally, and academically.

Direct Measure: Instrument that requires students to demonstrate knowledge or skills.

Diversity: Differences in all types of people and groups including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and identity, age, social class, disability, cultural perspective and religion.

Engaged: Actively listening, asking questions, joining in activities during event

Indirect Measure: Instrument that asks students to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate it.

Interview: A face to face or telephone questioning of a respondent by a qualified facilitator to obtain information.

Learning: The act or process of acquiring knowledge, skills, or attributes.

Office of Student Activities: An office that oversees all student club and organizations, coordinates student events and activities, and supports other social, cultural, and educational opportunities on campus.

Outcomes: The specific knowledge, skills, or attributes that students develop through their educational experience.

Passive Participation: Student is present, but not engaged in activity.

Self-Understanding: Student's knowledge of their personal values and how they were formed.

Student Club or Organization: Any student-driven group that registers with the Office of Student Activities whose purpose centers on the interests and goals of the students involved and enhances student life at Owens.

Survey: A research instrument generally in the form of an interview or questionnaire that provides researchers with information about what people think and how they act.

The Quality Team would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their input and cooperation:

John Byers, Director of Student Involvement

Dr. William Ivoska, former Vice President of Student Services

Joanne Juan, Specialist, Quality, Organizational Performance and Accountability

Debra Rathke, Director of Institutional Research

Ivy Billings, Owens Student/Alumnus

Thomas Marshall, Professor, Business Technology

Nicole Lance, Part-Time Assistant, Student Activities

Colleges, Universities, and Corporations whose staff assisted in our research of card swipe systems