# 4: Services to Students

The College adopted a strategic enrollment management approach to the entire area of services to students since the last Self-Study. In addition, technology upgrades have improved student, faculty, and advisor access to academic records in the past few years. This chapter examines the services to students from the initial point of recruitment and admission to advising and counseling, student support services, and student activities. The discussions of the College's enrollment management initiatives, descriptions of services, and assessments of services address Standard 8; discussions of various student support services, including counseling and advising, address Standard 9.

## Enrollment Management Plan

The College adopted an Enrollment Management Plan in 2001, in part as a response to declining or stagnant enrollments on the Harrisburg Campus from 1993-2000. The College engaged a consultant, Clarus Corporation, to study enrollment trends, and then a team of staff members examined the data in three areas and made recommendations: for recent high school students, adult students, and customer service. Groups in each of these three areas conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, which became the basis for the subsequent recommendations. From this, the initial Enrollment Management Plan developed, covering strategies for marketing, recruitment, and retention of students.

Following an analysis of these enrollment trends, the College developed recruitment and retention plans to improve enrollments in each category. Goals and objectives for the new Enrollment Management Plan included the following:
- Increasing enrollment, retention, and student success (i.e., graduation rates),
- Creating a customer-centered organization,
- Increasing the effectiveness of the College web site for all market segments,
- Translating the number of inquiries and applications into actual enrollments, and
- Increasing faculty and staff involvement in the recruiting process.

Two areas that changed right away were customer service and recruitment and marketing. Customer Service was a serious problem identified in the Clarus Report, and these issues were addressed immediately. Lack of staff in Admissions, Registration, and Financial Aid during peak periods meant students did not receive adequate service. To address these, office effectiveness reviews were conducted and improvements made, most notably in scheduling more staff during peak periods. The telephone system was also updated and improved to handle the volume of calls more efficiently. Regular staff meetings were held in each area of Student Affairs to improve communication and services. Customer Service training was initiated for all staff and administrators and is now a regular part of their new employee orientation and annual evaluation.

In recruitment and marketing, strategies were revised for two different groups. For High School students, the initial action plan to increase the number of enrollments focused

primarily on direct mail campaigns, targeting high school students with high SAT scores, summer guest students, high school counselors, and parents of high school students. With Adults, the goal was to reverse the decline in part-time enrollments through recruitment activities (open houses, advertising, and employer contacts) and to target the following groups of adults: those without high school diplomas enrolled in GED programs, adults with College experience but no degree, and prior College students who have not completed degrees. As a result, the College created a Next Step program to facilitate the transition from GED to college credit classes, tailored marketing materials to the needs of adults, and continues to build partnerships with area employers.

From these initial recruitment strategies, a more comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management Plan has been developed, which is implemented through the Data-Driven Enrollment Management Committee, the College's Enrollment Management Plan, and the College-Wide Retention Plan.

The Data-Driven Enrollment Management Committee, a joint committee of faculty, staff, and administrators with representatives from all the campuses, assists with new program development, along with marketing, recruitment, and retention strategies for all programs. Data-Driven Enrollment Management Committee has developed a structure for developing new programs. This includes a comprehensive pre-assessment, followed by a business plan, curriculum development, and an enrollment management plan with recruitment and retention phases.

# Student Recruitment and Admissions

## Current Recruitment Strategies

The current recruitment plan begins by separating prospective students into target markets: high school students, adults, international students, active duty and veterans, minorities, home schoolers, GED students, and guest students. The Admissions Office has developed a recruitment plan for each market segment that includes data and budget analysis, recruit priorities, objectives, and budget details; new initiatives; new materials and a presentation; and lists of contacts and types of events.

The following strategies are used for recruitment:
1) **A Master Recruitment Schedule** has recently been developed for all campuses to coordinate all outreach activities. It facilitates sharing ideas among recruiters from different campuses and coordinates activities, which is particularly important in communities close to county lines, where more than one campus may have an interest.
2) **Timeline:** Each semester the Dean of Enrollment Services puts together a timeline of all recruitment and follow-up activities.
3) **Updated Recruit Materials** were created, including updated view books and new brochures for ESL, Adult Basic Education and Developmental Studies, and financial aid; and a high school guidance poster. Admissions is also working with Public Relations to develop a CD-ROM, which will work with the new web site and replace the recruitment videotape.

4) **Guidance Counselors:** A key strategy in recruitment of high school students is for College admissions recruiters to develop relationships with area high school guidance counselors. They do this by scheduling guidance office visits in area high schools, working closely with counselors for early admit students, and by holding various events for counselors.

While the College has tried a number of new recruitment and follow-up strategies and has done a better job of tracking and coordinating events, assessment of these processes is just getting underway. By standardizing the response cards, and entering information from the cards into a database, Admissions can begin to assess what types of events yield what types of responses. The implementation of Web for Prospect and the Banner Recruit Modules provides new technologies to track and respond to prospective students. Since 2005-2006 event reports track the percent of prospects (those who returned the cards) from each event to determine which events are worthwhile. In the future, assessments of the effectiveness of specific recruitment strategies will be done based on admission and enrollment numbers.

The College Public Relations Office works with admissions staff to develop marketing and recruitment materials for each campus. In the past, each campus used different materials to address regional differences in markets and students, but recently the College moved toward a one-college concept in Public Relations materials so that branding of the College is more easily achieved. Committees composed of staff from all campuses are providing the groundwork necessary to share best practices, recruitment and communication strategies, and to create materials that can be distributed and used at each campus location. For example, a committee is looking at replacing the current schedule tabloid with a more effective marketing piece. Several years ago, some divisions and career programs developed their own recruitment materials that target specific career populations at all campuses. These materials are used in Health Careers with some success. Other academic areas need to be encouraged to develop specific career and transfer information for prospective and current students, particularly for new programs and programs determined by the Data-Driven Enrollment Management Committee to be high demand/low enrolled.

The College catalog is viewed as a vital part of public relations for the College by prospects, students, faculty, staff, and professionals in the public schools and community. However, it is outdated almost as soon as it is printed with changes in program requirements and course pre-requisites, so a committee was appointed by the College President to deal with these concerns. Three teams were charged with review of content, layout, and a survey of faculty and staff and student focus groups on catalog use. Results were developed into a series of recommendations for changing layout to make information easier to access. These recommendations should be incorporated into the 2007-2008 catalog production. **Recommendation 4.1: The College should continue to assess current recruitment and marketing strategies and materials and update approaches in print and electronic materials as appropriate.**

## Admissions

The College has experienced significant growth in enrollment with the greatest growth in the last two years at the York Center and in the Virtual Campus. A weekly admissions report tracks new

students applications, admissions, and enrollments, broken down by admit type and campus location. Traditional age students continue to enroll full-time while adult enrollment continues to be primarily part-time. Details are shown in the chart below.

**Table 4.1 Enrollment Growth (Headcount) by Campus 2001-2006\***

| Campus | Fall 2001 | Fall 2006 |
|--------|-----------|-----------|
| Harrisburg | 7901 | 9,767 |
| Lancaster | 2072 | 5,588 |
| Lebanon | 856 | 1,083 |
| Gettysburg | 842 | 1,644 |
| York | | 1,332* |
| Virtual Campus | | 3,243* |
| **Totals** | **11,671** | **18,082** |

**\*NB**: Totals do not include York or Virtual Campus numbers since data are duplicated. These students are also included in the totals for students' home campuses, and the bulk of York headcount are included in the Lancaster count.

Recruitment and admissions processes are developed and implemented College-wide by various offices overseen by the Director of Admissions. To facilitate communication with staff at all locations, the Admissions Director schedules regular meetings to discuss recruitment and admissions timelines, processes, and improvement plans. As a result, comprehensive communication and tracking practices for recruitment are being developed and applied to the various recruitment regions; these will need to be assessed at the time of the next Periodic Review.

## Student Orientation

Comprehensive new student orientations are offered at all College campuses. Orientation is organized and managed by the Student Life Offices, a collaborative effort primarily between the Student Life Office and Admissions, with support from a variety of other offices in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Regional campuses offer a mandatory orientation just before the start of classes; Harrisburg requires orientation only for recent high school graduates. These mandatory orientations continue to be well attended. Their value in assisting retention should be examined by the College-wide Retention Plan Committee.

The Harrisburg Campus offers three formats for orientation, targeting different types of new students: First Choice for recent high school graduates, New Beginnings for adult students, and Next Step for recent GED graduates. The program for recent high school graduates yields a high registration rate (71% for 2005) while the voluntary evening program for adults is not as well attended. In 2002-2005 on average fewer than 8% of new adult students attended orientation. Sessions are now offered monthly, using an expanded two-hour evening format, and attendance has increased. Still, a majority of admitted adult students are not being reached by voluntary orientation efforts. **Recommendation 4.2: The College should identify core outcomes for orientation programs and develop incentives for student attendance so that orientation programs result in similar student outcomes regardless of location.**

## Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid Services develops and reviews policies to award financial aid to students in an equitable, compliant, and efficient manner. However, awarding financial aid can be a challenge in light of the College's size, level of complexity, and use of SCT Banner, coupled with federal and state compliance guidelines and regulatory requirements.

Financial Aid policy and procedure information is disseminated in many ways. The most frequently used methods include many types of literature (forms, brochures, letters, and posters) in addition to the College website. The Office of Financial Aid Services has recently re-evaluated all of its literature, and several pieces of literature were consolidated and many forms were simplified in the last two years. This has assisted students, who now receive fewer, more thoughtfully designed pieces of information, such as the *HACC Financial Aid Guide*. The Office of Financial Aid Services also offers a general e-mail address where students may ask financial aid questions. The College has coordinated responses to e-mail questions under a specific staff member, which ensures better accountability for monitoring e-mail inquiries.

The Office of Financial Aid Services has been involved in several internal and external reviews of procedures in the last few years. In December 2002 all policies and procedures were written and organized in an indexed manual with the assistance of the financial aid consulting firm, Financial Aid Services, Inc. Systematic procedures were developed and recorded for the processing functions of Banner with the implementation of the Financial Aid module within the College's administrative software system.

An external review, along with a Business Process Analysis conducted internally in 2003, identified more than 80 areas that needed improvement, including the need for increased staffing levels. Major changes were implemented immediately, and more recent Business Process Reviews have resulted in improvements in processing federal grants and loans. A mapping of the entire Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress process helped document the process and resolve discrepancies. In addition to those changes, processes were put in place to review policy and procedures in Financial Aid regularly, including monthly planning meetings, special issue meetings, and a regular policy review process.

If students have a complaint, they use the appropriate administrative procedure: AP 591 *Student Grievances*, AP 513 *Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals*, and other appeals and complaints policies. Now that the office is fully staffed, students have better access to Financial Aid staff members that have the information that they need. Regular assessment and continuous improvement have resulted in far fewer student complaints in the last few years. In a 2004 student satisfaction survey, most students at all campuses were satisfied with Financial Aid services. After subtracting the 25-30% of students who did not use services, three out of five students were satisfied with securing an appointment, the quality of Financial Aid materials, the clarity of award letters, and the helpfulness of the staff.

# Registration and Records

Technology advances have changed how the Registration and Records Offices do business as many processes have moved online. In registration, services include student enrollment, maintenance and enforcement of current course pre-requisites, and distribution of schedule bill information. Registration and withdrawal procedures are communicated to the students by way of the credit tabloid, website, catalog, enrollment form, counselors, advisors, staff members, and the student handbook.

The College implemented online registration in 2003, and it quickly became the most popular means to enroll. For example, in Fall 2005, at the beginning of the registration period (March 31 to April 4), at least 87% of registrants did so online. To assess the effectiveness of the whole HACCWeb experience, a survey is available on HACCWeb, in which students may rate areas of HACCWeb and make comments.  The information will be compiled each semester and used to recommend and implement changes.

The Records Office is located at the Harrisburg campus but the responsibilities of maintaining and updating student information are College-wide.  These responsibilities also include processing grade submissions and changes, transcript requests, graduation certification, academic renewal, and transfer evaluations. The Records Office is also responsible for ensuring that records are physically secure and adequately protected as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).  The College community is informed about federal privacy requirements through a brochure, the College's website, the College catalog, the Student Handbook, and reminder notices each semester. New faculty, staff, and student workers are required to go through a FERPA training session when hired.

Another major responsibility of the Records Office is the Student Information System.  The Director of Records oversees the requests for reports and tests new versions of the system on all update and query functions.  Maintaining an accurate student information system requires coordination with other departments and the regional campuses.  Recently document imaging was added to retain student records.

The Records Office has implemented many of the online processes that faculty and students are currently using through the secured site, HACCWeb:
- Faculty enter students' grades;
- Students access their educational information, including grades and graduation requirements;
- Students can submit a change of address, request a transcript, and apply for graduation.

Since February 2005 students have been able to evaluate their courses against the graduation requirements of their program through WebCAPP.  Faculty also have the ability to run a program evaluation (WebCAPP) for their students to assist them in advising students about the courses needed to complete their program of study.

These processes have made records access easier and more convenient for students and faculty, and they have resulted in cost savings for the College. However, as both records and registration have transitioned from manual to electronic processes and as enrollments continue to increase each year, the workload has changed. In addition, state and federal

requirements have changed accountability requirements and the data collected. As a result, staffing and functions in records and registration need to be examined and adjusted as appropriate. Having a single office responsible for student records, privacy, technology and records updates, among other processes, is a challenge. **Recommendation 4.3: The College should assess workloads, staffing, and administrative structure in the Records and Registration Offices and make adjustments as needed.**

## Military and Veterans Affairs

The Military and Veterans Affairs Office (MVAO) supports the recruiting and retention goals of the College through its outreach program to military personnel and veterans. It does so through visits to National Guard and Reserve units, veteran's education benefits briefings to individuals and organizations, and at job fairs, career fairs, and other community events. As a result, the College has the largest veteran enrollment of any institution of higher education in Pennsylvania, with 558 veterans enrolled in Fall 2006.

MVAO services include assistance in applying for benefits and financial aid and enrollment certification to the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Information about veterans' services is available on the College web site, and the Military and Veterans Affairs Office publishes a newsletter, *The Veterans Voice,* each fall and spring semester. Veterans attending the College can also find assistance with benefit information and application assistance at each campus. Coordination between the Military and Veterans Affairs Office and other Student Affairs offices is also maintained at all campuses to help ensure consistent service at all locations.

Significant recent improvements in the Military and Veterans Affairs Office include the addition of a full-time Veterans Benefits Technician to the staff and an increase in the number of the VA Work Study Program students from seven to thirteen. This accommodates the increasing number of veterans attending the College: from 518 enrolled in Fall 2002 to 588 in Fall 2006. Dedicated computers at all campuses have significantly improved customer service by providing a platform to present detailed Veterans Education Benefits Counseling to all new veterans. Of students surveyed at each campus (2004), fewer than 10% responded that they have used College services. Satisfaction levels for those who did use services were high in Lancaster (64%), Lebanon (74%), and Gettysburg (91%); in Harrisburg, 54% of students using services were satisfied and 38% were neutral. Perhaps the lower satisfaction numbers were due to a lack of adequate, confidential office space, which has since been corrected.

## International Students

International Student Services focuses on the areas of recruitment, admission, and retention of international students at the College, which help promote student achievement and academic excellence, the first institutional priority in the current Strategic Plan. The recruitment and admission of all international students is handled through the Admissions Office in Harrisburg. The International Admissions Coordinator assists students with the specific international student admissions process. At the regional campuses, a counselor is assigned to assist international students with advising and paperwork and to be a liaison with the office in Harrisburg. The *International Student Handbook* assists students with securing

housing, travel, employment, and other issues.  A special orientation program assists international students with College processes such as academic advising and registration, and directs them to campus services (e.g., Security, Office of Academic Success (formerly Learning Support Services), Counseling Services, and Student Life).  It also provides social activities to welcome the students and help them develop as a cohort.

The international program at the College has seen several significant changes in the last few years.  The first significant change was adding the International Student Coordinator position in April of 2003 to support international student retention and immigration regulations.  This position has enhanced the services that are offered to international students by promoting academic success through academic monitoring and early intervention activities.

The second significant change in the office was the implementation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) in May of 2003. Mandated by the Department of Homeland Security, SEVIS is a web-based system for maintaining information about international students and exchange visitors in the United States; it helps keep student records in compliance with immigration regulations.  The College will go through the recertification process as soon as the new guidelines are announced to the public.

The College has seen a steady increase in applications and enrollment of international students in recent years.  Enrollments rose from 115 international students in the Fall of 2002 to156 in Fall 2005.  Formal recruitment of international students is just beginning at the College with the majority of international recruitment being done via the Internet, the College web site, community involvement, and word of mouth.  Through a grant awarded by the HACC Foundation, recruitment materials have been developed in 2005, and an International Student Fact Sheet was developed for prospective students.

According to statistics from International Student Tracking sheets from the Spring and Fall semesters in 2004, international students are retained from semester to semester.  In Spring 2004, only two students out of the 125 (1.6%) attending at that time failed to re-enroll without transferring or graduating.  In Fall 2004, nine out of 145 students (6.2%) withdrew without graduating or transferring.  A student survey completed in the Spring of 2004 shows that students overall are pleased with services provided specifically for them.  The survey showed where the College was meeting student needs (finding housing, adjusting to American culture and academic life) and areas of concern (making friends, sensitivity of faculty to student needs, and having work opportunities as a student).  To address these needs, International Student Services is working to improve communication with students and faculty.

An International Education Task Force was convened to review international student recruitment and retention.  One of the primary goals was to determine what assessment tools are needed for the International program at the College.  The Recruitment Subcommittee made recommendations to conduct market research, update the international website, develop a Housing Council, and improve the placement process into English as a Second Language classes. The Recruitment Subcommittee also recommended developing an International Recruitment Plan and implementing a system to tract prospective students to help increase

the number of international students at the College. The Retention Subcommittee uncovered several areas where improvement are needed including academic advising, faculty, student, and staff training, orientation, student academic concerns, and student financial issues. The recommendations of the International Educational Task Force have been presented to the President. The President is working with the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the VP of Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management to develop an active implementation plan. **Recommendation 4.4: The College should continue to work on improving services to international students.**

# Student Support Services

## College-Wide Retention Plan

The College has worked to improve student retention rates in recent years. A Retention Plan was initiated as part of the Enrollment Management Plan following the Clarus Report in 2001. The initial plan for twelve teams to implement recommendations from the Clarus Report has evolved into the current College-wide Retention Plan with fifteen teams of faculty and staff focusing on those most at risk (see Table 4.2 below). These strategies are now regularly tracked and updated by the Dean of Retention Services on a matrix included in Appendix E. While the College has only started to collect data on the effectiveness of each of these strategies in 2006, results from the first semester's efforts of the Suspension/ Reinstatement team seem encouraging, and the faculty team looking at classroom strategies presented their results at the Spring 2006 Faculty In-Service Program.

### Table 4.2 Strategy Teams for the College-Wide Retention Plan

1. Develop advising support for students at-risk because they are undecided about a career choice.
2. Develop an advisor training program that address the unique needs of adult students
3. Track and follow up on students who completely withdraw from courses after the semester begins. Follow-up on students who were enrolled at the College but "stopped out," and for those students admitted but not registered.
4. Develop a comprehensive monitoring and tracking system for students on academic probation.
5. Develop a comprehensive monitoring and tracking system for students who have been reinstated following academic suspension.
6. Explore and develop alternative delivery of student support services for the increasing number of Virtual Campus students and students unable to access such services on campus.
7. Develop policies to encourage the retention of students at risk for Financial Aid suspension due to lack of satisfactory academic progress.
8. Develop a mandatory freshman orientation course for students in developmental reading courses.
9. Determine the need for personal/mental health counseling services and improve the referral process to provide such services if needed.
10. Identify and implement a non-cognitive assessment tool as an early intervention strategy.
11. Expand support for the mentoring program with special student populations.
12. Expand and improve social spaces for students in Harrisburg
13. Expand child care services for students
14. Identify classroom issues that affect retention and develop strategies to address those issues.

## Academic and Personal Counseling

Counseling and advising services include academic advising for career and transfer programs, personal and social counseling, and career counseling. General counseling is available to assist students in developing decision-making skills, navigating the educational system, and addressing concerns that may negatively impact academic success. Academic advisors and counselors follow the Council for the Advancement of Standards Guidelines, including the following goals (among others) in their work with students:

- development of suitable educational plans;
- clarification of career and life goals;
- interpretation of institutional requirements;
- evaluation of student progress toward established goals; and
- referral to and use of institutional and community support services.

Each campus follows the Advising/Counseling model (Appendix F) with the goal of offering consistent services across all campuses. The Harrisburg campus uses a division counselor model in which counselors, located in academic division offices of (MSAH, CASS, and BHET), report jointly to division deans and Retention Services, advise most new students in their assigned division, train faculty advisors, and possibly teach in their division. Regional campuses use a modified division counselor model. In addition, the Harrisburg campus has Central Office counselors who advise undecided students and support the Advising and Transfer Center.

In terms of recruitment, counselors are often the first point of contact for students; they are directly involved in many recruitment activities, including college fairs and high school visits. The counseling staff meets with prospective students and newly admitted students to discuss educational plans and, if appropriate, assist students with scheduling classes. Counselors also support the various orientation programs across the College in which students gain more information about the academic services available to them.

Counseling services play a more direct role in student retention through periodic contact and follow-up with probation and suspension students identified during academic monitoring and at midterm. Students are encouraged to meet with their assigned counselor or faculty advisor at least once per semester. In addition, postcards may be sent to current students to remind them of registration for the upcoming semester, which include information about HACCWeb, the student's assigned advisor, and whether or not the student is required to contact an advisor prior to registration.

Training for advisors at all campuses is coordinated by the Counseling Services Training Team. This team meets periodically to review training needs, revise the Advising Manual as appropriate, and schedule training sessions each semester. In the last few years, the advising portion of the Student Affairs website has been revamped to improve access to transfer and advising tips, advising policies, checksheets for program requirements, and links to internal and external resources. The team oversees training updates for faculty and per diem counselors.

The College has also taken steps to provide additional advising support for at-risk students, including those enrolled in developmental reading classes or on academic probation. Since

2003 students on the Harrisburg campus testing into English 001 and 002 reading classes have been assigned to a division counselor in Adult Basic Education and Developmental Studies. In addition, students with a GPA below 2.0 and students on academic probation or suspension reinstatement are required to speak with a counselor or advisor to receive approval of their selected courses.  During these advising sessions, strategies for academic success are discussed including tutoring, attending study skills workshops, forming study groups, and communicating with professors. Results of these efforts are being assessed as part of the College-wide Retention Plan.

The College facilitates an online Academic Monitoring system in which instructors of students on academic probation or suspension reinstatement, Act 101 students, developmental students, and students with disabilities are asked to provide early alert information. Faculty rate identified students' attendance, exams, assignments, and overall performance as either satisfactory, marginal, or unsatisfactory.  Counselors or professional staff in each of these areas then follow-up with students who are identified as being "at-risk" when they receive an "unsatisfactory" in one or more categories. A study will be conducted in 2007 to determine the effectiveness of this tool, and adjustments will be made based on the results.

Another relatively new venture is the effort to address the needs of Virtual Campus students. For now, students can access program checksheets and transfer information via the College's web site anytime. In the summer of 2004, six College counselors attended Distance Counseling training; now other faculty need to be trained so they can offer distance advising for their campuses and academic areas.

Formal assessments of academic advising to date have been limited to either particular advising centers on campuses or to full-time faculty counselors. Results of full-time faculty counselor evaluations so far have been positive. In addition, a more thorough, College-wide student satisfaction survey was completed in 2004 by the Office of Institutional Research. According to these results, students are satisfied with the services provided.  By campus, the numbers below indicate that the majority of students were very satisfied or satisfied with services:

- Harrisburg - 62.3%
- Gettysburg - 72.2%
- Lancaster – 72.1%
- Lebanon – 71.1%.

All campuses also informally monitor the walk-in and appointment offerings, the walk-in wait times and numbers, and staffing levels to ensure customer satisfaction. The Advising and Transfer Center at the Harrisburg Campus is investigating the option of surveying satisfaction with walk-in advising services in the Center.  Perhaps group advising sessions for students in the same program would ameliorate walk-in demand. On the Lancaster Campus, walk-in services have been assessed; a comprehensive survey was conducted in 2002-2003 and improvements were made as a result.

Along with these successes, there are several areas of concern related to advising services.

1. One area of concern in the registration process is checking course pre-requisites. Students become upset if they are stopped from registering for a class for which they have met the pre-requisite. Handling these pre-requisite error situations at the

registration window and online could be improved by clearer communication to students and faculty advisors about the rationale for each pre-requisite. Students should be aware of what the pre-requisites are for individual courses and how to meet those pre-requisites in a timely manner. Admissions and Counseling must also provide thorough training to all staff that enters exemptions so that pre-requisites can be checked. In addition, a pre-requisite error checking report is pending on the College's project priority list to ensure that students are not admitted to courses for which they have not met the pre-requisites.

2. Second, faculty advisors are not available on campus during peak periods (during winter and summer breaks) when many students are registering for classes or changing their schedules. This means more walk-in business at those times for the counselors, who may be sending students away or asking them to schedule appointments weeks in advance. This volume necessitates the hiring of part time advisors and counselors to fill in during peak periods at all campuses. Staffing is also a question as regional campuses continue to grow; they need to add counseling staff to provide consistently high-quality walk-in services as well as all other counseling and advising services. Currently, the assignment of students to counselors and advisors differs by campus, with different ratios per campus and division. Hence, the College should review student-to-advisor ratios as part of the comprehensive assessment of counseling services to ensure students are well served in all divisions and campuses.

3. Increased use of technology in recent years has also raised questions about how to provide clear and secure advising at a distance for the increasing number of students relying on the internet for course work and for communication with the College. The College provides limited counseling and advising services through the phone and email systems. However, due to concerns over FERPA regulations and the insecurity of electronic means of communication, the College is still exploring how to effectively implement full counseling and advising services via phone and email, and this needs to be included in the assessment of counseling services.

4. Another area of concern is how to handle the increasing number of students who need more intensive behavioral and crisis counseling at all campuses. Because counselors' focus is academic advising and their time is very limited for other concerns, the College needs to consider whether it has adequate counseling resources for students who need the most help. Revisions are currently being made to AP 523, Behavioral *Crisis Intervention*, to assess the crisis management plan. A sub-committee of the College-wide Retention Plan is to "determine the need for personal/mental health counseling services and develop a referral process to provide such services if needed."

5. Finally, the College lacks a comprehensive advisor evaluation system. Full-time, tenure-track and tenured counselors are evaluated on their advising skills, but all other advisors (teaching faculty and per diem counselors) are not. Currently the College is in the midst of a comprehensive assessment of counseling services, and results will be used to improve services.

**Recommendation 4.5: The College should use results of the comprehensive assessment of counseling services, along with the needs identified in this Self Study, to improve counseling and advising services to students in the following areas:**

- **clear, accurate, and accessible advising information for students and advisors;**
- **adequate staffing and advisor loads across campuses and divisions,**
- **secure advising communication at a distance,**
- **crisis counseling—access or referrals, and**
- **a comprehensive assessment process for counseling and advising services throughout the College.**

## Transfer Services

The College maintains a variety of articulation agreements with four-year colleges and universities. College counselors and academic advisors communicate information about these agreements and transfer credit policies in many ways including orientation programs, advising, Transfer Days for various institutions, and online and various print resources. A College-wide Articulation and Transfer Group was formed in April 2004 to work collaboratively on articulation and transfer agreements. This group meets regularly to discuss new proposals, review current agreements, discuss concerns, and disseminate information to the rest of the College about articulation and dual admission agreements. This working group seems to have addressed prior concerns about communication of transfer information to divisions and campuses, but the College should assess its effectiveness as part of the regular assessments in the counseling and advising area.

Transfer services are available at all campuses, but there are differences in the number of staff involved and how resources are allocated. For example, the Harrisburg campus operates the Advising and Transfer Center, which is a specific physical space dedicated to providing transfer services. The Center provides general information to prospective students, as well as academic and transfer information to current College students. The regional campuses incorporate these transfer services within their counseling and retention offices by designating a counselor responsible for disseminating transfer information and coordinating services at that campus. To assess success and satisfaction with transfer services, the College conducts 6- and 24-month graduate surveys. In the most recent results, 98 percent would recommend the College to a person seeking to complete their program; 85 percent did transfer, 77 percent did not experience difficulties, and 85 percent continued the degree they started at the College.

## Career Services

Career Services at all campuses is responsible for career counseling, job preparation and search assistance, maintaining career development literature and other resources, and hosting various career-related workshops and events. Information about Career Services is provided to students during orientation, on campus tours, and through postcards, posters, newsletters, and email. Career Services does advertise extensively, yet many events are not well attended. The Harrisburg and Lancaster campuses have seen a significant increase in 2005-06 in the number of students attending career related events. It appears that the most effective way to get information to students is through the faculty. If students are encouraged or required to attend by a faculty member, they are more likely to attend.

All campuses provide career counseling and resume services, but because staff size varies, services are not always consistent. Career development and other printed and online career resources are available at all campuses. Each campus hosts its own career-related events, which vary by campus. Services for the Virtual Campus and the York Center are still in the planning phases. Career Services at all campuses also oversees the KEYS (Keystone Education Yields Success) Program, a state-funded program involving individuals who are referred to the College by their local County Assistance Office.

In July 2004 Career Services implemented an online job, internship, and resume posting service through College Central Network. This free service to students and employers provides students and alumni at all campuses with an opportunity to view the College-specific job postings and internships from more than 1000 employers. Career Services staff at all campuses promotes College Central Network to employers for job posting services, and they also host area employers for job recruitment.

Career Services also manages student employment for the Harrisburg campus, including training and manuals; Career Services works with the Financial Aid Office to manage student employment at the campuses. Student satisfaction surveys are used to assess training. Career Services is considering a survey to obtain feedback from students and staff concerning the student employment program.

The Harrisburg campus is the only campus with an Internship Coordinator, who works with students and program coordinators at all campuses in managing a wide range of internships. This Coordinator identifies worthwhile internship experiences and develops consistent internship procedures College-wide for staff, faculty and students. In addition, the Internship Coordinator works closely with the program coordinators to set up on-site and off-site meetings to develop new internship partnerships with area businesses and associations.

A permanent, part-time professional assistant for the Internship Coordinator at the Harrisburg campus would improve services due to the number of internships needing approval and site visits. Ideally, each campus would have a part-time internship coordinator as well, but until funding is available, additional help in Harrisburg is essential to expand services throughout the region for students at all the College campuses. The assistant would be responsible for managing internship registration on College Central Network, initial contact with potential interns, and answering and returning phone calls to students and employers.

Measuring student satisfaction with Career Services varies from campus to campus. The Lebanon campus requests that students complete an evaluation form at the conclusion of the workshops and other events. The Lancaster campus routinely surveys students after career related workshops and events. Employers who participate in events such as career symposiums and job fairs are also surveyed. Results of a recent student satisfaction survey at each campus reveal that students are satisfied overall with information offered by Career Services at all campuses. In Gettysburg and Lebanon, a higher percentage of students reported using Career Services (79 percent and 73 percent, respectively), while in Harrisburg 56 percent and in Lancaster 54 percent reported they used Career Services. Of student who used services, most were satisfied or very satisfied with information received at all campuses.

## Learning Support Services

Learning Support Services coordinators at all campuses meet regularly each semester to share procedures and updates. Since 2005, Learning Support staff at all campuses developed a mission statement, which fits into the College's Institutional Priority goal targeting enrollment management and student success (IP I.a). It states that they are "committed to supporting students and the College community through academic services and resources that promote educational, professional, and personal excellence." As a result, Learning Support Services has changed the name to the Office for Academic Success (OAS) to reflect the broad range of support services they offer.

The Office for Academic Success provides all College students the opportunity for free tutoring and specialized academic support in the form of workshops, educational software, online tutoring, supplemental instruction, and academic resource advising. Services are available at all College campuses, as well as the York and Penn Center locations.

The Office for Academic Success has expanded in scope considerably since the last Self-Study. Along with extending hours of operation, the variety of tutoring services, Supplemental Instruction, and the number of workshops offered, they have created Test Centers at all locations, coordinated services at all locations, and added services to new locations, including the York and Penn Centers.

All campuses and both centers offer different hours of operation; however, Smarthinking is a 24-hour, online tutoring service available to all students, and the main source of Academic Success support for the Virtual Campus. The Harrisburg campus offers Supplemental Instruction, Act 101, and specialized support for students in developmental courses (i.e., overcoming math anxiety, practicing English conversation, supporting reading, writing, and College Success assignments). Academic Success staff also work closely with faculty at all campuses to provide specific tutoring assistance for students enrolled in their courses. Strategic Initiative Grants have been awarded in York to support initial tutoring services, in Lancaster for focused tutorial support for ESL students, in Harrisburg for Supplemental Instruction supervisor training, and specialized tutoring for health career students at the Gettysburg, Harrisburg, Lancaster, and Lebanon campuses.

Each campus publishes information about Academic Success Services in a variety of formats. All campuses advertise on their respective web pages, and information is available at all new student orientation programs and on bulletin boards in common areas at each campus. Tutors regularly visit classrooms, and teaching faculty play a key role in making students aware of the Academic Success services available. Since the AccuTrack software tracking system was implemented in January 2005, the Office for Academic Success has begun tracking student usage each semester. As a result, College-wide reports will be generated for more efficient collection of data and tracking of trends.

In the recent student satisfaction survey, only 24-37 percent of students reported that they used Academic Success Services. Of those who used services, satisfaction levels were high for tutoring services, the test center, and disability services. No more than 3.4 percent of students were dissatisfied with any of these services at any of the campuses. Plans for more

thorough assessments of the effectiveness of Academic Success Services are planned in the 2006-07 year as the College applies for NADE (National Association of Developmental Educators) certification.

## Office of Disability Services

The mission and purpose of the Office of Disability Services is to promote student independence, program accessibility, and a psychologically-supportive environment. Students often are able to succeed academically when they use accommodations designed to help them meet their course and program requirements. Accommodations do not alter or lower the objectives or standards of a course or program, and the director works closely with faculty to maintain standards while providing appropriate accommodations.

Disability services are available at all campuses of the College and are governed by AP 521, *Access and Supports for Students with Disabilities*. The Office of Disability Services is led by a full-time Director in Harrisburg, and each regional campus has a counselor assigned as a liaison; Virtual Campus students are directed to the closest geographic campus. As the Virtual campus registers increasing numbers of students from geographically-remote locations, the administration will need to work with the Office for Disability Services to create unique solutions for accommodations.

Students are made aware of Disability Services through the Office's web page, brochures, and teaching faculty are encouraged to publish a disabilities statement in their syllabi directing students to the appropriate campus contact person or office. Information is also shared by high school recruiters and at orientation programs.

The Office for Disability Services recently was audited by the federal Department of Education. The audit determined that student access to all physical campuses was appropriate. Two areas of concern were student understanding of grievance procedures and access to financial aid information in alternative media. The Harrisburg campus has begun reviewing grievance procedures as a part of the Office of Disability Services intake procedure. The College has made financial aid information available in Braille. Students receiving accommodations and teaching faculty are asked to provide positive and negative feedback to the Office for Disability Services, and this feedback is considered seriously in making operational changes. One change piloted at the Harrisburg campus in Fall 2005 was the delivery of notification letters to faculty by students rather than by College staff. This encourages students to be responsible for discussing accommodations they need. Other changes being considered due to student feedback, include making test requests and other Office of Disability Services forms available on the web for electronic submission.

## Child Care

Child care for the College's students has expanded considerably since the last Self-Study, with additional services at the Lancaster campus and expansion of services in Harrisburg and Lebanon. More than 100 College students are taking advantage of the child care facilities at Harrisburg alone.

The centers in Harrisburg and Lebanon are run by the College, licensed by the state, and participate with the local county assistance offices as well as Child Care Network. The Lebanon campus expanded from 18 to 24 children per hour and moved to a larger space. A new, licensed child care facility was recently added to the Harrisburg Campus that includes accommodations for a greater age range (infants through age 9) and number of children (82 per hour). In addition, the new center is linked with the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program as a model lab school. As a result of the new, larger facility and the program link, a greater number of students will benefit. All child care centers are now lab schools for our ECE program.

The child care centers in Harrisburg, Lancaster, and Lebanon support student recruitment and retention by providing an affordable, safe, convenient learning environment for children of students on an "as needed" basis while they are taking classes or attending educational activities. Child care staff members refer student parents to other areas of the College for services such as counseling, financial aid, and campus employment. Students are made aware of the child care facilities by counselors and advisors, and in printed materials such as brochures, student handbooks, registration circulars, and the College web site.

The College is moving towards using Keystone Stars and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards in addition to College surveys to help improve the student satisfaction rate. The Harrisburg and Lebanon centers have focused on the expansion of their programs within the last year. The main focus for both centers is the Stars program. Then will apply for NAEYC accreditation once they have received a Star 4 level. The Lancaster campus focused on NAEYC accreditation the past year, falling under previous NAEYC guidelines.

Student satisfaction with the College's child care services is measured using College surveys. The Office of Institutional Research conducts surveys of student satisfaction with the child care services. The centers also maintain suggestion boxes for parents at their locations. For the most part, students seem satisfied with child care services offered by the College. Concerns in the 2003 College-wide child care survey have been raised regarding consistency in costs, hours of services, and the lack of child care at the Gettysburg campus. As a result, the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management established a Child Care Task Force to review the following: child care center hours, staffing, cost, funding sources, and services at all campuses. The committee's goal was to coordinate services so that students using centers at multiple campuses have similar rates and services. The final report of the Child Care Committee was presented in early 2006 and included recommendations from the following subcommittees: Cost/Funding, Administration, Educational Program/Access, and Marketing. One of the continuing concerns is the cost of College-sponsored child care. The Harrisburg and Lebanon centers are operating at large deficits, which can be resolved, in part, by following through on task force recommendations.

Harrisburg Child care:FY06 Budget -$276,671    FY06 Actual -$342,953
Lebanon Child care:   FY06 Budget -$95,815    FY06 Actual -$120,506.

**Recommendation 4.6: The College should continue to implement consistently high quality child care services at all campuses, balancing the costs of this quality with affordability for students.**

## Multicultural Affairs

The Office of Multicultural Affairs was established to enhance the understanding of diversity and multiculturalism at the College. This office works with students, faculty, and staff to encourage respect for people of all cultures and to provide an inclusive environment that enhances the opportunity for academic success. The Office of Multicultural Affairs has also developed relationships with community organization over the years. Several of these community organizations, such as Black Achievers and the Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs, hold events on campus to which students are invited.

This office has undergone several changes in the last decade. In August 2002, a new Director of Multicultural Affairs was named, and a new position of coordinator of international students was created in 2003. The next year, a part-time coordinator for Multicultural Affairs position was created at the Lancaster campus to address the needs of a rapidly growing Latino student population. For the first time, events were planned to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at the Lancaster campus. The events were a success based on attendance. In January 2006, a new International Student Organization was launched at the Lancaster campus as a way of promoting cultural awareness among faculty and students on campus. The reporting structure of The Office of Multicultural Affairs has changed from the Vice President of Student Affairs to the Vice President of Academic Affairs to help improve interactions with College faculty.

A major change this past year was the creation of the College-wide Multicultural Affairs Campus Committees. Teams of volunteers consisting of administrators, faculty, staff and students work with the Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in coordinating multicultural programming at their campus, including events to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, and Women's History Month. Students of all backgrounds attend the multicultural events at each campus, which also bring in community members from time to time.

In the academic year, 2006-2007, the Office of Multicultural Affairs was charged with implementing the recommendations of the International Education Task Force Report. The director has been working with the International Admissions Coordinator and the International Student Coordinator to implement the recruitment and retention recommendations. The Study Abroad Program will also be examined and revised, and the director will work with the Office of Academic Success to revamp and expand the m entoring program for special student populations.

## Student Life

The mission of Student Life is to provide activities, resources, and leadership opportunities for students outside of the classroom. The Student Life staff believe learning opportunities outside of the classroom are an integral part of a student's education and that students who participate in clubs and organizations are usually more satisfied with their College

experience. Examples of several programs among many offered by the Office of Student Life include leadership development, cultural awareness, and educational and entertainment events.

Student Life at the Harrisburg Campus includes a long list of services, including several that affect all campuses, such as commencement, publication of the student handbook and athletics. Each campus has its own orientation, government organization, student activities, child care, and list of club and organizations. Student participation in extra-curricular activities at a commuter college is always a challenge. Still, student participation in activities has increased over the past three years to approximately 1,000 students in 2005. Beginning in 2002, program attendance at large events and participation in athletics has been monitored. Participation has increased because of increased opportunities through athletics, the student activities team, and the leadership conference among others. A recent student satisfaction survey indicates that while over 60 percent of students are aware of opportunities in student government, clubs, and activities, fewer than 15 percent have interest in them, and fewer than 6 percent participate.

**Student Government:** All students are members of the Student Government Association and elect senators and officers. In Fall 2005, a new student government organization, the Student Government Association Executive Council, was created to share governing responsibilities previously held by the Harrisburg Student Government Association. Each campus now has a Student Government Association, which selects two representatives to attend the executive council meetings. Campus Student Government Associations serve as the official voice of students in College Governance and oversee all clubs and student organizations.

The Student Government Association serves students by working closely with various governing bodies of the College community, including the administration, Faculty Council, and various College committees. Details are spelled out in the Student Government Association Constitution. The Student Government Association receives a budget each year from the revenue generated from the student activity fees. For example, the Student Government Association budget for 2004-2005 academic year was $259,000, which supported organizations and activities such as Athletics, the Child Play Center, and the Cultural Events Series, among others.

**Clubs/Organizations:** All special interest clubs and organizations must have a College advisor (a faculty or staff member) to be officially recognized by the campus student governing authority. Students are made aware of the membership opportunities with the varied student clubs and organizations via orientation, on-campus posters, and a fair at the Harrisburg campus. The student organizations are required to hold at least two fundraisers and one community service project per semester. All club functions are monitored by Student Government Association and must comply with certain rules and regulations established through the Student Government Association. For example, a Monthly Club/Organization Activity Report, along with a monthly Financial Report Form, must be submitted to the Student Government Association Vice President by each club.

On the Harrisburg campus, the SWAT (Students Of Wildwood Activities Team) organizes campus- and College-wide events and activities that focus on social activity, education, and community service.  Annual events sponsored by the SWAT team include the Fall Formal, the Spring Band Jam, guest performing artists, and canned food drives. On the Gettysburg Campus there are nine clubs or organizations, ranging from the Psychology and Business Clubs to a Breakfast Club. Activities in Fall 2005 included a student picnic and a Hurricane Relief drive among others. Organizations in Lancaster include groups such as the History Club, Early Childhood Education Organization, and the Association for Non-Traditional Students. Events and programs have included guest speakers, bus trips, HACC-fest (student welcome day), and Multicultural Day. The Lebanon student organizations include Comfort Zone and Student Ambassadors. Planned activities and events have included Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender programs and awareness and welcome to campus events. All campuses also participate in Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Society, and the College has the second largest number of members (296) of any community college in Pennsylvania in Fall 2006.

**Student Handbook:** The Student Handbook is an annual publication with information on a range of topics. It is available to students in the student activity offices at all campuses and centers and via the College web site. Recent efforts have brought students in to advise and provide input about the content of the Student Handbook. Changes made in appearance, information, and the calendar were positively received by students as evidenced by comments and an increased request for handbooks.

## Athletics

Athletics plays a significant role in the lives of many Harrisburg campus students.  Athletics is consistent with the College's mission by being an integral part of the total educational program, by serving as an extension to the academic curriculum, and by providing an out-of-classroom education. Athletics is communicated to students and the College community through a variety of media (e.g., orientation programs, admission brochures, and coaches).

Inter-collegiate athletics are a relatively recent venture for the College. In December 1999 the College President convened a sports task force to explore the need for an athletic program; then students were surveyed to determine interest.  As a result, men's basketball, women's volleyball, and co-ed tennis were the first sports offered in Harrisburg during the 2001-2002 academic year.  Women's basketball, men's volleyball, soccer, and golf were added since then.

Any student interested in playing sports must follow the eligibility requirements, summarized on the Athletics website from the Student Life menu and detailed in *The Eastern Pennsylvania Collegiate Conference Manual.* To maintain athletic eligibility, all coaches encourage student athletes to use learning support services.  The men's basketball team has been identified as a high-risk group; therefore, staff members from academic support and the Adult Basic Education and Developmental Studies Division have spoken to them specifically about the type of academic support that is available to them.  The Athletic Director tracks each player's grades and notifies the coach of anyone who is at risk or not meeting academic standards.  The coach or Athletic Director will then call the student athlete to follow up.

Perhaps as a result of these efforts, retention rates of student athletes have met or exceeded the College-wide rate, as delineated in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3 Intercollegiate Athletics Student Retention: Fall Semester to Spring Semester**

| Sport | 2002-03 | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Men's Basketball | 8/11 (72.7%) | 10/12 (83.3%) | 8/9 (88.9%) | 26/32 (81.3%) |
| Women's Basketball | 6/6 (100%) | 8/8 (100%) | 5/5 (100%) | 19/19 (100%) |
| Men's Volleyball | N/A | 12/12 (100%) | 10/10 (100%) | 22/22 (100%) |
| Women's Volleyball | 7/9 (77.7%) | 10/12 (83.3%) | 7/8 (87.5%) | 24/29 (82.7) |
| Co-ed Tennis | 10/10 (100%) | 9/9 (100%) | 8/8 (100%) | 27/27 (100%) |
| Men's Soccer | N/A | 19/25 (76.0) | 18/22 (81.8%) | 37/47 (78.7%) |
| Total | 31/36 (86.1%) | 58/66 (87.8%) | 56/62 (90%) | |
| College wide retention of full-time students Fall 2004 to Spring 2005 = 73%. | | | | |

The Athletic Director assesses recruitment, retention, and academic success of student athletes after each academic year. Data include each team's record, program growth (total number of student athletes and then number of student athletes in each sport), area school district represented (data collected from eligibility forms), academic success (GPA at the end of the year, number of student athletes transferring to a four-year school, and number of student athletes transferring plus playing the sport they played at the College), and athletes by academic division. Because the athletics program is still in the start-up stage, there has been no formal assessment to date; instead, players and coaches give suggestions to the athletic director, who has an open-door policy.

The Intercollegiate Athletic Program has been successful in enriching students' educational experiences and promoting the College in a positive manner throughout the community.
- The College is seen as more appealing to prospective students, who may otherwise attend another institution because of the student's interest in sports.
- When students become involved in campus activities, they are more likely to form lasting connections with other students and the College.
- The College receives recognition associated with successful teams and this is frequently communicated in the local media.
- A student athlete can gain academic recognition due to campus involvement via scholarships (Academic Scholarship and PA Passport Scholarship).

For the College's current level of athletic participation, the facilities and equipment meet the expectations, and are about on par with other schools in the Eastern PA Collegiate Conference; however, there are no team locker rooms. The visiting teams use the locker room to meet, and the College's teams use a classroom. The athletic teams are able to get the equipment that they need to compete but nothing beyond that. There is no separate training room on campus. The College, SGA, HACC Foundation, and community give substantial

support to the athletic teams. If participation in athletics continues to increase, the College should consider expanding the Evans Center as part of the Facilities Master Plan, looking specifically at a new gym, team locker rooms, training room, and a multipurpose area for classes and office space.

# 4: Services to Students Recommendations

4.1: The College should continue to assess current recruitment and marketing strategies and materials and update approaches in print and electronic materials as appropriate.

4.2: The College should identify core outcomes for orientation programs and develop incentives for student attendance so that orientation programs result in similar student outcomes regardless of location.

4.3: The College should assess workloads, staffing, and administrative structure in the Records and Registration Offices and make adjustments as needed.

4.4: The College should continue to work on improving services to international students.

4.5: The College use results of the comprehensive assessment of counseling services, along with the needs identified in this Self Study to improve counseling and advising services to students in the following areas:

- clear, accurate, and accessible advising information for students and advisors;
- adequate staffing and advisor loads across campuses and divisions,
- secure advising communication at a distance,
- crisis counseling—access or referrals, and
- a comprehensive assessment process for counseling and advising services throughout the College.

4.6: The College should continue to implement consistently high quality child care services at all campuses, balancing the costs of this quality with affordability for students.