Dear Colleagues:

The Student Affairs Annual Report has been compiled to give a summary of the accomplishments within the Division of Student Affairs for the 2014–2015 academic year. Though there were challenges, the commitment to our students’ intellectual, personal, professional, and social enrichment remained the central priority and focus of each unit within Student Affairs.

The student affairs team met for its annual staff retreat in August, where the focus was on building a cohesive team, since student affairs was restructured to include many of the academic support units previously overseen by the Office of Student Success. Consequently, the Academic Development and Support Center was established to reflect the programs and services offered and to distinguish its services and programs from the Office of Student Success and Retention. The center includes disabilities services, The Learning Connection (TLC), the Persistence through Academic Coaching and Tutoring (PACT) program for “provisionally” admitted students, and peer tutoring. TRIO-Student Support Services and the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program were also placed under the Division of Student Affairs umbrella.

The dean of students, in conjunction with the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement, collaborated with faculty to launch a loosely structured faculty-student mentoring program, targeting identified “at-risk” students who were not a part of any of the university’s current support programs (e.g., TLC, EOF, TRIO). Thirty students were selected to participate in the program. The interaction between faculty and students proved to be a favorable model for further development and expansion.

As part of the Title IX mandate to provide sexual awareness programs to students on campus, the sexual awareness program Haven was piloted in the First-Year Seminar. In addition to a presentation on sexual assault, all students were assigned to complete the Haven modules, recommended in the “Not Alone” White House Taskforce document. Haven is an online resource that encourages students to learn about healthy relationships, the importance of consent, and the many ways we can help to create a safe and positive campus environment. The two-part series was meant to be a meaningful and thoughtful experience for students to learn about the potential consequences of their life choices. A total of 172 first-year students successfully accessed and completed the course.

Each unit has been vigilant and purposeful in administering programs and services to meet the growing and complex needs of our students. The accomplishments within the division are directly attributed to the dedicated team of professionals and educators who have been diligent in pursuing our vision to fully engage students in a supportive, collaborative, and challenging learning environment, by providing diverse opportunities for student learning, development, and success. While challenges were evident, 2014–2015 marked another extraordinary year for the Division of Student Affairs in spite of budgetary constraints and limited resources.

Throughout the report are a few key accomplishments and highlights which demonstrate student affairs’ ongoing commitment to fully engage students in a supportive and dynamic learning environment.

Together in Mercy!

Karen Goff
Assistant Provost for Student Life/Dean of Students
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*Student Affairs Annual Report 2014-2015*
The Office of Student Activities held over 115 events during the 2014–2015 AY, an average of 3 to 4 events per week.

The Office of Student Activities (OSA) is committed to providing students with events and activities that meet the cultural, academic, and social needs of the students. The coordinator of student activities (CSA) works with the Student Government Association (SGA), the Campus Activities Board (CAB), and over 40 clubs and organizations, as well as assists with the development and implementation of new student groups.

The Office of Student Activities is also responsible for the planning and promotion of the university’s traditional events such as Welcome Back Week, Club Day, Homecoming & Family Day, Back Porch Party, Halloween Celebration, Mercy Day Breakfast, and other class-level sponsored events such as Senior Week, Junior Ring Ceremony, Winter Formal, and both the Freshmen and Senior 100 Days.

This year, the Office of Student Activities held over 115 events (not including SGA/club meetings, service projects, or fund-raisers). On average, there were 3–4 events per week. Leveraging the data from the 2013–2014 Student Activities Survey, changes were made to how events were advertised, focusing more on social media (e.g., Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) as well as e-blasting flyers and announcements to students.

In addition, the Student Activities Committee met quarterly to help improve communication between departments when planning events as well as to increase the cross-promotion of events and activities. The Student Activities Committee included representatives from the Office of Student Life, Office of Residence Life, Office of Athletics and Recreation, and Office of Alumni and Donor Engagement.
Assessment Data

The Office of Student Activities launched its annual Student Activities Survey in February 2015. A total of 558 students responded to the survey; the majority of respondents were commuters (60.3%) and sophomores (26.5%).

Below are some of the key findings:

- The majority of students are satisfied with the events on campus; however, they do expect to see more events on campus, especially on the weekend.
- Students indicated that the primary reason they do not attend events is due in part to work obligations or inconvenient times.
- The best times to hold events according to the survey would be 7:00–9:35 PM, Monday through Thursday, and any time after 6:00 PM, Friday through Sunday.
- Music festivals and dance parties are the top two events students would like to see more of on campus.
- There is a need for more programs specifically geared toward commuter students.

When students were asked how satisfied they were with the student activities at GCU, 14% responded they were very satisfied; 28% were moderately satisfied; 31% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied; 15% were moderately dissatisfied; and 12% were very dissatisfied. When asked about their expectations regarding the number of activities/events during the week (Monday through Thursday), 60% of students indicated they expected more events on campus.

Challenges

- Lack of Space: One of the biggest challenges the Office of Student Activities faces is the need for additional soft space for students. There are very few places our large population of commuters can spend time in between classes other than the Court Café, which has limited seating, and the library.

- Technology Support: The lack of dedicated software to effectively manage cocurricular involvement on campus is another challenge. We currently track student involvement using Microsoft Excel; this method is outdated and ineffective.

- Student Activities Funding: Budgetary constraints remain a challenge for providing quality programs and events for students (60% of students expect more events to be held on campus).
Students in the Women in Leadership Development and Emerging Leaders programs contributed a combined 1,000 hours of community service throughout the 2014–2015 AY.

The Office of Student Leadership and Engagement provides leadership opportunities and engaging programs that meet the needs of a diverse student population. Leadership initiatives are designed to encourage student involvement at various levels. The assistant director of student leadership and engagement coordinates two signature student leadership programs on campus, Emerging Leaders and Women in Leadership Development (WILD).

The assistant director of student leadership and engagement also serves as the moderator for the Commuter Student Association, helping to increase commuter student participation on campus. Both the assistant director and coordinator of student activities work collaboratively to oversee the Orientation Leaders program, as well as coordinate and execute New Student Orientation at the start of each academic year. While overseeing multiple leadership programs, the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement is also intentional in its effort to recruit and retain male student involvement.

Emerging Leaders and WILD women attended the National Conference for Student Leadership (NCSL) held November 20–23 in Orlando, Florida. Attendees included Christine Hedgebeth, Sabrina Cruz, Edwana Hallowanger, Jaclyn Cusack, Anthony Varlese, Tyler Chamra, Chloe Grady, and Alicia Colon. Additional attendees included Brian Ford, a resident assistant, and Kele Teele, a member of the Young Lion’s Brotherhood. The NCSL Conference focused on interactive programs and the attributes essential to being a successful leader on campus.

Emerging Leaders attended the IMPACT Conference held February 19–22 in Los Angeles, California. Attendees included Jenna Reices, Christine Hedgebeth, Lafonda McKinney, David Schenck, Kofi Sarfo, and Nicholas Ciccone. Additional attendees included Miriam Hunte, a resident assistant and member of WILD and the Student Government Association, and Davin Venezia, a member of the Student Government Association. The IMPACT Conference focused on connecting, educating, and mobilizing college students to strengthen their communities through service, action, and advocacy.
In an effort to expose and engage our student leaders with other national agendas, students are afforded opportunities to participate in national and local conferences. Over the past year, WILD women attended the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders at the University of Maryland in College Park. Attendees included Edwana Hallowanger, Ruthann Senior, Madison Piassek, Gina Elattar, Deanna Briganti, Shereen Zanjani, Ama Gora, Selina Abriola, Charli Topinka, Adoley Thedison, and Ariana Speranza. The National Conference for College Women Student Leaders focused on empowering and educating college women to develop action plans to change their community and assess how to lead their peers on campus.

Three student leaders—Sabrina Cruz, David Schenck, and Jenna Reices—were selected to participate in the Clinton Global Initiative in Denver, Colorado. The student leaders served as volunteers and were challenged to take on social agendas aimed at addressing social issues both locally and nationally.

Sabrina Cruz and Bianchi Valdez were accepted into the highly selective New Jersey Governor’s Hispanic Fellows Program to pursue an internship in their aspiring field of study during the summer of 2015.

Lucy Figueras was selected to participate in the New Leadership Program hosted by the Center for American Women and Politics. The program is geared toward college women who aspire to become engaged in public service.

All student leaders were required to participate in Leadership Day on January 15, 2015. Approximately 100 student leaders participated in service projects. Below is a list of places where student leaders volunteered.

- Student Government Association—Providence House
- Women in Leadership Development—American Red Cross
- Emerging Leaders—The Children’s Home Society
- Mercy Collegiate Society and Resident Assistants—The Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties

During the 2014–2015 academic year, WILD accepted 42 new members into its newest cohort, Cohort 12. WILD members completed more than 500 hours of community service, individually and collaboratively. In May, 20 seniors graduated from the program.

During the 2014–2015 academic year, Emerging Leaders accepted 25 new members into its newest cohort, Cohort 2. Members of the program completed more than 400 hundred hours of community service, individually and collaboratively. Eighteen male students actively participated in the program, and four students graduated from the program in May.

A survey was sent to the newest cohort of WILD women, consisting primarily of freshmen; 58% were commuters and 42% were residents. More than 50% of the respondents indicated they were involved in one or more leadership programs/athletics/clubs/honors programs on campus. Of the respondents, 45% stated they were the first in their family to attend college.
An increasing number of students are requiring long-term case management. There was a 16.5% increase in caseload, from 97 students in the 2013–2014 AY to 113 students in the 2014–2015 AY.

The Office of Student Development provides case management to students in distress. A case manager is assigned to the student to connect them to appropriate campus and community resources and foster student development. Referrals to the case manager come from the Student Concerns Team, through the Early Warning System, faculty, staff, the assistant provost for student life, and the dean of students. The case manager provides outreach to minimize the impact of distress on the academic and personal pursuits of at-risk students through effective case management, coordination of care, and communication between campus and community resources. During the 2014–2015 academic year (AY), the case manager and director of counseling center presented to each of the academic schools. Information was given at faculty meetings about ways to refer a student, warning signs of distress, and support services. As a direct result of these presentations, there has been an increase in the amount of referrals from faculty, which may be a contributing factor to the 16.5% increase in caseload and the 15% increase in the number of students requiring long-term case management from the previous academic year.

Representatives from faculty, residence life, health services, counseling, academic support, security, and student development meet as part of the Student Concerns Team to address and discuss students of concern, whether academically, socially, or behaviorally. Focusing on prevention and early intervention for students, the team evaluates the presenting concern and recommends resources and strategies to address potential harm and/or disruptive behaviors. Reported behaviors may relate to the safety and rights of others; therefore, members of the team may intervene in order to minimize disruption to the university community. The team regularly assesses these behaviors/incidents and recommends actions in accordance with existing university policies. The assistant provost for student life addresses high-level student conduct issues through the student conduct process.
The Office of Student Development provides on-going psycho-educational groups as well as programming, including the following support groups offered through case management.

- The case manager meets with the Young Lion’s Brotherhood (YLB) on a weekly basis. The YLB is a group of young men who meet to discuss issues to help empower young men to develop character and respect for the community.
- The SEED programming model provides the GCU community with information to maintain and invest in good global citizenship through violence prevention initiatives and peer support.
- The “Lean on Me” support group meets weekly in the evenings to address student concerns and issues.

**Assessment Data**

There was a 16.5% increase in caseload, from 97 students in the 2013–2014 AY to 113 students in the 2014–2015 AY, resulting in an increase of 22 students who required long-term case management. The weekly SEED program (Student Empowerment, Engagement, and Development) continued with a focus on sexual assault awareness and prevention and anti-bullying programming. These programs also provided service learning opportunities for eight students and four junior interns from the Bachelor in Social Work program. Students implemented and led these weekly programs. Since these programs were directed by their peers, participation increased significantly. Approximately 1,388 students participated in the SEEDS program during the 2014–2015 AY, and 415 students participated in Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) throughout the month of April.

**Challenges**

There is currently one case manager, who is responsible for case management, co-chairing the Student Concerns Team, and violence prevention efforts. Given the growing needs of our students, this number will likely continue to increase, and this caseload would be difficult for one case manager to manage.

Currently, case notes are being manually documented and filed in the Office of Student Development. The integration of a computerized system would be more efficient for time management, as well as information sharing. The case manager is researching software.

The biggest challenge continues to be lack of resources; both financial and community. Within Ocean County and surrounding area, there is little support for transitional housing, as well as community resources for mental health, which continues to be an ongoing challenge. In order to develop more efficient resources within the community, the case manager would need more time to devote to developing relationships with our community partners. The continuation of violence prevention and anti-bullying programs is an integral part of this office’s promotion of social justice.

Another challenge is the lack of funding for this office. The only funding resource for student concerns was through the Angel Fund, which is supported by donations from faculty and alumni. The funds are used for emergency funding for purchase of textbooks, medical supplies/prescriptions, clothing, food, etc. In addition, funding for transitional housing during the summer continues to grow as our list of homeless students grows. Whenever possible, the case manager searches for local, state, or federal support. However, some students are unable to find resources within these areas. Additional funding for transitional housing would be a great benefit to assist our students during the summer break.
Residence life experienced some positive changes during the 2014–2015 AY. The lower level of St. Joseph’s Hall was converted to a student lounge space and the residence life programming suite. The renovation included functional and sturdy furniture that is also aesthetically appealing to students. The installation of a 60-inch high-definition television, Wii-U gaming system, air hockey table, and artwork on the walls also enhanced the space. As a result, the lounge was used extensively by the residents of St. Joseph Hall, as well as other residents.

The Office of Residence Life also worked with the GCU Office of Information Technology on the implementation of a residence software, which will be utilized for incoming student room assignments this summer and for Spring 2016 room selection. This will provide students with the opportunity to search for compatible roommates and for greater control over their residential experience.

A new programming curriculum was created that incorporated the following programming areas: diversity, civility, community service, community building, personal responsibility, faculty/campus collaboration, and Saturday 11:00 PM to 1:00 AM programming. Resident assistants (RAs) also planned monthly community builders for their residents. In addition, a series of workshops targeted at first year students were implemented in St. Joseph Hall as part of the Residence Life Community Development and Programming Model. Finally, the Office of Residence Life collaborated on programming with other units within the Division of Student Affairs, most notably the very successful Great Gatsby Party with the Office of Student Activities, Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) with the Office of Health Services, and the End-of-Year Block Party with the Residence Hall Association, the Black Student Union, and Chartwells.

As a result of the focus on building community within the halls and fostering meaningful relationships with residents, there were some positive gains in two critical areas. First, the overall residence retention rate from Fall 2014 to Spring 2015 was 88%. The overall retention rate for first-year students in residence was 90%. There was also a significant decrease in the number of conduct incidents. During the 2014–2015 AY, there were a total of 69 incidents that resulted in students being charged and sanctioned with a violation of policy, as opposed to 129 incidents during the 2013–2014 AY. The largest decreases occurred in quiet hours violations (down to 10 incidents from 27 incidents the year before), guest policy violations (down to 13 incidents from 28 incidents the year before), and verbal conflict/altercation violations (down to 9 incidents from 24 the year before). While there was an overall decrease in conduct incidents, there were two significant fire safety incidents and several incidents of vandalism in Maria Hall.

In addition to the above incidents, Maria Hall is also in need of renovation. Though 75% of residents who completed the end-of-year residence life survey indicated they were moderately to very satisfied with their residence hall experience, students were critical of the upkeep and condition of the facilities, especially as it relates to bathrooms and Maria Hall.

Finally, the collaborative work between the Office of Residence Life and the Honors Program is showing great dividends. Weekly meetings were held for students in the Honors Program to discuss pertinent issues or concerns. These meetings were a great success as reported by the students and the director of the Honors Program. The regular meetings helped to create a strong and cohesive community, especially among the first-year residents in the Honors Program.
Assessment Data

One hundred (180) resident students responded to the end-of-year residence life survey, which represents approximately 50% of the spring 2015 residential population (361).

Overall Satisfaction
- 75% of residents indicated that they were moderately to very satisfied with their residence hall experience.
- 72% of residents indicated that they would recommend living in the residence halls to others.
- 92% of residents indicated that the RAs promoted a friendly, safe, and healthy atmosphere.
- 84% of residents indicated that the RAs had a moderate to significant presence in the halls.
- 90% of residents gave the RAs a favorable response on ability to build community on their floor/wing.

Academic Performance
- 71% of residents indicated that living in the residence halls had a considerable to great impact on learning skills to assist in their academic development and success, while 18% of residents indicated that living in the residence halls had a moderate impact on learning skills to assist in their academic development and success.
- 92% of residents indicated that they were moderately to very satisfied with their academic performance.

Personal Growth
- 64% of residents indicated that living in the residence halls had a considerable to great impact on learning important life skills, while 25% of residents indicated that living in the residence halls had a moderate impact on learning important life skills.
- 60% of residents indicated that living in the residence halls had a considerable to great impact on learning about cultures and identities different than their own, while 31% of residents indicated that living in the residence halls had a moderate impact on learning about cultures and identities different than their own.

Programming
- 68% of residents indicated that they were moderately to very satisfied with the programming in the residence halls, while 25% of residents indicated that they were moderately to very dissatisfied with the programming in the residence halls; 7% of residents were unable to judge.
- 63% of residents indicated that there were not enough weekend activities; 35% of residents indicated that there was an appropriate amount of weekend activities; and 2% of residents indicated that there were too many weekend activities.
Challenges

Facilities
The renovation to the lower-level lounge in St. Joseph Hall was well received by the students as evidenced by the by daily and consistent usage during the academic year. However, Maria Hall continues to show its age and deterioration. Despite being cleaned on a daily basis by the facilities staff, the condition of the bathrooms and showers continues to worsen and are in desperate need of renovation. In addition, the hallways and rooms continue to age and need to be repainted, the room furniture is beginning to break due to age and needs to be replaced, and the lounges are in need of new furnishings and amenities. The students continually express their dissatisfaction with the condition of Maria Hall both in daily conversations with each other and residence life staff, as well as the residence life student satisfaction surveys.

While St. Catherine Hall is still in relatively good condition, the building is now over 10 years old and is beginning to show signs of wear and tear. Once renovations are completed to Maria Hall, a renovation plan should be put in place for St. Catherine Hall in order to prevent it from falling into the disrepair that Maria Hall is currently experiencing. Renovations and a deferred maintenance plan for all of the residence halls will have the single greatest impact on student satisfaction with their residence life experience.

Programming
Even though a majority (68%) of residents indicated that they were satisfied with the programming within the residence halls, there is a significant minority that indicated that they were either dissatisfied (25%) or unable to judge (7%). It is clear that more work needs to be done to provide a diverse slate of programs in an effort to connect with as many residents as possible. To that end, the Office of Residence Life will be reviewing student input on programming that has already been gathered and will continue to gather student input over the course of the coming year, which will be used to inform the type of programs planned by the Office of Residence Life.

Programming on the weekends continues to be an area of improvement for the Office of Residence Life. Many of our residents live in close proximity to campus. As a result, they often leave for the weekend, and weekend programs are typically not well attended. Since a large majority (68%) of residents has indicated dissatisfaction with programming on the weekends, the Office of Residence Life will continue to make it a priority to provide weekend activities through its own programming initiatives and ongoing collaboration with the Office of Student Activities and other university departments and offices.

Community
While there were great strides made over the past academic year in relation to the community building, there is still more work to be done. The overall community within in the halls seems to be more respectful and cohesive than the previous year, in large part due to the work of the RAs. The residence life staff will continue its effort to spend time getting to know residents and interacting with them on a daily basis, as well as encouraging the residents to get involved with and take responsibility for their residence life experience through the Residence Hall Association and Community In Action initiative.

Finally, one of the factors impacting the community in the residence halls is the lack of a central student social space on campus. Once classes have ended, there is very little space for students to socialize outside the halls. Consequently, many of the students go to the residence halls and congregate in the lounges, which sometimes leads to noise complaints.
Georgian Court University’s Office of Health Services supports the health of the campus community by supporting its academic mission, encouraging short- and long-term healthy behaviors, and gaining a current profile of health trends both within and outside the campus community. An integrated approach is used to meet the changing needs of all university students in a culturally competent and respectful manner. The Office of Health Services also partners with local, state, and federal agencies to respond to emerging health concerns and to improve the health of the campus. Over the past academic year, services were offered to 2,688 campus members—89% direct student care and 11% staff, faculty, vendors, or visitors. This equates to close to 1,200 hours of direct nursing care.

The campus physician, a Georgian Court alum, provides nearly 100 hours of free medical care to our students. There were 62 health promotion/wellness programs and diagnostic screenings offered with an outreach of over 2,655 people. Community outreach health promotion programming was based on relevant student concerns put forward by the Lifestyle Behavior Assessment of the 2013–2014 AY. In addition, Random Acts of Health (RAH) peer health educators, a part of the Healthy Campus 2020 Initiative, became active wellness presenters to their fellow students. Their activities were well received and documented on the Healthy Campus blog. The Office of Health Services also administered 123 immunizations or biologicals as well as performed 58 diagnostic CLIA-waived tests such as HCG for pregnancy, Finger-stick blood sugars or dipstick urinalyses. The CLIA-waived laboratory re-certified and current license expires July 2017.

Although the federal Patient Protection and Affordability Care Act (PPACA) requires all citizens to have health insurance coverage or be subject to tax fines, our records indicate that close to 30% of our student population are either uninsured or unable to utilize their insurance coverage within the state of New Jersey except in life-threatening emergencies. The ability to meet the health care needs of our students beyond the office’s capabilities continues to be a significant challenge. With the rise in complexity of students’ medical needs and accessibility to specialized care, adequate health insurance coverage remains critical to academic success and student retention.

Throughout the 2014–2015 AY, emerging infectious and communicable diseases (Ebola, MERS, avian flu, influenza, Multi-state measles outbreak, meningitis ) required the health services staff to take precautionary measures in the interest of the community by continual surveillance of the situations and planning for any contingencies should the situation arise. The staff participated in professional development opportunities, including the 30 continuing education credits required by the state of New Jersey to maintain licensure.
Assessment Data

Overall, the 2014–2015 AY saw a decrease in ratio of student encounters to student enrollment as compared to the last four academic years. The higher rate of student encounters in 2012–2013 AY and earlier can be attributed to the fact that the university’s mandatory hard waiver health insurance plan required all insured students to have their initial point of medical contact with Health Services. Students who purchased the 2014–2015 AY voluntary school Health Insurance Plan no longer need to visit Health Services to initiate the claim process.

Three surveys were sent to students to measure (1) the effectiveness of the health services clinical program, (2) identify student health needs and behaviors, and (3) identify overall satisfaction and areas of improvement. There was a majority resident response (78%) to the post-clinical assessment in direct contrast to an overwhelming commuter response (83%) to the Spring 2015 comprehensive survey. Students indicated that they visited the Health Center primarily one or two times for illness (27%), immunizations (23%), wellness (20%), first aid (12%), physical exam (10%) and health education (8%). The most frequent diagnoses were upper respiratory infection, sore throat, exacerbation of asthma, urinary tract infections, and abdominal pain.

Challenges

- There is a limited budget for health promotion and wellness programming.
- The lack of health insurance coverage or health insurance coverage that can be accessed in New Jersey continues to be a barrier to students who need specialized care beyond the services provided by the Health Center;
- Students with Medicaid outside of New Jersey can only use emergency services in New Jersey. Follow-up care and referrals to specialists must be in the student’s home state. This may result in a delay in treatment or medical withdrawal from school.
- New Jersey Medicaid or New Jersey Family Cares students who live outside of the Lakewood area can only access health care from their assigned medical providers who are located in or near their home addresses. Residents with such health care coverages can only access the local emergency department, follow-up care and associated referrals must be provided by their assigned primary physician.
- Limited transportation services for resident students who need to utilize medical services beyond the scope of Health Services;
- In addition to limited physician hours, there is no nurse practitioner to fill in the diagnosing/prescribing gap.
- The Office of Health Services continues to operate on the second floor of the antiquated Casino building, which has inadequate space for current and future needs (i.e., ADA accessibility).
COUNSELING SERVICES

The Counseling Center provides high-quality therapeutic services through individual therapy, crisis management, faculty consultation, and outreach. There was a 13% increase in the number of students seen in therapy this year. This may be due in part to increased demand in combination with the fact that the center was able to hire a staff assistant for the first time in four years. The assistant was able to greet students as they sought services and facilitate the process of scheduling appointments. Sixty-five outreach events were offered, reaching 1,211 people. The Counseling Center submitted its IACS reaccreditation study in April 2015 and was notified of reaccreditation in June 2015.

The Counseling Center also facilitated the launch of the Veterans’ Initiative this year, complete with the opening of the Veterans’ Lounge, the development of the GCU Student Veterans’ Association, the addition of the GCU Veterans’ Facebook group, and the provision of 23 outreach programs for veterans this year. All of this was accomplished with no additional funding from the university. The costs associated with the Veterans’ Initiative were covered by various private donations.

**Assessment Data**

Overall total client counseling hours: 1,231 (1,118 hours individual therapy; 22 hours couples therapy; 20 hours mandated assessments; 54 hours crisis contact; 17 hours emergency evaluations)
Total clients: 152 (143 undergraduate students, 9 graduate students)
Overall total outreach contacts: 1,211; Hours spent on outreach: 124.5
Overall staff/faculty consultation hours: 32
Other clinical hours, including conferences, supervision, outreach, and training = 256
Overall total client counseling hours includes individual therapy, crisis intervention, and emergency evaluations. Client satisfaction and learning assessment surveys were used to assess the extent to which students were satisfied with the services they received and the ethnic distribution:

- **Ethnicity**
  - African American: 27%
  - Hispanic/Latina: 7%
  - Asian/Pacific Islander: 1%
  - Multi-ethnic: 2%
  - Prefer not to answer: 1%
  - White (not of Hispanic origin): 62%

- **Gender**
  - Male: 19%
  - Female: 80%
  - No data provided: 1%

- **Residence Status**
  - Resident: 47%
  - Commuter: 47%
  - No data provided: 6%

- **Class Standing**
  - Undergraduate: 94%
  - Graduate: 6%
The extent to which counseling helped students achieve GCU’s Institutional Student Learning Goals. Surveys were administered to students after completion of their treatment in the fall and at the completion of their treatment in the spring.

### Highlights of the Surveys

- Students reported that counseling was “very helpful” in remaining enrolled in school (80% in fall; 65% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling was “very helpful” in achieving academic success (40% in fall; 39% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling was “very helpful” in achieving personal goals (62% in fall; 63% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling helped them improve their ability (very much/somewhat) to study effectively (83% in fall; 81% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling helped them improve their ability (very much/somewhat) to deal with their feelings (100% in fall; 95% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling helped them improve their ability (very much/somewhat) to work effectively (88% in fall; 91% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling helped them improve their ability to think things through (very much/somewhat) (97% in fall; 91% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling helped them improve their ability to understand themselves (very much/somewhat) (97% in fall; 96% in spring).
- Students reported that counseling helped them improve their interactions with others (very much/somewhat) (96% in fall; 96% in spring).

### Challenges

- Given the lack of adequate office space, it remains a challenge to offer group therapy. Further, the ability of the Counseling Center to provide placement and supervision to graduate student trainees is severely limited, as there is no space for trainees to work. Both the provision of group therapy and the provision of placement and supervision of trainees are goals of the Counseling Center, so the lack of adequate space limits the center’s ability to fulfill its mission.
- Increasing demand for services and an increased level of student pathology presents another challenge. Almost one in five students (19%) entered treatment on psychotropic medication, and almost one in three students (30%) finished treatment on psychotropic medication. More students presented for treatment (135 in 2013–2014 AY versus 152 in 2014–2015 AY), an increase of 13%. Increased levels of PESS screening this year (13 PESS screenings resulting in 8 inpatient admissions in 2014–2015 AY, versus 8 PESS screenings resulting in 4 inpatient admissions in 2013–2014 AY) indicate the extremely high level of risk carried by 9% of Counseling Center clients. Almost twice as many students entered treatment this year in the “Serious-Significant Impairment” categories than last year (19% in 2014–2015 AY versus 11% in 2013–2014 AY).
- The overall increase in demand for services and the increasing number of high-risk clients, coupled with a decrease in budget for psychiatric coverage ($10,625 in 2014–2015 AY versus $12,000 in 2013–2014 AY) is a poor risk management strategy and negatively impacts the treatment of students.
- If the Veterans’ Initiative is to continue under the auspices of the Counseling Center, the university will need to provide adequate resources to support it, rather than relying solely on private donations.
The Academic Development and Support Center (ADSC) provides a myriad of services including peer tutoring, disabilities services, The Learning Connection (TLC), and academic advising. There was an initial increase of 137% in the number of students enrolled in TLC due to the inclusion of “provisionally” admitted students. Due to the increase in TLC enrollment, two part-time employees were hired as academic development and support specialists to accommodate the needs of the students enrolled in the program.

Testing accommodations totaled 636 during the year, which was a 17% increase from the 2013–2014 AY. Professional tutoring and coaching hours offered to students in the TLC program increased by 43% in the 2014–2015 AY from the previous academic year. There were 163 director interventions for ADA issues, which reflected a 12% increase from the 2013–2014 AY. TLC student cumulative GPAs increased by 49% from fall to spring, with 62% of students with a cumulative GPA greater than 2.6. There were 169 Accuplacer tests administered in the ADSC. This test will still be used for social work majors and as a challenge exam but will no longer serve as the Praxis I for education majors. The staff assistant has been offered training for Accuplacer and arranges ADSC proctoring of exams.

Peer tutoring has been coordinated by two graduate assistants serving as tutor coordinators, who have assisted with training and managing of peer tutors. There have been a total of 843 hours of peer tutoring this year performed by 29 peer tutors (from 14 at the beginning of the Fall 2014 semester) and one professional tutor. A total of 128 courses were covered by peer tutors for the 2014–2015 AY. The tutor coordinators have conducted ongoing assessment of the peer tutoring program through surveys. Peer tutors have formed a cohesive group and have been included in all ADSC activities. Those activities totaled 10 events, planned by all ADSC staff and all student populations in ADSC (TLC, peer tutors, and tutees). They have also implemented a reward and strike system. There has been an ongoing discussion with the director of residence life and the director of the Honors Program about adding peer tutoring to residence halls, which we will be implemented in the 2015–2016 AY.
The academic advisor held 128 advising contacts with undeclared majors, 94 contacts with international students, and 128 contacts with other majors during the 2014–AY15 AY culminating in a total of 438 contacts. Additionally, the advisor hosted workshops on topics such as time management, career pathways, and course sequencing and selection. By the end of freshman year, 92% undeclared students declared a major. The academic advisor has also served as the outreach person for the dual admissions program in collaboration with Brookdale Community College, of which 75% were retained. Both group and individual training sessions were also offered to faculty members by the academic advisor.

Assessment Data

- The number of TLC students increased by 89% for the 2014–2015 AY, which exceeded the goal of 40%. This was due to the addition of conditionally admitted students.
- There were 2,170 hours of professional tutoring in the 2014–2015 AY in the TLC program—fall semester = 1197.5 hours; spring semester = 972.5.
- The results of professional tutoring/coaching continue to correlate with high performance and retention. Students report that services offered through the ADSC provide a strong support system, both academically and personally.
- Midterm reports show favorable outcomes for TLC and conditional admits—fall semester A/B range = 54%; spring semester A/B range = 60%.

GPAs in 2014–2015 AY of TLC and conditionally admitted students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2014 Semester</th>
<th>Spring 2015 Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73% conditional admits GPA ≥ 2.5</td>
<td>75% conditional admits GPA ≥ 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56% ≥ 3.0</td>
<td>33% ≥ 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20% &lt; 2.5</td>
<td>42% &lt; 2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall cumulative GPAs increased 49% from the Fall 2014 semester to the Spring 2015 semester.

Challenges

There is a lack of adequate and appropriate space in the ADSC to accommodate students’ privacy, tutoring, and testing accommodations. The space issues are most evident during times of high-volume testing.
SUPPORT SERVICES
The 2014–2015 year was the last year in the TRIO five-year grant cycle. Consequently, an ample amount of time was spent during the fall semester gathering data and writing and submitting the proposal for the grant competition for the 2015–2020 cycle. Another major accomplishment was the submission to the Department of Education of the Annual Performance Report for 2013–2014 during the fall semester. A search was conducted to hire a director for the program, but was unsuccessful. During the spring semester, each staff member was required to participate in professional development courses to become certified academic coaches. A total of 26 students graduated from the program and 13 new students were inducted into the National TRIO Honor Society.

Key Highlights

• Over 1,900 hours of tutoring were completed by peer and professional staff. The Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) was fully implemented to provide additional support for participants on academic probation for the university or may have had a low term GPA (2.0 or below) and identified by TRIO-Student Support Services.

• The use of noncognitive assessment tests to measure what students know by evaluating what they can do and how they deal with a wide range of problems in different contexts; counsel and advise students in ways that consider their culture, race, and gender; and utilizing data about what students know and are able to do are critical for guiding changes that are needed in institutional as well as TRIO policies and practices to improve student learning and success. These assessments include the Highlands Ability Battery, Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) and the Visual, Aural, Read/Write and Kinesthetic Sensory (VARK). The director has used these assessments along with students’ SAT/ACT scores to assist newly admitted participants with outlining their Individual Student Plans (ISP).

• Academic coaching modalities were implemented to work with participants on the AIP this academic year. The goals were to shift ownership of their academic missteps onto the students themselves as they made plans to get back on track and remain focused, utilizing their acquired skillsets to persist toward graduation.

• Seven workshops were presented during the fall and spring semester. Boosting Your GPA, our most popular workshop, was also conducted one-on-one during the year. TRIO-SSS also collaborated with the Office of Financial Aid, the Office of Graduate Admissions and the Office of Career Services to offer relevant workshops.

• The Supplemental Grant Aid (fall and spring) Committee met to discuss applicants’ essays and the tentative disbursement of award amounts. All participants awarded received financial literacy coaching and applied awards towards their outstanding bill and/or residence hall room deposit. Additional funding was made available at the end of the academic year to assist additional participants to ensure that they were able to return in the Fall 2015 semester.
Assessment Data

2014–2015 Annual Performance Review (APR) Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Approved Rate</th>
<th>Actual Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Academic Standing</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funded Number Served</td>
<td>160 (100%)</td>
<td>151 (94%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persistence includes the percentage of all participants served by the TRIO-SSS program in the reporting year who enroll at the grantee institution in the fall semester of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor’s degree during the reporting year. The calculation rules for the persistence rate are as follows:

- The denominator is the greater of the number to be served or the number served from project’s approved objectives. For the 2014–2015 AY, the denominator used is 151.
- The numerator is derived from those enrolled at the beginning of the next academic year. For the 2014–2015 AY, the numerator used to calculate the above is 146.

Good Academic Standing is calculated based on the greater of the number of participants funded to serve or the number of participants served minus those new summer participants that did not earn college credit. A summer program was not offered; therefore, it was not computed. The following calculation was used for the 2014–2015 AY.

- The denominator is the greater of number to be served or the number served from the program’s approved objective. Participant statuses are new and continuing students. For the 2014–2015 AY, the denominator used is 151.
- The numerator is derived from Good Academic Standing and is the sum of all participants served who were in good standing as per GCU’s Good Academic Standing of 2.0 GPA or better. For 2014–2015, the numerator used for the above calculations is 140.

2014–2015 Senior Exit Survey

This year, instead of asking graduating seniors to complete two surveys, we incorporated the programmatic survey into the Senior Exit to increase the response rate. As a result, the response rate for completing either the online or paper version of the Senior Exit was 85% (23 out of 27 participants). One survey was not included in the results because it was incomplete. The results included one student who was expected to graduate in August 2015.

Twenty-one students (91%) are from New Jersey and the remaining 2 students (9%) are from outside the state. We were provided contact information for all graduating seniors and their non-GCU e-mail addresses.

In terms of graduation, 3 students (13%) of participants graduated in December; 19 students (83%) of TRIO-SSS participants graduated in May; while 1 (13%) was expected to finish his degree requirements in August 2015.

The majority of students (19 or 81%) in this particular class have spent three to five years as an active member of the TRIO-SSS program. The earlier a student applied and was accepted
into the program, the more likelihood he or she will utilized services and graduate within six years. The services most utilized (duplicate counts) were tutoring (22 or 96%); computer lab usage (18 or 78%); walk-in writing lab, and academic advising, which included coaching, course and degree planning, and post-graduation/graduate school planning (the latter two both at 18 or 65%).

Many of the graduating seniors attended workshops with one-on-one follow-up meetings with staff, including Graduate School Preparation, Securing Additional Financial Aid Outside of GCU, Improving Study Skills, and other workshops, as well as other grant-approved services that are highlighted below.

Which one of the following services have you utilized? (Check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Respondent %</th>
<th>Response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>60.87%</td>
<td>11.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>47.83%</td>
<td>9.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>95.65%</td>
<td>18.80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>47.83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
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<td>12.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>65.22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>39.13%</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.70%</td>
<td>1.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 Respondents
117 Responses