UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

NEW STUDENT & FAMILY PROGRAMS

Program Review Committee Response

Overview

New Student & Family Programs (NSFP) extends its sincerest thanks to all the members of its Program Review Committee for completing such a thorough review of its self-study.

Committee Recommendations

The program review committee focuses its recommendations on the following areas:

1. Review the special challenges presented by orientation programs for international and transfers students to strengthen those programs and improve the integration of international and transfer students into the life of the university.
2. Working with appropriate university partners, NSFP should review the lines of responsibility and support for the Student Ambassadors. These students carry out various functions, including offering student tours and representing the university at public functions, that fall outside the mission of New Student & Family Programs. It seems odd to have the department bear financial responsibility for functions that exceed its mission.
3. Attend to access issues both in moving forward with proposed renovations to the program’s workspaces but also in advocating within the university to assure that facilities used during orientation programs are accessible for all.

Responses to these recommendations are included in the related areas below.

MISSION

An interviewee recommended extending the mission of NSFP to work with new students throughout their first year at Pacific to address a lack of retention of the information given to them at orientation. This would help meet the CAS standard for helping students to be ready for the responsibilities and fully understanding the opportunities available to them on this campus. It was also recommended that the mission be reviewed to ensure that the special challenges of international and transfer student orientation are recognized. Ambassadors felt that although they understand and knew the mission statement, it was not adequately presented to them or made clear or emphasized during their training. This may help make sure all employees are on the same page as the professional staff and help orientation fully live up to the standards of the New Student and Family Programs mission statement.

NSFP Response:
- Typically, it is the Student Advisors who remain in contact with the new students who participated in Orientation. However, there has been discussion with Joanna Royce-Davis, Dean of Students, and Lynn King, Assistant Vice President for Student Life to have the Pacific Ambassadors continue this relationship with their orientation groups through their
first year, as a way to provide additional support. Ways to implement this informal interaction are being explored.
  o NSFP commits to developing a model for this plan beginning Fall 2013.
• NSFP will review its overall Mission and suggest to the University it consider additional services to international and transfer student populations.
  o NSFP commits to reviewing its Mission as a department, with student, faculty and staff input during FY14.
• Ambassadors are presented with the mission statement several times during their first year training program and at the annual retreat in February. However, it appears new methods for understanding and retention must be explored.
  o NSFP commits to developing a new format for sharing its Mission with both newbie & oldie Ambassadors. A student committee will be formed in Fall 2013 to suggest ways to accomplish this process.

PROGRAM

Program Review Committee Recommendations:
1. Strengthen program offerings for new transfer students and new international students.
2. Increase staffing to support additional programming (off-site orientations, welcome week programming, etc.)
3. Further investigate the feasibility of students taking placement exams prior to attending orientation.
4. Review the timing of testing and other aspects of International Student Orientation to improve quality of orientation programs for international students.
5. Although it is not recommended that NSFP assume responsibility for graduate studies orientations, it is recommended that the orientation task force, chaired by NSFP Director, include graduate student orientation needs in its agenda and charge OR that graduate studies form an orientation committee that could address graduate studies concerns regarding orientation.

NSFP Response:
• Review of Transfer Orientation is underway. A special focus group was formed in the spring of 2013 to assist in determining ways of better meeting transfer student needs.
  o NSFP commits to developing a model for this plan beginning Summer 2013 and continue improving these services on an ongoing basis.
• The Orientation Task Force has begun more conscious efforts in working together to provide ways to better service our International student population.
  o NSFP will continue to encourage International Programs & Services to conduct a more aggressive action in developing a plan to serve our International students.
  o NSFP Director chairs the Orientation Task Force and will make sure this stays on the forefront of topics to be discussed.
  o The biggest hurdle is lack of funds for extended programing.
• If the University approves additional staffing for the department, NSFP will begin additional programing in the areas of off-site orientations, welcome week activities, summer send off events with Admissions and Alumni.
The possibility and feasibility of students taking placement exams prior to attending orientation is an ongoing dilemma. This spring an additional effort of reaching out to students shortly after they confirm to provide them with ways to take these exams early has been implemented.

NSFP began consulting with the Graduate Studies (GS) Department in 2010 about ways to improve their orientation program. The GS Department has been included in the Student Portal meetings. The GS Department also attends the Orientation Task Force meetings; however, NSFP has suggested that the GS program form their own task force because of the specific needs and faculty/staff differences. At one point, the Task Force did have GS Orientation as part of its monthly agenda, but because of the difference in needs and faculty/staff the appropriate people were not in the room, emphasizing the need for a GS Task Force.

ORGANIZATION and LEADERSHIP

The Council of Associate and Assistant Deans (CAAD) were very positive about the organizational and leadership structure of NSFP. In particular, they commended the director’s leadership in developing, preparing, and implementing New Student Orientation programs. CAAD plays an integral role in both New Student Orientation and Advising. They did recommend an evaluation of the International Student Orientation and placement testing. The office of International Programs and Services leads International Student Orientation. Members of CAAD felt that placement occurs almost immediately as soon as international students arrive at Pacific, a period of intense acclimation to a new environment and culture. This may not be the optimal time for testing to provide a reliable estimate of international students’ skills. CAAD recommends evaluating the International Student Orientation program in collaboration with NSFP to improve the timing of placement testing.

NSFP Response:

- NSFP agrees with CAAD about the recommendations and need for better service to our International student population. Two issues need to be overcome:
  - Lack of funds for extended programming
  - NSFP is not in charge of either International Programs or Placement Exams.

ETHICS

Review Committee Recommendations:
1. NSFP should continue their extensive training when new staff are hired and keep staff up to date on resources that are available to students.
2. Professional and student staff should continue to stay up to date and follow the NODA ethical standards.
3. Continue to address the budget deficit to ensure that NSFP operates efficiently and ethically.

NSFP Response:

- NSFP commits to continuing the extensive training of new staff, both profession and student staff.
• NSFP commits to following the NODA ethical standards and making sure these standards are reviewed on an annual basis with all professional and student staff.
• NSFP continues to address the budget deficit, ensuring that operations are run efficiently and ethically.

**LAW, POLICY, and GOVERNANCE**

*Review Committee Recommendations:*
1. NSFP should use the standard confidentiality agreement forms provided by HR, with a specific explanation provided to Student Ambassadors or Student Managers regarding how confidentiality applies to their responsibilities.

*NSFP Response:*
• NSFP will insure that the standard confidentiality agreement forms will be reviewed by HR and updated annually.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, and ACCESS**

*Review Committee Recommendations:*
1. NSFP should explore and implement additional recruitment methods for Student Ambassadors to develop a cadre of Student Ambassadors more representative of the composition of the student body.
2. NSFP should advocate for better campus infrastructure and resources to provide suitable access for students with disabilities, including additional courtesy carts, improved assistive technology, etc.
3. NSFP should use Student Ambassador results from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to assess Student Ambassador’s intercultural development.

*NSFP Response:*
• NSFP is currently exploring additional recruitment methods for Pacific Ambassadors and will implement these methods beginning Fall 2013.
• NSFP will partner with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to develop a better campus infrastructure and resources for students with disabilities.
• Intercultural Development Inventory is currently and will continue to be used to assess Pacific Ambassador’s intercultural development.

**INSTITUTIONAL and EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

*Review Committee Recommendations:*
1. Work with university officials to transfer responsibility to Admissions to pay for staff salaries for campus tours given to prospective students and local schools.
2. The university should provide additional support to help pay for operations in the Welcome Center.
3. Add additional funds for an internship or graduate assistantship in NSFP to assist with communication, publications, branding, and marketing to parents and families of Pacific students and to improve external relations within the Stockton community.

**NSFP Response:**
- NSFP has worked with Budget & Finance to develop a plan to cover the ongoing deficit and current debt.
  - Budget & Finance approved the additional budget items for Campus Tours and Welcome Center Operations.
    - Admissions will receive the addition for Tours and has agreed to reimburse NSFP for these expenses.
- NSFP would WELCOME the addition of a Graduate Assistant and believes that it would be a valuable asset to the MA in Educational Administration and Leadership with Student Affairs Emphasis program.
  - The biggest hurdle is lack of funds for this addition.

**FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

**Review Committee Recommendations:**
1. Establish a strategy to address the need for growth in specific program areas (transfer student, international student, welcome week activities);
2. Seek compensation for support to operate the year-round function of the University Welcome Center and events outside of the scope of NSFP mission – special events, hosting dignitaries, and yield events.
3. Determine a departmental budget to support stable programmatic funds; for renovations; for adequate support for staffing that had been cut to meet the budget deficit; for technology upgrades.

**NSFP Response:**
- NSFP will continue to investigate strategies to address the need for growth and improvement in all program areas. Lack of funding and additional budget makes this difficult to achieve.
- NSFP has worked with Budget & Finance to develop a plan to cover the ongoing deficit and current debt.
  - Budget & Finance approved the additional budget items for Campus Tours and Welcome Center Operations.
    - Admissions will receive the addition for Tours and has agreed to reimburse NSFP for these expenses.
  - NSFP will recharge all departments utilizing the Pacific Ambassadors.
- A Departmental budget to support stable program funds has been developed.
  - Additional funds will be needed for renovations to office space and for technology upgrades.
**TECHNOLOGY**

OIT emphasized two areas, which they believe would improve the Orientation Program:

1. Minimize or eliminate testing during orientation. It is difficult to schedule computing labs for on-campus testing. The labs must have compatible software, not be in use by classes, and lie in close proximity to locations hosting other orientation events. OIT would like to see more online testing done prior to arriving on campus for orientation, with an explanation to new students of the importance of taking these tests.

2. Address late admissions of students, such as those entering in the spring, international student and student athletes. Banner records may not be updated in time to have the proper information displayed when students access the portal, and correcting this is time-consuming. These late admits also impact finding housing, securing financial aid, and entering transcripts.

**NSFP Response:**
- The possibility and feasibility of students taking placement exams prior to attending orientation is an ongoing dilemma. This spring an additional effort of reaching out to students shortly after they confirm to provide them with ways to take these exams early has been implemented. Because NSFP is not in charge of placement exams it is difficult to oversee this process.
- NSFP struggles with late admits, as well. This is an Admission decision.

**FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

**Review Committee Recommendations:**

1. Due to the physical limitations imposed by the lack of large meeting spaces, the program review committee commends NSFP for their ability to build, retain, and utilize campus partnerships to reserve the necessary facilities to fulfill its mission and goals.

2. NSFP should continue to pursue planned renovations and that the funding required for these renovations be granted.

**NSFP Response:**
- The renovation of the Welcome Center is slated to take place over Winter Break 2013.
- Additional funds will be needed for renovations to office space and for technology upgrades.

**ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

**Review Committee Recommendations:** The Review Committee commends the New Student & Family Programs Department for its commitment to thorough and effective practices of assessment and evaluation, and makes the following recommendations:

1. NSFP should make more extensive use of direct assessment of student learning, both for new students participating in orientation sessions and for Student Ambassador trainees.

2. The survey completed by students at the conclusion of orientation should be reviewed with a view to assuring that students can indicate not just whether they have learned something about the university but how much they have learned.
3. Appropriate university governance bodies should consider the appropriate roles of the offices of Institutional Research and Information Technology in supporting NSFP’s assessment and evaluation efforts.

NSFP Response:

- New survey tools are being developed and implemented for orientations during Summer 2013.
  - “Tiger Tracks” has been expanded to collect more data about PacWell and Academic Advising.
  - The online survey completed at the conclusion of orientation will be extended to include specific questions about various sessions and will also provide space to gather information about “how much” students learn during orientation.
- Beginning Summer 2014 Institutional Research will again support the Orientation assessment surveys.