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USC - Beaufort

Accountability Report

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA - BEAUFORT

Introduction

This summary report for the University of South Carolina Beaufort includes: **Academic Advising; Entry-level Placement and Developmental Education; Administrative and Financial Processes.**

The following remaining components will be submitted to the Commission of Higher Education by the date annotated: **General Education (2000), Transfer Student Success (1998); Undergraduate Retention and Attrition (1998); Student Development (1999); Library Resources and Services (2000); Facilities (1998); and Public Service (1999).**

The components which are reported this year are at the core of USCB's mission:

Academic Advising: The USCB community has made critical commitments to quality advising; as the results of this assessment indicate. Indeed, the most significant application of these positive assessment findings will be their reinforcement of constructive advisement efforts. But while we will not allow strengths to go unrecognized, we will not ignore potential weaknesses in this critical area. Research has shown that retention, graduation rates, academic achievement and even students' personal lives are all improved with the increased involvement of faculty members in the advisement process. Why is this so? Retention is influenced by many things: 1) **Perception of Campus Quality:** Students make judgements about campus life based on four factors, primarily: quality of instruction, availability of faculty for consultation, freedom to contact faculty for consultation, and faculty involvement outside of the classroom. Of these four, three are related directly to advisement! 2) **Personal Utility:** Lee Noel identifies the components of a "staying environment:" student progress toward his or her educational goal, academic success, clear program options, and availability of advising. Again, all of these factors are greatly influenced by the advising process. 3) **Social/psychological factors:** The sense of belonging--so greatly influenced by advisement--is even more at issue at regional campuses, with a predominance of freshmen and sophomores, many of whom have low levels of academic preparation and identity.

Developmental Coursework: An important aspect of USC Beaufort's mission is to serve students who may not have been able to gain admission to the University for academic, financial or geographic reasons. USCB faculty and staff are engaging in intensive sessions to develop an infrastructure for academic assistance in the absence of developmental courses on campus. In any case, USCB plans to build on the strengths of its developmental laboratory. The USCB Academic Success Center is, indeed, a noteworthy example of USCB's commitment to students and all of their developmental needs.

Administrative and Financial Processes: In early spring, 1997, a campus-wide TQM training program was launched. This year the TQM Team is focusing on the bookstore (improving textbook availability, reducing inventory, passing on savings.) At this writing, four (4) meetings have taken place with the participation of all five Division Heads, all three Associate Deans, a student representative, and others. The Dean initiated the meetings by challenging the TQM team to bring about efficient, effective, quality service to our students and directed the development of a flow chart. The process has already born some fruit: a system of color-coding book order status (green, yellow, red) has resulted which improves internal communication. These represent only the first steps of an ongoing-process as we continue to apply TQM principles to **other key processes.** Lessons learned will be applied to further process improvements elsewhere. To determine *which* key processes will undergo these efforts, the

USCB Strategic Quality Plan will be developed which will prioritize key processes for future application of the TQM method, building expertise as we apply the approach from one key process to another.

1. General Education

This component was reported on last in 1996. Based on the Schedule of Reporting, this component is scheduled for reporting next in the year 2000.

2. Majors And Concentrations

This component is not applicable to our institutional type.

3. Performance Of Professional Program Graduates On Licensing And Certification Exams

This component is not applicable to our institution.

4. Reports Of Program Changes That Have Occurred As A Result Of External Program Evaluation

There have been no program changes in 1996 as a result of external program evaluations.

5. Academic Advising

Definition: Academic Advising is defined as the formal, cooperative, interactive process involving students and faculty and staff that empowers students to (1) identify appropriate academic goals, (2) select programs of study to support their career and academic goals, and (3) benefit from campus support services.

Indicators:

..related to the Advisor-Advisee relationship : (From a self-report survey items.)

- **Alumni** satisfaction with "Quality of Academic Advising."
- **Alumni** perceptions of "Availability of Faculty Advisors."
- **Currently enrolled students'** satisfaction with "Quality of Academic Advising."
- **Currently enrolled students'** perceptions of "Availability of Faculty Advisors."

Indicators of various specific aspects of the advisement process: (From surveys.)

- Number of meetings required to register for Spring '97 semester ("last semester" for Alumni)
- Convenience of meeting time for students
- Reliability of Advisors in meeting all appointments

..related to administrative aspects of advisement: (from survey, except as noted)

- **Alumni** reports on the process by which students are notified of advisor's name, location, etc.
- **Currently enrolled students'** perception of this advisor notification process.
- Material support for advisement process
- Percentage of students properly assigned to advisors (from Director of Advisement)

..related to other out-of-class academic support: from survey

- Reported satisfaction of **alumni** and with Access to Academic Support
- Reported satisfaction of **currently enrolled students** with Access to Academic Support

Assessment Methods:

- Alumni Survey:
- Student Survey:
- Records of Advisor Assignments

TQM Team (Preliminary)

Assessment Results:

Results of the "satisfaction" items on the Spring 1997 Alumni Survey (of 1993-94 graduates) are given below.

Alumni (1993-94 graduates surveyed in Spring 1997)	Quality of Academic Advisor		Acceptability of Academic Advisor		Access to Academic Support Services		Process for notifying you of your advisor's name, location, etc.	
	All	Valid	All	Valid	All	Valid	All	Valid
Very Satisfied	64%	64%	72%	72%	32%	47%	56%	61%
Satisfied	16%	16%	12%	12%	16%	24%	12%	13%
Somewhat Satisfied	0%	0%	8%	8%	12%	18%	8%	9%
	12%	12%	4%	4%	4%	6%	12%	13%
Dissatisfied	8%	8%	4%	4%	4%	8%	4%	4%
Very Dissatisfied	0%		0%		32%		8%	
N	25	25	25	25	25	17	25	23

Results of the "satisfaction" items on Spring 1997 Survey of currently-enrolled students are given below:

Currently-enrolled students (surveyed in Spring 1997)	Quality of Academic Advising		Acceptability of Academic Advisor		Access to Academic Support Services		Process for notifying you of your advisor's name, location, etc.	
	All	Valid	All	Valid	All	Valid	All	Valid
Very Satisfied	38%	41%	33%	35%	33%	38%	34%	39%
Satisfied	40%	43%	42%	45%	40%	46%	37%	43%
Dissatisfied	7%	8%	10%	11%	10%	11%	9%	10%
Very Dissatisfied	9%	9%	9%	9%	4%	5%	9%	10%
Does Not Apply	7%		6%		13%		11%	
N	258	240	256	240	248	216	160	143

If the alumni survey results must be read with caution due to the small sample size, it is illustrative to see that its results are corroborated by the survey of currently-enrolled students: Again, approximately 80% of the students seem **very satisfied** or **satisfied** with the advisement at USCB.

- Eighty-three percent (83%) were satisfied with the **quality** of academic advising.
- Eighty percent (80%) of the students expressed satisfaction with the **availability** of the academic advisor.
- Eighty percent (80%) of the students expressed satisfaction with the notification process.

Of course, USCB still has room for improvement. (See "Use of Assessment Findings.") The following data examine advisement processes and other qualitative issues in detail:

Meetings -- frequency, convenience and reliability

To ensure that we replicate the success, we need to understand and build upon current constructive practices. We analyzed the number of meetings reported for a single semester's advisement. We found that the number of meetings varied greatly, and this in itself was not necessarily a cause for dissatisfaction among students.

Indeed, these statistics suggested that all USCB faculty advisors take their job seriously:

- Thirty-eight percent (38%) of current students were involved in multiple meetings with their advisor prior to their last semester.
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of current students responding to the item reported that scheduling a meeting with their advisor was convenient.
- Ninety-seven percent (97%) of current students responding to the item reported that their advisor met "all scheduled appointments" with them.

Materials available

Other aspects of the advisement process warranting assessment are outside the dynamics of the advisor-advisee relationship, but rather the responsibility of Records, Admissions, and the Academic Dean. These involve primarily the provision of needed materials to support the process. A thorough assessment of the advisement process must address these, as well. The surveys of the (170) currently-enrolled students indicates **very positive** results: Only 2.9% of students checked that SCHEDULES were not available. 2.4% of students checked that TRANSCRIPTS were not available. 4.1% of students checked that WORK RECORDS were not available. 3.5% of students checked that USCB BULLETINS were not available. 8.2% of students checked that OTHER information was not available. (See Full Report for list.)

Completeness of Information Communicated

A key indicator of advisement success is student understanding.

- 90.5% of the students indicated they knew what "courses are required of my degree program."
- 67.1% attributed knowing major coursework to their ADVISOR
20.3% attributed knowing major coursework to the BULLETIN
19% attributed knowing required coursework to OTHER sources. (See Full Report for list.)

Percentage of Assigned Students

One indicator -- the number of students without assigned advisors -- demonstrates our use of assessment findings. As a result of constant monitoring, no USCB students are without assigned advisors:

Unassigned Advisees: March 28, 1994 435; June 6, 1994 620; June 23, 1994 456; September 19, 1994 85; January 3, 1995 32; May 17, 1995 0; August 20, 1995 0; January 3, 1996 0; May 15, 1996 0; August 25, 1996 0; January 4, 1997 0; May 20, 1997 0.

Use of Assessment Findings:

The most significant application of these assessment findings will be their reinforcement of constructive advisement efforts. The USCB community has made critical commitments to advising; as the results of this report indicate. While we will not ignore identified weaknesses, we will not allow strengths to go unrecognized.

In early spring, 1997, a campus-wide TQM training program was launched. Applying the "Juran" approach, we are selectively addressing key processes for the establishment of TQM teams. Resulting from the campus-wide TQM sessions this year is a TQM team focusing initially on the service of our bookstore. Lessons learned will be applied to further process improvements elsewhere. To determine which key processes will undergo these efforts, the USCB Strategic Quality Plan will be developed which will identify key processes and prioritize resource allocation for quality improvements.

While the initial TQM team focus is on bookstore operations (Improving book availability, passing savings on to students and faculty, reducing inventory, etc.) the grander vision is to learn how to apply TQM principles to other key processes. The next choice for this focus is the advisement process.

In the campus-wide TQM training session, USCB personnel in charge of registration, admissions and advisement formed a preliminary TQM subcommittee. This subcommittee will meet again at the end of the summer, 1997, to address the issues raised by the data represented in this assessment.

6. Entry-level Placement And Developmental Education

Definition:

Entry Level Skills are those minimum skills required to undertake and succeed in college coursework. At USC Beaufort, these are determined by two means:

1) Placement tests are given prior to the beginning of each semester in English, Math, French, Spanish, and German. In English, USC Beaufort uses a writing sample evaluation rated by the members of the full-time English faculty.

2) A "predicted GPA" is calculated on the basis of SAT/ACT scores and high school transcripts. Students entering USC Beaufort with a predicted GPA of less than 2.00 (on a 4.00 scale) are designated as "Branch," or conditional, students.

Through this year, entering students that did not demonstrate preparation for college-level work according to these two measures were placed into developmental courses at USC Beaufort.

Developmental Courses include: English 100, Math 100, Reading (UCAM) 100 and University 101, a student orientation course. Branch (conditional) students are required to take all four developmental courses, although they are offered the opportunity to "place out" of developmental Math and English courses. Students with low math placement scores are required to take Math 100; English 100 is required of students with low writing sample evaluations.

Indicators and Assessment Methods:

Several methodologies are instituted to judge effectiveness of placement and remedial courses at USC Beaufort. With the help of USC Columbia tracking data, USC Beaufort is able to analyze its placement and developmental processes quantitatively and comprehensively.

1. To determine effectiveness of *placement* devices, USC Beaufort analyzes the failure rate of students assigned to remedial courses. Study of the failure rate in the developmental courses should indicate if students **were properly placed in programs below entry-level.**

2. To evaluate the effectiveness of *developmental* classes, we analyze the success rate of developmental students in their subsequent classes:

The grades of students passing **English 100** are observed one year later in **English 101**;

The grades of students passing **Math 100** are observed in subsequent math courses;

The GPA of students passing **Reading 100** are observed in the following semester.

Also, currently-enrolled students were surveyed on their satisfaction with these courses.

3. Anecdotal evidence also serves as feedback on the effectiveness of developmental programs.

Assessment Results:

In reviewing the effectiveness of placement methods as well as developmental courses at USC Beaufort, we drew upon data on student grade performance in the developmental courses and in courses subsequent to the developmental course:

In Fall '95 English 100:

One year later:

3 Failed

>>

these 3 had not attempted English 101

26 Passed >> 12 had not attempted English 101
1 failed English 101
13 passed English 101

In Fall '95 Mathematics 100: **One year later:**

10 Failed >> 4 failed subsequent mathematics course
4 did not attempt subsequent mathematics courses
2 passed subsequent mathematics course
2 failed subsequent computer science course

33 Passed >> 2 failed subsequent mathematics course
14 had not attempted subsequent mathematics courses
17 passed subsequent mathematics
1 passed subsequent computer science course
2 failed subsequent computer science course

In Fall '95 Reading 100: **In the Next Semester (Spring '96):**

3 Passed >> 1 had Cumulative GPA below 2.00
2 had Cumulative GPA above 2.00

>> 1 had Spring Semester GPA's below 2.00
2 had Spring Semester GPA's above 2.00

Except in the case of UCAM 100, where the small sample does not make conclusive results, study of the progression charted above suggests two hypothesis:

- Significant failure rate in the developmental courses suggests that many of the **students were properly placed** in programs below entry-level.
- The high success rate of those students who passed the developmental courses suggests **effectiveness of the developmental courses** themselves.

Survey findings.

- Of the 100+ students sampled and surveyed during registration, one third (33.7%) had taken English 100. 50% of the students who reported taking English 100 found it "Very Helpful," 29% found it "Helpful," and 21% found it "not so helpful."
- Of the sample, over one third (36.7%) had taken Math 100. 59% of the students who reported taking Math 100 found it "Very Helpful," 31% found it "Helpful," and 10% found it "not so helpful."
- Of the sample, only 15% had taken UCAM 120. 36% of the students who reported taking Reading 120 found it "Very Helpful," 36% found it "Helpful," and 27% found it "not so helpful."

Use of Assessment Findings:

In the anticipated absence of these courses, USCB faculty and staff are engaging in intensive sessions to develop an infrastructure for academic assistance. Several alternatives are being considered, including a TRIO grant under submission. In any case, USCB plans to build on the strengths of its developmental laboratory. Indeed, the USCB Academic Success Center is a noteworthy example of USCB's commitment to develop underprepared students.

Realizing that developmental education is a state of transition, it may still be useful to take a quick look at our experience and the literature as we are making the change to address the mandate. The data above, which compares student performance in the developmental courses and (later) the performance of that cohort in courses subsequent to the developmental course, have been presented to the USCB faculty and staff (Please see newsletter attached to full report on file at CHE.)

Success Of Entering Students In Meeting College Or University Admissions Prerequisites

Percentage of New Freshmen Who Met All Prerequisites for College Admission

	1994	1995	1996
All Freshmen	88.9	88.8	97.4
S. C. Residents	91.3	90.4	97.3
Non-Residents	72.3	77.5	100

8. Achievement Of Students Transferring From Two-year To Four-year Institution

This component is not applicable to our institution type.

9. Analyses Of Undergraduate Retention And Attrition

This component was reported on last in 1994. Based on the Schedule of Reporting, this component will be reported on next in 1998.

10. Minority Student And Faculty Access And Equity

Ratio of Black Full-Time (F.T.) Faculty to Total Full-Time Faculty

Fall Semester	Total F.T. Faculty	Black F.T. Faculty Number	Black F.T. Faculty Percent
1992	24	1	4.1
1993	25	1	4.0
1994	27	1	3.7
1995	24	1	4.2
1996	25	1	4.0

11. Academic Performance Of Student Athletes

This component is not applicable to this campus.

12. Procedures For Student Development

This component was reported on last in 1996. Based on the Schedule of Reporting, this component will be reported on next in 1999.

13. Library Resources And Services

This component was reported on last in 1996. Based on the Schedule of Reporting, this component will be reported on next in 2000.

14. Administrative And Financial Processes And Performance

Definition: Borrowing from the NACUBO Small University/College Initiative, this report explores performance data in seven core areas cover the analysis of this component and are defined as follows: **Administrative Processes** are those institutional systems and routines that enable the institution to carry out its business and meet the needs of those it serves. **Financial Processes** are "Budgeting strategies and techniques that enable the institution to accomplish its mission in the most efficient manner possible."

Indicators and Methodology: Administrative. "Meeting the needs of those it serves" is the aegis of the TQM campaign on our campus this year. As we focus on service delivery and needs of our constituents, key university processes and are being analyzed one at a time. These processes are broken down into "sub-routines", charted, and scrutinized. Also informed by alumni and student **surveys**. **Faculty** concerns are deliberated through traditional means. Academic computing needs, for example, are brought to the Computer Committee. Also, faculty evaluate each of the top four campus administrators annually in an extensive **survey** (the results of which is not presented here.) **Financial:** Global financial assessment takes place continuously as USCB benchmarks its financial position against other institutions in critical income and expenditure categories. As the campus has transitioned to cost-center budgeting, feedback is monitored on timeliness and usefulness of management data, itself.

Use of Assessment Findings:

Administrative: In early spring, 1997, a campus-wide TQM training program was launched. Applying the "Juran" approach, we are selectively addressing key processes for the establishment of TQM teams: Lessons learned will be applied to further process improvements elsewhere. To determine which key processes will undergo these efforts, the USCB Strategic Quality Plan will be developed which will identify key processes and prioritize resource allocation for quality improvements.

Resulting from the campus-wide TQM sessions this year is a TQM team focusing initially on the service of our **bookstore**, in particular, improving book availability and

reducing costs for students and faculty. At this writing, four meetings have taken place involving all five Division Heads, all three Associate Deans, a student representative, and others.

In the first meeting, the group discussed its challenge: improving book availability, reducing inventory, and passing savings to students and faculty. The Dean introduced his concern that the bookstore provide efficient, effective, quality service to our students and the group expressed commitment to the goals.

The Dean directed the development of a flow chart. Subsequent discussions have focused on this chart and dealt with the mechanics of providing textbooks: improved preliminary course schedules; measurement of change orders and establishment of reduction targets; keeping the whole process electronic; better inventory control, etc. All these processes were looked at in terms of two (2) over-riding (TQM) outcomes: **decreasing defects; decreasing cycle time** (i.e., delays.) These two outcomes are derived from Motorola's TQM approach. Also, so-called "soft" indicators (e.g., **customer satisfaction measures**) are used as part of the measurement. The data reported above will serve this purpose.

Other issues have been addressed: Students returning books after the first few days of class when they perceive the professor will not use them; getting better control on the Hilton Head delivery site.

The process has already borne fruit: The flow chart has helped isolate various sub-routines for analysis and the assigning of accountability. Also, a system of color-coding book order status has resulted which improves internal communication by identifying for the bookstore manager the book orders which are more certain (ready to order) and those more tentative (which require caution and more careful analysis.)

Financial: With the assistance of the USC Computer Services Department, USCB has successfully set up a cost-center budget system, as we indicated we would do in the last (1994) report on this component. Lower-level decision making is taking place as department heads and others are getting feedback for their units and learning how to use this management information. Empowering division chairs and others to budget within their areas of responsibility increases the speed with which requests are processed and has many other benefits.

The complementary process of streamlining purchasing with "Smart Stream" software is also underway. This will enable an electronic way of ordering and processing purchases and give cost center managers even greater detail of past expenses for budgeting purposes.

While this budgeting process is being implemented, informal assessment data has been collected on this new cost-center budget arrangement. The administration will determine proper measures to assess the timeliness of the budget information and its usefulness.

15. FACILITIES

This component was reported on last in 1994. Based on the Schedule of Reporting, this component will be reported on next in 1998.

16. PUBLIC SERVICE

This component was reported on last in 1995. Based on the Schedule of Reporting, this component will be reported on next in 1999.

17. RESEARCH

This component is not applicable to this campus.