

## **2003 Institutional Effectiveness Summary Report**

### **Francis Marion University**

#### **Introduction**

The 2003 Summary Institutional Effectiveness Report (IER) for Francis Marion University contains summaries of the 2002-2003 work in the programs and areas called for by the current schedule of the SC Commission of Higher Education. Included in this summary report are IE work related to:

- Technologically Skilled Workforce
- Academic Advising
- Library Resources
- Student Services
- Alumni Survey<sup>1</sup>

#### **Ongoing Institutional Effectiveness and Research Projects**

##### *Academic Effectiveness<sup>2</sup>*

The University has continued to require in depth Institutional Effectiveness Reports of all academic programs. All academic programs completed their reports by May 30<sup>th</sup>. The reports include a statement of goal and mission, the means of assessment, the results and evaluation, improvements made on the basis of the 2001-2202 reports, and plans for improvements to be made during the 2003-2004 academic year (depending on funding). The Faculty Institutional Effectiveness Committee carried out a review of the academic Institutional Reports and found them to be acceptable. Recommendations and suggestions for changes in method, measurement, etc. were offered to authors of the reports by the Committee.

##### *Data Management and Research*

To allow for more sophisticated research the University is beginning to develop a data warehousing system that will allow greater access to data by all segments of the University. The Office of Institutional Research has been revising the existing report tables on enrollment, majors, cultural diversity, etc. into a more readable and useful format.

#### **Technologically Skilled Workforce**

Francis Marion University recognizes within its mission the essential role of higher education in economic development and has policies and procedures in place to provide technology access to its students, faculty and staff, each contributing to the provision of a technologically skilled workforce. The administration, the faculty governance structure and the academic units each play key roles in the continuous improvement of technology and training in technology skills. A required part of the University's General Education Program is demonstrated competence in use of computers. At this time all students are required to take an introductory course in computer science to insure the students are technologically literate. In addition, all academic departments continue to expand their use of interactive teaching methodologies and on-line course management, most significantly the growing use of the University's Blackboard system.

In order to more effectively manage the data generated and information provided for the University's increasingly technologically skilled workforce the office has been reorganized as the Office of Institutional Research and refocused on the development of a data based decision support system extending to every desktop in the University.

The effectiveness of technology improvements made with the technology grants monies will be assessed by the Office of Institutional Research and the Faculty Information Technology Committee.

### **Library Summary**

The Library serves the pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning by providing Francis Marion University students, faculty, staff and regional citizens with access to scholarly information and other resources. By providing this access, the Library is able to uniquely contribute to that portion of the mission of the University which stresses its support of scholarly pursuits in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

The Library has a detailed system for assessment of its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. All major components of the system continued to be used in this cycle. The results of this assessment reveal that:

1. Comparisons with other state and private institutions invariably show FMU's library to rank in sixth position in most categories, with a few slight variations. FMU is sixth in enrollment among the state and private institutions. This applies to volumes per student, expenditures per student, library faculty per student, etc.
2. Francis Marion has maintained a record of excellent library support, usually in the five percent of the education and general expenditure range. This compares very favorably with peer institutions in the state and region.
3. Customer surveys give library services and resources good to excellent ratings, with less than five percent normally rating services or resources less than good. Faculty surveys usually rate these slightly higher than do student surveys. From the student surveys especially we continue to find that we need to improve *information literacy* among FMU students. We continually revise library instruction sessions to reflect changes in resources and research methodology.
4. Assessments from library department heads, staff, the faculty library committee, and the FMU administration are used to identify areas needing improvement, and resources are allocated as appropriate and available to address identified needs. Also, field trips to other college and university libraries provide staff with excellent working models of variations on the routines we perform and on the expanding services customers need and have come to expect from their university library.
5. The annual library report highlights signal achievements posted during the fiscal year and afford staff the vantage point to review annual improvements and modifications to existing procedures, services, resources, and opportunities to better serve the information needs of our customers.

Following the 2001-2002 Institutional Effectiveness report the Rogers Library the following improvements are in place:

1. Added a computer lab with all major programs available on other FMU computer lab PCs (surveys pointed out increased need for such equipment and access);
2. Published for the first time an issue of The Axis devoted to subject or discipline specific journal holdings (result of the field trip where staff saw such a publication and its heavy use by students at Benedict College). This is one of those improvements we now ask ourselves "Why did we not think of this before? It has been extremely useful and popular."
3. Switched locations of both components of serials operations to better fit work flow, user needs, and staffing resources;
4. Allocated somewhat larger portion of materials budget to electronic resources based on customer usage statistics and customer requests, including faculty requests for additional access to electronic information;

5. Deleted a number of print journal subscriptions based on academic departmental assessment of needs, or availability in electronic format and hence redundant, or availability in microform at a cost avoidance;
6. Continued to use consortia purchasing power to drive down costs of certain resources, primarily electronic data bases;
7. Continued to work with PASCAL, the Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries, to plan for expanded statewide cooperation on a host of fronts, for both improved access to information and cost avoidance;
8. Increased emphasis on and participation in professional growth and development activities for all library staff, based on finding that staff must have constantly updated training. This meshes well with President Carter's emphasis on professional growth and development opportunities for all FMU support staff.

Of particular importance to faculty and students is the availability of full-text on-line journals. The Rogers Library has devoted an increasing percentage of its budget to meeting this desire. During the past academic year the use of these sources is significant.

Table 1

*Usage of Major Full Text Electronic Resources*

<b>Resource</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>
DISCUS	89,339
Science Direct	2,437.00
EBSCO	1,316.00
1st Search	33,936.00
SCIFINDER	863.00
JSTOR	3,544.00
News Bank	4,844.00
Lexis-Nexis	4,846.00
Silver Platter	21,266.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>162,391.00</b>

Based on findings from the various assessment methods employed, Rogers Library now plans to attempt to make the following improvements as resources allow:

1. Upgrade all public personal computers to new machine
2. Include MS Office products and other standard campus computing software on all new public machines, including Windows XP
3. Upgrade three public computer printers in Reference area
4. Increase number and hours of student assistants assisting with public computers
5. Re-evaluate late night hours usage on Tuesday through Thursday evenings (the 11 PM to midnight schedule) to determine importance of maintaining these hours
6. Upgrade the library's integrated library system (ILS) to a second generation program
7. Take every affordable opportunity for professional growth and development and encourage library staff to participate fully in this vital training
8. Establish departmental liaison so that each academic department is linked to a librarian who works more closely and deliberately with that department

9. Continue to assess data bases to which we subscribe and to which we find we ought to provide access to determine most effective use of financial resources
10. Continue to seeks ways to avoid cost so as to increase funding available for the acquisitions of new print materials
11. Reorganize library operations so as to provide a full-time administrator and leader for the reference area while streamlining parallel library services and operations
12. Continue to forge new levels of cooperation through consortial arrangements with PASCAL, SOLINET, Florence-Darlington Technical College, Coker College, and other beneficial entities.

Given the current budget constraints the Rogers Library and its staff are continuing to keep its holdings and services at an exceptionally high level.

### **Advising**

Due to our budget cuts, the Office of Advising and Retention has been closed and the duties are now distributed among the academic departments and the Enrollment Management Office. In an effort to continue our effective advising program, the duties of *assigning advisors and changing majors* will now be housed in the individual departments. Students will *continue* to be required to be advised by a faculty member in their major field of study.

The Enrollment Management Office runs the New Student Orientation and Registration sessions during the summer months. The ratings of the program are very high and the program was streamlined this summer with initial results in the “excellent” range on all scales.

A very significant modification has been put in place this year: *Intrusive advisement for students on Probation 2*. If a student's GPA is below a 2.0 for 2 consecutive semesters, then the student must see either the Director of Enrollment Management or the Registrar for an *intrusive* advisement session. The student and the staff member examine the transcript and discuss how the student can improve their academic standing by using the policies and resources offered on campus. Two additional changes have been made based on past evaluations to assist students and faculty with course planning and scheduling:

1. An interactive tracking system is going on-line this fall.
  - a. This system allows a student or adviser to view a record in terms of which general education and major requirements have been met and provide “what, if” queries to determine changes in course work needed if changing majors.
2. Modification to our on-line registration program to provide real time auditing of course requirements, essentially will:
  - a. Prevent a student from enrolling in a course for which they do not have the prerequisite courses. This modification will significantly reduce mistakes made when students modify their schedules after advising and after their access has been opened.
  - b. Reduce time spent finding open sections of required courses

### **Summary of Student Services**

#### *Campus Recreation Services*

The purpose of the Office of Campus Recreation Services is to provide recreational activities for students, faculty/staff and alumni with varying skill levels and degrees of competition ranging from unstructured informal activities to highly structured intramural competition. Programs are developed to enhance the academic environment, promote interaction between students and faculty/staff, and encourage skill acquisition for long-term health maintenance. This recreation process supports the mission of Francis

Marion University by contributing to the social, cultural, moral and physical development of students as well as to their intellectual growth through both its academic and student life programs.

The Campus Recreation Services office uses student surveys, focus groups, feedback from committees, and informal discussion groups in its Institutional Effectiveness reports. Based on last year's analyses the following improvements are now in place:

1. Increased the number of Campus Recreation Services' student assistants (two) and added an additional level of responsibility to the Smith University Center Assistant Coordinator (Derrick Young) to increase supervision of nightly intramural events.
2. Added an Independent points champion award to challenge the Greek points champion for an All-Campus Intramural Sports award.
3. Purchased official's manuals and rule books from the National Intramural Recreation and Sports Association (NIRSA) to help educate and improve the clinics and quality of the intramural officials.
4. Have engaged in discussions with intramural directors from other schools of similar size and within a hour to hour and a half driving distance to form tournaments and competitions between the schools in four team sports of softball, basketball, volleyball and flag football.
- 5.

This year's analyses lead to the decision to attempt to make the following improvements during 2003-2004: Provide additional surveys and forums to increase knowledge of the student satisfaction with the Campus Recreation Services' intramural sports program and to determine reasons for non-participation.

1. Increase quantity and quality of official's clinics to improve the quality of the intramural sports officiating.
2. Provide additional intramural activities as indicated in the survey, including indoor soccer, sand volleyball and ultimate Frisbee.
3. Establish an intramural sports advisory committee to identify issues of concern and methods to improve the Campus Recreation Services Department.
4. Develop a web site for the Campus Recreation Services Department that will improve the access of information to students, faculty and staff members.
5. Revise the intramural sports handbook and make it available on the

#### *Office of International Student Affairs*

The mission of the Office of International Student Affairs is to provide support to international and exchange students currently attending or planning to attend Francis Marion University

A critical component in the Office's effectiveness evaluation is a comprehensive survey of the international students at FMU. Additional assessment activities include the levels of adherence to SEVIS guidelines and the level of maintenance of international students' status within BCIS Regulations. Information from direct feedback from international students during focus group meetings and suggestions from faculty and staff members that have a high level of interaction with international students were also used in the assessment of program effectiveness.

Overall results from the International Student Survey indicate a general level of satisfaction with services provided by the ISA office. Currently, the university is in full compliance with SEVIS and BCIS guidelines. However, problems with implementation at the federal level and continual changes require a high level of attention be given to these issues.

Improvements during the past year were made based upon direct feedback from international students during focus group meetings and suggestions from faculty and staff members that have a high level of

interaction with international students. These improvements include:

1. Conducting a comprehensive orientation program for international students, including transportation from point of entry in Florence, campus orientation, tour of Florence, and assisting with basic life needs (bank accounts, social security number, household shopping, etc.)
2. Monthly meetings with international students as a group to discuss a variety of issues including upcoming campus events, immigration issues, transition issues, and student concerns
3. Transportation to various shopping and business venues in the Florence area on a weekly basis;
4. Periodic communication with international students through electronic mail and telephone to share announcements and other pertinent information
5. Completion of registration and data entry for SEVIS guidelines as required by BCIS
6. Completion of satisfaction survey for international students

This year's analyses lead to the decision to attempt to make the following improvements during 2003-2004:

1. Review and revision of the Orientation Program to better meet the needs of students with a higher level of emphasis on interaction with American students
2. ISA professionals will attend training sessions on SEVIS and BCIS standards to ensure adherence to new guidelines
3. Schedule weekend trips and group activities with more advance planning to ensure implementation
4. Improve communication efforts to inform international students of activities and events held on campus
5. Increase personal contact between ISA Staff and international students
6. Review and revise all ISA documents, including International Student Guide

### *Office of Multicultural Affairs*

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) provides students of ethnicity with those academic, social, and personal support services that facilitate their adjustment to the University. It provides leadership in the University's efforts to support minority students (African American, Asian American, Hispanic American and Native American). This office is responsible for informing the University community of the values of multiculturalism. The OMA also serves as a resource (in cooperation with campus departments) to minority students in areas such as, but not limited to, financial assistance, admissions, housing, academics, career development, with particular emphasis given to new FMU students.

The Office uses informal observations, one-to-one interviews, and the CAARE providers exit interview and student group meetings in its assessment activities. A new survey of overall effectiveness will be added next year.

This years results show:

1. Students appear to be lacking self-esteem and confidence. There is much apathy among the student body.
2. Programs and services of OMA were well attended but seem to attract more African American students.
3. There is a need to have more multicultural centered programs that show the diversity of students at FMU.

Improvements planned for the coming academic year include:

1. Organize and empower the *Multicultural Affairs Advisory Council*. This council will include upperclassmen, staff and faculty representatives who serve as an advisory and support team to the Office of Multicultural Affairs. They evaluate projects, programs and services of the OMA. They make recommendations and suggestions as necessary.
2. Make available resources and information more available for the promotion of campus diversity.

### *Office of Testing and Counseling*

It is the purpose of the Office of Counseling and Testing (OCT) to help students enhance their academic and personal well-being. OCT supports the educational mission of the university by helping students: cope with college and life pressures that threaten persistence in college and enhance or learn skills that optimize personal effectiveness

The office of Counseling and Testing is charged with the responsibility of coordinating the services offered to students with disabilities. The mission of The Office of Counseling and Testing further supports the academic goals of FMU by coordinating testing services for the University (freshman placement testing, and coordinating testing services for national admission and certification programs).

The Office has a comprehensive system for assessment of program effectiveness which includes: A graduating senior exit survey, a services satisfaction survey of individuals receiving assistance from the center, evaluation of the Orientation for New Student program, survey of students participating in the receiving disability services, and evaluation of procedures used for graduate level entry exams.

These measures consistently showed a high level of satisfaction with the wide variety of services offered by the Office; 60+ percent on general ratings and means over 3.3 on four point scales.

Based on the information provided by the assessment methods, the following improvements were made:

1. Feedback from stakeholders (parents, students, and staff at FMU) noted that students often went into the wrong building when looking for the Academic Computer Center. This year, we redesigned our method of notifying students about their placement testing requirement. We included an annotated campus map and gave students specific information about testing location and testing times (we used to do this by phone only—when students called to make their testing appointment).
2. We also developed a feedback sheet for students—explaining their results and their options for challenging their scores. We believe that our new procedures have increased effectiveness. We had far fewer complaints about the testing process this year.
3. Efforts to reduce computer problems have been made by FMU and by the company that constructs the tests. Our office exclusively uses the Academic Computer Center for testing, as that gives us access to the fastest computers. OCT's assessment is that computer glitches have dropped dramatically in the past year.
4. Expanded and systematized the note taker services provided for Disabled Students

Improvements planned for 2003-2004 are:

1. Institute a data collection system regarding usage of services to allow for more detailed analyses of user characteristics and services.
2. Seek to increase the number of students who report contact with our office during their years at FMU. The plan for increasing contacts include: publishing occasional articles in the student newspaper; establishing workshops on stress management and procrastination; conducting assessment services regarding learning styles and test-taking strategies.

3. Replace the survey of disabled students with a focus group/workshop. The workshop will also provide an opportunity for students and faculty to exchange information about the accommodations process.
4. Development of a formal procedure to insure maintenance of intellectual property rights while providing recording procedures required for some types of disabilities.

### *Office of Student Life*

The Office of Student Life is responsible for creating a positive campus environment that enhances and complements the academic mission of the University while providing opportunities for leadership development, involvement, recreation, and general growth and development. The Office of Student Life is responsible for the following areas and activities: Greek Life, Student Organizations, University Programming Board (UPB), Homecoming Events - (student related), Ms. FMU, and Leadership Programs.

The Office of Student Life offered a wide variety of social and developmental activities. The community involvement offered from Student Life events was measured first by the participation levels at each event, and second by the satisfaction level shown in the University Programming Board survey specifically for UPB events conducted this spring.

Based on last year's survey and feedback data and attendance records the following improvements are in place:

1. The University Programming Board used the data collected in the spring 2003 survey for all 2003-2004 activity planning. It was determined UPB needed to offer fewer programs of higher quality. Specific programs suggested in the "suggestions" portion of the survey were added to the programming calendar as well as previously successful programs.
2. The University Programming Board previously had 1 paid position whose title was "Chair." The number of hours worked by chair will be reduced 50% for the 2003-2004 year to add 2 additional 5-hour positions. These new positions will be UPB Film Chair and UPB Advertising Chair. This will allow the UPB Chair to focus more on volunteer and event efforts, as well as offering 2 new specific positions for leadership development and involvement on campus.
3. Student involvement in UPB is typically of African American female students. Current volunteers have made an effort to increase participation efforts across campus by special invites and information tables at campus events. UPB is more diverse because of these efforts.

Improvements planned for 2003-2004 are:

1. The feedback collected from the judges and participants in the Ms. FMU Pageant will be used for enhancing the 2004 Ms. FMU Pageant.
2. Student Life will offer an updated Student Organizations Manual for FMU student organizations and their advisers. A survey will be conducted in the spring of 2004 to assess the effectiveness of the manual and to make improvements for the 2004-2005 academic year.
3. Student Life will create a Leadership Development Program for interested FMU student leaders.
4. UPB plans to brainstorm and develop more creative forms of advertising for events. Attendance overall has been good, however, the UPB believes greater participation is possible will additional promotional efforts.

### *Office of Career Development*



The mission of the Office of Career Development is to provide a comprehensive, educational approach to career development as a life skill through offering specialized programs and services targeted for Francis Marion University students and alumni.

The Office of Career Development administered Recruiter Evaluations to all recruiters that participated in Volunteer Fairs, Career Fairs. OCD administered Student Evaluations to every student attending a Fall and Spring Class Presentations. The evaluations for presentations are used to determine how helpful our presentations are in terms of information provided. Student feedback that indicates the likeliness the student would refer others to the presentation is also obtained from these evaluations.

A review of the responses from our Volunteer Fairs indicated that the recruiters would like to have seen a larger student turnout and the students wanted to see more organizations represented. Many recruiters were satisfied with the fact that of the students who did come out and participate, many of them signed up to volunteer. Many students thought that the agency representatives were friendly and enjoyed learning more about the various outreach programs. Suggestions for improvement included trying to increase student attendance by having door prizes given to students and by providing food for students. It was also suggested to think about changing the time of the event.

A review of the responses from our Career Fairs indicates that the recruiters felt most positive about the career fair's organization. In addition, recruiters were also positive about having a chance to interact with our students. Most of the students felt positively about the variety of recruiters that attended and having a chance to network with the employers. Many of the recruiters also expressed that the set-up and the student preparation could have been improved. Many of the students expressed a desire to have a Job Fair in addition to a Career Fair. Other recommendations for improvement from students included expressing that we continue to bring more and more recruiters on campus.

Based upon last year's findings the following changes were made this year:

1. Formal encouragement of all students to attend the Career Fair regardless of classification (year in school)
2. Continued to expand the list of Career Fair Agency Participant Invitees.

Planned improvements based on this year's data:

1. Have agency participants bring door prizes to the Volunteer Fairs to increase student participation
2. providing small food items such as cookies, chips, or candy for students as an extra incentive to participate in the Volunteer Fair.
3. Hosting a "Preparing For a Career Fair" Workshop and/or a "Dressing For Success Workshop and Fashion Show"
4. Evaluation of a Job Fair for actual recruiting of applicants
5. Increase student involvement in classroom presentations

## Notes

1. *Survey Methodology:* The Office of Institutional Research is in the process of shifting all survey work from mailing and phone to on-line surveys. The expectation is that this will provide a return rate that will allow for analysis of meaningful data. The first wave of these will be completed by end of October, 2003.
2. *The Faculty Institutional Effectiveness Committee has received conditional approval of its planned evaluation of the General Education Program.* At this time the following procedures are in place:

- a. The School of Business is preparing to use an industrial test to assess computer literacy of students in the General Education Computer Science course
- b. The Department of English's evaluative portfolio system for evaluation of writing is operational.
- c. The Committee is setting up a schedule for evaluative discussions on adequacy of student preparedness for upper level courses.
- d. The Public Speaking program has implemented a pre-post evaluation of its course.