

The Assessment Committee  
Student Affairs  
Valdosta State University

ASSESSMENT PLAN  
FY2008

Department: **STUDENT CONDUCT OFFICE**

**1) Tracking**

The first component of a student affairs assessment program is ***keeping track of who uses your student services, programs and facilities***. Furthermore, how many clients are using student affairs offerings, and how are they described by gender, race, age, class standing, residence and other important variables?

**Current Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)**

1. Who- The Student Conduct Office overseen by the Assistant Dean of Students for Student Conduct (Richard Lee) who is under the immediate supervision of the Dean of Students (Russell Mast) is charged with the primary responsibility of enforcing the Student Handbook's Code of Conduct as it relates specifically to VSU students.
2. What- SCO receives reports of alleged violations of the Student Handbook's Code of Conduct from a variety of campus sources, e.g., University Police, Housing & Residence Life, faculty, and other administrative offices. These incidents are evaluated, students and related witnesses are summons to investigate the incident, and there is a disciplinary dispensation.
3. How- Demographic tracking and case management is via the use of "Judicial Officer" (JO), a proprietary judicial based software program. It was implemented Spring 2003 and upgraded to interface with VSU's Banner system 2007. A companion Excel spreadsheet is used for tracking aggregate summary data of cases entered in Judicial Officer, and a hardcopy case file exists too. All of these files reside in the SCO. A weekly one on one briefing occurs between the Dean and Assistant Dean or more often if needed, as well as periodic ad hoc briefings with the VPSA and/or other related administrators or staff to assess disciplinary activity.
4. When- Typically during the period of time between each semester and at the end of each school year (summer semester), the SCO annual report is assessed for trends. Each SCO annual report contains the annual SCO activity recap that reflects the total number of different violations, hearing types, types of sanctions issued, location of incidents, and demographics of students served. Also, daily activity involving incident reports received, summons, investigations and hearings, and all sanctions issued are verbally and in writing copied to the Dean of Students and or other "need to know" DOSA personal in order to determine if there are trends, e.g., recidivism, etc. developing that warrant a response.

**Proposed and/or Additional Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)**

1. Will develop data reporting format and distribution process that expedites the electronic dissemination of the data each semester to key Division of Student Affairs administrators.
  - A. How- Seek training and assistance in the better utilization of Judicial Officer's reporting features. Also will seek training and assistance from VSU's Office of Institutional Planning and Research in order to more effectively present the data.
  - B. When- By end of Summer 2008 to present FALL 2008 data and use for SACS accreditation.
  - C. Who- Assistant Dean of Students for Student Conduct.
  - D. What- Development of Excel, Publisher, or PowerPoint presentations each semester
2. What- Improve the method for tracking of ALL incidents reported even if no disciplinary action takes place in order to provide a more comprehensive activity summary report.
  - A. How- Use Judicial Officer for all reports and coding accordingly.
  - B. When- Begin Spring 2008 to input ALL incident reports received.
  - C. Who- Assistant Dean of Students for Student Conduct.
  - D. What- Reports reflecting those incidents of a non-sanctioned nature.
3. If practical and financially feasible adopt a paperless record keeping process i.e. the scanning of incident reports.
  - A. How- Investigate and adopt a suitable software program either via VSU-OIT or a vendor by Spring 2009.

**The Assessment Committee  
Student Affairs  
Valdosta State University**

**2) Needs**

The second component of this model is *assessing student and other clientele needs*. The basic principle is that we should meet the needs of our students and other clientele.

Current Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. Assistant Dean of Students- Conduct reviews adjudicated disciplinary cases and evaluates the sanction(s) usually at semester's and year's end to determine if consistent and suitable learning outcomes occurred for the a variety of incidents. In many cases, the Assistant Dean of Students-Conduct consults with the Dean of Students regarding cases and the recommended sanction(s) before hand to assure the appropriate course of action. A timely investigation and resolution, as well as consistency, equity, and appropriateness regarding disciplinary recommendations are the development benchmarks sought.
2. The Assistant Dean of Students- Conduct performs an annual review of sanctions applied in the previous year to determine if sanctioning inconsistencies occurred, if so why and regarding what type violation(s) to see if sanctions should be modified, improved on, or abandoned.
3. Post-sanction follow-up (written, verbal, or both) occurs with complainants and/or those who reported violations, i.e., students, faculty, University Police, Housing, Parking & Transportation, as well as DOSA departments within a reasonable period of time of both the initial report and final adjudication usually via an email or a hardcopy. Also, DOSA departments that are instrumental in fulfilling a developmental component of a given sanction, e.g., the Alcohol and Other Drug Education office, the Counseling Center, Housing and Residence Life, etc. are copied the sanction agreement.
4. Ad Hoc debrief meetings often occur with the appropriate parties typically to discuss a particular incident, case, or outcome regarding a sanctioning decision.

Proposed and/or Additional Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. I propose to develop a comprehensive plan for creating greater Student Conduct Office (SCO) visibility and awareness of the SCO mission and procedures on campus for both students and other clients.
2. I also plan to create a similar strategy for external clients, e.g., parents, local attorneys and law enforcement with each municipality and the county.
3. I propose to conduct a user survey with internal clients to evaluate "what they need from the SCO" and what is being done well and what is deficient.
4. I plan to conduct the internal survey by end of summer 2008, assess it's findings, and develop an appropriate response plan for Fall 2009.
5. I also plan to utilize the CAS needs assessment guidelines and other successful peer institutions assessment plans to assist in developing this process.
6. My results will be reported to the DOS by the end of Fall 2009.

**3) Satisfaction**

The third component is *assessing student and other clientele satisfaction with our services, programs and facilities, and demonstrating that those experiences are consistent with the institution's goals*.

Current Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. Given the nature of student disciplinary work, the return mail "exit survey" of students going through the SCO process used briefly in years past was not effective or utilized, and it had an extremely low return rate.
2. VSU-Institutional Research assisted in its creation, received the completed surveys returned (1), and they agreed to conduct analysis, but due to the non-existent return rate the findings were flawed. The student "exit" survey for the Student Conduct Office was abandoned.

Proposed and/or Additional Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

**The Assessment Committee  
Student Affairs  
Valdosta State University**

1. Re-evaluate and revise the student user exit survey based on a CAS model or from other peer institutions that have successfully implemented one and implement it again Fall 2009. Will focus on an on-line format for ease of access and use.
2. Conduct referring client interviews (campus departments / administrators / students that interact with SCO) as well as develop a similar client user survey by the end of Fall 2009. On line option too.

#### **4) Student Cultures and Campus Environments**

It is important to examine the *collective perceptions of a campus and the student cultures where they conduct their day-to-day lives*. Remember each student lives in his/her own cultural environment and all students do not have the same interests, friends and classes. Assessing the campus environment *determines and evaluates how the conditions and elements of the campus affect student learning and growth*. Each campus is unique and different.

Current Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

None- Really not clear on this component as it relates to Conduct Office.

Proposed and/or Additional Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. I will develop CAS based or suggested focus groups to gain an administrative perspective regarding the effectiveness and/or awareness of disciplinary policies and procedures as pertaining to the residence hall culture and more specifically relating to controlled substance and alcohol use and abuse in the halls.
2. I will develop a similar group from current hall residents comprised of a cross section of halls. A simple survey instrument will also be developed to gather needed data / feedback.
3. Development assistance from other VSU departments or staff such as Institutional Research, Psychology, or Sociology will be sought to focus and execute it properly.
4. These will be done by SPR 09'.

#### **5) Outcomes**

A fifth critical component is *assessing outcomes*. For those who use our services, programs and facilities, is there an effect on their academic success, learning, or development, particularly when compared to those non-users? Not all outcomes important to student services and programs are learning outcomes. There may be other outcomes important to effective student services, such as the delivery of services in a timely and efficient manner.

Current Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. SCO monitors recidivism and this is done annually during the FY annual report.
2. The review of individual perspective paper assignments for "what did I learn" comments to determine IF accused students "get it" after interacting with the SCO.
3. A semester by semester review of the # of completed on-line alcohol/drug referrals as well as AODE office in-person referrals for compliance/ non-compliance and learning outcomes.
4. SCO reviews the responsiveness or turn around time to of each cases dispensation from initial report to conclusion. Seek to conduct a speedy resolution (ten working days from initial receipt of the incident report) for most cases.

Proposed and/or Additional Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. Conduct research the pre-incident and post-incident + SCO disciplinary interaction impact via the Office of Institutional Research on a representative sample of SCO student cases to determine retention and success or failure as a VSU students.
2. Will develop better reporting of results or findings from #1 and #3 above by engaging Judicial Affairs Software provider, VSU-OIT and/or VSU-IR support and other faculty support to develop the best format.

**The Assessment Committee  
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Valdosta State University**

**6) Benchmarking**

How does the quality of our services, programs and facilities *compare* with like institutions? The key is to compare ourselves to like institutions that have good assessment programs and collect good data.

Current Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

NONE except informal networking with peers in ASJA (Association of Student Judicial Affairs) personnel. I am currently reviewing the 10 VSU "Peer Institutions" for Best Practices Assessment plans that I can adapt to VSU.

Proposed and/or Additional Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. Use the existing CAS Assessment guidelines to assure that VSU's SCO meets all minimums for a conduct office, and this will be accomplished by the end of FY08 annual report deadline.
2. In order to accomplish this, I will develop an assessment team for SCO from the VSU campus as called for in the CAS guidelines to review the VSU SCO. This will be done by the end of Fall 08, and their feedback will be generated by mid-term SPR 09' or earlier if possible.

**7) Measuring Effectiveness**

A seventh component is *assessing effectiveness - through reference to national or professional standards and/or through measuring cost effectiveness*. How do our services, programs, and facilities compare to accepted national standards (Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) for Student Services/Development Programs, various national and regional accrediting agencies, and professional organizations)? Are the benefits students derive from what we offer worth the cost, and how do we know that?

Current Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. Only evaluation being done now by the rate of recidivism.
2. These findings are reported annually in the DOSA-SCO Annual report as a summary.

Proposed and/or Additional Means of Assessment (who, what, when, how reported, etc.)

1. Take the findings of the CAS SCO assessment team and develop better policies and procedures and program evaluation measurement and methodology by end of SPR'09'.