

**STUDENTAFFAIRS ASSESSMENT PLAN
2005 - 2006**

Department: Counseling Center

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.)

Users of Counseling Center programs and services are tracked through the following methods.

- *Each person seen for counseling completes an intake form which provides information about gender, race, age, classification, etc. (See Attachment 1)*
- *A head count is taken, as much as possible, of attendees at groups/seminars and all outreach activities.*
- *Semester and annual reports record the number of persons and contact hours involved in 1) individual counseling services, 2) groups/seminars, 3) outreach activities, 4) supervision, 5) training, and 6) other services which are offered throughout the year.*

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

No new tracking methods seem needed at this time

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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.)

Assessment of needs is currently done informally through the following means.

- *Regular meetings with various departments on campus (i.e., Housing, Student Health, Public Safety, etc.) lend support to the needs for existing programs.*
- *Consultations with other Counseling Center Directors & personnel at other universities are used as a benchmark for what is needed and desired on different campuses.*
- *Verbal/written communications from previous clients who have used or heard about the services.*
- *Comments on our Program Evaluation Forms (Attachment 2) support the need for existing programs and future offerings.*
- *Comments on our Counseling Center Evaluation Form (See Attachment 3) support the need for existing programs and future offerings.*

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

- *Beginning in May 2005 after the end of the Spring Semester, The Counseling Center staff will develop a process to formally assimilate the informal information described above. An outline of that proposed process is included as Attachment 4.*
- *No systematic study of needs seems indicated at this time.*

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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.)

Satisfaction with Counseling Center services and programs is measured through the following means.

- *The Counseling Center Evaluation Form (See Attachment 3) is our instrument for assessing satisfaction with Counseling Center services and facilities. Each semester, three weeks are selected at random (two weeks are selected during the Summer), and everyone using Center services is asked to complete the Counseling Center Evaluation Form. Each year in May, the results are added to our ongoing data base, tabulated and analyzed, distributed to Counseling Center staff, and made available to interested parties.*
- *Program Evaluation Forms (Attachment 2) are collected after all Counseling Center groups, seminars, training programs and various outreach programs/presentations.*
- *Verbal/written communications from current and previous clients provide invaluable information regarding needs-based decisions.*

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

Our Program Evaluation Form (Attachment 2) has been revised to include measures of learning outcomes, and has been in use since January 1, 2005. See the section on Outcomes for a discussion of how this new data will be used.

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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.)

Assessment of Student Cultures and Campus Environments is currently done informally through the following means.

- *Regular meetings with various departments on campus (i.e., Housing, Student Health, Public Safety, etc.) provide important data regarding the experience of being a student at VSU.*
- *Consultations with other Counseling Center Directors & personnel at other universities likewise provide important data regarding the experience of being a student at comparable institutions.*
- *Verbal/written communications from current and previous clients provide invaluable information about student environments and cultures.*

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

- *Beginning in May 2005 after the end of the Spring Semester, The Counseling Center staff will develop a process to formally assimilate the informal information described above. An outline of that proposed process is included as Attachment 4.*
- *We need to better understand the University environment and student cultures. VSU is participating in the National Survey of Student Engagement, and we look forward to using the data generated by this study.*

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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.)

Systematic assessment of specific counseling outcomes is especially difficult because of issues of client confidentiality. More informally, however, we receive feedback from individual students, The Office of Testing (Regents Exam results), Registrar, Dean of Students, Health Services and faculty communication regarding positive individual outcomes of counseling. A major emphasis for the future will be the development of assessment and research studies focused on both student and program outcomes.

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

Beginning January 1, we have developed specific learning objectives for all of our psycho-educational programming – groups, seminars, and other programs. We have, accordingly, revised our Program Evaluation Form (Attachment 2) to include participant feedback regarding the achievement of the program learning objectives. We will develop a data base, tabulate and analyze the data, distribute the results to Counseling Center staff, and make that information available to interested parties.

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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.)

We do benchmarking assessment through the following means.

- *Using feedback from regular meetings of Counseling Center Directors in Georgia and the Annual National Survey of Counseling Center Directors, sponsored by the Association of University and College Center directors and The American College Counseling Association.*
- *Making web site comparisons with other schools.*
- *Attending conferences and meetings on the local, state, regional and national levels and using information from these events.*
- *Using information developed from membership in professional organizations.*
- *Meeting the requirements for Full Accreditation through the application process and satisfactorily completing the Annual Progress reports*

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

- *Beginning in May 2005 after the end of the Spring Semester, The Counseling Center staff will develop a process to formally assimilate the informal information described above. An outline of that proposed process is included as Attachment 4.*
- *No systematic benchmarking study seems indicated at this time.*

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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.)

- *The Counseling Center has Full Accreditation through the International Association of Counseling Services, Inc. (IACS).*
- *The Annual Report describes the effectiveness of the The Counseling Center, most specifically in Table 2: Progress Toward Common Institutional Goals.*

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

- *We will continue to meet the standards required of Full Accreditation through maintaining the required levels of practice, and satisfactorily completing yearly progress reports required by the accrediting organization.*