

## Task Force on Academic Support – April 30, 2009 – Mission/Goals/Objectives Notes

From the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Mission Statement:

“Our MISSION is to serve people by:

- Providing students with access to a high-quality, affordable, comprehensive education that enables them to develop their general intellectual capacities, specific interests and abilities through academic programs and personalized student development services. “

The learning assistance program supports the University mission statement.

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### Learning Assistance Program Mission Statement:

The learning assistance program at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh provides high-quality, student-centered, academic support as part of an inclusive community that empowers all students to develop their academic potential and earn a degree.

### Themes:

Empower      Independence      Quality      Engaged Learning      Inclusive      Development/Growth

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### Definitions:

The *learning assistance program* provides student-centered instruction and services for developing skills, strategies, and behaviors that increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes that improve learning outcomes. By helping students achieve their learning potential and succeed academically, the learning assistance program significantly influences student retention. All services and courses that provide learning assistance are part of the learning assistance program referred to in this document.

*Students* refers to all students that we admit to the University.

*Developmental education* is an organized collection of courses supported by learning assistance services designed to help students succeed academically. It can help “underprepared students prepare, prepared students advance and advanced students excel” (Adapted from the National Association of Developmental Education motto in What Works, Boylan, p. 3, 2002).

*Campus community* refers to all members of the campus: students, faculty, academic and classified staff, and administrators.

*Staff/faculty* refers to staff and faculty within or related to the learning assistance program.

*Assessment* - When data (e.g., gpa, retention, graduation, NSSE, etc.) are examined to measure outcomes, the examination will be overall *and* by student characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, intended major, age, transfer, preparation).

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UW Oshkosh learning assistance program goals are founded on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) principles. The goals and objectives of the campus program are:

**Goal 1: To make students the central focus of the learning assistance program.**

Objectives/Outcomes

- a. Provide services that are convenient, delivered in ways that are accessible and free for students to use.
- b. Create a comfortable and supportive environment; students feel welcomed.
- c. Provide services that are responsive to the evolving needs of students, and are informed by student demographic data.
- d. Engage in outreach (website, Odyssey, Res Life, Facebook, email, class syllabi) appropriate for the academic and cultural diversity of students.
- e. Staff/faculty will meet frequently to share information, check consistency of practices and do professional development.
- f. The University will provide resources (facilities, capital, staff/faculty) sufficient to support services at levels that make the above objectives possible.

Things that can be *measured* related to this goal:

- a. Users become providers: students who have been through any of the learning assistance programs apply to become tutors, mentors, Peer Advising Liaisons, SI Leaders, etc.
- b. Student feedback is used to improve services (SOS, program evaluations, interest/feedback groups)
- c. NSSE – engagement increases
- d. Students recommend to peers
- e. Participation of more students in use of services
- f. Usage of services is representative of student demographics

**Goal 2: To provide campus faculty, staff and administrators with services and resources that enhance and support classroom instruction and professional development.**

Objectives/Outcomes

- a. Ensure that the campus community is aware and supportive of the overall program and individual services, and makes appropriate referrals.
- b. Promote developmental education practices and information about services through:
  1. Faculty Colleges and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning;
  2. Inclusion in faculty/staff orientations; and,
  3. Wide-spread, demonstrated buy-in from Chancellor, Provost, Deans, and Department Heads through regular articulation of the advantages of the program.
- c. Develop an assessment plan based on national best practices and research.
- d. Provide campus community with information about impact and usage of the learning assistance program through standardized and consistent data reporting.
- e. Provide learning opportunities for students, staff and faculty to orient themselves to the needs of a diverse campus community.
- f. University will support professional development of staff/faculty.
- g. Provide staff/faculty training in learning strategies and transferable skills so that they can help students employ these skills in progressively challenging circumstances.
- h. Maintain highest standards and expectations of all who teach in developmental courses, in terms of qualifications and student engagement.
- i. Establish an advisory board of campus community members to advise the learning assistance program and Provost's Office.
- j. Examine curriculum, campus faculty requests and student success rates to determine where services can be paired with classes.

Things that can be *measured* related to this goal:

- a. Number of courses working with learning assistance services
- b. Campus community awareness
- c. Number/participation in Faculty College, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, national and regional professional development events
- d. Certification of programs
- e. Accomplishment of any of the above tasks (advisory board established, inclusion in orientation, creation of web tools, etc)

**Goal 3: To cultivate positive attitudes toward learning, inspire academic curiosity, and build confidence in students' ability to learn across the curriculum.**

Objectives/Outcomes

- a. Assist and support students in developing short- and long-term academic, career and personal goals.
- b. Assist students in adopting and applying resilient life skills within the campus community to enhance social and academic integration.
- c. Provide mechanisms for students to recognize their incremental successes early and continuously.
- d. Enhance positive attitudes about learning by encouraging staff/faculty to provide various means of assessment and feedback.
- e. Make staff/faculty aware of students' learning strategies and the principles of universal design that might inform their presentation and assessment strategies.
- f. As students advance at the university, work to enhance their opportunities to achieve their academic and career goals by providing opportunities to engage in the broader culture of the academy and community.

Things that can be *measured* related to this goal:

- a. Number of students engaged in research and presentations
- b. SOS to evaluate flexibility in assessment and pedagogy
- c. Early Warning participation
- d. Number of students who have declared or changed majors

**Goal 4: To foster personal responsibility, independence, accountability and potential for one's own learning.**

Objectives/Outcomes

- a. Clearly and regularly articulate the benefits of higher education and the expectations that will generate success.
- b. Provide substantive feedback early and often in the class so students become active participants in their education and personal development.
- c. Make expectations clear and model the behaviors expected of students.
- d. Instill in students the expectations of them in a culture of higher education and the accompanying advantages.
- e. Assist students in determining personal barriers to academic success and empower them to develop and follow appropriate courses of action.
- f. Incorporate self-assessment and promotion of active learning strategies into all learning assistance services.
- g. Encourage students to self-select from a variety of personal development courses and program options that meet their academic, career and personal needs and goals.
- h. Encourage the effective use of learning communities, study groups and tutors.

Things that can be *measured* related to this goal:

- a. Retention of students (fall to spring; first year to second year)
- b. GPA of students
- c. Graduation rate of students
- d. Results from NSSE and other campus-wide surveys

**Goal 5: To assist students in transferring learned skills and strategies to their academic work and lifelong learning.**

Objectives/Outcomes:

- a. Provide learning assistance to students in all high-risk (as defined by DFW and/or repeat rates) courses.
- b. Provide students with appropriate course options consistent with the results of mandatory assessments in reading, math, and writing.
- c. Collaborate with faculty to determine appropriate learning assistance services necessary to achieve student learning outcomes.
- d. Facilitate the development and repeated practice of college-level learning strategies through a variety of options (e.g., study skills classes, paired courses, individual counseling, workshops, etc.).
- e. Provide developmental reading, writing, and math courses that assist students in transferring those skills to their academic course work.
- f. Give repeated opportunities to practice skills and apply knowledge necessary for academic and career success.
- g. Ensure staff/faculty are knowledgeable and trained so they can assist students in identifying, evaluating and transferring learning strategies in multiple settings.

Things that can be *measured* related to this goal:

- a. Success rate of students using individual learning assistance services (grade earned)
- e. Retention of students (fall to spring; first year to second year)
- b. Student survey addressing the quality of individual learning assistance services
- c. Correct placement of students into the courses they need
- d. Adequate number of seats in learning assistance program courses to accommodate all students
- h. Success of students at the end of the course
- i. Number of students who are successful at getting internships, practicum and placement based on their goals
- e. Survey of campus staff/faculty (satisfaction with learning assistance services; services contributing to the success of students in class)

**Goal 6: To support the academic standards and requirements of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.**

Objectives/outcomes:

- a. Ensure staff/faculty are knowledgeable about the academic standards (e.g., Liberal Education, Learning Outcomes, good academic standing, and academic honesty) and requirements (e.g., graduation requirements) of the University.
- b. Staff/faculty will adhere to ethical standards and the academic standards and requirements of the University.
- c. Assist students in understanding and achieving the academic standards and requirements of the University.
- d. Promote student adherence to all accepted ethical standards relating to academic learning.
- e. Assist students in understanding the expectations of faculty and the culture of higher education.
- f. Ensure training of staff/faculty/student workers includes ethics and ethical reasoning which uphold academic standards and requirements.

Things that can be *measured* related to this goal:

- a. Pre- and post- tests in courses designed to teach students about the academic standards and requirements of the University (e.g., FYE, developmental education, career exploration, study skills, etc.)
- b. Provide students with the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey at the conclusion of these courses
- c. Retention rate (fall to spring; first year to second year)
- d. Suspension/probation rate and academic standing statistics
- e. NSSE – level of engagement