

**Drake University**  
**Five-Year Student Academic Support Unit Strategic Plan**  
**(2005-2008)**  
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**Drake University's Mission Statement**

Drake's mission is to provide an exceptional learning environment that prepares students for meaningful personal lives, professional accomplishments, and responsible global citizenship. The Drake experience is distinguished by collaborative learning among students, faculty and staff and by the integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation.

**Student Academic Support Unit Mission Statement**

The mission of the student academic support unit is to complement Drake's mission of providing an exceptional learning environment through co-curricular programming and services designed to enhance students' interactions with faculty, provide experiential learning opportunities on and off campus, and foster student peer-to-peer interactions with a focus on intellectual and personal development.

The Student Academic Support Unit consists of five areas. Each area will focus on the Unit goals when developing objectives and strategies that reflect their specific areas.

- Academic Achievement
- Disability Services
- Professional and Career Development Services
- Student Co-Curricular Programming
- Student Records and Academic Information

**Student Academic Support Unit Goals**

**Goal 1:** Provide leadership for the development of programs that reflect collaboration between academic departments and student services offices to further strengthen the learning experience for students, faculty, and staff.

**Academic Achievement**

**Objective 1:** Further strengthen the learning experience through increased visibility and use of academic achievement services

**Strategies:**

- Develop and disseminate Academic Achievement binder and online materials to Greek Life and RAs with programming ideas, handouts, ice breakers, and bulletin board ideas
- Maintain and update specific study techniques and strategies using the Academic Achievement Channel/Portal

**Objective 2:** Implement and/or enhance academic achievement related programming to strengthen the experiences of students

**Strategies:**

- Create interdisciplinary committees of faculty and administrators, staff and students to evaluate all existing programs, resources and relationships
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the current systems and confer with students and faculty advisors to determine needs, and formulate strategic approaches to academic achievement as a result of recommendations
- Expand “Connections” workshop to include general campus as well as athletes

**Disability Services****Objective 1:** Increase faculty awareness and empower students with disabilities**Strategies:**

- Implement student/peer led support groups
- Implement programs involving faculty and staff learning about different disabilities and strategies for teaching students with disabilities (universal design)

**Professional and Career Development Services****Objective 1:** Further strengthen the learning experience through increased visibility and use of Professional and Career Development Services**Strategies:**

- Develop and implement marketing strategy for “introduction” of new career services model
- Expand service learning initiatives, internship opportunities, and student employment options designed to enhance on-campus learning
- Encourage inclusion of professional development within classroom curriculum and student life

**Objective 2:** Increase faculty and student interest and participation in service learning**Strategies:**

- Develop policies and procedures for implementing service learning into the curriculum
- Develop service learning web page with link to Campus Compact
- Develop and implement faculty training opportunities in service learning
- Provide information to students through workshops, publications and classroom discussions

**Objective 3:** Implement and/or enhance professional development/career related programming to strengthen the experiences of students**Strategies:**

- Create interdisciplinary committees of faculty and administrators, staff and students to evaluate all existing programs, resources and relationships
- Determine needs from students and from employers (who have conducted interviews on campus)
- Formulate strategic approach to career services as a result of recommendations
- Determine “industry” representatives who can address new programs created to prepare students for what it takes to get the job, competition to get the job, and the dynamic workplace (panels, speakers, special presentations, student organizations)
- Develop and enhance programming to address new insights. (i.e., Career Seminar Series in CBPA, Graduate Interview Day in Pharmacy)

**Objective 4:** Acknowledge the needs and number of students who enter the university with an open major (one of the largest majors) by developing “major” fairs where various areas are represented

**Strategies:**

- Create interdisciplinary committees of faculty and administrators, staff and students to determine if such events would be beneficial to student populations
- Determine timeframe for event
- Collaborate with alumni, academic departments, faculty members, and FYS assistants to develop and disseminate information regarding majors
- Generate information relating the information to possible career options

**Objective 5:** Create programs that focus on extending traditional educational job/career expectations and extend career opportunities to all students

**Strategies:**

- Create programs with Drake alums
- Provide a regular flow of nationally-sourced career information to all students
- Design programs/internships/experiential learning opportunities that reflect a new ideal and create new company/organizational partnerships to reflect the needs of academics and student constituencies
- Utilize the new Symplicity system to establish a new channel of communication and career management and counseling with students

**Student Co-Curricular Programming**

**Objective 1:** • Enhance and increase the quality of student peer-to-peer interactions

**Strategies:**

- Redesign marketing strategies to recruit and involve a broader population of upper-class students in new student transitional programs (e.g., summer orientation for first-year students, welcome weekend, transfer orientation, graduate and part-time student initiatives)
- Involve various student groups in developing, implementing, and evaluating co-curricular programming that complements the “engaged citizenship” initiatives (primarily sophomore year), junior year connections (FYS reunions), and senior year capstone experiences
- Use the Don V. Adams Leadership Institute (DVALI) programming strategies to introduce, sustain, and recognize leadership development beginning with Welcome Weekend for first-year students and extending throughout the undergraduate experience (e.g., peer mentor/academic consultant program, residence life, athletics, student senate committees, student advisory groups)

**Student Records and Academic Information**

**Objective 1:** Use current and new technology to make academic policy/procedures/guidelines easily available to students

**Strategies:**

- Develop student-friendly web site
- Design workflows to systematize commonly used paper-flow processes (graduation application, change of major)

**Objective 2:** Increase awareness of various high profile federal laws and regulations that have relevance to responsibilities of faculty and staff

**Strategies:**

- Prepare for distribution to faculty and staff, at the request of the Information Security Task Force, a FERPA Guide including key points of the law and a questions and answers component, and develop training materials to help introduce the Guide.
- Identify federal laws and regulations that are relevant to the unit and make sure the policy statements are up-to-date and publicly available
- Prepare staff development sessions for inclusion in the Human Resources Excellence in Learning and Development program; recruit presenters with expertise and assistance from within Drake

**Goal 2: Commit to being innovative and creative**

**Academic Achievement**

**Objective 1:** Design new and innovative programs that challenge traditional assumptions about academic achievement

**Strategies**

- Research programs at peer and leading universities
- Form a student advisory committee
- Review and evaluate current programs
- Develop relationships with faculty by serving on faculty-dominated committees that encourage co-curricular programming both in and outside of the classroom

**Objective 2:** Implement new programs, procedures, methods and processes to develop and expand student academic support

**Strategies:**

- Create a yearlong plan with all events carefully placed into the all-university calendar; next to each event/activity will be listed the cost, attendance expectation, desired outcome, and historical information pertinent to the events

**Disability Services**

**Objective 1:** Increase faculty awareness of students' disabilities

**Strategies:**

- Design awareness programs that challenge the traditional assumptions about people with disabilities, including but not limited to technology, universal design, and making educational environments usable by everyone without the need for adaptations
- Survey faculty and staff to gain information about their knowledge base and areas for growth
- Provide educational and training opportunities for faculty and staff in the area of universal design, either through newsletters or web site

**Professional and Career Development Services**

**Objective 1:** Implement new programs, procedures, methods and processes to develop and expand student academic support

**Strategies:**

- Collaborate with other areas on campus to design a strategic plan of events that is developmental in nature and intentionally timed to capture the attention of various constituents/audiences resulting in improved attendance at events and increased satisfaction with programming options
- Include these events on an all-university calendar, web sites, and special attraction modes of communication in various places throughout campus

**Student Co-Curricular Programming**

**Objective 1:** Engage students in improving retention by designing, implementing, and evaluating programs that specifically address enhancing their peers' intrinsic motivation toward their intellectual and personal development, and making connections between their current experiences and professional aspirations

**Strategies:**

- Introduce students to Drake's mission statement and explication during Welcome Weekend in ways that foster active participation and self-motivation, particularly regarding meaningful personal lives, professional accomplishments, and responsible global citizenship
- Collaborate with students through academic and non-academic student organizations to systematically solicit ideas to improve student satisfaction at all levels of their collegiate experience
- Provide research opportunities for students to examine how other institutions use student peer-to-peer interactions to improve retention and graduation rates

**Student Records and Academic Information**

**Objective 1:** Analyze staffing positions in student records and auxiliary offices that perform student records functions to assure optimum usage of available technology and knowledge of student records procedures, and assure accuracy of student records information and compliance with the institution's policies and procedures

**Strategies:**

- Review job descriptions and reorganize staffing when necessary
- Research options for new model of student records upkeep with an emphasis on accountability
- Design on-going staff development programs to address changing needs as technology replaces many previously manual processes

**Objective 2:** Consistently ask others within the University to look beyond the current business practice for solutions/ideas

**Strategies:**

- Utilize appropriate list serves, publications and professional conferences for heightening awareness and keeping up-to-date on best practices in Academic Support areas of Higher Education
- Seek input from on-campus student leadership teams to determine real and perceived student issues pertaining to Student Records
- Include college office "student records" personnel in discussions related to best business practices, innovations in use of technology, and staff development needs

**Goal 3. Ensure quality service with an emphasis on reinforcing Drake's principles of community and diversity.**

**Academic Achievement**

**Objective 1:** Develop a culture of evidence: information-based, statistical assessment of programs and services as well as graduate accomplishment

**Strategies:**

- Evaluate current supplemental instruction processes and make necessary changes based on the results (i.e., change courses where SI is offered, add or reduce student tutorial staff)
- Review the literature and identify benchmarks or indicators that can assist with determining the most effective strategies to address diverse learning styles in class and online as well as student preparation for classes (study techniques)

**Disability Services**

**Objective 1:** Develop disability awareness programming to educate Drake's students, faculty, and staff on issues concerning students with disabilities

**Strategies:**

- Conduct satisfaction survey of current students to gain information to ensure that their needs are being met, and any additional services they may require are being provided
- Review current campus accessibility plan to ensure that all areas of accessibility are of quality and add areas where accessibility continues to be an issue

**Professional and Career Development Services**

**Objective 1:** Create dynamic non-traditional programs that reflect a wide array of topics including but limited to ethics and integrity in the work place as well as in academe

**Strategies:**

- Promote and model quality in every event, every relationship, every program, and every plan generated for professional and career development services
- Develop new ways of using technology and other forms of media to communicate career services information to Drake's student body

**Objective 2:** Develop a culture of evidence: information-based, statistical assessment of programs and services as well as graduate accomplishment

**Strategies:**

- Review and evaluate current graduate survey process with the goal of obtaining accurate graduate information
- Coordinate efforts with alumni programs to ensure ongoing relationships with graduates

**Student Co-Curricular Programming**

**Objective 1:** Empower students to take more responsibility and the initiative for providing an environment that is welcoming and reflects a respect and appreciation for the importance of community and diversity

**Strategies:**

- Provide a variety of forums for students, faculty, and staff to have ongoing conversations about inclusion, conflict management, and challenges and rewards associated with developing a sense of community and appreciation for diversity
- Use the Don V. Adams Leadership Institute sessions and conferences to further engage students in intellectually stimulating conversations about global and controversial issues students face now and will encounter in the future

**Student Records and Academic Information**

**Objective 1:** Comply with the University's Business Continuity Plan

**Strategies:**

- Procure hardware and train appropriate staff to “image and index” vault transcript records and incoming transcripts
- Develop methodology for securing emergency contact information from every Drake student, faculty and staff

Student Academic Support Unit Strategic Plan updated on November 6, 2006  
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