Division of Student Affairs
Northern Illinois University

student-centered service
partnership focused on student learning
establishing an inclusive community
actively building collaborative relationships
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The Division of Student Affairs inspires students to engage and succeed in their individual pursuit of learning as they transform into dynamic leaders. In alliance with the educational mission of Northern Illinois University, the Division of Student Affairs creates student learning opportunities beyond the classroom that inspire intellectual, personal, and civic growth for leadership in a diverse and complex world.

On behalf of my colleagues in the seventeen departments that comprise the Division of Student Affairs, I am pleased to provide this report of activities and accomplishments during 2006-2007. Keeping our core values in focus, we began the year with several divisional goals. As illustrated in the following departmental summaries, we have made excellent progress toward achieving these and many other goals.

Housing & Dining was integral to the implementation of two of last year’s goals: breaking ground for a residential facility called Northern View for students with dependents, and initiating a campus-wide renovation plan entitled Living & Learning by Design. Student Involvement & Leadership Development established new marketing materials to promote the Leadership Academy. This cutting edge, multi-tiered leadership development program is now in its second year. These initiatives provide enhanced student-centered services and programming that continue to meet the needs of today’s student.

I am pleased to report that significant progress was made in developing new revenue streams, with an increase of over $300,000 through donations, grants, and innovative program sponsorship. Through collaborative ventures, the major contributors included: Housing & Dining; Student Involvement & Leadership Development; Commuter & Non-Traditional Student Services; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center; Campus Child Care Center; and Career Services.

Across the Division, we focused on enhanced assessment efforts. To that end, the Planning and Operations area launched a four-year benchmarking schedule that yielded significant learning and creative ideas for five departments. We also integrated learning outcomes into the annual planning process, resulting in timely and accurate data to inform our departments about the impact they are having on student learning.

I am proud of the work we do in the Division of Student Affairs at Northern Illinois University. We are a mission-driven organization that continually reinvents itself to support and meet the needs of our students. I hope you enjoy reading about our accomplishments during FY07; I certainly had the honor of being a part of this continuing success story!

Forward, Together Forward,

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Vice President for Student Affairs

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The Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) provides accommodations and services to students with disabilities, allowing them to access university academic and extracurricular activities by providing accommodated exams, e-text books, interpreting, and real-time captioning. In FY07 a total of 512 students were registered with CAAR, continuing the trend of increased students each year (465 students in FY06). Of the 443 students registered with CAAR in the fall, 86% ended the semester in good academic standing. In the spring, 89% of the 440 students ended in good academic standing.

In collaboration with the Department of Communicative Disorders, the Center implemented a new initiative in which graduate students work with students who need additional coaching or assistance. Collaborations will continue, with practicum students earning professional development hours with Access-Ability Resources.

Students with disabilities had many opportunities to become involved in university and community activities, to develop leadership skills, and to become more informed and responsible citizens. The Center offered workshops to promote civic responsibility and personal development, including presentations on the Americans with Disabilities Act, and information about voting and how to work with the Illinois Office of Rehabilitation Services.

Student organizations continued to promote disability awareness on campus with social, service, and awareness projects. SPIN, an organization that focuses on issues of mobility impairment, organized an athletic event featuring the Rockford Chariots, a professional wheelchair basketball team. DeafPride once again organized the annual Deaf Awareness Week, during which more than 2,000 Huskie football fans received Deaf Athlete Trivia flyers. In late spring, the Deaf Volleyball Team won the Harper College Invitational Deaf Volleyball Tournament.

The Asian American Center experienced a very successful second year of full-time operation during FY07. With a growing population of Asian Americans representing 16 diverse ethnic populations enrolling at NIU (nearly 7%), the Center actively assists in the recruitment and retention of this population, while providing support services in the areas of leadership development, student organizational outreach, and educational, cultural, and social programming.

The Asian American Pilot Peer Mentor Program, one of the center’s signature programs designed to engage first-year students, proved eminently successful. Nationally recognized with the Bronze Excellence Award by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, the Peer Mentor Program recruited forty mentors and forty protégés, developed a comprehensive assessment tool for its training program, developed a Peer Mentor Training Manual, and hosted a daylong training retreat for thirty mentors.

The Asian American Center strives to establish close working/advising relationships with seventeen Asian American student organizations, including four Greek-letter organizations. The facility continued to attract high utilization (1,288 users) and significant participation (5,040) from the Asian American student population in programs, events, and student organizations.

As a member of the Diversity and Equity Community of Practice, the Asian American Center collaborated with many campus departments to provide services, outreach, program development/implementation, and/or resource acquisition. These partnerships engaged the Latino Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, Center for Access-Ability Resources, Center for Black Studies, and Women’s Resource Center on such programmatic initiatives as Rock tha’ Mic: Huskie Talent Jam!, Paraprofessional Training Program, and the Second Annual Diversity and Equity Awards Gala.
Campus Child Care (CCC) continued to provide high quality care and education to children of NIU students (60%), faculty and staff (32%), and the surrounding community (8%). A total of 163 children were served during the year. Demographics served included 40% minority populations, 35% single parents, 28% commuters, and 75% low-income students.

Campus Child Care is committed to serving low-income families. The lack of affordable child care can create a significant barrier to student parents who are trying to pursue a college education in order to become self-sufficient. The Center secured several grants, most notably the federal CCAMPIS Grant (Child Care Access Means Parents in School), that served fifty low-income student families. Documentation collected from participants indicated that this program significantly contributes to students’ ability to stay in school and work toward the completion of a degree.

The Center provided experiential training and education for sixty-one NIU students preparing for work in education-related fields. Students are provided with a wide variety of experience and training opportunities to expand their knowledge and develop skills in the areas of working with children, parents, families, and staff.

Departments and organizations that collaborated with the Center to accomplish course assignments included: Psychology; Speech and Hearing Clinic; School of Music; Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity; TEACH students; and Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences (FCNS). Students provided learning activities and speech/language services for children, and participated in volunteer work, research projects, and observations.

The Center is accredited through the National Academy of Early Childhood programs and completed the process this year to achieve re-accreditation.

career services :07

Career Services enjoyed a successful year, accomplishing the goal of becoming a unified team in an environment of mutual respect and professional expertise that provides outstanding service to students.

Employer and student attendance at job and internship fairs was up 11%, generating revenue of over $225,000 and filling the Convocation Center to capacity. Under NIU’s leadership, the Mid-America Consortium for Education majors began a new electronic registration system for employers by utilizing Career Services’ highly successful eRecruiting system.

The career counseling unit co-presented seventy-eight UNIV 101/201 sessions with members of the Academic Advising department. A new collaboration between the College of Business, Textiles and Marketing, employers, and alumni resulted in a Dress for Success program that was attended by 300 students. Similarly, a collaboration with Community Advisors from Housing & Dining that provided résumé preparation and reviews drew more students than could be accommodated at the event.

The State of Illinois renewed a $119,000 grant for internships. With the additional participation of five newspapers and the American Red Cross, the internship program has increased significantly, making it possible to employ more Liberal Arts and Sciences majors. The Internship Student of the Year was a junior mechanical engineering major, who completed a rewarding and meaningful experience with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), thanks to the coordinated efforts of Career Services, Access-Ability Resources, and faculty. The NASA representative in attendance at the year-end luncheon was extremely complimentary, describing how the student aided the team working on the Space Shuttle disaster by providing the integral data that solved the dilemma.
The Department of Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services started FY07 with a move to a permanent space in the Holmes Student Center. The departmental office occupies space formerly utilized by the Students Who Are Non-Traditional (SWAN) organization. A grand opening reception and the addition of lounge furniture have greatly improved the visibility of the department. A director, one full time SPS staff member, one graduate assistant, and several student workers developed and provided all programs and services offered throughout the year.

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The Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services Advisory Board continued to meet to discuss, plan, promote, and implement many of the services and programs offered through this unit. In addition, the Off-Campus Housing Advisory Board continued to meet to collaboratively address issues related to off-campus student issues. Other campus partners included Parking Services, Housing & Dining, Student Involvement & Leadership Development, Student Support Services, Health Enhancement, Recreation Services, ITS, Public Affairs, and the Holmes Student Center.

The department completed a comprehensive benchmarking project of MAC institutions and other institutions of comparable size, to discern whether NIU was providing timely and appropriate programs. The study revealed that NIU's Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services is on a par with the majority of programs serving these particular constituent groups. The current plan for expansion of services and departmental goals will establish this department as a leader in the area of student service and programming.

counseling and student development center :09

Throughout FY07, the Counseling and Student Development Center (CSDC) provided a wide range of psychological services to the NIU community that included clinical services to 870 students through 5,083 appointments. Staff also provided outreach programming and workshops attended by 9,207 individuals (a 27% increase over FY06).

New initiatives included planning goals that targeted diverse populations, such as R.E.A.A.L. – a therapy-based support group geared toward enhancing the college experiences of African American students. This program provides African American students a confidential atmosphere in which to share their unique personal journeys. Students who participate in this group become empowered as they voice their concerns, learn to be more interpersonally effective, improve life skills, and sharpen their focus on their goals. Outside sources recognized the Center's positive impact. The Ally Award from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center and the Presidential Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity praised the Center's support and contributions to the LGBT community at NIU.

CSDC continued its emphasis on collaboration during FY07 through initiatives with Housing & Dining; Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences; Center for Black Studies; Asian American Center; and Kishwaukee Community College. The Center also collaborated with the International Student & Faculty Office to facilitate knowledge acquisition among international students about campus resources, and with the Study Abroad Office to educate students, prior to leaving for study abroad, about psychological and transitional issues. The International Association of Counseling Services re-accredited the Center, stating that the Center "continues to make a vital contribution to the quality of student and campus life."
Health Enhancement launched several new programmatic initiatives during FY07. A unique initiative was a nine-university benchmarking study regarding the provision of interpersonal violence prevention education through interactive peer theater. Efforts are underway to create an NIU peer theater troupe. Another exciting initiative involved the completion of the American College Health Association’s National College Health Assessment. NIU now has current indices of its students’ health status that will be used to provide new and improved student-centered programs and services.

Health Enhancement evaluated celebration drinking practices at NIU through survey data that revealed a snapshot of where, how, and when students celebrate. The department also developed an alcohol education curriculum infusion module, and placed a link to it on the department’s Web site. Designed for faculty and staff, the content consists of how to communicate consistent messages regarding alcohol, to promote safety for those who choose to use alcohol, and to support those who choose not to use.

The department expanded one of its ongoing initiatives by forming a speakers’ bureau to address interpersonal violence prevention education. Health Enhancement also focused on increasing students' knowledge, skills, and commitment to ending interpersonal violence. The Greek community and student organizations joined the general campus community to participate in Take Back the Night, brought the White Ribbon Campaign to campus, showcased an example of peer theater, and initiated Project Link during Sexual Assault Awareness Month. These initiatives reached record numbers of students.

The Life Enhancing Eating and Exercise Program (LEEP) fitness classes remained favorites for NIU’s African American and Latino/a populations. Classes consistently filled to capacity during both semesters, and requests for future classes remain high.

Health Services also collaborated with International Programs, Psychology Department, College of Health and Human Sciences, and community entities to provide on-site professional development opportunities for Health Services staff. In addition, Health Services maintained two physician members on NIU’s Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects.

Health Services continued to collaborate with local community agencies to strengthen disaster-response plans and procedures, and is currently partnering with Housing & Dining and the Counseling and Student Development Center to coordinate departmental pandemic response plans.
The department focused on two significant initiatives in FY07—Northern View Community and Living and Learning by Design. Northern View Community, NIU's first new housing facility to be built in the last thirty-eight years, serves graduate, professional, and international students, students with dependents, and students with special needs that cannot be best accommodated in the traditional residence halls. NIU built the facility through a public-private partnership without using state or student funds.

The Living & Learning by Design initiative includes renovation of Grant Towers plus renovation and a return of Gilbert Hall to its original use as a residence hall. This six-year capital renewal and maintenance plan will address four priorities: health and safety, ADA compliance, facility infrastructure upgrades, and modernization to comfortable, convenient, and attractive living and dining spaces.

As an added measure to ensure safe living environments, Housing & Dining performed criminal background checks on all students living in residence halls and installed a digital surveillance system in the main lobbies, elevator lobbies, elevators, and building entry/exit points in Grant Towers. Housing & Dining will expand this successful project to all residential facilities next year.

With the aid of direct student feedback, the department completed several large-scale facilities projects that included significant painting throughout the residence halls, lounge renovations in Neptune, and an upgrade of Lincoln Dining.

The department successfully completed numerous small-scale initiatives that included: hiring and establishing a marketing team for the department, opening Neptune Dining during the lunch hour to provide more convenient dining options, designing and implementing an online room application for returning residents (1,800 students served), and collaborating campus-wide to provide national speakers on alcohol use and sexual assault education.

Judicial Affairs' program goals included expanding Student Mediation Services to incorporate an increased awareness of, and participation by, all students in the student judicial process. Mediation is available to students and campus organizations for conflicts such as roommate disputes, lifestyle or ethnic tensions, communication barriers, and minor harassment issues. Staff members presented informative sessions to UNIV 101/102 classes to help students understand the mediation concept and encourage them to utilize this resource before conflicts escalate.

For FY07 the department created a successful new initiative in the establishment and training of Greek Judicial Boards. This initiative was accomplished through the collaborative efforts of Student Involvement & Leadership Development and the Greek leadership boards. Two members from each Greek-letter organization received training for board participation and handled six cases in the spring semester.

Judicial Affairs provided financial support to various recognized student organizations to assist in the presentation of diversity programs for the entire student body. The department actively recruits from diverse groups for office staffing and student members of judicial boards. Efforts focused on the enhancement of student learning included counseling of student violators during and outside of preliminary meetings, and the training of community advisers and teaching assistants. Ongoing programs included Civility Class, judicial hearings, the Judicial Advisory Board, and faculty and residential hall staff training.

Judicial Affairs continued numerous collaborative partnerships on campus. Staff members conducted panel reviews jointly with the College of Law and hired several law students as adjudicators and mediation coordinators. Other collaborative partners included the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center, Student Athletics, NIU Student Association, Housing & Dining, Residence Hall Association, and numerous academic departments.
The Latino Resource Center (LRC) provides resources that enhance the academic, social, leadership, and cultural experience of Latino/a students. The Center offers a gathering space for students, staff, faculty, and the community to learn about Latino heritage and diverse cultures and to address relevant issues in an environment where ideas can be freely exchanged. Staff members encourage students to use the facilities to plan cultural, educational, and social events; take academic courses in the Smart Classroom; use the library for study groups; work in the computer lab; or utilize the wireless Internet connection.

LRC focuses on student-centered service by developing partnerships focused on student learning, while establishing an inclusive community that builds collaborative relationships across campus. During Black History Month, the Latino Resource Center collaborated with the Center for Black Studies to present The African Presence in México lecture and reception. Over 250 students attended this and other events such as Latin Chill and the Latino Month ice cream social.

One of the Center’s priority goals for FY07 was to develop an outreach program to increase the recruitment of Latino students. Twenty-four schools visited the Center last year, totaling 771 prospective students. Another outreach initiative is the ongoing mentoring program at Clinton Rosette Middle School, where mentors meet with twenty seventh- and eighth-grade students every week.

An equally important goal for FY07 was to restructure and develop procedures for the Latino Resource Center retention programs: Latina Assistance Program (LAP), and Mentoring for Academic Success (MAS). The Center also works closely with the student organization, Supporting Opportunities for Latinos (SóL).

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center stretched in new directions during FY07 with three new initiatives. It established the inaugural LGBT and Ally alumni organization, explored the relationship of sexual orientation and gender identity to leadership for a new student-centered focus on leadership development, and took a step toward supporting the academic success and retention of students involved in LGBT activities with the initiation of the Joseph Harry Endowed Scholarship Program.

A special focus in FY07 was paraprofessional training to create an intentional learning environment for student employees and graduate assistants as a joint initiative of the Diversity & Equity Community of Practice. Through self-assessment tools, training workshops, and performance reviews, student employees were guided through a learning process to enhance their career preparedness.

To support the divisional goal of creating an inclusive community, the Resource Center increased community knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity through classroom presentations and training workshops that reached 437 people. A highlight of the year was the re-establishment of the Ally Program, which offers a campus-wide avenue for students, faculty, and staff members to learn about and support NIU’s LGBT students. The program reached 100% capacity in all training workshops.

The Resource Center continued to provide social, educational, and cultural programming by sponsoring, coordinating, participating in, or collaborating on seventy-five events that targeted the LGBT community or focused on LGBT topics. Approximately 2,000 people attended these LGBT-focused events. Utilization of the Resource Center continued to be high; averaging fifty-five visits per month with 80% of all visitors being students. First-time visitors accounted for 24% of all visits.
The staff of Orientation & First-Year Experience capped a productive year by helping 4,500 new students and 5,600 family members to make a successful transition to a new academic environment at NIU. Highlights of FY07 included the publication of the Task Force Report on a Comprehensive First-Year Experience for Northern Illinois University, the hiring of the unit’s first Technology Coordinator, expansion of the REACH Program into the spring semester, a special focus on the orientation of transfer students, and the development of an online orientation reservation system.

The department has increased its efforts to heighten a sense of belonging among members of the freshman class. The unit was significantly involved in Student Affairs/Academic Affairs collaborations; co-chaired the planning and execution of the 2007 Academic Convocation (which was canceled at the eleventh hour because of unprecedented flooding); and supported NIU’s extended new-student orientation courses, UNIV 101/201. Indeed, extensive cross-campus partnerships define the daily work of Orientation & First-Year Experience.

Finally, professional development activity and contributing to the profession continues to be a hallmark of Orientation & First-Year Experience. Department staff members edit The Journal of College Orientation & Transition, and are active in such professional associations as the National Orientation Directors Association, American College Personnel Association, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, the First-Year Experience movement, the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, and the Texas-based Institute for the Study of Transfer Students.

Recreation Services supports NIU students in reaching their academic and personal goals by providing unique services such as nutrition intern outreach services, nutrition one-on-one consultations, personal training, massage therapy, and acupressure. The Open Recreation program hosted at the Student Recreation Center, Chick Evans Field House, and aquatic centers offered 6,115 hours of recreation time and 370,498 usages during FY07. Through Intramural Sports, Group Fitness Classes, Outdoor Adventure trips, and Sport Clubs, Recreation Services offered 3,973 diverse student recreational opportunities.

The department focused on student learning initiatives in FY07. Recreation Services developed student staff learning outcomes for the Outdoor Staff Trip Training Program, the Group Fitness Instructor Performance Evaluation Program, and the Group Fitness New Instructor Training Program. Additionally, it developed and incorporated learning outcomes in Group Fitness classes and Outdoor Adventure Trips. Collaborating with UNIV 101/201 instructors, Recreation Services provided thirty-four information sessions/tours for freshman and transfer students, which included an introduction to relaxation exercises, fitness/wellness presentations, and sports activities.

Recreation Services continued its concentration on improving programs and services. In consultation with the Assistant Director of Fitness/Wellness, a student group from an academic class designed and implemented a nutrition needs assessment. The staff directing the group fitness program created an incentive-based program to encourage consistent participation.

To improve access for students with hearing impairments, Recreation Services installed the NexTalk software system that enables all staff members to communicate more easily with hearing-impaired students. In collaboration with the Center for Access-Ability Resources, Recreation Services conducted a needs assessment for students with physical disabilities in order to implement improvements to better respond to this population.
Student Involvement & Leadership Development provides a broad range of opportunities for students who wish to pursue their interests while enhancing and developing their skill-sets. As the departmental home of the Parents’ Association, Student Involvement supports the families of NIU students through outreach and programming. It also provides direct advisement to the four Greek councils, the Campus Activities Board, and the Student Association.

The department coordinates a wide variety of leadership programs on campus. One ambitious program is the Leadership Academy – a comprehensive, multi-tiered leadership development program designed to promote students through three levels of involvement: Emerging Leaders, Evolving Leaders, and Engaging Leaders. The department also makes Volunteerism opportunities available to students through on- and off-campus partnerships. Over 1,000 volunteer students, faculty, and staff members participated in NIU Cares Day, the first large-scale NIU-sponsored day of service for the community.

Students’ Legal Assistance continued to provide high quality legal services to students at NIU in FY07. The department assisted 975 individual new clients and 1,145 returning clients. Of new clients seen, 51% were male and 49% female; 7% were freshmen, 15% sophomores, 26% juniors, 34% seniors, and 16% post-graduate students.

Students’ Legal Assistance further developed its Debt Counseling/Budget Planning Program by adding a segment on how to analyze a credit report and improve one’s credit rating. It continued to seek out new partners to assist with the program, which is intended to increase students’ understanding of the benefits of financial planning to avoid debt.

Students’ Legal Assistance experienced major achievements in FY07 in protecting student rights. Staff members made over 200 court appearances on behalf of students, and handled two Fourth Amendment cases involving illegal police searches of students’ apartments or cars without a proper search warrant. Additionally, the office augmented its new “one-stop” service to help students expunge or seal criminal records.

Staff members continued to develop prevention programs to increase student learning to avoid legal problems and to address them before they become serious. Toward this end, the department added two new pages to its Web site: a self-help “Action Plan” for victims of identity theft, and a guide describing options available when issued traffic citations in DeKalb County. The office presented programs on issues of interest to many student groups, including landlord/tenant relations, traffic offenses, and driving under the influence of alcohol.

The department successfully implemented several new initiatives that included developing a comprehensive student organization manual; hosting a student organization advisor luncheon; implementing tier two of the Leadership Academy; collaborating with the city of DeKalb for the sesquicentennial celebration and homecoming parade; and developing an All-Greek Awards Program. Finally, the department established assessment protocols to quantifiably demonstrate the improvement of customer service within Student Involvement & Leadership Development.

The year marked very successful partnerships in educational program sponsorship and planning with Intercollegiate Athletics, Judicial Affairs, Housing & Dining, and Health Enhancement. Close work with the Student Association on their campaign to increase student voter participation resulted in the highest voter turnout in recent history.
The Women's Resource Center (WRC) serves as a central resource for women of the campus and community to support their advancement and success on the job, in school, and in their relationships, and generally to improve the campus climate for women. New initiatives in FY07 included program collaboration with Students’ Legal Assistance, the Division of International Programs, and Safe Passage, as well as the continued development of a student volunteer corps. Ongoing educational programs addressed workplace issues, diversity, anger management, mental illness, body image, teambuilding, Native American crafts, international student resilience, personal and career development, support for the College Parents Group (students who are parents), and sexual safety. Over 750 individuals attended these programs.

During FY07, the Center provided meeting space for several groups, including Questioning Youth, a community-based program for teens; a women’s group for the study of personal finance; and the College Parents Group and their children; and hosted the second annual LGBT Rainbow Ice Cream Social. Throughout the year, the Center offered career-related training opportunities for graduate assistants, interns, and practicum students from various academic programs. The Center hosted students from the Department of Counseling, Adult, and Higher Education and the Women’s Studies program.

The Women’s Resource Center participates in institutional policy development in areas affecting women. Staff members coordinated five award programs, including the Outstanding Women Student Awards, the Martha Cooper Journalism Award, the Wilma D. Stricklin Award, the Women Who Make a Difference Award, and the Outstanding Mentor Award. These awards are annually co-sponsored by the NIU Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), the Office of the President, and the Division of Student Affairs.

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