

## ***CR 2.10 - Student Support Services***

The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students.

### **Compliance Finding: In Compliance**

#### **Narrative:**

Student Development at the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USC Beaufort) supports the overall mission of the university by providing services and programs for students. Student Development provides both administrative and co-curricular services and programs that “encourage students to think analytically and abstractly, explore options, see similarities, be open to differences, communicate effectively and respect every individual.” Student Development strives to help students address the challenges of life, gain leadership skills, and “prepare graduates to participate successfully in communities here and around the globe.” [i] As partners in the education process, the various divisions within the Student Development unit offer services and programs designed to complement and enrich the classroom experience, to meet the development needs of a diverse student population and to prepare students to take an active role in achieving their intellectual and interpersonal potential. Each department submits an annual Institutional Effectiveness report [ii] to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Responses from the Graduating Student Survey administered in 2006 [iii] (70 respondents out of 133) and 2007 [iv] (92 respondents out of 146) show that approximately 21% of graduating students had participated in student organizations more than 5 hours per week and 24% performed community service or volunteer work for more than 5 hours per week. Financial aid services were rated as very good and/or outstanding by 62% and 60% respectively; 75% and 93% respectively rated services of admissions office as very good and/or outstanding; 60% and 55% respectively rated student activities as very good and/or outstanding. A comparison of ‘Benchmark Categories’ from the NSSE in 2007 shows that USC Beaufort students rated their relationship with administrative personnel and offices higher (4.70/5.00) than the national average of 4.64 [v].

#### **Services Provided**

Prior to the 2007-2008 academic years, career services were provided through the Academic Success Center (ASC). The ASC housed academic advising, testing placement services, career services, tutoring, and disability services. At the beginning of the 2007-2008 academic years, the ASC was reorganized and the services were assigned to Academic Affairs or Student Development. Academic advising is now a part of the Registrar’s office. Testing placement and tutoring services are housed under the newly created Center for Instructional Technology and Academic Resources. Career and disability services are part of one office, housed under Student Development. The 2007-2008 school year, will provide the first opportunity to comprehensively evaluate the four services independently of each other.

***Career Services*** [vi] Career Services provides comprehensive career planning services to all students at USC Beaufort. The career planning process begins with students exploring and selecting a career path during their freshman year. Career Services provides assessments that evaluate a student’s skill set to a desired career field. After choosing a career path, students are then encouraged to gain experience within their chosen field. Career Services makes an effort to partner with each academic department to provide appropriate career-related and experiential learning opportunities within the

local community for part-time jobs or summer internships [vii] Student Job & Volunteer Opportunities website. While researching possible job opportunities, students may use a variety of print resources available in the Career Services Library. Additionally, an online posting of available positions can be accessed through the Student Life website as a way to connect students with employers. To serve USC Beaufort's traditional and nontraditional students, both entry level positions and positions requiring prior experience are posted. Finally, as students enter their senior year and begin looking for permanent employment, individual appointments and group sessions are available through Career Services to help students with resumes and cover letters, interviewing skills, and job search strategies. Career Services plans to administer a post graduation survey to graduating seniors in order to evaluate the above services.

**Disability Services** [viii] Disability Services provides equal access to all programs at USC Beaufort for students with documented learning, psychiatric, and physical disabilities. Disability Services provides individualized accommodations to students with disabilities upon review of appropriate and timely evaluations, student questionnaire, and intake form. USC Beaufort adheres to Education Testing Service guidelines with regards to appropriate documentation for disabilities. The Disability Services office works in close cooperation with the Center for Instructional Technology and Academic Resources to provide appropriate accommodations and assistive technology to students with disabilities. Assistance provided by Disability Services includes but is not limited to: referrals to qualified educational psychologists; reasonable accommodations based on individual assessments; letters to professors regarding a student's accommodations; evaluation of the effectiveness of accommodations upon completion of each semester via a meeting with each student (or earlier, if requested by the student). A variety of resources can also be found in the Disability Services office.

**Financial Aid** [ix] The University of South Carolina Beaufort's Office of Financial Aid/Veteran Affairs is responsible for administering federal, state, institutional, and private funding to assist students with the costs of their education. USC Beaufort adheres to all federal regulations as set forth under Title IV student financial aid program regulations. Financial aid policies and procedures are in compliance with all Title IV regulations. Student eligibility is verified according to federal regulations; verification rules are reviewed each year and the financial aid system is modified to comply with the new rules and regulations. Approximately 50% of students responding to the Spring 2006 Graduating Student Survey [x] rate the services of the Financial Aid office as 'good/very good' and 21% as 'outstanding.' A similar survey administered to students graduating in Spring 2007 [xi] shows 50% rating the services as 'good/very good' and 20% as 'outstanding.'

**Judicial Affairs** The Judicial Affairs Office is committed to providing and ensuring an educational campus climate conducive to the personal and professional development of each student. The staff provides support and a process by which students pursue grievances within the campus community. All aspects of the student's non-academic discipline matters are addressed under the Student Code. In keeping with the services described above, Judicial Affairs also does the following each semester:

- Distributes a hard copy of the student handbook containing the Student Code of Conduct and hearing procedures [xii]
- Selects, trains, and advises Judicial Board members

**Housing Affairs** Capstone Management Palmetto Village staff manage the Palmetto Village apartments [xiii] on the South Campus with oversight by USC Beaufort. The Palmetto Village staff consists of a director and an assistant director. Both staff members collaborate with the Student Life Office to provide a supportive, high quality environment that promotes the educational goals and values of USC Beaufort. This relationship provides students with the best possible residential

experience that promotes learning and personal growth. Student Life staff working with Palmetto Village staff develop and promote programs, services and staff interactions that encourage student development with a particular emphasis on individual responsibility as outlined in the On-Campus Community Guide [xiv]. Leadership opportunities that support the educational and programmatic needs exist in the form of resident assistant positions, a residence hall association and a housing judicial board. Services are provided with an understanding and commitment to quality with regard to fairness, efficiency and cost effectiveness. Services provided include, but are not limited to, on-call maintenance service, on-call housing assistance and mail and package services. Evaluation of programs and services are conducted through Resident Advisors' evaluations, housing exit surveys, and program evaluations [xv]. Exit surveys conducted by Palmetto Village staff indicate a strong satisfaction with the facility, the director and staff.

***Military Programs*** [xvi] The Military Program at USC Beaufort maintains an office on the North campus due to its proximity to the two military bases (Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and Marine Corps Recruiting Depot/ERR Parris Island.) In addition to the direct services provided by staff on the North Campus, active military interested in enrolling at the university also are provided with admissions counseling on an individual basis on the military bases, thus providing applicants with direct access to enrollment services. A similar arrangement also is made available to continuing students. The services provided include academic advising, class registration, financial aid information and assistance in completing tuition assistance forms.

The integration of active military into the general student population of the USC Beaufort provides a diversity of experiences that allows for an exchange of knowledge and ideas that enhances learning at all levels. In addition, Military Program staff members are active participants of the Student Development team supporting the departments in carrying out their mission and goals. Consistent with USC Beaufort requirements, the program submits yearly Institutional Effectiveness Reports that evaluate the goals and objectives of the program. USC Beaufort is in good standing with Service Member Opportunity Colleges (SOC) and recently completed requirements to become a SOCMAR-4 (Service Member Opportunity College Marine) and SOCNAV-4 (Service Member Opportunity College Navy) institutions.

***Opportunity Scholars Program*** [xvii] The Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP) is a student support services initiative funded by the U. S. Department of Education (D.O.E.), Office of TRIO Programs. Since 1997, USC Beaufort has received federal funds through TRIO to support and increase the college retention and graduation rates of first-generation, low-income students, and students with documented disabilities. Approximately 160 students are served each year on the North and South Campus. The program provides a myriad of services to enhance student academic development, motivate students toward completion of a four-year post-secondary degree, and consider graduate school or other professional education beyond college. Each OSP student is assigned an Education Specialist who works one-on-one to monitor academic progress and address other issues that may interfere with student progress and well being. The program also provides tutoring, peer mentoring, advisement, cultural enrichment, computer assistance, and financial aid counseling. An Annual Performance Report (APR) is submitted to the D.O.E. in the fall of each academic year. The data reported evaluates the program's success in achieving each of the objectives approved by the D.O.E. The APR submitted for the 2006-2007 cohort year reported approximately 91% of students maintaining good academic standing, exceeding the approved goal of 75%. Approximately 88% completed English 101 with a grade of C or better, exceeding approved goal of 82%. The percent of students that persisted and stayed in college from the same cohort group was 75% compared to an approved goal of 70%.

***Student Life*** [\[xviii\]](#) The Office of Student Life is committed to educating the student in a holistic fashion. Communication and contact is maintained between the Office of Student Life and all other appropriate departments and divisions of the university (for example: Housing & Residence Life, Instructional Technology & Academic Resources, Information Technology, Advancement, Academic Affairs, Public Safety, Purchasing, Finance & Operations; Maintenance and Facilities, Continuing Education, Library, Athletics & Recreation, Admissions, Student Services and administration). The office staff publishes a weekly events calendar disseminated through email to students, faculty, and staff, and produces periodic newsletters displayed on both campuses [\[xix\]](#).

The Office of Student Life provides activities, programs and services to students outside the classroom. These include:

- Orientation for all students new to the university
- Clubs and organizations
- Student Ambassadors
- Advisement of Student Government Association
- Programming
- Leadership opportunities

The Office of Student Life evaluates the programs each semester and submits quarterly reports [\[xx\]](#) and annual Institutional Effectiveness reports [\[xxi\]](#). Success of these programs is discussed in Student Life team meetings as well as in debriefings with appropriate students and personnel involved in production of events. Evaluation of new student orientation conducted in 2005-2006 [\[xxii\]](#) shows 187 out of 195 answers on evaluations indicating ‘strong satisfaction’ with the event. Results in 2006-2007 [\[xxiii\]](#) show continued satisfaction with a total of 220 out of 226 answers showing ‘strong satisfaction.’

Other Student Life Programs include:

- ***Advisement of Student Government Association (SGA)*** The SGA is made up of four elected executive officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary General), senators and general student body. The Director of Student Life is the advisor to the SGA. The organization’s constitution can be found in the student handbook [\[xxiv\]](#). The SGA holds representation on the Chancellor’s Cabinet, and maintains its own Presidential Cabinet made up of a presidential advisor, secretary of community outreach, secretary of academics, secretary of athletics, secretary of housing, and secretary of information technology. The treasurer chairs a budget committee, and the president chairs a constitution committee. The senate meets twice monthly, and the executive board meets twice monthly. The senate has capacity for thirteen senators.
- ***Clubs and Organizations*** Students have access to all the current clubs and organizations. Students may join as general members and may be elected officers. All clubs have a social and educational foundation and are comprised of students from both campuses. Students wishing to start a new club/organization follow the charter process as described in the approved policy printed in the Student Handbook. The Office of Student Life oversees the allocations of budgets to each organization, and abides by the set policy [\[xxv\]](#) when

allocating funds. The office also monitors the use of the student lounges and assists organizations in planning and facilitating programs and events.

- **Leadership Opportunities** Students may take part in leadership opportunities such as the Women's Leadership Series [xxvi] hosted in spring of 2007. USC Beaufort plans to expand its leadership programs in the 2008-2009 academic years. Student leaders have the opportunity to travel to regional and national conferences that address a variety of topics. As an example, in spring of 2007 a student delegation to the regional National Association of Campus Activities conference won an award for Outstanding Delegation. Students enrolled in the Opportunity Scholars Program are nominated to participate in the annual Wanda Hicks-Bellamy Leadership Conference held at Myrtle Beach, SC, every January.
- **Orientation** Upon being admitted to USC Beaufort, students receive a letter notifying them of orientation which is mandatory for first-year students and strongly recommended for transfer students. Beginning in the 2008-2009 academic years, orientation will be mandatory for all incoming students. Students have a choice of orientation sessions and go through a day of information sessions led by faculty and staff. The day culminates with advisement and course selection. Parents are afforded the opportunity to attend a parent orientation. Under the direction of staff, current students guide the incoming students and parents through the day [xxvii].
- **Programming** The Office of Student Life provides campus education and programming to students throughout the academic year. The programs include a variety of themed and cultural events that promote the mission to complement and enrich the classroom experience, meet the developmental needs of a diverse population, and prepare students to take an active role in achieving their intellectual and interpersonal potential. Programs are identified and selected by the unit's staff, and beginning in fall of 2007, the Sand Shark Productions campus activity board. The board is made up of students and approved by the Director of Student Life. Students have access to all programs sponsored by the Office of Student Life.
- **Student Ambassadors** Student Ambassadors are current students who represent USC Beaufort by giving tours during the week and Saturdays and by participating in larger-scale events including Campus Day, Commencement and other sponsored events as needed. Students go through an application [xxviii] and interview process. Those selected participate in 5 hour training sessions [xxix].
- **Student Wellness** In keeping with its mission and belief that a student's physical, emotional, and social well being provide a firm foundation for academic success, USC Beaufort, through the unit of Student Development, addresses the many issues that students encounter in the normal pattern of human growth and development. At the beginning of and throughout each new academic year, programs are presented on topics such as date rape/sexual assault, drug/alcohol abuse, emergency responsiveness, etc. Mental health counseling is provided by a licensed psychologist who meets with students privately. Students may self initiate meetings with the psychologist or are referred by faculty/staff. The physical well being of each student is addressed by local hospitals. Emergency situations are handled by the Department of Public Safety who, in turn, assist a student in reaching the hospital for treatment. On-going assessment of the above services is carried out by the Student Development unit and appropriate changes are made when deemed necessary.

The Director and staff of the Office of Student Life belong to the American College Personnel Association, the National Association for Campus Activities, and the National Orientation Directors' Association.

### **Supporting Documentation**

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <a href="#"><u>i</u></a>      | <a href="#"><u>USC Beaufort Mission</u></a>                                     |
| <a href="#"><u>ii</u></a>     | <a href="#"><u>Student Development Institutional Effectiveness Report</u></a>   |
| <a href="#"><u>iii</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>Graduating Student Survey 2006</u></a>                           |
| <a href="#"><u>iv</u></a>     | <a href="#"><u>Graduating Student Survey 2007</u></a>                           |
| <a href="#"><u>v</u></a>      | <a href="#"><u>NSSE 2007</u></a>  |
| <a href="#"><u>vi</u></a>     | <a href="#"><u>Career Services</u></a>  |
| <a href="#"><u>vii</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>Student Job and Volunteer Opportunities</u></a>                  |
| <a href="#"><u>viii</u></a>   | <a href="#"><u>Disability Services</u></a>                                      |
| <a href="#"><u>ix</u></a>     | <a href="#"><u>Financial Aid</u></a>  |
| <a href="#"><u>x</u></a>      | <a href="#"><u>Graduating Student Survey 2006</u></a>                           |
| <a href="#"><u>xi</u></a>     | <a href="#"><u>Graduating Student Survey 2007</u></a>                           |
| <a href="#"><u>xii</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>Student Code of Conduct</u></a>                                  |
| <a href="#"><u>xiii</u></a>   | <a href="#"><u>Palmetto Village</u></a>   |
| <a href="#"><u>xiv</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>On-Campus Community Guide</u></a>                                |
| <a href="#"><u>xv</u></a>     | <a href="#"><u>Palmetto Village Exit Surveys</u></a>                            |
| <a href="#"><u>xvi</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>Military Program</u></a>   |
| <a href="#"><u>xvii</u></a>   | <a href="#"><u>Opportunity Scholars Program</u></a>                             |
| <a href="#"><u>xviii</u></a>  | <a href="#"><u>Student Life</u></a>   |
| <a href="#"><u>xix</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>Student Life Weekly Events Calendar</u></a>                      |
| <a href="#"><u>xx</u></a>     | <a href="#"><u>Student Life Quarterly Report</u></a>                            |
| <a href="#"><u>xxi</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>Annual Institutional Effectiveness Report --Student Life</u></a> |
| <a href="#"><u>xxii</u></a>   | <a href="#"><u>2005-2006 Orientation Survey Results</u></a>                     |
| <a href="#"><u>xxiii</u></a>  | <a href="#"><u>2006-2007 Orientation Survey Results</u></a>                     |
| <a href="#"><u>xxiv</u></a>   | <a href="#"><u>Student Government Association</u></a>                           |
| <a href="#"><u>xxv</u></a>    | <a href="#"><u>Clubs and Organizations</u></a>                                  |
| <a href="#"><u>xxvi</u></a>   | <a href="#"><u>Women's Leadership Series</u></a>                                |
| <a href="#"><u>xxvii</u></a>  | <a href="#"><u>Orientation Schedule Fall 2007</u></a>                           |
| <a href="#"><u>xxviii</u></a> | <a href="#"><u>Student Ambassadors Application</u></a>                          |
| <a href="#"><u>xxix</u></a>   | <a href="#"><u>Student Ambassadors Training</u></a>                             |