

ASSESSMENT REPORT

TRIO/Student Support Services

Program Purpose

A federal TRIO program, the Student Support Services Program at Cleveland State has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education since 1970. Because the program is grant funded, it must adhere to specific federal guidelines in providing services to its target population: students who are low income, first generation college and/or disabled students. The purpose of the SSS program is to increase the retention and graduation rates of its eligible participants. To achieve these federally mandated program goals, SSS provides supportive services such as academic advising, mentoring and tutoring to promote participants' successful matriculation at CSU.

The program goals/objectives listed below were developed by the previous program director for the current 5-year, 2001- 2006, grant cycle. Based on new federal requirements, these objectives have been modified for the upcoming 2006 -2010 grant cycle. The report below is an updated report based on the 2004/05 Annual Performance Report submitted to the Department of Education as well as any available data for 2005/06.

Objective #1: Identify, screen & select 500 participants by Sept. 30 of each project-year. At least 67%, or 335, will be both low income and first generation or individuals with disabilities; and 33%, or 165, will be low-income individuals and first-generation or individuals with disabilities. At least 33% of the individuals with disabilities will also be low income.

Outcome:

The Outcome measure for this objective was developed based on the federal regulations for TRiO/Student Support Services programs. The Department of Education's Federal Register, 34 CFR Part 646.11 provides eligibility guidelines for program participants.

Research:

Using information on the enrollment status of returning participants as well as information from the COMPASS Placement Test for new participants, 500 students were identified for program participation.

Findings:

For the 2004/2005, of the 500 participants, 211 were low income and first generation; 89 were low income, 91 were first generation; 109 participants were disabled individuals of whom 62 were low income. In 2003/2004, of the 500 participants, 217 were both low income and first generation; 23 were low income and 138 were first generation, 74 were disabled, and 48 participants were low income disabled students.

Review:

The files of each student participant were reviewed by TRiO staff at the end of each semester to ensure that appropriate program documentation of eligibility had been collected.

Actions:

A SSS Intake form was developed and implemented to secure participants' signatures verifying their eligibility for program services as defined by federal regulations.

Objective #2: 100% of new admits will have their academic needs assessed by placement tests and an Educational Action Plan [also referred to as Individual Progress Plan (IPP)] will be developed within one month of acceptance.

Outcome:

The outcomes for this objective were developed based on the program's retention goal. The Educational Action Plan provides the framework to help the students toward degree completion.

Research:

100% of new SSS students had their academic needs assessed and, using the academic checklist, an EAP developed within one month of participants' acceptance into the SSS program in Fall 2005.

Findings:

Each new student's academic and career interest along with his/her Placement Test scores were used to develop an Educational Action Plan.

Review:

Both the SSS student and his/her advisor reviewed the EAP during each advising session and discussed the student's progress in meeting goals of the EAP.

Actions:

Each advising session was documented in the student database.

Objective #3: 70% of all participants will be in good academic standing at end of each project year.

Outcome:

The goal was developed to meet the federal program requirement to increase the retention rate of participants. Good academic standing is based on participant's achieving a cumulative GPA of at least 2.00.

Research:

At the end of the academic year, the grades for each participant were collected, reviewed and assessed by the SSS advisors to determine the achievement of this objective.

Findings:

The grades for each program participants were collected and reviewed. Based on the cumulative GPA obtained for each participant, 71% of the program participants met the academic performance level required for good academic standing at the institution.

Review:

SSS academic advisors were involved in the review process by collecting, reviewing and assessing their assigned participants' academic performance at the end of the 2004/05 academic year.

Actions:

SSS advisors will continue to closely monitor the academic performance of each participant during the year.

Objective #4: 100% of low-income students will be offered sufficient aid each year. 10% of participants will reduce loan dependency each year.

Outcome:

Because the lack of sufficient financial aid is often the reason low income students do not remain in college, this objective was developed to address the retention goal of the project

Research:

Based on information from the Financial Aid Office, all of the eligible low income participants were offered and received financial aid. With assistance from the Financial Aid Office, 18% of eligible participants received a SSS Supplemental Grant Aid to reduce their loan indebtedness.

Findings:

Information on the financial aid awarded to each participant was collected and analyzed to determine if he/she received sufficient aid. Students who met federal guidelines for grant aid were identified and received grant aid from SSS to reduce their loan indebtedness.

Review:

With information received from the Financial Aid Office, SSS staff reviewed and assessed the participants' financial aid packets.

Actions:

For the 2005/06 academic year, arrangements have been made to receive participants' financial aid information upon acceptance into the program.

Objective #5: 70% of participants will maintain a minimum of 12 credit hours each year.

Outcome:

This objective relates to the retention goal of SSS because the number of credit hours a student maintains and completes each semester impact their retention and time to graduation.

Research:

The enrollment status of each participant was reviewed to ensure their full-time status (at least 12 credit hours). The credit hours earned by program participants are collected and monitored by SSS advisors each semester.

Findings:

According to the enrollment status collected by the project advisors, 86% of the participants were enrolled for least twelve credit hours during 2004/05.

Review:

The program advisors assisted the participants in registering for classes to ensure their full-time enrollment. The advisors were also involved in registering and monitoring the enrollment of assigned participants each semester.

Actions:

The SSS advisors will monitor participants' enrollment periodically during each semester.

Objective #6: 65% of SSS participants will be retained from one academic year to the next.

Outcome:

This objective relates directly to the overall goal of the SSS program: to increase the retention rate of low income, first generation students.

Research:

The Fall 2005 enrollment status of participants who attended CSU in 2004/05 was collected and reviewed.

Findings:

Based on participants' Fall 2005 enrollment status collected by the advisors, 65% of the program participants were still enrolled at CSU the following academic year. The retention rate for 2004/05 was also 65%.

Review:

At the beginning of Fall 2005, the SSS advisors reviewed the enrollment status of each participant on their 2004/05 caseload to determine if s/he was enrolled for Fall 2006.

Actions:

At the beginning of each semester, the enrollment status of each participant is determined by the SSS staff.

Objective #7: 20% of project seniors will graduate in each cohort, excluding transfers and those who exit the institution for health reasons.

Outcome:

The goal of the SSS program to increase the graduation rate of its participants was used to develop this objective.

Research:

The names of SSS participants who graduated in 2004/05 were identified based on enrollment information collected by each advisor.

Findings:

Of the eligible senior-level participants in 2004/05, 40% graduated, exceeding the goal of 20%, according to the enrollment status collected by the project advisors.

Review:

The graduation status of senior-level participants was collected by the project advisors. Program advisors assisted junior-level students in declaring their majors and assisted them with the completion of necessary paperwork to transfer to the appropriate college.

Actions:

A more effective method of monitoring participants' academic progress towards graduation has been developed and implemented to assist in ensuring the timely graduation of the participants.

Objective #8: Cleveland State University SSS Program will provide allowable activities cited in Objectives 1-7 that will positively influence the institutional climate for SSS eligible students.

Outcome:

This goal was developed to address one of the federally mandated goals:
"Foster an institutional climate supportive of the low income and first generation college students and individuals with disabilities.

Research:

Satisfaction surveys on advising services were completed by students to assess students' satisfaction with the Advising Center in which the TRiO/SSS advisors are housed.

Findings:

Based on the results of the advising surveys that have been completed, and based on the criteria data collected, the University Advising Office's findings were that students are receiving a consistently high level of advising services.

Review:

The TRiO/SSS staff reviewed the survey used by the Advising Center.

Actions:

For 2005/06, SSS developed and administered satisfaction surveys to project participants. The results will be tabulated at the end of the grant year.