

2022-23 Student Affairs Annual Report Summary

Brief Overview

The Division of Student Affairs is gifted with talented, dedicated professionals who continuously put our students first. It is our staff, from directors to UAW office assistants, who have carried us through a difficult year of transition and helped us emerge as a cohesive and collaborative division excited to take on the renewed challenges of student success and retention.

Throughout this past year, we have improved existing programs such as Homecoming and the Parade of Nations, developed creative support mechanisms like the Student Development Scale, enacted strategic processes to create space in on-campus housing, educated students on the value of listening and respecting alternate viewpoints, and engaged in collaborative efforts to bring well-being initiatives into the classroom. All of our efforts create a sense of belonging, community, and affinity for Michigan Tech which positively impacts student success and, ultimately, retention. It is notable that Student Affairs departments were able to provide continuity of service and programming to our students despite the obstacles we faced due to staff attrition. Specific accomplishments are highlighted below.

Accomplishments

The directors in Student Affairs will be discussing the collection and reporting of data relevant to each individual area and the division as a whole at a retreat scheduled for June 14, 2023. Moving forward, we will strive for consistent, meaningful quantitative, as well as qualitative, data which reflect our efforts toward student success and retention. We will be able to use this data in the future to help us convey our accomplishments in more measurable ways. The accomplishments listed below are, for the most part, reported in narrative form. These fall into the broad categories of staffing, programming, and student support.

Staffing

Staffing levels represent an accomplishment, but also remain an obstacle for the overall success of the Division of Student Affairs. This past year we experienced unprecedented attrition on top of already reduced staffing. To address this in the latter part of the academic year, we engaged in thoughtful hiring processes and also took an introspective look at the expertise and dedication of our existing professionals. After experiencing nearly a 30% reduction in staff, we have hired 7 new staff, promoted 3 positions from within, and will be welcoming at least 3 new staff members before the end of the fiscal year. In the past 2 months emphasis has been placed on communication and on staff morale and appreciation, which has created an environment where staff are eager to contribute and feel a renewed sense of purpose.

Programming

Student Affairs staff are adept at providing engaging and enriching experiences that foster student retention. Despite the shortage of staff, we delivered some record-breaking results. Highlights include:

- 606 employers attended the career fairs, a record high number
- 9097 students (non-unique) participated in wellness related programming activities

- 15 new registered student organizations (RSOs) were established, giving a total of 257 RSOs
- Record number of RSOs participated in Spring Fling
- Increased collaboration resulting in improved delivery of Homecoming programming and events. Areas participating included Student Leadership & Involvement, Athletics, Alumni, Residence Education & Housing Services, and the Wahtera Center for Student Success
- The return of the multicultural food festival to the Parade of Nations

Student Support

Student support is at the heart of what we do in Student Affairs. In an effort to increase retention, we address academic, housing, and mental health support, food insecurity, personal crisis management and developmental growth. Specific examples from the 2022-2023 academic year are as follows:

- In response to student feedback, REHS maintained its commitment to fostering an inclusive, residential experience by expanding gender inclusive spaces on campus, increasing gender inclusive bathroom availability, and spearheading a first-year themed housing initiative.
- Center for Mental Health & Well-being clinical support
 - 3609 total contacts & 651 unique students—on campus
 - 292 total contacts & 179 unique students—MySSP
 - 75 emergency/crisis cases—on campus
 - 16 emergency/crisis cases—MySSP
- International Programs & Services served 1148 students and scholars from 59 countries
 - 46 UG students
 - 700 GR students
 - 374 alumni
 - 28 scholars
- The Office of Academic & Community Conduct provided support to RSOs with disparate political views, allowing events to proceed on campus without disruption. A restorative circle with Keweenaw Socialists, Young Americans for Freedom, and Turning PointUSA at Michigan Tech led to these RSOs planning a combined event together.
- The Center for Mental Health and Well-being collaborated with the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and the Department of Engineering Fundamentals to increase awareness/utilization of mental health supports, events, and resources among underrepresented and first year students.
- HuskyFAN Food Pantry saw a record number of donations and pounds of food distributed
 - Monetary donations (July - April): \$8,709.75
 - Pounds of food donated in: 4,136
 - Pounds of food distributed out: 5,887
- The Dean of Students Office support
 - 1351 unique UG students
 - 129 unique GR students
 - 1378 excused absence notices sent
- The Early Intervention Team provided support to and/or monitored 58 students
- REHS successfully forecasted the housing demand and implemented a strategy that mitigated the demand for 478 beds for Fall 2022 and is actively preparing to mitigate 513 beds for Fall 2023 in an intentional, empathic, and developmental way.

Goals & Initiatives for 2023-2024

Every area within Student Affairs establishes individual annual goals. Each area will include goals or initiatives which support the overarching initiatives for the entire division. The following are the proposed Division of Student Affairs initiatives for 2023-2024.

- Creation of a Student Success Council to address holistic, institutionally-coordinated student success efforts. The council will:
 - Provide recommendations on efforts that impact holistic student success and well-being
 - Advise senior leadership on institutional policies and practices that either hinder or promote student success
- Develop a plan for increasing staffing in Student Affairs to a level that is sustainable for the adequate support and retention of students
 - Identify needs in each area based on benchmarking and industry standards
 - Create 3-, 5-, and 10-year plans for adding additional staff and programming in preparation for increases in enrollment
- Create professional development plans within each department in Student Affairs and provide staff with the ability to spend a minimum of 10% of their time on professional development and training.
 - A system will be developed which will allow staff to track their professional development activities
 - Ensure each director or supervisor engages in meaningful conversations to identify individual staff members' professional aspirations and talents

Obstacles which could hinder success of these initiatives include transition of leadership and the inability to fill staff positions due to budget/salary constraints or lack of available housing.