Ad Hoc Committee on Customer Service and Registration
(Following the Facilities and Property Committee)
Friday, October 17, 2008
Board of Supervisors’ Meeting Room
2nd Floor, J.S. Clark Administration Building
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Invocation
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Public Comments
5. Informational Item(s)
   A. Customer Service and Registration Reports, by Campus
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment

Members
Mr. Jamal A. Taylor (Chair); Rev. Jesse B. Bilberry (Vice Chair); Mr. Patrick Bell,
Atty. Tony M. Clayton, Atty. Patrick Magee, Mr. Myron K. Lawson (Ex Officio)
Status Report on Customer Service
And Registration Problems

In response to the Board’s directive that each campus appoint an ad hoc committee to address customer service issues, SUBR submits the names of persons who will serve on this committee and the areas that these individuals represent.

Kofi Lomotey .................. Chancellor
Michelle Hill .................. Chancellor’s Office
Cecelia Griffin-Golden ........ Academic Affairs
Ed Pratt ....................... Media Relations
D’Andrea Frank-Lee ............ Registrar’s Office
Mark Young ................... Admissions and Recruitment
Tanisha Phillips ................ Financial Aid
Demetria George ............... Bursar’s Office
Errica Taylor .................. Residential Life
Terrica Fields ................ Student Health Center
Karen Thomas ................ Comptroller’s Office
Maletta Payne ................ University Library
Barbara Bilberry .............. Faculty (Social Work)
Mary Gray ..................... Faculty Senate Representative
Warner Anderson .............. Faculty Senate Representative
Velva Thomas ................ Staff Senate Representative
Cleophus Bankston ............ SGA Representative
Ritney Castine ................ SGA Representative
Krysta L. Ricard .............. SGA Representative
Davitria Stubbs ............... SGA Representative
Leonard McCastle .......... Staff Representative

The composition of this committee is both deliberate and comprehensive in that its membership reflects all of the major service areas of the University. While the committee may appear to be rather large, SUBR views the problems related to customer service as “large” and as a challenge that the University must address broadly and decisively.

The administration believes that as we address major customer service issues, some problems associated with the registration process will also be addressed. In spite of this fact, however, problems and challenges associated with registration are also being addressed separately under the leadership of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost and the Division of Academic Affairs. This will be done in collaboration with other areas that play a key role in the registration process in the Division of Finance and Administration and the Division of Student Affairs.
As the University addresses both customer service and registration issues, at the core of its efforts will be an emphasis on ensuring that the entire SUBR Family understands, appreciates, embraces and applies a common value system adopted by the University. This value system will be based upon agreed upon desirable principles and qualities that serve as guide posts when pondering and making key decisions. These values are related to (1) Leadership, (2) Accountability, (3) Giving, (4) Nurturing, (5) Integrity, (6) Accessibility, (7) Pride, (8) Patience, (9) Excellence.

Although the beginning alphabet of each value spells out the word, LAGNIAPPE which means “something extra,” good customer service is certainly not something extra. Rather, it is basic and critical to the effective and efficient operation of the University.

In the weeks and months ahead, the work of this very important committee will be carefully monitored and evaluated. Where necessary, adjustments and changes will be made based on observations and evaluation of what works and what needs to be modified. The administration also wants to add that it views all issues related to customer service as critical. Thus, the Chancellor, along with his leadership team, had already articulated a commitment to improved customer service prior to the Board’s directive regarding same.
Southern University LAGNIAPPE: Something Extra

Leadership
Accountability
Giving
Nurturing
Integrity
Accessibility
Pride
Patience
Excellence
ADHOC Committee on Customer Service and Registration

Report

This report highlights the convening of the ADHOC Committee on Customer Service and Registration as comprised of the SGA President, Mr. Rodney McFarland; two student representation; Ms. Denesha Foster, Krystale Woods (Miss SUSLA); two staff members, Mr. John Mills, Aleshia Wilson and faculty members, Professor Willie Burton, Jimmy Daniel and Warner Brown. Ray L. Belton, Chancellor of SUSLA presided over the meeting. It should be noted that in the Fall, two additional students are scheduled to be appointed when the semester formally begins, on September 2, 2008.

The initial meeting of the Committee took place on Thursday, August 21, 2008, preceding the scheduled registration date for the university. Therein, members were issued the charge of the committee, specifically, addressing institutional practices concerning the professional service and the need to refine registration processes.

Members further engaged in productive dialogue sharing observations and suggesting strategies that had the promise of minimizing an adverse experience for students and community stakeholders. Of most importance, even in the first meeting, members revised a standing survey instrument that will be administered during registration, however, that now reflects questions assessing one’s overall experience relative to the process and how individuals are treated (i.e., assisted, customer friendly, provided accurate info, etc.).

Moreover, members expressed their respective interests and commitment to embrace the goals of the committee throughout the year. Suggestions that arose and will receive follow-up included:

- Need for additional volunteers (student ambassadors) with clothing that identify them to new students
- Information booth that is manned continuously and signs those clearly direct students to stations and buildings.
- Need to revisit student course sheet, denoting the classroom location number or lack thereof.
- Need more hard copies of class schedules instead of relying on web site to access information.
- Revisit university procedure of turning students away if they come to campus on unassigned registration dates.
- Need to revisit late registration fees-seen as too nominal

In addition, observations cited the need to:

- Adopt customer friendly slogans;
- Ensure "Live Voice" telephone exchanges;
- Explore monitoring strategies such as ghost shopping techniques;
- Develop strategies that reinforce the need to respect staff, faculty and students.

Generally, the meeting of the Committee was very productive with participants fully engaged. It was determined that the next meeting will be scheduled shortly after registration to review baseline survey data and to shape implementation strategies for the Spring 2009 semester.
On Wednesday September 24, 2008, SUSLA submitted its 14th day headcount to the Board of Regents, reflecting a four (4%) percent increase in students and the largest Fall enrollment ever realized in the history of this institution. Equally important, the University has begun to review the aforementioned registration survey seeking inputs from students particularly relative to examining the process and customer service. Accordingly, preliminary data reflect over 72 percent satisfaction in customer service and 67 percent satisfaction with the overall experience. Additional analysis will be conducted, and as previously mentioned, the committee will convene shortly to review observations and recommendations.
Southern University at New Orleans
Customer Service and Registration Task Force

In Attendance:
Victor Ukpolo, Chancellor
Aaron DeGruy, SGA President
Gloria Moultrie, Vice Chancellor for Community Outreach/Univ. Advancement
Janice Winder, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Shawn Gulley, Interim Comptroller
Wesley Bishop, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Mary Ann Francois, Community Coordinator
Donna Grant, Executive Director of Enrollment Services
Renee Gill Pratt, Director of Admissions
Gladys Allen, Registrar
Melba Venison, Early Start Program
Kathy Woods, Interim Director of Financial Aid
Trivia Garrett, Financial Aid Counselor
Edmund Cummings, Director of ITC
Sheila Wood, Interim Director of E-Learning
Harold Clark, Jr., Executive Associate to the Chancellor

ACTION PLAN

Introduction
Southern University at New Orleans continuously strives to improve registration and overall customer service. This report will identify both strengths and areas of opportunity discussed during a meeting on September 26, 2008, and will suggest ways in which to address challenges.

Chancellor Ukpolo opened the meeting by complimenting everyone for their assistance with helping SUNO surpass the 3,000 enrollment figure for the first time since Hurricane Katrina. Additionally, he noted for the second consecutive year, SUNO experienced the highest enrollment growth percentage of all four-year state institutions of higher learning. He asked those in attendance to remind their respective staff members to attend a thank you reception later that afternoon in the gym.

Enrollment Services

A. Strengths
   • The partial reopening of SUNO’s Health and Physical Education Building for the Spring 2007 registration period greatly alleviated many challenges with registration. Holding registration in this facility allowed us to establish a “one-
stop-shop” whereby students could be advised and complete registration within extremely close proximity. This allowed for more expediency and efficiency.

- The adoption of the Early Bird Registration and pre-advisement for first-time freshmen strategies prior to the start of Fall 2008 contributed to our success.
- SUNO also produced an incredible feat whereby first-time students were able to apply for admission and register for classes in one day. The late evening and Saturday registration opportunities work well for working adults.
- Personnel went door-to-door reclaiming our returning students throughout the New Orleans area in an effort to increase our retention rate. Door hangers informing students about registration were left at homes when no one answered.
- Personnel placed flyers at various businesses and churches promoting registration. They also spoke at several churches about registration.
- A telephone bank was established whereby prospective students were called about registration.
- In July, letters were sent out reminding all students of fall registration.
- The signing of award letters online is a great amenity, and several financial aid awards were processed much earlier than in the past.
- Assisted deans with completing classroom assignments and class cancellations
- Implemented rapid deletion of students when classes were cancelled and quickly placed them in other classes
- Remained open after hours to assist students on days personnel were not required to work late
- Sent letters to re-admit students and transfer students
- Processed re-admits on the spot
- Provided fast, efficient service so that there were no long lines
• Made phone calls to re-admits and transfer students to inform them of missing documents

• The Office of Student Financial Aid accepted written letters from students in lieu of on-line acceptance letters while the student web was undergoing repairs.

• The staff worked weekends to ensure that as many students as possible get reviewed and processed if possible.

• The Office of Student Financial Aid created a helpful hints booklet to guide the students through the financial aid and registration processes.

B. Challenges
• The volume of telephone inquiries received during registration increased tremendously, which, of course, is welcomed. All efforts were made to answer all calls and/or respond to voice messages but some went un-answered due to the increased volume.

• Students who requested transcripts experienced delays in getting them because most of enrollment services employees were requested to help with registration due to the increased volume of students attempting to enroll.

• Some academic colleges did not provide an adequate number of faculty members to advise students during registration.

• Problems beyond SUNO’s control with the student web created challenges with some students accepting their awards online.

• Not enough time to solely process information/data prior to meeting with students.

• Some faculty members were using rooms that had not been assigned to them.

Comptroller’s Office

A. Strengths
• To date the Comptroller’s Office has processed and made available over $2.9 million in student refund checks.
The Comptroller’s Office assisted over 2,000 students with promissory notes during SUNO’s Fall 2008 Registration period.

The Comptroller’s Office aided more than 50% of our registrants with Hurricane Katrina Assistance.

The Comptroller’s Office also issued $58,450 in SGA Loans to help our students buy books.

B. Challenges
   • This office noted that several students have not picked up refund checks.

Student Affairs/SGA

A. Strengths
   • The SGA Emergency Loan has been a great benefit for students who need financial assistance. Most students use these funds to purchase books while awaiting their financial aid refund.

   • The Division of Student Affairs distributed refreshments to students who were registering. Titled “The Knights Cool Drink of Water,” snacks have included coffee, donuts, fruit, chips, pickles, etc.

   • Student Affairs and Academic Affairs conducted Enrichment Seminars in which they discussed customer service-related issues with deans and faculty.

B. Challenges
   • An overwhelming number of students have contacted the SGA about problems experienced with processing financial aid.

   • During the most recent registration period, several students visited the Lake Campus instead of the Park Campus where registration was being held in the Health and Physical Education Building.

   • Some students didn’t know in a timely fashion that certain classes were closed.
Conclusion
Upon discussing the above information with meeting attendees, Chancellor Ukpolo explained that our increased number of students means that our customer service must improve. It is imperative that we step up the quality of our service which should positively impact our retention rate.

Mary Ann Francois, an expert in customer service, SUNO alumnus and staff member, will coordinate on-going workshops for various University departments. Ms. Francois indicated that she will cover several areas, including telephone etiquette, face-to-face-contact, and aspects specific to the departments. A detailed action plan and timetable are attached.

In addition, the following actions will be taken in an effort to address some of the challenges outlined above.

Enrollment Services
- More staff will be hired to assist in the areas where SUNO experiences challenges with registration and customer service.
- During high volume periods such as registration, more current personnel at the University will be actively involved with this process and trained to assist with various functions. Some of these duties include answering telephones, handling transcript requests, and other clerical-related functions. We will also explore having staff work in shifts and providing snacks and lunch for them.
- SUNO will produce and post a master listing of the duties and working hours for everyone student workers/volunteers, faculty and staff involved with the registration process, and hold a series of training sessions for these individuals.

Financial Aid
- A checklist form or receipt will be created to verify that a student has received certain services.
- Prior to arriving at the institution, students will receive letters informing them what components of the financial aid process have been completed.
- This department will also significantly increase its staffing in order to increase efficiency.
- Beginning Spring 2009, work schedules of this department will allot more time to process financial aid documents prior to meeting with students.
Comptroller’s Office

- Plans to place flyers in classrooms regarding notifying students that checks are available.

The ITC Department

- A second SUNO switchboard will be added with the hiring of a new operator.

- The ITC department will work with Enrollment Services to provide a significant bank of telephones with additional personnel on-site for student inquiries. Calls from students will be re-routed to these telephones.

Student Affairs/SGA

- Student Affairs/SGA will continue to work with Enrollment Services to produce signage directing students to various stages of registration and employ, possibly, the First Fifty Knights or other student organizations to be on-site to direct students and assist with walking them through the registration process. Signage will identify the names of the various colleges and departments.

Timelines for Proposed Workshop Activities – conducted by Mary Ann Francois, Customer Service Coordinator

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ACTION ITEM</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Complete</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attend focus group with Representatives from various segments.</td>
<td>9/26/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet with IT to discuss features of existing telephone system that can be activated to help alleviate unnecessary telephone calls.</td>
<td>9/29/08</td>
<td>9/30/08</td>
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<td>Meet with Departments of Admissions, Recruiting &amp; Retention and Financial Aid to discuss and document internal administrative processes and ways to improve the flow of communication and the registration process.</td>
<td>10/01/08</td>
<td>10/03/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordinate with Human Resources to identify, contact and schedule Customer Service training for remaining departments that includes the clerical staff and Work Study students. Training to from 10/27/08 thru 11/14/08.</td>
<td>10/01/08</td>
<td>10/15/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with IT to discuss findings with the above departments and how to activate or expand existing telephone features to address University access during registration.</td>
<td>10/06/08</td>
<td>10/07/08</td>
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• Design Customer Service training module (to include Effective Telephone Techniques) that can be modified to meet the needs of each department. Acquire approvals and order materials (posters, pins, etc.) to reinforce training objectives.

• Schedule and conduct first phase of Customer Services training for the Offices of Admissions, Recruiting & Retention and Financial Aid.

• Complete Customer Service training for remaining campus personnel including clerical personnel and Work Study students.

• Evaluate, summarize and submit written report, with recommendations, to the Chancellor.

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Registration and Customer Service at the Southern University Law Center

The SULC Committee on Registration and Customer Service met to determine if there are particular concerns or problems relative to customer service and registration at the school. Not only were members asked to individually assess this issue but also to garner and welcome comments from others. Neither committee members nor those to whom they spoke registered any problems to be resolved concerning registration. A customer service item is noted below.

The office of Records and Enrollment and other administrators at the Law Center work diligently, almost year-round, to assure a smooth registration process for all students. A two-day orientation session is held for incoming 1Ls in which a full overview of the Law Center’s expectations of students and each category of anticipated student need is addressed. Additionally, the Law Center’s faculty and staff are very accessible and provide an open door policy for all students. Moreover, our faculty is considered “notoriously approachable,” as reported the most recent edition of the Princeton Review. Additionally, comments from students in the 2007 Law School Survey of Student Engagement found remarks as “the law school works hard to provide extra benefits and learning tools to help students learn to the best of their ability;” and “I loved the professors and staff. I will miss SULC because of them.”

Mention was made, however, of glitches, from time to time, in the timely receipt of checks and, at other times, students may incur difficulty or delay in the processing of financial aid applications. This may be due, in part, because the SULC has to rely on the Financial Aid office at the Southern University and A&M College.

The Law Center will work diligently to improve customer service to all of our constituents and will always strive for first class service.