Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
SACS: Self-Study Report

2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. (Student Support Services)

Compliance Status: Compliance

Narrative

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi provides student-support programs, services, and activities that promote student learning and enhance the development of the students as the University prepares its "students for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in the global community [1]." The Momentum 2015 Strategic Plan continues this support through its unifying themes of excellence, engagement, expansion, and effectiveness; but most predominately through imperative one, three, six, nine, and eleven [2]. Imperative one calls upon the University to "build and sustain academic excellence and competitive programs," noting that services and operations dedicated to student recruitment, retention and welfare should enhance the educational experience [3]. Imperative three requires that the University "instill global perspectives into the academic life of the University" by hosting nationally and internationally known artists, performers and speakers as well as regional and national conferences, symposia and festivals [4]. Imperative six challenges the University to "recruit, retain and graduate a diverse and highly qualified student body," so that it mirrors the state population in its enrollment. The University's student-centered environment is designed to enhance the intellectual community and overall student experience, helping to prepare and graduate students with the critical-thinking, problem-solving and leadership skills necessary to excel and advance in an ever-changing global economy [5]. Imperative nine engages the University in the local community, calling upon us to "live, learn and work together to promote a vibrant Coastal Bend community." Texas A&M-Corpus Christi has learned from its experiences with an active and supportive community that successful partnerships bring mutually beneficial outcomes. Our partnership with the community has resulted in an ongoing, interdependent relationship, enhanced the quality of life, and prepared students for civic engagement [6]. Imperative eleven challenges us to "preserve and foster an inviting island environment," even as we continue to meet the needs of an expanding student population. Housing and parking accommodations, dining and food service venues will continue to grow to meet expanding needs while the University remains sensitive to its natural environment and contributes to the health and well-being of the campus community [7].

The Division of Student Affairs [8] has primary responsibility for student support programs, services and activities, and provides excellent opportunities to help students develop leadership skills for lifelong learning [9]. These programs and services are outlined in both the undergraduate [10] and graduate catalogs [11] and are prominently displayed on the Division of Student Affairs web page, Student Services A-Z [12]. The student support programs, services and activities offered through the division and augmented by other units throughout the University focus upon excellence, student engagement, and expansion as highlighted in the imperatives above. Each program, service, and activity described below undergoes rigorous assessment annually and the results of assessment are entered into WEAVEonline, the University's web-based assessment tool. Additional information related to the assessment of the areas described below is included in the response to Principle 3.3.1.3 [13].

Career Services
Career Services engages students and alumni in career exploration, career planning, job-search preparation, and provides print and online career-related resources and job-listing services. Students or alumni who are seeking full-time, part-time, internship, and volunteer opportunities register with Career Services and submit resumes through I-Link. Career Services sponsors on-campus recruiting, workshops and presentations both in and out of the classroom, the Business Etiquette Dinner, and the Get the Job Fashion Show.

Career Counseling offers one-on-one sessions to help students gain insight and awareness about career or educational options and job-search strategies. Resume reviews and mock interviewing challenge and prepare students for their future career endeavors. Career Services hosts seven fairs throughout the fall, spring and summer. These fairs include the All Major Career Fair, Teacher Job Fair, Graduate School Fair, Health Care Professional Fair and the Part-Time On-Campus Virtual Career Fair. Online resources include CHOICES assessment, which helps students identify interests, clarify values, and assess skills in order to make better educational and career decisions. The Career Guide is available both print and online and offers assistance with resume-writing guidelines, networking, evaluating a job offer and transitioning from college to career.

Center for Athletic Academic Services
The Center for Athletic Academic Services provides services to student athletes that enhance their academic experience, assist in their retention and development as students, and promote the CHAMPS/Life Skills program and the five commitment areas (commitment to academic excellence, athletic excellence, personal development, career development and service). Services include supervised study hall, a computer lab, individual and group tutoring sessions, and the availability of learning assistants. Scholastic supervisors work with the athletic department, students, coaches, faculty and staff to coordinate athletes’ schedules, determine academic eligibility and provide necessary support to athletes.

Center for Academic Student Achievement
The Center for Academic Student Achievement assists students in developing the skills necessary to be successful learners within a supportive environment that fosters intellectual growth. Students work collaboratively to achieve academic success by gaining an understanding of their learning styles and by mastering learning strategies. The center identifies at-risk students who require developmental coursework and assists with course placement and support services such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, and early academic guidance/intervention. Tutoring services are available both in-person (six days per week) and online (24/7) through SMARTTHINKING, a contracted service introduced in fall 2008. As a part of the Texas Success Initiative, intervention specialists housed in the Center for Academic Student Achievement work closely with students in developmental-education courses or on probation to develop and monitor individual success plans. Peer mentors coordinated by the center work with at-risk students as a part of the Academic Insight Monitoring Program (AIM).

Disability Services
Disability Services coordinates services and accommodations to ensure accessibility and utilization of all programs for all students with disabilities. The services are designed to meet the unique educational needs of enrolled students with documented permanent or temporary disabilities. Disability Services is committed to providing students with disabilities equal access and opportunity to discover, communicate, and apply knowledge and abilities. Disability Services works with the faculty to ensure that students with disabilities receive equal access to curricular and co-curricular opportunities in the academic community. Sample services include height-adjustable tables, closed-circuit television, Kurzweil 3000 Scan and Read, ZoomText Xtra Level 2, TTY Telephone, JAWS for Windows, and interpreters. These services are available in Disability Services main office, Exam Services and the
Mary and Jeff Bell Library [32]. Disability Services also works hard to ensure that appropriate testing accommodations are provided for students who are eligible for services [33].

Financial Aid
The Office of Student Financial Assistance [34] is available to assist those students who have difficulty meeting the cost of attending the University. A&M-Corpus Christi offers financial assistance based on documented financial need to those students who would otherwise not be able to attend the University. Aid is available in the form of loans, grants, and part-time employment or any combination thereof. Students are encouraged by new-student programs, admission counselors, offices within the Division of Student Affairs, and the Office of Student Financial Aid through personal and electronic communication to contact or visit the Web site of the Office of Student Financial Assistance to obtain appropriate application materials and to determine eligibility for the various forms of aid available [35].

The Office of Financial Assistance and the undergraduate and graduate catalogs provide information for students about Title IV and other financial assistance programs [36]. For example, the financial-aid web site provides detailed information about application procedures and deadlines for students and provides the necessary forms. A&M-Corpus Christi offers the following Title IV programs: a) Pell Grant, b) Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, c) work study, d) Perkins Loans, e) Stafford Loans (subsidized and unsubsidized), f) Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students, g) Academic Competitiveness Grants, h) SMART Grants, and i) Graduate PLUS Loans. The undergraduate and graduate catalogs and the Office of Financial Assistance web site provide information about these financial-aid programs and include specific information about the repayment of Title IV funds when a student withdraws from class(es).

Intercollegiate Athletics
After many years without an athletic program on campus, the University created one in 1998 to enhance the programs offered to the student population. Students, along with administration, felt the next step for growth was to reinstate an athletic program. The University established its NCAA Division I program, which held independent status for the first eight years. It became a member of the Southland Conference in 2006. On May 20, 2003, the students voted for the implementation of an $8-per-semester-credit-hour athletic fee. In a referendum passed in 2006 the fee increased to $12. Currently, the fee is $13.23 per semester-credit-hour with a cap of $171.99.

The program now offers five men's and eight women's competitive sports: men's basketball, women's basketball, men's cross-country, women's cross-country, women's golf, women's softball, men's tennis, women's tennis, men's indoor track and field, women's indoor track and field, men's outdoor track and field, women's outdoor track and field, and women's volleyball [37].

Judicial Affairs
The Office of Judicial Affairs [38], under the direction of the Assistant Dean of Students, strives to provide a safe environment for learning by promoting civil and responsible behavior of students [39]. This office is responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct, both behavioral and academic. A 2007 determination found that students should have the option of having their cases heard by either the judicial affairs officer or by a board of their peers. Created from this determination was The Student Conduct Board (SCB) [40]. The board is composed of 15 currently registered students and six students from the pool constitute a board for any specific hearing. Students interested in serving on this board submit application materials and attend an orientation session designed to prepare them for their participation in board activities [41].

The goals of the Student Conduct Board (SCB) are to provide a purposeful and holistic model that
promotes student learning and development; engage students regarding behaviors and responsibilities through educational strategies and disciplinary counseling; educate and protect the rights of the student; enforce rules and regulations of the University through fair and objective judicial process; and provide educational activities for the prevention of violation of campus regulations.

The Judicial Affairs web site offers courses in alcohol and marijuana education. The office also provides outreach through workshops and presentations at orientation programs and Aloha Days Freshman Camp. Examples of these presentations are Do the Right Thing and Academic Misconduct.

**New Student Programs and Student Recruitment**

The Office of New Student Programs and Student Recruitment aims to assist in the recruitment and retention efforts of the University, by encouraging all potential students to seek a higher education through the implementation of programming, and communications that will introduce all students and families to the University and its processes. The department enhances the college experience of admitted students by providing programs and information that will orient them to the University, aid in their transition, and help connect them to the University and their fellow Islanders. Programs offered are orientations for freshmen, transfer, international students, and dual credit/University prep high school.

Campus visitations are encouraged as a part of the University’s overall recruitment efforts. Student and family tours and group tours are available six days a week. Island Days is the University's campus-preview program. Through a series of open houses, prospective students are given the opportunity to visit with staff and current students to learn about campus life. Attendees are able to meet with representatives from various departments across campus and begin the application process.

In addition to the efforts listed above, student recruitment programs include Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers day/night recruiting, target area/schools recruitment visits, freshmen send-off parties and recruitment communications, including communications with undergraduates through letters, e-mails, phone calls and brochure mail-outs.

**Office of International Education (OIE)**

The Office of International Education was established in December 2008. In step with Momentum 2015, the Office of International Education provides venues for international students to increase their interactions, not only with other international students, but with domestic students as well. Each month the office hosts at least two activities, one meant to provide instruction at some level such as cultural panels, bringing in not only students, but staff and faculty as well. A second activity is almost exclusively for students and is planned by students. Each month, a recognized student organization on campus plans activities and games that are meant to be entertaining and engaging, giving international and domestic students an opportunity to interact.

As of the spring semester 2009, there were 340 international students at A&M-Corpus Christi, and 152 students attending the English as a Second Language International program. Most of these students will likely become A&M-Corpus Christi students upon completion of their English as a Second Language International studies. International students who graduate from the program participate in orientations before enrolling in their programs. The Office of International Education offers these orientations under the guidance and leadership of the Office of Student Recruitment and New Student Programs.

The Office of International Education is also working to increase the number of students participating in study-abroad programs. To this end, this office is implementing faculty-led workshops for interested faculty and study-abroad workshops for students to learn more about study-abroad opportunities.
are two reciprocal agreements already signed and two to four more in the process of being developed [58] [59]. Study-abroad fairs are scheduled every spring and fall semester to highlight study-abroad opportunities.

Recreational Sports
The Recreational Sports Department [60] provides opportunities for participation in a variety of sports, recreational, and social activities designed to accommodate all ages, skill levels, gender, and sports interests for the University community [61]. Recreational sports offers students the opportunity to participate in a variety of wellness activities. Intramural sports such as flag football, table tennis and badminton allow students to adjust to college life while keeping their physical health as well as their competitive spirit active. Sports clubs offer students an opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in a particular sport through group practice and competition. Some examples of these clubs are men's soccer, chess, ballroom dance, and kite boarding. In addition, sports clubs offer the opportunity to enhance their leadership skills by managing club activities including scheduling facilities for club meetings, practices and games, organizing meetings and communicating with others. Other programs include informal recreation such as the Swim Across Texas Incentive Program, special events such as dive-in movies and family programs such as miniature golf [62]. Personal fitness training and group exercise programs are also available [63].

The Jack and Susan Dugan Wellness Center opened its doors in January 2009. The state-of-the-art facility has 70,000 square feet of space, a gymnasium that supports volleyball, basketball, and badminton, 9,000 square feet of weight and cardio areas located on two levels and two 2,000-square-foot group-exercise rooms. The center houses the recreational sports offices and intercollegiate athletic offices as well as providing space for academic classes.

SandDollar$
The SandDollar$ card is the official identification of the University and is also a debit card to help students manage finances [64]. The SandDollar$ card is a prepaid declining-balance account that can be renewed each time a deposit is made. The card can also be linked to a Wells Fargo checking or savings account and used as a PIN-based debit card both on and off campus. The card can be used at vending machines, copy machines, and at all food-service locations on campus. Students use this card to check out books at the library, pay for printing in the computer labs, and gain access to recreational and fitness facilities, athletic events, and residence halls.

Student Government Association
The Student Government Association [65] is a student-run, campus-wide organization developed to provide students at A&M-Corpus Christi with a voice in the decision-making processes of the University [66]. Association members are encouraged to express their opinions, criticisms, and expectations in order to promote a student-friendly environment and uphold the general welfare of the student body. The governing body is determined by the population of students within the designated college or class. The positions represented are: president and vice president, senator-College of Business (2), senator-College of Education (2), senator-College of Liberal Arts (2), senator-College of Nursing (2), senator-College of Science and Technology (2), senator-freshman class (4), senator-sophomore class (3), senator-junior class (3), senator-senior class (5), senator-graduate students (4), senator-international students (2), and the senator-on-campus students (2).

Through service in the Student Government Association, members improve communication skills, enhance leadership abilities, hone critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, and learn how to work with a variety of people, including the faculty, staff, and peers, with unique ideas and views. Parking appeals filter through the association and the Parking Appeals Committee [67]. The Student
Government Association appoints students to a variety of campus-wide councils and committees, including the Homecoming Committee, Recreational Sports Advisory Board, Student Publication Committee, Chancellor Student Advisory Board, Diversity Committee, QEP, and Provost Search Committee [68] [69] [70] [71] [72].

**TRIO Student Support Services**
TRIO Student Support Services [73], a federally funded program through the Department of Education, focuses upon providing a supportive environment and meeting the academic, personal, social, cultural, and career goals and needs of historically under-represented students in higher education in Texas. The program provides academic advising and registration assistance, career counseling, tutoring, cultural enrichment opportunities, mentors, referrals to campus and community resources, access to technology, and workshops on study skills, time management, health and well-being, and other important topics.

**University Center and Student Activities**
The objective of the Office of the University Center & Student Activities is to foster a healthy academic climate and professional atmosphere that promotes and encourages student leadership, learning, and growth [74]. The University Center serves as the “living room” of the campus. The center includes meeting facilities, administrative and student offices, food service, and retail amenities that comprise almost 100,000 square feet.

Student Activities is dedicated to helping students become more connected to campus life by providing programming and services for student organizations and students interested in participating in a wide variety of activities at A&M-Corpus Christi. Programming is done through departmentally sponsored organizations like Aloha Days Freshman Camp [75], Campus Activity Board [76], EDGE Leadership Program [77], Greek Life [78], the Island Waves Student Newspaper [79], the Islander Cultural Alliance [80], TIDE Mentor Program [81], the South Texas Leadership Conference [82], University Council of Student Organizations [83], and Waves of Welcome [84].

**University Counseling Center**
The counseling center [85] provides free and confidential mental health services to currently enrolled A&M-Corpus Christi students. A variety of quality clinical, counseling, prevention, educational, consultation, training, outreach and crisis services are offered to facilitate students' development toward their academic, personal and professional growth [86].

Services include: personal-skills training; short-term counseling services; alcohol and other drug treatment and education; psychological screenings and assessment; anonymous online mental health screenings available to find out whether professional consultation regarding depression, anxiety, alcohol or eating disorders would be helpful; outreach services focused on student mental health issues; educational materials about mental health issues referrals to community providers and services; and consultation with faculty, staff and students regarding student issues.

The counseling center is located in Driftwood, suite 106. Students initially learn about the center through presentations at orientation and the University catalog. Additional information is provided to the students in the student handbook [87] as well as the University web site [85]. Additionally, students are referred to the counseling center by faculty and staff who feel that the student may benefit from their services.

The center is also committed to the training of graduate students as future helping professionals. It offers practicum students internship opportunities [88].
University Health Center
The University Health Center's primary emphasis is on preventive health practices, health education, and the promotion of wellness. Primary health care is provided by registered nurses, family nurse practitioners, and physicians for the care of acute illnesses and minor injuries. Health Services provides the following services: immunizations, women's services, clinical services, sexually transmitted disease testing, allergy injections, and the nurse line.

For the privacy and convenience of the students, the Health Center offers a nurse line. Students can call and speak to a nurse about their health-related concerns or questions from the privacy or anonymity of their home. Students can call 825-5735 to speak directly to a nurse. The phone line is staffed during regular office hours only. If a nurse is not available at the time of the call, the caller may choose to leave a number and a message and the call will be returned at the next available opportunity.

The University Health Center also operates a class-A pharmacy offering many medications that are commonly prescribed by the University Health Center providers or the student’s primary care provider.

University Health Center is located in Sandpiper, suite 105. Students initially learn about the center through presentations at orientation and the University catalog. Additional information is provided to the students on the University web site. Additionally, students are referred to the health center by faculty and staff who feel that the student may benefit from their services.

University Housing
Camden Miramar, in partnership with A&M-Corpus Christi, provides quality housing facilities and services to students of the institution. The housing department endeavors to facilitate the educational mission of the University, creating living environments that foster the growth and development of all students participating in the housing program. Camden Miramar Apartments and residence halls are the exclusive provider for on-campus housing.

Camden Miramar promotes development beyond the classroom. Knowledgeable resident advisors are the on-site link to campus resources. Resident advisors offer programs that equip students with the proper tools to be successful living away from home. The college basics programs are a series of programs that teach students about cooking, laundry, roommate communication and other survival necessities needed for living on their own.

Every two years, housing conducts the Residence Life Survey to assess the quality of housing. The assessment utilizes questions based on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education Standards.

Veteran Affairs
Veteran Affairs is committed to recruiting, retaining, and supporting active-duty service members, veterans, and their dependents. In preparation for the implementation of the new GI Bill in August 2009, the University is expanding military-friendly services and programs for returning military members and adopting a Military Student Bill of Rights. Veteran Affairs participates in the service members Opportunity Colleges, and encourages student organizations such as the United Student Veteran Organization and the Islander Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) Battalion. The office has developed a comprehensive suite of programs and services designed to enable students who are veterans to be successful in their academic endeavors. Included in its programs and services are benefits-counseling, military-to-civilian student-life transition assistance, public-awareness programs,
veteran mentoring, study groups, access to and assistance with information technology, and a University veterans advisory panel.

A&M-Corpus Christi students created the United Student Veteran Organization to assist veterans in the transition from military to academic life, thus contributing to a successful college experience. It provides support for veterans with common issues, and provides counsel on veterans’ educational benefits, scholarships, and other resources available to them. It serves as the definitive organization advocating for veteran student issues at the University and state level. Finally, it enables other students and the community to become involved with veterans from the University, and to create a resource in support of members of our armed forces, at home and deployed around the world [96].

**Women's Center for Education and Service**
The women's center [97] promotes a supportive, equitable, and safe environment that advances and affirms the inherent dignity and worth of women through education, advocacy and service endeavors. Since 1995, the center has worked to empower students to create a campus culture that values women and their many identities and various experiences by providing information sessions, referrals, speakers, performers, events and activities about issues that disproportionately affect women.

In order to offer support, education and advocacy the women's center works closely with the local community including agencies such as First Friday, the City of Corpus Christi, Planned Parenthood, The Women's Shelter of South Texas, YWCA Corpus Christi, and the Coastal Bend Coordinated Community Response Coalition.

**Conclusion**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi provides student support programs, services, and activities that are consistent with its mission and that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students. These programs, services, and activities are regularly assessed to ensure that they are effective in supporting the University’s mission and the goals of the Momentum 2015 Strategic Plan of excellence, engagement, expansion, and effectiveness.

Evidence

- UD 042 3.10.5-05 TAMUCC New Mission Statement
- UD 025 Momentum2015 Strategic Plan
- UD 470 Momentum2015_ImperativeI
- UD 471 Momentum2015_ImperativeIII
- UD 472 Momentum2015_ImperativeVI
- UD 473 Momentum2015_ImperativeIX
- UD 474 Momentum2015_ImperativeX
- CD 345 Student_Affairs_Home
- CD 235 Division of Student Affairs Mission Statement
- UD 475 0809 Undergraduate Catalog Student Services
- UD 476 0809 Graduate Catalog Student Services
- CD 346 StudentServices_A-Z
- CD 347 CareerServices_Home
- CD 348 CareerServices_Mission Statement_08