

Salt Lake Community College Student Life and Leadership Program Review External Review Team Report

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Submitted by

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Pillar I - Robust Student Life

Programming is the strength of the Student Life Program.

The number of students participating in Student Life and Leadership programs has increased by over 10,000 students since the 2008-09 academic year. The numbers seem to support the notion that students are interested in programming and are attending current programs. The South Region and North Region Boards are committed to providing programs to meet the needs of the students on the various campuses. Family programming is a priority and faculty and staff are invited to participate in events. In addition the board has expanded the types of programs they offer to include cultural programs. Risk Management and Student Life are working together to support student programming needs.

- OrgSync appears to be a benefit for communicating to students and tracking participation, and it will become even more beneficial as it gets more use. Student Life and Leadership should be commended for including closed captioning on the videos for accessibility to deaf and hard of hearing students.
- The number of clubs and organizations on campus is a strong indicator of a robust student life. Clubs represent personal interests, instructional programs, and cultural organizations. Club leaders are asking for more support and communication with the Executive Council. The location (2nd floor) of the Club Office is a physical barrier to the connection to Student Life and Leadership and student government. Getting the clubs to feel more connected should be a priority. A retreat with club leaders, executive board members and Student Life staff would be beneficial to put all concerns, program strengths and issues on the table.
- | ▪ On the other hand, club advisors feel supported by Student Life. Additional on-line information for advisors would be helpful. Support for faculty and staff to serve as club advisors varies from department to department and supervisor to supervisor. Some advisors are compensated some are voluntary positions. It is recommended that if the college values clubs and organizations that they build service to clubs into the employee evaluation system, so staff are recognized for their commitment. In addition a rotation system for club advisors needs to be developed, so the burden of club advising does not fall on one person. We recommend Student Life staff reach out to faculty through new and adjunct faculty orientation or during Professional Development Day activities.
- Service Learning, Multicultural Initiatives, and Health and Wellness all indicated that the working relationships between Student Life and these departments needs to move beyond co-sponsorship of events to true collaboration. We recommend helping students leaders and staff understand the difference between cooperating and collaborating. There is a great deal of potential for student leadership growth, and conservation of resources to be gained from departments collaborating. Involvement in the planning process at the beginning of the year and monthly meetings can enhance and provide opportunities for this collaboration to take place.
- It is our perception, that Student Life and Leadership defines "a robust student life" as programming and clubs. We concur those are components of a robust student life, but

that it is more. We challenge Student Life and Leadership to critically think more broadly about a robust student life.

Pillar II - Effective Student Government

- Where is the "student voice" in policy making at the college? Student leaders should be more in touch with the issues facing the college. Students should be placed on all college committees where they are seen and heard by staff and faculty. This not only empowers the students but creates more informed leaders. The students should be seen as major stakeholders in policies and decisions that are facing the college. It is vital the student leaders have a voice in their education. This will only make the student life program stronger. This shared governance needs the support of the entire administration, from the College President on down. The student body president should be included in the Senior Leadership Council Meetings as a sign of commitment to this concept.

The North and South Regional VP's are an important part of the leadership structure for the satellite campus. The Regional Boards need to expand their role beyond programming to include the "shared governance" of their campuses. Permanent staffing would go a long way in supporting the training of these student leaders in relation to issues that affect them.

- Because of the programming/leadership needs of the South and North Region Boards, it is important to have staff assigned to these areas who are familiar with the needs of the student leaders and the campus environment. For the programs to flourish and meet the needs of the population, staff needs to be present to support the daily operation, which includes leadership development of the students. Two options to consider are 1) relocating a Student Life and Leadership staff member to other campuses or 2) identify a current faculty member and provide him/her with "release time" to support and coordinate the program part-time.
- During the site review visit there was discussion among Student Life and Leadership staff and executive officers regarding the restructuring of the Executive Council. In light of the need for a stronger "student voice" in governance at the college, we believe this is a worthwhile discussion to have. We recommend taking time to methodically examine models of student government from other institutions. More vetting and research on the reconfiguration (reduction of VP positions) of Executive Council is needed. All stakeholders need to be included in the process.
- There should be a stronger connection between the Inter Club Assembly and Student Senate. ICA should be a forum for gathering student input on campus issues.
- Student Life and Leadership has had a policy of rotating advisors responsibilities within the department. This practice should be examined carefully considering that there is often a high turnover rate among advisors (usually entry-level positions).
- Another issue that should be investigated is the high turnover rate for the student Senators and other leadership positions. While this is often typical with students on a community college campus efforts should be made to retain these students through compensation, GPA, and other benefits provided.

- Salt Lake Community College should establish a Policy Review Procedure which funnels new policies and policy changes to the Executive Council and Student Senate for input.
- The Student Fee Advisory Committee should consider including an advisor from Student Life and Leadership on the committee. Student leaders often have a limited understanding on issues relating to resources especially long-term. An advisor on the committee would assist these students in being better advocates for the general student body and Student Life and Leadership as a department that depends wholly on student fees to operate.

Pillar III - Meaningful Leadership Development

- It is very apparent that Student Life and Leadership sees student leadership development as a core function of their office. Staff should be commended for the extensive opportunities they offer students including the extensive summer training for Executive Council, the August Leadership Conference, the January Leadership Conference, and the various conferences students are able to attend.
- A number of students expressed concerns about the content of the leadership courses, and that the content was a repeat of concepts they were exposed to during leadership conferences. How can the leadership classes be viewed as a more important part of a students' academic time? The leadership classes have a service learning component as part of the curriculum; we recommend that student service to the college through their leadership position fulfill that requirement. Student Life and Leadership should work with academic departments to provide courses where credit can be given for leadership positions and work related to student government.
- We would encourage you to use staff and students from outside the department to present workshops at your leadership conferences. As an example Multicultural Initiatives could train students on cultural models of leadership and grass roots organization or Peer Leaders in Health and Wellness could present health related workshops.

Summary

Student Life and Leadership needs to define the department separate from the services it provides to student leaders. While these functions are an integral part of the day to day duties of the staff, the staff are not part of the student council, the executive council, or the individual clubs and organizations.

Student Life and Leadership is responsible to provide the framework and the structure for the student leadership programs on campus (the house) and the students each year can provide the decorating (paint, curtains, furniture, etc..). This concept enables the program to remain solid and provide the necessary services while still allowing each student government team to put their mark on the program and display their individuality.