The Counseling Services Program Review Committee met during the Fall and Spring semester of the 2001 academic year. The purpose of this committee was to review the counseling services that are provided to students attending classes at the Eastern Campus.

The committee was chaired by Michele Green, Director of Counseling and included the following committee members: Patty Southard, counselor; Bruce MacDonald, instructor (psychology); and Meryn Pilzer, registered nurse.

The committee convened its first meeting during the third week of the Fall semester. At this meeting the Associate Dean of Students, Judith Koodin, clarified the charge for the group and answered any questions that arose. Dean Koodin served as a resource person throughout the entire process. Subsequent meetings consisted of the following:

- reviewing the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) self-assessment guide, which had previously been completed by the Director of Counseling.
- distribution, collection and analysis of the faculty and student surveys.
- discussion of the results of the program review and survey data.

The final report was completed October 2002.
CAS Standards

Counseling services in higher education must develop, record, disseminate, implement and regularly review its mission and goals. Mission statements must be consistent with the mission and goals of the institution. The mission of counseling services is to assist students to define and accomplish personal and academic goals. To accomplish the mission, the scope of counseling services must include:

- high quality individual and group counseling services to students who may be experiencing psychological, behavioral, or learning difficulties;
- programming focused on the developmental needs of college students to maximize the potential of students to benefit from the academic environment and experience;
- consultative services to the institution to make the environment supportive of the intellectual, emotional, and physical development of students; and
- assessment services to identify student needs and appropriate services and referrals.

Actual Program Practice

Counseling Services' goal statements are reviewed at the beginning of each academic year and counselors are encouraged to review the mission throughout the year. The mission statement is located on the Suffolk County Community College web site at the following URL: www.sunysuffolk.edu/StudentServices/f52at.html. Goal statements are not disseminated on a regular basis but discussed in staff meetings during the year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-Specific:
- Counseling services goal statements will be disseminated and reviewed at the beginning of each academic year and on an as needed basis.
- East Campus Counseling Web site may be created to post the goal statements for the academic year.

College-Wide
- Consider the administration to undecided students of a career assessment inventory at the time the CPT is given or shortly thereafter.
CAS Standards

To effectively fulfill its mission, counseling services must provide directly, through referral, or in collaboration:

- individual counseling and/or psychotherapy in areas of personal, educational, career, development/vocational choice, interpersonal relationships, family social, and psychological issues;
- group interventions (e.g., counseling, psychotherapy, support) to help students establish satisfying personal relationships and to become more effective in areas such as interpersonal processes, communication skills, decision-making concerning personal relationships and educational or career matters, and the establishment of personal values;
- psychological testing and other assessment techniques to foster client self-understanding and decision making
- outreach efforts to address developmental needs and concerns of students
- counseling support to help students assess and overcome specific deficiencies in educational preparation or skills;
- psychiatric consultation, evaluation, and support services for students needing maintenance or monitoring of psychotropic medications;
- crisis intervention and emergency coverage; and
- staff and faculty professional development programs.

Actual Program Practice

Very little outreach is done to reach those students who have been identified as having developmental needs and concerns. A psychological counselor is available 60 hours per semester to see students needing these services. At other times, students are referred to outside agencies for testing and psychological follow-up.

Results from the student survey indicate that only 55% of the students are aware of psychological/personal counseling and 30% are aware that counselors make referrals to community agencies. However, over 75% of the students are aware of career, transfer, advising, and educational counseling services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific
- Hire a full time psychological counselor.
- Advertise the psychological/personal counseling services

College-Wide
- Students, who have been identified during advisement as having developmental needs and concerns, should be scheduled for follow-up counseling session before the mid-term of each semester.
CAS Standards

Institutions must appoint, position and empower leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish stated missions. Leaders must be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal attributes, and other professional credentials. Leaders of counseling services must:

- articulate a vision for their organization
- set goals and objectives
- prescribe and practice ethical behavior
- recruit, select, supervise, and develop others in the organization
- manage, plan, budget, and evaluate
- communicate effectively
- marshal cooperative action from colleagues, employees, other institutional constituencies, and persons outside the organization.

Leaders of counseling services must address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement. Leaders must institute processes that improve programs and services continuously in response to changing needs of students and evolving institutional priorities.

Actual Program Practice

Counseling services leader articulates a vision for the Eastern Campus Counseling Center not for the entire college. However, the vision articulated for the Eastern Campus is in accordance with the vision articulated for the college.

Staff meetings are held on a regular basis to keep the staff abreast of any changes and/or new initiatives that directly effect the delivery of counseling services. Staff meetings also provide a forum to evaluate services on an ongoing basis.

The Associate Dean for Student Services manages the counseling program budget with input from the counseling services leader.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific
None

College-wide
None
CAS Standards

Counseling services must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures, written performance expectations for all employees, functional workflow graphics or organizational charts, and clearly stated service delivery expectations. Evidence of effective management must include clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, decision-making and conflict resolution procedures, and responsiveness to changing conditions, accountability and evaluation systems, and recognition and reward processes.

Channels within the organization must be provided for regular review of administrative policies and procedures.

Actual Program Practice

Policies and procedures specifically for counseling faculty are not listed on the college web site.

The college has appropriate staff recognition and reward processes, but nothing that is campus specific.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific
- The campus should establish a formal staff recognition ceremony and reward process that would include counseling faculty and staff.

College-wide
- Policies and procedures for counseling faculty should be listed on the college web site.
CAS Standards

Counseling services must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish the mission and goals. Counseling programs and services must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision; and provide appropriate professional development opportunities.

Counseling functions must be performed by professionals from disciplines such as counseling and clinical psychology, counselor education, psychiatry, and clinical social work, and by others with appropriate training, credentials and supervised experience.

Salary levels and fringe benefits for all staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.

The director of counseling services must have an appropriate combination of graduate course work, formal training, and supervised experience.

Clerical staffing must be sufficient to provide receptionist, secretarial, technology-related, and testing support necessary for the effective functioning of the services such that professional staff members spend the preponderance of their time on professional duties.

Actual Program Practice

The professional staff consists of 2 full time counselors. They both have the appropriate credentials and training. However, the student to counselor ration is 1:100 to 1, with a psychological counselor available 5 hours per week to provide psychological/personal counseling.

Clerical support is comprised of one full time senior clerk typist and 2 part time college aides. In addition to handling the needs of the counselors, the clerical staff must also provide support for the Cooperative Education program and coverage for the registrar. Most of the clerical staff possess minimal computer skills and are not technologically proficient. Counselors do most of their own clerical work. Because of a high turnover rate among the college aides, the full time clerk typist must train a new college aide every 6 to 8 months.

Recommendations

Campus-specific
- Hire one additional full-time counselors to provide psychological as well as general counseling
- Hire one additional full-time clerk typist to provide support for the counselors.
- Mandate clerical staff to register for computer classes provided for county employees.

College-wide
None
FINANCIAL RESOURCES

CAS Standards

Each program and service must have adequate funding to accomplish its mission and goals. Priorities, whether set periodically or as a result of extraordinary conditions, must be determined within the context of the stated mission, goals, and resources.

Actual Program Practice

Funding is not adequate to provide basic counseling services to our students. The college’s priority is advisement and registration. Full-time counselors are available to provide personal and psychological counseling only 6 weeks during each semester. An adjunct counselor is hired to provide an additional 60 hours (5 hours one day per week) of counseling throughout the semester.

Priorities are set within the context of fiscal resources. When funding is cut; services are cut.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific

- Adequate funding must be made available to maintain minimum service levels.
- Funding must be made available to hire additional counselors to provide personal and psychological counseling services.

College-wide

None
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FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, and EQUIPMENT

CAS Standards

Counseling services must have adequate, suitably located facilities, technology and equipment to support its mission and goals. Facilities and equipment must be in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health, confidentiality and safety.

Counseling services must maintain a physical and social environment that facilitates optimal functioning and insures appropriate confidentiality.

Actual Program Practice

The counseling operation shares space with the following areas: College Placement Testing Lab; Cooperative Education and Job Placement; and the Registrar. The Counseling operation does not maintain a physical and social environment that facilitates optimal functioning and insures appropriate confidentiality. The space is too open and areas are blended.

Technology and equipment are available but not suitably located. Printers and fax machines are in public view whereby the public can see confidential information. A copy machine is not available. Staff must use the copier in another office.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific

- More space needs to be allocated to separate the various operations.
- The registrar function should be totally removed from the counseling center.
- A copier should be purchased and housed in the counseling area.
- Separate area, not accessible to the public, should be created for the printers and fax machines.
- Develop or purchase a computer-tracking program to create and maintain electronic records.

College-wide

- None
LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

CAS Standards

Staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective program or service. Sources for legal obligations and limitations include constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial and local governments; and the institution through its policies.

Staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. Staff members must be informed about institutional policies regarding personal liability and related insurance coverage options.

The institution must provide access to legal counsel with expertise in mental health and higher education for staff members as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

The institution must inform staff and students, in a timely and systematic fashion, about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

Actual Program Practice

Staff members are knowledgeable and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to counseling services. The college publishes the following documents on their website: Code of Ethics, College Briefs, Student Services Policies and Procedures, and the College Catalog (also in print). All of these documents are available to staff and students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific

None

College-wide

None
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, ACCESS, and AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

CAS Standards

Counseling services must be provided on a fair and equitable basis. Programs and services must be accessible. Hours of operation must be responsive to the needs of all students. Counseling services must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws.

Counseling services must not be discriminatory on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religious creed, sexual orientation, and/or veteran status. Exceptions are appropriate only where provided by relevant law and institutional policy.

Consistent with their mission and goals, counseling services must take affirmative actions to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

Actual Program Practice

Hours of operation are not responsive to the needs of all students. Budgetary restraints has a direct impact on when counselors are available to see students. A psychological counselor is not available for students who attend classes in the evenings (after 4:00 PM). A counselor is only available two nights per week.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific
- Hire personnel to provide psychological/personal/academic counseling every evening.

Campus-wide
None
CAS Standards

Counseling services must establish, and promote effective relations with relevant campus offices and external agencies. Where adequate mental health resources are not available on campus, counseling services must establish and maintain close working relationships with institutional community mental health resources.

Actual Program Practice

Counseling services has established and maintains effective working relationships with campus offices, external agencies, and community mental health resources whose operations are relevant to its mission and goals. Referral lists to community agencies are updated annually.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific
None

College-wide
None
CAS Standards

Within the context of each institution’s unique mission, multi-dimensional diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, programs and services must nurture environments where similarities and differences among people are recognized and honored.

Counseling services must promote cultural educational experiences that are characterized by open and continuous communication, that deepen understanding of one’s own culture and heritage, and that respect and educated about similarities, differences and histories of cultures.

Programs and services must address and characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

Actual Program Practice

The staff are acutely aware of the diverse student population and endeavor to develop programs and services where similarities and differences among people are recognized and honored.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus-specific
None

College-wide
None
ETHICS

CAS Standards

All persons involved in the delivery of counseling services must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. Counseling services must develop or adopt and implement statements of ethical practice addressing its unique issues. Counseling services must publish these statements and insure their periodic review by all concerned. Staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal.

All staff members must insure that confidentiality is maintained with respect to all communications and records considered confidential unless exempted by law. Client status and information disclosed in individual counseling sessions must remain confidential, unless written permission to divulge the information is given by the student.

All staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved.

Counseling services must maintain records in a confidential and secure manner while specifying procedures to monitor access, use, and maintenance of the records.

Actual Program Practice

All staff members adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. Staff members perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence and refer individuals in need of advanced levels of assistance to staff members who possess appropriate qualifications.

There is no place to store student records to ensure confidentiality. Student notes are not kept for this reason. The printer and fax machines are accessible to the public.

RECOMMENDATION

Campus-specific
- Have an area, not accessible to the public, to house the printers and fax machines
- Develop a computerized tracking system to record student notes.

College-wide
None
CAS Standards

Counseling services must conduct regular and systematic qualitative and quantitative evaluations of programs to determine if the stated mission and goals are being met and to assess outcomes of services provided. The process must employ a sufficient range of assessment measures to insure objectivity and comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students and other affected constituencies. Results of these evaluations must be used in revising and improving programs and services and in recognizing staff performance.

Actual Program Practice

Counseling services are evaluated regularly to determine how well its mission and goals are being met. The results from the various surveys that the college sponsors as well as end of year reports are used to conduct qualitative and quantitative evaluations of counseling services and programs.

RECOMMENDATION

Campus-specific
None

College-wide
None
SURVEY RESULTS

According to the student survey, the following information was found:

- 64% of students surveyed were between the ages of 17 – 22. 68% were females. Therefore, the students who completed the surveys were representative of the total population on the Eastern Campus.

- 75% or more students surveyed are aware of career and transfer counseling, advisement and educational counseling. Yet, only 55% are aware of psychological/personal counseling services. As mentioned previously, psychological/personal counseling is only available on a limited basis each semester.

- Only 30% of the students surveyed are aware that counselors make referrals to community agencies. Referrals are made during psychological/personal counseling sessions.

- Only 45% of students surveyed are aware of personal growth workshops. These workshops have had very poor attendance and are convened at the request of the faculty.

- Only 33% are aware of counseling services web site. The site is difficult to navigate.

- Even though 75% or more students surveyed are aware of career and transfer counseling, over 70% have never participated or used these services.

- The results of the survey indicated that those students, who had used counseling services, were overall satisfied.

According to the faculty survey, the following information was found:

- Over 95% of the faculty surveyed are aware of career and transfer counseling, advisement and educational counseling.

- 88% of the faculty surveyed are aware of psychological/personal counseling.

- 78% of the faculty surveyed are aware that counselors make referrals to community agencies.

- 68% of the faculty surveyed are aware of personal growth workshops.

- 50% of the faculty surveyed are aware of the counseling services web site.

- Over 75% of the faculty surveyed actually refer students for career and transfer counseling, advisement and educational counseling. Whereas, less than 60% have referred students for psychological/counseling/referrals and personal growth workshops.
• 60% of the faculty surveyed have never referred students to visit the counseling services web site.

• Over 60% of the faculty surveyed have contacted the Counseling Center for assistance with career and transfer counseling, advisement and educational counseling.

• Less than 47% have contacted the Counseling Center assistance with psychological/counseling/referrals and personal growth workshops.

• 85% or more of the faculty surveyed were satisfied with the Counseling Center.
CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Eastern Campus Counseling services are providing basic services for our students. Staff meets on a regular basis to evaluate the services that are available to our students. Counseling Center Staff is always developing strategies to maintain, enhance, and/or develop programs and services.

The results of the student and faculty surveys show that both groups were generally satisfied with counseling services overall. However, the results indicate that there is low awareness and utilization of psychological/personal counseling, agency referrals and participation in personal growth workshops. Awareness that the college has a counseling services web site was also low as well as the number of students who accessed the web site.

For the past 2 years, the enrollment on the Eastern Campus has increased 7% for the 2001 – 2002 and 10% for the 2002 – 2003 academic years. Counseling services will be compromised if current staffing levels are not augmented to address the increased enrollment.
RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY
Campus-Specific

Mission
- Disseminate counseling service goal statements at the beginning of each academic year
- Create an East Campus Counseling Web site to post the goal statements for each academic year so that they would be accessible all year long.

Program
- Hire a full time psychological counselor
- Advertise the psychological/personal counseling services
- Students, who have been identified during advisement as having developmental needs and concerns, should be scheduled for follow-up counseling session before the mid-term of each semester.

Organization and Management
- The campus should establish a formal staff recognition ceremony and reward process that would include counseling faculty and staff.
- Hire two additional full-time counselors to provide psychological as well as general counseling
- Hire one additional full-time clerk typist to provide support for the counselors.
- Mandate clerical staff to register for computer classes provided for county employees.

Financial Resources
- Adequate funding must be made available to maintain minimum service levels.
- Funding must be made available to hire additional counselors to provide personal and psychological counseling services.

Facilities, Technology and Equipment
- More space needs to be allocated to separate the various operations.
- The registrar function should be totally removed from the counseling center.
- A copier should be purchased and housed in the counseling area.
- Separate area, not accessible to the public, should be created for the printers and fax machines.
- Develop or purchase a computer-tracking program to create and maintain electronic records.

Equal Opportunity, Access, and Affirmative Action
- Hire personnel to provide psychological/personal/academic counseling every evening.

Ethics
- Have an area, not accessible to the public, to house the printers and fax machines
- Develop a computerized tracking system to record student notes.
College-wide

Mission
- Consider the administration to undecided students of a career assessment inventory at the time the CPT is given or shortly thereafter.

Organization and Management
- Policies and procedures for counseling faculty should be listed on the college web site.