

Closing the Loop

Campus Life	2
ISS	2
TRiO	3
FYE	3
Hard at Work...	4
ELC	4

For full text of any 2005-06 projects or proposed 2006-07 projects please see the assessment website <http://www.rit.edu/~saasses>

RIT Health/Fitness Challenge: Center for Intercollegiate Athletics & Recreation

News services today regularly report on an “American crisis” based on poor eating and exercise habits which have led to unprecedented increases in obesity and related health risks within our population. In an effort to combat some of these poor habits and misinformation about living a healthy lifestyle, the Center for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation began offering a health/fitness challenge program. Beginning in 2005-06 this program was offered as a formal course within RIT’s wellness/recreation options. In order to take full advantage of this opportunity to study this initiative as it

shifted from a program to a course, a comprehensive assessment plan was undertaken. Data were largely used to compare responses to survey ques-



tions about food and exercise behaviors of average RIT stu-

dents and course enrollees. Significant differences were found, leading to changes in course content and focus. Results of pre and post test materials also showed positive learning and behavioral outcomes related to the usage of campus facilities for regular exercise and effectiveness in coping with stress.

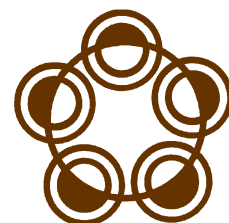
These and other positive results have led to even more course improvements for 2006-07 which will be marketed via the *Reporter Magazine* and other promotional material prior to Spring Quarter Registration.

Religious Life

For the 2005-06 academic year, the Center for Religious Life took on the challenging project of assessing interfaith programming on campus. Traditionally, student organizations and communities offer faith-specific programs and services. This assessment of a series of interfaith programs designed for conversation, community build-

ing and education among and across faiths led to interesting findings which ultimately suggest that there is both a need to explore ways to establish stronger relationships between the Center for Religious Life and club/community programming AND that faith specific groups may be more focused on the edification of their members within their teachings

rather than in cross-denominational experiences. Next steps include meetings with student club leaders and Religious Life staff to explore needs, desires, relevance and venues for interfaith conversations in the future!



Campus Life: Event Registration

Each year, hundreds of events for and, largely, by students are managed through the Event Registration System (EVR) coordinated by the Center for Campus Life. This system has developed over time, using enhanced technology and core training elements but its goal has remained the same, to provide an environment which facilitates the students' learning related to the planning and implementation of a safe and organized event.

During the 2005-2006 academic year, a post-event survey was implemented as part of the EVR. In this survey students are asked to respond to a set of items related to



staff service as well as to a set of qualitative items related to learning outcomes and ways that an event could have been improved. Results were analyzed by professional staff and graduate students assigned to work with the EVR process.

Although some improvements in the assessment process were suggested by the findings as well as procedural changes to enhance participation, the initial results provided a great deal of useful data and an excellent benchmark for future evaluation. Initial results suggest that 79.5% of students who responded to the post-event survey believe that the intake staff was above average to excellent when it comes to staff helpfulness. Similarly, 78% of students who responded believed that staff were above average to excellent relating to knowledge of event planning during the time of intake AND friendliness during this same time. 84% of students who responded to the post-event survey were satisfied with the services provided during their event.

Qualitative data also revealed useful data which highlighted opportunities for improved EVR services many of which are already underway. In response to the quality of service issues, EVR is moving to an on-line certification and on-line event registration system, which address the concerns related to hours and inability to attend a pre-scheduled certification system. Campus Life is also looking at cul-

tural barriers, and intend to work closely with the new Assistant Director of the Student Life Team to address the issues directly related to the deaf culture.

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Finally, continuous development of technological support for the EVR system may lead to further improvement of services with the creation of a report generating feature that can create specific weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual reports, as well as special events insurance needs, risk management needs assessment, and an outdoor event conflict function.

International Student Services

Staying “current” with program and service offerings for today’s students can be a challenging task in our age of technology and globalization! The International Student Services office, in partnership with an international graduate student in the Service Quality Management program at RIT, examined the range and quality of programs and services offered here with those of



other Universities. Although data are still being collected and analyzed, some key initial findings in-

clude a high demand for information and programs on loans/scholarships as well as driving courses and information.

Remote Tutoring: TRiO

During the 2005-06 academic year, the TRiO program in collaboration with NTID and college faculty, piloted a project to study remote tutoring using Breeze Software. This software enabled course-specific tutors and faculty to communicate with students via unique software including virtual whiteboards and real-time text messaging.

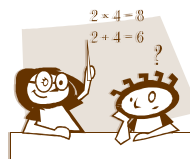
The assessment of this pilot program included feedback from online sessions and end of the quarter feedback from students as well as tutor and faculty feedback. Responses were largely positive across all three quarters of the pilot (which were conducted in different courses with different faculty, students and tutors). According to the project leaders, "Remote peer tutoring represents a potentially powerful



"arrow in the quiver" of academic support. The supporting technology is relatively inexpensive, and with orientation and experience is relatively user-friendly. Its versatility in enabling communication through various modalities (e.g., real-time chat, file and screen sharing, whiteboarding, videoconferencing, etc) is impressive, and enhances accessibility among deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing learners. It also relies on relatively low-cost tutoring expertise through employing qualified students."

Recommendations from the pilot include:

- The use of peer tutoring as an academic support strategy will best fit a classroom context that values collaborative learning



- Remote peer tutoring should be conceptualized and implemented by the teacher as a core instructional strategy
- The use of peer tutoring for courses that historically serve as "gatekeepers" within majors, where students are motivated to do as well as possible, holds promise as being particularly effective
- Likewise, the use of peer tutoring for sequential courses linked across two or three quarters also hold particular promise
- Finally, it is recommended that peer remote tutoring continue to be piloted in a range of classes to test where it can best serve students' needs.

Performance Coaching Outcomes: FYE

Since the inception of FYE in 2000, much has been discussed, debated and challenged about the course, curriculum and credit. Little debate however has occurred over the performance coaching with extremely high satisfaction rates from students, faculty and staff. Whatever individuals may think about the FYE course, there has seemed to be consensus about the value and effectiveness of the coaching component.

In order to maintain this high level of success, the FYE program completed a comprehensive assessment of the coaching component (a requirement of all first year students enrolled in FYE) during the 2005-06 academic year. Course evaluation data, a direct and anonymous sur-

vey of coaching, focus groups and usage data were collected and reviewed by staff. Based on a combination of fall and winter quarter coaching evaluations from 473 students selected at random, results indicated that 99.6 % of students were comfortable working with their coach; 95.8% believed that major topics and goals were discussed during coaching; 97.8% stated that they understand their coach's role; 97% stated that they understood

"99.6 % of students were comfortable working with their coach"

their role; 97.5% believed their coaches fulfilled their roles, and

93.22% believed they fulfilled their roles. Qualitative feedback was equally positive including comments such as

- "As a psychology major I know how important it is to discuss decisions with someone."
- "Coaching is a way to make connections with people."
- "Good idea. Enjoyed the time, shared about self."

With over 98% of first year students participating in coaching, results indicate that this is a strong program initiative with little need of change at this time. FYE will, however, continue to monitor this component and its connection to the overall services offered to first year students.





Other Centers Hard at Work...

In additional to the excellent work highlighted in this edition, the following areas have also continued to provide quality assessment with outcomes that help to promote service to the RIT Community.

We applaud you for your efforts!

- Disability Services—ongoing student satisfaction survey has led to improved educational efforts and celebration of excellent service by faculty/staff across campus.
- RLI & CSC—ongoing assessment of the RLI certificate program learning outcomes and satisfaction has led to enhanced workshop offerings and exploration of links to a national leadership program.
- ASC—began a continuing assessment of pre and post scores for the LASSI (Learning and Study Strategies Inventory) as used with students enrolled in the College Restoration Program. Preliminary results indicated positive growth and skill building.
- Margaret's House—continued its tradition of excellent service with an evaluation of parent participation in family events. Following initial data collection and focus groups, a survey is planned for this fall to collect more information about increasing the already strong parent participation levels.
- Residence Life—conducted a needs assessment related to the ResLife Cinema Program. As a result of their findings, this program was eliminated and the funds reallocated for initiatives with greater student interest.
- SCCMS—completed an outcomes based assessment of the Alternative Sanction Program including a review of the referral process and a pre and post evaluation for participants. Given some internal procedural changes there is an expected increase in referrals this year and the assessment of this program will continue.
- Student Health Center—conducted ongoing assessment related to quality practices with a special focus on appointment scheduling. Following survey results from 2005, adjustments were made to scheduling processes and phone call protocols which were re-evaluated in 2006 showing improvement in satisfaction and a reduction of complaints.
- Women's Center—completed preliminary assessment work for a multi-media program with a focus on stalking behaviors. Initial results show positive learning outcomes for participants in the workshop series.

English Language Center: Activities Program

The ELC continued its tradition of excellence in assessment with a project focused on their activities programming. This initiative is a key part of assisting both domestic and international students in gaining a better understanding of cultural differences and perspectives which reinforce concepts explored in the formal classroom. Using participation data, anonymous questionnaires and discussion groups, the ELC staff gathered important data to better understand the impact of their activities programming.

Results from this assessment

covered a wide range of findings including possible improvements to the evaluation process itself. Participation rates met the expected criteria, however further analysis may suggest changes in location or type of event to improve both attendance and impact of activities in the future. Student feedback further supported these conclusions and may lead to increased involvement of students in the program offerings in the future. Events that were noted as especially enjoyable included a trip to Niagara Falls, Red Barn, Ice Skating, City Tour and End of the Quarter Dinner. Special note was

made of a desire to offer events that may attract both

American and International students to provide support and interaction opportunities. Data will continue to be monitored in the future with an eye to providing consistently engaging out of the classroom experiences!

