The John E. Jaqua Academic Center for Student Athletes is an incredible facility for providing services for student athletes at the University of Oregon. Now in operation for more than a year, the staff and the students are becoming accustomed to the use the space in ways to be efficient and maximize effectiveness. The transitional period during 2009-10 and 2010-2011 academic years, although exciting, also produced periods of necessary adjustments and cooperation at a level beyond normal expectations. Most everyone in the Services for Student Athletes (SSA) organization from the leadership team to the tutors, all willingly and completely participated in allowing the delivery of services to the student athletes to be at the optimum throughout the transition and beyond.

The review of the Services for Student Athletes was conducted in the Spring of 2011 in a comprehensive manner with

a) An on-line survey instrument distributed to the student athletes
b) An on-line survey instrument distributed to the staff in the SSA and the athletic department (AD) staff working with the SSA operation
c) Interviews with each individual in the SSA and the Athletic Department as identified in b) above

Each component of the NCAA prescribed services to student athletes was individually evaluated along with the comprehensive aspects of the operation in general. The intent was to determine the level of success for each component but then more importantly to make some assessment of the general overall delivery of critical services. The experience of the student athlete from an academic and student life perspective was the key element of the inquiry.

Process:

Student athletes each received a survey via e-mail identifying each of the component services provided. (Survey attached). Of the 400 athletes receiving the e-mail, 84 responded for a 19% response rate. The goal was to receive 25% response and this level of completion was almost reached.

Each of the staff members in the SSA unit and those closely aligned with the academic component services were also provided with a survey via e-mail. Additionally, each of the SSA employees and those Athletic Department employees providing direct services to athletes were individually interviewed. There was a 100% response rate for this dedicated group of professionals. Those discussions were focused on potential areas for improvement in the operation of the SSA and an indication of topics to focus on in the staff retreat planned for late summer/early fall.
SSA STAFF & STUDENT ATHLETE SURVEY RESPONSE - 2011

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Student Athlete Responses (84)</th>
<th>SSA Staff + Responses (26)</th>
<th>Combined Rating Avg.</th>
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<td>26/26</td>
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<td>4.32</td>
<td>4.42  110/110</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Academic Progress Monitoring and Reporting</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>84/84</td>
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Responses to surveys are a matter of perception and should not be interpreted to be particularly “scientific.” The ratings do, however, provide an indication of how well respondents believed various services were delivered. Respondents did discern and consider each individual item because there were differing numbers of people who indicated N/A or not enough information or knowledge to some of the items.

Comments on Survey Results

Most of the components were rated very highly. The staff comments on the survey indicated that learning assessments are less than optimally used. Consistent information and the means whereby learning assessments are accessed and interpreted could be improved. The numerical rating of that item on the 5 point scale was among the lowest rating along with the rating for post-eligibility programs.

Discussion

Brief comments about each component will be presented in each area along with the numerical averages for the student athletes being reported first followed by the average response for the staff. Most often when university students and staff complete surveys, the response average is usually around 3.5 when things in general are going relatively well. An overall average above 4.25 is exceptional and can be viewed very positively. Of course one must remember that these values are perceptions but still an indication of a group's assessment.
Academic Advising

Overall, the response to the advising component was very positive (4.24,4.40). For football specifically, this activity is a combined comprehensive effort by the advisors in SSA and the academic coordinators in the athletic department. For other sports the advisors, the coaches, compliance staff, and operations staff are key links to success. Since the academic success of the student athlete is at the core of the mission for SSA, accurate, timely and comprehensive information is key. Communication amongst and between advisors to be sure that an athlete’s academic record is understood and complete is critical.

Tutoring

The Jaqua Center has greatly increased the ability to provide space for individual and small group tutoring sessions. Perhaps the most important component of the services for student athletes that has benefitted from the new building is tutoring. But as with any component, a service can only be deemed successful if the personnel providing the services are of equal quality to the facility. The oversight and monitoring of the tutors has become a major activity from an administrative perspective with the increased space, increased numbers of tutors, and the increased expectations.

The assessment here is quite high (4.44, 4.32) with some indications of more coordinated efforts required in some instances. The coaches are a key in being supportive and clear about the importance of the academic support available. That link can be made more consistent throughout the various teams for better results here.

Success Skills

Many of the services provided in this area are part of the Student Athlete Development Unit (SD) administered by the Athletic Department. Classes offered by the College of Education with significant input and instruction from the Student Development staff, the O Heroes activities, the career nights, the resume’ building workshops, the efforts to connect student athletes with mentors all combine to give student athletes the best chance to be successful while at the UO but more importantly for satisfying and productive lives.

The student athletes who take advantage of the programs and activities made available definitely benefit from the array of events offered. The wide range of opportunities offered, the skill, professionalism, and dedication of the staff who provide the leadership in this area contribute to the success skills component. Every member of the SSA and the SD are continuously looking to expand the program in this area to better meet the needs of the ever changing demands on graduates. The rating by the student athletes was 4.21, whereas the staff were a bit more critical of the success here with a rating of 3.74.

Study Hall

The Jaqua Center provides a facility for effective structured study halls for the past seven terms. Rather than just logging in-seat time on site, the means to provide specific requirements in terms of outcomes for a class assignment has been a very worthwhile approach to productive learning. The oversight and guidance provided by the tutors and learning specialists during these structured study times has been very well received. The ratings were consistent for both staff (4.15) and student athletes (4.42) which is very satisfactory.
Freshman/Transfer Orientation

All incoming student athletes should be provided with sufficient information to take advantage of the services provided and better understand the expectations of student athletes at the University of Oregon both athletically and academically. Most recently the freshman orientation has been held for all incoming athletes over a two day period. Introductions to personnel and service components within the SSA and Athletic Department as well as the University can be critical to the overall development of a student athlete. Improvement in the orientation for transfer students deserves consideration. Despite the realization that some of these activities deserve attention the ratings were 4.14 and 4.08 respectively.

Academic Progress Monitoring and Reporting

This is primarily a function of necessity, timing and transparency. The rates of compliancy regarding progress towards degree, graduation and eligibility are important markers for the students, the coaches and the university. Athletes themselves do not really have access to these collective data and some of the staff do not really have a need to know. Coaches and other administrators are key recipients of this information regarding progress and scholarship impacts. From an NCAA perspective, accuracy and timeliness are critical. The UO completes this component very well. The consequences of errors of fact or timing are significant for this category and the perceptions are that the AD does this well with ratings of 4.62 by staff and 4.34 by student athletes.

Assistance with Special Academic Needs

The proportion of student athletes who have special academic needs is higher than the general student population. In some instances the academic or domestic environment some of the student athletes have experienced prior to being at the University of Oregon is not conducive to optimal learning. Exposure to specific learning skills and means to negotiate the rigor of certain classes with limited knowledge and success is a key component of academic readiness and success. Respondents believe that the team of learning specialists at the SSA provide these services in a very professional and informed manner. Although the measurements of success here are less quantitative than in some areas, those students who receive these services seem to be well served. More time and more energy can always be expended here but the one-on-one nature of this activity is very labor intensive and only so much can be done. The numerical ratings were 4.29 and 4.04.

Learning Assessments

Professional testing is sometimes required to verify the degree of deficiencies for a particular student athlete to determine how best to meet his/her needs. The coordination of this activity and the sharing of information to be optimal deserves some attention at least as perceived by the staff. Student athletes were more positive in their assessment of learning assessments, although approximately one-third of the student athlete respondents marked N/A. The numerical response to this item was 4.27 and 3.26.

Assistance for At-Risk Students

Important considerations need to be made for students who are at-risk academically. Sometimes students bring backgrounds that are not conducive to university academic expectations; bring backgrounds that have created regular negative behaviors that get in the way; relationship and respect issues that don't support a collegiate experience that will have positive outcomes, especially from an academic perspective. Initiatives to provide
educational sessions and specific skill building activities are key. Overall this item received positive ratings with 4.19 and 4.26.

**Post Eligibility Programs**

Many athletes have opportunities and/or barriers that prevent them from consistently making progress toward the goal of completing their degree. Sometimes this is a result of playing professionally, sometimes it is a result of taking time away for personal reasons, and sometimes it is just because the required academic obligations did not get completed during the time period prior to playing eligibility being exhausted. The challenge for these circumstances is maintaining contact with the athletes and creating the motivation necessary to complete the final courses necessary for graduation. Without a coach’s encouragement and the “playing time” incentive available, these programs become difficult to facilitate. Scores here were 4.31 and 3.24 although many of the student athletes as well as the staff did not have familiarity with this aspect of services.

**Recruiting**

The SSA serves an important role in the recruitment of prospective athletes. The tour of the Jaqua Center and a description of the services provided there is important to the student, the parents, the athletic department and the university. Descriptions of the services provided, the strengths and weaknesses of the university, the life of a student athlete at the University of Oregon, the assurances for parents regarding the means whereby their son/daughter will be supported all become critical when selecting a school. The importance of the academic goals for a student athlete can be demonstrated by showcasing the Jaqua Center—a student first and an athlete second is very easily promoted under the current conditions. This service was highly rated by both staff and students with ratings of 4.56 for both.

**Interview Response Discussion**

The response to the new facility, the John E. Jaqua Academic Learning Center for Student Athletes, has been extremely positive. The comparison from the old spaces to the new spaces is so extreme in terms of quantity and quality it is difficult to express any negativity to the working environment. The continuing process of learning how to best use the space so that the student athletes are optimally served is important and ongoing. Regardless of the space available for operation, the most important component is the quality of the persons who function within that space and the services they deliver. Overall, the staff currently working in the SSA are of high quality and are excellent professionals.

**Interview process.**

Interviews were conducted with each of the individuals who are a part of the Support Services for Student Athletes, including those from the Athletic Department who provide the leadership for Student Athlete Development, compliance and the oversight of football academics. Each individual was asked the same general questions. Basically the questions garnered comments on the survey areas and expanded discussions on those followed by what is going well and what could be improved. A summary of the responses are presented here.

**Comments about the component areas.**

The most often identified area that was specifically mentioned as needing attention was that of learning assessments. Many of the staff expressed frustrations with the availability of testing results in a timely manner.
Post eligibility programs were another area where staff responses were often less than superior. The responses in this category were often related to not having complete information or not really understanding the entire scope of the programs rather than knowing about it and not thinking it was effective.

Senior Success as a part of the Student Development Program is not well understood. This program is relatively new and really in operation for only one year.

Positive aspects of the SSA.

Obviously the most often mentioned positive is the John E. Jaqua Academic Learning Center for Student Athletes facility. But in addition to commenting on the building, staff indicated that the process of transitioning and learning to optimize the functioning of the facility also went and continues to go extremely well. The way in which leadership was provided during the past two years was complimented. Comments were made about the genuine caring that staff had for each other and the student athletes.

The changes that have been made in the structured study hall in the past two years were met with enthusiasm. The resultant focus on assignments and specifics rather than seat-time is more productive for all involved.

The student development programs and activities are being received well and participation and outcomes are at a new positive level. Progress is continuing to be made in the coordination of activities with the O Heroes program complimented by practically everyone.

Interestingly, communication was also identified as a component that was going particularly well despite also being labeled as needing improvement. Persons commenting positively here indicated that the new spaciousness of the Jaqua led people to work more diligently to be certain that communication occurred between and among staff who were no longer in close, crowded vicinity. Others however, believed certain component parts of the organization were not in complete harmony.

Challenges.

Communication within and across units particularly between sub-groups of staff who work closely with certain categories of athletes was identified by some as needing to be improved. Connecting within the building and sharing pertinent information with counselors/advisors, learning specialists and tutors for those who are assisting the same student athletes could be very worthwhile. Much of this occurs but sometimes there is a missing link.

Continuing education opportunities for the staff have been made available on a regular basis but some believed that more specifically coordinated programming could prove to be useful. Meeting with each other regarding specific athletes or athletes with categorical needs is productive. Many of the staff are well trained professionals who have the experience and ability to deliver in-house on-site continuing education (training) to other members of the staff. These professional development workshops (sessions) could be beneficial to both the provider and the recipients. Being proactive in terms of matters of mutual concern could also prove very beneficial.

Ninety percent of the operation is going well; ten percent could improve. This kind of an overall assessment is extremely positive. But as with everything, means whereby improvements can be made should be continually pursued.
Campus connections are relatively positive at the present time but there might be opportunities to improve on the manner in which similar campus services (academic learning services, disability services, etc.) are sought and provided.

Continuing discussions regarding differing philosophical perspectives on the degree and style of support provided for student athletes will occur. Some believe that too much assistance is provided and deters individuals from developing the desired goal of independence. Others consider the specific assistance provided essential in the process of gaining confidence in individual abilities prior to complete independence.

The Support Services for Student Athletes has become a relatively large and complex organization. The ability to view event calendars and individual activities on a common server would assist all staff in having a clear understanding of the traffic expectations and the responsibilities that some staff may have on their agenda. A common calendar available on line for all to access could prove useful.

Retreat topics to consider.

Communication, collaboration, cross fertilization, trust, cohesion, compartmentalization, continuing education, team building, pedagogy, information share, and defined activities for improvement and outcomes.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Orientation for transfers and others in winter and spring
2. Post eligibility tracking and support
3. Assessment results shared for the optimal use by advisors and learning specialists
4. Communication between the staff involved from the SSA and those from the Athletic Department involved in support, life skills, and general development

Overall, the professional staff at the Support Services for Student Athletes is performing admirably. The manner in which they collaboratively and collegially provide the services that student athletes need to be successful at the University of Oregon is commended and most all staff indicate that they enjoy coming to work and express satisfaction with their accomplishments. As with every organization of this size, striving to be the best that can be is the overall goal. All persons are committed to work towards accomplishing that. The University of Oregon can be proud of the services and can highlight this as a best practice facility and staff.

Lorraine Davis
Special Assistant to the Provost
1. The NCAA accreditation process requires that we provide specific services for the student athletes. As part of the review process, periodic input is desired as a means of assessing the components and improving services as needed. For each of the components listed, provide your rating of the success of delivery by the University of Oregon Support Services for Student Athletes and the Athletic Department, as applicable. Rate the performance on a scale of 1 to 5, using NA if you do not have knowledge or information. A 1 indicates the least acceptable rating and a 5 is the highest rating possible. Any constructive comments may be added at the bottom of the form. Thanks, Lorraine Davis

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Academic Advising

Academic advising is one of the central functions of the Services for Student-Athletes (SSA) Office. SSA currently employs five advisors to work with individual students, assigned by team. The overarching mission is to help students succeed academically, while working to obtain a degree from the University of Oregon.

Advisors help students construct quarterly class schedules, navigate major and university requirements, and adhere to NCAA rules for continuing eligibility. Advisors work even more closely with at-risk students, monitoring their weekly progress in courses. Advisors collaborate with department and university staff to ensure a holistic approach to the University experience. In addition, advisors serve as liaisons to faculty and staff on campus.

Tutoring

SSA offers a wide array of tutoring services in an effort to best address the needs of each individual. SSA employs a staff of approximately eighty tutors, comprised of undergraduates, law students, graduate students, and retired teachers. Four to five carry the distinction of a Super Tutor, and work with the most at-risk population on both content areas and skill building. Regular tutors work in weekly individual and group appointments with students in different content areas, ranging from the sciences to the arts. SSA also provides tutoring on a drop-in basis. SSA offers a variety of group tutoring sessions for the classes most impacted by the student-athlete population, as well as group review sessions for major exams. These sessions are lead by our learning specialists and most qualified tutors.

Tutoring is required for all freshmen and students who fall below a 3.00 GPA, and these students have tutors assigned each term. Anyone not required to take part in tutoring is encouraged to use the services at their discretion.

Success Skills

SSA staff members work with students on a variety of skills to help them achieve success academically, but also personally, in their athletic pursuits, in their career goals, and in the community. Skills range from time management to public speaking, and serve to help students develop as a young adult in all areas of their lives.

Academically, SSA seeks to teach students the necessary study skills and time management skills to be successful students on campus. In addition to major advising and course scheduling, staff also communicates the academic etiquette of university life to students. Staff also seeks to prepare students for academic pursuits beyond their undergraduate degree, providing information on graduate programs at the University of Oregon, or helping students seek programs of interest across the country. In the area of personal development, SSA staff work to develop a strong rapport with students during their first year on campus. Staff members strive to be a sounding board for students as they mature, and a
person who can direct them to various resources on campus and in the community. Staff members attend a variety of campus trainings to be better informed on issues affecting college students, like drug and alcohol abuse, or suicide. Athletically, SSA staff has the least direct impact. Again, staff members often serve as a resource for students who are seeking advice on issues which affect them athletically. In career development, SSA staff helps students prepare to enter the working world with a solid résumé, highlighting the skills student-athletes learn in their sport. SSA staff maintains relationships with various companies and alumni, who favor student-athletes as new hires, to assist in placing them after graduation. Staff members also encourage students to participate in the campus events hosted by the Career Center, and also to connect with a faculty member on campus to establish a future reference. In the past, advisors have taught a career planning course for juniors, discussing issues like résumé building and cover letters, interview skills, and transitional issues for college athletes. Finally, for the area community service, SSA offers students opportunities to work with local children. Typically, the focus of these events revolves around topics like academics, responsibility and leadership.

**Study Hall**

SSA offers two different approaches to study hall. The traditional approach has been measured by an hour requirement, in which each student is required to accrue eight hours of study hall time per week in our building. Included in their eight hours are tutoring appointments, meetings with advisors, and individual study time.

**Structured Study Hall**

The new model, Structured Study Hall, is a tiered program that is measured by attendance and contact time with tutors and staff. This system allows SSA to more closely monitor academic progress and needs of the student-athletes, as well as provide more structure to the time they spend studying in our unit. Students on Tier 1 (2.30 GPA and below) are the most closely monitored, and scheduled to a minimum of eight hours of contact time per week. Those on Tier 2 (2.31 – 2.60 GPA) have six hours of contact time scheduled per week. Those on Tier 3 (2.61 to 3.00 GPA) have four hours of contact time scheduled per week. Those above 3.00 GPA are free to use tutors and study hall at their own discretion.

**Freshman/Transfer Orientation**

SSA participates in and organizes a variety of student orientations. During the summer, the advising staff assists in the University IntroDUCKtion program, which student-athletes are encouraged to attend. During these sessions, incoming students learn about university requirements, discover campus resources, take placement exams, and schedule their first term of courses.

A concentrated orientation for freshmen and transfer football student-athletes takes place in August. Throughout ten days, new students participate in of skill building exercises, hear from guest speakers, receive academic advising, and participate in various academic workshops involving departments on campus. Advisors frequently work with individual teams to provide similar orientations each fall for newcomers.
**Academic Progress Monitoring and Reporting**

Academic progress monitoring and reporting is a collaborative effort between all members of the SSA Staff. Advisors meet weekly with all freshmen and upperclassmen of concern to monitor their academic progress. Notes from each meeting are entered into an internal online reporting system. This system also includes progress notes from learning specialists and tutors, who also track course progress for their students. These notes are read daily by SSA staff and athletic department compliance staff, and shared with coaching staff on a weekly basis. SSA also requests Mid-quarterly Grade Reports (MGRs) from instructors to help assist in obtaining an accurate picture of each student’s progress.

SSA staff meets weekly with athletic department compliance staff to discuss student progress and any potential NCAA eligibility concerns. Official NCAA eligibility certification is done both on a quarterly and yearly basis by the advising staff, and approved by the Faculty Athletics Representative (quarterly basis), by the Registrar’s Office (yearly basis), and by various deans and department heads (yearly basis).

**Assistance with Special Academic Needs**

SSA employs five learning specialists, who predominantly work with our at-risk population. The at-risk population consists of students who enter college underprepared, have documented learning disabilities, or are identified through a screening process as having learning difficulties. The testing and assessment of learning disabilities is handled by the Office of Disability Services. Accommodations and recommendations for assistance come directly from the Disabilities Office. Students with previous documentation identified through the admissions process or are also referred to Disability Services for on-campus help.

Learning specialists work with the identified at-risk students on an individual basis to address unique needs of each student, with content and academic skill building for current courses. They also frequently communicate with professors regarding the progress and needs of the individual student. Learning specialists also work closely with the Office of Disability Services to help students with disabilities understand their rights to register for appropriate accommodations.

**Learning Assessments**

SSA has used a variety of learning assessments historically. All assessments are administered by a learning specialist. The assessments used for the 2010-11 year included the DIBELs (Reading), SMALSI (study skills), a writing sample, and a personal history questionnaire. These assessment tests are designed for internal use only. They are not designed as diagnostic tools for the identification of learning disabilities.

Past assessments have included the WRAT-3, Nelson Denny, and a variety of other measures. The information gathered from these assessments is used to help identify anyone who may be a candidate for further testing (disabilities, etc.) and anyone who may require special assistance in tutoring.

**Assistance for At-Risk Students**

Assistance for at-risk students is provided in a variety of ways. Students identified as at-risk are immediately assigned to work with a learning specialist. Learning specialists work with students to
help address skill deficiencies, discuss content for courses, and help students build confidence in their academic abilities.

At-risk students typically have one or two appointments per week with their assigned learning specialist. For the remainder of their structured study time, students are integrated into the Structured Study Hall system and assigned to work with Super Tutors for their additional time in study hall. At-risk students also meet with advisors on a weekly basis, sometimes more often, and are encouraged to seek the help and support of their instructors in office hours.

Post-Eligibility Programs

For post-eligible students, graduation remains as the goal. Anyone who is injured and unable to continue their sport, or completed their eligibility without their degree, is required to use or offered the services in a manner consistent with when they were eligible. Thus, they take part in advising, tutoring, study hall, and exam reviews as necessary. Advisors also work closely with these students to help them prepare for the transition to life beyond college and sport, working with them to pursue graduate school admissions, and/or career opportunities.

Recruiting

SSA staff members coordinate with athletic department staff to provide a variety of recruiting services on campus. As prospective student-athletes come to campus on official or unofficial visits, academic advisors meet individually with recruits to discuss the academic nature of the university. They also hold informational sessions for parents, and present academic information at academic breakfasts or dinners for larger sports. Academic advisors will also arrange for recruits to meet with faculty members in a department of interest to the recruit.

Faculty Relations

SSA and Intercollegiate Athletics collaborate on several programs to show appreciation for faculty and staff. Several teams utilize a guest coach program, in which faculty members join the team for a complete game day experience. Football has hosted a faculty appreciation luncheon in the spring for several years.

SSA acts as the liaison between athletic department staff and faculty members. As such, academic advisors address issues of concern regarding their student-athlete’s academic performance. This may include course progress, accommodations for exams missed during travel, or behavior issues.


The response to the new facility, the John E Jaqua Center for Academic Support for Student Athletes, has been extremely positive. The comparison from the old spaces to the new spaces is so extreme in terms of quantity and quality it is difficult to express any negativity to the working environment. The continuing process of learning how to best use the space so that the student athletes are optimally served is important and ongoing.
Regardless of the space available for operation, the most important component is the quality of the persons who function within that space. Overall, the staff currently working in the SSA are of high quality and are excellent professionals.

Interview process.

Interviews were conducted with each of the individuals who is a part of the Support Services for Student Athletes, including those from the Athletic Department who provide the leadership for Student Athlete Development, Compliance and the oversight of football academics. Each individual was asked the same general question. Basically the questions were regarding comments on the survey areas and expanded discussions on those followed by what is going well and what could be improved. A summary of the responses are presented here.

Discussions about the component areas.

The most often identified area that was specifically mentioned as needing attention was that of learning assessments. Many of the staff expressed frustrations with the availability of testing results in a timely manner.

Post eligibility programs were another area where staff responses were often less than superior. The responses in this category were often related to not having complete information or not really understanding the entire scope of the programs rather than knowing about it and not thinking it was effective.

Senior Success as a part of the Student Development Program is not well understood. This program is relatively new and really in operation for only one year.

Positive aspects of the SSA

Obviously the most often mentioned positive is the John E Jaqua Center for Support Services for Student Athletes facility. But in addition to commenting on the building, staff indicated that the process of transitioning and learning to optimize the functioning of the facility also went and continues to go extremely well. The way in which leadership was provided during the past two years was complimented. Comments were made about the genuine caring that staff had for each other and the student athletes.

The changes that have been made in the structured study hall in the past two years were met with enthusiasm. The resultant focus on assignments and specifics rather than seat-time is more productive for all involved.

The student development programs and activities are being received well and participation and outcomes are at a new positive level. Progress is continuing to be made in coordinated activities with the O Heroes program was complimented by practically everyone.
Interestingly, communication was also identified as a component that was going particularly well despite also being labeled as needing improvement. Persons commenting here indicated that the new spaciousness of the Jaqua led people to work more diligently to be certain that communication between and among staff who were no longer in close, crowded vicinity occurred.

Challenges

Communication within and across units particularly between sub-groups of staff who work closely with certain categories of athletes was identified by some as needing to be improved. Connecting within the building and sharing pertinent information with counselors/advisors, learning specialists and tutors for those who are assisting the same student athletes could be very worthwhile. Much of this occurs but sometimes there is a missing link.

Continuing education opportunities have been made available on a regular basis but some believed that more specifically coordinated programming could prove to be useful. Meeting with each other regarding specific persons or types of persons is productive. Many of the staff are well trained professionals who have the experience and ability to deliver in-house on-site continuing education(training) to other members of the staff. These professional development workshops(sessions) could be beneficial to both the provider and the recipients. Being proactive in terms of matters of mutual concern could also prove very beneficial.

Ninety percent of the operation is going well; ten percent could improve. This kind of an overall assessment is extremely positive. But as with everything, means whereby improvements can be made should be continually pursued.

Campus connections are relatively positive at the present time but there might be opportunities to improve on the manner in which similar campus services (academic learning services, disability services, etc.) are sought and provided.

Continuing discussions regarding differing philosophical perspectives on the degree and style of support provided for student athletes will occur. Some believe that too much assistance is provided and deters individuals from developing the desired goal of independence. Others consider the specific assistance provided essential in the process of gaining confidence in individual abilities prior to complete independence.

The Support Services for Student Athletes has become a relatively large and complex organization. The ability to view event calendars and individual activities on a common server would assist all staff in having a clear understanding of the traffic expectations and the responsibilities that some staff may have on their agenda. A common calendar available on line for all to access could prove useful.
General comments

The transmission of information between units and some of the sports, particularly the revenue sports, is inconsistent. A building of trust and confidence between all persons involved would go a long way towards optimal communication and hence optimal efficiency.

Retreat topics

Communication, collaboration, cross fertilization, trust, cohesion, compartmentalization, continuing education, team building, pedagogy, information share, and defined activities for improvement and outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Orientation for transfers and others in winter and spring
2. Post eligibility tracking and support
3. Assessment results shared for the optimal use by advisors and learning specialists
4. Communication between the staff involved from the SSA and those from the Athletic Department involved in support, life skills, and general development

Overall, the professional staff at the Support Services for Student Athletes is performing admirably. The manner in which they collaboratively and collegially provide the services that student athletes need to be successful at the University of Oregon is commended and most all staff indicate that they enjoy coming to work and express satisfaction with their accomplishments. As with every organization of this size, striving to be the best that can be is the overall goal. All persons are committed to work towards accomplishing that. The University of Oregon can be proud of the services and can highlight this as a best practice facility and staff.