TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

June 1, 2012
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REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

I. Inventory of External Customers for Each Budget Strategy

Tarleton State University’s mission is to provide an academically challenging and experiential learning environment that fosters moral and ethical thinkers and leaders who contribute in a meaningful way to a global society. With a fall 2011 enrollment of over 9,000 students at four campuses, Tarleton’s budget strategies in the general appropriations act for fiscal year 2011-2012 are directly or indirectly related to serving students. Institutional and department level surveys are used to assess the University’s efforts to provide quality services to students. Strategies identified are as follows:

A. INSTRUCTION / OPERATIONS
   A.1.1. Strategy: OPERATIONS SUPPORT
   A.1.2. Strategy: STAFF GROUP INSURANCE PREMIUMS
   A.1.3. Strategy: WORKERS’ COMPENSATION INSURANCE
   A.1.4. Strategy: UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION INSURANCE
   A.1.5. Strategy: TEXAS PUBLIC EDUCATION GRANTS
   A.1.6. Strategy: ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES

B. INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT
   B.1.1. Strategy: E&G SPACE SUPPORT
   B.1.2. Strategy: TUITION REVENUE BOND RETIREMENT

C. SPECIAL ITEM SUPPORT
   C.1.1. Strategy: TARLETON OUTREACH
   C.1.2. Strategy: CENTRAL TEXAS CENTER
      University System Center – Central Texas
   C.2.1. Strategy: ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH
      Institute for Environmental Research
   C.2.2 Strategy: AGRICULTURE CENTER
      Tarleton Agriculture Center
   C.3.1. Strategy: SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER
      Small Business Development Center
   C.4.1 Strategy: INSTITUTIONAL ENHANCEMENT

D. RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FUND
   D.1.1. Strategy: RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FUND
Significant services that are routinely offered to students include:

1. Course instruction
2. Academic counseling and advisement
3. Financial aid
4. Tutoring
5. Library
6. Housing
7. Parking
8. Recreational facilities
9. Social events
10. Dining
11. Instructional laboratories
12. Career counseling
13. Psychological counseling
14. Health services

II. Description of Surveys and Findings

A. The National Survey of Student Engagement, Spring 2011

1. Planning and Overview

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is designed specifically to assess the extent to which students are engaged in empirically derived educational practices and what is gained from their college experience. The results of NSSE have been used to produce a set of national benchmarks of good educational practice that participating schools use to estimate the efficacy of improvement efforts. The five NSSE benchmarks and examples of associated questions are presented in Table 1.
As with other surveys, the NSSE relies on self-reports. Using self-reports from students to assess the quality of higher education is common practice. For many indicators of educational practice, such as how students use their time, student reports are often the only source of useful data.

The design team that developed the NSSE instrument devoted considerable time in an effort to make certain the items on the survey were clearly worded, well-defined, and had high content validity. Logical relationships exist between the items in ways that are consistent with the results of objective measures and with other research.
The NSSE was administered in spring 2011. A range of questions to assess student customer satisfaction is included in the questions posed to participants. Indiana University assists with the administration of the survey.

2. Data Collection

The survey was conducted in a collaborative effort with Tarleton’s Office of Institutional Research and the Division of Student Life. Over 1,100 Tarleton students completed the survey, with the sample of interest being first-year and senior students (n=643 and n=296 respectively). The survey was administered in paper format in Tarleton’s residence halls and randomly sampled classes. In addition to the delivered questions, the NSSE allows institutions to include a set of questions tailored to the needs of the administering institution. The 2011 administration included 20 questions specific to student satisfaction with Tarleton services.

3. Data Analysis

Means and frequency distributions were calculated for the individual questions as well as the five NSSE benchmarks. Figure 1 demonstrates statistically significant increases (p=.05) in four of the five benchmarks between first-year and senior students.

Figure 1.
This is important in demonstrating higher level of satisfaction with the academic experience as students persist at Tarleton.

When considering the Tarleton specific questions related to satisfaction with services, Table 2 indicates high levels of approval with all services except those associated with procedures to file an academic or student service complaint.

Table 2. Additional NSSE Questions Specific to Tarleton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1. Freshmen Consortium Question Responses (NSSE)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tarleton Freshmen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University System Freshmen</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85.9% indicated that navigating and completing the admission process was easy</td>
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<tr>
<td>82.6% agreed/strongly agreed that the registration timeframe is reasonable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>88.2% were satisfied with the accessibility of their academic advisor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>85.5% indicated the academic requirements were easy to understand</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>95.4% found the academic staff to be knowledgeable about their areas</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>95.2% agreed/strongly agreed that teaching facilities provide an appropriate learning environment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>55.7% indicated that they knew how to file a complaint regarding academic issues</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>94.9% indicated that the library staff was helpful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95.9% agreed/strongly agreed that the library’s resources were adequate</td>
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<tr>
<th>Student Services &amp; Programs</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94.7% agreed/strongly agreed that non-academic staff was knowledgeable about their areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>87.5% indicated that communications about student services is clear and effective</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>91.1% believed that the student handbook provides useful information</td>
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<tr>
<td>87.6% indicated that office hours were convenient</td>
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<tr>
<td>54.2% agreed/strongly agreed that they knew how to file a complaint regarding student services</td>
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<tr>
<td>94.5% indicated that computing resources were adequate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84.8% agreed/strongly agreed that the university’s website is well organized and easy to access</td>
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<tr>
<th>Campus Environment</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94.5% agreed/strongly agreed that they felt safe on campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>95.3% indicated that the campus is well maintained</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>95.2% agreed/strongly agreed that Tarleton’s campus is supportive of student learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>77.4% believed that the institution will respond to their concerns</td>
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B. Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), Spring 2012

1. Planning and Overview

A second administration of Noel Levitz’s Student Survey Inventory (SSI) was conducted at Tarleton State University during the spring of 2012. The SSI provides information on the institution’s strengths as experienced by students.

2. Data Collection

The SSI was administered in randomly selected classes on the Stephenville campus. It was completed by 591 Tarleton students.

3. Data Analysis

Most respondents were full-time students (97%) attending classes during the day at the Stephenville campus. Fifty-six percent of the respondents were female while forty-four percent were male. A review of the data indicated that 94% were traditional aged students, 80% were white, and 96% were permanent residents of Texas. Of the respondents, 63% indicated that Tarleton was their first college choice.

The following are Tarleton’s strengths as indicated by the respondents:

- The instruction in my major field was excellent
- The content of the courses within my major is valuable
- My academic advisor was knowledgeable about degree requirements
- Faculty are knowledgeable in their field
- The campus is safe and secure for all students
- Tarleton provides ample opportunities for students to get involved outside the classroom
- It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus

Overall, 57% indicated that the Tarleton experience was better than they anticipated, 67% were satisfied to very satisfied with Tarleton as their college, and 69% said they would probably/definitely re-enroll at Tarleton.

C. Internal Department Surveys

1. Student Health Center

Student Health Services (the Center) provides medical and pharmaceutical services to Tarleton students to maintain or restore their health to maximum capability. A satisfaction survey was administered in the spring of 2010 to collect student perspectives related to the importance and quality of service and services provided by the Center. The target population for this assessment were Tarleton State University students utilizing the Center for services between April 15, 2010 and May 14, 2010 (N=490). As potential participants were identified from students specifically utilizing the Center, the final sample (n=59) was a purposeful sample of convenience.
Of the 59 respondents:

- 67.8% (40) visited the Student Health Center to obtain general medicine services
- 6.8% received women’s health services
- 3.4% received laboratory services
- 3.4% obtained pharmaceutical services
- and 18.6% visited for other services including allergy injections, immunizations, and consultations.

Overall, participants indicated high levels of satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the Student Health Center with 91.5% and 89.8% indicating they would recommend the services and return as a patient respectively. The participants indicated the facility cleanliness of the center was an important aspect of the SHC and the majority indicated satisfaction in this area. Courtesy, promptness, and response to questions of the reception and the nursing staff continue to rank high among the students.

2. New Student Orientation

New Student Orientations are held in the summer prior to subsequent fall semester. The desired outcomes for students are to understand the academic requirements of Tarleton, connect with the Tarleton community, and understand aspects of the enrollment/registration process. In an effort to gather information about how well the student outcomes were achieved as well as gain in-depth information about student expectations for Orientation, a focus group of 24 students was conducted in September, 2010. The following is a brief summary of the questions and responses provided in this focus group:

What were your expectations of Orientation?
- I wanted to learn more about Tarleton
- I wanted to find out about the physical lay-out of the campus
- I wanted to know more about the Tarleton culture
- I wanted to meet new people/make new friends

Were your expectations met? If so, in what ways?
- The vast majority of students indicated that their expectations were met and/or exceeded

What part of Orientation was most useful in transitioning to college?
- Informal information gained from the student Orientation leader
- The culture of Tarleton
3. 2010 Duck Camp

Duck Camp is a three-day experience offered to first year, first time students at Tarleton State University. The transition camp is a student-led event designed and implemented in conjunction with the Division of Student Life. The desired outcomes for Duck Camp were for students to (a) interpret academic expectations and responsibilities, (b) establish relationships with students of various backgrounds, (c) develop a sense of pride in Tarleton history and traditions, and (d) discuss the importance of team building skills. Duck Camp is sponsored by the First Year Experience Office. In an effort to gather information about how well the outcomes for Duck Camp were met, as well as gain in-depth information about student’s expectations of Duck Camp, a focus group was conducted in the fall of 2010 with 11 students participating. Students indicated that Duck Camp was effective in meeting new people and assisting in the transition to college and matriculating into the Tarleton environment.

III. Using Assessment to Inform Practice

The findings from any assessment or collection of data are only as valid as their use in implementing new student initiatives or adjusting existing services to meet changing demographics. The findings from these assessments have been discussed at the institutional, divisional, and department level and are used as guidance in meeting student needs. Tarleton is committed to high quality customer service, recognizing that students and constituents have options in the college choice process.

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