

New Student Orientation Annual Report

June 2010 – May 2011

1. Changes in Service Environment: Include recent and anticipated events or trends that will affect the scope and/or size of activities in the future (e.g. economic conditions, opportunities)

- a) **Projected Increase in Transfer Student Enrollment:** One of the seven strategies to enhance the success of our students through educational innovation (Goal #1 in the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan) is to “enroll a greater percentage of external undergraduate transfer students.” Given the projected growth in this population, New Student Orientation (NSO) must continue to seek ways to revise the Orientation and transition process for our incoming transfer students. NC State struggles with providing assistance to this diverse population of students and NSO plans to lead the way on campus to provide transfer students with the attention they require and deserve.
- b) **Strategic Realignment of New Student Orientation:**
 - o *New Student Orientation will be “exported” from the Division of Undergraduate Academic Programs to the Office of Enrollment Management and Services.* It is currently unclear how this move will affect New Student Orientation’s activities, but the closer proximity to Undergraduate Admissions, Registration & Records, and the Visitor Center, provide opportunities for collaboration to make the transition of students more seamless.
 - o *New Student Orientation and Parents’ Orientation will be combined.* Incorporating Parents’ Orientation into New Student Orientation will affect the operations of the NSO program in a number of ways. This change would require the Office of NSO to take on additional responsibilities, create new processes, and obviously play an increased role in working with parents as their sons and daughters transition to NC State.
- c) **Increased Electronic Communication:** With the increased use of technology by students, it is essential for NSO to continue to find ways to utilize this technology to communicate important messages to students in transition. Some examples of our use of technology (either current or planned) include the use of Facebook and Twitter, using a text message-based campus tour package (SCVNGR), creating a New Students website, providing online tutorials and creating an online Orientation component for transfer students. Some of these are already being used while others are in their final stages of implementation.

2. Initiatives: Major initiatives and/or changes to programs or activities

- a) **New Transfer/One-day Orientation Model:** New Student Orientation restructured the one-day Orientation programs that include Transfer Orientation, Late/August Orientation, and our Spring Entry Orientation programs. After reviewing research on transfer student needs and feedback from students, the NSO staff created a new program which incorporates more faculty involvement and academic content while providing participants with more options for break-out sessions. The new model also provides a more streamlined and cohesive feel by combining multiple offices into theme-based presentations, reducing the number of presenters to which students will be exposed to during their orientation experience. The new model was implemented during the Summer 2010 Transfer Orientation program and students responded positively to the new information in the program, indicating a high level of understanding of important measures related to the new content.
- b) **Handbook for Incoming Students:** The Office of New Student Orientation created, edited, and paid for the Handbook for Incoming Students. The Handbook provides

students with a single, hard-copy source for important transition-related information. The Handbook was created in the format of a student planner to provide all students with a planner while also increasing the likelihood that students will keep the publication through their first year at NC State. The Handbook was distributed during the Summer 2010 Orientation programs and an updated version was created for Summer 2011.

- c) **New Student Checklist and New Student Website:** Beginning in Fall 2010, New Student Orientation worked closely with Undergraduate Admissions and the Coordinator of Communication in Enrollment Management and Services to create a consistent New Student Checklist that could be used by students beginning with the admission process and going through the beginning of their first semester. The checklist was used in Admissions materials and was posted on the NC State website (<http://www.ncsu.edu> → Current Students → New Students) and is accessible via a newly created New Students website at <http://newstudents.ncsu.edu>. This New Student website is in its final stages of implementation and when completed will serve as a single source of information for new students (undergraduate first-year and transfer students).

3. Diversity: Initiatives and progress

- a) New Student Orientation continues to dedicate time and resources into ensuring that our staff is informed and trained on diversity-related issues. Professional staff members have participated in training sessions such as Transgender 101, Project SAFE, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Institute. As part of their training, each student staff member participates in the National Coalition Building Institute and hears from the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, the Women's Center, and the Office for Equal Opportunity. We also work closely with our campus partners to ensure messages related to diversity are included in the Orientation programs. In the planning and delivery of information, NSO regularly includes the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, the GLBT Center, and the Office for Equal Opportunity. In particular, there are specific messages during Orientation related to the Free Expression Tunnel and the expectations the NC State community has for all of its members.

4. Instructional Program Advances: Including curriculum development and program review

5. Research: Volume of activity and achievements of significance

6. Extension/Engagement: Initiatives and public service activities

- a) Michael Coombes serves on the planning committee for the 2011 National Orientation Directors Annual Conference.

7. Faculty and Staff: Honors, awards and recognition

- a) Michael Coombes won the Division of Undergraduate Programs Recognition Award (EPA) – Spring 2011
- b) Gabe Wical was selected as the Outstanding Alum by University College (Ohio University) – Fall 2010

8. Students: Honors, measures of quality and student activities

9. Fund-Raising: Private fund-raising successes

10. Unit Directors: Achievements and staff changes

- a) **First-year and Transfer Orientation Programs:** New Student Orientation coordinated twenty-two Orientation programs for incoming students during the 2010-2011 year – seventeen two-day programs for first-year students, two one-day programs for transfer students, and three one-day programs that included both first-year and transfer students. The overall attendance numbers remained very similar to 2009-2010, with the numbers going down slightly for first-year students (-36), and increasing slightly for transfer students (+51). See the table below for information regarding attendance numbers for the Orientation programs.

Year	First-year Students			FY Total	Transfer Students			TR Total	Overall Total
	Summer	Dec.	Jan.		Summer	Dec.	Jan.		
2009	4667	16	19	4702	990	89	153	1232	5934
2010	4632	21	13	4666	1019	118	146	1283	5949
	-35	5	-6	-36	29	29	-7	51	15

- b) **NC State University Open House Assistance:** On Saturday, October 16 staff members (including both professional and student staff members) from New Student Orientation assisted participants of the University Open House by welcoming students and family members as they arrived at the Open House. Over a five-hour period, NSO staff members assisted hundreds of students and family members, providing information on the schedule, activities, and offices present at the Open House.
- c) **Partnerships:** Again in 2011, New Student Orientation is partnering with the Student Wolfpack Club and the Students Today Alumni Tomorrow (STAT). The Student Wolfpack Club became a sponsor of the New Student Orientation program during the past three years and has agreed to serve as a sponsor again in the summer of 2011.

STAT has again agreed to partially sponsor the lanyards that are given to and used by every first-year student at New Student Orientation. This partnership continues the relationship that has grown between the two offices over the past few years. In exchange for the donation of the lanyards, STAT will have an increased presence at Orientation while still following the guidelines set by New Student Orientation.

New for 2010, New Student Orientation worked with the University Communication in an effort to provide a more creative, inviting, and cohesive program.

- d) **Wolfpack Welcome Week:** New Student Orientation coordinated a panel discussion for incoming students entitled "What to expect in the college classroom". There were two separate sessions held, each with the same three panelists. Those participating in the panels were Brian Koehler (Coordinator of the First Year Engineering Program), Janelle Moretz (Adviser & Instructor, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management) and Michelle Crossley (Academic Adviser, First Year College). The panels were facilitated by Michael Coombes (Assistant Director, New Student Orientation). There were 22 total students in attendance at the two panels who gave the program positive comments.
- e) **New Assistant Director:** In January, 2011 NSO hired a new Assistant Director, Cameron Hill.
- f) **Staff Accomplishments and Activities:**
Michael Coombes
- o 2011 National Orientation Directors Annual Conference Planning Committee
 - o Transfer Student Mentor – Fall 2010, Spring 2011

- Member of the National Orientation Directors Association
- Serves on the Alliance for Sexual Assault Prevention
- Serves on the Student Success Advisory Board Student Engagement subgroup
- Participated in DUAP's Grant Writing class
- Attended the "Institute on Transfer Student Success" hosted by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (April 2011)
- Was trained to be a facilitator for StrengthsQuest (April 2011)

Gabe Wical

- Serves on NC State Common Reading Committee
- Member of Wolfpack Welcome Week Steering Team
- Member of the First-year Success Committee
- Transfer Student Mentor – Fall 2010, Spring 2011
- Served as the chair of the DUAP Assessment Team
- Member of EMAS Open House Steering Committee
- Disney Quality Service Institute

Lori Wilson

- Member of the DUAP IT Committee
- Disney Quality Service Institute

Cameron Hill

- Serves on Wolfpack Welcome Week Committee
- Attended the "Institute on Transfer Student Success" hosted by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (April 2011)
- Was trained to be a facilitator for StrengthsQuest (April 2011)
- Disney Quality Service Institute

11. Recommendations and concerns for the future

Recommendations:

- a) **Explore a "University" Orientation Model:** The merits of moving to a university model for Orientation (versus a college-based model) should be reviewed to see which model would best support the goals of the strategic plan. The Office of New Student Orientation plans to begin this process this summer by gathering student data that will assist in exploring this option.
- b) **Communicate the "New Students" focus of NSO:** Most on campus understand the role that the Office of New Student Orientation plays in coordinating the summer Orientation program, but there is a limited understanding of the role we play in assisting first-year and transfer students throughout their entire transition process. Whether it involves changing the office's name, re-branding "New Student Orientation" across campus, or just doing a better job of communicating what we do, the campus needs to know how we can help them assist incoming students transitioning to the university. This will be increasingly more important as we continue to expand the scope of our services beyond the summer Orientation programs.
- c) **Strategic Plan:** Throughout the newly adopted Strategic Plan there are a number of references to the importance of getting students connected to the appropriate resources as early in their college career as possible. The Office of New Student Orientation is going to be essential in implementing many of the strategies listed in

the plan. Whether it involves professional academic advising, high-impact experiences, or enhancing institutional pride, New Student Orientation can play a key role and should be included in the discussions from the beginning stages.

Concerns

- a) **New Student Orientation Fee:** The New Student Orientation fee is charged to all incoming students. There is a specific purpose code for the fee, which indicates that the fee can only be used for “normal orientation expenses”. Currently, the “New Student Orientation” fee provides funding for more than just New Student Orientation, including some services that are not coordinated by the Office of New Student Orientation and/or do not fit within the purpose specified for the fee. This creates concern because it provides the appearance that New Student Orientation costs more than it actually does and more importantly, students are not accurately informed where their fees are going. Separate fees should be created for those programs/services currently utilizing the New Student Orientation fee or the name of the fee should be changed to reflect the full scope of services being funded by the fee. “New Student Fee” would be an example of a more reflective name for the fee.

In addition, please provide any examples from your unit, only if applicable, that illustrate the strategic goals emerging in the draft strategic plan:

1. Enhance the success of our students through educational innovation.

Enroll a greater percentage of external undergraduate transfer students

- If NC State plans to enroll more transfer students, it will be essential to provide the appropriate services and support for this group of diverse students. The Office of New Student Orientation can play a major role in this process; the office is currently working to help transfer students in a number of ways.
 - In Summer 2010, the Transfer Orientation program was re-designed to focus on research-based topics that would be more helpful and appropriate for transfer students. The next step in this process is designing an online module that replaces a portion of the transfer orientation process for students.
 - NSO is working with college partners to provide more accurate and timely information to their transfer students, including details regarding the advising and course registration process.
 - NSO is also coordinating activities for transfer students including a session specifically designed for transfer students during Wolfpack Welcome Week, with plans to also start a student organization in Fall 2011 for transfer students.
- Improve retention and graduate rates
 - New Student Orientation is working to create systems that assist students throughout their transition to NC State. In Fall 2010, the New Student Checklist was created – a consistent checklist used by Undergraduate Admissions and New Student Orientation that begins from the time a student gets admitted to the university. NSO is also in the final stages of creating a New Students website, a single source of information for incoming first-year and transfer students in transition to the university. While these activities may not directly impact retention, they can play a role in the overall satisfaction with NC State and connect students to the necessary resources to prevent or reduce situations that may cause them to leave the university.
- Explore a new proactive advising model for freshmen and students in transition
 - Providing students with high-quality academic advising and appropriate course registration is essential to a successful transition to the university. The

Office of New Student Orientation currently works with our college and campus partners by providing “best practices” presentations to advisers and at the Advisers Roundtable. This assistance will continue as the university seeks ways to create a more proactive advising model for all students in transition.

- Provide high-impact educational experiences for undergraduates
 - Providing high-impact educational experiences for students is an important strategy for enhancing their success, but these experiences will not work unless students are aware of these experiences and why they are important. New Student Orientation will play a key role in communicating these experiences, starting from the time a student is accepted to NC State through the end of their first year on campus. This will be accomplished not only through the tradition summer Orientation programs, but also through on-going methods such as the New Student Checklist, the New Students website, programming, and electronic communication.

2. Enhance scholarship and research by investing in faculty infrastructure.

3. Enhance interdisciplinary scholarship to address the grand challenges of society.

4. Enhance organizational excellence by creating a culture of constant improvement.

a) Encourage diversity and inclusion

- New Student Orientation continues to include a variety of messages through the summer Orientation programs that clearly communicates the university’s expectation for everyone associated with NC State to act with respect and civility towards others. A wide range of topics and speakers welcome students and their families to the NC State family throughout the Orientation programs.

5. Enhance local and global engagement through focused strategic partnerships.

Finally, from the information above, please identify up to five (5) bullets of information that you believe are worthy of special note or acknowledgment by the university administration.

- **Explore a “University” Orientation Model:** The merits of moving to a university model for Orientation (versus a college-based model) should be reviewed to see which model would best support the goals of the strategic plan.
- **New Student Orientation As a Process:** The Office of New Student Orientation is involved in much more than just the summer Orientation programs, including such things as the New Student Checklist, the New Students website, programming and assistance for transfer students, and on-going communication with students in transition.
- **New Student Orientation Fee:** Separate fees should be created for those programs/services currently utilizing the New Student Orientation fee or the name of the fee should be changed to reflect the full scope of services being funded by the fee. “New Student Fee” would be an example of a more reflective name for the fee.
- **New Student Orientation’s Focus on Transfer Students:** The Office of New Student is currently working to help transfer students in a number of ways, including re-designing the Transfer Orientation program, creating a student organization for transfer students, providing programming specifically designed for transfers, and working with college partners to provide better service and support for this population of students.

- **Strategic Plan:** The Office of New Student Orientation is well-situated to assist in the implementation of a number of strategies listed in the Strategic Plan, particularly with the goal of enhancing the success of our students through educational innovation.