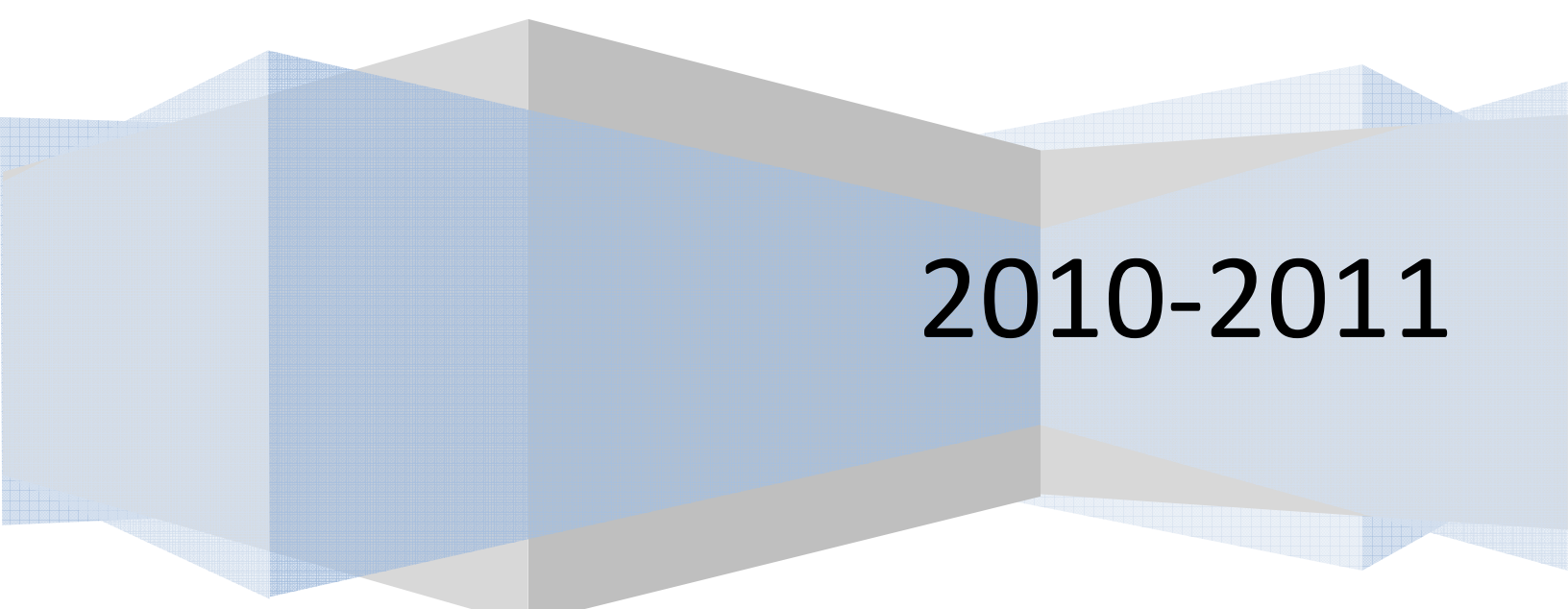


University of South Carolina

Office of Student Disability Services Performance Blueprint



2010-2011

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS) is to promote the personal growth and professional development of students with disabilities by facilitating the provision of reasonable accommodations, serving as consultants to students, faculty, and staff, as well as educating the greater Carolina Community.

VISION STATEMENT

The Office of Student Disability Services shares responsibility with students and the greater Carolina Community to promote inclusion, provide access, and encourage mutual respect.

UNIT OVERVIEW

Staffing

OSDS is composed of five full-time highly trained experts consisting of one Director, two Student Services Managers, one Office Manager, and one Assistive Technology Coordinator. In addition to the full-time staff, four part-time staff members consist of one Networking/Career Specialist, one Assistive Technology Lab Assistant, and two Graduate Assistants.

Funding

OSDS is sustained completely by 'A' funds with the exception of the work completed by the Networking/Career Specialist, which is a grant funded (\$6,000) part-time position.

History

OSDS emerged in the 1970's, prior to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), to provide support for students with hearing, visual and mobility impairments. Accommodations primarily provided were: readers, note takers, and transportation. During this time, the Transitional Living Center (TLC) provided comprehensive programming for students with head and spinal cord injuries that required 24-hour nursing care. This program, now closed, was one of the first of its kind in the country and was a collaborative effort between the university and the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN).

Upon passage of the ADA in 1991, all colleges and universities were required to identify an office for assisting students with disabilities, which created an unfunded federal mandate.

Mission Fulfillment

The mission of OSDS is broken down into three components: Provision of Reasonable Accommodations, Consultancy, and Educating the Carolina Community.

The provision of reasonable accommodations consists of ensuring equal access for students within all aspects of campus life (i.e. Financial Aid, Housing, etc.) and coursework. Over the course of the year OSDS has received no complaints that were elevated beyond the office. The relatively small numbers of complaints from students received by the office were able to be handled in a fashion which was beneficial to all affected parties. As a result of enhanced problem resolution, students, faculty, and staff have been educated on the tenets of accessibility and personal responsibility.

Improved communication with faculty has had the result of strengthening our relationship as well as providing enhanced services for students. This has been seen in an increase in the number of meetings intended to mediate student/faculty concerns. Improved relationships have also been seen with Housing, the Registrar's Office, and Facilities Management resulting in greater access to services and compliance with state and federal regulations. The ability of the staff to mediate concerns has resulted in a better working relationship with our faculty counterparts.

Through consistent education and training, great progress has been made in providing relevant information and directing faculty, staff, and students towards appropriate resources. OSDS support, in an educative capacity, to system campuses also continues with frequent contact and guidance being provided. With regard to training, OSDS has engaged the staff in Housing, Conferences and the President's Office in purposeful endeavors with the intention of developing their overall knowledge of working within state and federal guidelines to maintain compliance. OSDS on the Columbia campus has established itself as a leader in the system and maintains its role of providing direction to other disability services offices as needed. This is evidenced by the increased number of instances in which our guidance is sought in an effort to resolve and mitigate problems that occur on the system campuses.

CONTEXTUAL STATEMENT

The core functions of OSDS are to put in place accommodations which are deemed appropriate in adherence with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), act as consultant, and educate the Carolina Community.

Accommodations

The number of students who have become registered with the office continues to grow at an average annual rate of 39%. OSDS has added its largest number of students (221) during AY 10-11 and now has a total of 688 students. A five-year synopsis is presented:

Table 1

Academic Year	Baseline	Total New	% Increase	Total
2006-2007	359	95	26%	454
2007-2008	306	133	43%	439
2008-2009	364	150	41%	514
2009-2010	425	155	36%	580
2010-2011	467	221	47%	688

- Baseline is defined as the number of students registered with OSDS after the yearly purge of inactive students.

In viewing the synopsis, it should be noted that due to changes in the Americans with Disabilities Act, a larger number of students will become eligible for services. As a result, OSDS is projected to have the largest influx of students it ever has as its staffing levels have remained relatively consistent.

In order to receive accommodations, students must become registered as a student with a disability. Prior to registration, each student file must be complete with both an application and supporting documentation. The overall time to register students with OSDS has decreased from four-six weeks to less than two. The average staff time spent during this process is 1.5 hours.

This includes follow-up, discussion with external professionals, parents, and students. Students must then attend a mandatory orientation. Orientation is defined as when a student registers with OSDS after their file has been completed and averages .75 hours. The overall time to complete registration is therefore calculated to be 2.25 hours. A five-year synopsis is provided:

Table 2

Academic Year	New Registrants	Total Man Hours
2006-2007	95	213.75
2007-2008	133	299.25
2008-2009	150	337.50
2009-2010	155	348.75
2010-2011	221	497.25

The man hours indicated above should be considered with regard to staffing. Over the time indicated, the coordinators who are responsible for this portion of operations increased from two to four and now returned to two.

Students are placed into one of four categories: Learning Disabled/AD(H)D, Psychiatric, Physically/Health Disabled, or Audio/Visual Disabilities. Of the students currently registered the largest category are those classified with learning disabilities (57%), followed by those with physical/health disabilities (22%), psychiatric disabilities (13%), and audio/visual disabilities (5%). Students who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities also continue to make up the largest population (52%) of new students registering with OSDS. This allocation of students is comparable to what is seen on the national level. However, the total number of students registered with OSDS at the University of South Carolina is significantly less than what would be expected for a university with over 29,000 students.

Over the past five years, the distribution of students who become registered with OSDS has remained relatively consistent with the exception of a decreasing number of students who present with audio/visual disabilities. It is suspected that with the rising entrance requirements, it is more difficult for these students to meet the entrance requirements. While the percentage distribution of the other categories remains the same, the increasing number of students who choose to register with OSDS has shown a steady increase between 26% and 47% year over year. This has a direct impact on the amount of time OSDS staff spends working with faculty and staff in the provision of accommodations for an increasing load of students served while the number of staff has remained unchanged.

In the provision of student support, each disability classification carries with it an estimated number of man hours to provide service. Student support is defined as any and all services related to the provision of accommodations after the student has become registered with OSDS. This includes but is not limited to: notification letters to professors, conflict resolution, early registration for classes, logistical planning with faculty/staff, etc. A four-year synopsis regarding time is presented:

Table 3

Academic Year	Learning Disabled (3 hours)	Psychiatric (2 hours)	Physically Disabled (5 hours)	Audio/Visually Disabled (6.5 hours)	Total Man Hours
2007-2008	762	108	445	260	1275
2008-2009	882	106	485	208	1681
2009-2010	921	156	655	279.5	2011.5
2010-2011	1161	180	755	234	2330

In considering the numbers above, it should be kept in mind that the length of time spent on each student is highly variable with some students requiring more time than others based on the severity of the presenting issue.

Note takers are considered a reasonable accommodation for some students with disabilities; as such OSDS was able to cover 64 (80%) of the 80 classes requested for Fall 2010 and 62 (91%) of the 98 classes requested for Spring 2011 on a purely volunteer basis. The trend of students requesting note takers has decreased as a result of increased use of assistive technology in the classroom.

Students also receive alternative format books as an accommodation. All requests for this accommodation were fulfilled with a total of 155 books being requested for AY 10-11. Of the 155 total books: 25 were obtained from Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D) for a total of 75 man hours; 105 were obtained from publishers for a total of 315 man hours; 13 were disassembled and scanned into PDF format in-house for a total of 104 man hours; 10 were converted in-house into digital talking books for total of 300 man hours; 2 were converted from PDF format into Word for total of 20 man hours.

The provision of interpreters for students with hearing deficits is crucial. Over the course of 2010-2011, OSDS formed relationships with other campus partners to arrange for the provision of interpreters for all special events to include ESPN Game Day. OSDS also continues its partnership with the Registrar's Office to ensure that graduation ceremonies are accessible to attendees with disabilities.

Test proctoring continues to be the most widely approved and utilized accommodation by students with disabilities. A total of 598 exams were proctored by OSDS during the Fall 2010 semester, which is a 67% increase over Fall 2009. A total of 624 exams were proctored during the Spring 2011 semester, which is a 50% increase over Spring 2010. This continues the trending increase in utilization of this accommodation that began with 121 exams (83% increase) in the Fall of 2008, and 358 exams (a 196% increase) in the Fall of 2009. A five-year synopsis is presented:

Table 4

Academic Year	Fall	% Change	Spring	% Change	Total Tests	Man Hours	After Hour Man Hours	Total Man Hours
2006-2007	83	-	114	-	197	-	-	-
2007-2008	66	-20%	106	-7%	172	-	-	-
2008-2009	121	83%	161	52%	282	376.5	133	509.5
2009-2010	358	196%	417	159%	775	581.5	66	647.5
2010-2011	598	67%	624	50%	1222	700	112	812

In considering the number of hours required to provide test proctoring, it should be noted that the hours required to do so is expected to continue to rise as academic department budgets have been cut and responsibility has shifted to OSDS.

Consultancy

Maintaining the role of Consultant to faculty and staff continues to be a priority of OSDS. Initially, staff notify faculty at the beginning of each semester of the appropriate accommodations for their class and then work collaboratively with faculty to ensure students have access to all class materials. This is a continuous endeavor as registration occurs all semester.

One-on-one contact between faculty and students has increased in an attempt to intervene on a more systemic level in which all parties are brought together in an effort to both resolve conflict and provide resources and information.

Campus partners continue to seek us out as a source of information in planning for special events and conferences. Through our work together, these gatherings have been made more accessible for all who choose to attend by providing interpreters, enlarged print text, and text in braille. The work done with these campus partners is not merely reparative and we continue to convey disability-specific knowledge to consider in the initial planning stages of events which could be attended by those with disabilities.

Educating

Educating the Carolina Community is the final aspect of the mission of OSDS. Of note, a collaborative relationship with Dr. Joseph Johnson and the development of his QRECT class response system has been formed in an effort to ensure its ability to be used by students with disabilities. Work has also been done with Linda Mahilik from University Technology Services (UTS) to make sure that the entire USC website is accessible to students with disabilities. OSDS also continues to enjoy a collaborative relationship with Facilities Management. As a result of this strengthened relationship, OSDS has been called upon on numerous occasions to provide relevant information on the accessibility and modification of several buildings. OSDS support, in

an educative capacity, to system campuses also continues with frequent contact and guidance being provided.

Significant Events

The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), significantly impacted OSDS in that it has broadened the scope of those who would be considered disabled and placed higher expectations on making programs and services accessible. More specifically, the requirements to qualify as a student with a disability were relaxed which made a greater number of students eligible to register with OSDS. With the increased numbers of students becoming registered the cost to provide quality services will continue to increase.

Over the course of the past year, OSDS has forged strong collaborative relationships with the faculty of students with disabilities. While this has proved beneficial for our students as well as the faculty in providing a better understanding of appropriate accommodations, we are aware that this is also a result of fewer resources for faculty to draw on in the classroom (i.e. fewer TAs and GAs). Of particular note is the use of test proctoring, mentioned earlier, which has seen a sizeable increase in the amount of students seeking the provision of this accommodation. Discussions with faculty indicate that they previously relied on TAs and GAs to implement accommodations like test proctoring. Therefore with fewer TAs, faculty refers students back to our office for the accommodation. OSDS intends to continue this collaborative relationship as well as seek new ways to enhance it.

As budget cuts continue to be a reality for the University, continued cuts have the propensity to limit the scope and quality of services provided to students with disabilities. It has become the norm for new students to expect more personalized and one-on-one service instead of merely being provided accommodations. This expectation was established during their time in K-12 education in which students were provided frequent individualized services. As such, with current budgetary limitations, further cuts would make being able to provide personalized service extremely difficult and have the effect of impacting the University's compliance with federal law. Further, student progress and retention will also be impacted as fewer services are provided and monitoring of academic success becomes more difficult.

GOAL STATEMENTS

Goal 1: OSDS will provide programs for students related to career development, participation in job shadowing, mentoring, and internships.

Analysis of Goal Achievement: Given that students with disabilities are more likely to be underemployed or unemployed, developing students for future employment has been a goal of OSDS for the past four years. By participating in the events provided by the Network

Coordinator, students have been exposed to positive experiences in becoming attractive to employers in the future. The Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) in association with the federal government occurs yearly with 10 students participating this year. Based on the performance of students who choose to participate in this program, paid federal internships are awarded to those who do well.

A total of nine networking events have been held over the course of the year with an increasing number of students who attend and find utility in them. Of the students surveyed (95), 100% report that they learned more about pursuing a job and addressing disability-related issues. With regard to the professionals (47) who also attended the events, 100% report that they had a positive experience, felt more comfortable with addressing disability-related employment concerns, and took something valuable away from the experience.

Key Performance Indicator: The number of job offers for students will increase as a result of their participation in directed career-related activities.

- At the time of this document's submission, two of the 10 students who participated in WRP were offered federal internships.

Goal 2: OSDS will develop individualized intervention plans for students who have been identified as academically deficient (semester GPA < 2.00).

Analysis of Goal Achievement: Academic success for the students registered with OSDS remains a top priority. As such, student's GPAs are reviewed on a semester basis with those achieving less than a 2.00 being contacted for individualized intervention. This occurred in May 2010 with students expressing an initial interest but unfortunately those expressing interest did not follow through. This process was duplicated again for the Fall 2010 semester. While the number of students who chose to participate was low, OSDS collected valuable data nonetheless. Of note, the average undergraduate GPA for students registered with OSDS was 2.99 while the average for the university was 3.04 and only 44 (10.4%) of the actively enrolled students achieved a GPA below 2.0. With regard to the Spring 2011 semester, the average undergraduate GPA was 3.04 with only 36 (7.7%) achieving a GPA below 2.0. The average undergraduate GPA from Spring 2011 was unavailable by the due date of this document.

Key Performance Indicator: The semester GPA of students who participate in and adhere to their intervention plans will increase.

- While only four students took the opportunity to speak with their original Coordinators, three of them achieved a higher GPA for Spring 2011.

Goal 3: OSDS will provide training to students who express an interest in learning more about assistive technology.

Analysis of Goal Achievement: Over the course of the year students have taken advantage of the one-on-one training provided by the Assistive Technology Lab Coordinator. As a result, students have been able to integrate the tools available in an educationally purposeful manner

and expressed high levels of satisfaction with services provided. It should be noted that as students became aware of the tools available, such as the SmartPen, our supplies did not equal demand. As such, additional SmartPens were ordered in preparation for the expected increase demand for the Fall.

Key Performance Indicator: Students will increase their usage of the Assistive Technology Lab and indicate a higher level of satisfaction with the services provided as indicated by survey results.

- Based on end of year survey results, students indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Assistive Technology Lab, the services and tools offered.

Goal 4: OSDS will engage the faculty of students with disabilities in an effort to increase their level of comfort in the provision of an inclusive classroom.

Analysis of Goal Achievement: Over the course of the year, OSDS has remained a resource for faculty of students with disabilities. Faculty have expressed their satisfaction with the ongoing support that OSDS provides, however, due to time and staff limitations a formal survey was not able to be completed prior to the submission of this document.

Key Performance Indicator: Materials and accommodations will be provided in a timely manner to ensure compliance. Survey results will be obtained from faculty to assess their knowledge and needs.

- While faculty have expressed their appreciation of the services and support that OSDS provides, a survey was not able to be developed and deployed due to time/staffing limitations.

Goal 5: OSDS will conduct campus-wide compliance audits in an effort to assess the accessibility of programs and services on a continuous basis as well as provide feedback in order to establish or maintain equal access and inclusion.

Analysis of Goal Achievement: Monitoring the accessibility of programs and services by way of audits helps to ensure the accessibility of these programs and services for all students. This process began with conferences and events out of necessity. Findings included the need for: disability disclosure statements, the provision of materials in alternative formats, and the provision of interpreters. OSDS also provided consultation to the USC Web Redevelopment Initiative in an effort to make accessibility a standard throughout the process instead of a reparative endeavor after the fact. Consultation was also provided to Student Affairs Technology Services and Housing regarding the accessibility of their websites.

The services of an Interpreter were also arranged for the ESPN Game Day event held on the Horseshoe. Due to the proactive effort of OSDS to make this event accessible, the 20 deaf individuals who were in attendance were able to enjoy event. According to the representatives from ESPN, USC was the first university to arrange this accommodation. As a result, ESPN now requests interpreters for Game Day events at all locations.

The Off-Campus Student Lounge, located in the Russell House, was identified as an area of opportunity due to complaints received by OSDS. Due to the age of the building, accessible entrances have been created but accessible entrances are not well marked. While the staff of the Russell House was under the impression that the ramps in the front of the building were compliant, it was determined that they were indeed not compliant. The elevators were also an area of concern as they were not clearly indicated by appropriate signage nor did they actually reach the floor that the Off-Campus Student Lounge is located. The only elevator that could reach the lounge is service elevator located at the back of the building.

Given a recent complaint regarding the Green Quad from a faculty member, housing will be holding a meeting on May 25, 2011, to discuss: appropriate signage, parking, elevator access for guests needing to get to the Learning Center, the pavers in the back of the building, improved communication between Learning Center staff as well as Housing staff when meetings are being held in the Learning Center, and the overall accessibility of the Green Quad. A

Follow-up will continue to be conducted to ensure sustained accessibility.

Key Performance Indicator: A baseline audit will be performed to assess the current level of compliance with programs and services receiving feedback. Upon follow-up, the programs and services audited will realize an increased level of compliance.

- As a result of the consultation provided to the USC Web Redevelopment Initiative and Student Technology Services, those units are more aware of how establish and maintain accessibility for all faculty, students, and staff.
- As a result of the walk-through of the Russell House, accessible entrances will be identified and signage will be added to direct patrons to those entrances. Staff will also be trained to direct patrons to those accessible entrances. Better signage and lighting have also been added on the ground floor to help students locate and safely navigate to the Off-Campus Student Lounge.
- The results of the May 25, 2011, meeting regarding the Green Quad is not known prior to the submission of this document.
- A campus-wide policy regarding signage was also discussed with Jim Demarest and Don Gibson from Facilities as this is an ongoing theme of the submitted complaints.

Goal 6: OSDS will increase the production of alternative format materials used on campus.

Analysis of Goal Achievement: Through a diligent effort to educate the campus community, materials in alternative formats are beginning to be requested by campus partners in increasing numbers. Over the course of the year Large Print and Braille materials have been provided for a number of campus events including the opening of the Hollings Library, Awards Day, IdeaPop, and Commencement.

Key Performance Indicator: As partially informed by the compliance audits, the availability of alternative format media as well as compliance will increase.

- As alternative format materials have become more widely used, the importance of having these materials available has begun to become more of a standard as requests have increased.