STANDARD VI: STUDENT SERVICES

Introduction

Student Services are provided not only to undergraduate students, but also to graduate, medical, and continuing education students. This standard sets forth the services provided through the Division of Student Affairs to undergraduate students. Services to graduate, medical, and continuing education students are described within the sections of Standard 4 devoted to the Graduate College, The College of Medicine, and the Division of Continuing Education.

The Division of Student Affairs is composed of the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and eight departments, which provide a wide array of support services for all students. Each department is headed by a director responsible for the leadership and management for her/his department. Each of the departments is sufficiently sized to provide multiple services and programs. The Division has approximately 220 staff members, 113 hourly employees, and 1,030 student employees. The budget for the Division is approximately $31 million, of which 26 percent comes from the General Fund and 74 percent derives from fees, grants, private gifts, and income.

The mission of student affairs is to engage students actively in learning through meaningful achievement in one’s academic pursuits, genuine commitment to healthy community life, and purposeful preparation for responsible citizenship in a global community.

This mission statement was developed in 1996. A previous mission statement of student affairs, the one in operation during the last accreditation visit in 1988, focused on student development support and learning opportunities offered by student affairs. Subsequent versions of the mission statement since 1988 articulated these themes more generally but also added concepts of preparing students to live in a pluralistic world, encouraging students toward health lifestyle choices, and specific co-curricular learning outcomes. The present mission statement was intended to be a more brief statement than its predecessors but tightly focused on encouraging students to be active learners around three major themes.

In recent years the University mission statement has undergone significant review which continues to date. Once the University mission statement is formally adopted, the Office of Student Affairs will again review the Student Affairs mission statement to assess its appropriateness.

The Division of Student Affairs conducts ongoing planning and produces periodic reports which are available to the campus community. Each of the departments prepares annual reports which consist of statements of mission and intended student learning outcomes, an assessment of the past year’s goals and objectives, critical data trend charts showing user data for primary services and programs, and new goals and objectives for the coming year.

Institutional budget-cutting, which occurred in the early 1990s, led to a significant reorganization of primary services and programs. In addition, in 1996 the departments of
Admissions, Financial Aid, and Registrar were added to the Division of Student Affairs to foster the assumption of greater institutional responsibility for enrollment management. If there were no change in the status of departments and programs since 1988, student affairs would be comprised of 17 departments and programs rather than the current eight. Some departments no longer exist although their programs and services have been repositioned in the new departmental structure. Some departments have been combined into new departments or merged with another department. Some departments or programs have been repositioned within the institution but outside of the division of student affairs. This significant reorganization is now completed and has yielded benefits in greater clarity and focus for both the division and departments and, in most instances, reinvigorated staff and programs. The following description of services reflects the new departmental structure and positioning of programs and services within that new structure.

Description

This review of services is organized in terms of the eight departments and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. In addition, brief descriptions of both divisional goals and assessment activities are provided at the end of this descriptive section.

Admissions and Financial Aid. Admissions and Financial Aid, previously two separate departments, is now one department as a result of reorganization. Admissions and Financial Aid is the initial point of interaction for students and families interested in The University of Vermont. This department has 42 staff members and 27 student employees. The primary services and programs provided by this department include:

- Aid award packaging
- Alumni/student representative programs
- Applicant counseling and evaluation
- Campus visit programs
- Financial need counseling and evaluation
- Publication and marketing
- Recruitment
- Residency determination
- Scholarship administration
- Student search

Athletics and Recreation. The Athletic and Recreation Department coordinates programs of basic instruction (physical education courses), intercollegiate athletics, recreational sports, and also manages all athletic and recreation facilities. The basic instruction program serves 3,700 enrolled students each year. The intercollegiate athletics program has 14 varsity sports for women and 13 varsity sports for men, involving 530 student athletes. The recreational sports program serves 4,100 participants annually. This department has 40 staff members, 36 hourly employees, and 300 student employees.

- Admission support
- Events management
• Facility management
• Physical education
• Recreation
• Varsity sports

Career Services. Career Services, as a result of reorganization, now includes the service-learning internship program and the work component of the work-study program. The department serves approximately 8,500 student contacts each year plus an additional 2,200 student placements in experiential learning programs. This department has 13 staff members and 23 student employees who offer a broad array of services and programs:

Career Counseling
• Choice of academic major
• Career decisions

Getting Experience
• Service-learning and career internships
• Co-op program
• Work-study
• Part-time and summer employment listings

Graduate School Preparation
• Premed and pre-law advising
• Grad school search assistance
• Grad school application/essay assistance

Job Search Assistance
• Resume/cover letter
• Networking/interviewing
• Full-time job postings/On-line job referral system
• On-campus interviewing program

Special Events
• Alumni panels - “What Can I Do With a Major in …..?”
• Summer jobs and internships fair
• Technical jobs/career fair
• NY, Boston, & DC networking and exploration events with alumni

Information Support
• Alumni career network
• Job search/Internship workshops
• Career library
• Jobnet

Center for Health and Wellbeing. The Center for Health and Wellbeing brings together in one department the Student Health Center/Clinics, the Counseling Center, and all health-related prevention, outreach, and education programs. The department has approximately 30,000 student contacts each year plus an additional 15,000 student, faculty, and staff contacts in the health outreach programs. The department has 40 staff members and 82 student employees. The primary services and programs of the center include:
• Alcohol and other drug education
• The medical clinic
• The women’s clinic
• Crisis intervention
• Services for students with physical disabilities or ongoing acute medical conditions
• Health and wellbeing education
• The medical laboratory
• Mental health counseling
• Nutrition counseling, outreach, and referral
• Outreach and referral
• Sexual assault case management
• Sports therapy
• Standardized testing
• Student health insurance.

Learning Cooperative. The Learning Cooperative, which as of early 1998 now includes disability services particular to learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders, now provides significant learning support services and programs in eight major areas. The department has approximately 11,000 student contacts each year. The department has 14 staff members and 250 student employees. These programs and services, which support both students and faculty, include:

• Disability services
• Early education initiatives
• The exam center
• Learning skills
• Supplemental instruction
• The TRIO program
• Tutoring
• The writing center

Registrar. The Office of the Registrar manages course registration and academic record keeping. The 15 staff members and eight student employees serve students, faculty, and administration with the following programs and services:

• Banner management (student information system)
• Enrollment verification
• Designated scholarships
• Diplomas
• Grade recording
• Permanent academic records
• Registration
• Schedule of courses
• Student record maintenance
- Transcript production
- Transfer course evaluation

Residential Life. The Department of Residential Life provides a wide array of services and programs to address the needs of the approximately 3,800 students residing on-campus. The department has 38 staff members, 70 hourly employees, and 250 student employees. The primary programs and services of the department include:

- Counseling and advising
- Facility management
- Housekeeping
- Housing: family, graduate, non-traditional, and undergraduate
- Inter-Resident Association and Community Council support
- References
- Residence education
- Residential student life

Student Life. Reorganization has brought together the previous Student Activities Department, community service and volunteer programs, and the orientation and parent relations program into a Department of Student Life. The department directly produces a specific set of programs each year but also has a significant affect on campus life through the advising and support they offer to student organizations, student leaders, and their programs. The department has 12 staff members and 70 student employees. The primary services and programs of the department include:

- Campus opening
- Community service and volunteer programs
- Club sports
- Facility management for Billings Center, Outing Club and Cabin
- First-year programs
- Greek affairs
- Leadership programs
- Orientation and parent relations
- Outdoor programs
- Student Government Association support
- Student organization support

Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs provides leadership and support for a broad array of services and programs that assist student learning, living, and success. Most of these services and programs are housed in the eight departments identified above. The office of the Vice President for Student Affairs has ten staff members and eight student employees. The office also assumes responsibility for:

- Division publications
- Division planning, budgeting, and evaluation
- The judicial affairs program
- Publication of the student handbook
- Residency appeals
- Administration of the Robert Wood Johnson Grant to reduce binge drinking
- Partnerships with university departments of Advancement, Institutional Studies, Marketing, Information Technology, and the Graduate Program in Higher Education and Student Affairs
- Coordination of the Disability Work Group, the Research Work Group, and the Technology Work Group

The partnerships and work groups mentioned above are entities that rely on participation from professionals across the division of student affairs as well as professionals from outside the division. These entities have broad agendas but very specific projects on which they focus in any given year. They combine talents and knowledge for initiatives that student affairs departments or the division could not address effectively alone.

**Current Goals**

1. **Academic Focus:** Focus student attention on their academic pursuits as the clear first priority of their time and energy.

2. **Diversity:** Promote healthy community life for people of all races, colors, religions, national origins, gender, sexual orientations, disabilities, and ages by modeling behavior and articulating expectations that we live and work together in one community, bound together by our commitment to learning and respect for one another.

3. **Learning Plans:** Develop coherent paths in which students may shape their various experiences into purposeful preparation for work and life after college.

4. **Enrollment Management:** Refine the enrollment management structure, in partnership with schools and colleges and other administrative units, to create a well coordinated and seamless transition experience for first year students.

5. **Involvement:** Develop a more integrated experience of on-campus student life (Student Life, Residential Life, Recreation) that unfolds throughout the first two years of a student’s undergraduate experience during their required residency.

6. **Satisfaction:** Promote customer satisfaction in our interaction with students and parents by simplifying and streamlining our administrative processes and communication efforts.

7. **Quality Space:** Secure and develop space for departments commensurate with program and service objectives.

8. **Private Giving:** Enhance support for departmental programs and services through private fundraising.
9. Technology: Develop a strategic approach to anticipating, managing, and budgeting for institutional advances in technology as they affect student affairs departments.


Assessment

Over the past decade, there have been significant evaluation efforts to understand the needs and satisfaction of students, as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of Student Affairs’ programs and services. These research efforts use national (for example, CIRP and NACUBO Benchmarking), institutional (for example, Maguire Report, Survey of Graduates) and departmental (for example, Quality of Life, Athletic Exit Interviews) tools and instruments. In 1997, the Division of Student Affairs established a Research Work Group in partnership with Institutional Studies. This work group provides oversight for the quality, quantity, and consumption of research conducted on UVM students and student service departments, and provides effective generation, dissemination, and application of this information. As student service departments articulate learning outcomes, a particular emphasis of the Research Work Group will be to identify assessment strategies and instruments in concert with the measurement needs and expectations of the university.

Appraisal

The appraisal of student services follows the sequence of the 11 elements of the standard on Student Services. In addition, special appraisal sections are provided on two issues of great importance to the university; alcohol use by students and diversity. These special sections focus on developments in recent years and current initiatives to address each of these issues.

*The University of Vermont meets expectations regarding the intellectual and personal development of students.* The co-curriculum program of the institution offers broad and diverse experiences and services to foster intellectual and personal development of students. Examples of this are found in the variety of special living theme options of the residence halls, the wide array of leadership opportunities found throughout the campus, the leadership support program of Student Life, and the numerous internships provided through Career Services. The Orientation Program in June and the Connection Program in August are examples of addressing from the very beginning an incoming student’s learning experience, both in its academic dimension and in interrelated developmental opportunities. The University’s statement “Our Common Ground,” the Division’s “Student Affairs Mission Statement,” and the institution’s “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities” are examples of regularly reviewed and published statements that promote the development of a shared learning community and guide the development of programs and services to prepare students to become responsible members of society.

*The University of Vermont meets expectations regarding adherence to both the spirit and intent of equal opportunity and to the institution’s own goals for diversity.* “Equal
Opportunity in Educational Programs and Activities, “Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities,” and the “Residential Life Diversity Statement” are examples of published policies that serve the spirit and intent of equal opportunity and diversity. Established campus cultural and religious organizations such as Alianaza Latina, GLBTQA, the Asian-American Student Union, New Black Leaders, Womyn of Color, Hillel, Jewish Action Council, and Wahbeenowin are active in promoting awareness of diversity issues on campus. The Educational Outreach and TRIO programs of the Learning Cooperative, the ALANA advisory team of Admissions, the facility access program of Administrative and Facility Services, the array of psychological, physical, medical, and learning disability services throughout the Division of Student Affairs, the disability work group, and extended office hours are all examples of initiatives in programs, communication, and accommodation to support the spirit and intent of equal opportunity, as well as institutional goals for diversity.

Despite a wide array of initiatives, the institutional goal of greater diversity has not yet been met. The disabled student population of 650 students in relation to our total student populations approximates the estimated national average. The population of evening, part-time, and commuter students has been growing in recent years. After several years of decline from the late 1980s into the 1990s in the ALANA population on campus, recent years have shown modest gains and provide reason to believe recent strategies and initiatives will help regain momentum.

The University of Vermont meets expectations in identifying the characteristics and learning needs of its student population and making provision for responding to them. The Division of Student Affairs, in partnership with Institutional Studies, both initiates and makes use of extensive institutional assessment and evaluation activities that identify the characteristics and learning needs of UVM students. The following list identifies a number of national, institutional, and departmental research efforts all conducted since 1995, many on an annual basis.

National
1. Cooperative Institutional Research Program
2. Student Satisfaction Inventory
3. College Student Survey
4. Admitted Student Questionnaire
5. NACUBO Benchmarking
6. College Alcohol Study

Institutional
7. Maguire Report
8. UVM Survey of Graduates
9. UVM Student Profile
10. Alumni Survey

Departmental
11. Quality of Life (Residential Life)
12. Student Staff Evaluation (Residential Life)
13. Smoking Questionnaire (Residential Life)
14. Campus Involvement (Student Life)
15. Athlete Exit Interviews (Athletics)
16. Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (Health and Wellbeing)
17. Judicial Comparative Data (Vice President for Student Affairs)

These are some, though not all, of the tools and approaches taken for appraising, assessing and/or evaluating UVM students’ characteristics and needs. The Division’s Research Work Group works in partnership with Institutional Studies to anticipate and evaluate various research efforts. Most importantly, the findings of these various research efforts are manifest in the changing structure and program initiatives of student services at UVM since 1995.

The Center for Health and Wellbeing, Residential Life, Judicial Affairs and The Learning Cooperative provide a deep, broad, and rich set of services to assist students in the resolution of personal, physical, and educational problems. Each school and college within UVM has a high-level professional staff member who plays an integral role in resolving particular academic problems. These individuals work in partnership with student affairs professionals in the resolution of individual student problems that cut across the organizational structure. The University has heightened concerns for the use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs among college students. In 1996, the institution assumed a leadership role with five other universities to aggressively address this concern as a part of a five-year funded program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in partnership with the American Medical Association. Numerous initiatives have taken place and many strategies are currently under development as a part of this campaign.

_The University of Vermont meets expectations on student financial aid._ Financial aid is provided through a creative and well-organized program. Approximately 65 percent of UVM students receive financial aid. The program provides need-based awards on the equitable application of clear and publicized criteria. The program receives regular audits from the federal government.

The University’s strategy for enrollment management incorporates an understanding that accomplishing quantitative and qualitative goals relating to student enrollment involves coordination of student services and programs from the point of initial contact with prospective students until the launching of a student’s career after graduation. The Department of Admissions and Financial Aid serves as the “front end” component of the series of programs that fall along this continuum. The two recruitment-related activities (admission to the University and financing the UVM experience) are recognized as interrelated pieces of a single decision-making process in which parents and students engage as they make their college selection. That recognition led to the integration of these two departments into a single organizational entity with director level oversight in late 1996.

Since the departmental integration, much of the focus of the Admissions and Financial Aid Department has been on establishing an infrastructure that will facilitate accomplishment of the University’s short and long-term enrollment goals. This effort was necessary given the series of management changes that occurred during the preceding seven years. Both
branches of the department (Admissions and Financial Aid) have been organized into service-oriented work teams. Clear departmental policies and procedures have been established to facilitate open communications and clear lines of responsibility. Systems integrity and budgetary planning have been hallmarks of this organizational effort.

*The University of Vermont meets expectations regarding orientation, career development, placement counseling, health education, and access to professional health care.* The Orientation Program in June serves approximately 94 percent of incoming students and their families. Exit evaluations from 1997 reveal that approximately 95 percent of students and parents in attendance rate their feelings about the University after their two-day experience as good/excellent. Separate track programs, one for students and one for parents or families, are provided to give both students and family members rich interaction with students, faculty, staff and institutional leadership. Both students and parents needs for information and understanding about the university are addressed as fully as possible. In addition, students leave the experience registered for their fall semester classes.

The department of Career Services managed in recent years the development of new and improved services such as Jobnet and walk-in appointments, and a dramatic repositioning of some divisional programs to create a one-stop service center for students. The work component of the financial aid program of work study, the service-learning program, and a new non-profit program are now integral programs of Career Services. Expanded alumni networks, job fairs, on-campus interviewing, and the implementation of the powerful electronic technology Jobnet tool provide greater service to students than was the case only three years ago. Students who use the Career Services programs give them high ratings. The Career Services staff manages approximately 8,500 student visits (not including electronic inquiries) per year.

The Center for Health and Wellbeing includes the programs and services of the Student Health Center, the Women’s Clinic, the Counseling Center, Athletic Training, and health prevention, outreach, and education. The Center manages approximately 13,000 student visits to the Student Health Center, 2,500 student visits to the Women’s Clinic, 5,500 student visits to the Counseling Center, 7,000 student visits to the Athletic Training program, and 15,000 student, faculty, and staff participants in health prevention, outreach, and education programs. The Center has a creative and well managed program that provides a rich and imaginative set of programs and services to serve student needs. The new alignment of programs and services under the Center for Health and Wellbeing is realizing its potential for addressing complex student problems through a team approach that integrates for the benefit of students the best of both medical and psychological services.

*The University of Vermont meets expectations on opportunities for student leadership and for participation in campus organizations and governance.* The institution supports a broad range of opportunities for student leadership and participation in campus organizations. Leadership opportunities abound in the approximately 100 recognized student organizations, Student Government Association, Inter-Residence Association, Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, the Captain’s Council, Orientation Leaders, Resident Assistants, the Ambassadors group, and each of the programs of the Living/Learning Center. Advising
support and training programs for each come from appropriate professional staff in various offices, including but not limited to Student Life, Residential Life, and Athletics. In addition, the Department of Student Life coordinates a Leadership Program that provides a broad range of programs to support students at various stages of leadership development, in various contexts, through various formats, and on a wide variety of issues.

The institution also supports opportunities for students to participate in broad institutional governance matters. Examples of this support include but are not limited to approximately 50 student appointments to various standing advisory committees, policy committees, task forces, Faculty Senate committees, Staff Council committees, and full voting membership for two students on the University Board of Trustees.

The University of Vermont meets expectations on adequate opportunities and facilities for both female and male students' recreational and athletic needs. The institution provides a broad array of recreation and athletic programs to meet men's and women's needs. Already ample facilities have been greatly enhanced by the addition of a new recreation center. Intercollegiate athletics, an NCAA Division I program, has long been conducted with sound educational policy, with the highest standards of integrity, and in a manner consistent with institutional purposes. The athletic program went through the new NCAA certification program during the 1997-98 academic year and received high praise for the financial and academic integrity of the program. The administration and faculty have clear control over these programs. The Athletic Council, the policy setting body for athletics, is currently chaired by a tenured full professor of psychology. The President’s advisor on athletics is currently a tenured full professor in biomedical technologies. The cumulative grade point averages and graduation rates of students participating in athletics programs are higher than the average of all students. In addition, UVM was identified in The Chronicle of Higher Education (April 3, 1998) as being one of the top 21 institutions in the country for achieving substantial proportionality in compliance with Title IX (gender equity).

The University of Vermont meets expectations in assuring that individuals responsible for co-curricular activities are qualified by formal training, work experience, and personal qualities, and that facilities and funding are adequate. The institution has a highly qualified staff responsible for co-curricular activities. Most professional staff have formal training and education at the master's level, and many have a doctoral degree. The institution strongly supports additional formal educational training through tuition remission. Student affairs leadership strongly encourages staff to use this program and provides release time in support of this. Many staff take advantage of these opportunities. Departments also provide strong financial support for staff at all levels to participate in ongoing training through involvement in professional organizations, conferences, and institutes, both regionally and nationally. In addition, the presence of a master's level program in Higher Education and Student Affairs and a doctoral level program in Educational Leadership, as well as significant levels of interaction of professional staff with graduate students and faculty in these programs, set a high standard of professional stimulation.

Funding is adequate to implement the institution’s student policies and procedures. Funding has been lean over the years, but the Division's reorganization, coupled with aggressive
fundraising efforts since 1996 in partnership with University Advancement, have strengthened funding across programs and departments. Career Services has been developing a new plan, “Career Services for a New Generation,” in which the vision of the program exceeds presently available funding, but current institutional planning processes are mindful of this discrepancy and strategies are under development to match funding with vision.

Facilities are adequate to implement the institution’s student service policies and procedures. However, there are five facility needs currently built into institutional planning processes. These include Admissions & Financial Aid (consolidation and relocation), Career Services (relocation), Center for Health and Wellbeing (consolidation), Learning Cooperative (consolidation), and Student Center (new facility). Consolidation means that each of these entities has staff located in different parts of a building or in separate buildings. Our goal is to have all departmental staff located in contiguous space, unless a compelling service to students suggests otherwise as is the case with the athletic training program of the Center for Health and Wellbeing.

*The University of Vermont meets expectations in identifying, publishing, and implementing clearly stated ethical standards to guide student service activities.* Since 1996, the institution has been working on a document entitled “Our Common Ground” that articulates six values to guide the UVM community. Those six values are respect, integrity, innovation, openness, justice, and responsibility. “Our Common Ground” was formally adopted during the 1997-98 academic year, and work continues on how to integrate these values continuously and increasingly into the daily activities of each community member. In addition, policies on student rights and responsibilities have been modified and heavily edited for clarity over the past three years. The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities appears each year in the student handbook (*The Cat’s Tale*), and since 1996 the code has also been available in the “Schedule of Courses” issued for enrollment each semester and through the University’s home page on the World Wide Web. The judicial system has gone through substantial upgrades since 1996 to meet community needs. University community members place a heavy reliance on the judicial system to resolve a wide variety of problems, issues, disputes, and conflicts.

Students who use the institution’s formal means of resolving conflict are generally satisfied with the processes and outcomes. Some students, frequently due to lack of information about processes or outcomes, express dissatisfaction or distrust of these systems. Staff have worked diligently in recent years to balance confidentiality and privacy rights of students with increasing demands from other community members who express a need to know. Student services staff are continuously examining alternative methods and tools by which to most effectively resolve conflicts and to make adjustments in processes where that is appropriate. In addition, staff are examining improved means of communicating with students about the processes and systems to deepen trust in, satisfaction with, and use of these programs.

*The University of Vermont meets expectations in providing policies regarding the kinds of information that will be included in the permanent record of students as well as policies*
regarding the retention, safety and security, and disposal of records. The institution's "Student Records Access Policy" is an all-inclusive statement regarding what is kept in students' permanent records, a detailed listing of where records are maintained, who has access, what student rights exist for seeing and/or destroying those records. This policy information is available to students both in hard copy and through the University's web page on the Internet. The University allocates responsibility for the retention, safety, and security of student records to each office or department that manages record keeping.

The University of Vermont meets expectations of a regular and systematic evaluation to determine whether the co-curricular goals and needs of students are being met. A variety of tools and methods are regularly used to assess and evaluate whether co-curricular goals and needs are being met. Examples of these include national programs such as the Cooperative Institutional Research Program, Admitted Student Questionnaires, and NCAA Certification Program, institutional efforts such as The Maguire Report, Student Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Graduate Survey, divisional initiatives such as the Alcohol Study and a wide variety of departmental evaluations such as Quality of Life Focus Groups (Residential Life), Student Satisfaction Survey (Center for Health and Wellbeing), and June Orientation Evaluation (Student Life). The reorganization of student services, which began in 1995 and included the repositioning, modification, deletion, and addition of programs and services throughout student services, is evidence of the use of information from these evaluation and assessment instruments to make changes for better meeting student needs.

The implementation in 1997 of the student affairs Research Work Group, a partnership with Institutional Studies, formalizes a structure to continuously address regular and systematic evaluation of student services.

**Student Alcohol Use**

Dr. Henry Wechsler of the Harvard School of Public Health has received national attention for his studies of over 17,000 students at 140 colleges documenting the use and abuse of alcohol on American college campuses. He conducted national studies in 1993 and 1997 focusing on college students' alcohol use. UVM has chosen to participate in both studies.

The preliminary results of his most recent study show that 45% of UVM students surveyed reported being drunk in the previous 30 days. Fifty-two percent of students who drank alcohol reported that they usually binged when they drank. (Binge drinking was defined for men as having five or more drinks in one sitting and for women as having four or more drinks in a sitting). Forty-eight percent of those who drank reported missing class at least once in the previous year as a result of their drinking. Of the UVM students who reported drinking in the past year, close to one-third engaged in unplanned sexual activity, 20% got hurt or injured, and 75% reported having a hangover. Seventy percent of UVM students who drank reported "drinking to get drunk," and 40% reported to have used marijuana in the past thirty days. In considering how other students' drinking affected them, 66% percent reported having to "baby-sit" a drunken student, 74% reported having their study or sleep interrupted, and 39% reported having been insulted by someone who had been drinking.
There is evidence that many students arrive on UVM's campus with established drinking patterns. Recently, the Vermont Department of Health's Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs published a report entitled the "Youth Risk Behavior Survey" of students in grades 8-12 statewide. One-half of the 8,636 students sampled reported having drunk alcohol in the past 30 days and close to one-third reported having bingeed in the past month. These numbers have not changed significantly in the past three years. Likewise with marijuana use, close to one-third of Vermont high school students reported having used marijuana in the past month in both 1995 and 1997.

The University of Vermont was one of six universities awarded a five-year grant by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to address high-risk drinking. The project is operating under the understanding that this problem is greater than any one institution and, as a result, is employing an environmental strategy approach. This approach involves identifying the many factors on a campus and in the surrounding community and state that contribute to the problem. A significant component of this project involves developing a campus and community coalition in an effort to create a long-term, sustainable change in the environment and culture around alcohol use. In addition to a number of initiatives under way at The University of Vermont, there have been other local and statewide efforts which show promise that we, as a community, are prepared to address alcohol abuse. Recent legislative changes concerning DUI, the public attention focused on youth alcohol use, a $9 million state incentive grant addressing alcohol abuse, statewide enforcement efforts of the Department of Liquor Control and local efforts by the Burlington City Council to hold bars more accountable for license violations all speak to the statewide commitment to this issue.

Education and prevention efforts around substance abuse are not new to The University of Vermont, but finding new and effective ways to reduce alcohol and other drug abuse in our community has become a priority at this university. Our environmental strategy approach to reducing high-risk drinking involves addressing the problem on a number of fronts: policy and enforcement, communication, and education and programming. Over the past year, many individuals and departments at The University of Vermont have worked on campus and with the community to change the environment that has contributed to alcohol abuse in the past. Thirty distinct initiatives have been undertaken during this time period. We will remain diligent in our efforts and consistently look for new opportunities and initiatives to address this pervasive and vexing problem.

**Diversity**

Student demonstrations regarding racial equality and social justice occurred in 1988 and 1991. These lead to many changes at UVM which include a particular set of organizational changes. The minority affairs program and the Center for Cultural Pluralism, which were established over twenty years ago as part of the student affairs division, emerged as important components of the new organizational structure. The Executive Officer of Cultural Pluralism and Racial Equality for UVM was appointed in 1995. The Center for Cultural Pluralism, previously used to identify the minority affairs program in the Blundell House, was re-established in 1998 in the Allen House which is located on the Main Campus green. An array of diversity programs and initiatives, including minority affairs, were repositioned.
under the new executive officer with some located in Allen House and others located in other campus facilities. The minority affairs program title no longer exists but the staff positions associated with that program continue to work in Blundell House under a new title of the ALANA Student Center.

Student affairs staff continue to work diligently on diversity programs and initiatives to improve the campus community. Particular diversity initiatives of student affairs at this time focus on promoting the Our Common Ground values, admissions recruitment efforts, supporting outreach and enrichment programs, diversifying student affairs staffs, refining institutional protocols for bias-related incidents, and continuing diversity programming efforts. Student affairs staff and leadership enjoy close and collegial working relationships with the Executive Officer of Cultural Pluralism and Racial Equality and her staff.

Projection

The work of student affairs over the next years will focus on four major areas requiring continuous quality improvements: enrollment management, student life, student services, and the assessment of each.

Enrollment management in recent years focused on significant improvements in recruitment, application, and matriculation. Future years will require the expansion of institutional focus on retention. Possible tools to achieve retention may include the development of student learning plans, quality academic advising, heightened intellectual stimulation and rigor, and excellent learning support. Improvements in retention will require strong support from faculty, academic administration, and student affairs. Such efforts may be accomplished by one or another unit but most will require close collaboration.

Significant improvements must be made in the area of student life. We have moved from an operating slogan of “work hard, play hard” to “work hard, play well.” We must now make this real. Meaningful involvement in the university and the community is key not only to the retention of students but to fulfilling our aspirations and values as a community. The focus of divisional student life efforts will be to use student affairs programs and services to engage students to become active learners, focus on their academic pursuits, be involved in meaningful activities, and recognize that these mutually shape and build a quality learning experience which will prepare them to be effective in a global society. Campus involvement by students should deepen one’s understanding of the core values articulated in “Our Common Ground.” For those students who resist these efforts, continuing improvements in judicial affairs and related educational programming will contribute to improvements in student life.

Reconsidering and rethinking all of our various and sundry interactions with students and how to continuously improve those interactions through better use of technology, increasing value, lowering costs, eliminating “red tape,” one stop shopping, and modeling the principles of “Our Common Ground” will be necessary for the improvement of student services.
Student affairs has been engaged in a variety of assessment activities. In the future, assessment activities will be refined to provide a clear set of performance indicators. These will be circulated to university community constituents on a regular basis for consideration and feedback that will allow student affairs to make appropriate program and service adjustments.

A new institutional mission statement and the “Areas of Emphasis” initiative of the accreditation study will be carefully monitored over the next months as it moves through final development and approval. As clarity and focus emerges in each of these final documents, student affairs will make appropriate adjustments to support the institutional mission and vision of its future.