

New Student Orientation Annual Report

June 2008 – May 2009

1. Programs: Changes in scope and/or volume or activities, and significant achievements

- a) **First-year and Transfer Orientation Programs:** New Student Orientation (NSO) coordinated fourteen Orientation programs for incoming students during the 2008-2009 year – nine 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. While there was not a drastic change from 2008 to 2009, attendance decreased slightly for both first-year (-165) and transfer students (-8). See the below table for detailed information regarding attendance numbers for the various orientation programs.

Year	First-year Students			FY Total	Transfer Students			TR Total	Overall Total
	Summer	Dec.	Jan.		Summer	Dec.	Jan.		
2007	4889	32	41	4962	866	125	131	1122	6084
2008	4752	22	23	4797	879	102	133	1114	5911
	-137	-10	-18	-165	+13	-23	+2	-8	-173

- b) **New First-year Student Orientation Model:** After much review over the past two years, a new Orientation model was adopted for Summer 2009. As a result of increased attendance numbers over the past five to six years, the need for improved methods of delivering messages to incoming students, and the desire to improve the overall orientation experience, New Student Orientation will now consist of 17 overlapping sessions. The change in the model also provides an opportunity for new and revised messages during Orientation, including a joint session with students and their parents which was not possible in the previous model.

The process of creating and approving the new model involved a wide range of campus partners, including the Associate Deans Council, the Student Affairs leadership, the New Student Orientation Advisory Committee, and a newly established New Student Orientation Steering Team.

- c) **Creation of the New Student Orientation Steering Team:** In an effort to work more closely with the different constituent groups across campus, and to provide a venue for the director to receive objective feedback on major decisions associated with the Orientation program, the New Student Orientation Steering Team was created in Fall 2008. The Steering Team consists of nine individuals from across campus representing the student body, Student Affairs, the Office of Information Technology, Registration & Records, the Office of Diversity & Inclusion, the College of Management, and the Agricultural Institute.
- d) **NC State University Open House Assistance:** On Saturday, October 18 three 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.
- e) **New NSO Website:** Starting in the fall of 2008, New Student Orientation worked with the Design group within the Office of Information Technology to completely redesign the New Student Orientation website. The site went live in early March in time for the updated Summer 2009 Orientation information. NSO was awarded a grant from the Division of Undergraduate Academic Programs to pay for the redesign process.

- f) **AdmissionPros Orientation Module:** In an effort to streamline the orientation registration process, New Student Orientation had a new Orientation Module created within the AdmissionPros system. The module allows students to self-register themselves via the WolfPAW system (Undergraduate Admissions' online portal system for students), communicates directly with students using their email on file, and allows for real-time attendance to be taken during the Orientation check-in process. The AdmissionPros module has greatly reduced the amount of staff time and energy required to register students and has increased NSO's ability to communicate effectively and efficiently with incoming students.
- g) **Partnerships:** Again in 2009, 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 Summer 2008 and has graciously agreed to serve as a sponsor again in the summer of 2009.

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 represents a significant improvement in the relationship between the two offices from past 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.

- h) **Wolfpack Welcome Week:** Again in 2008, New Student Orientation coordinated a panel discussion for incoming students entitled "What to expect in the college classroom". There were two separate sessions held, the first had 2 faculty panelists (Brian Koehler and Jim Michnowicz) and a facilitator (Arnold Bell) and the second had 4 faculty panelists (Michelle Crossley, John Griggs, James Mickle, and Jim Michnowicz) and a facilitator (Keri Bowman). There were 49 total students in attendance at the two panels who gave the program positive comments.

2. Compact Plan: Major initiatives from your Compact Plan

- a) **Orientation Publication:** A grant proposal for the creation of a publication to be distributed during Orientation was approved by the DUAP Dean's Office but due to budget restrictions in late spring, the publication was never completed. The proposed publication was going to include a sub-set of course listings (courses that were most often recommended to incoming students) and basic policies and procedures. The idea of a similar publication will be explored again next year.
- b) **Focus Groups:** The plan to have focus groups with students has not yet been completed, but throughout the Orientation review and restructuring process feedback was gathered from a number of constituent groups, including students. Our current plan is to complete focus groups in Fall 2009 to gather information about the Orientation program as well as how students prefer to receive and process information.
- c) **Orientation Model Research:** This item has been completed. A new Orientation model has been adopted for Summer 2009 after extensive work with the NC State campus.

3. Diversity: Initiatives and progress

New Student Orientation continues to dedicate time and resources into ensuring that our staff is informed and trained on diversity-related issues. 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 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, this year 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. Staff: Major new appointments, kudos, professional activities and recognitions

a) Kudos & Recognitions:

- Lori Wilson received the DUAP Recognition Award in Spring 2009

b) Professional Activities:

- Michael Coombes
 - Currently serving on the Planning Committee for the 2011 National Orientation Directors Association Conference
 - Served as a Pack Promise Academic Coach during the 2008-2009 academic year
 - Serves on the Wolfpack Welcome Week Committee
 - Serves on the Alliance for Sexual Assault Prevention
- Kathleen Curp
 - Serves on the Advisory Committee for Harassment Prevention
 - Served as a Pack Promise Academic Coach during the 2008-2009 academic year
- Gabe Wical
 - Coordinated DUAP's efforts related to the NC State Employees Combined Campaign
 - Served on the Undergraduate Student Transition Task Force
 - Served on the ACCESS Strategic Planning Team
 - Serves on the Open House Committee
 - Serves on the ACCESS Committee

5. Recommendations and concerns for the future

Recommendations

a) Office of New Student Orientation Should Transition to a First-year Experience Office:

Given the list of recommendations made by the Undergraduate Student Transition Task Force, it is clear that NC State struggles to provide consistent messages to incoming students throughout their transition process. With the current positioning of the Office of New Student Orientation and the history that NSO has of working closely and effectively with the full range of campus constituents, it makes sense for NSO to take on additional responsibilities associated with the full transition process and not just the summer Orientation program.

The creation of a First Year Transition Committee has provided a venue for a representative group of campus personnel to discuss issues related to the first-year student transition process, but it is important that there be a central office to take the responsibility of coordinating recommendations and efforts that result from this committee. It is currently unclear what specific roles this office would play, but it is recommended that this idea be considered.

Concerns

- ##### b) How the Office of New Student Orientation is Viewed on Campus:
- There is a growing concern over how the Office of New Student Orientation is viewed around the NC State campus. It appears that NSO is seen as just another office, program, or summer camp. The Office of New Student Orientation represents all students and serves as the steward of their student fees. When NSO is charged for facilities and services, a focus needs to be placed on the idea that it is not just an office that is being charged, but instead that the incoming students

are the ones who must pay. NSO is a university-mandated program and should receive some level of priority in reserving and utilizing facilities, understanding when costs are assessed, and cooperation with proposed partnerships and sponsorships whenever feasible. The goal of NSO, as with others on campus, is to do what is best for our students. Providing high-quality programs and services is important, but this must be accomplished without passing along too much of the costs to students. This is especially worrisome in the current budgetary climate where offices are seeking additional funding mechanisms.

- c) **Growth of NC State:** As NC State continues to grow, it is still unclear as to how undergraduate education is going to be impacted. Estimates of growth currently focus on not increasing the number of undergraduate students significantly, but if history serves as an indicator for future realities, a large proportion of the increase in the student body will come from growth in the undergraduate population. Given the difficulties faced by students related to registering for classes and finding appropriate spaces to use during Orientation (among many others), increasing the number of incoming students will only compound the current problems.

Five University Focus Areas

#1) Producing leaders for the state, nation and the world:

New Student Orientation puts a tremendous amount of time and energy into developing student leaders. Approximately 35 undergraduate students are hired and trained to welcome incoming first-year and transfer students to NC State. Through an extensive training course (ECD 223) and their service to the university, the Orientation Counselors develop their interpersonal communication and presentation skills, campus knowledge, and learn how to be productive and responsible members of a team. Some of the highlights of their training and skills acquired:

- **National Coalition Building Institute:** all students participated in a full-day diversity training program
- **Presentation skills and experience:** a representative from the Writing and Speaking Tutorial Services program taught the students presentation basics; the students honed their presentation skills throughout the semester through a number of required and voluntary speaking opportunities
- **Professionalism:** as representatives of the university, the students are held to an extremely high standard where being prompt, alert, prepared, and polite are expected in their position of serving as role models

The skills, competencies, and experiences that New Student Orientation student staff gain while serving with the program remain with them long after their position ends. The position in which they serve is much more than just a summer job – it is an opportunity for students to become a leader for the state, nation, and the world.

Special Notes About the Office of New Student Orientation

- During 2008-2009, nearly 6,000 first-year and transfer students attended one of the fourteen programs coordinated by the Office of New Student Orientation
- New Student Orientation continues to partner with a variety of offices from across NC State's campus to provide supportive, informative, and representative programs for all incoming degree-seeking students.
- The New Student Orientation staff members are active members of the NC State and orientation community, participating in a variety of activities (Pack Promise coaches, University Open House, etc.) and committees (Alliance for Sexual Assault Prevention, Advisory Committee for Harassment Prevention, ACCESS, etc.)