Signature Program Description

**Description and Rationale for Selection**
The First Year Achievement Program, also known as FYAP, was one of two signature programs for the Office of Residence Life for 2009-2010. The program was selected because learning outcomes had been designed and an assessment plan had been developed. The goal of the program was to increase student retention and knowledge of campus resources. This was to be accomplished through a series of 1-on-1 meetings between students and their RA. 2823 booklets were distributed for the first year students in our residence halls. Of that population, 1674 student completed the survey at the end of the program during the Fall 2009 semester.

**Expectations for Student Achievement**
When the FYAP program was created, we didn’t set any specific target levels. Since this was the initial year for the program we hoped to identify a base level of knowledge for future years. However, we did hope to see an increase in student retention when comparing Fall 2009 to Fall 2008. We did set specific learning outcomes and created questions that would attempt to assess these outcomes.

Three learning outcomes were developed which were; Students who participate in the First Year Achievement Program will be able to identify at least 2 academic or social resources on campus, students who participate in the First Year Achievement Program will be able to summarize their future plans to remain at BGSU, and RAs who facilitate the First Year Achievement Program will be able to identify and report students at high risk of leaving BGSU to supervisors.

**Link to University and Student Affairs Student Learning Outcomes**

**University Learning Outcome(s)**
- **Articulate and Demonstrate Learning** – The first learning outcome for FYAP requires students to identify at least 2 academic or social resources on campus. This learning outcome clearly shows that students can articulate and demonstrate learning. It also falls under the student affairs outcome of “gain general knowledge breadth and depth.”

- **Actively Engaged as a Participant and Leader** – The second outcome shows that students plan to stay at the university. This leads to them being engaged with hall staff, faculty, and organizations. It also aligns with the student affairs outcomes of “accept personal responsibility”

- **Actively Engaged as a Participant and Leader** – The third outcome shows that RA’s are aware of their students’ issues and concerns. It also directly relates to the student affairs outcome of “engaging others in action”.

**Student Affairs Learning Outcome(s)**
- **Gain General Knowledge Breadth and Depth** - students who participate in the First Year Achievement Program will be able to identify at least 2 academic or social resources on campus.

- **Accept Personal Responsibility** - students who participate in the First Year Achievement Program will be able to summarize their future plans to remain at BGSU.
Engaging Others in Action - RA's who facilitate the First Year Achievement Program will be able to identify and report students at high risk of leaving BGSU to supervisors

Assessment Methods and Procedures

Description of Methods and Procedures

The FYAP program was administered to more than 2800 first year students. Of that, 1674 students completed a short eight question survey. The survey used a Likert scale and a simple yes or no response. We also asked students to provide two responses indicating resource that they learned about through the program. The surveys were administered by Resident Advisors in final floor meetings at the end of the Fall 2009 semester. An online assessment was distributed to all Resident Advisors. 133 RA’s completed this survey. This assessment utilized questions with pre-determined options. We also asked a series of qualitative questions. The data from both surveys was then gathered and given to our Graduate Assistant for Assessment to be analyzed. Summary reports of the data and findings of both surveys were submitted to the Senior Coordinator for Academic Programs to review. These reports were shared with the Senior Associate Director and Director of Residence Life.

Assessment Instruments

See attached

Results and Conclusions

Description of the Results

A total of 1674 students responded to the evaluation. Of those who responded to the survey, 987 (59%) were female and 686 (41%) were male. Those students who provided an accurate BGSU ID number, seven (0.6%) identified as American Indian, 11 (1.0%) identified as Asian, 169 (14.4%) identified as Black, 37 (3.1%) identified as Hispanic, 40 (3.3%) did not specify their ethnicity, one (0.1%) identified as Pacific Islander, and 914 (77.5%) identified as White.

88.2% of students rated either a 4 or a 5 (highest scores) on whether they enjoyed speaking with their Resident Advisor (RA). 78.3% stated that they gained valuable knowledge about campus from their one-on-one with their RA. 78.3% stated that they felt better about their choice to attend BGSU as a result of their conversations with their RA. More than 51% of students stated that the conversations with their RA’s helped them decide to return to BGSU. 89.8% said that as a result of their meetings with their RA’s, they were able to identify at least two resources available to them on campus. 58% of RA’s stated that they were able to identify students who were likely to leave the university as a result of the FYAP conversations.

Target Level Achievement

Since this was a new program, we did not set a target level of achievement. Our main goal was to see an increase in student retention, and we saw an increase in fall to spring on-campus retention rates. Since we didn’t set target levels of achievement, we hoped to utilize this first round of the FYAP as a baseline for data. In the future, I would set a target level of 80% for students who can identify two resources. I would also set a target level of 80% for students who decide to remain at BGSU as a result of the FYAP. I would also set a target level of 70% of RA’s who were able to identify students at risk of leaving the university.

Evaluation of Assessment Methods and Procedures

Overall, the evaluation methods were successful. We had a relatively high response rate to the surveys and questionnaires. I believe that for students, this is likely a result of administering paper surveys in floor meetings. RA’s also had a high response rate as they hoped to provide critical feedback about a new program. The one issue we did discover is that the scale was reversed for the student question “On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to return to BGSU next year.” We believe that this reversed scale likely skewed results on this question. We would likely continue to administer the assessment in the manner that it was administered this past year.
**Action Taken/Future Plans**

**Connect Results and Program Changes**

Most of the data provide above is quantitative. We did discover through some of the qualitative data that three meetings per semester were probably too much for both students and staff. We will likely be requiring two meetings per semester going forward. We will also be correcting the survey to make sure that all of the scales are consistent. This will help assure that the data we receive is the most accurate data available. We will also be adjusting some of the information that we hand out to students and we will make an attempt to assure that the information is delivered at the appropriate time of the year.

**Showcasing Student Learning**

From the data, it is clear that students learned about various campus resources. 89.8% of students indicated that because of their meetings with their RA’s, they were able to name at least three campus resources. The results of the assessment done on this program were shared at the annual Teaching and Learning Fair. The format of the program was also shared with staff members creating an RA type position for commuter students.

**Proposed 2010-2011 Signature Program Assessments**

**List of Proposed Signature Programs (minimum of 3) to Assess for 2010-2011**

- First Year Achievement Program
- Students of Color Mentoring, Aiding, Retaining, and Teaching program
- Greek Leadership Programming
FYAP ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR STUDENTS

First Year Achievement Program Evaluation

GENDER CLASS STANDING

___ Female ___ Male ___ Frsh ___ Soph ___ Junr ___ Senr

RESIDENCE HALL STUDENT ID #: _______________________

___ KCD ___ KAB ___ HCD ___ HAB ___ Kohl

___ Founders ___ McDonald ___ Offenhauer ___ Campus Apartments

QUESTIONS

I enjoyed speaking with my Resident Advisor in a 1:1 setting
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 (Very Much)

I gained valuable knowledge about campus resources from my 1:1 meetings
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 (Very Much)

Meeting with my Resident Advisor made me feel better about my choice to attend BGSU
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 (Very Much)

I gained valuable knowledge about campus activities or organizations that I can join as a BGSU student?
(Not at all) 1 2 3 4 5 (Very Much)

On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to return to BGSU next year.
(Will Return) 1 2 3 4 5 (Will Not Return)

The 1:1 meetings with my RA helped me decide to return to BGSU next year.
Yes No

I can list two resources or organizations on campus that are meant to assist me academically or socially.
Yes No

Please list two academic services or social organizations that you discovered or learned about from your 1:1 meeting with your RA

1.
2.
FYAP ASSESSMENT GIVEN TO RA’S

RA Survey
1. Was FYAP/FAP useful in identifying students with issues? (scale)
2. What issues were you able to identify through FYAP/FAP conversations?
   a. Roommate issues
   b. Academic issues
   c. Homesickness
   d. Difficulty making friends on campus
   e. Other (fill in the blank)
3. Was the workload manageable? (Likert scale)
   a. Include comment box
4. Did the FYAP/FAP discussions help you build relationships with your residents? (Likert scale)
   a. Include comment box
5. Do you think the learning outcomes of the program were met? (Likert scale)
   a. Include comment box
6. What changes would you recommend? (essay question)
Signature Program Description

Description and Rationale for Selection
This event will give students the opportunity to meet Faculty of Color and interact with them on both an informal and a formal basis. By removing the invisible barrier that sometimes exists in the classroom, students will better understand the role of faculty on campus, learn the “why” behind classroom expectations and homework, and potentially be exposed to a new career path. Additionally, the event will “humanize” faculty to the students so they can build better relationships with those who attend (leading to more comfort building relationships with ALL their professors and instructors).

Expectations for Student Achievement
By attending this event, we expected all participants to gain a clearer understanding of the opportunities available to them and expectations of them as students. We anticipated that students attending would build relationships with the staff in attendance and seek them out for advice, help, and mentoring in the future.

Link to University and Student Affairs Student Learning Outcomes
Critical and Constructive Thinking - “…recognizing opportunities …making discoveries and reaching new understandings…”, students will have a clearer appreciation of the effect of their actions in their classrooms and on their instructors. This encounter will encourage students to examine their behaviors and perhaps change their standards based upon this new knowledge.

Personal and Social Responsibility - By “interacting with and understanding diverse perspectives,” students will give “full consideration to ethical integrity and actions” when it comes to interactions with their instructors, better aligning their words and their practices. This event will also encourage them to see their behaviors through others lenses and hopefully cause them to leave with a different view of the effect of misaligning their message and their behavior.

Assessment Methods and Procedures
Description of Methods and Procedures
Event success was measured by attendance, verbal feedback from participants, and verbal evaluation by Staff at Roundtables.

Assessment Instruments
None.

Results and Conclusions
Description of the Results
Though attendance was minimal (two mentees and seven mentors), the feedback from the participants was largely positive. Those in attendance learned of the paths of attending faculty, asked a lot of questions, and well-received the event. The positive feedback was reiterated at Roundtables. One suggestion was to hold the event earlier in the semester; this might encourage a better student turnout.

**Target Level Achievement**

The two mentees who did attend performed academically well this year, and both were offered RA positions as a result of their grades and involvements. Whether this can be attributed in part to attending this event (rather than participation in SMART as a whole) cannot be ascertained.

**Evaluation of Assessment Methods and Procedures**

The informal nature of verbal programmatic evaluation was not as useful as other methods of evaluation; however, because this was a transition year, the highest priority was establishing relationships and assessment of the SMART Program overall. Next year, a more systematic approach will be used for assessment.

**Action Taken/Future Plans**

**Connect Results and Program Changes**

Based upon the feedback from the students, this program will be repeated next year. However, it will take place earlier in the semester to encourage better turnout. In addition an evaluation directly following the session, students will be given a “next steps” handout to help them build relationships. The usefulness of the handout/student growth can be assessed at the end of semester feedback session.

**Showcasing Student Learning**

Results of all evaluations will be compiled at the end of each semester, highlighting the qualitative sections. Results of the end of semester feedback sessions will be recorded to ascertain student growth.

**Proposed 2010-2011 Signature Program Assessments**

**List of Proposed Signature Programs (minimum of 3) to Assess for 2010-2011**

- Faculty/Staff Meet and Greet (Fall)
- SMART Taste of Soul (Spring)
- All-SMART Meetings (Compilation of meetings throughout the year)
This event offers SMART student staff the opportunity to experience life at a Historically Black Institution. The students will visit Howard University during its Annual Homecoming celebration (October 22nd – 25th), tour the University/learn of its rich history and significance, and participate in the events surrounding the celebration that weekend.

The effects of such an exchange may have a far reaching effect on the participants. Besides the immediate, personal impact an experience such as this provides, this exchange may help to build understanding and erase misconceptions that may exist between the populations. It may be the beginning of a long-standing relationship between the two institutions. It may also be the foundation of a senior thesis, conference presentation, or graduate study.

The trip to Howard definitely helped the students “develop a meaningful and personal career action plan.” Approximately 75% of the student staff was comprised of third and fourth year students who needed to begin considering options for post-baccalaureate education. Many of them had never given thought to a Historically Black Institution as an option, and most would not be able to afford an exploration of this type without an opportunity such as this.

This trip was an ideal opportunity for the students to “improve cultural competence” and “develop character through the explorations of personal values”. 93% of the student staff self-identified wholly or partially as African American; the opportunity to enjoy their culture and heritage in an environment that also celebrates education as a primary life focus was not something many would likely experience otherwise. This was also an opportunity to share their BGSU experiences with others who, although they share the desire to forward their lives and enhance their opportunities through education, do not have similar life experiences.

Event success was measured by a reflective assessment which each student was required to fill out upon his or her return to BGSU. The participating students were sent an assessment email shortly after coming back to BGSU that they were required to return to me within one week.

The email consisted of the following information:

Now that you’ve had a couple of days to individually process your trip to Howard, I want a full debrief. PLEASE BE THOROUGH; how you talk about what you learned will outline the value of the trip to the administration (or won’t). But be honest; it will help determine how we handle something like this in the future (if we’re able to do it again.)
Please address the following information (and before you ask, it has to be as long as it takes to answer the question thoroughly and honestly):

1) Your Name, Your Year in School, Your Major
2) Generally speaking, what you gained from this experience (a brief snippet that could be used in reports and publications)
3) Your Overall First Impressions
   a. What were your expectations?
   b. What did you want to gain from the trip?
   c. What surprised you (positively or negatively)?
4) Give specific examples of “A-ha moments”. They could relate to the Residence Halls, the Campus Climate, the Social Life, the Programs/Requirements, the Student Population (their culture/characteristics), the Events, the Game/Halftime Show, etc. What did they MEAN to you?
5) Compare and contrast Howard and BG as it affected you personally. (Don’t tell me things like HBCU/PWI, campus size, etc.; tell me things I DON’T know) What do you like/appreciate about each?
6) What activities/events should we plan for the Howard Students when they come here?
7) How has the trip impacted your life? Has it changed your perspective on anything? If yes, how so? How has it affected your future plans?
8) Anything else you think is important that I didn’t cover here.

Please send this information directly to me NO LATER THAN FRIDAY AT NOON; I will compile it and forward it.

Results and Conclusions

Description of the Results
The 21 participating students filled 11 pages (11 point font and extended margins) with vivid descriptions of their experiences; they were extremely grateful for the opportunity, which was obvious from the information they provided. Student growth was widespread and evident from their assessments; some were even given a new (positive) perspective on their BGSU experience as a result.

Target Level Achievement
The students grew a great measure personally; some participating in Black Studies/Africana Studies/Ethnic Studies were asked to report out during class time so others could learn from their experiences. A few of the graduating seniors actually did apply to Howard for post-baccalaureate studies as a result of the trip.

Evaluation of Assessment Methods and Procedures
This type of assessment was appropriate and effective, given the event type.

Action Taken/Future Plans
Connect Results and Program Changes
Based upon the feedback from the students, it would be WONDERFUL if the event could be repeated next year; however, the extreme cost is prohibitive. Additionally, we were unable to arrange a visit to BGSU during Spring Semester for the Howard students who hosted BGSU. As
a result, an offer will be extended again during the Fall Semester to provide those students with an opportunity to live our experience at BGSU.

### Showcasing Student Learning

Results of all evaluations were compiled after the trip and were shared with relevant BGSU Staff and participating Howard University staff.

### Proposed 2010-2011 Signature Program Assessments

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