

UC 11094 10F

TO: Simon Bott, Chair
Undergraduate Council

FROM: Richard Scamell
Academic Policies and Procedures Committee

APPROVED NOV 17 2010

SUBJECT: Request To Require All New Transfer and Post Baccalaureate Students To Attend Advising and Registration For Transfers (ART)

DATE: November 17, 2010

The Academic Policies and Procedures Committee met on Wednesday, October 27 to consider UC 10896 10F to discuss the Office of Admissions ART Program. Participating in the discussion were committee members Betty Barr, Martha Dunkelberger, Debbie Herman-Henry, Peter Lam, Willie Munson, Richard Scamell, Larry Williams and Louis Williams. Tara Boyle and Djuana Young of the Office of Admissions attended the meeting as guests.

Background

Achieving the Dream, a multi-year effort to increase the educational attainment of students, particularly those who are at high-risk in historically underrepresented groups and from low-income backgrounds. In Fall 2007, the University of Houston was selected to participate in this national initiative. This has provided the University of Houston an opportunity to accelerate its efforts to develop programs to help more community college students (**i.e., our transfer students**) achieve their dreams of academic success. Our involvement in the initiative was facilitated from an invitation by Houston Endowment Inc., a private philanthropic organization and an Achieving the Dream sponsor. Houston Endowment awarded a five-year, \$450,000 grant to the University upon its acceptance into the program.

In Spring 2010 the New Student Orientation Program was moved to the Office of Admissions. One outcome of the work between the Office of Admissions and those involved with Achieving the Dream has been the creation of the Advising and Registration for Transfers (ART) Program. This one-day conference for transfer students is not a traditional orientation program but focuses instead on providing transfer students with an opportunity for them to accomplish such things as

- Meet with an advisor*
- Confirm their academic major and learn about course requirements
- Change their major (if necessary)
- Obtain their Cougar One Card
- Purchase their parking permit
- Learn about financial aid
- Sign up for the student health plan
- Purchase textbooks

ART also offers a number of optional concurrent sessions which students have the option of attending if relevant to their needs. These optional concurrent sessions include

- Walking 20 to 30 minute campus tours of the inner campus
- Tours of Calhoun Lofts
- Information about veterans services
- Information on how to get involved on campus
- A resource fair that provides students with Information about services and departments offered on campus

Students participating in an ART conference convene in the Houston Room in the University Center at 9:00 am for a 20 to 30 minute welcoming and introductory session after which they disperse to various locations on campus with the aid of members of the O-Team (Orientation Team Leaders) to do such

*During ART, students are required to see an advisor and are "encouraged" to register as well. Those not registering during ART typically register later from home.

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things as meet with academic advisors, enroll in classes, and accomplish many of the activities listed previously. Lunch is provided in the Houston Room between 12:00 noon and 1:30 pm after which students have an opportunity to work on those activities not accomplished during the morning.

The cost to attend an ART conference is \$60.00. Guests are welcomed to participate in all ART conferences. Guests are charged a \$20.00 for each adult guest (18 and older). ART conference dates for Spring 2011 admits and Summer/Fall 2011 admits are as follows:

- Spring 2011 Admits: December 13, January 5, January 7, and January 13
- Summer/Fall 2011 Admits: May 20, May 23, June 13, June 20, July 18, July 29, August 8, and August 15

The registration deadline for each conference is one week prior to the date of the conference. Students are encouraged to register early because there are a limited number of seats for each conference and specific colleges/majors may limit their participation to selected conference dates.

Participation in the 2010 ART Program

During the Summer 2010, a total of 4,113 transfer students attended the ten one-day ART conferences offered. In addition, over 2,000 guests accompanied these transfer students. Approximately one-third of the students attending an ART conference responded to a survey sent out after each conference. Of these respondents, more than eighty-five percent were moderately to very satisfied with their experience at the conference. In addition, of the 4,113 students who attended a one-day ART conference, ninety-one percent (or 3,745) of these students enrolled in courses this fall. In short, the ART program did its job well last summer and the Office of Admissions is working hard on improvements to make the program an even more meaningful experience for the Spring 2011 and Summer/Fall 2011 transfer student admits. Our challenge as an institution is to retain a comparable percentage to the more than ninety percent of last summer's 3,745 ART Program participants.

Proposal of UC 10896 10F

The purpose of UC 10896 10F is to give the Office of Admissions the authority to make Advising and Registration for Transfers (ART) a mandatory orientation program for (a) all new transfer students and (b) all post baccalaureate students who are seeking a second bachelor's degree and are new to the University of Houston.

Discussion

In past years, in conjunction with the Dean of Students Office, the Undergraduate Council has twice recommended mandatory one-day transfer and two-day freshman orientation programs. On each occasion these recommendations were not supported by the Office of Provost because it was felt that mandatory orientation programs would have a negative impact of the number of students interested in applying to and subsequently attending the University of Houston**. UC 10896 10F indicates this not to be the case for transfer students. Not only was there a ten-fold increase in the number of transfer students attending an "orientation" program tailored to their needs (4,113 in 2010 versus 417 in 2009), a greater percentage of students attending in 2010 actually enrolled in courses (3,745 out of 4,113 or 91 percent) when compared to approximately 80 percent of the 417 attendees in 2009. The requirement that all students participating in ART meet with an advisor during their conference reduces the number of students who previously would go to academic advisors throughout the summer to schedule individual advising appointments. For example, in 2009 more than 2,700 students who did not attend any kind of orientation inundated academic advisors throughout the summer attempting to schedule individual advising appointments. The ART program makes it possible for colleges and departments to set aside specific times on those dates when ART conferences are scheduled to more efficiently accommodate the advising needs of transfer students.

Recommendation

The Committee unanimously recommends that all new transfer and post baccalaureate students be required to attend Advising and Registration for Transfers.

**Freshman Orientation (two-day) was approved by the Office of the Provost in Summer 2009.