AACRAO Consulting Services
Strategic Enrollment Management Consultation

Florida A&M University

Final Consulting Report
October 2, 2006
Project Summary

- Florida A&M University (FAMU) contracted with AACRAO Consulting Services (ACS) to conduct an analysis and offer recommendations for achieving enrollment goals over the long term.

- ACS consultants Bob Bontrager (Oregon State University), Mel Tyler (University of Missouri – Kansas City) and Julie Poorman (Berklee College of Music) conducted four consulting visits to the FAMU campus in March, April, May, and September 2006.

- *This Report concludes the ACS consultation. It builds upon and updates recommendations contained in reports of the previous ACS visits, providing a roadmap for building FAMU’s enrollment programs over the next two years.*
Formalize the role of the President’s Cabinet in making top-level decisions related to enrollment.

- The President’s Cabinet has already done considerable work in setting goals. This work should be expanded in the context of this question:

  What does FAMU want to be in 10 years, in terms of enrollment, and the profile of its students?

  - Undergraduate/graduate
  - Resident/nonresident
  - Racial/ethnic diversity
  - Academic programs
  - Recruitment and retention rates

- Goal-setting process should be led by the President’s Cabinet with input from the Campus Enrollment Team

- Associate Provost Kennedy-Lamar should be included in Cabinet meetings on a quarterly basis to report on enrollment status and gain input on key decisions.
Form a Campus Enrollment Team to provide ongoing oversight and campus-wide support to enrollment efforts

- Co-chaired by AVP Kennedy-Lamar and a member of the Provost’s staff, perhaps AVP Gita Pitter
- Appointed and charged by the President
- Campus-wide representation to include directors of: Admissions, Financial Aid, Scholarships, Registrar, Orientation, Residence Life, Bursar, IT, Student Support Services, and College recruiters
- Establish Recruitment and Retention subcommittees to provide focused attention to each of those crucial areas
- Monthly meetings

Form an Enrollment Management Team to oversee the day-to-day operations of key enrollment-related areas and provide a more coordinated approach to enrollment efforts

- Chaired by AVP Kennedy-Lamar
- Membership should include the directors of Admissions, Financial Aid, Bursar, Registrar, Scholarships, and Information Technology

Open and complete searches for Associate and Assistant Registrar positions as soon as possible
Under the leadership of AVP Kennedy-Lamar and Director of Admissions & Recruitment Boyle, the following recommendations are either already implemented, or on-track for implementation in the coming year their efforts can be further informed and supported by the newly-formed Recruitment subcommittee of the Campus Enrollment Team:

- Assign recruiters to territories, to develop relationships with high school principals, counselors, and teachers
- Develop a recruiting plan, including
  - Identification of feeder schools and geographic locations, to focus recruiting efforts
  - Targeted efforts to ensure most effective utilization of limited resources
- Develop a communication plan, to ensure regular, timely interaction with prospective students
- Respond to initial student inquiries within one week
- Communicate with prospective students regularly throughout the year
  - Monthly for high school seniors
  - Bi-monthly for high school juniors and transfers
  - Utilize a variety of media: web, e-mail, print, mail, in-person
- Target out-of-state students from Atlanta by providing a renewable non-resident scholarship with a 2-year minimum residency requirement
Retention

In Fall 2006, FAMU achieved an increase in new students, but had an overall enrollment decline. This is attributable in large part by an extraordinarily high attrition of students from the freshman to sophomore year. Excellent progress was made this year in improving new student orientation. To make additional progress, the following initiatives are recommended:

- The Retention subcommittee of the Campus Enrollment Team should conduct a thorough analysis of Freshman Studies and academic advising, identifying areas of effectiveness and potential improvement.

- One of the best ways to engage students with the campus is to create as many meaningful on-campus employment opportunities as possible. Evaluate and enhance work-study opportunities. Develop scholarships with a service component requiring students to work on-campus.
Financial Aid and Scholarships

- Identify opportunities to coordinate scholarship and need-based awards to ensure maximum benefit in recruiting students (Note recommendation for 2007-08 to conduct a comprehensive restructuring of FAMU’s scholarship programs, to improve campus-wide scholarship processes and increase benefit to students. ACS can offer expertise in this area, if desired.)
- Comptroller & Financial Aid Director should work together to create an on-going six year trend spreadsheet for Perkins Loan collections
- Perkins funds should be included in the initial award letter in March for the coming fall enrollment
- Improve timing of award letters to new students, with a target date of mid-March

PeopleSoft enhancements

- Develop an organized documentation system that will allow a seamless transfer of knowledge from consultants to university personnel.
- Purchase the User Productivity Kit (UPK) for integrated functional training
- Purchase technical training from Oracle or a reputable third-party training company
Evaluate data needs and Institutional Research resources in order to enhance and support all enrollment management initiatives. Example of data needed include:

- Yield rates from inquiries to applications and applications to enrolled students
- Retention rates by college
- ‘Show rate’ for scholarships offered
- Attrition rates of scholarship recipients over the past 3 years
- Freshman-to-sophomore progression after two semesters for scholarship recipients
2007-2008 Academic Year

- Centralize university recruiting efforts in the Office of Recruitment and Admissions
  - Coordinate and lead recruitment efforts for the University
  - Intake all applications and transcripts/credentials

- Move Scholarships and Financial Aid to Enrollment Management
  - Financial aid is a critical component of strategic enrollment management and should report to the AVP for Enrollment Management to facilitate coordination and ensure maximum effectiveness in meeting enrollment goals.
  - Maintain Scholarships and Financial Aid as separate departments (this revises a recommendation from a prior visit)
  - Scholarship should work closely with Academic Affairs and Admissions to identify a pool of high ability students and then coordinate with the Financial Aid Office to determine who amongst that pool has high need
2007-2008 Academic Year, continued

- With leadership from the Campus Enrollment Team, restructure FAMU’s scholarship programs
  - Streamline the application process for students
  - Improve coordination of College awards with University awarding process
  - Enable the completion of a comprehensive award package to be sent to prospective students in March
  - Provide maximum positive impact on students’ enrollment decisions

- With leadership from Residence Life, implement Living-Learning Communities (LLCs) and Freshmen Interest Groups (FIGs) based on academic majors and common interests.