Freshman Orientation Subcommittee  
Final Recommendations  
May 21, 2003

Committee Membership:

Gregory E. Dziadon, Director, Orientation & Testing Services
Jeremy Baham, Coordinator, Housing & Residence Life
Matt Hulett, Director, Admissions
Dr. Doug Pearson, Associate Vice President, Student Affairs
David Walden, Assistant Director, University Honors Program
Lusharon Wiley, Director, Student Support Services
Kathy Wilson, Academic Advisor
Brittany Bowles, Student representative

The Freshman Orientation Subcommittee met on the following dates: April 10, April 21, May 5, and May 21, 2003. We reviewed UWF’s current orientation program for lower division students, looked at what other institutions are doing, and discussed ways to enhance and meet the needs of our future lower division students through orientation programming.

Our recommendations can be clustered into two groups each related by a common factor: the first group is “philosophical” in nature, commonly seen as vision, mission, and value statements. The second group is more “task-“ or “action-oriented” in nature; operational steps to be taken with specific results intended.

Recommendations (“Philosophical” In Nature) & Priorities

Recommendations:

- UWF’s orientation programs should promote the mission of the University and help students make the difficult transition to the new world of college life.

- Promote campus community involvement; the encouragement for involvement should carry through the first semester (and beyond) via various transition activities and programs outside the orientation program, such as welcome week activities, extended orientation courses, early warning programs, residence hall activities, student organization showcases, positive peer role models (Mentors), faculty/staff role models, etc.

- Emphasize activities/events/information which provide a meaningful experience that helps transition students to their new academic environment while simultaneously providing academic and social tools for first semester success, and beyond. The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has developed the
following orientation programs “musts” which should be incorporated into UWF’s program:

- be based on stated goals and objectives
- be coordinated with the relevant programs and activities of other institutional units
- be available to all students new to the institution
- assist new students in understanding the purposes of higher education and the mission of the institution
- assist new students in understanding their responsibilities within the educational setting
- provide new students with information about academic policies, procedures, requirements, and programs sufficient to make well-reasoned and well-informed choices
- inform new students about the availability of services and programs
- assist new students in becoming familiar with the campus and local environment
- provide intentional opportunities for new students to interact with faculty, staff, and continuing students
- provide new students with information and opportunities for self-assessment
- provide relevant orientation information and activities to the new students’ primary support groups (e.g., parents, guardians, spouses, children)

- Activities should be planned that will instill a “passion” for, and a “connection” with, the University along with the reality of the UWF collegiate experience

- Academic advising should center on the individual—his/her interests, goals, and motivations for college, and how these interact with academic decision making

Priorities:

All of the above recommendations should be given high priority and can begin being incorporated into the orientation processes for the coming year.

Recommendations (Task-oriented) & Priorities

Based on the timing of the committee’s report, we determined that the following recommendations should fall into two priority groups: things that could be implemented in the next year, and things that could be implemented in the next two years and beyond. The following tables present our recommendations as such.
Table 1: One-Year Implementation

- Retain the current two-day format

- Require only all new freshmen (1’s) to attend this orientation; exclude sophomores from this program and include them in the transfer program

- Require students to stay on campus in a residence hall the night between the first and second day (provide separate, on-campus housing for parents who request it)

- Use evening hours for small group “connecting” activities/events

- Utilize University Mentors and Housing staff as group leaders

- Ensure uniform training for all who are involved with the orientation program

- Include as much small group interaction as possible with staff, faculty and students

- Same-day, walk-in orientation registration and attendance should be strongly discouraged (explore incentives for early orientation registration and online completion of pre-orientation activities).

- Class registration should take place outside of the advising session, with the help of Mentors, using the Registrar’s computers and/or a nearby SAIL lab

- Reorganize the current Ad Hoc Committee for Orientation Planning into a “transition” committee, with representation from every constituency in the campus community. This committee should annually review goals, guidelines and activities for all transition programs and offer the means by which policies and plans are articulated to campus constituencies. Ownership of and commitment to “transition” programming by the campus community at large begins with this committee.

The adoption of the above recommendations would warrant attention to the following:

- The student orientation program should be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals.

- The student orientation program should have adequate funding to accomplish its mission and goals. Explore and evaluate other possible revenue sources.

- The student orientation program should have adequate facilities and equipment to support its mission and goals.
Table 2: Two-Years & Beyond

- Develop an online, web-based pre-orientation where students complete as many "administrative" tasks as possible before orientation attendance, including:
  - online pre-adviseing information
  - online ITS account activation
  - online interest surveys to identify goals, academic and career interests

- Develop an online, web-based pre-adviseing session that students need to complete before orientation attendance to better prepare them for the advising appointment

- Develop online interest surveys to help students and advisors identify academic, career and social goals, interests and motivations

- Explore all options of possible revenue for funding

- Review the structure of the orientation office, and explore alternative schemes of organization and makeup-

In regards to resources, support, and departmental collaboration, we could not make specific recommendations without knowing the other subcommittees' desires. There was agreement that the University should evaluate having one office act as the "home" for orientation and transition program coordination, with the cooperation of all involved departments. Within this evaluation, exploration of related programs (welcome week, parent/guest weekend, first year experience courses and seminars, etc.) falling under the auspices of this office should be examined. All possible funding options should be explored and relied upon, including University (E & G) appropriations, assessment of a student fee, parent/guest fee, and housing fee, and Activity & Service fee appropriations. Staffing would be based on the final "structure" and functions of a central orientation office.
TRANSFER ORIENTATION SUBCOMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS

• Require some form of Orientation for all new students
  
  ◦ High priority
  ◦ Should be in place for next summer (2004)
  ◦ Cost to be paid by participants

• Keep advising holds – every new student must see an advisor prior to registration
  
  ◦ Status quo, but high priority to maintain
  ◦ No cost

• Develop a virtual Orientation as soon as possible.
  
  ◦ Absolutely needs to be done – high priority
  ◦ Goal should be Summer 2004
  ◦ Cost unknown

• Divide students into three separate Orientation groups with Student Classification status as follows:

  Class Code 1 (0-29 sh) required Orientation on campus

  Class Code 2 (30-59 sh) required Orientation but abbreviated into one day session
  (morning info, Nautilus card, E-mail account, etc. – advising in afternoon)

  Class Code 3 (60-89 sh) Abbreviated one day Orientation is recommended.
  or 4 (90+ sh) Required to see advisor prior to registration (hold); Advisor guide to be developed; when available Virtual Orientation is recommended. These students will then be required to attend either Virtual or On-Campus Orientation.
  
  ◦ Ready by Summer 2004
  ◦ Cost unknown

• Review of all Orientation activities regarding what is beneficial to the students and University on an annual basis by Orientation Committee.
  
  ◦ High priority for continued evaluation of program. Need full, detailed summary evaluation of student and parent ratings.
  ◦ Begin Fall 2003
  ◦ No cost
• Provide advising services in all Departments during all Orientation periods and times of high student need as follows:
  - week after grades are posted
  - week prior to start of any semester

  • Implement immediately in preparation for this summer
  • Critical need
  • Cost unknown, but small

• Charge all new students an Orientation fee based on real budgetary needs, including:
  
  Orientation Office expenses
  Mentors
  Meals
  Housing
  Computer Lab expenses
  Advising costs
  Web maintenance
  Etc.

  • Goal is next summer
  • High priority
  • Suggest differential between 1 and 2 day Orientations

• Coordinate Orientation dates/times with other offices that could impact program.

  Academic Departments
  Police
  Physical Plant (construction, grounds and maintenance)
  Signage (electronic board, SGA, poles, etc.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Orientation Required</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Not Attend Penalty?</th>
<th>Register Prior to Attending?</th>
<th>Virtual Orientation</th>
<th>Count as Attended?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida Atlantic</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>Can’t register</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>TR of 30 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(561)297-2536</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes – but still see advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida State</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>Revoked admission</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(850)644-2785</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USF</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>Can’t register</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(813)974-3060</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UF</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>Can’t register</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(352)392-1261</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida International</td>
<td>TR – major</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>Must be advised</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(305)348-6414</td>
<td>Ed, Journalism,</td>
<td></td>
<td>(hold)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English, Nursing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Gulf Coast</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td>Responsible for</td>
<td>Yes (in transition to no)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(239)590-7957</td>
<td>(in transition to</td>
<td></td>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCF</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>Can’t register</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Covers first ½ day --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(407)823-5105</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- must attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>advising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMU</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>Can’t register</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Florida</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes - advisor</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(904)620-1720</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent Program Sub-Committee
Final Report
May 20, 2003

Committee Membership:

- Dr. Jim Hurd, Director, University Commons and Student Activities (chair)
- Dr. Marcia Howard, Associate Dean, College of Business
- Tammy McGuickin, Assistant Director, Housing and Residence Life
- Joe Rieland, Student Representative
- Martha Lee Blodgett, Director, Planned Giving
- Anna Shiplee, Academic Advisor

This group worked under the assumption that our charge should include “parent programs” as a comprehensive notion and not just parent orientation. We believed that parent orientation is the beginning of a continuing relationship between the University and parents.

The Parent Program Sub-Committee met four times. In our first meeting we briefly assessed our current programs (Parent Orientation and Parent and Family Weekend), we looked at CAS standards, and we looked at what other institutions are doing. We also discussed what we need, what we want, and what is unique about UWF that might influence our recommendations. To summarize our discussion:

- We looking for a comprehensive parent program with at least the following major components:
  - Parent Orientation
  - Parent Association
  - Web Services
  - Family Weekend
  - Special Events

- There are opportunities for meaningful parent involvement in:
  - Supporting parent orientation
  - Career networking
  - Development/fund raising
  - Providing advisory support to various components of the program

In our second meeting we drafted vision, mission, and values statements and listed strategic goals.
What is our vision?

The Parent Program should be a portal to a long term relationship between family stakeholders and the UWF community which encourages active involvement to support student success.

What is our mission?

• Educate parents about UWF through orientation and ongoing transition programs.
• Create opportunities for parents and family to contribute to the University both financially and otherwise.
• Provide opportunities for parents and families to be involved in their student’s college experience.

What are our values?

• Personal Relationships
• Communication
• Sensitivity to divergent needs
• Appropriate Involvement
• Growth
• Diversity in place and circumstance as well as culture

What are our strategic goals?

• Establish leadership for Parent Program.
• Identify parents’ transition needs.
• Develop an effective way of communicating with parents.
• Identify and recruit parents who are interested in the program.
• Establish a parent association.

In our third meeting, we stated objectives (strategic imperatives) and recommendations for 2003 and beyond (strategic priorities).

What are our objectives?

• To introduce and provide parents with access to essential departments and services of the University (financial aid, housing, safety, advising, student services, etc.).
• To assist parents with the transition process (parenting toward independence, understanding the ambiguities of the relationship between parents and the
institution, identifying appropriate ways for parents to participate in the life of their student, etc.).

- To provide parents with information and tools to help support student success (academic support services, student support services, etc.).
- To enable parents to connect to the University (campus traditions, campus activities for parents, opportunities to support the University, etc.).

What are our preliminary recommendations for 2003 and beyond?

- Begin developing parent specific web resources that will support pre-orientation browsing and an ongoing post-orientation relationship.
- Focus on collecting parent contact information to facilitate direct communication with parents via land mail and email.
- Create a parent orientation program that features greater separation of the student and parent components -- even when content is similar, parent interests differ from student interest so separate sessions are preferred.
- If housing is made available to parents on campus, it should be presented as an option and they should not be housed with the students.
- Assess parents' interests and needs while they are on campus for orientation: what do they want to know, are they interested in a parents' association, are they interested in being involved in the life of the institution?
- Design parents' schedule with a focus on smaller, concurrent sessions to achieve smaller groups.
- Create a dynamic FAQ collection that can be accessed via the web.
- Create and distribute a Parent Handbook (since time will not likely permit developing and publishing such a resource this year, consider purchasing and distributing the NODA parents' guide).
- Delegate a groups of mentors to focus on parents. This can rotate throughout the summer so all mentors can work with students and parents.
- Identify a Parent Program Director who will serve as a permanent contact point for parents, manage web resources and publications, and coordinate programs and services for parents.

In our fourth meeting we prioritized our recommendations (adding one additional recommendation) and discussed issues related to resources, support, and departmental/divisional collaboration. We determined that our recommendations fell into two priority groupings: things that could be implemented this summer and things that could be implemented over the next year or so. Our recommendations are organized into this scheme in the table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate or Near Immediate Term Implementation</th>
<th>Intermediate Term Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Begin developing parent specific web resources that will support pre-orientation browsing and an ongoing post-orientation relationship.</td>
<td>• Establish an appropriate Parent Orientation Fee to support legitimate and necessary expenses associated with Parent Orientation (improving food and hospitality offerings, providing materials, additional mentor staff, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on collecting parent contact information to facilitate direct communication with parents via land mail and email.</td>
<td>• If housing is made available to parents on campus, it should be presented as an option and they should not be housed with the students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a parent orientation program that features greater separation of the student and parent components -- even when content is similar, parent interests differ from student interest so separate sessions are preferred.</td>
<td>• Assess parents’ interests and needs while they are on campus for orientation: what do they want to know, are they interested in a parents’ association, are they interested in being involved in the life of the institution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Design parents’ schedule with a focus on smaller, concurrent sessions to achieve smaller groups.</td>
<td>• Create a dynamic FAQ collection that can be accessed via the web.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delegate a groups of mentors to focus on parents. This can rotate throughout the summer so all mentors can work with students and parents.</td>
<td>• Create and distribute a Parent Handbook (since time will not likely permit developing and publishing such a resource this year, consider purchasing and distributing the NODA parents’ guide).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify a Parent Program Director who will serve as a permanent contact point for parents, manage web resources and publications, and coordinate programs and services for parents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In regard to the question of resources, support, and departmental/divisional collaboration, we felt somewhat limited by context. Any design solution proposed by our group would, by necessity, be developed outside the context of the other subcommittees’ deliberations. However, we felt that there must be a “home” for these programs and that management by committee was not desirable. Certainly one or more committees should exist to facilitate collaboration, but there needs to be an administrative touch point for initiating and sustaining action. In additional, there is potential for a good deal of synergy within the organizational scheme our proposal outlines.

We are proposing a scenario that we feel is reasonable taking into consideration the overall context of the current structure, the needs of a more comprehensive transition program, and the implementation of a complete Parent Program.

- We recommend the establishment of an Office of Student Development (simply a descriptive and inclusive name to reflect the theme of the functions united in the department). This department would include the following functional areas:
  - New Student Orientation (all levels)
  - Parent Programs (including orientation)
  - First Year Experience (an emerging area?)
  - Retention and Success Initiatives (student development programming)
  - Liaison and collaboration with key support offices including (but not limited to): Advising Center, Student Success, Student Activities, Career Services, Counseling Services, Admissions, Development
  - Testing Services

- We recommend that the Office of Student Development be staffed as follows (clearly some of these resources already exist and would require re-tasking while others would require establishment):
  - Director (A&P)
  - Coordinator (A&P)
  - Program Assistant/Office Manager (USPS)
  - Graduate Assistant
  - Student CWS/OPS (30 hours)
  - Mentors

- We recommend that the Office of Student Development be funded via a combination of resources:
  - E&G
  - Auxiliary -- Orientation fees and Testing revenue
  - A&S Fees (for programming initiatives)
We recommend that the existing Orientation Office/Testing Center be evaluated for suitability for housing this expanded function.