

Office of the Registrar, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN Year End Report, 2003-2004

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Overview:

At the outset, I wish to acknowledge the contribution of my staff during 2003-2004 and to thank them for their conscientious work, integrity, service, collegiality, and good humor during this academic year. The staff includes Katherine Baker, Assistant Registrar for Enrollment; Sally Gonzalez, Associate Registrar; Kathy Granquist, Coordinator of Scheduling; Tonda Grund, Administrative Assistant; Kelly Hubred, Administrative Assistant; Cheryl LaCroix, Coordinator, Academic Advising Center; Nan Schroeder, Assistant Registrar for Data Services; Paula Stowe, Coordinator, Student Services. I am grateful to each one for the role they each play in the smooth operation of the Registrar's Office and for making my work as Registrar so enjoyable.

The organization of this year-end report follows that of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) *Registrar's Self-Audit* (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, 2000), in keeping with my goal of moving toward one consistent filing and record keeping system in the office. The self-audit document contains basic principles, which I have paraphrased and summarized at the beginning of each section and then taken into account in the organization and content of the report.

This report summarizes the work of the office in 03-04, mentioning specific achievements and some examples to give an idea of the day-to-day work of the office. It also pinpoints specific goals for the future. The information comes from three sources. The first is the experience of working in the office during the past year. The second is our one-day office retreat in January 2004. At that time, we worked through the whole *Registrar's Self-Audit* to identify areas of particular strength and areas of potential change as we begin to implement the new computer system during 04-05. The third source of goals for the future comes from the ethical and social analyses of our office in relation to the new computer system that were completed by the students in Computer Science 263: Ethical Issues in Software Design, taught by Chuck Huff. Since we will be discussing the reports from the students at our June retreat, their results are not fully integrated into this report at this point, but a few items have been mentioned.

The annual report of the Academic Advising Center accompanies this report.

Role of the Registrar:

This section reports on the philosophy of the registrar's office as contained in guiding documents such as a mission statement and statement of ethics; scope of responsibility, including general authority and responsibility and relationships with other offices; organization, including organization of the staff, policies, and procedures; planning and budgeting; personnel, including hiring, training, professional development, and review; and maintenance of office records and documents.

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office:

- ✓ Standardized and clarified job description formats and performance review procedures following the initiative of Human Resources; adjusted some job titles to make them consistent with college-wide practice; created an organizational chart of the office in consultation with Pat O'Brien. The chart and the job descriptions will be integrated into the procedures manual;
- ✓ Held two systematic conversations between the Registrar and each member of the staff, one before our January 2004 retreat, to understand perceptions of how the office will change with the new computer system, and one for performance evaluation. (December-January 2003-04 and March-April 2004);
- ✓ Hired one student intern to continue working on our procedures manual, begun during 02-03; edited, proofread, corrected, and standardized most of the existing entries;
- ✓ Met weekly as a staff to plan upcoming tasks, review the previous week's work, suggest improvements, and discuss issues that arose;
- ✓ Instituted monthly catch-up days for the office staff;
- ✓ Hired, trained (procedures + FERPA training), and supervised five regular student workers, plus others during registration periods;
- ✓ Clarified our office policy for reimbursing the College for personal use of office equipment (phone, fax, printer, copy machine);
- ✓ Consolidated all steps of the catalog process into the Registrar's office by moving the new course proposal procedure from the office of the Provost and Dean, to enable better tracking of changes to the catalog and into the class and lab schedule;
- ✓ Attended regularly the meetings of CEPC (Registrar), GEC (Assistant Registrar, Enrollment), IDOCS, Academic Standing Committee, Re-admission (Associate Registrar);
- ✓ Served on various other committees and task forces: Academic Appeals Committee, ACM First Year Experience Group, General Education Task Force, Student Information System Task Force; Center for Experiential Learning Faculty Advisory Committee, Information Systems Integration Team (ISIT), Science Center Design Team (Registrar);
- ✓ Maintained close communication with other offices, academic departments and programs, and AAAs through day-to-day interaction and the Registrar's Administrative Advisory Group (monthly meetings): offices of the Dean of Students, Institutional Research and Planning, Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Residence Life, International and Off-Campus Studies, Student

- Support Services, Provost and Dean of the College; the Center for Experiential Learning; Center for Integrative Studies;
- ✓ Engaged in professional development: AACRAO national meeting (three people, including one who presented at a session [Sally Gonzalez]); Veterans Administration training session (one person); AACRAO technology conference (one office staff member plus one IIT staff member); regional UMACRAO convention (one person); workshops on campus, mostly related to computer applications, such as Excel, Dreamweaver, Crystal Reports (several staff members); Currently serving as chair of the program committee for the October 2004 Upper Midwest Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (UMACRAO) (Registrar).

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Craft a satisfactory mission statement for the office that is consistent with the mission of St. Olaf, to be integrated into our procedures manual, posted on our website and at our window, and to be used as the basis for our day-to-day work (Office Retreat, June 16, 2004);
- Adopt a statement on professional practices and ethical standards, also for the procedures manual, website, and office (Office Retreat, June 16, 2004);
- Complete our procedures manual, hiring two more interns during 2004-2005;
- In consultation with the curriculum committees, revise the college course proposal forms for clarity, usefulness, and economic use of resources;
- Create a single logical filing system for office documents and find a place to store our documents so that they are accessible to each staff member and that our inadequate workspace becomes less cluttered. We have already spoken with the Assistant Provost about one possible location for these documents. Lack of space for work and for storage, and inadequate space (poor air quality, ventilation, and no natural light) remains the most intractable problem we face in the Registrar's office;
- Continue to remain professionally active. It is our hope that we can begin participating in professional development opportunities related to summer school administration in 2004-2005.

Communications:

This section includes the Registrar's office role in communicating and interpreting academic and institutional policies and the goal of accurate, prompt, and thorough communication with students, faculty, administrative offices, and other constituencies, such as parents and alumni. Under this heading come the following responsibilities of the Registrar's office: creation and dissemination of the academic calendar, the registrar's calendar, and an office calendar; the college catalog (paper and web-based); the class and lab schedule; all forms needed to conduct business; the final exam schedule. The Registrar's office also prepares institutional reports and provides data for the college directory. An important aspect of our work currently is to determine the appropriate use of electronic technology in communications.

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office:

- ✓ Continued to try to provide timely communication regarding procedures, important events, deadlines with various constituencies through our web site, targeted e-mails, and communications with individuals (in person, at window, e-mail, letter);
- ✓ Made every effort to communicate with other administrative offices in a regular way, through the Registrar's Administrative Advisory Group, through meetings, and through personal conversations; met with Kathy Chadwick as she began her work on identifying problems in communications among administrative offices; participated in her ISIT group that is studying ways to improve data transfer among administrative offices;
- ✓ Worked through the monthly meeting of the AAAs to provide systematic training to all AAAs on web services and a preview of the new computer system;
- ✓ Maintained a "Registrar's Letter to Parents" on our web site;
- ✓ Developed and received CEPC approval of the academic calendars for 05-06 and 06-07;
- ✓ Made good progress in implementing Resource25, an integrated room scheduling program. While the college purchased this software a few years ago, we were unable to use it until the vendor addressed a number of technical flaws. The latest version has the potential to meet the needs we intended it to when we purchased it. We have entered basic information about each classroom on campus, and have begun to enter more detailed information about classroom features (such as technology, classroom layouts, blackboards/white boards, etc.). We have been able to import class and lab data for both sessions of summer school, as well as semester I 2004-05, and have been able to create, change, and delete classroom assignments. Once these steps were completed and we were confident that the Resource25 would work for academic scheduling, Conferences and Events staff began using the program, and we hope to bring the Buntrock Scheduling Office on board in June 2004;
- ✓ Completed and disseminated the 2003 catalog supplement and began work on the 2004-2006 catalog; worked with Admissions, Boe House, and our free-lance editor to decrease costs for the 2004-2006 catalog. As a result, the 04-06 catalog will cost approximately \$20,214.00 (\$13,614.00 for printing, \$6,000.00 for labor to be paid by Boe House), down from \$33,135.15 for the 02-04 catalog;
- ✓ Significantly decreased the number of class and lab schedules we print, which saves money and paper and also allows us to provide a more accurate web version;
- ✓ Made changes as needed to the Registrar's web page and learned Dreamweaver to begin redesigning the current web site to incorporate the college's new look of the college web sites.

Some Numbers:

- 60-75 requests for data (beyond the typical annual reports) were received, mostly from departments, and processed;
- \$4,502.00 is estimated to be saved due to mostly on-line delivery of class and lab schedule (with paper copies for faculty and for registration) compared to 2001-2002, when all students as well as faculty received paper copies.
- \$12,921.15 is estimated to be saved on production of 2004-2006 catalog in comparison with 2002-2004 edition.

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Continue to work with Kathy Chadwick and the ISIT group;
- Upgrade and streamline our web site (beginning summer 2004);
- Continue to improve the quality of our information to new students and faculty;
- Continue to work closely with the AAAs;
- Develop and receive CEPC approval of the academic calendar for 07-08;
- Complete and disseminate the paper version of the 2004-2006 catalog, taking out the GE attributes from courses (to eliminate one common source of inaccuracy) and upgrading the index; work with Boe House to put it on the web and add a Google-type search to make the catalog more user-friendly;
- Update forms, especially web-based forms, and create a full range of forms that can be completed on the web and then printed for signatures;
- As we move to the new computer system, review our forms to determine if any can be changed, combined, eliminated;
- Implement a four year rotation of final exam schedules and publish the final exam schedule earlier;
- Work with Telecommunications to add a FERPA disclaimer to the college directory.

Much of our work under this heading will change significantly as we move to the new computer system.

Registration and Related Functions:

Registration is an essential function of the Registrar's office; policies and procedures must be well planned, clearly communicated, and designed to maximize convenience, fairness, and effective use of resources. It should be possible to make schedule changes and late registrations in a timely and consistent manner.

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office:

- ✓ Continued to use the policies and procedures worked out in 2002-2003 for pre-registration, acknowledging and attempting to minimize the drawbacks of this process;
- ✓ Planned and implemented three registration periods. During the April registration, the registration storage file filled, causing the system to go down for approximately one half hour until an IIT representative could get it running again. The following evening, the wait list file nearly caused the same problem, but IIT

- intervened before the system crashed. However, in every other respect, registration went smoothly thanks to good planning and staff support, including the contribution of student workers;
- ✓ Surveyed (via the SIS Task Force) the student body (approximately 850 respondents) to determine their concerns and wishes for a registration system and studied the data;
 - ✓ Based on the survey and the Principles of an Effective Registration from the SIS Task Force in spring 2003, worked with Matt Richey and the SIS Task Force to devise an appropriate model for registration using the new computer system. We examined various approaches, including the “Tree” model at use at Rhodes College, and concluded that a system that allows students to register on line but remain in close contact with their advisors serves St. Olaf the best. The task force is proposing a system whereby we may move gradually toward a “tree” type model of registration, which is the most flexible of the options we have considered;
 - ✓ Studied our current registration algorithm and determined that it does not significantly disadvantage some students over others.

Some Numbers:

- 39,069 individual registrations of students into courses occurred in 2003-2004;
- 2,000 pre-registrations entered during the year;
- 326 applications for Independent Study/Independent Research were processed;
- 105 applications for Internships were processed;
- 14 Carleton/St. Olaf Inter-registrations were processed;
- 84 course overloads were processed;
- 304 petitions were processed;
- \$3,410.00 in fines was collected;
- \$358,854.00 net revenue was collected in summer terms I and II, 2003 (gross: \$589,980; salary: 231,128). There were 454 total course credits and 352 total individual students. There were 63 courses, 8 music lessons, 16 internships, 7 IS/IR

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Continue with the current system of registration while we continue to plan for a better registration model using the new computer system but retaining the personal contact between students and faculty. Matt Richey, who will serve as a consultant to the new system, the SIS Task Force, and I will continue to develop a new model for registration;
- Develop a clear timetable and plan for implementing a new registration system;
- Continue to build the summer school program to enhance opportunities for students to take courses and to provide revenue to the college.

Clearly, we depend on the implementation of the new computer system to make any significant improvements in this area, and this will be a top priority for the next several years.

Student Academic Records, Transcripts, and Grading Processes:

This section includes procedures for grade processing, providing information to students and faculty regarding grades, enrollment information, schedules, and other parts of the student record. It also includes the format and processes associated with providing transcripts to students and others. It includes, finally, policies and procedures for records retention.

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office:

- ✓ Continued to process grades through established procedures, which require faculty to hand-carry their grades to the office and staff to hand enter them into the computer system and proofread them; once grades are posted, faculty may view their advisees' grades via the web interface to the AS 400, and students may also view their degree audit and transcript via the web. We do not send paper grade sheets to students or to faculty, but we offer e-mail training for faculty and students to access their records, and the departmental AAAs are prepared to help faculty with this process;
- ✓ Continued to provide enrollment information to faculty via the web but also via paper print-outs;
- ✓ Continued efforts to ensure that student records remain private under the provisions of FERPA;
- ✓ Continued to provide timely transcript services within the provisions of FERPA;
- ✓ Continued to manage retention of student records in the office, at other locations on campus, and in an off-campus location. Began to scan transcripts of seniors upon graduation using the library's scanner.

Some Numbers:

- 28,372 grades have been hand entered so far in 2003-2004, not including summer or off-campus courses;
- 87 grade changes (changes due to faculty miscalculation) were made during 2003-2004;
- 1,974 lines of text were entered for transfer students, off-campus programs, AP scores, and so forth;
- \$25,759.69 were collected in transcript fees (\$3.00 fee per transcript, \$8.00 rush fee per transcript).

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Move to the possibility of on-line submission of grades by faculty as soon as this becomes feasible in the new computer system, in order to make grade submission more convenient, timely, and accurate, and to make it unnecessary for us to hand-enter grades into the system;
- Once the new system is up and running, track more completely all transcript requests and status;
- Work with IIT and other offices to look into imaging of documents in the future, a process which will facilitate retrieval of information and save space;

- Become fully compliant with AACRAO's recommendations on retention of records. This should allow us to clean out our student files somewhat and thus save some space in the vault.

This is another area where the new computer system will have a significant impact. Until that system is running, we will have to continue to operate according to established procedures. The new system will also allow us to maintain better, more complete, information on students, on enrollments, and on the history of enrollment changes.

Certifications:

In its role as custodian of student records, the Registrar's office provides certifications of enrollment to students or outside agencies, within the limits of FERPA. The Registrar's office also certifies athletic eligibility, and provides enrollment information on students who are veterans to the Veterans Administration so that those students receive the benefits for which they are eligible.

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office:

- ✓ Increased our participation in the National Student Clearinghouse by implementing Degree Verify and Enrollment Search (in process). By working with the Clearinghouse, we can provide quicker service, and the process is easier and more efficient for the outside agencies and the students;
- ✓ Completed training on the new web-based system for reporting to the Veterans Administration;
- ✓ Continued to work with Athletics to try to streamline the process of certifying athletic eligibility.

Some Numbers:

- 6 Veterans Administration students were certified;

From yearly report of the National Student Clearinghouse July 1, 2002-June 30, 2003 (latest report):

- 16,209 paper and electronic deferment forms were processed for our students;
- 6 Department of Education enrollment lists (SSCRs) were processed;
- 10,773 student records were reported to the Department of Education;
- 226: Number of times that student loan providers looked up enrollment records for our students via the Clearinghouse web site instead of generating phone or paper inquiries;
- 609 staff hours were estimated (by the Clearinghouse) saved by using the services of the National Student Clearinghouse;
- 18 enrollment verifications were processed by the Clearinghouse (April and May 2004 only; new service).

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Complete further training on the Veterans Administration system (summer 2004).
- Complete necessary steps (computer programming) to implement fully the new services with the National Student Clearinghouse;

- Continue to work with Athletics on eligibility issues (this will become easier with the new computer system);

Advising/Degree Audit/Graduation/Commencement:

The Registrar's office works closely with the Academic Advising Center and the advising process in general. The Registrar's office is also responsible for evaluating transfer credit from other institutions, awarding credit as appropriate, and informing the students and their advisors for purposes of program planning. The Registrar's office provides web-based degree audits to all students to help them assess their progress toward graduation. One of the most important functions of the office is the process of graduation, from setting the class, performing senior audits, assisting students in applying for graduation, tracking changes in status in the senior year, certifying majors and all requirements, determining honors, providing the list of graduates/participants for the commencement program, ordering and distributing diplomas.

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office:

- ✓ Made it through graduation without a glitch or major crisis after having completed all the steps listed above;
- ✓ Worked with several other administrative offices to implement GradFest, an integrated approach that helped seniors manage the graduation process, including all matters associated with the Registrar's office, plus all the other details such as ordering of caps, gowns, invitations, events sponsored by the Alumni and Family Relations Office, advising about name pronunciation, and so forth;
- ✓ Began at the AACRAO convention to research the options for printing diplomas in-house rather than outsourcing this task (to save money and streamline the process).

Some Numbers

- 35 High School Honors students were accepted for 2003-2004;
- 23 continuing education students took courses;
- 22 faculty/staff took courses;
- 12 Luther Seminary students took courses;
- 37 post-graduate student teachers enrolled during a ninth semester;
- 110 first year students were awarded 234 St. Olaf credits based on Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO) work;
- 179 first year students were awarded 500 St. Olaf credits based on Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) work;
- 243 students had off-campus coursework added to their records;
- 119 current students requested permission to transfer credit back to St. Olaf for summer 2003 coursework;
- 49 preliminary transfer evaluations were completed and 31 new transfer students were admitted for fall 2004;
- 705 senior degree audits were conducted and 698 students were certified to graduate or participate in May 2004;
- 59 students were participants in May 2004.

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Have graduation run as smoothly as it did this year!;
- Continue to meet one-on-one with each senior to go over graduation requirements;
- Provide more training to seniors to access electronically what is available to facilitate the graduation process;
- Develop training materials to help students and faculty advisors understand the degree audit better;
- Perhaps make it possible for students to apply to graduate via the web;
- Explore options for in-house printing of diplomas in more detail.

In the longer term, the new system may make it possible to incorporate the major audit into the degree audit, rather than having separate audits as is now the case.

Information Technology and Support Equipment:

This section concerns the role of the Registrar's office in information technology, efforts to increase efficiency, enhance service, and save money through appropriate use of technology; efforts to ensure data security as a top priority; efforts to create a contingency plan in case of system failure or a natural disaster.

Because of the development and implementation of the new computer system, this area will remain a top priority for the office in the coming years. The main challenge we will face in 04-05 will be to implement the new system and to train users into it. Matt Richey of the Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science has been working with us and with Jeff Dixon of the IIT on this project and will receive .33 release time to continue this valuable work during 04-05. Besides consulting with Jeff on the design of the system in relation to the academic program, Matt will also be working with me to train users into the new system. He and I have also co-chaired the Student Information System (SIS) Task Force, whose charge has focused especially on new models of registration, since February 2003.

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office, led by the Assistant Registrar, Data Services:

- ✓ Cleaned up old fields, files in the current AS400 system for conversion;
- ✓ Worked on converting information from the old system to the new system and verifying the information has been converted correctly;
- ✓ Worked with the programmer on developing new interfaces that will incorporate St. Olaf business practices but in a new, more efficient manner, taking into account how we do business now and how we can improve our business processes;
- ✓ Worked with other offices (e.g., Music, Student Accounts, International and Off-campus Studies, AAAs, Dean of the College, faculty) as needed when developing interfaces;
- ✓ Worked within the new system to add fields, files, and processes as needed;
- ✓ Worked on helping to develop the web interface and gathered input from users;

- ✓ Worked with programmer in giving presentations of the new system to groups on campus (e.g., the Leadership Group);
- ✓ Continued to add help text;
- ✓ Met weekly in various groupings (programmers, Matt Richey, Registrar, Registrar's office staff) to review projects and plan the next steps;
- ✓ Went to a Crystal Reports refresher class and continued to work on developing the transcript;
- ✓ Developed an Excel list of all reports we currently run in order to prepare reports in the new system;
- ✓ Attended the AACRAO technology conference in October (Assistant Registrar, Data Services and programmer);
- ✓ Attended relevant sessions at the AACRAO annual meeting in April;
- ✓ Added privacy screens to almost all office computers to increase security.

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Run a test of the new computer system, June 8, 2004, to test functionality. This test will allow us to create a more detailed timetable and plan for the implementation of the system;
- Develop a detailed plan for moving forward on the system, complete with detailed timetable (summer 2004);
- Continue work on the new system and begin implementing the system within the Registrar's office;
- Ensure, in implementing the new system, that information coming from our office is secure in all forms, and write policies governing security of information. This includes protecting documents in our office, information showing on computer screens, e-mail communications, information available on our web site, and face-to-face communications with students. With increased reliance on electronic forms of communication, we will need to be vigilant in new ways to ensure security of student records. We are aware that our current office environment is not as secure as it should be, and we have already begun to take steps (privacy screens) to improve the security of our records. We have much more to do in this regard;
- In implementing the new system, develop a policy and procedures for the use of electronic signatures for specific purposes;
- Ensure that the new computer system is accessible by persons with disabilities insofar as is possible.

Legal Issues:

The Registrar's office monitors compliance with FERPA and the Solomon Amendment (which prohibits institutions from denying military recruiters access to directory information for purposes of recruiting), and works with Human Resources to implement SEVIS (documentation of international students).

03-04: Work and Achievements:

During 2003-2004, the Registrar's office:

- ✓ Created bookmarks that provide users with concise training on FERPA and distributed them to faculty, offices, and students;
- ✓ Provided FERPA training to all student workers in the office and to all new faculty during Week 0;
- ✓ Maintained a FERPA information page on our web site;
- ✓ Consulted with other offices as necessary to improve compliance with FERPA provisions;
- ✓ Worked with the developers of the new computer system to ensure that the system will be FERPA compliant;
- ✓ Added a confidentiality statement to e-mails coming out of the Registrar's office;
- ✓ Attended sessions at professional meetings to update information about FERPA, specifically, concerning new legislation on electronic signatures.

Goals for the Future:

During 2004-2005, we intend to:

- Remain compliant with all legislation while implementing and training people into the new computer system;
- Improve our training and documentation to improve our training of all constituencies on FERPA.

Conclusion

2003-2004 was a busy and productive year in the Registrar's office. We are all looking forward with trepidation and anticipation to 2004-2005, when the new computer system will become a reality in our office and across campus.