

**BREWTON-PARKER COLLEGE****EXTERNAL PROGRAMS  
SIX-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN  
2002-03 THROUGH 2007-08****DEPARTMENT PURPOSE**

The Division of External Programs seeks to help the College meet its mission through the provision of an equally effective academic program at sites that are distant to the Mount Vernon campus. The Division of External Programs provides a community of intellectual inquiry and learning under Christian sponsorship to students unable to commute to the Mount Vernon Campus for such an educational experience. Furthermore, the Division of External Programs develops student maturation in knowledge, values and citizenship through baccalaureate degrees and the Associate of Arts degree, and through the provision of counseling and career guidance as well as to assist students to learn.

**OBJECTIVE 1**

Enhance academic quality by continually reviewing the feasibility, quality and staffing of each existing site; developing and improving the academic programs at each existing site; and exploring the possibilities of new sites for the external program.

**ACTION PLAN 1**

To annually review the feasibility, quality and staffing of each existing site, confirming that they have learning environments, which encourage scholarly and creative achievement.

**ASSESSMENT**

Review student assessments of classes and professors at the end of each semester. Conduct year-end surveys of site directors, staff, faculty and students regarding their level of satisfaction with the academic program, services and staffing. Review the ETS Academic Profile pre- and post-test results section focused on external programs to look for "value added". Study alumni survey information for information regarding the effectiveness of the programs in securing employment and graduate school.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Assistant Vice President for External Programs and Provost.

**TIME FRAME**

Annual (Spring).

**RESOURCES**

Time to conduct surveys and review already available data.

**RELATED TO**

Strategic Goal No. 4; SACS Recommendation No. 15

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#### **RESULTS**

On their course evaluations for Fall 02 external students rated the overall effectiveness of their classes on a 1-5 scale where 1 = ineffective and 5 = very effective. The mean rating for Fall 02 was 4.21 for external students and 4.01 for students on the Mount Vernon campus.

In a Spring 03 survey external students rated their satisfaction with the quality of their academic experience on a scale of 1-6 where 1 = very dissatisfied and 6 = very satisfied. The mean ratings for overall academic experience, preparation for employment or grad school, treatment of ethical issues in courses, learning assistance programs, quality of teaching inside and outside of major, and the process for student evaluation of teachers ranged from 4.44 to 4.94 with a median of 5. Satisfaction with variety of courses offered each term and variety of degree programs had a mean rating of 3.75 and 3.80 respectively with a median of 4. One obvious general conclusion here is that attention is needed in improving the variety of courses and degrees. Students rated the quality of teaching inside their major at 4.94 with a median of 5 and outside their major at 4.74 with a median of 5.

A new interim Assistant Vice President for External Programs was hired in September and much initial assessment in the fall was conducted by dialog (in person, by phone, and by email) between him and the site directors and staff. The general consensus of these dialogs suggested the following needs: improved communication between directors, staff, and faculty at sites and main campus; more consistency and organization in and streamlining of procedures).

Waiting for results of ETS Academic Profile in order to determine value added.

An external programs alumni survey is being developed which will be administered in Fall 2003.

#### **RESPONSE**

More frequent and consistent observation of courses (as required by the adjunct faculty observation procedures suggested by the ad hoc committee on adjunct faculty evaluation, Oct. ) and interviews and surveys of external faculty, staff, and students should help determine the reasons for the higher rating given by external students regarding the overall effectiveness of their classes than that given by students on main campus to make sure that lower standards are not a factor in this judgment. Student course evaluations, surveys, and teaching observations will serve as guidelines for developing strategies to further improve students' judgment of the effectiveness of their classes.

A first step toward improving the variety of courses and degrees would be to increase enrollment. The student population at the Savannah site has become particularly low due to the lack of an organized marketing and recruitment plan. The new director

has 4 years successful experience in admissions and recruitment and is expected to increase enrollment at that site. Also, \$10,000 from the Strategic Planning Fund has been added to the general budget for Savannah and will be available 7/1/03 to be used primarily for an extensive advertising campaign.

Another consideration that is being made in regard to the variety of degrees offered is the establishment of a nursing program on the main campus and an extension of it in the Savannah-Hinesville area. An associate of arts degree in Pre-Nursing/Allied Health was approved by the faculty assembly on the main campus (date). Preliminary investigations in the feasibility of developing beyond this "pre-nursing" degree to a nursing degree have begun. The first step is completed: dialog, by phone and email, with director of nursing program at LaGrange College, a small, private, church affiliated liberal arts college like Brewton-Parker; contact with state nursing director, determination whether it is financial feasible at this point for Brewton-Parker make initial investment to begin program.

Due to employee turnover in several key positions in the spring, including two directorships of sites, a survey of directors and staff is being postponed until 03-04. Distinct web pages have been created for External Programs in general and each of the sites in order to facilitate availability of information and general communication between external students, sites, and main campus. In addition, a Blackboard (computer program for on-line courses) site is being set up to aid in communication between faculty and staff off campus and the External Programs office as well as to allow easier and quicker availability of documents, forms, regulations, syllabi, etc. to external staff and faculty. Orientation meetings for adjunct faculty have been scheduled at external sites in addition to the main campus. The Office of External Programs on the main campus has been in dialog with the offices of admissions, financial affairs, and the registrar in order to codify the specific procedures involved in the admission, registration, advisement and maintenance of students and has written these in a new handbook. This handbook has been put on the website to make it available to the staff and faculty of external sites. This will allow immediate availability of adjustments or changes in procedures.

## **ACTION PLAN 2**

To continually develop and improve the academic programs at each external site, so they might have even better learning environments which encourage scholarly and creative achievement. Prior to the addition of any new program, to conduct a study indicating that the program is feasible, has defined assessable educational outcomes and is consistent with the institutional mission. To seek SACS approval for any substantive change.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Annual audit of courses and programs offered at off-campus sites conducted by External Programs and reported to Provost. Results of feasibility studies. SACS response to any substantive change request.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Assistant Vice President for External Programs, directors and relevant faculty at specific sites, Provost, SACS.

## **TIME FRAME**

Annual (Spring).

## **RESOURCES**

Time to conduct audit and feasibility studies.

## **RELATED TO**

Strategic Goal No. 4, SACS Recommendation No. 15.

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RESULTS

Classroom observations, site visits, and student feedback have indicated examples of excellence in teaching as well as some specific cases of weaknesses and inconsistencies in academics at some of the external sites.

RESPONSE

In order to encourage excellence, official recognition was given to an external programs professor for excellence in teaching at the Liberty County and Savannah graduation: she received a plaque and a check when the award was announced. Two similar awards recognizing excellence were also given to a staff member and a student. Dialog with adjunct faculty has corrected some of the weakness and inconsistencies in academics that were found. In one case, an adjunct, who through classroom observation and evaluation of syllabus and testing materials was found not to be adequately reaching the goals and objectives designated for the course by its academic division at the Mt. Vernon campus is being mentored in order to ensure equity of the academic experience of this class with that of the main campus.

The chair of the humanities division has appointed a director of writing who has begun the process of ensuring consistency of freshman writing courses on and off campus. The writing director has instituted guidelines for adjunct faculty teaching these courses as well as pre- and post-course writing tests for the students of these courses at off-campus sites.

Study of the feasibility of adding a nursing degree has begun but has not yet been completed.

**ACTION PLAN 3**

To continually explore the possibilities of new sites for the external program. Prior to the addition of any new site, to conduct a study indicating that it is feasible, has defined assessable educational outcomes and is consistent with the institutional mission. To seek SACS approval for any substantive change.

**ASSESSMENT**

Results of feasibility studies.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Assistant Vice President for External Programs, Provost, Trustees, SACS.

**TIME FRAME**

Annual (Spring).

**RESOURCES**

Time to run feasibility studies.

**RELATED TO**

Strategic Goal No. 4.

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**RESULTS**

Consideration is being given to opening a new site in Newnan, Ga.

**RESPONSE**

Meetings with contacts in Newnan who support the opening of a site there as well as with local church and civic leaders have been held. Dr. Jossey, chair of the education department on main campus, Dr. Denni, the dean of external programs, and Marvin Johnson, a businessman and civic leader in Newnan who supports the establishment of a site in Newnan, have met with the superintendent of Coweta County Schools to explore the feasibility of offering a degree in Early Childhood Education there and discuss other possibilities in which Brewton-Parker and the local board of education might be able to help each other fulfill their respective missions in the community. Possible sites are being explored. Needs analysis and feasibility studies are in progress, but not completed.

**OBJECTIVE 2**

Enhance academic quality by increasing the accessibility and the extent and effectiveness of the use of Brewton-Parker library resources by students, staff, and faculty at each external site, through increased cooperation with library staff and improved technology.

**ACTION PLAN**

New software, which is more user friendly, will be installed in the main-campus library to aid in accessibility. The Director of the Library will create a plan that will result in professional librarians visiting External Program centers on a regular basis. Service to all students will be increased.

**ASSESSMENT**

Annual school-year-end evaluation of library software, staff visits, and access service. Annual survey of student use and satisfaction.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Assistant Vice President for External Programs, Director of the Library and Provost.

**TIME FRAME**

Annual (Spring).

**RESOURCES**

Time to evaluate services and conduct survey.

**RELATED TO**

Strategic Goal No. 4, SACS Recommendations No. 36 and 44.

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#### **RESULTS**

During the 2002-03 academic year, library staff visited external sites to conduct six library orientation sessions for 210 students, during which 151 Brewton-Parker ID cards were made and distributed to students and 252 orientation booklets were distributed.

In October the library replaced Dynix with Horizon, a system which has a searchable module that is accessible to anyone with Internet access without glitches, improving access to information from the main library, books, periodicals held, audio-visual materials, for external program students. Galileo, Atlas, and WilsonWeb also improve information access. These databases provide many full-text articles so that external students seldom need hard copy from the main library.

#### **RESPONSE**

Ensure that all external program students are aware of the extent of library services available to them and continue to encourage greater use of these services by EP students. This will be done by developing strategies to improve communication of their availability as well as by encouraging instructors to suggest or require the use of these services in some of their course assignments. A survey of library use by EP students will be conducted at the end of each semester.

**OBJECTIVE 3**

Enhance academic quality by improving several aspects of the external program faculty, including tighter control of the academic preparation and transcripts of external program faculty, increasing the ratio of full to part-time faculty at the sites, improving the procedure for evaluation of faculty; increasing external program faculty participation in orientation and faculty development and increasing student structured access to and interaction with full-time faculty.

**ACTION PLAN 1**

Improve the faculty in the external programs by a tighter control of the academic preparation and transcripts of external program faculty. This involves several things, including developing easier access between the transcript files stored in the Provost's office and those in the External Programs office and tightening the practice of scrutinizing transcripts for the minimum of a master's degree with 18 semester hours or a Master's Degree in the teaching discipline.

**ACTION PLAN 2**

Improve the faculty in the external programs by increasing the number of full-time faculty teaching all or part of their load at external centers each year. Budgeted funds to increase the number of full-time faculty teaching at external centers will be requested during each budget cycle. Full-time faculty teaching in Mount Vernon will be encouraged to occasionally teach at external centers. In 2001-2002, the number of full-time faculty teaching at external centers was 8. The specific goal for each year is: 2002-2003: 10; 2003-2004: 12; 2004-2005: 14; 2005-2006: 16; 2006-2007: 18; 2007-2008: 20.

**ACTION PLAN 3**

Improve the faculty in the external programs by implementing an improved system of faculty evaluation, which emphasizes the use of faculty evaluation to improve the quality of education. Complete the study by an existing ad-hoc committee on the evaluation of adjunct professors and institute its recommendations.

**ACTION PLAN 4**

Improve the faculty in the external programs by promoting faculty participation in the annual orientation program (in August) on the main campus. Promote External Program faculty participation in faculty development seminars. Request from the Provost's faculty development line in the pro-forma budget: \$2000 for External Program faculty professional development for 2003-4 and add an additional \$1000 for each of the remaining 4 years under the plan.

**ACTION PLAN 5**

Improve the faculty in the external programs by increasing student-structured access to and interaction with full-time faculty, using the planned increases in full-time faculty in the program for better advising.

## **ASSESSMENT**

1. Conducting an annual audit of External Programs faculty files with courses taught to link courses taught with documentation of academic preparation and official transcripts.

2. An annual report documenting the full-time faculty teaching all or part of their load at external centers will be prepared. In any year in which the specific goal is not attained, an action plan will be created to address reaching the goal during the next year.

3. Certify that a report has been issued by ad-hoc committee on adjunct faculty evaluation by September, 2002, and evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures at the end of each academic year.

4. Report to the Provost the number of external program professors attending a) the August adjunct faculty meeting on the main campus, b) faculty development seminars; and c) participating in other faculty development programs.

5. Annual surveys of external programs students will include questions about the amount and helpfulness of faculty and staff contracts.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Assistant Vice President for External Programs and Provost.

## **TIME FRAME**

Annual

## **RESOURCES**

Time to make reports and conduct and interpret surveys.

## **RELATED TO**

Strategic Goal No. 4, SACS Recommendations No. 21, 22, 25 and 26.

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#### **RESULTS**

External programs faculty files have been reviewed to ensure proper documentation (including official transcripts) are present for all courses being taught.

Full-time faculty teaching all or part of their load at external centers (excluding Education Division faculty): A total of 14 different full-time faculty taught 58 classes at external sites during the 2002-03 academic year; 7 taught 21 classes in the fall, 10 taught 25 classes in the spring, and 8 are teaching 12 classes in the summer.

The ad-hoc committee on adjunct faculty evaluation presented a report and plan which was approved by the Academic Council on October 17, 2002. The procedures set forth in the plan were begun in the spring of 2003.

Of the 80 adjunct external programs adjunct professors scheduled to teach classes in the fall semester of 2002, 43 (or roughly 54%) attended the annual orientation meeting in August of that year.

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1=ineffective and 5=very effective the mean score from external program students in rating the helpfulness of instructors on the SIR II was 4.61 in the fall of 2002. The mean response concerning the availability of extra help in the same evaluation was 4.58, and the overall mean for all aspects of faculty/student interaction was 4.63. In a Spring 03 survey external students rated their satisfaction with student services and staff on a scale of 1-6 where 1 = very dissatisfied and 6 = very satisfied. The overall mean for this category was 3.91. The overall mean for their satisfaction with faculty advisement on the same survey was 4.77.

#### **RESPONSE**

Continue to scrutinize documentation of new applicants and closely follow the established procedures for approval to teach courses.

Continue to encourage professors from main campus to teach part of their load at off-campus sites and hire new full-time external programs professors with terminal degrees when the budget allows.

Since the new procedures for adjunct faculty evaluation have only been in place for a single semester, it is too soon to adequately evaluate their effectiveness. An initial assessment, however, seems to indicate that adjustments may need to be made in these procedures in order to realistically carry them out according to the limitations of staffing. Research will be done to determine how other accredited institutions of similar size deal with this problem.

In order to increase participation in adjunct faculty orientation meetings, three such meetings were scheduled and conducted in August 2003 instead of only the one traditionally held on the main campus: one on the main campus, one in Norman Park, and one in Hinesville for Liberty County and Savannah site faculty. Attendance:

\$1030 is available for external programs' faculty development in the 2003-04 pro forma budget.

Continue to survey students on satisfaction with helpfulness of faculty and staff. Staff changes have been made that are expected to improve on this in 2003-04. The introduction of on-line registration and the addition of two new full-time faculty members with terminal degrees at Liberty County campus and the Savannah center have already improved student advisement some. Plan to involve some of the part-time adjunct faculty in advising in order to lower the advisee load of full time professors.

**OBJECTIVE 4**

Ensuring that the off-campus sites provide an appropriate learning environment which encourages scholarly and creative achievement, comparable to the Mount Vernon campus.

**ACTION PLAN**

Ensuring such equity between sites includes such things as:

1. Promoting and encouraging academic achievement of the students in the external programs so that they equal that of the on-campus student;
2. Administering only approved programs and courses at off-campus sites;
3. Using the same textbooks and essentially the same syllabi as chosen by the full-time professor (usually on-campus) responsible for that class – unless negotiated with that professor;
4. Providing appropriate and adequate staffing at each site that is responsive to the needs of students, faculty, and other staff members;
5. Providing appropriate and adequate facilities and technology to carry out the mission at each site, such as added classrooms and offices and equipment at the Liberty County Campus;
6. Providing students with timely access to required textbooks and supplemental materials, coordinating with the on-campus bookstore and other staff;
7. Providing students with appropriate and necessary information for their academic process, including consideration of a Financial Aid/Admissions Counselor at Liberty County Campus;
8. Providing and delivering appropriate career and student services to meet the needs of traditional and non-traditional students; and
9. Enhancing the Christian distinctiveness of external programs by initiating a dialog with External Program students, faculty and staff concerning the proper role of faith and learning in liberal arts education – thus participating in the "campus-wide" dialog slated by the President.
10. Keeping the external programs components of the College's safety and security plan in operational compliance.

**ASSESSMENT**

1. Annual review of course grades, comparing and analyzing tests, and tracking ETS Academic Profile pre- and post-tests – comparing "value added" for on-campus and off-campus courses.
2. Annual year-end reports to the Provost itemizing the programs and courses offered.
3. Annual audit conducted by External Programs of the syllabi (with textbook and course unit listings) requested from all full-time professors (and sent to all relevant adjunct professors) and comparing the approved syllabi with those required from all adjunct professors – and reported to the Provost.
4. Annual audit of External Programs faculty files and annual survey of students, faculty, and staff members.
5. Annual evaluation of the various facilities and steps taken.

6. Annual survey of students, faculty and staff conducted by External Programs and reported to the Provost.

7. Assessment of the needs and actions taken.

8. Annual survey of students, faculty and staff conducted by External Programs and reported to the Provost.

9. Summations of dialogs.

10. Being part of the regular review of the College's Safety and Security Plan.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Assistant Vice President for External Programs and Provost.

**TIME FRAME**

Annual.

**RESOURCES**

Time to conduct audits, surveys, and dialogs.

**RELATED TO**

Strategic Goal No. 4 and SACS Recommendations No. 15, 25, 49, and 65.

## **BREWTON-PARKER COLLEGE**

### **EXTERNAL PROGRAMS SIX-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2002-03 THROUGH 2007-08**

#### **RESULTS**

Review of course grades show external programs students receiving slightly higher grades than students on main campus.

Audits of programs, courses, syllabi, and textbook use have been made. Some cases of non-use of required textbooks or appropriate syllabi by adjunct faculty have been found.

Spring 03 survey of students indicates that staffing is sufficient. The overall mean in this survey category was 3.91 in a range of 1-6.

The technology department on main campus has increased visits and monitoring of computer and technology needs at all sites. They have assessed needs and are in the process of meeting them (see CTS strategic plan). Small, but new offices have been created for full-time faculty at Liberty campus. We are moving the location of our Savannah site from the office building on Abercorn Street to Calvary Baptist Day School. This will provide students with a more collegiate atmosphere (an actual campus) as well as an up to date computer lab, a biology lab, and language lab. The environment there will also be more consistent with our Christian mission.

In the Spring 03 survey external students rated their satisfaction with books and educational material on a scale of 1-6 where 1 = very dissatisfied and 6 = very satisfied. The overall mean for this category was 3.5 with a low score of 2.53 and a high score of 3.9.

A financial aid staff member at main campus made regular monthly visits to Liberty County. The new director of the Savannah site was the previous director of admissions on main campus and has made himself available for consultation at both Savannah and Liberty campus.

In the Spring 03 survey external students rated their satisfaction with student services on a scale of 1-6 where 1 = very dissatisfied and 6 = very satisfied. The overall mean for this category was 3.91.

Insufficient dialog with external programs students, faculty, and staff concerning the proper role of faith and learning in liberal arts education.

#### **RESPONSE**

Higher grades at external sites could be due to grade inflation, less rigorous course requirements, or simply to the possibility that non-traditional students can be more mature and motivated than traditional ones. Efforts will be made to determine the cause of this phenomenon by examining testing materials, observing classes, and polling students on perceived ease or difficulty of courses.

Importance of using required textbooks or requesting alternatives by negotiation with divisional chair personnel on main campus will be emphasized in upcoming orientation sessions and results will be monitored through classroom observations and

polling of students. The same process will be applied regarding the use of appropriate course syllabi. Plan to have approved course syllabi for all courses available to adjuncts on-line in 2003-04.

Continued dialog and surveys of students' satisfaction will be made in order to maintain and improve on their evaluations of staffing, facilities, textbooks, and services.

Dialog will be initiated on the proper role of faith and learning bringing all students, faculty, and staff into the "campus-wide" dialog slated by the President.