

MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY



Report of Efforts Concerning Timely Graduation

- 1. For each undergraduate degree program, the average number of semester credit hours attempted and the average number of fall and spring semesters attended by a student completing the program:

Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters toward Baccalaureate Degree in Program Areas, Fiscal Year 2007\*

Table with 4 columns: Program, # Grads, Credits Attempted, Mean Semesters. Rows include Science and Math, Arts and Architecture, Business, Health, Social Sciences and Service, Technology, Total Graduates, and Institutional Average.

\*Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

- 2. Specific efforts implemented to ensure that undergraduate students graduate in a timely manner:
3. Specific efforts implemented to ensure that undergraduate students do not attempt an excessive number of semester credit hours beyond the minimum number required to complete the students' degree programs:
- Orientation - The orientation book which students are given upon entry to the university has sections regarding the requirement that students should complete degrees without going over 45 hours above the degree requirements...
- Three-peat - courses taken for the 3rd time for which MSU does not receive

funding: The orientation book, catalog, and schedule of classes indicate that MSU does charge an additional \$100 per semester credit hour for courses attempted for the third time.

- \$1,000 rebate – Our orientation book and catalog describe the state program for which students who meet the state criteria can receive the \$1,000 rebate for not taking excessive hours above the minimum degree requirements. MSU is very proactive with this program in that we check EVERY student for eligibility who applies for graduation. If upon doing a degree audit, we find that the student appears to be eligible to receive the \$1,000 rebate, a note is placed on the official degree audit for them to contact the assistant to the registrar, so that they may be counseled regarding eligibility.

4. Specific efforts implemented to provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation:

- Application for Graduation – MSU has developed an online evaluation, which is completed by graduating seniors to collect information about their educational experience at MSU including everything from their major courses/faculty, to their advising, to their campus services received. This data is collected by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment for use in campus planning for improvement. Upon completion of the online evaluation, the candidate for the degree may then print the forms to apply for graduation and submit them, or come by in person and submit them. We advertise graduation deadlines in the campus newspaper, as well as by hanging posters all over campus in various buildings. We encourage students to apply for graduation the semester prior to the semester in which they intend to graduate in hopes that an official audit can be completed in time to know what is lacking by the end of the registration period for their last enrollment.
- Imagine Graduation Event – The President’s Office has coordinated this graduation preparatory event and it will be coordinated by the Assistant to the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Enrollment Management in the future. It is a “one stop shop” for all graduation needs, and helps students to tie up loose ends for a timely graduation, and find out any lacking requirements. We hold the event in a very visible location in the Clark Student Center, in order to generate excitement among underclassmen, as well as those closer to graduating. Sometimes they ask questions during the event, which can help them to plan for a more timely graduation as their time draws nearer.
- Adviser Training – For many years, the Office of the Registrar led an effort of our own in offering workshops for advisors on how to advise using the student information system, and other advising details. With the implementation of the Banner system, we will continue to offer these workshops as well as Banner training workshops. Additionally, for the past five years, just prior to each fall semester, the Provost has sponsored an advising workshop in which the Office of the Registrar has been one of the major presenters for assisting advisors to do a better job of advising students to a timely graduation.
- Advising Profile Forms – The Office of the Registrar produces individual advising profile forms for each new student, for each orientation session. The

- profile forms contain the most up-to-date testing, TSI, English and Math placement information for new students. The advising profile forms assist the advisers in correctly assisting the students to be in the coursework that is not only mandated, but which will help them achieve a more timely graduation.
- Certain freshman English courses have a library component incorporated to assist students in using library resources toward a successful and timely completion of requirements. The four modules of library instruction are physical tour, instruction on the online catalog, instruction on the use of various electronic databases, and, instruction on evaluating web sites. The library has also provided database instruction to various health science courses, and general library instruction to all College Connections classes as well as to several speech classes.
  - The Student Affairs area hosts a Student Success Series, with speakers and workshops in various areas that assist with academic progress as well as the total student experience.
  - The Academic Support Center (ASC) provides support through:
    - a. Advising for students who are undecided on a major, as well as students who face academic challenges. For example, their first year probation program, is an early intervention program to try to assist students to get back on academic good standing while monitoring their course loads and academic progress.
    - b. College Connections, a three-credit hour course designed to help students successfully transition into a college environment, providing an opportunity for students to gain the essential knowledge and skills necessary to achieve graduation. Students explore the relationship between higher education and their goals, and information is provided on all available resources and programs at Midwestern State University. Through practice in applying course learning, accessing resources, working as a team member, asking questions, and seeking answers, students develop skills, habits, and attitudes that are essential for college success and life beyond college.
    - c. Academic Referral, an intervention program initiated by faculty with it becomes apparent that a student is experiencing academic difficulty. Upon receiving a referral, the ASC attempts to contact the student to set an appointment to discuss the concerns noted by the initiating faculty. The student's academic advisor is also contacted to determine if the advisor is available to meet with the student.
    - d. Supplemental Instruction (SI) sections of various courses that are historically difficult for students. The SI sections include peer tutoring and study groups in an effort to increase the pass rate. These SI sections have produced significant results in the pass rate, and grade levels achieved in these courses.
5. Specific efforts implemented to develop an online student degree progress report which compares the courses taken and credit received by a student to the courses

completed and needed for degree and graduation requirements for each academic term:

- On-Course degree audit system – We have built degree plans in our On Course degree audit system available via the student Web World system, so that students may perform unofficial audits for lacking degree requirements. The system has been programmed so that some “what-if” scenarios can be attempted by the students, to see what they would lack in a different major. With the conversion to Banner software in the 2008-2009 academic year, we will move to a different online degree audit system known as CAPP. We are currently building the degree programs in the new CAPP system. We have the project approximately 80% completed.
- Training for CAPP – The team that has worked with the development of the CAPP degree audit system will be developing training sessions in the coming year for faculty of various colleges so that they can become familiar with how to use it in assisting with student advising. This will be a great advising tool.

6. Specific efforts implemented to implement tuition policies that encourage timely graduation:

- The MSU Board of Regents authorized that the maximum number of semester credit hours required for a baccalaureate degree will not exceed 120 as required by Texas Education Code 61.0515.
- The MSU Board of Regents approved an allocation of \$50,000 to provide scholarships for students who are within 30 hours of completing the undergraduate degree. This fund will be available for those students whose previous MSU scholarships have expired.
- MSU charges an additional \$100 per semester credit hour for courses, which are taken for the third or more times. (see number 2 above.)
- The MSU Promise is that students at Midwestern State University are guaranteed through 2012 that with the exception of student-initiated fee increases, tuition and fees at MSU will not increase more than five percent in any academic year.

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may perform unofficial audits for lacking degree requirements. The system has been programmed so that some “what-if” scenarios can be attempted by the students, to see what they would lack in a different major. With the conversion to Banner software for which we are training, we will move to a different online degree audit system known as CAPP. We are currently building the degree programs in the new CAPP system in hopes to have most of them completed when the system goes live in April 2008.

- Training for On Course – The Assistant to the Registrar who has worked with the development of the On Course degree audit system has done training seminars with faculty of various colleges so that they can become familiar with how to use it in assisting with student advising. The colleges have found this to be a great advising tool. Additional training will be provided when we move to the CAPP degree audit system.

6. Specific efforts implemented to implement tuition policies that encourage timely graduation:

- MSU charges an additional \$100 per semester credit hour for courses which are taken for the third or more times. (see number 2 above.)
- The MSU Board of Regents authorized the administration to plan the details of a tuition cap of 5% per year for entering students, effective with the fall 2007 semester