Division of Student Affairs Staff Development Team  
New Staff Orientation  
2018-2019

**Purpose of Assessment**  
The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Staff Development Team (SDT) develops and facilitates three New Staff Orientations throughout the academic year. The half-day workshop offers new staff the opportunity to meet others, learn about the DSA as well as introduces staff to additional professional networking opportunities. A paper survey was given out to attendees at the end of each workshop to assess their experience and provide feedback for the Staff Development Team to improve future New Staff Orientations.

**Method and Sample**  
The DSA New Staff Orientation paper survey was produced using Teleform®, a survey design software that creates scannable forms and databases. The survey asked eight questions; five were quantitative and three qualitative. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, and the qualitative data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel®. As reported to Student Life Studie (SLS), 97 new staff attended the three workshops and received a survey; 97 surveys were returned to SLS, yielding a 100% response rate.

**Key Findings with Recommendations**  
Student Life Studies identified several key findings and developed actionable recommendations that the Staff Development Team (SDT) may take based on the results. However, the SDT may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the New Staff Orientation participants. Staff Development Team members are strongly encouraged to read all the results and qualitative comments to gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences.

- As in previous years, New Staff Orientation attendees seemed to feel positive about the experience, and clearly understand the vision and mission of the DSA as a result of attending. Participants found the resources presented helpful and enjoyed interacting with others outside their own departments.

- Similar to last year, New Staff Orientation attendees indicated they were least clear about how their role fits into the DSA mission and vision. If clarifying staff roles within the DSA mission and vision remains an important outcome of attending the New Staff Orientation, SDT members organizing the orientation may want to include table activities and discussions that allow attendees to define and discuss how their positions fit into the mission and vision of the DSA.

- Although there was less emphasis on including more activities and less lecture during the New Staff Orientation, participants continued to mention an appreciation for the more interactive formats and the round tables that enhance engaging and networking with others outside their own department.

- Attendees indicated they would like more in-depth reviews about the DSA departments, as well as more information regarding opportunities to form partnerships with other departments within and outside the DSA. In addition, materials that highlight career development, career paths and opportunities at the University would be a welcome addition to the New Staff Orientation.
Results
Results are reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. The table is in descending mean order for 2018-2019. Summary themes are reported in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. Comparisons to previous years will be made where appropriate.

The participants were asked about their level of agreement or disagreement regarding their experiences attending the DSA New Staff Orientation. Ninety-nine percent of the participants agreed that the orientation provided them a better understanding of what the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) does for the University, the same as last year. Similar to 2018, participants were again least in agreement that the orientation provided them a clearer understanding of how their role fits with the vision and mission of the DSA, Table 1, presents the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a result of attending the New Staff Orientation:</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Neutral (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>2018-2019 Mean (sd) n=97</th>
<th>2017-2018 Mean (sd) n=104</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have a better understanding of what the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) does for the University</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4.63 (.60)</td>
<td>4.63 (.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a better understanding of the history and culture of the Division of Student Affairs at TAMU</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4.55 (.68)</td>
<td>4.57 (.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The resources provided were valuable</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4.47 (.69)</td>
<td>4.61 (.60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to network and connect with the other colleagues in the DSA</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4.42 (.73)</td>
<td>4.56 (.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I more clearly understand how my role fits with the vision and mission of the DSA</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4.10 (1.00)</td>
<td>4.45 (.64)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: DSA Orientation Experiences

Participants described aspects of the orientation they found most and least effective. Eighty-three shared what they found most effective; many indicated that hearing from senior DSA administration was most effective, and that their presentations, particularly those of Dr. Anne Reber and Dr. Daniel Pugh, were
informative and valuable. Others mentioned the history of the DSA, traditions and Title IX topic discussions as most effective. Playing Kahoot, and table activities with others outside their own department were also popular, as was the networking opportunities with other DSA colleagues. Sixty-five respondents wrote what they found least effective, and many wrote in nothing, or expressed it was all effective. Some stated they would like more activity and interaction with others, and found the lecture style all day ineffective. A few mentioned the department reviews were a bit long and dry.

Participants were asked what additional information they would like to see included for new staff members at future orientations. Some of the 69 respondents suggested more information on how to become involved in the campus community and DSA committees. Others suggested highlighting current partnerships between the DSA and other campus departments and colleges, and suggestions on how to initiate and grow such partnerships. Others wanted more in-depth information regarding the 17 departments in the division and their areas of responsibility. A few mentioned wanting more information on career development, career paths and advancement at Texas A&M University.

**Background**
The Staff Development Team of the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) assists student affairs professionals in acquiring the skills, professional expertise and development needed to best serve their goals, the division and the university. The website (http://dsastaff.tamu.edu/about) indicates their mission is “to enhance the competences of professionals in Student Affairs by facilitating purposeful, innovative and engaging activities that educate, train and develop.”

The Staff Development Team develops and sponsors three New Staff Orientations per year that are half-day workshops mandatory for new staff within the DSA to attend. This year’s New Staff Orientations were held on September 28, 2018, January 25 and May 25, 2019, to ensure new staff could attend a workshop near to their start date within the Division. Topics included the history and culture of student affairs at Texas A&M, current strategic initiatives, scope of services and resources available through the DSA (https://dsastaff.tamu.edu/nso/). Participants were also provided information regarding how to get involved in networking opportunities within and outside of the Division. Student Life Studies (SLS) has assisted the Staff Development Team in assessing the DSA New Staff Orientation most years since the fall of 2006.

**Project Details**
The Department of Student Life Studies provides quality assessment services, resources and assessment training for departments in the Texas A&M University Division of Student Affairs and student organizations. Services by Student Life Studies are funded, in part, by the Texas A&M University Advancement Fee. Results of this project and other assessment projects done through Student Life Studies can be found at https://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu/results/. Additionally, division staff can follow Student Life Studies on Facebook.

To work with Student Life Studies for future assessment projects, please fill out the Assessment Questionnaire at https://slsform.dsaapps.tamu.edu/.

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