Learning Goals and Assessment Highlights
2015-2016

Please complete the following form to contribute to the Annual Report of the Division of Student Affairs. The submission deadline for Annual Report information is June 15, 2016. Please contact Romando Nash with questions.

I. Name of Department – Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations (GAPE)

II. Departmental Staff Information (Number of FTE, Graduate Assistants, Student Workers, Interns, Volunteers):

GAPE has 14 full-time employees (1 Director, 1 Assistant Director, 4 Data Specialists, and 8 Evaluators) and three temporary full-time employees. We employ three student workers.

III. Departmental Mission Statement:
The Office of Graduate Admissions & Program Evaluations (GAPE) performs the administrative and evaluative functions to maintain and implement the policies and procedures related to admissions, advancement to candidacy, graduation, and university level program requirements for all graduate students. The GAPE Office strives to ensure the quality of graduate and credential programs by meeting efficiency goals in processing academic requests, to act as an advisory resource to graduate program personnel and students, to advocate for faculty and student programmatic needs in the area of admissions, student scholarship and graduation, to ensure the university is in compliance with all federal, state, and CSU policies related to admissions and graduation, to disseminate the guidelines for policy related to graduate admission eligibility requirements, to promote graduate student retention and graduation, and to assist in the development of collaborative graduate department activities.

IV. Departmental Learning Outcomes:

1. Support new students in ensuring successful enrollment, retention, and graduation. Provide graduation workshops to increase the level of knowledge about university and department requirements for a successful graduation (Addresses Applied Knowledge).

2. Support students in obtaining knowledge about their program requirements at the department and university level. Increase students’ knowledge of pertinent filing deadlines and notifications in MySJSU to ensure a timely graduation (Addresses Applied Knowledge and Intellectual Skills).

3. Make full use of various communication mediums to maintain, practice, and communicate CSU eligibility requirements for prospective graduate applicants and students (Addresses Applied Knowledge and Intellectual Skills).

4. Support the efforts of graduate departments and advisors in the shared task of sustaining an efficient and successful admissions and graduation cycle for all graduate students (Addresses Applied Knowledge and Intellectual Skills).
a. Which outcome(s) was (were) assessed this year? We assessed department learning outcome #1 and #2.
b. When will the other outcomes be assessed? We plan to assess #3 and #4 next year.

V. Key Assessment Findings, & Action Plans: Please include minimum of four findings – 400 character limit per findings. All findings should provide source information, (e.g. how/when data was collected, purpose, how many respondents, etc.)

1. GAPE hosted two Fall 2015 graduation workshops and three Spring 2016 graduation workshops for graduate students. During the workshops we conducted pre/post-tests to directly assess knowledge regarding policy, procedures, expectations, and deadlines. The pre/post-tests asked for demographic information (college, resident status, expected graduation date). In addition, the pre/post-tests included 7-multiple choice questions and one open-ended question regarding what advising they have received (pre-test) and feedback on the session (post-test).

For Fall 2015, we had 88 attendees and for Spring 2016 we had 107 attendees. The number of attendees for all sessions each term is lower than Spring 2015 (200 attendees); although the Spring 2015 session may have been larger because it was the first graduation workshop offered.

The level of knowledge increase was addressed by comparing the number of incorrect answers aggregated in the form of a percentage-decrease from pre-test results and post-test results. For Fall 2015, we had 88 respondents for the pre-test and 74 for the post-test. The pre-test yielded 170 incorrect answers. The post-test yield was 58 incorrect answers. The findings indicate an overall 59% decrease in incorrect answers in the post-test. For Spring 2016, we had 107 respondents for the pre and post-test. The pre-test yielded 245 incorrect answers. The post-test yield was 66 incorrect answers. The findings indicate an overall 73% decrease in incorrect answers on the post-test. The Fall 2015 decrease in incorrect answers may be due to our handing out of powerpoint slides in advance, so students were looking for the correct answers at the pre-test time. We only handed the powerpoint out to attendees after the pre-test was submitted for the Spring 2016 session. In addition, we looked at the incorrect post-test answers for the Fall 2015 sessions, and emphasized the correct policies/process in the Spring 2016 graduation workshop session ensuring information was clear in the presentation. This also may explain the greater decrease in incorrect answers for the Spring 2016 sessions. Overall, the graduation workshops help increase knowledge of graduation policies and deadlines to ensure successful and timely graduation. The below findings are based on the graduation workshop assessment.

2. Again this year at the graduation workshops, a large percentage of students (62.5% in Fall 2015 and 68.2% in Spring 2016) attended from the College of Engineering. For Spring 2016 we asked on the pre-test if students were international students. A majority of attendees were International students (70 out of 107 or 65.4%). In addition, for Spring 2016 we asked the term the student was planning to graduate. Most attendees were planning to graduate for Spring or Summer 2016 (22.3%), Fall 2016 (23.3%), or Spring 2017 (36.8%). Therefore, more than 80% of our attendees plan to graduate in the coming one year.

3. Timing of graduation workshop – For Fall 2015 we offered two sessions in November 2015, which was after the candidacy deadline for Spring 2016 graduation (October 1, 2015). While many students felt the workshops were helpful, some also encouraged us to host the workshops prior to the candidacy deadlines. One student wrote on their post-test feedback, “While the class is helpful, it may be even more so if there is time before the candidacy form deadline has passed to hold it.” Four other students also mentioned the timing of the workshop as a concern. For Spring 2016 we hosted all three of our graduation workshops prior to the candidacy date.

Last year we noted a need to have an evening session because of feedback from students working during the day. For Fall 2015 we held an evening session (started at 5:30pm and ended at 6:30pm), and many students (around
15-20) came after the start of the session and around 15 of our 88 participants had to leave early to attend class. Therefore, these students did not get to attend the full session, meet with evaluators one-on-one, nor take the pre/post-test. In the future, we may want to offer alternatives to the evening session given this occurrence.

4. Various graduate department advising– The pre-test assessment at the graduation workshop asked what advising the student received so far during their graduate study at SJSU. Their responses let us know that department advisors offer varying advising to students regarding their educational pathway to graduation. For Fall 2015, 27 students made mention of department advising. Forty-four percent (12 out of 27) of students indicated that they received little or no advising from their department advisor. On the other hand, 55% (15 out of 27) students indicated that they received adequate to good advising from their department advisors. Sixty-five percent of students that attended a Spring 2016 graduation workshop indicated that they mostly receive little or no advising from their department advisor (21 out of 32). While only 35% indicated that they receive adequate to good advising from their department advisor. Students also mentioned peer advising is more common – which means the potential for inaccurate information.

5. Communication as a response to student input from the graduation workshop- Several (10) students that attended the graduation workshops indicated on either their pre or post/test that communication of important deadlines through emails and messages, along with clear and updated information on the website would assist in greater educational success.

   a. Given current assessment results, what (if any) changes will the department consider making for the future?

1. More strategic outreach to underrepresented colleges is needed. We will need to be more strategic to encourage non-Engineering College students to attend the session. One option is to reach out to department graduate advisors for feasible and department-specific ways to solicit students to attend – whether it is during a class, the program evaluator meeting with a cohort, or setting up alternate times based on student’s schedules. We will also revamp our publications and social media this year for greater marketing.

2. More strategic timing of graduation workshops to make sure all students have access to attend and the information is timely and relevant. We will continue to offer graduation workshops prior to the key candidacy filing deadlines (Fall and Spring terms). In addition we will expand our online graduation workshop offering. GAPE is planning to deliver an online graduation workshop for Special Session and/or online students.

3. Offering more graduate advisor resources to ensure students are receiving department advising, as well as resources for students to self-advice (online catalog, website resources) – trainings, invitations to attend the graduation workshop, or perhaps a graduation workshop for graduate advisors.

4. Designing a communication plan for current students and advisors regarding candidacy and graduation application filing deadlines: MySJSU messages, emails to advisors, and use of social media.

5. GAPE will work with ESTIC to design a Steps to Graduation brochure. This brochure will outline the steps to graduate and tips for success. Ideally this would be handed out at orientation and graduation workshops.

VI. 2015-2016 Departmental Highlights (Please submit four highlights – 375 character limit per highlight). For this section, please ensure that at least two of your highlights relate to the Division Learning Goals which are directly connected to the University Learning Goals of Intellectual Skills, Applied Knowledge, and/or Social and Global Responsibilities. If this is not possible, please include general highlights related to this academic year. The full definition of the Division Learning Goals can be found online, but the six overarching goals are listed below:
Division Learning Goals:

- **CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**: Critical thinking skills refer to the ability to independently and accurately evaluate information, data and ideas from multiple perspectives.
- **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**: Effective communication embodies the ability to receive information, exchange ideas, present information, and convey messages in ways that are effective and appropriate to the situation and audience.
- **MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**: Multicultural competence and active citizenship refer to understanding and appreciating human differences as well as positively contributing to the community.
- **PRACTICAL COMPETENCE/LIFE SKILLS**: These skills refer to the capacity to manage one’s affairs both inside and outside the university.
- **LEADERSHIP AND INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE**: These skills refer to the ability to mobilize groups around shared interests as well as demonstrate and sustain meaningful relationships.
- **HEALTHY LIVING**: Healthy living refers to making informed decisions and acting on those decisions to enhance personal and community health.

1. **1a. Division Learning Goal/Undergraduate Learning Goal Connection**: The graduation workshop encouraged increased effective communication with GAPE and department advisors, specifying when appropriate to contact GAPE staff vs. department advisors and how to reach specific staff/faculty to address concerns (Effective Communication).

   **1b. Was this accomplishment a goal from 2015-2016?** Yes

2. **2a. Division Learning Goal/Undergraduate Learning Goal Connection**: The new graduate student orientation and graduation workshop assists international students in navigating policy within a different academic culture (Practical Competence/Life Skills).

   **2b. Was this accomplishment a goal from 2015-2016?** Yes

3. **3a. Division Learning Goal/Undergraduate Learning Goal Connection**: This year we offered varying times and more graduation workshop sessions to accommodate student’s schedules. In addition, we piloted an online session of the graduation workshop for one program (Public Health) this Spring. Starting Fall 2015, GAPE also collaborated with the ESTIC department to expand communication about graduation workshops to social media.

   **3b. Was this accomplishment a goal from 2015-2016?** Yes

4. **4a. Division Learning Goal/Undergraduate Learning Goal Connection**: We increased the amount of feedback from the Enrollment Services text & tell program by more than 300% (15 responses prior year to 67 responses the first few months after the start of the Fall 2015 semester). In addition, we invigorated staff to be more engaged at our front counter and encourage student feedback with each visit to our office. Text & Tell is an Enrollment Services opportunity for students that visit our front counter or email our main graduate@sjsu.edu email to text and let us know how we are doing by completing a 3-question survey and providing open-ended feedback about service. Students who participate have the opportunity to win a $25 Gold Points Card.

   **4b. Was this accomplishment a goal from 2015-2016?** Yes

5. **5a. Division Learning Goal/Undergraduate Learning Goal Connection**: Increased audience participation in our graduation workshop by offering interactive questions and answers during the session to continual maintain attention.

   **5b. Was this accomplishment a goal from 2015-2016?** Yes

**VII. 2016-2017 Department Goals**: Please include minimum of four goals – 375 character limit per goal
1. Maintain, practice, and communicate CSU eligibility requirements for prospective graduate applicants and students.
2. Support new students in ensuring successful enrollment, retention, and graduation.
3. Support students in obtaining knowledge about their program requirements at the department and university level.
4. Increase students’ knowledge of pertinent filing deadlines to ensure timely graduation.
5. Support the efforts of graduate departments in sustaining workable and successful admissions and graduation cycles

VIII. Messages from Students: Please include at least one message – 150 character limit per message. This section should provide testimonials from student participants with your department. Include information about when and how the student provided the message, (e.g. in an interview assessing first year experience, on a satisfaction survey from a particular event, during a focus group, etc.).

1. The post-assessment given at the end of each graduation workshop allowed students the opportunity to provide feedback about the workshop. Overall, most students found the sessions helpful and informative. For Fall 2015, 17 out of 29 students that gave feedback indicated that the workshop was informative for their education journey and that they learned good information about deadlines and policies. One student stated, “Productive session. Really appreciative. Covered most important things to graduate.” For Spring 2016, 42 out of 59 students also commented on the usefulness of the graduation workshops. One student from our Spring 2016 graduation workshop wrote, “Good to have seminars like this. Helps us to know what to do and when to fill the forms (deadlines).” Another wrote, “The workshop was very helpful and I got a clear idea on what I should do for graduating at right time.”

2. Students visiting our front counter or emailing graduate@sjsu.edu mostly (21 out of 27) emphasized the “helpfulness”, “good service” that was provided in a timely manner. Others, however, were concerned about the delay in response or that our office did not completely answer their question. One respondent said, “Your service may become best if you able to reply on the same day. Sometime it goes to 4 to 5 days for getting reply, but I never disappointed from your email service because I again send the same email and get appropriate suggestion from your staff members.” One individual was frustrated with awaiting the arrival of his/her diploma, “No planning and very backward compared to other universities. Waiting for a degree certificate for 2 months without a proper guidance is very disorganized.” For Fall 2015 we sent MySJSU messages to graduates about the process to ensure clear information about timelines.

IX. Did You Know: Please include two information bytes to be included in a “Did You Know” section. These should be short, one sentence blurbs that shed light on the student experience - 150 character limit per byte. This section is intended to highlight something remarkable and/or unknown about the experiences students have or have the chance to engage with your department. For example, do students who participate with your department have higher GPAs/retention/4-year graduation than other students?

1. SJSU has the largest number of graduate students in the CSU system. In 2014-2015 SJSU ranked #1 for hosting the most (3696) International students among Master’s granting institutions (Open Doors Data http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Leading-Institutions-By-Institutional-Type/2014-15). Given this large population, graduate students request more resources in order to succeed. When asked at a graduation workshop what advising resources graduate students have, 41 out of 73 (or 56%) commented little to none. One indicated, “None. So hard to find right resources. Why is Peer Connections only for undergraduate? Most program is for undergraduate only. School should offer extra writing help for international student regardless of undergrad/grad status because 30 mins is not very helpful for especially international student.” Another graduate student remarked, “I have not received much advising. I have only received information at the orientation and on websites. I wish there is a function on MySJSU to display my progress and also remaining requirement/units I need to satisfy.”
2. The amount of graduate applications has been increasing over the past few years, particularly for international students (Overall applications: Fall 2014 – 8499; Fall 2015 – 9050; Fall 2016 - 9424 so far and still accepting applications; Fall 2016 – 14% increase in International applications over last year). In addition, we have seen an increased number of current students who applied for graduation (Fall 2015 – 1191 vs. approximately 750-800 in prior years; Spring 2016 – 1867 vs. approximately 1350-1400 in prior years). Due to this increase, we have streamlined our process in collaboration with department advisors so that we are now conferring more degrees than in past years (91% conferral rate for Spring and Fall 2015 vs. 65-75% conferral rates in the previous years).

3. Approximately 66% of admitted graduate International students ordered Express Mail for Spring 2016. Seventeen percent of admitted International students were transfer-in students and the other seventeen percent elected to receive their I-20 by Regular Mail. Approximately 75% of those that ordered Express Mail enrolled at SJSU for Spring 2016. In addition, approximately 72% of graduate transfer-in students also enrolled. The group with substantially less enrollment is the Regular Mail selection group. Only 18% of students who opted for Regular Mail actually enrolled for Spring 2016. This may be due to a variety of factors - not serious about SJSU in the first place, not able to receive I-20 and get VISA on time, attended another university, etc. Regardless, the Regular Mail group has the lowest yield. Therefore, the type of mailing selection plays a role if an admitted international graduate student enrolls at SJSU.

X. Resource Needs: What support or resources would be helpful to you as you continue your assessment processes? (Responses to this question will guide future practice for professional development and/or support of assessment within the Division.)

1. For graduation workshops, we need a larger base budget for printing the advertisements and offering special brochures like the Steps to Graduation brochure.

2. To support our communication and advising effort to prospective students, applicants, current students, and department graduate advisors, we could use personnel allotted specifically for these functions instead of just production staff.

3. Assessment drop-in questions and answers. We would like to utilize assessment guidance for specific projects.

XI. Campus Partners (Individuals): Please list campus partners (individuals) outside of Student Affairs who should be thanked for contributing to the Division in a SIGNIFICANT way.

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<tr>
<th>Last, First Name</th>
<th>Office/Department</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tsao, Evelyn</td>
<td>International Student Advising</td>
<td>SEVIS Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:evelyn.tsao@sjsu.edu">evelyn.tsao@sjsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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XII. Campus Partners (Offices/Departments): Please list departmental partners outside Student Affairs who should be thanked for contributing to the Division in a SIGNIFICANT way.

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<th>Office/Department/Agency</th>
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<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Student Advising</td>
<td>Leann Cherkasky-Makhni – Interim Director of ISSS</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leann.cherkaskymakhni@sjsu.edu">leann.cherkaskymakhni@sjsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
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XIII. Departmental Student Photos: Please send at least five high resolution photos with students attending events or activities sponsored by your department, utilizing your office space, etc. Photos should not be pasted into this document, but should be emailed to Romando Nash as an additional attachment.

*Departmental reports should not exceed 6 pages. Please be descriptive, but concise.*

*Each department is welcome to include copies of assessment tools as supplementary documents.*

Annual Report submission deadline is June 15, 2016.
Please contact Romando Nash with questions.
Thank you!