

Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management



Pictured with President Elaine P. Maimon and Provost Deborah Bordelon, 34 students attended the first campus wide Para-Professional Training Day. Participating student leaders serve as Residential Assistants, Admission Ambassadors, ROAR Orientation Leaders, Peer Mentors, Dual Degree Program Transition Assistants, and Peer Success Coaches from the Center for Junior Year. The training included workshops covering current topics such as: diversity and inclusion, student success, case studies, campus resources, Title IX training, public speaking, and conflict resolution.

Annual Report

2016–17

INTRODUCTION



Aurélio Manuel Valente, Ed.D.

Vice President for Student Affairs
and Dean of Students

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[@GSUDean](https://twitter.com/GSUDean)

Welcome to our 2016–17 annual report. 2016–17 was a year defined by many accomplishments despite challenges resulting from an ongoing state-wide budget impasse. In our third year as a comprehensive institution, GSU enrolled 5,818 students, a slight decrease of 2% from 2015–16. We welcomed 218 students to our third freshmen class, retained 124 sophomores (53.2%) and maintained full capacity in Prairie Place – 278 students – for the second consecutive year.

Indeed, the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management has made significant progress towards its mission and vision in 2016–17. Among our points of pride, we: authored the institution’s first Strategic Enrollment Plan; implemented a new document imaging platform to expedite admissions workflow; launched an online early alert platform and a new financial aid self-service module; and opened new facilities, including the Meditation and Interfaith Room, Student Health and Counseling Center, and the Student Success Commons.

Programmatically, Student Life has expanded services through the Male Success Initiative with support from our second Kresge Grant; 200 students have participated in our portfolio of structured leadership initiatives, up 22.5% from 2015–16; and Athletics showcased its first student-athlete to qualify for a national championship, competing in the NAIA Women’s Cross Country National Championships.

Beyond these highlights, this report marks progress on year two of our five-year strategic plan, entitled *Reaching Vision 2020*, and provides information about the breadth of programs and services sponsored by our team of dedicated and talented student affairs educators and enrollment management professionals. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or comments about this report, or if you are interested in partnering with Student Affairs in creating or expanding programs and services for the Governors State University community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aurélio M Valente". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Aurélio Manuel Valente
Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

MISSION, VISION, AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student Affairs and Enrollment Management | **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management is to provide a seamless and supportive pathway from prospective student to alumni focused on personal and academic success and ensure that students are career ready and positioned to be leaders and active citizens in the community.

Student Affairs and Enrollment Management | **Vision Statement**

At a transformative time for Governors State University, the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management will be recognized as a vital contributor in creating an inclusive, supportive, and engaged campus community focused on student success.

Student Affairs and Enrollment Management | **Learning Outcomes**

The Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management aspires to deliver an innovative, comprehensive and integrated student life curriculum that promotes self-efficacy and determination, personal and professional success, multicultural competence, leadership development, and civic engagement.

Students who actively participate in Student Affairs programs and services will achieve:

- **Self-Efficacy and Determination** by constructing an understanding of self and a commitment to personal responsibility, integrity, and wellness that guides their decisions and actions.
- **Personal and Professional Success** by learning and applying knowledge and transferable skills to achieve personal aspirations and professional and career growth.
- **Multicultural Competence** by thriving within diverse perspectives, experiences, and environments, and building their capacity for being an advocate for equity and social justice.
- **Leadership and Civic Engagement** by deploying their knowledge and talents to improve their communities, both as individuals and by mobilizing others towards positive sustainable change.

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REACHING VISION ²⁰/₂₀

Contributing to the GSU Strategic Plan

Our *Reaching Vision 2020* plan demonstrates how the division contributes directly to GSU's Strategic Plan while also articulating the unique strategic opportunities within the division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. Articulating that contribution through our *Reaching Vision 2020* strategic planning process, particularly in the midst of such challenging times in higher education, is critical to ensuring we serve our students and our community by fulfilling our mission.

2016–17 marks year two of our five-year strategic plan. While this annual report highlights some notable accomplishments, a full dashboard of progress towards focus area goals can be reviewed at: www.govst.edu/reachingvision2020/.

Selected highlights towards our Strategic Planning objectives

Athletics and Recreational Activities: GSU student-athletes finished the 2016–17 school year with a cumulative grade-point average of 3.01. A total of 36 student-athletes qualified for the GSU Athletics Honor Roll during the 2016 Fall Term, compiling GPAs above 3.00. For the 2017 Spring Term, 34 student-athletes were honored. GSU student-athletes also accumulated 17 terms of perfect 4.0 work.

Career Development and Graduate Student

Programming: Career Services launched a career preparation and liberal education program, supported by a \$100,000 grant from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous. This program has allowed us to increase our number of on-campus student employment experiences by ten, including a summer internship program for students in the arts, humanities, and social science areas. Additionally, we have added a series of workshops for all student employees that focus on strength development, identifying and maximizing transitional skills, and overall professional development.

Dual Degree and Transfer Student Programs: Over 90% of the DDP students who have completed their Associate Degree and enrolled at GSU have graduated, transferred, or are still enrolled and pursuing their degrees.

First and Second Year Programs: Through focused efforts of both Cohort Advisors and the Student Success Teams, first-year students who were admitted to both Smart Start Math and English achieved good academic standing in both fall and spring semesters. Moreover, the fall GPA of at-risk first-year students rose 18.6% from the 2015–16 academic year.

Student Success: We fully implemented Starfish, an online communication and early alert system that connects students with faculty, advisors, and resources by scheduling appointments and raising flags to address their needs. In its initial year, 2,180 flags were raised in the system in addition to 1,532 midterm alert flags. Of the 218 first-year students in the system, 199 (92%) received some form of contact through Starfish (including flags, kudos, to-do lists, appointments, or referrals), or “raised their hand” for assistance.

ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

The **Academic Resource Center (ARC)** strives to promote the personal growth of students and to enrich their academic experience. The ARC provides support for students in academic recovery, GSU STAR assistance for Starfish users, Access Services for Students with Disabilities, tutoring, and Writing Center services.

The ARC continues to grow with the implementation of new programs and early alert initiatives aligned with the Reaching Vision 2020 Goals. These new initiatives have sparked growth in services and student utilization in the Writing Center and ARC tutoring services.

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Department Highlights:

- The ARC continues to see success in submission of midterm grades. In Fall 2016, 2400 students received midterm grades with a total of 4,351 grades submitted, a 28.9% increase in grade submission compared to Fall 2015. In Spring 2017, 2,240 received midterm grades with a total of 3,702 grades submitted, resulting in a 15% increase in grade submission compared to Spring 2016. Intervention efforts following midterm grades proved equally successful with 42% of students earning a “D” or “F” midterm grade received a final grade of “C” or better.
- Two programs, Lower Division Academic Recovery Program (LDARP) and the Back on Track Program (BOT) continue to assist students in academic recovery. On average the BOT program has an 89% completion rate for Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. During Fall 2016, 5/16 (31%) and in Spring 2017, 27/52 (52%) of lower division students placed on academic probation participated in the Lower Division Academic Recovery Program. As a result, 11/52 (21%) of LDARP students returned to “Good Standing” and 27/52 (52%) of LDARP students persisted to “Academic Probation Extended” with the majority of students increasing their cumulative GPA.



Tutoring is available in the Academic Resource Center, where student success is their number one priority!

- The Writing Center recorded 2,385 student contacts with 989 face-to-face appointments, 756 Growl contacts, 120 Library Contacts. Writing consultants served 142 students through workshops and 18 walkin requests. The Writing Center provided sophomore tutors in the Library, Prairie Place writing assistance with weeknight and weekend hours, and seminars.
- A total of 187 students participated in ARC tutoring with a total of 841 contacts in math, science, statistics, and business. As part of ARC’s Vision 2020 Goals, Supplemental Instruction (SI) extended services to support both lower and upper division students. The ARC provided SI assistance in ten Math, Science, and Statistic courses. During the 2016-2017 academic year, the ARC supported 573 SI visits.
- On September 19, 2016 the Starfish Implementation Team launched GSU STAR, an online communication and early alert system. GSU STAR allows students to connect with faculty, advisors, and resources by scheduling appointments and raising flags to address their needs. Faculty and staff utilized the system to monitor students’ progress and address student concerns. During AY 16-17, 2,180 flags were raised in the system and 1,028 flags were cleared. 1,532 midterm alert flags were raised and 745 of those flags were cleared. In addition, 322 kudos were sent to students to give recognition for their achievements and good work.

ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITING

The Office of Admissions offers assistance to prospective students and applicants during the selection and admission process. The office provides admission counseling appointments, campus tours, group presentations, and a number of recruitment events to showcase our university to students and their families. Our team works with various departments throughout the university to provide the best experience possible to future Jaguars.

In addition to outreach and recruiting, a team of admission representatives work hard to provide timely admission decisions to applicants and an admission processing team manages the intake of all application materials, document scanning, and evaluation of admission applications. During the 2016-17 academic year, the Admission Processing Team entered 6,444 new applications into the Colleague system, and issued 2,548 admission decisions (both admitted and denied), representing a 40% admission application completion rate.

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Web: www.govst.edu/admissions

Department Highlights:

- We are excited to have implemented our new document imaging system this year! As a result of our external review in January 2016, which suggested that we streamline our admissions process and integrate our software systems, Lexmark was installed to replace our Singularity system. Lexmark integrates with both CRM Recruit and the Colleague ERP system, and allows the admissions team to digitize files sooner in the application process. The Lexmark system also provides a more automated process for the entry of transfer credit for undergraduate students. The Lexmark system reduces the time needed to process an admission application and render an admission decision to our students.



Participants at the Signing Day and Scholars Recognition for the White House Reach Higher campaign.

- Along with the Lexmark implementation, we were also able to create a workflow that automates the Colleague process to move completed files from applied to complete without manual intervention, and move files to review sooner.
- Admissions hosted our 2nd Signing Day and Scholars Recognition event on May 1. Nearly 90 new students and their family members celebrated their decision to attend GSU in the Fall 2017 Semester. Presidential Scholarship recipients were recognized as well.
- Transfer Thursdays continue to be successful GSU admission program. This year we had 347 students register to attend a Transfer Thursday event. Of the 347, 192 attended and 152 students (43% yield) were approved for admission (a 5% increase from 2015-16).
- Campus visits and tours continued to leave a positive impression on our prospective students and their families; 43 high school and college group visits (a decrease of 1.4% from 2015-16) for a total of 1382 prospective students visiting our campus and touring the university with the Office of Admissions (a 9% increase from 2015-16).
- The Recruiting and Outreach team continues to grow our prospects by representing GSU in the High Schools and Community Colleges of Illinois and Indiana. This year we generated 6,344 prospects through all of our outreach efforts, from which 3,422 submitted an application (54%).

ATHLETICS AND RECREATION

The Department of Athletics and Recreation

encompasses seven varsity athletic programs (men's and women's basketball, men's and women's golf, men's and women's cross country, and women's volleyball) as well as clubs for bowling, cricket, table tennis, and softball. The Athletic and Recreation Center is open to students, faculty, staff, and community members, and its facilities include an Olympic style pool, racquetball court, fitness room, and gymnasium, offering the tools necessary to reach total body wellness goals. In addition, the atrium game room includes an X-Box station, billiards table, table tennis, and foosball table in addition to plenty of lounge space to relax. The Center's support team is committed to improving the quality of life and fitness for all participants.

In addition to students visits, 542 alumni and community members also utilized our facilities, for a total of 42,498 visits to the Athletics and Recreation Center during the 2016–17 academic year.

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Departmental Highlights:

- Of the 42,498 visits to the Athletics and Recreation Center, 24,025 (45%) were to the fitness room, 17,716 (33%) were to the swimming pool, 10,127 (19%) were to the gymnasium, , and 2,054 (3%) were to the racquetball court. Additionally, the game lounge logged 1,034 visits, and 454 students participated in fitness classes.
- \$65,400 of revenue was generate during the 2016–17 academic year from membership fees and rentals of the Athletics and Recreation Center facilities. \$2,690 of revenue was generated during the 2016–17 academic year from athletic events.

Athletics Year-in-Review:

- Stephanie Clarkson became the first GSU student-athlete to qualify for a national championship, taking part in the NAIA Women's Cross Country National



Women's golf finished with the highest GPA among GSU's seven sport teams.

Championships. She also became the school's first All-CCAC selection.

- Freshman Amber Brooks led the country in offensive rebounding, recording 13 double-doubles.
- Men's basketball defeated fifth-ranked St. Francis by 18 points, and recorded a 139-132 victory over Asbury in the highest scoring game in the NAIA.
- Men's golf registered their first victory in program history.
- Women's volleyball recorded the most regular season wins (12) of any GSU athletic team.
- Women's golf was recognized with an Academic National Championship by the Golf Coaches Association of America (GCAA).
- The men's and women's cross country teams scored in all six regular season meets.
- Six student-athletes earned NAIA-Daktronics Scholar-Athlete honors.
- GSU student-athletes finished the 2016–17 school year with a cumulative grade-point average of 3.01. A total of 36 student-athletes qualified for the GSU Athletics Honor Roll during the 2016 Fall Term, compiling GPAs above 3.00. For the 2017 Spring Term, 34 student-athletes were honored. GSU student-athletes also accumulated 17 terms of perfect 4.0 work.

AUXILIARY SERVICES & UNIVERSITY HOUSING

Auxiliary Services & University Housing (ASUH)

provides support and high quality services to the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests of the Governors State University community.

Our primary goal is to support the educational mission of the university and enhance the quality of the student experience. We strive to provide superior services for the best interests of students and the broader university community. ASUH is responsible for the programs and services associated with University Housing, the GSU Bookstore, Campus Dining, Catering & Vending, and myONECARD.

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Web: www.govst.edu/housing

www.govst.edu/dining

www.govst.edu/bookstore

www.govst.edu/myONECARD

Departmental Highlights:

University Housing:

- A Quality of Life survey was administered to the students living in Prairie Place in the 2017 spring semester. Fifty-six students (21.62%) responded to the survey. This survey provided us with an opportunity to evaluate satisfaction data trends comparing 2015–16 to 2016–17. On the 48 specific questions, thirty showed an increase in aggregate satisfaction; 15 showed a slight decrease in satisfaction and 3 were at a satisfaction level consistent with 2015–16 survey results. The survey data will be used to inform the development of Strategic Goals & Objectives for 2017–18.
- Seven Prairie Place Hall Council Executive Board members and advisors attended the Illinois Residence Hall Association (IRHA) conference at Eastern Illinois University in February. IRHA is the statewide organization composed of different Residence Hall Associations (RHA) and National Residence Hall Honorary Chapters (NRHH) from Illinois. Throughout the year, each university affiliated with IRHA sends representatives, known



Prairie Place Hall Council Executive Board members.

as conference coordinators, to business meetings, retreats, and the annual conference.

Auxiliary Services:

- Arena Food Services, Inc. implemented an action plan in 2016–17 that was based on feedback received from a satisfaction survey sent to faculty, staff, and students in the spring 2016 semester. The action plan resulted in an increase in customer satisfaction on 22 of 23 satisfaction points in the café and on all 11 satisfaction points in the c-store.
- The Make the \$0.25 Difference Campaign implemented in the café in July 2016 generated \$689.50 for the GSU Food Pantry through April 30, 2017. Arena Food Services is also providing the GSU Food Pantry with fresh fruits and vegetables at wholesale cost from their vendor for the Operation Healthy program whereby fresh fruit and vegetables are distributed to persons in need on a monthly basis.
- FA Link participation continued to grow in 2016–17. Over \$720,524 of financial aid monies was used in the GSU Bookstore in 2016–17. This is an increase of \$99,409.74 (16%) over the same time period in 2015–16. A significant portion of the increase can be attributed to the university's decision to permit students to use their financial aid monies to purchase computers in the Bookstore. Eighty-six computers with an average transaction cost of \$504.24 were purchased by students in 2016–17.
- In the 2016–17 academic year, 2,233 myONECARDS were issued. Revenue that passed through the myONECARD program totaled \$143,059.99. In addition, more than \$244,000 in meal plan monies was loaded onto student's myONECARDS in 2016–17.

CAREER SERVICES

The **Office of Career Services** provides a wide range of services available to both currently enrolled students and alumni. Services include individual career counseling sessions, assistance with resume and cover letter preparation, job and internship search strategies, interviewing skills, career exploration, and much more. In addition, Career Services coordinates job search skills workshops, customized workshops, and career and internship fairs. In total, Career Services served 1,276 individual client visits, which included individual counseling sessions, open hour visits, and walk-ins. Career Services also sponsored and/or participated in 107 programs and events at which 2,315 students, faculty, staff, corporate partners, and community members attended.

Contact Information:

Campus Location: Student Success Commons B1215

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Web: www.govst.edu/careerservices

Departmental Highlights:

- Individual counseling sessions constitute a significant portion of the personal outreach by the career counseling staff. In total, 669 individual clients were served in private counseling sessions. Of the 669 clients; 579 (87%) were students, 49 (7%) were alumni members, 27 (4%) were members of the community, and 14 (2%) were employers.
- Career, Internship, and Networking Fairs are the most visible programmatic efforts sponsored by Career Services. They served 758 job seekers and hosted 102 employers during the 2016–17 academic year. In total, three fairs were sponsored; the Student Employment Fair, the Health and Human Services Career and Internship Fair, and the Spring Career and Internship Fair.



“I was very lucky to be able to apply at the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness through the Career Preparation Grant. I was even luckier to receive a job offer. Accepting this job offer has been one of the best decisions I have made in my academic career. My responsibilities differ day-to-day depending on what sort of project my office is doing at the moment, but being able to help contribute valuable data to the university is very exciting. One of my projects has been developing social media and infographics for my office to help increase student engagement in important projects like surveys of focus groups that is helping me learn skills for my future career in advertising. I am also learning very important skills such as networking, communication, and teamwork, and since I started working on campus, I have noticed an increase in my GPA and time management ability. I am very grateful to have had this opportunity and am looking forward to returning to the program next year.”

– Isabella Hollingsworth: Career Preparation Grant Student Employee

- New in 2016, Career Services launched the integrating career preparation and liberal education grant. This program has allowed us to increase of number of on-campus student employment experiences by ten, including a summer internship program for students in the arts, humanities, and social science areas. Additionally, we have added a series of workshops for all student employees that focused on strength development, identifying and maximizing transitional skills, and overall professional development.

COUNSELING CENTER

The **Counseling Center** provides individual, group, and couples counseling services for GSU students. The mental health needs of the GSU community are also met through outreach programming for students, faculty, and staff on a variety of mental health issues.

Contact Information:

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Web: www.govst.edu/counselingcenter

Departmental Highlights:

- The Student Counseling Center relocated to a redesigned space (A1120) at the end of January 2017 in order to collaborate with the university's anticipated first health services operation.
- The GSU Student Counseling Center provides individual, group, and couples counseling for all GSU students. The mental health educational needs of the GSU community are also met through outreach event programs that may be requested by students, faculty, and/or staff on a variety of mental health issues.
- During the 2016–17 year, there were 1,990 student appointments. Twenty-three outreach events were also held, with approximately 520 students in attendance. The annual National Depression Screening day held in October yielded 85 in-person screenings; the total number of online screenings for 2016–17 were 332.

Student Disability Services:

For 2016–17, Access Services for Students with Disabilities had a total of 1,612 visits, 962 student contacts, 326 for testing accommodations, and 460 faculty collaborations and consultations.



Title IX Update:

The Advocating for Sexual Assault Prevention (ASAP) Team met throughout the 2016–17 year, planning and sponsoring various outreach events and working with the YWCA to train students on prevention work. In August 2016, more than 45 student leaders (Student Senators, Peer Mentors, Resident Assistants, Graduate Assistants, and Tutoring Assistants) were trained by the YWCA on the appropriate course of action if a student self-disclosed regarding sexual violence. The outreach ranged from displaying various prevention logos, survivor t-shirts, posters, etc. in the B-wing glass display case (twice) to three educational events in Prairie Place, two during the Fall 2016 semester and one in the Spring. The Fifth Annual Clothesline Project occurred on April 27, 2017 in the Hall of Governors. Over 100 survivor t-shirts were on display and YWCA staff were present to help GSU students create a t-shirt. It is estimated that more than 500 students and staff were exposed to some type of sexual violence prevention material over the course of the 2016–17 academic year. For more information, visit www.govst.edu/asap.

DIVERSITY EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Diversity Education and Leadership Development

includes Intercultural Student Affairs (ISA), which plays a critical role in helping to create an inclusive and welcoming campus community for all. Intercultural Student Affairs goals include: 1) develop campus-wide diversity awareness programs and social justice education efforts; 2) aid in the retention of underserved student populations; and 3) serve as a resource to culturally diverse student organizations.

We offer learning opportunities that promote an environment that supports understanding and respect to aid in the holistic development of students. ISA is currently laying the foundation for programmatic thrusts to strengthen and expand intercultural learning and student enrichment efforts.

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Department Highlights:

- Co-sponsored over 37 cultural awareness programs with student organizations and campus departments that yielded over 5,210 participants in total.
- Hosted the Inclusive Leadership Conference, SHERO Women's Leadership Symposium, and Men's Leadership Summit that yielded over 100 participants.
- Hosted MLK Celebration and Day of Service in collaboration with University Park Library and Southland Ministerial Alliance that yielded 217 participants.
- Expanded interfaith programming efforts by hosting Campus Interfaith Prayer and opening of new Interfaith Prayer and Meditation Room.
- Coordinated Respond to Violence and Resource Fair in collaboration with Digital Learning and Media Design which yielded 85 participants.



On April 27, at the Student Leadership Awards, MSI Coordinator Sean Smith recognized almost 30 males of color who were actively engaged in the MSI during the spring 2017 term. Many of the student participants were first-year students, and four had completed the Emerging Leaders Program earlier in the term.

- Hosted inaugural Brotherhood Retreat that yielded 20 participants. MSI served as a co-sponsor of the Bees for Jays Spelling Bee to increase literacy and reading comprehension for middle school male students of color. Hosted 12 workshops and 27 MSI participants.
- Launched Be the Change as part of the Social Justice Educators Program, producing 17 student leaders.
- Recognized with Preceptor Award from College of Health and Human Services for Internship Program developed for Community Health students in Student Life.
- As part of Campus Inclusion Team, developed Listening Wall.
- Hosted three Safe Zone trainings in collaboration with Gender and Sexuality Studies Department that resulted in more than 65 faculty and staff being certified.

DUAL DEGREE PROGRAM

The **Dual Degree Program (DDP)** is a unique partnership between GSU and 17 Chicagoland community colleges that provides full-time students who have earned between 12-45 college-level credit hours with an excellent pathway to earn quality, accessible, and affordable associate and bachelor's degrees. In addition, DDP provides transition services and programs to DDP students who choose to attend GSU. Community college students have nothing to lose and everything to gain by enrolling in this free program. In total, 380 students were newly enrolled in DDP this year. To date, 522 students have transferred to GSU through DDP. During 2016–17, a record number 88 DDP transfer students graduated from GSU.

Contact Information

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Web: www.govst.edu/ddp

Department Highlights:

- More than 90% of the DDP students who have completed their associate degree and enrolled at GSU have graduated, transferred, or are still enrolled and pursuing their degrees.
- The Fall 2016 semester welcomed a total of 85 new GSU transfers – DDP's largest GSU transfer cohort thus far!
- DDP students enrolled at GSU have an average GPA of 3.4. GSU Promise Scholarship recipients have an average GPA of 3.5. DDP Honors Scholarship recipients continue to have an average GPA of 3.9.
- Between August 2016 and June 2017, the DDP Student Transition Assistants coordinated eight monthly community service projects. A total of 124 DDP student volunteers worked over 475 hours. Service projects ranged from packaging and distributing holiday food baskets to assisting with a 5K fundraising event benefiting Down Syndrome awareness.



DDP Fall 2016 Induction Ceremony

- In collaboration with GSU's Department of Digital Learning and Media Design and Marketing & Communications, the DDP staff and Student Transition Assistants filmed three transfer vignettes, a "Welcome to DDP" montage, and seven individual student interviews for use on the DDP website and Online Induction module. The vignettes highlight three important steps in a student's transfer journey, the montage lists important reminders for maintaining eligibility in DDP, and the individual student interviews focus on the STA's experiences and successes while participating in the program.
- In February, the DDP staff presented on "Strategies for a Successful 2 to 4 Year Transition Program" at the 2017 Great Lakes Regional Student Success Conference in Detroit, MI. The presentation was a great success with approximately 25 attendees, garnering several inquiries from attendees for additional information and insight about the program.
- In partnership with Prairie State College (PSC) and the Male Success Initiative (MSI) committee, DDP awarded its first recipient with the PSC DDP-MSI scholarship!

FINANCIAL AID AND REGISTRAR

The **Office of Financial Aid** is tasked with processing and awarding federal, state, and institutional aid to students based on eligibility. Further, it exists to assist students, faculty, staff, and prospective stakeholders in the understanding and management of financial aid awards and processes.

In the 2016–17 academic year, the Office of Financial Aid processed nearly 6,000 student files and transmitted more than \$52 million in funds from federal, state, institutional, and external sources. Below are the total amounts (fall and spring) for a few of the types of aid received by students to assist with college expenses.

2016 – 17

	Amount
Federal Pell Grant	\$7,738,340
Federal SEOG	\$170,717
Federal Direct & PLUS Loans	\$41,150,538
Federal Perkins Loans	\$241,378
Federal TEACH Grant	\$9,786
State of IL MAP Grant	\$3,139,062
Ch33, MIA/POW, IVG, & ING	\$1,276,033
Institutional & Foundation Aid	\$1,960,942
External Scholarships/Sponsorships	\$165,400
Alternative Loans	\$558,073
	\$52,040,028

Contact Information:

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Department Highlights:

- Implemented new financial aid self-service module located in the GSU portal. This allows students to see where they are in the financial aid process and what they need to do in order to receive financial aid.
- Continue to provide students with fast, reliable information so they can make important financial decisions about attending GSU.



The mission of the **Office of the Registrar** is to provide exceptional student-centered service, delivered with integrity and care, to make life easier for the GSU community.

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Web: www.govst.edu/registrar

Department Highlights:

- Supported Document Imaging (Lexmark) Implementation and worked with consultants in the design and creation of workflows and processes. The new system launched in April 2017.
- In December 2016, we worked with Information Technology Services to release the Self-Service graduation application. Some of the benefits realized include:
 - ▶ A more intuitive interface for students
 - ▶ Students could indicate if they were going to walk at the May Commencement ceremony
 - ▶ Students could update the diploma mailing address
- Built degree audits for graduate programs and certificates and began the initial review of the audits with key stakeholders in several programs.

NEW STUDENT PROGRAMS

The **Office of New Student Programs and Cohort Advising (NSP)** provides academic preparation and support for lower division students from the point of enrollment until they transition to their chosen majors. Services provided to lower division students include academic advising, leadership development, major selection and academic pathway development. Campus-wide orientations for all incoming students (first-year, transfer, and graduate) are also coordinated by New Student Programs.

Contact Information:

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Web: www.govst.edu/fye

Department Highlights:

- With the support of their Cohort Advisors and the work of the Student Success Teams, first-year students who were admitted to both Smart Start Math and English achieved an overall average GPA of over 2.0 in both fall and spring semesters. Moreover, the fall to spring persistence of first-year students rose 6% from the 2015–16 academic year.
- In collaboration with the entire GSU community, NSP coordinated six ROAR New Student Orientations for incoming first-year students and their families between July 2016 and June 2017. This included the first ever spring ROAR in January 2017. During these orientations, a total of 210 first-year students and 102 guests were welcomed to Jaguar Nation. Newly added orientation offerings included private meetings with financial aid advisors and staff, break-out financial aid/student accounts sessions in computer labs specifically for students then for families, and the ALEKS math placement assessment.
- In collaboration with the entire GSU community, NSP coordinated four orientations for incoming transfer and graduate students between July 2016 and June 2017. During these orientations, a total of 350 transfer students and 166 graduate students learned about campus resources and tips for success. Newly added targeted sessions were offered, including a Transfer Student Panel and Writing for Graduate Research Papers. Also, orientation attendees were invited to program/major informational and networking sessions according to their academic college.
- After a national search, two NODA (Association for Orientation, Transition, and Retention in Higher Education) interns were selected to enhance the orientation programs for summer 2017. Their main projects included revamping the ROAR Leader training as well as creating an extended orientation series that will be implemented fall 2017.
- The third annual Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) immersed 13 lower division students in various activities that illustrated the different styles of leadership. Over the six-week program in spring 2017, these students strived to answer the question, “What type of leader do I want to be?” and created a leadership development plan for their years at GSU. Seventy-one percent of ELP evaluation respondents indicated that they would be more involved in leadership opportunities on campus after this experience.
- In an effort to improve the new student experience for both first-year and transfer students, the sixth iteration of the “Six Week Survey” was distributed. This survey was sent to all first-year and transfer students who were admitted in fall 2016. Highlights of the results included:
 - ▶ 100% of first-year student respondents indicated that their Cohort Advisor was helpful, 79% indicated that GSU was “the right choice” for them, and 89% were satisfied with their class schedule.
 - ▶ 96% of transfer student respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the level of instruction at GSU and 99% indicated that they would refer GSU to family/friends.
- The second annual Jaguar Jump program was expanded to a week-long series of programming for sophomores as they transitioned (“jumped”) from General Studies to selecting majors in their chosen academic colleges. Program topics ranged from exploring their passions to the benefits of selecting a minor. Jaguar Jump attracted 166 students throughout the week. The week culminated with a program/major fair and an exclusive dinner for sophomores.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The **Office of Student Life Center** develops initiatives to engage GSU students in meaningful co-curricular opportunities to promote retention and persistence toward graduation. This is achieved through intentional collaboration with academic affairs to create experiential learning opportunities that provides applied practical experience to enhance academic learning. Student Life is dedicated to preparing students to become responsible advocates and engaged citizens.

257 students were inducted into Tau Sigma National Honor Society – GSU is the largest chapter of the national honor society. Student Life sponsored 157 programs and events with a total attendance of 17,021 students, faculty, staff and community members. Student Life provided service to 27,293 students, faculty, staff, and community members. 79 active clubs and organizations and 8 new clubs were added to the roster this academic year. Clubs and organizations sponsored 194 campus events with attendance of 5,881 students, faculty, staff, and community members. 115 student leaders were nominated for awards presented at the annual Student Leadership Awards Ceremony. Student Senate registered 243 new voters in the GSU Rocks the Vote Campaign. The Phoenix Student Newspaper increased publication by 50%. 94% of students who participated in Alternative Spring Break indicated that they are more likely to participate in future service projects.

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Departmental Highlights:

- The implementation of Jaguar Connection has enhanced engagement with clubs and organizations and departmental groups across the University. Subsequently, 96% of club and organizations users reported satisfaction in being able to easily access club information.



Student Presidents representing Black Student Union, Community Service Council, ICO, Prairie Place Hall Council, Tau Sigma Honor Society, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and Generating Hope share a few moments together as nominees for the Elaine P. Maimon Award at the Student Leadership Award Ceremony.

- The CEO Leadership Program enrolled 86% of the clubs and organizations' executive board members. In addition, Student Life offers pathways for students to connect and develop their leadership skills through participation in the program council, community service council, student senate, and internships.
- Notable student leader accomplishments in FY17: Ameenah Rashid received the Dr. Elaine P. Maimon award for outstanding "President of an Organization"; Generating Hope was honored as the club of the year; the Student Affiliates of the School of Psychology received new club honors; and Briana Albert was awarded the "Civic Engagement Fellow". In addition, Samantha Allen was awarded the Lincoln Academy Lincoln Laureate award for 2017.
- The Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CECSC) serves as a clearinghouse for students, faculty, and staff to create awareness and understanding of global issues and civic responsibility and creates a pathway for students' participation in community service. CECSC manages and maintains the GSU Food Pantry and assists GSU students with food insecurities through programs such as "Operation Healthy." Operation Healthy serviced more than 340 students. CECSC also collaborated with Chicago Survivors to certify students in Mental Health First Aid Training. GSU students facilitated 5,246 hours of community service, valued at \$126,638.

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