

The Office of
The University Registrar

Strategic Goals & Objectives

2006 – 2016



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Introduction

The Office of the University Registrar [OUR] is one of many within the Office of Academic Affairs at the University of Alabama [UA]. The five offices most closely aligned include Undergraduate Admissions & Scholarships, Student Financial Aid, Technology Support Services, Enrollment Services & Testing, and the University Registrar. These five offices collaborate to provide a continuum of services to UA students and support services to the campus community.

The Office of the University Registrar [OUR] is an office that consistently works behind the scenes to provide student record information (degree audit, transcripts, etc.), enrollment and degree verification, up-to-date catalog and timetable information (including classroom scheduling), and enrollment services (including web enrollment, the assessment of tuition and fees, and determination of residency for tuition purposes) for the University. The OUR also ensures continuing academic eligibility for UA student athletes. OUR ensures student privacy in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and ensures that electronic access to record information is secure and efficient.

The OUR plays a critical role in facilitating the attainment of campus strategic goals and initiatives by providing some of the academic and administrative infrastructure necessary for continued service to students and the campus community. In concert with the goals of the University, the work of the OUR emphasizes collaborative efforts, integrated services, efficient communication processes, and student success.

The OUR faces many challenges related to budget, technology, and resources. The OUR has seen no increase in its base budget for a number of years, while realizing that the technology improvements and initiatives it takes on to better serve the campus community often require more highly skilled resources and additional time. The OUR will also be facing the retirements of several long-term employees/managers, the continued clean-up of a major student information system conversion [Banner]; the future

succession of Banner software upgrades; the implementation of academic and event scheduling software; a version upgrade of degree audit, and, a new systems implementation of a web-based academic advising, degree audit, and transfer articulation tool. Concurrently, the higher education marketplace is also evolving as prospective students “shop around for the best deal.” Despite these challenges, the OUR will continue to provide excellent service to its stakeholders, and continue to initiate new efforts to improve that service.

The OUR Mission

In support of the University mission, OUR is to help students enroll and then succeed by providing world-class customer service to faculty, staff, students, their families, and the public; with a particular emphasis toward processes related to academic records, academic progress, enrollment data, classroom support, and academic certification. OUR accomplishes this mission by striving toward excellence in everything it does, challenging itself to be as efficient and effective as possible in work, seeking out new and better ways of doing business for both the internal and external customers it serves, and by creating an environment in the office and on campus which encourages growth, supports academics, respects people and diversity, promotes communication and participation, and cultivates a performance culture.

The OUR Core Functions

The OUR’s core functions are to serve as the University's central service and academic support unit to:

- Collect and record student and instructional academic program information, including conducting and managing processes ranging from registration, to degree audit, to commencement, to residency reclassification.
- Coordinate and produce official enrollment and academic certification from academic records.
- Provide data services to collect, process, and provide access to information in support of academic advising, instruction, and institutional decision-making.
- Provide support for determining academic eligibility and academic progress.
- Plan and execute all activities related to each of three annual commencements.
- Officially respond to requests for information about students and programs, and serve as the official manager for access to and release of student academic and educational information.
- Coordinate the use of campus space which can be shared by multiple units.
- Facilitate optimum utilization of the instructional opportunities available to students.
- Provide appropriate service support to the areas within the Office of Academic Affairs.

The OUR Vision

The OUR's vision is to enhance the academic experience by building a respected, world-class customer service centered team. The office's constituents include the entire University of Alabama community – the students, the faculty, college & department offices, the administration, the alumni, and the Office of Academic Affairs.

The OUR Goals

As the OUR looks to the future, it recognizes its critical role in growing a strong future for University of Alabama. The OUR will continue to strive to provide superior customer service, to take advantage of emerging technologies when appropriate, and to be a leader in the campus community for performance excellence.

The OUR will collaborate with its five fellow Academic Affairs units to provide a seamless continuum of service for students. At the same time, the OUR will work to define its exact role within Academic Affairs. To this end, the Office of the University Registrar's six overarching goals are:

- Satisfy customer needs.
- Enable office personnel to excel.
- Import technology.
- Import continuous process improvement.
- Optimize use of available resources.
- Operate/sustain a quality workspace environment.

The OUR Organizational Values

In order to accomplish these goals the OUR must be:

- Purposeful – committed, in partnership with its constituents, to the educational mission.
- Open – committed to free expression with civility.
- Just – committed to equality of opportunity.
- Disciplined – committed to a shared outcome achieved through shared support.
- Caring – committed to the value of the individual.
- Celebrative – committed to the affirmation of traditions and rituals, old and new.

Simultaneously, the OUR's individual team member's core values must include:

- Integrity – doing what's right even when no one is looking.
- Service – uncommon dedication to our customers.
- Excellence – excellence in all that we do.
- Self-Discipline – knowing what needs to be done and doing it - in a timely manner.

- Accountability – taking full credit for one’s successes, but full blame for one’s failures.
- Teamwork – enthusiastically participating – realizing the necessity.

Ultimately, both sets of values must be joined by flexibility and adaptability.

The OUR Operating Philosophy

As the OUR looks to the future, it must recognize its critical role in growing a strong future for the University of Alabama. It must provide service and service improvements to campus administrative staff and faculty and advisors, and collaborate with them in future planning. It must continue to strive to provide superior customer service, to take advantage of emerging technologies when appropriate, and to be a leader in the campus community for performance excellence.

The OUR has seen a shift in how it performs its work over the past couple years. While the office continues to provide the traditional services, it also is attempting to take a proactive approach to technology, resources, and continuous improvement.

The office is developing an operating philosophy that helps guide its planning, choices, and actions. This philosophy focuses on the following:

- Supporting its employees and providing a structure for change management.
- Identifying and responding to customer and stakeholder requirements.
- Implementing improvements and efficiencies, within OUR, in the context of the Office of Academic Affairs, and in the services it provides students and the campus community.
- Aligning our goals with its core competencies.
- Planning and measuring what it does by developing metrics/benchmarks.
- Establishing a methodology for process improvement.
- Building partnerships and appreciation for all.
- Collaborating with the Office of Information Technology and being a leader in campus community for new collaborations.
- Facilitating easier access to information by taking advantage of the *myBama* portal, the data warehouse, and the Banner functionality.
- Being fiscally responsible by continually improving what it does to gain efficiency.
- Developing collaborative relationships and partnerships with Office of Academic Affairs units and working in concert to achieve a common set of goal and objectives.

The OUR Strategic/Tactical Planning

The strategic planning information that follows provides an outline of the OUR efforts to chart its path in response to the current and future needs of the campus community.

Office of the University Registrar (OUR) Strategic Goals & Objectives

Goal One

Satisfy Customer Needs

Objective

Understand through sustained interactions, OUR customers and their requirements

Supporting Strategy

Satisfy (or exceed) external customer needs

Supporting Objective

Identify external customers

Supporting Objective

Build strong working relationships

1. Understand the customer

- Identify customers' mission, goals, and needs
- Participate in staff/key meetings
- Develop a series of recurring "cross-talk" meetings among various constituents, students, faculty, and special interest groups, i.e. departmental schedulers, etc.

2. Promote OUR

- Develop "cross-talk" sessions with college offices/departments explaining OUR services and style of operations
 - Seek feedback regarding their issues
 - Explain OUR technology based services
- Build on favorable OUR feedback
- Evaluate/update the OUR homepage
- Periodically disseminate e-mails, announcements explaining OUR tools and method of operation

3. Provide value-added services to OUR constituents

- Disseminate information in a timely fashion
- Answer questions quickly
- Keep constituents informed through listserv, e-mail, announcements, personal visits, and recurring, regularly scheduled meetings

Supporting Objective

Revalidate services

1. Get meaningful customer feedback

Supporting Objective

Forecast future needs of OUR

1. Forecast needs and services
2. Assess OUR suitability to meet future needs
3. Identify/resolve disconnects between (i) and (ii) above – “Fit-Gap Analysis.”
4. Include constituents in planning

Supporting Objective

Develop internal actions to support external constituents

1. Clarify roles and responsibilities within OUR
2. Document internal processes/services
3. Refine workflow measurement for processes/services
4. Affect a “lessons learned/best practice” sharing program

Supporting Objective

Develop internal audit program

Goal Two

Enable Office Personnel to Excel

Objective

Create, implement, and communicate an internal promotion/work related development program

Objective

Invest in OUR staff by providing necessary education and training

Objective

Move decisions to the lowest level, expand individual responsibility and authority, and ask for and provide feedback

Objective

Champion and implement personnel management changes that enhance productivity and job satisfaction

Supporting Strategy

Enable OUR staff to excel

Supporting Objective

Increase opportunity for personal development

1. Training
2. Education
 - Develop a cadre of “UA homegrown” employees to foster professional development and advancement
3. Feedback
4. New OUR Employee Orientation

Supporting Objective

Improve work environment.

1. Ensure required tools are available
 - Policies
 - Practices
 - Procedures

- Equipment
 - Technology
2. Ensure adequate physical facility
 3. Provide policy:
 - Strategic/tactical plans.
 - Operating principles
 4. Have an adequate, new OUR Employee's Orientation
 5. Provide meaningful work
 - No "busy work"
 - Empowerment
 - Feedback
 - Reward
 6. Build position redundancy via cross-training.

Supporting Objective

Develop and implement an awards and recognition program

1. Management recognition
2. Use performance feedback process
3. Peer recognition
4. Annual performance award

Supporting Objective

Develop "yardstick" or meaningful metrics

Goal 3

Import Technology

Objective

Control and improve delivered services via hardware and software enhancements

Supporting Strategy

Satisfy (or exceed) internal customer needs

Supporting Objective

Identify/understand the customer

Supporting Objective

Improve communications

Supporting Objective

Establish a cooperative network with academic departments and other campus agencies in order to disseminate information, resolve problems, and recommend changes to improve services to students

Goal 4

Import Continuous Process Improvement

Objective

Create a culture in the organization that embodies a hybrid model of Total Quality principles and other related management philosophies.

Goal 5

Objective

Enhance OUR Resource Allocation Practices

Enhance OUR operations by improving output and optimizing resources in everything we do

Supporting Strategy

Optimize use of all resources

Supporting Objective

Lower costs and optimize revenue

Supporting Objective

Ensure that the OUR and all of its subsystems (processes, teams, employees, etc.) are working together in an optimum fashion to achieve results desired by the organization

Supporting Objective

Assess the adequacy of the current organization and work force mix to support anticipated customer's future needs

Supporting Objective

Develop a more adaptive, responsive multi-skilled workforce

Goal 6

Objective

Operate/sustain a quality work space environment.

Enhance the quality of life of OUR people through continuous improvement in facilities, services, and work environment to satisfy their needs and priorities

Objective

Be a good neighbor by enhancing community partnership relationships

Supporting Strategy

Make the physical office environment as pleasant as possible (inside, outside, comfort, aesthetics)

Supporting Objective

Use environmental psychology and ergonomics to motivate

Supporting Objective

Encourage employees to stay healthy (reduce burnout, stress, exhaustion)

Supporting Objective

Encourage work-free vacations

Supporting Objective

Promote a positive organizational identity, image