DARS Strategic Plan
2005-2006

Describe major changes in the context of your profession and work.
Phase one of the DARwin implementation was completed on October 2, 2004. Admissions, Transfer Center, and DARS staff in the Office of Admissions and Records now have access to the client application. Advisors are currently being provided with access to DARSweb, the web-based application. DARSweb will be available to students when a new student information system is purchased and implemented.

Ensure the accuracy of the reports
• Have developed an encoding approval process that operates in tandem with the catalog approval process.
• The Associate Registrar for DARS serves as a non-voting member of the UCCC and the Core Board.
• The UCCC minutes now include implementation dates for curriculum change in catalog/schedule/DARS.
• The DARS web site now includes an interactive listing of Common Course Numbering changes.
• The Associate and Assistant Registrars for DARS worked with staff at the system office and the DARS Statewide Group to verify common course numbering changes implemented on each campus were correctly represented in the system CCN database. Transfer articulation tables were updated as a result of the final report.

Make the reports widely available
• Providing DARSweb access to faculty was delayed almost a year pending resolution of security issues at SCS. Though security concerns have not been completely addressed, all current XNET users have been invited to attend workshops introducing them to DARSweb. To date, approximately 50 faculty and advisors have attended training.
• Through UCCC, data was collected and a web site was designed to display course offerings planned for the next two years. Update sheets will be distributed during the fifth week of instruction fall and spring to maintain the website.
• The DARS Data Management Coordinator and a talented student, Alex Redei, have designed a web site displaying the output of our transfer articulation tables. This resource was recently made available.
• DARS reports have been fully integrated into the graduation process.

Institutional Context
• Enhancements to the DARwin application were almost entirely suspended pending the selection of a new student information system.
• As a result of the CCN inventory conducted on each campus during the summer of 2005, staff at the Chancellor’s Office have become aware of the degree to which the
transfer articulation functionality within DARS can play a significant role in maintenance of the common course numbering system. However, improvements to the system’s CCN database deemed necessary to make the CCN database a reliable source for updating TA tables have been suspended pending the selection of a new student information system.

- The Admissions and Records Office provides monthly training and support workshops faculty and staff.

**Key Performance Indicators**

After implementation of DARwin, engage in a systematic review of DARwin’s impact on Admissions and Records workflow to maximize accuracy and efficiency.

- Thoroughly document the entire workflow and DARS process and procedure.

We have written a desk manual for every position in the DARS unit.

- Develop and execute a plan for student outreach (workshops, presentations, web materials).
  - Develop lesson plans for freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior courses on accessing and reading a DARS report for distribution to faculty.
  - Work with Jane Detweiler to get into as many ENG 102 classes as possible and/or develop a lesson plan just for this composition course—researching possibilities.
  - Contact college advisement offices about access to the FYE courses that are taught in their college to insure DARS get some attention in all those courses.
  - Work with Student Services offices to encourage professional staff to incorporate the DARS into their interaction with students: tutoring, counseling, career development, DRC, student life, etc.
  - Set up “Academic Fortune Telling” booth in Pine Lounge on a monthly basis.
  - Monthly faculty workshops on using the DARS in advising: co-present with an advisor each time.
  - Make DARSweb and an Advisor website available EARLY this spring.
  - Get an article in the Sagebrush—collaborate with a student on the development of a column on advising resources. At least get a reporter to attend Advising Advisory Board.
  - Talk to Jerome Maese about getting DARS workshops in the dorm in an appealing format.

We made modest progress in this area in the last year. We did student and parent presentations at orientation. We participated in the Technology Fair. We did three outreach sessions in the Student Union. We collaborated with ASUN on an outreach activity in the library. This goal will become part of the communication study conducted through the spring and summer of 2006.

- Use the Advising Advisory Board as a DARS Council.
  - Include DARS updates as a standing item on the agenda.

The Assistant and Associate Registrar attend the Academic Advising Advisory Board and report on Registrar’s Office, DARS issues at each meeting.
• Integrate new professional positions into the DARS operation.
  
  o Develop a new organizational chart and clarify reporting lines within DARS, within A&R, with Advisement programs.
  o Update position descriptions as needed.

We have made progress toward integration of catalog/DARS approval processing, but we need to do more to make this process seamless.

• Define a new role for the DARS unit in the curriculum management process.
  
  o Clarify, strengthen relationships with students, advisors, the UCC, the Core Board, and Common Course numbering staff in the Chancellor’s Office.

We have excellent progress in this area over the last year. We have been able to provide data and support to these committees, and they respect our contribution. We have formalized a process for identifying and inactivating courses that have had no enrollment in the last five years. We provide the forms for departments to report their course offerings for the next two years. We provide the forms for departments to tell us which alternative method of delivery is being used for their courses.

• Improve the performance of the transfer articulation operation:
  
  o Fully integrating the TA system into the statewide common course numbering system;
  o Invent a process for auditing and updating Transfer Articulation tables through the UCC;
  o Make TA table information available to students and advisors on the web.

In the summer of 2005, Virginia Moore, as chair of the Statewide DARS Group led the group in a thorough review of the system’s CCN database and identified when and how each change had been implemented on each campus. Many updates were made to the transfer articulation tables as a result of the report that was produced. After the updates were completed, work began on the development of an institutional web site to display the contents of our transfer articulation tables for all NSHE institutions and our top 13 out-of-state feeder schools. This site recently became available and has been well received.

• Assess SIS/DARS users’ needs.
  
  o Better understand data needs and collaborate with SCS and campus IT staff on meeting those needs.
  o Develop and offer training as necessary. (Reports to be made available through the Student Data Warehouse: Students in major and minor programs with contact information. GPA reports for majors. Graduation applicants and DARS status. Projected demand for courses.)

This project was also suspended pending the selection of a new student information system. We have been able to work with Campus IT to offer mid-term progress reporting capability from CAIS. Our input has also been helpful in creating department and college user profiles to access class rosters through CAIS.

• Develop advisor website in collaboration with Advising Advisory Council to include TA tables, degrees and catalog years available, minors and catalog years available, encoding approval dates.
We have made excellent progress in this area. Our site now includes, the items mentioned above and sample DARS reports.

- Customize graduation requirements that will replace the text message at the top of the report for each college/program.

We have completed this project, but hope to gain advisor support for a greater level of standardization in graduation processing by the end of this school year.

- Include a WARNING requirement on reports. If students perform below a 2.0 in selected indicator courses, the requirement appears on the report and provides information about advising and academic support opportunities/requirements.

We were able to add a warning message for students who fall below the cumulative and college grade point average requirements for their major.

- Develop college-specific DARS reports for DQ students.

DARS reports are now available online for all DQ students.

- Develop DARS reports for high school students.

We made some progress on this project, but it was suspended pending the selection of a new student information system.

**Provide a measure of your performance indicators.**

- Exception volume by program. A large volume of exceptions may indicate the need for improvements to encoding and/or improved training for the advisement staff.
  - From 2003 to 2005 our exception volume decreased 28%. Most of that improvement came in the last year when the volume decreased 22% from 2004 to 2005. This reduction was achieved during the two terms in which we entered two new exceptions for every graduation applicant.

- Exception processing time. Our processing time has been reduced dramatically in the last year to 2 days. Our workload will increase as the DARS staff becomes more fully integrated into the graduation certification process, but we are committed to keeping exception processing to 2 days.
  - We have been able to keep processing time to 2 days for most programs.

- Approval of DARS encoding. Track changes after initial approval.
  - We need to do a better job at recording the approvals and changes to DARS encoding. We use an UCCC Approvals spreadsheet to track changes approved through the C&C process and schedule them for implementation in DARS. We have an access database in which we enter the encoding approvals.
- Percentage of clean DARS by program at each of the five reporting points in the graduation cycle. Number of ineligible students who submit applications for graduation.
  - We watch this tracking data carefully and share it with the college advisement representatives. Ten percent more graduation applicants have clean DARS reports now than at the same time last year.
  - Last year about 23% of the students who applied for graduation did not graduate.

- Faculty/staff participation in training and use of DARS in advising and graduation certification.
  - We offered five graduation certification workshops for faculty last year. The attendance at these sessions was somewhat disappointing. But we have been able to use the AAAB and the AA/SSC to review changes to the graduation process as well.

- Reduce transfer articulation processing time.
  - In collaboration with the admissions evaluators, changes were made the transfer articulation process for the Fall 2005 admission cycle. These changes, including a “take everything” policy, have led to modest reductions in the amount of time required to make DARS reports available for in-state students.

Update the priorities on your resource needs.
- Fill vacant encoding and transfer articulation positions.
- Add student employees and cross train on exception processing and data entry for transfer articulation to prepare for implementation of a new ERP.
- Continued DARS staff participation in testing and training.
- Resources to design and provide training and support to faculty/staff users.
- Provide student access to the live audit.
- Transcript scanning software with data to DARS for evaluation of high school and college transcripts.