

Senior Vice President for Student Affairs “Office” Review

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1. Faculty Senate Review Directive:

The Iowa State University Faculty Handbook calls for periodic review of Central Administrators. Specifically, the handbook indicates the review program has the following two primary purposes—“(a) to provide an occasion for central administrative officers to review their programs and subunits and, in return, to explain the roles, procedures, and activities of their offices to the university community and (b) to provide a means for constructive and systematic faculty review of central administrative offices and officers.”

According to the Handbook, “The review procedure is intended to improve the capacity of administrative offices and officers to provide system maintenance, goal attainment and resource development efforts that support the teaching, research, and service functions of the university. Moreover, the conduct of a review should facilitate communication between central administrators and the faculty, and promote the concept of responsible shared governance in the university.”

The Review Program applies to Central administrative officers, who are “defined as the vice presidents, senior vice president and provost, and above. Under the present administrative structure, the offices of the following officers are to be served by this review program: president of the university, senior vice president and provost, senior vice president for business and finance, and senior vice president for student affairs.”

Each review has the following three parts:

- a self-study by the office to be reviewed
- a faculty review of the office and its subunits
- a faculty review of the administrator's performance

According to the Handbook, the Review committee members are “appointed by the Senate president with suggestions from the Faculty Senate and approval of the Senate Executive Board. Normally, a review committee will consist of seven persons as follows:

- chairperson appointed with the approval of the Senate
- one member from the Faculty Senate's council for Faculty Development and Administrative Relations
- one member from another Faculty Senate Council
- three additional faculty members appointed after due consideration is given to the representation of various faculty concerns, and to the needs of the review committee for particular kinds of expertise, depending upon the office to be reviewed
- one or more other reviewer appointed after consultation with the administrator of the office to be evaluated. This reviewer should have expertise relevant to the office being evaluated and may be external to the university”

Specific procedures for conducting a review will be designed by each committee in collaboration with the Executive Board of the Faculty Senate as appropriate for the office being evaluated. The following policies pertain to all reviews.

The Handbook specifies that “the Review committee will confer with persons responsible for framing or approving policies that affect the relationship between the office and the faculty. In addition to the Self-

Study Report prepared by the office under review, the committee will have access to all necessary documents and administrative information unless the requested information is considered confidential under state or federal laws.”

Opinions concerning the performance of the office and officer under review shall also be solicited from students, staff, faculty, and administrators. All responses sent to a review committee will be treated as confidential correspondence, subject to applicable laws.

The Handbook calls for two written reports, “the first, or Office Evaluation Report, is a public document and should not contain confidential information related to the evaluation of the administrative officer. The second, or Officer Evaluation Report, is a confidential evaluation of the performance of the administrative officer. Both reports will summarize the findings of the review committee, and will include any recommendations it deems appropriate.”

Office Evaluation Report:

This report will address the issues listed above. A draft of this report will be submitted to the administrator of the office under review, primarily to allow an opportunity for corrections to assertions of fact. The committee will confer with the administrator under review and with the university president (or, if the office of the university president is under review, with the president of the Board of Regents) to discuss the draft report.

Once these processes have been completed, a final report will be written and forwarded to the president of the Faculty Senate who will inform the Senate about the major recommendations. Copies of the final report will also be submitted to the administrator of the office under review (who may make copies for subordinates), to the president (or, if the president's office is under review, to the Board of Regents), and to the Faculty Senate Executive Board. A brief summary will be published in *Inside Iowa State* to alert the faculty to the fact that a review is completed.

Appropriate provision will be made to have reading copies of the office's Self-Study Report and the review committee's Final Office Evaluation Report accessible by all university faculty members.

Officer Evaluation Report:

The review committee will solicit from all members of the university community written and/or oral evaluations concerning the performance of administrators under review. The Iowa State faculty members of the review committee will summarize the results of this survey in writing and prepare recommendations.

This report will be distributed to the administrator being evaluated, to the University President or Board of Regents depending on to whom the administrator being evaluated directly reports, and to the president of the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate president will, in turn, summarize the recommendations before the Faculty Senate Executive Board, meeting in closed session, subject to the requirements of applicable laws.

2. 2015 Review Process

This report is the review of the Senior Vice President of Student Affairs (SVPSA) and the Division of Student Affairs (DSA). DSA is led by the SVPSA Dr. Tom Hill and supported by Associate Vice President Dr. Martino Harmon; Assistant Vice President (currently vacant), and Heads of Administrative Units within the DSA. The various Administrative Units within the DSA include Admissions (headed by Katharine Johnson Suski), Dean of Students Office (DoS) (headed by Dr. Pamela Anthony), Department of Residence (DoR) (headed by Dr. Pete Englin), Financial Aid (headed by Roberta Johnson), International Students and Scholars (ISS) (temporarily headed by Deb Vance), ISU Dining (temporarily headed by Dr. Tom Hill), Learning Communities (headed by Doug Gruenewald), Memorial Union (headed by Richard Reynolds), Office of the Registrar (headed by Laura Doering), Student Counseling Service (SCS) (headed by Terry Mason until recently but is currently vacant), Student Support Services Program (headed by Japannah Kellogg), Thielen Student Health Center (TSHC) (temporarily headed by Dr. Martino Harmon), and Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search (headed by Jane Agyeman). In addition, the SVPSA works closely with Iowa State University's President in providing overall leadership for a comprehensive DSA. The SVPSA serves on the President's Cabinet, and works closely with the Senior Vice President and Provost, Senior Vice President for Business and Finance and other University Vice Presidents.

The Faculty senate Review Committee—comprising of eight members was formed by the Faculty Senate President in Spring Semester of 2015. Two of these eight members are student representatives (Presidents of Student Government and GPSS) and two of these eight members were selected by the SVPSA (Ms. Roberta Johnson and Professor David Acker). The other four represent the Faculty Senate of which three are former Faculty Senate Presidents. The committee is chaired by Dr. Sanjeev Agarwal, a former Faculty Senate President.

The SVPSA submitted a Self-Study Report of the DSA to the review committee in May of 2015. The review committee reviewed the Self-Study Report and then interviewed a number of institutional administrative officers, staff, and students during the ensuing months (See the list of individuals and groups in Appendix A). The respondents were invited to present strengths and weaknesses of the SVPSA and DSA. The respondents were also asked to offer suggestions that may strengthen the SVPSA and the DSA. Finally, members of the University community (administrators, staff, students, and ISU affiliates who hold ISU email) were invited through a special-purpose ISU website created to solicit anonymous comments about the SVPSA and DSA (See the email announcement in Appendix B). The email was sent twice over a period of 30 days and the website was active for 30 days. Note that the Faculty Handbook suggests placing an ad in Iowa State Daily and inviting people to send written reports by mail; however, the committee chose to solicit feedback from the University community via a website for convenience and anonymity of the respondents. There is also precedence for this approach in a similar review conducted in the recent past.

The findings summarized in this report are based on input and comments submitted by the members of the University community. The respondents were self-selected; hence, may not constitute a representative sample of the university community. The committee treated these comments as opinions and did not verify the validity of the comments made by the various respondents in either the face-to-face interviews or the web-based anonymous submissions. Like typical of such surveys, there may be over-representation of negative comments. However, the negative comments do provide a hint of actual or perceived problems. We feel it is worth listening to the expressed concerns and treat them as inputs in deliberations about how to improve the functioning of the DSA. It should also be pointed out that many of the concerns expressed by the university community may not be new and the DSA

administration may be already actively addressing them. With this in mind, the committee presents this report for DSA's reflection and actions that may improve the operations of the DSA and the university as a whole. Also, note that this report covers the review of the office of the DSA. A separate report covers a review of the SVPSA—officer in-charge of the DSA. The latter report is not public.

We also want to note that the effort was made to cover all aspects of DSA. However, we acknowledge there may be some areas or issues omitted from adequate coverage. This is not intentional and the committee would be happy to continue the review of any specific areas or issues if recommended.

3. Review of Student Services:

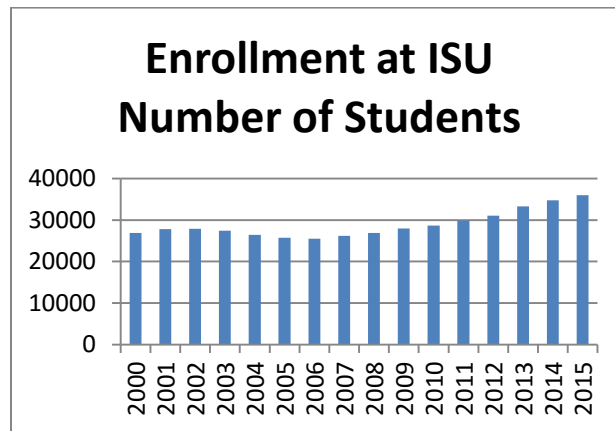
The 2015 Self-Study Report submitted by the SVPSA identified following five goals for the five-year period ending in 2016:

1. **Enrollment:** Achieve the university’s enrollment goals through a highly effective and focused effort on student recruitment and retention.
2. **Diversity:** Provide programs that support and celebrate a diverse student body and staff.
3. **Community:** Foster a supportive and inclusive campus community.
4. **Student Success:** Empower students to achieve success as learners, leaders, and citizens.
5. **Access and value:** Strive to provide an Iowa State University student experience that is accessible, affordable and of value.

The Review Committee reviewed each one of these goals and presents its findings as follows:

1. Enrollment:

The enrollment has increased from 29,887 students in 2011 to 36,001 students in 2015 as illustrated in the following graph. Hence, DSA has achieved success in increasing enrollment of students. The growth in enrollment has brought more resources to the institution and the community. The new resources have contributed to absolute growth in staff and faculty to service the larger student body. The growth is seen as fulfilling the land-grant mission for Iowa residents.



However, the enrollment growth has brought challenges with respect to maintaining the quality of educational and other services. Respondents and commentators across-the-board raised questions about the University’s ability to handle more students on campus. One commentator stated, “...while we want to be sensitive on the land-grant mission, we also need to consider how crowded all services and classrooms are, and whether or not that is providing the experience we want to give our students. Should it impact the way we “target and recruit students?” This theme was omnipresent in all interactions with students, staff, faculty, and administrators.

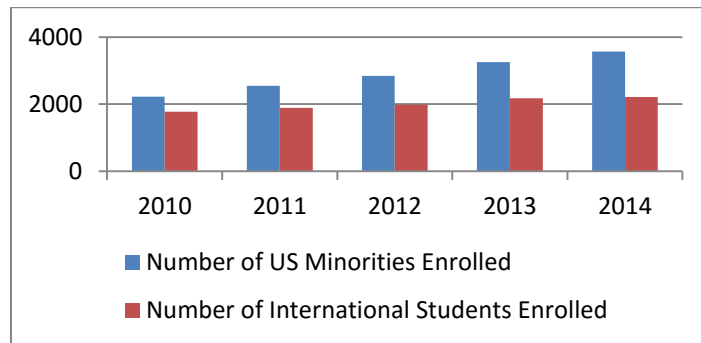
The 2015 DSA Self-Study did not project the future growth goals or discuss strategy to service the growth. As mentioned above and throughout the rest of this report, the committee was made aware of many strains in DSA’s preparedness in handling the increased enrollment thus far. This situation is more worrisome going forward especially if the University anticipates further growth. It

is the committee's impression that DSA leadership is engaged in assessing needs and preparing a plan for addressing those needs. The committee encourages the DSA leadership to complete this process urgently.

2. Diversity

The enrollment of US minority and international students in both undergraduate and graduate programs has also increased, thereby increasing the share of total enrollment comprising of US minority and International students among the student body. The number of US minority undergraduate students has increased from 2,228 students (9.6% of the total undergraduate enrollment) in 2011 to 3,562 students (12.3% of the total undergraduate enrollment) in 2014. The enrollment of US minorities at the graduate level has increased from 7.4% of total graduate enrollment in 2011 to 9.6% of total graduate enrollment in 2014. The number of international students has also increased from 1,775 students in 2011 to 2,216 students but stayed at 7.7% of the total undergraduate enrollment. The number of international students in the graduate program has increased from 1,548 students (31% of all graduate students) in 2011 to 1,790 students (36.2% of all graduate students) in 2014.

According to the 2015 Self-Study Report, "The ISU student body has a long tradition of diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, nationality, and culture. Contributing factors include the institution's having been coeducational from its earliest years and the continued presence of a significant international student population. And Fall-2014 marked the arrival of the most diverse student body on record. International and U.S. minority students now represent more than one in five students on the ISU campus: Total U.S. multicultural and international enrollment is 8,045 or 23.16 percent of the student body."



The 2015 Self-Study report indicates that, "the Division's commitment to diversity is infused into the programs and services offered." Many programs from 2013-2014 that support diversity goals are listed in the Self-Study. Several initiatives have been undertaken by the Division to bring nationwide dialog on diversity and create many opportunities for training staff and students in diversity-related issues.

3. Community

Greater enrollment and increasing diversity cannot be sustained unless a supportive and inclusive community is present. DSA has developed and promoted many programs centered round

appreciation and training of a variety of diversity issues and other topics that promote inclusiveness (a complete list can be reviewed in the 2015 Self-Study) for both staff and students.

Students indicated that they are treated with respect and taken seriously by the DSA staff. One of the commentators stated, "In spite of functioning for unnecessarily long periods of time with multiple vacancies in their units (often including director level vacancies), student affairs staff excel and serve students extremely effectively. Collaboration between units within the student affairs is for the most part, positive and effective. Staff is committed to helping students succeed personally and academically. Their work ethic is superb."

However, one person presented a different perspective. According to this person, "There is nobody (in DSA) that deals with community building and student engagement. This (DSA) structure is far from cutting edge. It is archaic!" According to this person, DSA "is just dealing with the minimum things a university should do. There is a long way to go to become one of the best student affairs (office)... The services offered are university affairs, providing for basic needs and there is no student component there. (There) should be a department dealing with student life- whose role should be to create a vibrant cultural exchange and community engagement. The (Memorial) Union does some of that." This is an extreme but an interesting viewpoint that needs to be discussed within the DSA.

On the issue of inclusiveness, we received several comments. Some student groups feel that there is bias in the office of DSA. One student commented, "...as a student I don't feel supported by the Division of Student Affairs. I have to plan the Hispanic heritage month with other students only, while the African-American heritage month is full of activities..." The comment proceeds to say, "We have asked for support as Latino students and we have been denied multiple times, while other students ask for support and they receive it for personal or professional support. Why can't everyone get the same support? I would like to see how their budget is handled. Last, it is important to review and rethink why El Centro Latino is not supported by student affairs and never promoted. Also, it is in a room in the residence halls where no one has access to it. No support for us!!"

In the same vein, another student commented, "Student Affairs leadership has had a consistent presence at the annual Lavender Graduation celebration. However, their absence is well-noted at other LGBT events throughout the year. Prospective students can perceive the absence on social media and in other media coverage of events and this influences their decision on whether ISU is a safe, welcoming campus for all." Another anonymous comment related to LGBT stated, "The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (serving American-born students of color) has 5 full-time professional staff members, an administrative assistant, and 6 graduate assistants while the LGBTSS Center has 2 full-time staff (one was just added this year)."

One commentator questioned, "Will the committee also evaluate the continuous lack of support to students that are not white and black." One person questioned, "Why is there a disproportionate number of students of color on the Student Affairs webpage? I think it sends a purposefully false message that ISU has more students of color than its 11%."

It is the University's desire to have more students (as well as staff) of color as well as other diverse backgrounds. It is natural for parents of students of color or other diverse backgrounds to want to see images that include diversity and speak with staff who represents similar diversity so they feel

“their children are not alone (at ISU).” There is no doubt that the background of the SVPSA has been instrumental in providing such comfort to many students of color and their families. There is no denying that the SVPSA is very accessible and personable and has participated in many projects that support students of color. But rather than feel disturbed by some imbalances from time to time, the university community should celebrate diversity and all efforts to improve diversity. There is more work to do to create a broad-based inclusive environment.

DSA role is to create safe, comfortable, healthy, supportive, inclusive, and active learning place for “all” students, including US minority and international students. It is understandable if DSA provides greater support and encouragement to minority students to participate fully in University life and utilize available resources. Having minority staff helps in encouraging minority students to participate and hence all efforts should be made to make the staff diverse as well. DSA should strive to create an atmosphere of vibrant cultural exchange and community engagement.

In the spirit of ensuring safe and comfortable environment, DSA also needs to tackle challenging issues such as student misconduct, harassment, and sexual assault. There is perception that there is ambiguity in how these are defined and how the violators and perpetrators are handled. These are prominent campus concerns even at the national level and must be addressed satisfactorily and urgently at Iowa State University.

4. Student Success

DSA has many services and programs to ensure students’ success. According to the 2015 Self-Study Report, “Student Affairs provides direct support for classroom education (through tutoring, supplemental instruction, learning communities partnerships), but also because DSA personnel see themselves as educating students “beyond the classroom walls.” This occurs through programming and by shaping the campus environment/climate, specifically by means of residence hall “neighborhoods,” leadership training programs, and advising student government and student organizations.”

The role of the DSA is to make sure that all students receive services that make their educational experience both inside and outside the classroom exceptional. Many aspects of student experience are directly touched by DSA such as orientation, residence, dining, safety, tutoring, counseling, health care, and extra-curricular activities. Others are indirectly touched by DSA through other divisions of ISU and it depends upon its success on all divisions.

Collaboration within the DSA

With respect to collaboration among the various DSA units, the 2001 Faculty Senate Review had praised DSA for having the vision to develop learning communities. The report said, “Learning communities provide an opportunity for students to link their in-class experiences with out-of-class experiences” and that it enhances student “retention and graduation rates.” However, the report also pointed out that all units of the DSA should be “linked” more closely and “take ownership” of the program and “organize its activities” collectively to enhance the student learning experience.

Over the ensuing years, DSA has made significant progress in executing that recommendation. As per statement in the 2015 Self-Study Report—“Collaboration is a hallmark of the work in Student Affairs. While each unit in the Division has primary responsibility for certain functional areas, in

practice much work is accomplished through partnerships between departments.” However, we heard from some advisors that “Each office in student affairs keeps separate records for their interactions with students - a centralized system would be very beneficial.” DSA may look into this and other ideas that may improve further collaboration and make student services more effective.

A good example of collaboration within the Division according to the 2015 Self-Study Report, “... is MAP-Works, a self-assessment for all first-year students to help them make a strong transition to college and succeed in their first year. Units with related functions – such as Dining and Residence, or Student Health and Counseling – collaborate on planning and service delivery to ensure students’ needs are met. Each of the Division’s six annual priorities has a committee with members from multiple units within the division units. Ultimately, the goal of the Division is to work together to support the success of every student at Iowa State.”

This type of collaboration achieves synergy and reduces waste or duplication of time and effort. We noted from various comments made by the concerned service providers how closely they work with each other. It was mentioned by many that various staff members have phone numbers of each other and make themselves available off-hours in emergencies.

One person aptly reminded, “We need to remember above all not a single office stands alone, we are all ISU. If there is even one office that isn't putting customer service as the top priority, we can only be as strong as our weakest link. We must be unified in our attempt to provide the best customer service, we need to always LISTEN and then collaborate with other ISU offices on campus to implement as much positive change as possible.”

We heard that collaboration within the various units of DSA has improved over the years but we also heard of instances of failures and breakdowns. Perhaps it is due to strains caused by overload of work but improvements made in the past cannot be lost and renewed effort should be made to improve intra-division collaboration.

Collaboration between DSA and other divisions or units need to be strong as well. We heard some unease with changes made to Facilities Planning and Management (FPM) and, in general, some concerns that several units across campus are not “Student” oriented. The committee recommends that DSA identify and review the touch points with students and determine how to improve the processes and programs in place to serve them.

Collaboration with the Division of Academic Affairs (DAA)

The 2015 Self-Study Report highlights many collaboration projects between the DSA and DAA. Projects such as the Learning Communities and MAP-works have been mentioned before. According to the 2015 Self-Study report, “the learning communities program at ISU offers more than 80 learning communities and draws about 70% of first year students.” One person commented, “The programs such as Learning Communities and the MAP-works Survey show DSA’s strength in its desire to partner with the Academic side of the University.”

Another project worth mentioning is the formation of Student Success Council. The Council is co-chaired by Dr. Harmon from DSA and Dr. Holger from DAA. The Council looks at factors that impact graduation rates, retention, and student success. In furthering this work, the Council is embarking

on a new initiative under Education Advisory Board to create a big-data analytics program to mine student data for databased advising and retention.

There are several other initiatives and programs such as University Innovation Alliance and NCORE/ICORE that are collaborative. DSA is also working with IT on a pilot project on technology to better streamline student-information. SVPSA is participating to change and improve handling of student information but is mindful about “protecting the ISU brand” with adoption of new technologies.

Some colleges indicated that they need “customized” recruitment and admissions. Some colleges engage in “targeted” recruiting and better relations with the Admissions Office would be helpful in meeting the needs of certain colleges. The advising services in Colleges are generally supposed to limit their engagement with students to academic issues; however, there are many instances where academic advising and counseling may need to go hand in hand. This may allow for better assistance to students at a grass-roots level. One person commented, “Advisors are not trained in mental health—when there is a crisis it is a challenge.” This may have implications for what is centralized and what is decentralized and how resources are directed to the DSA and Colleges for support services.

We recommend a review of DSA and DAA to determine areas of student services that may be candidates for a decentralized approach.

Collaboration with Faculty

The SVPSA has established an Advisory Board which includes faculty. DSA recognizes faculty contributions and gives recognition rewards. One person aptly stated, “(DSA) comes across as collaborative and welcoming to faculty input.” Several recommendations were offered for further improvement. One idea is that the DSA could enhance faculty’s ability to “help connect students for support for things that aren’t academic issues.” DSA could look for more ways in which programs can be strengthened with the help of academic programs. For example, as one faculty stated, “does Multicultural Student Affairs reach out to the Ethnic-Studies program leaders for collaboration? Are we leveraging our strengths as well as we might?”

There might be possibility of teaming up with faculty to develop more learning programs for students. As one Faculty noted, “DSA can provide more feedback to faculty about the student body—who they are and what they share about their experiences in the classroom (with DSA)?” On the other side, DSA can take what faculty and academic advisors have to say about students and help prepare students to become better consumers of academic programs offered by the University. Perhaps there could be a dialog about what comes first—academics or extra-curricular activities (including work)? Or, what is the right mix of academics and extra-curricular activities.

An area of contention between DSA and Faculty might center round the issue of “Academic dishonesty” among students. There is a perception among some faculty that, “there is extremely weak, if any, consequences resulting from a finding that academic dishonesty has occurred and a common view among students that the office will not take any meaningful action. Many faculty have given up on trying to refer cases to that office (Office of Student Conduct and Student Assistance). The suggestion for improvement is to devote more resources to enforcing academic honesty rules, and make it clear that the DoS office has a disciplinary role - that is, it is not there only

to "assist" students. Allowing students to think that academic dishonesty is no big deal actually does not help them."

The committee understands that disciplinary actions can only be taken if adequate evidence against students alleged to have been involved in academic dishonesty can be collected. Often, collecting evidence is difficult. Moreover, it may not be possible to share with Faculty the results of investigations and disciplinary actions taken by the DoS due to privacy issues. The committee believes that this is a perception held by some faculty and it is important to allay their concerns otherwise they may not seriously take action against academic dishonesty of their students.

We heard that collaboration between DSA and DAA has improved. The collaboration at the highest level should continue to strengthen. However, there are other areas of cooperation that may benefit students. Faculty and Academic-Advising Staff are calling for DSA to think about how to stress the importance of ethics (including issues such as plagiarism, respect for all, and work ethic) among students. The students also need to better understand what it means to be a student and what it takes to live independently, manage finances, and navigate the university life. One person talked about "instilling" pride by teaching "What it is to be a cyclone?—not purely from the point of view of allegiance to sports teams but incorporating ethics, maturity, discipline, responsibility, leadership, etc. The committee recommends that the DSA and Faculty review these recommendations.

Student Services under Stress

While there is general praise for DSA in many areas, the university community provided a critical review of DSA services such as Student Counseling Services (SCS) and Thielen Student Health Center (TSHC). One person commented, "Overall, Student Affairs has done an outstanding job in maintaining excellence across ALL units, with two major exceptions. The Thielen Student Health Center has well-documented issues that are already being addressed and Student Counseling Services is woefully inadequate to serve the current needs of our students." In addition, students indicated signs of weakness in other services such as International Students & Scholars (ISS), ISU Dining, and Department of Residence (DoR). Tutoring & Testing Services were also identified although they fall under DoS and SCS, respectively.

We understand that a student (or anyone with a mindset of a consumer) may have unrealistic expectations with respect to the level of services and the immediacy with which they must be provided by the University. For instance, students may get impatient when faced with long lines or when asked to wait at certain service points. This can happen during the beginning of an academic year (or each semester) with respect to course registration, financial aid, or any other service that faces capacity constraint during peak season for short durations. One student stated, "Whole division is understaffed. Financial aid—students have to wait or put on hold. Personal touch is missing." At other times during the semester, the delay is being faced at places such as tutoring, testing services, counseling, and health care. With increasing student enrollment, the entire university community (including DSA) is concerned about greater possibility of present or impending capacity constraints. Each one of these critical areas is discussed below:

A. Counseling Services:

The academic advisors as well as DSA staff indicated that the demand for counseling has increased and the Division has experienced difficulty in retaining and recruiting qualified counselors. One staff member commented that, “The Student Counseling Center is of minimal help as they are understaffed and overwhelmed...” Another staff member noted, “Mental health is a huge problem for students and we are NOT addressing it, actually decreasing available services. Staffing at both Student Counseling Services and Thielen Student Health Center have not been increased (actually decreased) with the increased student admissions.” Still another person pointed out that, “There are four counselor therapists for all of Iowa State University with 36,000 students present. The other counselor therapists have left.”

There are two ways in which this shortage affects students. First, there is long wait time for students to receive attention/help from the counseling office. As one adviser noted, “I meet with many students who have mental health issues. The increase demand for mental health services on the Iowa State campus is real and needs to be addressed. Many of my advisees have to wait a couple of weeks to see a counselor in Student Counseling Services.” One student narrated first-hand experience, “I experienced trauma during the fall of my final year. I waited over 5 weeks to see someone in the Counseling Center (due to staffing issues).” Based on several comments, it appears that, “two week wait is normal.” A concerned staff member noted, “The counseling services office is frequently unable to meet with students and cannot serve as a mental health counseling unit, merely a mental health triage service, due to massive understaffing and lack of resources.”

We understand that the Counseling office has a system of triage—the staff determines who gets seen immediately and who can be asked to wait based on “how critical is the condition of the student.” However, as one advisor put it, “a student with mental problems probably has prepared herself for a long time to be able to come, share their situation and get help. In this situation the student needs almost immediate attention.” Another remarked, “Even if they have an initial meeting with a counselor, the next meeting may be a few weeks later even though they may need more immediate assistance.” Another advisor added, “The ability to see a counselor becomes even more difficult as the semester progresses. The triage approach to dealing with so many students with mental health issues is not working. Student Counseling Services needs to have more full-time staff and an assessment of the services needs to be conducted.”

Second, the Counseling department, in some cases, refers students to see private providers in Ames as one way to relieve case-overload and get the students needed help immediately. One academic adviser noted, “I refer students to the Counseling Center and they are referred off campus.” A student provided a vivid description as follows—“Student Counseling Services are poor. During my second year at Iowa State I struggled with severe depression. I was told it would be weeks to months before I could see a counselor, even though I and my adviser whom I had spoken with felt that I needed to be seen urgently. I ended up having to find help outside of ISU which was a struggle for me both because of lack of motivation (due to my depression) and cost. Thankfully I did find help and my situation has since improved. However, I think if student counseling was more accessible and willing to work with student schedules (for example, I had class all day during the time in which they wanted me to wait until they were ready - an unknown amount of time - to be seen by an intake counselor) I would not have struggled as

much that semester. I feel that I am lucky that I never attempted to seriously harm or kill myself, and that is not thanks to Student Counseling.”

However, even this approach of referring students to private providers may not be working for all students as the following commentator points out, “Many students bring a lot of mental health needs to college with them. We need more counseling services available on campus, partially because the needs are growing, but also because it is very difficult to find mental health care in Ames.” Moreover, for many students not having private insurance or access to cars to drive to a private provider are limiting factors in obtaining off-campus counseling services.

There is widespread belief that, “the resources allocated to Counseling Services have not kept up with the record student enrollment or the increased severity of mental health of students over the past several years.” Many people believe that there is “lack of administrative support for the needs of high risk students and emphasis on increased enrollment without advocacy for additional services to meet the needs of the student body.” One person stated, “It seems that individuals who work in these areas have been highly dedicated but not provided with resources and support to expand programs. I feel that increased value needs to be placed on efforts to improve students’ mental and physical health and wellness, to promote students’ academic success and overall well-being of the student body.” People believe there is no other way but increase the “number of counselors in the counseling center.” Moreover, counseling services “needs to be more diverse - many students of color will not go to the counseling center because there is no one there that looks like them.”

It must be pointed out that the last external review of the SCS, according to the 2015 Self-Study Report, was conducted in 2011 by the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS). The report was positive and praised the Director and the staff for their expertise and service. However, the report had also noted that the department’s “ability to continue to provide the necessary services is limited by understaffing.”

We believe that the DSA administration is fully aware of the situation at SCS and is actively engaged in addressing the problems. However, given that recent changes have not helped, the committee recommends that DSA address the problems of this unit urgently. The fact that this situation has continued to persist even after the external review of 2011 is alarming and should not be allowed to continue.

B. Student Health Center

Just like SCS, THSC seems to have failed to deliver quality and timely care to students. The problems at THSC have been known for a long time; consequently the university had appointed a private consulting organization—Keeling & Associates to formally review THSC. Keeling & Associates submitted their report in March, 2015. The Des Moines Register published an article on July 24th, 2015 summarizing the findings of the report. The article said, “Keeling and Associates found the center had suffered for years from a “prolonged lack” of “effective leadership,” “attention to staffing,” and “fiscal oversight.” The article notes, “the problems festered so long, they “seriously undermined the quality of care and service it provides to students,” “endangered its accreditation,” and “created significant risk for the University.”

One person captured this scenario and stated, “The Thielen Student Health Center and Student Counseling Services support the mental and physical well-being of our student population, and (the DSA) has paid little attention to building those services, advocating for the development of those resources, and increasing staffing in those areas. Now we have a tipping point and finally a report from an outside consultancy agency that has put a light on the health center issues.” The comment proceeds to state, “We knew in 2004 that these areas were under-staffed and under-resourced...”

Although the University administrators and, the DSA in particular, claim to be taking steps to implement the most pressing recommendations in the report, it should be mentioned that there is widespread suspicion of the management. We heard that, “the situation has worsened since the Keeling report.”

The staff and students understand that growing enrollment can be part of the problem for deterioration of services, but they place the blame for continued deterioration on DSA management. One person commented, “I do strongly feel that there was a lack of vision when accepting record numbers of students and not expanding these high-liability services to meet the demand. I appreciate the efforts that are now in place, but feel that students were not only under-served, but put at risk because of lack of vision and cooperation...”

Despite increased enrollment, there are fewer physicians on staff than before. Speculation is rife that the remaining physicians may retire and/or leave if conditions remain the same. Replacing these physicians will be a tremendous challenge for the university. TSHC has had multiple failed searches for physicians allegedly attributed to non-competitive salaries. The issue of salaries goes beyond that of Physicians. We heard that Merit staff is making more than P&S staff for comparable tenure; consequently, “RN's are making less than LPN's.” According to the same commentator, “The RN's are actually making almost equivalent to what the receptionists are making. This all goes into poor staffing, inability to hire good people including providers who are not paid competitive salaries as well.” Another person noted, “Based on the current hiring and compensation practices that Beardshear advocates and suggests, I fear that the problems that the consulting firm identified will not disappear but rather escalate and expand.”

One person noted that, “Morale (at TSHC) has never descended as low as it is now. A number of staff have decided to depart rather than continue to serve in these egregious circumstances and without the respect, treatment, and space they deserve as professionals seeking to only serve and empower college students.”

Another person noted, “The Health Center is still in what I would call a state of crisis. We are unable to take care of the numbers of students we have with the amount of staff currently here and the current building size. The staff is very overwhelmed and on the verge of total burn out. We are doing the best with what we have and what we have is by far too little for this many students. We have more mental health patients than ever and less providers and counselors available to take care of these patients. They are suffering and therefore the university community is suffering. What could be more important than the health and welfare of our students?” According to another comment, “the delays and difficulties getting through to see physicians are not just an inconvenience, they can be catastrophic.”

A student stated that, “I have personally experienced the effects of poor scheduling, management, and lack of quality health care provided by the clinic. These issues need to be resolved immediately. It is especially upsetting that students were charged the regular \$98.00 health fee for sub-par care.” In the same vein, another person notes, “We not only have a dramatically higher student enrollment, but also a higher percentage of these students have significant pre-existing mental health issues. In addition, studies have shown that the vast majority of students feel overwhelmed at some point during their college experience. It is not hard to predict the need for therapists/psychologists, but our current budget situation does not provide the funds to allow us to meet that need. It is a moral imperative that we do not take student tuition money if we cannot provide a safe and supportive environment. It creates a high risk situation for many students AND for the university. The Thielen Health Center has been exposed in its review for rampant inability to serve and severe doubts about its ability to maintain accreditation. They have been operating at well below minimum capacity of doctors and are unable to make competitive enough salary offers for doctors to be employed. This has shown down to the students who, in many instances, fear and refuse to use a service they are forced to pay for due to a repeated demonstration of inability to serve and inability to serve competently by the medical staff.” A student noted, “I am made to go to the bad health care provider as a student at ISU. Not fair.”

Another person commented that TSHC now has “three full-time primary care physicians and two part-time primary care physicians. One full-time primary care physician left in mid-September. A part-time gynecologist was hired several months ago and left after a few weeks. There are two positions that are contracted for very occasional work. There is one full-time psychiatrist and one part-time psychiatrist (for approximately one day per week). All three of the full-time physicians are in their 60s and may be within months of retirement. The University has made attempts to hire nurse practitioners but the process has been very slow. The salaries offered for both nurse-practitioners and primary-care physicians are non-competitive.”

TSHC has tried to outsource the supply of physicians. However, we heard that “part-time help has not been able to give the same quality of care to students. Moreover, these (outsourced) providers are unable to follow up with their patients (because they have only part-time presence at TSHC). The follow-up of such patients falls on staff already over-booked. According to the TSHC staff, the problems are well documented.”

The problems at TSHC have been brewing for almost a decade. The administration has to assess how many doctors, psychiatrists, nurses, and other staff are needed to provide quality care to 36,000 students (or more in the coming years). The options may be to hire and strengthen THSC from within or collaborate with one or more off-campus providers. According to one person, an off-campus provider cannot absorb “35,000 extra bodies for 9 months out of the year” without considerable expansion and dedication of resources. The committee strongly recommends that DSA study all possible options—including a comprehensive strategic partnership with off-campus providers—to turn around TSHC expediently. The committee requests that DSA seriously reflect upon its responsibility to provide for the physical and mental health of its student body and allocate the financial and management attention that is truly required to maintain the highest level of health care.

C. Tutoring

Tutoring was also identified as a stress point. Many students are unable to get a tutor because there is shortage of tutors for some classes. As one student indicated, “The availability of tutoring is great... if you're taking a low level math course.” This person tried to find tutoring for three (upper-level) classes but was unable to get help through campus. The person “ended up getting tutoring online from someone who didn't speak English or know the material very well, but it was better than nothing which is what Iowa State provided to me.”

An often cited constraint is the hourly rate for a tutor that hasn't changed for years. The Academic advisors indicated that there is discrepancy in what we charge students for tutoring and what we pay tutors. We charge students \$4 per session for receiving tutoring (which hasn't changed for 15 years) and we pay \$8 per session to tutors. Tutors can't organize or offer a session till a certain minimum number of students have signed up for the session. In many cases, tutors who sign up may not get enough students and hence can't rely on this job. And students who sign up for tutoring can't get a tutor. Moreover, students who want to be tutors don't find it attractive to be tutors at this salary because they can often find better hourly rate as a research assistant or other regular jobs.

The committee recommends that a comprehensive review be undertaken to increase the number of tutors and peer mentors. Although the university has made progress in accommodating students with disability, there is still not enough space for students with disability to take exams. With increased enforcement of ADA requirements, there needs to be more help from staff to support students with special needs both in terms of space (for testing), staff, and ADA compliant websites.

D. International Students & Scholars (ISS)

The number of international students has also grown but the number of officers in ISS seems to be fewer and the space is tight. While people complement the department—“Everybody in the office seem to be nice and helpful and works hard to provide good service to international students.” However, people also indicate, “sometimes you have to wait for a long time to see an international advisor as they are all booked. All student requests that took shorter time to complete by ISS before, take longer now. For example, to get an advisor's simple travel signature on I-20 form takes 5 days.” It was pointed out by one of the staff members that “ISS can only barely keep up with the visa requirements of their job, through no fault of their own but through a vast lack of support and staff.”

Given that the university is seeking to enroll more international students and needs to provide support to the enlarged current international student body, the staff-shortages or poor service will be detrimental. One person even suggested that, “it would be beneficial to create a senior level position in DSA that oversees all international initiatives including international enrollment, international student services, study abroad, exchanges and other international initiatives” for students, faculty, and visiting scholars and guests.

The committee recommends that a comprehensive review be undertaken to assess what is required to strengthen the management and services of ISS.

5. Access and Value

In our review, we did not hear specific complaints about tuition or access to education. However, we recognize that there is broader ongoing dialog about tuition and escalating debt burden on students nationwide. We will not address that issue in this report.

We limited our discovery to quality, procedures, and costs of university services such as housing, dining, and recreational facilities. There is a perception among students that the private housing contracted by ISU outside the campus is high-priced. We also heard similar concerns with the cost of meals and meal plans. In addition, there are other concerns relating to the dining experience. For example, one advisor indicated, "I have heard comments from students about crowded environments in the dining centers, long lines, and the need for more student housing has been well documented. One person commented, "Stop trying to recruit more and more students without the ability to house them near campus, feed them in dining halls, or any of the other areas students are entitled to. The recreation facilities, although very nice, are normally reserved for special activities. The areas which are open to any student are packed during every open hour. It is a big deterrent to even using the facilities, especially considering the mandatory fee students pay for them."

A student noted, "The new method of having Dining Staff place food on the student's plate (instead of the student serving their own food) seems to be extremely detrimental to the already ridiculously long lines in the dining hall. One could easily spend over half of their lunch hour just waiting in line for food, which seems ridiculous. I'm assuming this new method was implemented to reduce food waste, but I think in this case the cost of doing so far outweighs the benefit."

With regards to university housing, one student noted, "Even the apartments in Frederickson Court and University Village, which are of the poorest quality, were extremely expensive. The value gained from living with DOR does NOT match the cost. The DOR is charging an astronomical amount of money with no realized added benefits.... I will caution all potential DOR residents to not contract with ISU as their apartments are astronomically over-priced, and cannot be trusted to deliver the quality of services promised, or deserved."

The committee notes that while DoR and ISU Dining have made great strides in increasing the availability of university housing and dining facilities, there is still a need to consider the implications of growing enrollment and take appropriate actions to rectify the congestion and improve service and facilities. We also believe that the ISU Dining should be led by a full-time director as soon as possible.

4. Review of DSA Administration/Organization

According to the 2015 Self-Study report, the DSA identified following priorities for 2015:

1. **Recruitment:** Using effective strategies that support the university's enrollment objectives.
2. **Diversity:** Enhancing the university's diversity efforts
3. **Student Success:** Providing services and support for student success in support of the university's enrollment objectives
4. **Student Experience:** Maintaining the student experience with increased enrollment
5. **Community Development:** Enhancing internal and external relationships
6. **Resource Development:** Enhancing financial and human resources

I. Recruitment (of Staff)

There is acute recognition university-wide that the DSA organization has to grow (or become more productive) with the growing student enrollment. Although the 2015 Self-Study Report provides a detailed description of backgrounds and roles of the senior management personnel as well as describes the number of P&S and Merit staff in each of the major divisions of the DSA, it has not addressed the staffing needs to prevent service shortages and/or failures.

We heard from students and staff at various levels about staffing needs that are not being met. One person commented, "My experience has been that the individuals working in student affairs are very energetic, compassionate, and knowledgeable people. However, I'm concerned that the increasing student population is drawing on the already overstretched resources."

The vacancies at the senior management level such as the Director of ISU Dining; Director of TSHC; (Permanent) Director of ISS; and more recently, the Director of SCS are obvious. With the exception of the position of the Director of SCS which was recently vacated, the other positions have been vacant for a considerable duration. While these vacant positions may have been in capable hands (with the SVPSA as the interim director of ISU Dining; the Associate Vice President as the interim director of the Student Health Center; and Ms. Deb Vance as the interim director of ISS), there is need to fill those positions with permanent managers/directors. There is a general sense of anxiety among the staff at DSA due to the frequent departure of various key managers. We note with pride that many of our Division Managers are professionally engaged in national and regional organizations and are nationally renowned and are likely to find alternative employment. But, as person noted, "The division is suffering greatly due to a lack of, and inability to fill, upper leadership positions."

Within the various departments, there is shortage of staff. Most notable shortages are reported in the TSHC and SCS as previously noted above. However, as noted by one person, "nearly all areas of student affairs are working at well beyond their capacity and are unable to do more than the bare minimum of service to try and help students. ISS can only barely keep up with the visa requirements of their job, through no fault of their own but through a vast lack of support and staff. Financial aid and ISS counselors regularly are forced to work weekends due to the overloading of their workloads (by regularly I mean 3/4 or 4/4 weekends a month, both Saturday and Sunday). The majority of the units of student affairs have not seen increases in the number of positions and staff they may have since the university was serving 25,000 students. We have added 10,000 students and in some instances cut staff." Many staff members are "working at levels above what they were hired for,

filling their supervisor's roles while also attempting to continue to fulfill their own job responsibilities. All of this comes at a time when we are massively increasing student enrollment and are seeing a huge increase in the number of mental health and emotional crises and needs in the student population.”

While comparability between job duties may not be the same, one commentator noted, “The units in student affairs are drastically understaffed by all comparative measures when looking at peer institutions. Academic Advisors at ISU, for example, frequently advise case-load of 500-600 students. The National Academic Advising organization (NACADA) recommends that full-time advisors have no more than a 300-350 student case-loads to effectively advise students. ISS advisors are often serving well over 1,000 students per advisor.”

One staff member lamented, “Our unit has had particular trouble with getting assistance when needed from the Office of the Registrar. Although we understand that the office has been impacted by retirements and resignations, it is not acceptable to take months to resolve simple issues that ultimately affect our students.”

According to another person, “The Division of Student Affairs no longer appears to have the capacity for undertaking its mission, despite the absolute best efforts of its lower level employees.” It was brought to our attention that the DSA staff is not just over-stretched but that there are “unrealistic” expectations about the hours they are required to work. One staff member said, “(it is unrealistic) to require all staff in the division of student affairs to forgo any commitments they may have planned to work nights and weekends in April with just a few days’ notice. We are all very committed to student success and willing to do what it takes in a salaried position but working at 2am on a Saturday morning for no benefit is just crazy.” Another person noted that during the “This is Your April” (a month of programming in April that took the place of the week-long festival called VEISHA) Student Affairs employees were asked to provide “overnight shifts patrolling campus when there was no student activity happening.” Staff indicated concerns with high staff turnover suggesting we need to know why they are leaving—“Could it be due to overwork, weekends, major events, they are told to do extra work.”

The morale in DSA is low. There are many people in DSA who work very hard but feel under-appreciated. One person noted, “I know there is a lot of unease in this unit at this time. It is my hope this can be settled soon, we put people in place that want to be here and are here for the right reasons, and then reward them for their service.”

Student Experience is the centerpiece of the Mission statement of the DSA. The mission states, “Student Affairs is integral to the rich and vibrant Iowa State University student experience...” Ensuring the “ISU experience” as it has come to be known requires an environment where students feel welcome, safe and achieve their full development potential. The SVPSA has provided leadership in creating such an atmosphere and the DSA has responded with unwavering commitment and non-stop effort to hopefully delight the students with the ISU experience. This cannot happen unless the staff identifies with organization; internalizes the culture; and commits to achieving a long-lasting reputation for providing that experience. We hope there is no undue burden placed on staff members who may have to put in long hours or need to work evenings, nights or weekends while serving students. We hope the staff finds it rewarding to act as gracious hosts to students. In addition, as discussed earlier, DSA needs to assess the demands of staffing (both present and anticipated) for the various units, starting with senior level leadership, planned succession, and

appropriate number of staff to avoid failure in services. An important piece of ensuring a properly functioning division is ensuring the existence of a framework or channels for DSA staff to voice their concerns and conflicts that will improve the functioning of the DSA and its services. The committee recommends a review of the grievance procedure used in the DSA organization.

II. Diversity

The 2015 Self-Study indicates that “the Division of Student Affairs continues to hire and retain a diverse staff, with racial diversity being most prominent in our Professional and Scientific (P&S) staff. We actively recruit a diverse staff in our hiring practices, through how we advertise and network open positions, and through ongoing compliance with Human Resource Services. We encourage the retention of our diverse workforce through formal and informal programs within the Division and will continue to strive to include a greater representation of diverse populations on our staff.”

We believe there is University-wide recognition and processes in place to maintain diversity among the leadership and staff across the University. We are confident that the DSA follows the same level of care in their hiring practices. However, from what we heard, it appears that the hiring practices at the DSA need to be reviewed. We heard specifically that “Qualified candidates are not being considered (for DSA positions) because the candidate pools are not diverse enough. It can be challenging to get candidates to answer the optional diversity questions on the application for fear of being not considered based on their answers. We cannot force candidates to answer the questions and we cannot determine a candidate's diversity based on their resume alone.”

The committee recommends that DSA review its hiring practices with respect to all candidates, including diversity candidates. The committee recommends that DSA must strive to fill key positions expediently. Perhaps better methods of identifying diversity candidates and making efforts to hire diversity candidates is critical but suspending hiring indefinitely is detrimental to the functioning of the operations.

III. Community Development

We are pleased to note that community development is considered an important part of the priorities for the DSA. ISU and Ames community are interdependent. There are many services that the city provides the ISU community and vice versa. The two share responsibility for the health and welfare of the entire community.

ISU collaborates with the city by extending to Ames City Manager a seat on DSA Advisory Board. The City co-operates with ISU to maintain safe and supportive atmosphere for all its residents, prevent crisis, and ensure positive experience for students, their families, and members of the community on campus and off-campus, including all ISU sponsored events.

There are a number of ways in which the city collaborates with the University. For example, the city collaborates with DoS by sharing police log of students. The City feels that the DoS is better suited to follow-up with the students and prevent future problems. Fortunately, the students take this seriously when it comes from the DoS rather than the Police.

The City is faced with a growing “Crisis” mental-health-care of its residents including students. Counseling works for people who seek help but not to people who don’t until they are completely in

need of hospitalization. It is even more difficult when such help is needed at night/weekends. Typically, the main point of contact for the city is DoS. Extreme cases are communicated to “on-call” Dean but there are many other cases that are not being responded to even though DSA does a good job of handling crisis today than it did 10-15 years ago. The city officials feel that DSA needs to strengthen crisis prevention staff and a plan for action. The City officials feel that the University reps have more impact on students in resolving “crisis” cases or situations. Police is not the best thing to be the first point of contact when students face crisis. The City officials feel that it will help to have representatives of the ISU “Crisis prevention” group to liaison with the City.

The City officials feel that alcohol is a source of problem and a recurring problem for the City. The city doesn’t allow alcohol consumption on city streets. City spends lot of time teaching students about not drinking on city streets. However, the University tends to overlook or tolerate street drinking on streets during certain events. The City would like to see the University partner with the city to show the same concern. A related area of concern is underage drinking. The city feels that bar operators are satisfactorily enforcing under-age drinking but that the problem just moves to residential buildings. The University housing on the west side of town has live-in managers—so the discipline is much better.

One of the suggestions offered by the City is to create a new position housed within the DSA that provides a point of contact with the city. Some universities have institutionalized collaboration between the University and the City. At present, students have a city council liaison but the University doesn’t. As a result, community initiatives may not receive adequate follow through and consideration by the University. Some universities have a front office in the community for better integration with the City. The city officials suggest that such an office may be very helpful. The city officials also indicate that it would be helpful if DSA leaders interact more with the community and be more visible in the community.

The committee recommends that the DSA should review suggestions made in regards to strengthening relationship with the City of Ames. The city is seeking collaboration in dealing with alcohol consumption and mental-health crisis cases involving students. The city is also recommending creation of a new position housed within the DSA that provides a point of contact with the city.

IV. Resource Development

As indicated earlier, there are many divisions which are being led by interim directors, and in some cases, these interim directors are the SVPSA or AVPSA themselves. This gives a misguided signal that the SVPSA and AVPSA are the only two people capable of running the enterprise. DSA needs to create more visibility for all unit directors and perhaps create an effective succession plan if replacing vacated positions is difficult to fill. As stated earlier, there is also staffing needs at other levels in many units within the division. The current staff is over-stretched. There needs to be a serious evaluation of staffing needs throughout the DSA.

This also means that there needs to be a serious evaluation of financial needs for ensuring a strong DSA. We received a comment that indicated, “Repeatedly the division of Student Affairs has been told by its leadership that they will continue to lose resources and new positions will not be approved but they are expected to maintain and improve upon the services offered. It is not possible to improve when support is removed. The units in student affairs are drastically

understaffed by all comparative measures when looking at peer institutions.” Numerous such references were made in regards to the resources available or allocated for dealing with increased staff (as well as facilities and assets) needs in various units under DSA.

Many of the units (such as DoR, ISU Dining, Memorial Union, TSHC, and Counseling) of the DSA are large financial enterprises. A serious administrative review of these services and the way they are operated should be conducted to determine whether these can be run as a stand-alone business enterprise.

Finally, it would be appropriate at this time to review the organizational structure of DSA. One person noted, “I personally think the "umbrella" of oversight is way too broad and large for any one person to manage effectively.” One possibility is to provide higher level of autonomy to operations such as DoR, TSHC, Counseling, ISU Dining, and, may be, Recreation with very broad oversight from the SVPSA. The committee would recommend that a review of the structure be conducted.

Recommendations:

1. The 2015 DSA Self-Study did not project the future growth goals or discuss strategy to service the growth. As mentioned above and throughout the rest of this report, the committee was made aware of many strains in DSA's preparedness in handling the increased enrollment thus far. This situation is more worrisome going forward especially if the University anticipates further growth. It is the committee's impression that DSA leadership is engaged in assessing needs and preparing a plan for addressing those needs. The committee encourages the DSA leadership to complete this process urgently.
2. DSA role is to create safe, comfortable, healthy, supportive, inclusive, and active learning place for "all" students, including US minority and international students. It is understandable if DSA provides greater support and encouragement to minority students to participate fully in University life and utilize available resources. Having minority staff helps in encouraging minority students to participate and hence all efforts should be made to make the staff diverse as well. DSA should strive to create an atmosphere of vibrant cultural exchange and community engagement.
3. In the spirit of ensuring safe and comfortable environment, DSA also needs to tackle challenging issues such as student misconduct, harassment, and sexual assault. There is perception that there is ambiguity in how these are defined and how the violators and perpetrators are handled. These are prominent campus concerns even at the national level and must be addressed satisfactorily and urgently at Iowa State University.
4. We heard that collaboration within the various units of DSA has improved over the years but we also heard of instances of failures and breakdowns. Perhaps it is due to strains caused by overload of work but improvements made in the past cannot be lost and renewed effort should be made to improve intra-division collaboration.
5. Collaboration between DSA and other divisions or units need to be strong as well. We heard some unease with changes made to Facilities Planning and Management (FPM) and, in general, some concerns that several units across campus are not "Student" oriented. The committee recommends that DSA identify and review the touch points with students and determine how to improve the processes and programs in place to serve them.
6. The committee recommends a review of services (such as student recruiting, crisis prevention, testing, tutoring, etc.) that overlap between DSA and DAA and consider if there is a benefit in decentralizing some of these activities.
7. We believe that the DSA administration is fully aware of the situation at SCS and is actively engaged in addressing the problems. However, given that recent changes have not helped, the committee recommends that DSA address the problems of this unit urgently. The fact that this situation has continued to persist even after the external review of 2011 is alarming and should not be allowed to continue.
8. The problems at TSHC have been brewing for almost a decade. The administration has to assess how many doctors, psychiatrists, nurses, and other staff are needed to provide quality care to 36,000 students (or more in the coming years). The options may be to hire and strengthen THSC from within or collaborate with one or more off-campus providers. According to one person, an off-campus provider cannot absorb "35,000 extra bodies for 9 months out of the year" without considerable expansion and dedication of resources. The committee strongly recommends that DSA study all possible options—including a comprehensive strategic partnership with off-campus providers—to turn around TSHC expediently. The committee requests that DSA seriously reflect upon its responsibility to provide for the physical and mental health of its student body and allocate the financial and management attention that is truly required to maintain the highest level of health care.

9. The committee recommends that a comprehensive review be undertaken to increase the number of tutors and peer mentors. Although the university has made progress in accommodating students with disability, there is still not enough space for students with disability to take exams. With increased enforcement of ADA requirements, there needs to be more help from staff to support students with special needs both in terms of space (for testing), staff, and ADA compliant websites.
10. The committee recommends that a comprehensive review be undertaken to assess what is required to strengthen the management and services of ISS.
11. The committee notes that while DoR and ISU Dining have made great strides in increasing the availability of university housing and dining facilities, there is still a need to consider the implications of growing enrollment and take appropriate actions to rectify the congestion and improve service and facilities. We also believe that the ISU Dining should be led by a full-time director as soon as possible.
12. Student Experience is the centerpiece of the Mission statement of the DSA. The mission states, "Student Affairs is integral to the rich and vibrant Iowa State University student experience..." Ensuring the "ISU experience" as it has come to be known requires an environment where students feel welcome, safe and achieve their full development potential. The SVPSA has provided leadership in creating such an atmosphere and the DSA has responded with unwavering commitment and non-stop effort to hopefully delight the students with the ISU experience. This cannot happen unless the staff identifies with organization; internalizes the culture; and commits to achieving a long-lasting reputation for providing that experience. We hope there is no undue burden placed on staff members who may have to put in long hours or need to work evenings, nights or weekends while serving students. We hope the staff finds it rewarding to act as gracious hosts to students. In addition, as discussed earlier, DSA needs to assess the demands of staffing (both present and anticipated) for the various units, starting with senior level leadership, planned succession, and appropriate number of staff to avoid failure in services. An important piece of ensuring a properly functioning division is ensuring the existence of a framework or channels for DSA staff to voice their concerns and conflicts that will improve the functioning of the DSA and its services. The committee recommends a review of the grievance procedure used in the DSA organization.
13. The committee recommends that DSA review its hiring practices with respect to all candidates, including diversity candidates. The committee recommends that DSA must strive to fill key positions expeditiously. Perhaps better methods of identifying diversity candidates and making efforts to hire diversity candidates is critical but suspending hiring indefinitely is detrimental to the functioning of the operations.
14. The committee recommends that the DSA should review suggestions made in regards to strengthening relationship with the City of Ames. The city is seeking collaboration in dealing with alcohol consumption and mental-health crisis cases involving students. The city is also recommending creation of a new position housed within the DSA that provides a point of contact with the city.
15. The committee recommends a serious evaluation of financial needs for ensuring a strong DSA with respect to staff, facilities, and assets.
16. Many of the units (such as DoR, ISU Dining, Memorial Union, TSHC, and Counseling) of the DSA are large financial enterprises. A serious administrative review of these services and the way they are operated should be conducted to determine whether these can be run as a stand-alone business enterprise.
17. The committee recommends a review of the organizational structure of DSA.

As a final comment, we will take liberty to quote one person’s commentary that captures the essence of the foregoing analysis. It said, “All we keep hearing from offices on campus is that they don’t have the appropriate staffing to support the student demand. If this is true, we need to review our internal structure and priorities to ensure our growth goals include the staff that are needed to continue providing the best service to students in a timely manner. We cannot afford to leave students feeling like they are alone and not getting the help they are reaching out for.” This paragraph captures the committee’s sentiments very well.

Appendix A: List of Groups Interviewed

President of the University
Senior Vice President and Provost
Vice President of Business & Finance
Vice President for Research
Vice President of Economic Development & Industry Relations
Vice President for Extension & Outreach
Interim Vice President, Office of Chief Technology Officer
DSA Cabinet
DSA Office Staff
Council of Deans
P&S Council
University Academic Advising Committee
Student Academic Assistants for Athletes
Assistant Dean of Students
Director of Greek Affairs
Assistant Vice President Chief of Police
Director Recreation Services
Minority Liaison Officers
GPSS
Student Government
Ames Police Chief
Ames City Manager

Appendix B: Web-based announcement for feedback

“Review of the Office of the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs

The Iowa State University Faculty Senate is charged with the review of the Office of the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs (basically the Division of Student Affairs).

Student Affairs provides programs and services that bring students to Iowa State University, make them a part of the Cyclone Family, and support them in their many campus learning experiences.

The Division of Student Affairs comprises of the following units:

Admissions
Campus Dining
Dean of Students Office
Department of Residences
Educational Talent Search
International Students & Scholars Office
Learning Communities
Memorial Union
Office of the Registrar
Office of Student Financial Aid
Student Support Services Program
Student Counseling Services
Thielen Student Health Center
Upward Bound

The Senior Vice President for Student Affairs has the primary responsibility within the university’s administrative structure for the following critical processes:

- recruiting and enrolling the student body;
- administering student financial aid;
- acclimating students to the campus through orientation programs;
- providing housing for undergraduate and graduate students and their families;
- providing food service for the campus community;
- providing medical care and personal counseling for students;
- maintaining recreational facilities, activities, and programs;
- maintaining discipline within the student body;
- maintaining student academic records and organizing graduation ceremonies;
- supporting academic life through learning communities, tutoring, and supplemental instruction;
- addressing the needs and interests of special student populations;
- advising, and facilitating student government and organizations; and
- providing leadership and diversity training for the student body, as well as opportunities to participate in peer education and mentoring programs.

Iowa State University’s Division of Student Affairs strives to be widely recognized as having one of the very best student affairs operations in the nation.

We invite the University Community including students, staff, and faculty as well as residents of Ames Community to provide input regarding strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the activities of any of the above mentioned units. We specially invite comments and suggestions that will make the Division of Student Affairs better.

Please note that the names of the people making remarks will be kept confidential and the recommendations of the committee will not attribute the comments to any individual.”