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Student development is the direction in which Student Affairs appears to be heading. This seems evident from reading the professional journals and examining the topics of the conventions of the leading professional groups. For the purpose of this paper, student development may be described briefly in operational terms as follows: 1) assessment or the process of determining an individual's present level of development, a continuous process, by use of various diagnostic means; 2) goal setting which involves the collaborative determination of the specific behaviors toward which the student desires to strive; for change which includes instruction, both and 3) strategies formal and informal, consultation, and management of the educational environment for the student in an effective, productive way by marshalling available institutional resources to facilitate desired and agreed upon behavioral changes.

Student development occurs when the concept is applied to specific operational functions. It is believed that one function which lends itself well to the implementation of the student development concept is a learning assistance support system operated as a counseling outreach program.

Learning assistance programs are anything but new. In fact, all education is learning assistance. More specifically, a whole gamut of remedial programs have been created usually to remedy a specific deficiency such as mathematics skills, or English composition writing. Some of these remedial programs have been set in elaborate expensive facilities; many have not. Some have persisted as highly successful programs while others have faded out. In recent years, remedial programs based on a tutorial approach have expanded with additional emphasis because of educational opportunity programs. The advent of teaching machines offered a new dimension to learning assistance. Some machines have worked well; others did not stand the test of time. Across the nation, orientation programs, short courses, and regular curricular offerings, up to a year in length, have offered "how to study" sessions. most of these remedial-type programs do not involve much in the way of assessment and/or very little in collaborative goal setting. The change strategies frequently use formal instruction techniques.

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Occasionally counseling centers have been responsible for creating and operating remedial programs, but not on a widespread or regular basis. The counseling staff may provide diagnostic help related to learning assistance. The growth of the outreach programs in counseling which is a movement away from the strictly clinical approach,

is an all-important role in a learning assistance support system. This added dimension to counseling appears to be timely in viewing current student needs.

It is believed that many counselors have skills in assessment procedures and the knowledge to work collaboratively with students, and for that matter, with faculty and others as well. Counselors are consultants and frequently instructors. The ingredients are here to develop a learning assistance support system under a student development concept with counseling outreach taking a lead role in establishing and operating a learning assistance center.

What is the difference between the remedial approach and a learning assistance support system? One, the learning assistance support system views the entire campus as a system. Through systems analysis all parts of the campus are integrated on a planned basis fitting each part into the program objective. Briefly, this is accomplished by the following approach: 1) involving and orienting key groups; 2) analyzing the institution, including resource identification; 3) defining goals in operational terms; 4) developing and selecting a program to achieve goals; 5) preparing for and installing the program; 6) evaluating and getting continuous feedback. This may appear to be simple, but such planning is seldom done completely. It is essential to a well-functioning program.

Second, a counseling approach is vital to success. By this is meant that the student is accepted as he is. He is welcomed with warmth and he is not judged. He relates to the learning assistance center staff in a collaborative manner to establish reasonable goals. Again this appears to be a simple approach, but it is frequently overlooked and it takes constant monitoring to maintain this attitude.
Third, this kind of a learning assistance center takes all comers, not just those needing remedial help. For example, a student with a 3.5 grade-point average who desires to enter law school may like to have assistance in improving his law

test score. An honor student planning to visit Germany the following summer might want help in getting a better grasp of conversational German. A faculty member, a student, or even a local business executive may want to increase his reading speed. All of these would find the learning assistance center of value.

In general terms, the objectives of this type of learning assistance center were described well in an application for innovative funds, prepared by California State University, Long Beach. The principal objective is to mobilize equipment, materials, and personnel to aid learners in achieving content mastery and perhaps a higher grade through a highly personalized and individualized campus facility. The learning center aims at what Benjamin Bloom in his review of research on learning (1971) insists can happen "the grade of A as an index of mastery of a subject can, under appropriate conditions, be achieved by up to 95% of the students in a class" and…" if every student had a very good tutor, most of them would be able to learn a particular subject

to a high degree." The aims of the center are to reduce the amount of time spent by students in college by providing immediate and easy access to and the use of a comprehensive, multisensory and functional collection of existing resources. The linking together of learners, learning facilitators, and learning assistance materials in a systematic and functional way to achieve the highest possible use of space, personnel, and materials are most important. It aims to support faculty innovation when such innovation is directed to improvement of the learning environment, its resources and materials.

Such a center operating under a systems approach does not need to possess all of the materials and all of the personnel in one facility. It mobilizes these elements. It schedules them. It integrates them. For example, a faculty member in the foreign language department may have times listed when he is available to meet a learner, for example, the student who wants to improve his German. The math department may have a problem-solving study lab in the department. This is integrated with the Center program. There are usually a number of tutorial programs on a large campus. The center has the schedule of times when such tutoring is available. The center may call upon counseling or other agencies for diagnostic information to assist a student. The center does have its own tutorial staff. It does have diagnostic materials. It does have a small professional-technical staff capable of providing

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both direct assistance and referral.

While there are undoubtedly a number of such centers in the nation, two in the California State University and Colleges system are founded and operate under the systems analysis approach as briefly described herein. One of these is at California State,University at Long Beach. Dr. Frank Christ has stated (1973) that experience has shown that departments and individual faculty members "own" or have access to equipment and materials which they do not use or for which they could share usage. An example of this is the number of program instructional materials that could be used by students in the center, but which are now on bookshelves in the offices of instructors, department chairmen, or on library shelves. Other examples are hardware and software which used in a center would be accessible to more students for more hours weekly.

Both of these centers are housed in the library in "extra" space. The library is usually a central facility with fairly long hours of availability. The centers are both operated as counseling outreach. However, the centers are treated as University-wide, as opposed to being "owned" by anyone. At Cal Poly a Board of Directors, consisting of faculty, students, and related administrators, oversees the program which is under the aegis of the Dean of Students.

Both Long Beach and Cal Poly found it desirable to implement the program on a low-profile basis. Both programs were initiated with very little fanfare. This provided the

staff an opportunity to become trained on the job and to develop, expand, and relate to the various tutorial and any other learning assistance programs on the campuses. It takes time to find the faculty members who can and are willing to assist. The development of peer tutors and arranging schedules is not done overnight. It should be noted that there are not many persons available who possess the combination of a counseling approach and skills in operating a learning assistance center of the type indicated. It is believed that a sound way to prepare the staff is to begin the program on a low-key basis.

Although the program will have been developed as indicated above by a system approach involving a large share of the campus community in inventory of resources, formulating and installing plans, and developing feedback procedures, the actual operations require developmental time. The preparation

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involved in the system approach provides enough publicity to initiate the program. Later, as the program finds its footing, appropriate publicity releases to the students and general campus community are in order.

It is interesting to note that at Long Beach where the pilot program was initiated, enough student interest was generated to draw about 250-300 students a month during the first six months of operation. This insured a good "shakedown" period. It looks as though the Cal Poly experience will parallel that at Long Beach.

While totally adequate financing from a given budgetary source would be welcome, the experience at Cal Poly revealed certain values in having the various segments of the campus community contribute to the center at least in the beginning stages. Various instructional schools and departments, Educational Opportunity Programs, the Library, the student body, the Audio Visual Department, Plant Maintenance, along with Student Affairs, have contributed personnel, equipment, student assistance funds, materials and/or labor. This gives each of them a stake in the success of the program. It is surprising what interest the contribution of a small sum such as $100 for student assistance will generate. The whole campus is in the system and the interest developed has proven highly desirable.

These programs operate using a student development concept. They are examples of student development in action. The student is assessed as to where he is in his development along the lines of his particular learning interest. He works with a professional -technical staff to establish goals, and all available resources of the University are mobilized to assist him in achieving that goal.

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