

Student Support Services Policy and Procedures

Student Support Services:

The Student Support Services (SSS) Program is a Federal TRIO program providing opportunity for academic development, assistance with basic college requirements, tutoring, mentoring, and motivating students towards the successful completion of their college education.

Students in the program receive assistance through academic advising and monitoring, career advising, transfer advising, financial aid advising, peer tutoring, peer mentoring, supplemental grant aid, assistance for students with disabilities, workshops and cultural events. The SSS program is funded to serve 350 first-generation, low-income students, and students with disabilities who have been admitted to or are enrolled at the college and have a demonstrated need for academic support.

Annual Awards Banquet:

Each year one or two weeks before final exams, an annual awards banquet is scheduled in order to recognize high achieving, program participants for various accomplishments. Tutors, Peer Mentors and Clerical workers are also recognized for their contributions to the SSS program at the banquet. Professional and support staff members solicit donations from local merchants so that a gift can be presented to awardees in addition to a certificate or plaque.

The following awards are presented to eligible past and present program participant nominees:

SSS Super Student Award: Awarded to top all around student considerations include: GPA, Leadership, campus and community service and involvement (i.e. student senate, clubs and organizations), on campus employment and its impact on SSS program participants, citizenship, maturity, character, role model, personality and involvement in SSS.

Super Achiever Award: Awarded to student who has demonstrated the greatest improvement in cumulative GPA over four or more semesters.

Most Diligent Award: This award is presented to the SSS program participant who has overcome the most obstacles in conferring his/her Bachelor's Degree. The SS staff acknowledges the fact that, all SSS program participants are at risk by virtue of eligibility in the program which requires students to be first generation/low income or disabled. Therefore, all program participants who confer a Bachelor's Degree have demonstrated diligence in overcoming some type of obstacle or another. Consequently, the recipient of this award is held in high regard by the SSS staff and the selection is based on the perceptions of the collective SSS staff membership. Preferably awarded to students on the verge of graduating.

Super Initiative Award: Awarded to the student with the highest number of tutor contacts showing outstanding personal initiative to ensure academic success.

Personal Initiative Award: This award is presented by each of the Academic Advisors to the SSS program participant who has demonstrated dedication and determination to succeed in college by not only consistently meeting with his/her advisor, but following through with suggestions and recommendations provided by that advisor.

Supplemental Grant Aid:

Eligible program participants are awarded Supplemental Grant Aid in the amount of at least \$400.00 per year for their freshman and sophomore years. These monies are awarded to students who are Pell eligible and have financial need according to the office of Financial Aid (priority given to students from the neediest to the least needy).

Additional criteria for eligibility includes achieving academic progress by passing 12 or more credit hours with a GPA of 1.75 for freshmen and 2.0 for sophomores. Special exceptions to the GPA / credit hours rule may be made for students who are working very closely with their advisors. The awards will be disbursed at the end of the spring semester to students who show academic progress for both spring and fall.

Disbursement of these awards is strictly contingent upon availability of funds which is to be determined at the end of the spring semester by the Director and Administrative Secretary.

Field Trips:

Field Trips are provided to program participants. Selection criteria is based on the following considerations: the program participant

- active program participant, in good standing with SSS and NMHU,
- has not attended more than one field trip,
- is selected on a first come first served basis.

1) When on a field trip, students are subject to the university Code of Student Conduct, the same behavioral expectations apply as if they were still on campus.

2) Students are obligated to stay with the group through out the trip and return with the group.

3) If there is a serious conflict between two or more of the people on the field trip, the professional staff will provide mediation for the people in conflict, if this isn't successful one or more people may be sent back home by bus.

4) As is the rule on campus, consumption of alcohol or illicit drugs is strictly prohibited.

5) Any infractions of rules and regulations may result in the student being sent back home by bus as well as answering to a disciplinary committee once back on campus.

Hiring of support staff:

Tutors are to be hired, trained and evaluated by the Tutor Coordinator with the approval and assistance of the Director. Tutors must demonstrate proficiency in the subject that they are to tutor in by earning a passing grade in a course at least one level higher than the one being tutored, e.g. pass Math 140 to tutor Math 120. In addition, tutors must be endorsed by a faculty member from the department for which the tutor is being hired to tutor in. This endorsement must be in the form of a letter of recommendation from the appropriate faculty member by email or hard copy.

Peer Mentors are to be hired, trained and evaluated by the Peer Mentor Coordinator with the approval and assistance of the Director. Prospective candidates should be classified as a sophomore or higher and have a dynamic personality and approachable demeanor. Peer Mentors may be called upon to assist with clerical work in the office as needed.

Clerical Workers are to be hired, trained and evaluated by the Administrative Assistant with the approval and assistance of the Director. Prospective candidates should have basic office skills and have a very customer friendly demeanor and attitude.

All support staff are expected to carry themselves in a professional manner in terms of dress, conduct, reliability, responsibility, approachability, demeanor, telephone etiquette and customer service.

Chain of Command:

All work-study employees will report to their immediate supervisor. If their immediate supervisor is unavailable, he/she must report to or get approvals from SSS staff members in the following bureaucratic order: Director, Administrative Assistant, Staff Secretary, if none of these staff members are available, then see an Academic Advisor who is on duty.

Staff Training and Travel:

“All staff travel for professional development must be directly related to the project’s overall purpose and proposed activities and should not exceed four percent of the total project salaries”. The Department of Education may adjust this percentage if the applicant demonstrates and the Department agrees that a higher percentage is necessary and reasonable.

I. Project Director’s Travel – Per Year

- A. One National Conference;
- B. One Regional Meeting;
- C. One State Meeting; and
- D. Travel for staff development under the Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs.

II. Full-time Professional Staff Travel – Per Year

- A. One Regional Meeting, One State Meeting or One National Meeting; and
- B. Travel for staff development under the Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs.

Additional Travel may be added if you follow the Basic Considerations in OMB A-21.

Support Staff Training:

Training for support staff i.e. Tutors, Peer Mentors and Clerical workers, is generally scheduled in early fall sometime within the first two weeks of classes. This training is generally provided on a Saturday so that all support staff can hopefully attend. The SSS professional staff is responsible for providing the training for support staff and each staff member is expected to be present and involved in the training program. The Tutor Coordinator oversees training of Tutors, the Peer Mentor Coordinator for Peer Mentors and the Administrative Assistant for Clerical staff. Newly hired support staff members are required to attend this training and their employment is contingent upon the completion of training. Additional training may be provided for support staff by their immediate supervisor on an ongoing basis.

Leave:

Annual Leave

- 1) Annual leave for more than two consecutive weeks at a time generally will not be approved unless there are extenuating circumstances which must be approved by the Dean of Students.
- 2) No more than two academic advisors or three staff members will be allowed to take annual leave during the same dates so we will have ample staff to perform the daily responsibilities of this office.
- 3) Leave requests will be approved on a first come-first served basis.
- 4) A maximum of 240 hours can be carried over from one fiscal year to the next.
- 5) It is the responsibility of the employee to plan ahead and ensure that he/she will be able to take any excessive annual leave before the June 31st deadline of each fiscal year.
- 6) Annual leave for three days or more must be submitted at least two weeks in advance.
- 7) Annual leave will generally be approved if it doesn't land on dates of important events that involve the SSS office and it's staff, i.e. freshman orientation & SSS training, awards banquets and other major SSS sponsored events. Extenuating circumstances may be approved by the Director and/or the Dean of Students.

Comp Time:

- 1) Comp time will be allowed only with prior approval by the director of SSS.
- 2) Paraprofessional or non-exempt staff will be allowed comp time on a 1:1.5 basis, (one and a half hours accrued for every hour worked).

- 3) Professional staff members are generally expected to work without compensation for hours beyond the 40 hour work week.
- 4) Any comp time accrued will be taken during the same pay period which it is accrued or be lost. (The following pay period may be allowed under special circumstances)

Sick Leave:

- 1) A doctor's excuse is required from any employee who takes sick leave beyond two days.
- 2) It is the prerogative of the Director to request a doctor's excuse even after one day of sick leave.
- 3) Sick leave can only be taken when members of the immediate family are sick i.e. children, spouse and in special cases father or mother.
- 4) HR has the authority to over ride approvals by supervisors as well as make final determinations on denials which are contested by subordinates.
- 5) Professional staff members who call in sick should inform the Director personally if possible. If the Director is not available to take the call, then the Administrative Assistant or Staff Secretary should be notified.
- 6) If a staff member does not call in with in one hour of the start of the work day or if he/she is gone for more than an hour without notifying the Director, Administrative Assistant or Staff Secretary, he/she will be considered AWOL (Absent Without Leave).
- 7) Sick leave tacked onto (taken the day before or after) annual leave or holidays will require a doctor's excuse to be approved for even one work day.

Leave Policies for Work-study employees:

- 1) Work-study employees (Tutors, Peer Mentors and Clerical workers), must call in prior to their scheduled work time and notify their supervisor or an available professional staff member if their supervisor is not available. Work-study employees who do not notify SSS office in a timely manner about missing work will not be allowed to make up hours missed.
- 2) The time card that students use to clock in with is an official document and should never be written on by the work-study employee. If a work-study employee forgets to clock out at the end of the work day, he/she must have his/her immediate supervisor write the clock out time on the card after verifying that the employee did indeed work the hours in question. If the immediate supervisor is not available to sign off before the time cards are submitted, then the Director can sign off on the card after verifying work hours.
- 3) All work-study must clock out upon leaving the office for lunch or any other reason without prior approval from a supervisor. Work-study students who are sent on errands on campus are required to return within thirty minutes unless approved by supervisor prior to the fact.
- 4) Work-study students will be allowed to bank hours for holiday and special occasions only upon supervisor approval prior to the fact and if there are

no major conflicts with the work schedule. Banking of hours from one pay period to another is strictly prohibited (no exceptions). This is not an obligation of the SSS staff but a privilege that will be extended at the prerogative of SSS staff.

- 5) **Evening hours:** clerical staff members are required to work weekdays between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm. Peer mentors will be allowed to work a maximum of 4 evening hours a week. Tutors may be required to work evenings between 5:00pm and 9:00pm for up to half of the work hours assigned.
- 6) All work-study staff are expected to adhere to the agreed upon work schedule that was initially submitted. Any deviations to this schedule should be approved by the immediate supervisor before the fact. Continued deviation from the initial work schedule and/or failure to meet the number of scheduled work hours per week constitute grounds for dismissal, termination or a decision not to rehire.

Tutors Reporting Late for Work:

- 1) If a tutor will be more than 5 minutes late, s/he must call the front desk and ask for a professional staff to either leave a written message for the Tutor Coordinator, or ask for the Tutor Coordinator's voicemail to leave your message (or for the Director if the Tutor Coordinator is out of the office). A tutor needs to specify the time s/he will be in to work. Simply saying that "I will be late and will be in sometime...", is not acceptable. As a courtesy to our students, we need to know the time you will be available for tutoring.
- 2) Please ask the front desk person to also post a "Tutor not Available" Sign to indicate that you will be in at a specified time. If you are not sure of the time, you must cancel your entire work shift (see cancellation policy) so that students don't have to wait and remain guessing.
- 3) When you know in advance that you will be late, you are responsible for posting the "Not Available" sign on your own.
- 4) No make up time is allowed for being late to work. As a courtesy to students, tutors are encouraged to keep to their scheduled tutoring hours as much as possible.

Tutors Cancelling work shift

- 1) **Unplanned or last minute cancellations:** You must call the front desk person (ask for a staff member) to post a Tutor Not Available Sign and to leave a written message for the Tutor Coordinator or you can ask for the Tutor Coordinator's voicemail to leave your message (or for the Director, if I am out of office). Making up any missed time is not allowed in this situation.
- 2) **Planned cancellations:** a tutor must complete a Tutor Time Off Request Form and must be responsible for posting their own "Tutor Not Available" sign. Make up time for planned cancellations will be considered if a two week advanced notice is provided to me. Make up time must be done during the same week of the cancellation and with preference given to

being able to work peak (student demand) tutoring hours. For cancellations with less than a 2 week notice, make up time may be considered if a tutor is able to switch hours with another tutor (of a similar subject area). The purpose of this is to ensure we have coverage (for the tutoring subject area). A temporary switching of work hours must be agreeable to both tutors and must have prior approval by the Tutor Coordinator.

- 3) A “No show” to work is unprofessional behavior and not acceptable. Tutors are expected to be responsible and make every effort to call in and leave a message for the Tutor Coordinator.

. Bereavement Leave:

- 1) According to Human Resources bereavement leave is reserved for staff members who have suffered the loss of immediate family members only (i.e. mother, father, children or spouse). When in doubt, Human Resources should be consulted to make final judgment calls.

Supplemental Income/Contracts:

- 1) All professional staff members are paid for a 40 hour week and they are expected put in at least this many hours for the SSS program. Any activities that distract the staff members from, or cause them to neglect their job responsibilities are prohibited.
The exception to this rule is that a staff member will be allowed to work on an unrelated project, if approved by the Director and/or Dean of Students, if the hours are kept accurately and arrangements have been made to make up any hours worked for any entity other than SSS. Completion of a time and effort form must be submitted each pay period and kept on file to document the fact that the employee is indeed working a 40 hour week for the SSS program.
- 2) This includes responsibilities as an officer of related organizations e.g. NM/WTASAP, SWASAP or COE. All staff members should keep this in mind before considering running for office in any of these TRIO organizations.

Students with Disabilities:

When Student Support Services was first established, services for students with disabilities were a fundamental part of its mission. The definition of a disability under legal statutes is that an individual is considered a person with a disability :

- If they have a disability,
- Have a history of a disability,
- Or are regarded as a person with a disability

For example, deaf individuals do not consider themselves as being disabled, but because they are considered so by the general population, they could be classified by SSS as disabled. If someone has received assistance as learning disabled in grade school and shows proof of it (i.e. an IEP), that individual is considered as having a history of a disability and can also be classified as a person with a disability.

A disabled student who wants to receive university/classroom accommodations for a disability will need to contact the Disabilities Coordinator in the office of Academic Support. Generally, records of a student's disability are stored in the office of the Disabilities Coordinator, but should be available to SSS if needed in order to provide the best assistance. These records are highly confidential and should be stored separately from the general records for SSS program participants.

One third of the disabled students accepted into the SSS program must be considered low-income. Disabled students are retained through completion of their program of study as opposed to non disabled program participants who are exited from active status after completing 64 credit hours with at least a 2.3 GPA

Student Support Services Annual Activity Timeline

Month	Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Time of Month
July			
	Plan and have SSS BBQ	All SSS staff	One or two weeks before final exams
	Freshman Orientation	D, ACA's	Generally twice in July
	Process New Applications: enter new apps. in database, run ISIRs, ACA's check for eligibility, D reviews apps. for final approval, letters of acceptance, rejection, and more info. needed sent out, enter new admits in SA, MS Access and SEAASGN, make a file	All SSS staff	Applications obtained at Freshman Orientation.
	Change status to advanced standing (participants who earn 64 credits with at least a 2.3 GPA) Disabled students excluded.	D, ADA, SS	Must be done before fall semester to make room for new admits.
Aug.			
	SAP Committee Meetings	D	Up to 6 weeks after classes commence.
	Freshman Orientation	D, ACA's	Generally twice in

			August
June 1 st thru October 1 st	Process New Applications: enter new apps. in database, run ISIRs, Acad. Adv.'s check for eligibility, Dir. reviews apps. for final approval, letters of acceptance, rejection, and more info. needed sent out, enter new admits in SA, MS Access and SEAASGN, make a file	All SSS staff	Applications obtained at Freshman Orientation.
1 st month of fall sem.	Change status to advanced standing (participants who earn 64 credits with at least a 2.3 GPA) Disabled students excluded.	D, ADA, SS	Must be done before fall semester to make room for new admits.
	First day of classes	All SSS staff	Generally the 3 rd week in August
Aug. or Sept	Academic Advisors need to send a letter out to each of their students.	D, ACAs	End of Aug. or beginning of Sept.
Aug. or Sept.	Training for Work-Studies: Tutors, Peer Mentors and Clerical workers	All SSS staff	1 st feasible Saturday after 1 st day of classes
Aug or Sept.	Welcome Back or Open House	All SSS staff	Weekday afternoon 2 or 3 weeks after 1 st day of classes.
Aug. / Sept. Sept.	Complete Needs Assessment and Success Plan for new Admits.	ACA, D	By one month after admission to SSS.
	Closely monitor Program Participants / Early Alert	ACA	1 st 6 weeks of classes
	Develop and revise Tutor schedules	TC	1 st 4 weeks of classes.
	COE Conference	D	Mid Sept.
Oct.			
	Performance Report	D, ADA, TC, SS	Usually due by the end of October
Oct. or Nov.	Mid-Term mail out	ACA	Generally 8 weeks into the semester
Oct. or Nov.	Last day to withdraw from classes	ACA	Varies
Nov.			
	SWASAP Conference	ACAs	Varies
	Spring Semester pre-registration	ACAs	Varies
	Fall Break	All SSS staff	Thanksgiving
Dec.			
	Tutors submit revised schedules for finals week.	TC	1 st or 2 nd week of December
	Mail outs regarding final grades	ACAs	Before X-mas break

	Christmas Break		
Jan.			
	SAP Committee Meetings	D	Up to 6 weeks after classes commence.
	Spring Registration	ACA	
	Admit New Applicants if needed	All SSS staff	Up to 4 weeks after classes commence.
	Academic Advisors need to send a letter out to each of their students.	D, ACAs	Within three weeks of beginning of classes.
	Plan / Schedule FA & IRS assistance collaborate with FA office, Business Dept., Academic Support, & CAMP.	D, ADA, SS	Mid January
Feb.			
	Provide workshops for Fin. Aid and IRS assistance.	D, ACAs	Once a week for month of February
	Assist Prog. Participants with completing FAFSA's	D, ACAs	Month of February
March			
	Fin. Aid priority deadline	D, ACAs	March 1st
	Mid-Term Grades (Mail outs)	D, ACAs	Varies
	COE Partnership Agreement	D, ADA	Varies
	Spring Break	Not appl.	Varies
April			
	Plan Awards Banquet	ACA, D	1 or 2 weeks before final exams.
3 rd week of April	SSS Awards Banquet	All SSS staff	1 or 2 weeks before final exams.
May			
	NMHU Commencement Exercises Line up	Available SSS staff	1 st or 2 nd week of May
June			
	Summer Session commences	ACAs	1 st week of June
	Freshman Orientation	ACAs, D	Generally twice in June
	Recruit New Applicants	D, ACAs	At Freshman Orientation
	Process New Applications: enter new apps. in database, run ISIRs, ACA's check for eligibility, D reviews apps. for final approval, letters of acceptance, rejection, and more info. needed sent out, enter new admits in SA, MS Access and SEAASGN, make a file	All SSS staff	Applications obtained at Freshman Orientation.

