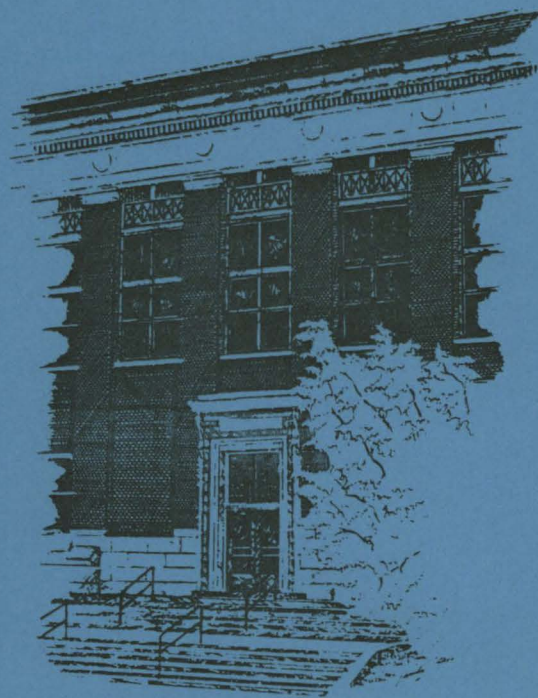


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# **ANNUAL REPORT**

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**1984-85**



**Student Support Services**

**University of Minnesota**

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## OVERVIEW OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

1984-85

### RESPONSIBILITIES

As an administrative division within the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Student Support Services (SSS) provides basic academic and administrative support services to the University of Minnesota community.

"Student" Support Services is somewhat a misnomer, for much of the support we provide helps colleges, campuses, and central administration to carry through their programs. Units within SSS must balance direct services to students--our primary responsibility--with the need for other forms of support.

Thanks to our early commitment to computer development and our ongoing dedication to improvements, SSS has made great progress--largely recovering from the severe retrenchments of a few years ago without additional operating resources (except in financial aid).

The administrative reorganization of SSS four years ago, which resulted in four essentially interdependent units, is working remarkably well. Separate reports on each unit, with more detailed data on individual programs, are attached. In general, the units function as follows:

Admissions and Prospective Student Services provides essential information to prospective Twin Cities campus students and helps them make a smooth transition to undergraduate life.

The Office of Student Financial Aid oversees the allocation of both external and internal aid funds according to University priorities, facilitating the enrollment and retention of thousands of students.

Registration, Student Records, and Scheduling documents students' academic accomplishments and manages the all-important registration and room scheduling mechanisms.

Information Systems and Services coordinates the complex student services computer systems and communicates vital information through computer access and extensive printed materials.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Computer Development Strategy. During the severe retrenchments of three and four years ago, we decided to protect resources allocated to computer development--the only viable alternative to improve student services for

the long haul. We considered three basic building blocks (listed below) essential for an effective and integrated student services computer system, and evidence now shows that our strategy is beginning to pay off:

- ▶ The Registration and Student Record system is mature; it provides good support across all campuses. We are slowly adding enhancements such as two-quarter registration and improved transcripts.
- ▶ The SAM (Student Aid Management) system, having completed its first year on the Twin Cities campus, is now being generalized to all campuses. It has enabled student contact improvements in Fraser Hall, a critical and obvious need. Judging from registration system experience, we expect to capitalize on further efficiencies and enhancements in the near future.
- ▶ The Admissions/Prospective Student Services system should logically have been first but was left to last, due in part to on-line support available through a far-sighted system developed in 1968. During 1984-85, an external design document for a new and comprehensive three-phase system was completed. Internal design was begun and the system planned for 1985-86 implementation. However, because integrating Continuing Education and Extension and day school records is now a higher priority than the admissions system, only Phase I can be implemented in 1985-86.

Thanks to development strides made this year, the three systems above are now ready to fit together in an on-line mode for the first time ever.

Other significant steps have been taken to provide better information from student data computer files along with access through a University-wide network of terminals.

Workload. The quantity of work in the various SSS units has risen, even though the number of staff has remained the same. Increases occurred in applications for admission (up 17%), in prospective student contacts, and in self-help services such as guaranteed student loans and student employment. Three other shifts signified better service: transcript requests dropped (in part--we believe--because students have more confidence in records and do not need to check them); more in-person certifications were made (students did not have to wait for paper requests to be processed); and fewer students were asked to come to the Office of Student Financial Aid (we responded more by phone).

The financial aid environment became more complex: federal and state regulations were added and revised; more internal reporting was required; and a new dimension for awarding aid was overlaid on the criterion of financial need.

In response to the Task Force on the Student Experience, SSS made adjustments within existing resources: hours were expanded, contact services stressed, and development efforts initiated (e.g., removing registration holds and registering in spring for fall).

Attracting high ability students to the University became a priority. Resources were redirected to expand recruiting efforts, and new resources were made available for central merit awards to new students.

Communication with various constituencies within the University has improved. Relationships were strengthened between Financial Aid and the professional colleges and International Student Adviser's Office; between the College Work Study program and the Graduate School; and between all SSS units and the St. Paul campus units and athletic programs. Information Systems and Services also worked to furnish better information to colleges, campuses, and departments.

## STAFFING

During 1984-85, no changes occurred in director or assistant director positions. Numbers of employees were similar to the prior year, with the addition of 1 FTE clerical in Prospective Student Services and 1.4 FTE in Information Systems and Services. Four Admissions staff members were reassigned to computer development work. In Financial Aid, it will be another year before a stable pattern solidifies in the wake of the SAM system, which has called for new skills and some staffing shifts to student contact areas; in the meantime, a large component of part-time, student help is providing flexibility during this period of flux.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

"Service" is literally part of the name and mission of Student Support Services. Over and above our specific service role to the University community, there are many ways we influence educational and public policy and assist other institutions and the community at large.

Within the University, SSS staff have been on various task forces (e.g., Student Experience) and have provided extensive background information for others (e.g., Commitment to Focus).

On a state, national, and even international level, SSS staff contribute their expertise to key government and professional organizations. Such interaction is a two-way street, since crucial information (e.g., late-breaking changes in financial aid) often comes to us through informal channels associated with those organizations. We could not operate effectively without it.

Staff have held high leadership positions--including president--in such organizations as ASTUTE (the national computing system users organization), MOSA (Minnesota Office Systems Association), AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers), UMAACRAO (the Upper Midwest regional association of AACRAO), NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisers), NASFA (National Association of Student Financial Aid), MAFAA (the Minnesota equivalent of NASFA), the National Association of Student Employment Administrators, and NACAC (National Association of College Admission Counselors). Several of us serve on policy and advisory committees of the Higher Education Coordinating Board and the American College Testing program.

## ISSUES

Three factors, largely beyond our control, constrain our efforts to provide the best services possible to students and the University community:

External Changes. We are often the unit of the University that interacts with external constituencies, and are therefore forced into the role of interpreting new University directions such as Commitment to Focus. We need to anticipate the implications of new directions for, say, affirmative action and recruiting, so as to work effectively in their support.

Particularly in financial aid, changes in the outside environment are constant, significant, and troublesome. More than any other unit, Financial Aid is at the mercy of external agencies--both those that change the rules of the game (e.g., Congress) and those that help us accommodate change (e.g., software suppliers).

Within the financial aid community throughout the country, a major policy shift in favor of high ability students is being hotly debated. The new directions the University is taking with Commitment to Focus make clear how we need to position ourselves. Historically, the central financial aid service has based its decisions on documented financial need, subtracting students' available resources from their University costs. In the past few years, we have interposed the concept of merit awards to academically promising students. And now, limited in our ability to make a dent in financial need for all students, we fund high ability students demonstrating some need before more needy students of lesser academic potential.

University Policies. Although most issues seem to involve both policy and resources, a few are policy-dependent, not resource-bound. That is, we could improve service, and even save time and money, if we simply had the power to change certain policies. Reducing late grades, unifying calendars, limiting changes in the grading systems, and enforcing deadlines would be high on our list.

But by far the most disconcerting policy issue this past year involves Administrative Information Services (AIS), the administrative computing organization we are dependent upon. We cannot control AIS charges. Our best estimates of the direction administrative computing would take assumed prices would come down over time; instead, mainframe computing is more expensive every year, despite huge increases in our volumes. To us, it appears that the new direction in AIS is funded by maintaining unnecessarily high prices.

In addition, we are concerned about the intent of AIS to deal directly with the same clients we do, causing significant overlap for many University units and jeopardizing long-established SSS student information programs. In some areas (e.g., downloading to micros), AIS will be holding us back on developments we have sought for some time.

Computer Funding. Although we have received exceptionally good financial support from the central administration for computer development, we still have not recovered in operational areas (necessary to run

sophisticated systems) from the severe retrenchments of the last biennium. And we are further hampered by skyrocketing AIS charges.

Another hindrance to computer development is largely historical. We had a relatively late start in improving large student administrative computing systems at the University, and much remains to be done (e.g., phases II and III of the Admissions project and the CEE registration system). However, the nature of the computing environment--with its emphasis on micros and distributed information--is beginning to pass us by. We see marvelous, cost-effective, and clever applications; we want to do them; we know how to do them; but if we do, we will not put the basic building blocks of our central system into place. Most frustrating is that we are viewed by those who want today's service as providing only yesterday's. It is a resource problem, not a knowledge or attitude problem, and it is exacerbated by the present AIS direction.

If we had additional computer development resources, we would:

- ▶ Put phases II and III of the Admissions project (delayed to make way for the CEE project) back on the development schedule
- ▶ Build a computerized course transfer system (other Big 10 schools are doing so) and an academic progress tracking system
- ▶ Decentralize student system access from college to academic department level
- ▶ Support equipment to use the ID system University-wide (through point-of-sale terminals and ties to other systems, such as libraries)
- ▶ Free up staff time to take full advantage of our internal office automation system (our minicomputer system has capabilities we haven't had time to implement)
- ▶ Support external and internal computer interactions about financial aid (e.g., with need analysis services, the General Ledger, loan application services)

Closing Comment. Student Support Services has built back some of the ground lost through retrenchment by stressing computer assistance. The administrative reorganization is working. Our services need to be improved, but we believe we are using resources effectively and working toward current University objectives. We are doing more to evaluate our services. The environment changes fast, particularly in financial aid. Our primary problems are in maintaining the support and resources for administrative computing. We know how we want to develop future services and find our inability to move faster frustrating.



## ADMISSIONS AND PROSPECTIVE STUDENT SERVICES

1984-85

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Admissions Office coordinates essential services for colleges of the University, prospective and admitted students, and feeder schools. Its mission is to provide an appropriate student body for the faculty and to find appropriate academic programs for qualified students. The three primary subunits operate as follows:

Prospective Student Services describes the University's colleges, programs, majors, course offerings, and requirements so that students can make informed decisions on their postsecondary educational plans. Information is provided in response to requests as well as through targeted mailings, group programs, and individual contacts. Publications include the undergraduate student viewbook and counselors' handbook.

Admissions Processing collects credentials for the admission of new students to the University's undergraduate and professional schools; evaluates high school, college, and international academic records; and makes admission decisions according to guidelines worked out with colleges (or refers applicants to colleges). This subunit organizes and provides data for advising and placing new students; reporting to federal, state, and University officials; and reviewing admission standards. Staff participate in the revision and implementation of new admission standards and regularly consult colleges and feeder schools.

The Student Contact Center offers admission counseling; answers questions; accepts application forms, transcripts, and other credentials; and, when appropriate, makes referrals.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New Computer System. After a year of intensive planning and consultation with academic units and coordinate campuses, the System External Specifications for the new Admissions and Prospective Student computer project were approved. Work on System Internal Specifications and the programming of Phase I has proceeded very productively. System development this past year is viewed as a model of good communication between users and Administrative Information System (AIS) staff. All offices that work with the student data base are benefiting from the system team's innovative approaches and solutions to problems. This solid development work has laid the foundation for a system that will creatively meet the University's admission and recruiting needs.

In the near term, the new system will provide direct communication with Registration, Records, and Financial Aid. It will facilitate smooth and



continuous service to students and allow tracking and management reports on groups of students across administrative departments. College and coordinate campus staff will have direct access to admission and prospective student data on their applicants. Clerical errors will be reduced through electronic transfer of test score data. Eventually, following Phase I, subsequent enhancements will speed application processing and response time and produce reports evaluating the outcomes of recruitment efforts.

Recruitment. The Admissions Office provided leadership, staff support, and resources for the initiatives of the all-University President's Recruitment Project. The head of Prospective Student Services participated in planning and developing new strategies for attracting high ability students. He chaired the Student Recruitment Advisory Board, which planned implementation procedures, and redirected office funds to support college and central efforts. New recruitment efforts included an expanded President's letter cycle that began earlier, lasted longer, and maintained contact with nearly double the number of targeted students. Out-of-state recruitment events were held in four cities in Wisconsin and Illinois. More demographic data was gathered to support marketing analysis. An all-University slide show and a brochure to support receptions in test markets were developed. We attended the Wisconsin Minority Fair for the first time to expand our pool of prospective minority students.

A staff position on soft money was committed to helping process high ability student applications. A new report, called the High Ability Roster, was developed and shared with college office staff to facilitate high ability student follow-up. High school teacher participation in our College Board Advanced Placement workshop remained high after a dramatic increase the previous year; the number of AP scores sent to the University increased 44%, from 180 to 260.

Improved Service. Expanded Monday evening and Saturday morning office hours improved service to students and their parents. Changes in the physical layout and staffing of the office created a pleasant and responsive student contact center, in keeping with the main thrust of the Task Force on the Student Experience. Many of the task force's recommendations have been implemented; others are planned.

International Students. The international student admissions officer participated in the development of a proposal for recruiting high ability international students; worked with the College of Agriculture to review and revise admission policies; and planned steps to improve service to international students, such as coordinating admissions for St. Paul and Minneapolis colleges.

Transfer Entry. The on-line entry of transfer credit, begun last year, has been refined. The Transfer Credit Evaluation system not only provides course transfer information to students earlier, but also adds Advanced Placement awards to the transcripts of freshmen to improve Orientation/Registration course selection and advising.

## Activity Indicators

	1983-84	1984-85
Prospective Student Services		
Telephone Hotline Contacts	10,813	11,149
Information Requests by Students	40,379	44,302
National College Fair Contacts	9,500	10,200
MN Post High School Planning Contacts	3,640	3,510
WI Postsecondary Planning Contacts	174	2,940
High School Visits	6,580	5,115
Campus Visits	<u>1,006</u>	<u>320</u>
	TOTAL	72,092
Admissions Processing		
New High School	9,026	10,891
New Advanced Standing	8,529	10,707
Intra-U Transfer	<u>6,837</u>	<u>6,927</u>
	TOTAL	24,392
Admissions Activities		
Transfer Credit Evaluations	5,596	8,885
Student Contacts	54,934	56,000
Telephone Contacts	<u>118,344</u>	<u>113,000</u>
	TOTAL	178,874

## STAFFING

Prospective Student Services		
Professional	7.44	7.69
Clerical	1	2
Admissions Processing		
Professional	6.75	5.5
Clerical	25.3	23.8
System Support		
Professional	NA	2.0
Clerical	<u>NA</u>	<u>2.0</u>
	FTE TOTAL	40.49
		42.99

Several staffing changes were made in 1984-85. Two professional and two clerical positions were moved to the newly organized System Support subunit to work on development, testing, and implementation of the Admissions/Prospective Student Services computer system. Two positions were created: one for an admissions counselor and one to facilitate high ability student applications. The most notable shift was allocating more staff time to direct student contact.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Admissions Office staff participated in numerous University, all-University, and extra-University activities. They provided leadership in overall recruitment planning and helped colleges develop enrollment management plans. They represented the University on Department of Education and Higher Education Coordinating Board committees (e.g., Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act Advisory

Committee, Post High School Planning Committee), which play key roles in legislative decision making. They held office in national professional organizations such as AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers), UMAACRAO (the Upper Midwest regional association of AACRAO), NACAC (National Association of College Admission Counselors), and NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisers). The international student admissions officer was selected for a U.S. Information Agency grant under the auspices of AACRAO to visit Austria and study its educational system; she will then write a placement guide to help American educators assess Austrian-educated students.

## ISSUES

Changes in Minnesota Education. President Keller's Commitment to Focus plan directly affects this office--mandating the admission of better prepared students, in some cases through new entry points. New requirements must be effectively communicated to students and the educational community. We must work closely with feeder schools to mesh their changes with ours.

Paralleling refinements in the University's mission and role are new legislation (e.g., Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act); new Department of Education regulations (e.g., high school graduation requirements); and new K-12 developments (e.g., competency testing and curriculum revision).

New Computer System. Bringing the new Admissions/Prospective Student Services system on line will provide opportunities to serve the University in new and better ways. Careful planning and good communication with users will be needed to assure positive and constructive change. An important use of the new system will be to support recruitment of high ability students and enrollment management decision making.

Course Transfer. The Legislature, Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Board of Regents are interested in facilitating course transfer. We need to refine methods of providing students, counselors, and faculty with readily available information on how to transfer courses and count them in new degree programs.

Minority Recruitment. We will continue our firm commitment to affirmative action and recruitment of minority students. However, increasing emphasis will be placed on attracting high ability and better prepared minority students who will persist, earn degrees, and be more likely to enter graduate and professional programs. Succeeding in this much more competitive recruitment market will demand intensive recruitment efforts, stronger support from academic units, and better financial aid awards.

Improved Service. Significant enhancements in service to students will require ingenuity to find new ways to get things done, hopefully with the cooperation and understanding of academic units. We have implemented many worthwhile changes in the past, and believe that earlier deadlines and new computer support will enable us to achieve even more. We will need all the tools and wisdom we can bring to bear to respond constructively, appropriately, and successfully to future changes and challenges.

## OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

1984-85

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) on the Twin Cities campus serves approximately 35,000 students each year. Its mission is to serve and help students whose family resources are inadequate to cover costs incurred while attending the University. OSFA administers and awards funds from a variety of gift, loan, and work programs supported by the federal and state governments, the University, and private foundations. Students are offered consumer information on aid availability and educational costs; assistance in applying for and receiving aid; and counseling services.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New Computer System. The administration of all financial aid programs has become increasingly complex. In a major effort to expedite the processing of aid applications and awards, OSFA introduced in 1984-85 a new computerized Student Aid Management (SAM) system purchased from Sigma Systems, Inc. The implementation of SAM has required a significant financial commitment, as well as extensive planning, testing, and development by OSFA and Administrative Information Services (AIS).

Software for the 1984-85 academic year was not delivered until February 1984, and the first programs were not turned over to production until April. As a result, processing of 1984-85 aid applications was delayed by several months, and packaging of awards did not occur until August. Despite these delays, more aid funds were available to students at the beginning of fall 1984 than in any previous year.

Complete implementation and production turnover of the various modules of SAM is continuing in 1985-86. But even throughout 1984-85, SAM's effect was already felt in OSFA's enhanced ability to process aid applications quickly, award funds to eligible students, produce and disburse checks efficiently, and respond to inquiries.

SAM offers on-line access to all information pertinent to a student's application and award status. Staff are able to answer many complex questions by quick reference to SAM, improving telephone counseling services to students and decreasing the need for students to come to OSFA in person.

As processing and awarding of aid has progressed for the 1985-86 year, the anticipated efficiencies of SAM are being more fully realized. Applications are now processed within one week of receipt in OSFA; the awarding cycle began in June, compared to August the previous year; award

notices were mailed to most students by July; and virtually no application backlogs or bottlenecks occurred during the traditional peak application processing times.

Reliance on Self-Help. With relatively little increase in federal funding and decreases in state funding, OSFA has been challenged to develop new strategies to help students meet their financial need. Students are now relying more heavily on self-help funds--a trend clearly evidenced by a 17% rise in applications for guaranteed student loan programs and a 22% jump in the number of students seeking employment during 1984-85.

Automated GSL System. OSFA responded to the increased demand for outside loans by exploring new initiatives to automate and expedite the processing of guaranteed student loans (GSLs). In May 1984, OSFA began preliminary discussions with the Higher Education Assistance Foundation to develop an automated system for processing GSLs. In September, American College Testing entered the discussions and by December the concept for an automated GSL delivery system materialized. The Twin Cities campus is piloting this new delivery concept in 1985-86, and OSFA plans to install Sigma's Loan Application Processing System (LAPS) for the 1986-87 academic year. The innovative automation of GSL delivery has gained national attention and is already demonstrating significant processing time savings. It is anticipated that the time required in OSFA to process GSLs will decrease from 6-8 weeks in 1984-85 to 2-3 weeks in 1985-86. With LAPS in place for 1986-87, OSFA processing time should be reduced to 1 week or less.

Student Employment Programs. Students, in increasing numbers, are working to pay for their education. OSFA continues to provide a variety of student employment programs: University, non-University, off-campus, Job Location and Development, and Student Emergency Service. While the number of student applicants increased 22% in 1984-85, job vacancies increased by 39%. And benefits are not restricted to students; OSFA continues to provide efficient service and qualified employees to University departments as well as the community.

High Ability Awards. As part of a University effort to attract high ability students to the Twin Cities campus, OSFA implemented a plan in 1984-85 to increase high ability scholarship assistance. A full-time staff member was added to deal specifically with high ability students. OSFA was actively involved with administrative and college staff in formulating a long-range plan to recruit and retain high ability scholars.

OSFA earmarked aid funds to support high ability students in 1984-85, and for the first time, included them as a priority population in financial aid packaging policy. The commitment to high ability students signifies a major shift from an exclusively need-based policy to one in which merit is considered.

In 1984-85, University-sponsored National Merit scholars numbered 115; in 1985-86, there will be 157 University-sponsored and 46 corporate-sponsored National Merit scholars. Presidential scholars on the Twin Cities campus will increase from 50 to 169. Outstanding Minority Scholars (Presidential and Katz) will increase from 8 to 20.

University Relationships. In 1984-85, OSFA continued its efforts to improve relationships with other University departments and programs. A pilot project demonstrated the feasibility of using College Work Study funds to support graduate assistantships. OSFA expanded outreach activities with the International Student Adviser's Office, Office of Minority and Special Student Affairs, Law School, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and health profession schools. OSFA staff are available as resources and meet monthly with University departments to help them better serve their own specific populations of students.

Activity Indicators

	1983-84	1984-85	% Change
<b>Awards</b>			
Federal Funds			
NSDL	\$3,187,772	\$3,141,135*	-2
SEOG	\$1,659,369	\$1,629,862*	-2
College Work Study	\$2,005,089	\$2,023,423*	+1
Pell	\$8,725,419	\$9,188,397*	+5
State Funds			
MN State Grant	\$4,635,331	\$3,947,105*	-15
Part-Time Grant	\$125,558	\$126,970*	+1
College Work Study	\$1,324,335	\$1,205,476*	-8
University Funds			
Scholarships	\$2,446,958	\$2,468,661*	+1
Loans	\$820,084	\$1,488,877*	+76
Guaranteed Loans	\$34,539,775	\$40,300,000*	+17
University Earnings	\$69,500,337	\$74,014,906	+7
<b>Student Contacts</b>			
Telephone	58,564	72,743	+24
In-Person	69,053	55,472	-20
<b>GSL Applications</b>	15,997	18,660	+17
<b>Student Employment</b>			
Job Vacancies	11,467	15,892	+39
JLD Vacancies	1,066	1,477	+39
Off-Campus Vacancies	2,479	5,611	+126
SES Vacancies	670	852	+27
Individual Applicants	9,978	12,173	+22

\*Estimates (1984-85 year-end figures not yet available)

**STAFFING**

OSFA employs 70 full-time staff, supported by 60 to 80 part-time staff. The introduction of SAM has resulted in ongoing analysis of the staffing needs of the office and refinement of staff roles. As certain functions have become automated, OSFA has redirected staff and resources to support and improve student contact and services.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Throughout a very busy year, OSFA staff continued to play vital roles in the University, community, and external organizations. Staff were active on various committees within Student Support Services and other University departments. They provided specially tailored services to students through the Learning Resource Centers, the health profession schools, the Office for Students with Disabilities, the Law School, the athletic department, Continuing Education and Extension, and other college and program offices.

OSFA participated in high school nights throughout the metropolitan area to provide prospective students and their parents with financial aid information.

Various staff represented the University and participated actively in professional associations. Staff held elected office in the Minnesota Association of Financial Aid Administrators (MAFAA), National Association of SAM Users (NASU), and National Association of Student Employment Administrators (NASEA). Staff participated in committee work for MAFAA, the Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA), and the Midwest Association of Student Employment Administrators (MASEA). In addition, staff were selected as members of various advisory councils for the Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board (MHECB) and American College Testing (ACT). Through these professional associations, OSFA is able to influence policy at the state, regional, and federal levels; to recommend new initiatives; and to participate in the development of new services to the financial aid profession.

## ISSUES

OSFA faces many challenges in the coming year, among them the continuing financial demands of the SAM system, development and implementation of SAM on the coordinate campuses, and installation of LAPS. Ever-present goals include equitably distributing limited resources to students, streamlining processes to administer aid, and improving the quality of services to University students.



## REGISTRATION, STUDENT RECORDS, AND SCHEDULING

1984-85

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Registration, Student Records, and Scheduling (RSRS)--the repository of academic records for all students who ever enrolled--is responsible for a wide variety of functions vital to the well-being of the academic endeavor at the University. The basic functions below have not changed substantially in 1984-85:

- ▶ Maintain all authorized course records and quarterly course offerings
- ▶ Schedule courses, special events, and finals
- ▶ Equip and maintain classrooms
- ▶ Produce academic load reports
- ▶ Operate computers used for Twin Cities registration and coordinate registration activities on the other campuses
- ▶ Register students in person and by mail
- ▶ Plan, test, and implement system changes throughout RSRS
- ▶ Maintain contact with academic units about scheduling and registration activities
- ▶ Create and maintain academic records for day and evening students
- ▶ Manage grades and grade reports
- ▶ Audit student records
- ▶ Organize diploma production and distribution for University system
- ▶ Assist colleges with the degree clearance process and maintain statistical compilations of degrees granted
- ▶ Handle extensive student contact in all locations
- ▶ Certify student enrollment
- ▶ Manage veteran monitoring
- ▶ Produce all student transcripts for students, departments, and advisers
- ▶ Assist students with academic record problems
- ▶ Operate the St. Paul Admissions and Records center
- ▶ Assist St. Paul colleges with prospective students, admissions, and orientation
- ▶ Manage Office of Student Affairs operations in St. Paul
- ▶ Produce numerous statistical reports for the University, educational agencies, and government bodies
- ▶ Produce the Class Schedules and General Information bulletins
- ▶ Certify the academic eligibility and progress of student athletes

Liaison responsibilities with University departments and colleges are given concentrated attention as is the process of planning enhancements to automated student record systems.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Many new and exciting changes were implemented in 1984-85, including direct expansions or improvements in student services.

Increased Hours. One major change was to increase hours in all student service areas to 8-4 Tuesday through Friday and 8-6:30 Monday. Several other University offices also increased their hours, and student referral forms were designed for use in all areas.

Student Record Area. Enhancements in the student record area were numerous. Colleges can now access the records of students in any University college, instead of being limited to their own students. A monthly graduation plan implemented at the request of the Graduate School is working very well. The substantially altered process for turning in applications for degrees has reduced student stops and processing time within RSRS and the colleges; work-saving techniques have cut two weeks off the time needed to mail diplomas to graduates. Grade capture procedures and forms have been redesigned: the percentage of grades received late has fallen slightly. Programming changes have speeded input of late grades into the student record system. CEE student records are continuously being audited, making transcript production easier and more accurate. A new on-the-spot official transcript service was implemented.

Hold System. As in 1983-84, efforts have been made to improve the hold system. Holds are no longer placed on records just before registration. RSRS staff help with hold problems at the registration centers, instead of just referring students to various offices.

Registration System. Registration for both summer sessions was possible for summer session 1985. Detailed plans are now being laid for early fall registration in spring 1986. More efficient in terms of both student wait time and staff operational time, the registration system is being modified to produce reports showing the first day classes close each quarter and to streamline payroll deduction for graduate students.

St. Paul Center. The St. Paul Admissions and Records center functioned extremely well all year, receiving compliments from both colleges and students. The center now sends copies of transcripts for graduating students and approves health service exemptions. Office layout was modified for more efficiency in 190 Coffey Hall. RSRS staff in both Minneapolis and St. Paul assisted the Admissions Office with timely entry of transfer student academic records.

Scheduling. Scheduling staff have participated in designing a revised Course Inventory system, which provides more detail on teaching load factors. A Room Utilization report for central administration was produced for the first time in four years. Extensive work has been done with the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs in light of the Task Force on the Student Experience recommendation to improve the educational environment in large classrooms.

Outreach. Student and college relations work and liaison activities have been constant. Teams of staff have visited colleges and many academic departments regarding a variety of topics. Relationships with the Minnesota Daily have become excellent this year as a result of RSRS work.

RSRS has continued to sponsor a series of informational workshops for University staff, which have been very well attended and received. Good working relationships have been established with the athletic academic counseling staff, with few problems certifying academic progress for athletes compared to other recent years. After much planning and thought, an academic progress tracking report was designed and completed for student athletes.

### Activity Indicators

	1983-84	1984-85
Registrations Processed		
Summer	23,074	21,621
Fall	46,750	45,041
Winter	43,933	43,024
Spring	<u>40,977</u>	<u>39,704</u>
	TOTAL	154,734
Transcripts Processed		
Official Transcripts Mailed	70,085	50,542
In-Person Transcripts	63,724	64,375
College/Department Transcripts	<u>10,840</u>	<u>12,344</u>
	TOTAL	144,649
New Diplomas Issued	10,678	11,059
Replacement Diplomas Issued	510	209
Day Grades Processed	508,400	573,566
Extension Grades Processed	84,000	61,250
Mail-In Certifications	17,713	11,222
In-Person Certifications	13,196	20,053
Late Changes to Class Schedule Information	7,741	8,345
Number of Special Room Reservations	11,388	11,978
St. Paul Admissions Applications Processed	2,959	2,572
Course Sections Scheduled		
Summer	4,843	4,980
Fall	7,983	8,013
Winter	8,054	8,141
Spring	<u>7,594</u>	<u>7,621</u>
	TOTAL	28,474

### STAFFING

No major staffing changes took place in 1984-85. Full-time RSRS employees number about 90. Some reductions in student employees can be attributed to increased efficiency in the transcript and registration areas. As part of a major effort to ensure accuracy of student records, the academic records of all Student Support Services staff who have access to the Student Data Base were audited; no problems were found. All student service staff now wear name tags.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

RSRS staff continued their high level of interaction with other departments on campus. All coordinate campuses were visited at least once during the year for training and communication purposes. The most recent trip to Waseca helped ensure smooth production of fall fee statements from the early spring registration for fall. RSRS is deeply involved with numerous task forces and committees aimed at improving student services. The director was a member of the Task Force on the Student Experience and the Semester Study Committee. Others participated in CEE computer development groups, many college relations committees, and the St. Paul Coordinating Committee. We have been committed to the operation of the new Student Support Services office automation network, which has been very successful in its first year. The Scheduling subunit initiated a self-evaluation of services offered to academic departments. RSRS efforts have been heavily concentrated on improving student service.

## ISSUES

Early Fall Registration. One major issue for the coming year is the implementation this spring of early fall registration on the Twin Cities campus. This eagerly awaited development will have broad implications for the academic endeavor in terms of course offerings, advising techniques, and student opportunities. It will encourage early planning and save students trips to campus before fall quarter. In time, we hope enough information will be available to allow departments to add courses in popular areas and improve course availability. Programming to begin early registration is nearly finished. Tentative procedures have been worked out with colleges and departments, and a calendar of important dates is almost complete for next spring. The early registration capability will be widely publicized this fall.

Computer Development Projects. The academic record system will require changes to accommodate Morris's new grading system and Duluth's restructured colleges. Other large computer development projects--CLA's proposal to alter the grading system for Twin Cities undergraduates, the integration of CEE student records into the day school system, the development of an on-line transcript production system, the modification of the course inventory reporting system--will require the concentrated energy of numerous RSRS staff. (The CEE project, one of the University's top development priorities, is being rethought. The original plan envisioned a separate but tied CEE student data base, but current thinking favors only one data base serving all University students. President Keller's long-range plan stresses eventual integration of academic offerings.)

Administrative Information Services. It is becoming apparent that staff resources in Administrative Information Services are not sufficient to complete all projects on time. So RSRS staff need to continue to operate manual systems efficiently, including separate CEE records. The final goal of computer development--efficient student and University service--can be reached. As we have seen with the registration system, which was implemented three years ago and is now very efficient, considerable time and dedicated staff are needed to take significant steps forward.

## INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

1984-85

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Information Systems and Services (ISS) coordinates a variety of critical functions supporting the three operational units within Student Support Services (SSS)--Admissions and Prospective Student Services; Student Financial Aid; and Registration, Student Records, and Scheduling. ISS consists of four distinct subunits:

Data and Reporting Services (DRS) functions as an information center, offering student information retrieval, data analysis, and some research services to SSS operational units and University colleges, departments, faculty, student organizations, and central administration.

Office Services (OS) maintains hard-copy student records, supplies word processing support, provides mailing services, maintains the ID card office, distributes forms and computer output, responds to requests for publications, and handles an impressive array of disparate but important support functions. Through the Williamson Hall Information Center and telephone services, staff have daily public contact.

The Publications Center (PC) produces publications for prospective and enrolled students and staff, including college bulletins, briefs, class schedules, prospective student publications such as the viewbook, orientation materials, and "The Record" (the SSS newsletter). Staff assist in the development of internal documents (e.g., forms, signs, training manuals).

System Development/Operations (SD/O) provides technical support services in system development and enhancements to our present computer systems, including project management, systems analysis, screen/report design, testing, implementation, and evaluation. SD/O is a primary contact point with Administrative Information Services (AIS) through which all service requests, problem reports, job scheduling, budget management, billing adjustment requests, production turnover, and hardware installation flow. Staff are also largely responsible for installing and supporting the new SSS office automation system implemented late in summer 1984.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Major accomplishments include the following:

- ▶ Completed a marketing research plan (with Admissions and Prospective Student Services)
- ▶ Completed a summary of minority student demographics and performance (with Registration, Student Records, and Scheduling)

- ▶ Completed data collection for a student loan indebtedness study (with Student Financial Aid)
- ▶ Redesigned the SYSTEM 2000 reporting data base
- ▶ Implemented and supported the SSS office automation system, which provides word processing, host access, spreadsheet capability, and other features to professional and managerial staff
- ▶ Recaptured \$23,000 from Administrative Information Services (AIS) through the billing adjustment process
- ▶ Completed specifications for an on-line phonetic name search program on the Student Data Base to support files operations and CEE records
- ▶ Completed the sign standards manual
- ▶ Completed a major revamping of orientation program materials (with Orientation)
- ▶ Completed planning and began development of a student data factbook

New initiatives include the following:

- ▶ Began printing social security numbers on ID cards to support the central administration move toward the social security number as the common record identifier
- ▶ Developed a plan for a comprehensive record management program, including records retention policy and procedures, in-house micrographics, and computer reports to purge hard copy student records
- ▶ Redesigned directional signs in Williamson and Fraser Halls
- ▶ Designed a new color-coded terminal digit filing system for hard-copy student records
- ▶ Coordinated an inventory of SSS student records in preparation for a new records management system
- ▶ Implemented a paper recycling program in Williamson Hall
- ▶ Installed a cash register to receipt applications to improve accounting
- ▶ Implemented a new bulletin design incorporating color cover photos
- ▶ Used the new bulletin design for a whole family of publications, including briefs, the viewbook, and various brochures
- ▶ Designed a new security system for student records to enhance control and flexibility of access
- ▶ Redesigned two newsletters: "Counselors' Quarterly" (for high school and community college counselors) and "New Student News" (for newly admitted students)
- ▶ Neared completion of a new system for storing "tables" at AIS on Tables/DLI (purchased software)

### Activity Indicators

In general, work in all areas except SD/O is increasing. Interestingly enough, word processing lines in OS continue to increase even though most professional and managerial staff have Wang word processing available; this confirms the continued need for production word processing. Also in OS, the large increase in fee receipting is primarily due to the new transcript fee. Hard-copy file inquiries continue to decrease as more staff have terminals available to access the computer record.

PC forms and orientation workload increased this year. Forms will likely remain high in FY86 because of new systems being brought on line. Most readily available activity indicators cannot accurately reflect PC workload; for example, time spent editing manuals is not tracked.

DRS request processing increased a modest amount this year, but the last two years taken together (489 requests) represented a 27% increase over the previous two years (389 requests). And it should be kept in mind that each request often consists of multiple parts (e.g., roster and labels, several statistical tables).

In SD/O, a number of activity indicators declined significantly, representing continued improvement in our basic systems for managing the computing effort. Effort in new system development and maintenance can only be measured by the amount of paper on desks--and it's getting deeper!

Activity indicators are sometimes hard to come by in ISS since so much of our work is in the form of consultation, but this chart should be helpful:

Subunit	Item	1983-84	1984-85	% Change
DRS	Data requests	237	252	+6.3
OS	Word processing lines	1,443,000	1,560,000	+8.1
	Data entry transactions	194,417	181,858	-6.5
	Incoming and outgoing mail	507,782	519,543	+2.3
	Phone requests for info/services	17,993	16,507	-8.3
	Fees receipted (transcript, application, degree)	51,750	66,455	+28.4
	ID cards (student/staff/faculty)	48,000	57,406	+19.6
	Messenger errands	9,482	9,099	-4.0
	Hard-copy file inquiries	50,977	44,451	-12.8
PC	Bulletins (24-564 pages)	21	22	+4.8
	Bulletin briefs (6-12 panels)	30	30	+0.0
	"The Record" (SSS newsletter)	12	12	+0.0
	Forms designed/edited	200	223	+11.5
	Orientation brochures/handbooks	53	57	+7.5
	Signs designed/edited	50	41	-18.0
SD/O	Requests for billing adjustment	221	148	-33.0
	Hardware orders	78	74	-5.1
	AIS job schedule changes	57*	87	NA
	Problem worksheets	108	68	-37.0
	Production Turnover Forms	71**	132	NA
	Requests for AIS services	232	180	-22.4
	SSS Schedules (500 jobs/100 events)	4	4	+0.0

\*6-month figures

\*\*7-month figures

#### STAFFING

As of June 30, 1985, FTE staff were distributed as follows:

	Clerical	Professional
Director, ISS		1.00
Data and Reporting Services (DRS)		4.80
Office Services (OS)	25.0	4.00
Publications Center (PC)	.5	4.00
Systems Development/Operations (SD/O)	0.0	5.75
	FY85 TOTAL	19.55
	NET CHANGE FROM FY84	+1.0



Note that the additional clerical staff member in OS was funded by Registration, Student Records, and Scheduling for the purpose of transcript receipting. The impact of the 1.0 FTE professional staff (added in SD/O in June 1985) will not be seen until FY86.

Compared to other SSS units, ISS is heavily professional staff, with the exception of OS. The SD/O area remains somewhat understaffed. Little clerical support is needed because of the level of computer support available, but demands for skilled assistance are increasing (e.g., for system training and documentation, system development support, project management, office automation coordination).

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

ISS staff provide diverse assistance to other parts of the University and to the community; for most ISS subunits, such service is an integral part of their mission. For example, for all colleges and campuses, the PC produces bulletins that go to homes, schools, libraries, and offices throughout the state and beyond; DRS responds to a wide array of inquiries from numerous colleges and departments, including the coordinate campuses. Such activities are not outlined here. Listed below are selected atypical activities:

- ▶ Director taught OM 8041, Project Management, in the University's Evening MBA Program
- ▶ Director served as product improvement chairperson of ASTUTE, national user group for the SYSTEM 2000 data base management system
- ▶ Head of OS served as president of the Minnesota Office Systems Association (MOSA)
- ▶ PC staff participated in Business Forms Management Association activities

## ISSUES

Among the many issues and new ideas that will challenge ISS during 1985-86 are the following:

Design of New Reporting System. This project, which will benefit all of SSS and the entire University community, will consume time for staff in DRS, SD/O, and other operational areas. By the end of fiscal 1986, reporting data bases or files should be in place for all major systems. Planning for better ways to provide data in a machine-readable form needs to be included in this process, as does the reporting of data in a succinct, time-series manner. An unknown at this time is how existing DRS information center activities will fit into the new AIS environment.

New Reporting Formats. Development of group summaries, the student factbook, standard report formats, easy methods to get data to microcomputers around campus, and flexible retention reporting will also occupy DRS staff time.

Support for Marketing the University. Increasing emphasis on the marketing of the University will force our continued attention to computer support for prospective student recruiting, research support to determine effective strategies for recruitment, and office and publications support to implement these strategies.

New Records Management System. Implementation of the new records management system will occupy large amounts of staff time in OS. When completed, we will have microfilm records of all hard-copy transcripts, a new terminal digit filing system to support the Admissions/Prospective Student Services system, a records retention policy and procedures, and at least a little more physical space. When filming of linen transcript records is complete, we will move on to filming other records.

SSS Office Automation. Enhancements to the SSS office automation system will continue to be a major effort, with an emphasis on data base development and addition of graphics support. Preliminary results suggest that the system has resulted in important productivity increases for key staff members.

New ID Card System. Development of a new identification system to replace the present ID card system is long overdue. SSS and other parts of the University (e.g., libraries, food service, bursar) need a system that will support diverse needs and take advantage of more current technology.

New Bulletin Design. In the area of publications, we hope to expand the new format for bulletins to include unique color photos on each bulletin as well as a common color insert showcasing the Twin Cities area. Efforts continue to enliven and streamline bulletin copy. "Phantom" courses (courses that have not been taught in recent years) and overly wordy course descriptions need to be reduced or eliminated altogether.

New Security System. Implementation of new security measures is a high priority as we add many new users to the system, each of whom needs access restricted in a certain way. The proliferation of personal computers on campus, many wanting access to student data, is also creating new challenges. We need to control access and preserve student privacy but at the same time provide staff with the data and tools they require for their work.

New Tables Data Base. With the completion of this new data base at AIS in early FY86, we will be able to begin converting existing programs to use these tables. Benefits will include lower maintenance costs and more rapid response to University needs (e.g., the move of departments from one college to another, addition of new colleges or majors).

New AIS Direction. A key area of concern is the apparent new direction being taken by AIS. While their wish to enhance data access can only be applauded, the impact of such changes on existing operations, required developments, and necessary maintenance will have to be monitored carefully. Further, rates for system operation continue at an extremely high level compared to past years, hampering our ability to fund desired developments and enhancements.

Astounding Degree of Teamwork. In viewing our accomplishments this year as well as last, I am continually struck by the degree to which these items are only rarely ISS accomplishments alone. Rather, almost all of them result from an astounding degree of teamwork among SSS operational unit staff, AIS staff, and ISS staff. This is as it should be and has brought us to a degree of system integration that could not have been foreseen years ago. This is not to say there are not problems. There are and always will be as we attempt to do exciting, worthwhile things in an environment that is seldom stable. But the willingness to work together in this organization is exceptional.