



**The University of Texas at San Antonio**

---

Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson  
2018-2019 Annual Report

## **I. Introduction**

The 2018-2019 (September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>) annual report includes the following:

- a description of the role of this position,
- outreach and training efforts,
- a comparison of the individuals served including areas of concern for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, and
- recommendations for institutional improvements or change.

## **II. Role of the Director of Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson**

The primary role of the Director of Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson is to assist students with academic and non-academic concerns related to their enrollment in an effort to help them bring closure or resolution to their situation or circumstances.

The Director of Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson provides informal, neutral, independent and confidential problem-solving assistance to registered and former students in a welcoming and safe environment. Parents and other individuals are also assisted within Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. Additional information about the scope of services provided and operating principles is available for review at <https://www.utsa.edu/students/ombudsperson/index.html>. The Director of Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson reports to the Senior Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students.

## **III. Outreach and Training**

The Director of Student Ombudsperson Services/Student Ombudsperson conducted the following outreach efforts during 2018-2019:

- Participated in the Fall 2018 UTSA Day Services Fair, new faculty resource tabling event and Kickback at the Student Union during Roadrunner Days.
- Meetings about role of position/discussion of common issues with the following departments, faculty and/or staff : Associate Vice Provost for University College, First-Generation and Transfer Student Center, One Stop Enrollment Center, Downtown Collaborative and undergraduate advising centers for Arts and Humanities, Business Studies, Engineering, Interdisciplinary Education, Math and Physical Sciences and Social Sciences.

Collaboration with the University Ombuds included the following:

- Presentation about navigating university procedures/policies – Graduate Student Professional Development Center.
- Hosted an information table during six summer resource fairs for new freshman students and the Graduate School Orientation Information Fair for new graduate students.

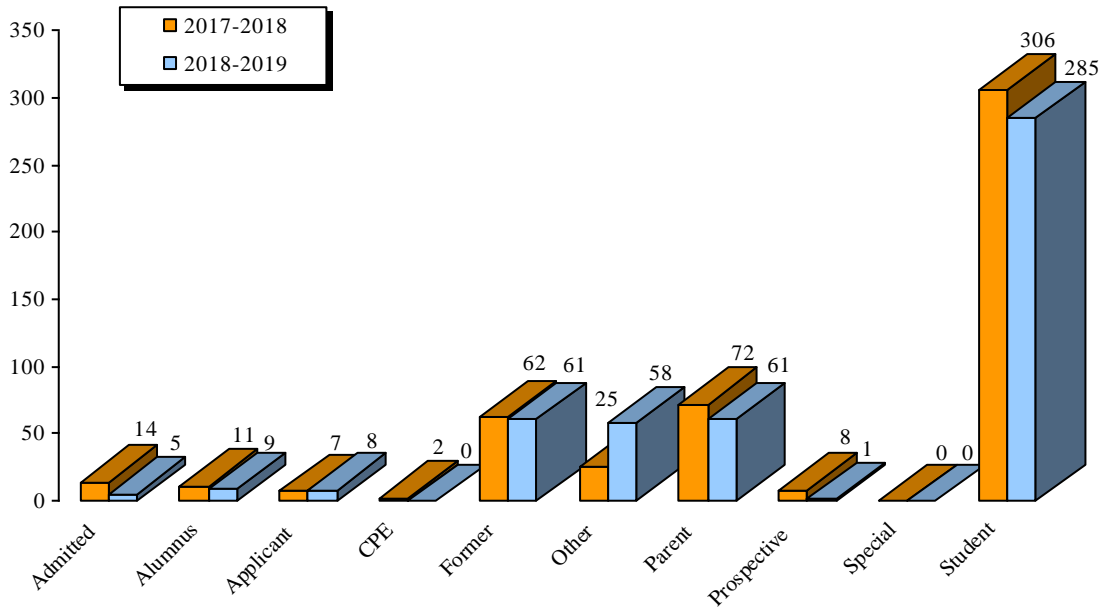
**III. Outreach and Training continued**

- Meetings with the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School and Student Advocate for the Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Consultation and Empowerment (PEACE) Center (formerly the Office of Student Advocacy, Violence Prevention and Empowerment).
- Hosted visit with ombuds staff from The University of Texas at Austin.
- Presentations about role of position/discussion of common issues for orientation programs for new department chairs, new faculty and teaching assistant positions.

Student assistance/ombudsperson services were also publicized via the web and in the online Student Policies publication (formerly the Information Bulletin). Information about a student's rights and responsibilities, which included information about ombudsperson services at UTSA, was also sent out to all currently enrolled students via email. The Director of Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson also conducted four True Colors presentations during 2018-2019.

**IV. Statistics**

**Person Type**

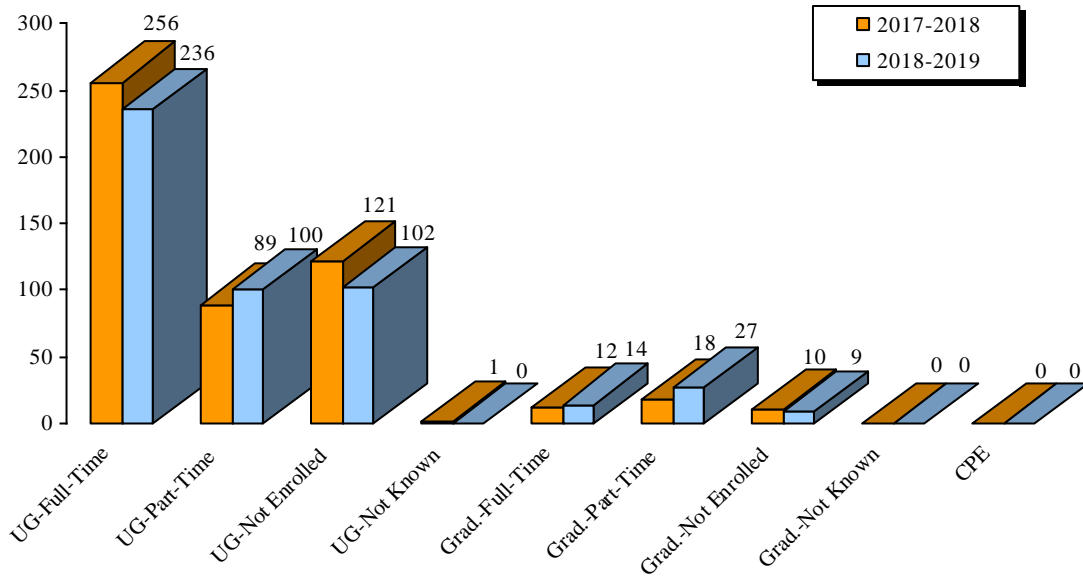


A total of 488 individuals were assisted by the Director of Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson during 2018-2019 versus 507 during 2017-2018. The individuals assisted were as follows:

- Admitted Accepted to the university.
- Alumnus Graduated from the university.
- Applicant Applied to the university.
- CPE Enrolled in classes through the Center for Professional Excellence.
- Former Previously attended the university (not currently enrolled).
- Other Third party inquiry (i.e. aunt, uncle, counselor, etc.).
- Parent Inquiry by mother, father, stepparent, or legal guardian.
- Prospective Interested in applying to/attending the university.
- Special Non-degree seeking.
- Student Currently enrolled at the university.

The majority of those assisted continued to be comprised of currently enrolled students (58% for 2018-2019, 60% for 2017-2018), parents (13% for 2018-2019, 14% for 2017-2018), and former students (13% for 2018-2019, 12% for 2017-2018).

**Enrollment Status**



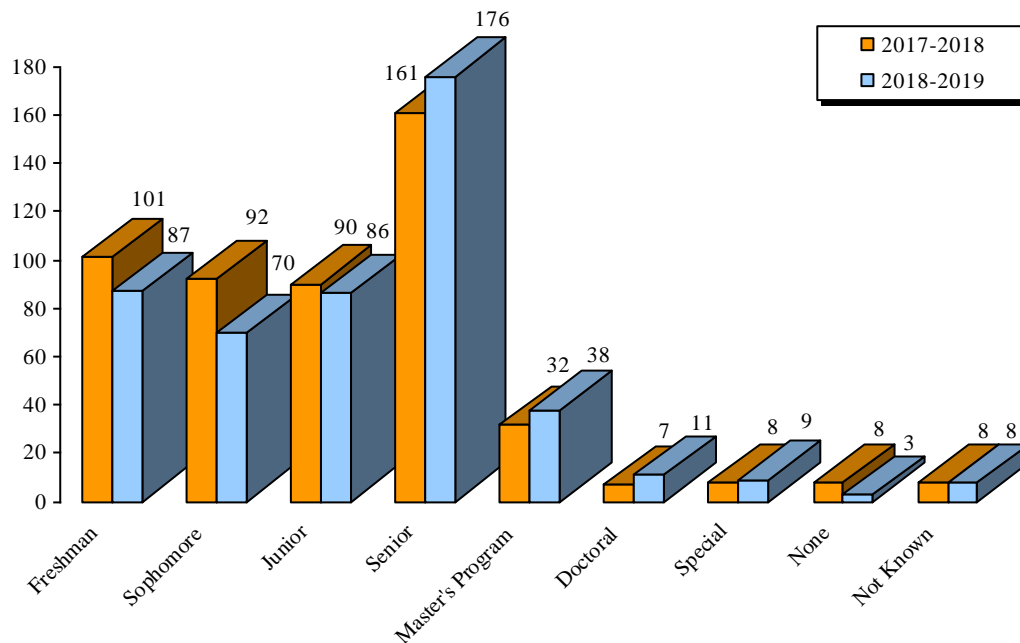
\* UG = undergraduate students and Grad. = graduate students

Undergraduates constituted a majority of the contacts, 90% and 92%, during 2018-2019 and 2017-2018, respectively. Most continued to be categorized as full-time, not enrolled and part-time. Graduate students made up 10% of the contacts in 2018-2019 and 8% of the contacts during 2017-2018.

- Undergraduate Full-Time      Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, or Special student enrolled at least 12 semester credit hours.
- Undergraduate Part-Time      Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, or Special student enrolled less than full-time.
- Undergraduate Not Enrolled      Not currently enrolled.
- Undergraduate Not Known      Enrollment status not confirmed.
- Graduate Full-Time      Doctoral, Master’s degree, or Special student enrolled at least 9 semester credit hours.
- Graduate Part-Time      Doctoral, Master’s degree, or Special student enrolled less than full-time.
- Graduate Not Enrolled      Not currently enrolled.
- Graduate Not Known      Enrollment status not confirmed.
- CPE      Center for Professional Excellence student.

Note: If a parent or other (i.e. aunt, uncle, etc.) were assisted, enrollment of the student was included in this report.

**Classification**



During 2018-2019, the majority of the contacts continued to be comprised of the same undergraduate classifications as 2017-2018.

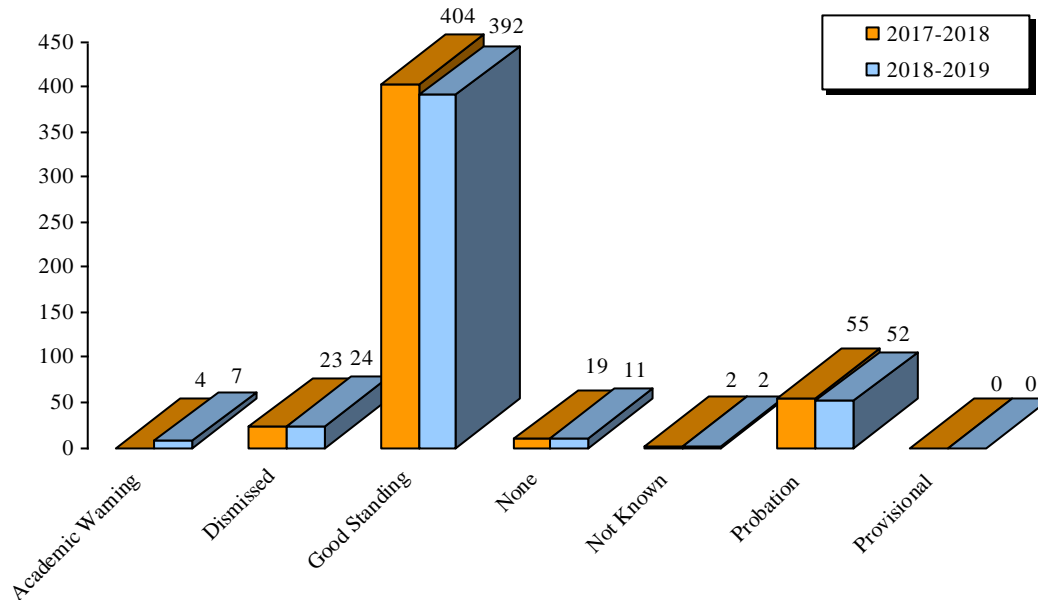
These classifications included freshmen (18% for 2018-2019, 20% for 2017-2018), sophomores (14% for 2018-2019, 18% for 2017-2018), juniors (18% for 2018-2019, 18% for 2017-2018) and seniors (36% for 2018-2019, 32% for 2017-2018).

Students enrolled in a master's degree program consisted of 8% for 2018-2019 and 6% for 2017-2018, while doctoral and special (non-degree seeking) students comprised a very small percentage of the classifications represented.

- Freshman                      0–29 semester credit hours earned.
- Sophomore                    30-59 semester credit hours earned.
- Junior                            60-89 semester credit hours earned.
- Senior                            90+ semester credit hours earned.
- Master's Program            Enrolled as a graduate student in a master's degree program.
- Doctoral                        Enrolled as a graduate student in a doctoral degree program.
- Special                         Non-degree seeking at the undergraduate or graduate level.
- None                              Classification not available (i.e. prospective student, new admit, etc.).
- Not Known                      Classification not confirmed.

Note: If a parent or other (i.e. aunt, uncle, etc.) were assisted, classification of the student was included in this report.

**Academic Status**



During 2018-2019 and 2017-2018, the majority of students who received assistance (80% for both years) were in good standing with the university. Those experiencing academic difficulties encompassed 17% of the population during 2018-2019 and 16% during 2017-2018.

- **Academic Warning** First-time undergraduate, admitted in good standing, who earned between a 1.00 and 1.99 semester grade point average during his/her first semester at UTSA.
- **Dismissed** Undergraduate on probation who earned below a 2.00 semester grade point average or a graduate who earned a grade point average of less than a 2.00 in any term, earned a grade of “F” in any course, or who was on probation and would be placed on probation again under the probation provisions listed below for graduate students.
- **Good Standing** Undergraduate who maintained at least a 2.00 or higher UTSA grade point average or a graduate who maintained at least a 3.00 or higher UTSA grade point average who did not fall into any of the categories which would cause a graduate student to be placed on probation or dismissal.
- **None** Academic status not available (i.e. prospective student, new admit, etc.).
- **Not Known** Academic status not confirmed.

**The University of Texas at San Antonio**

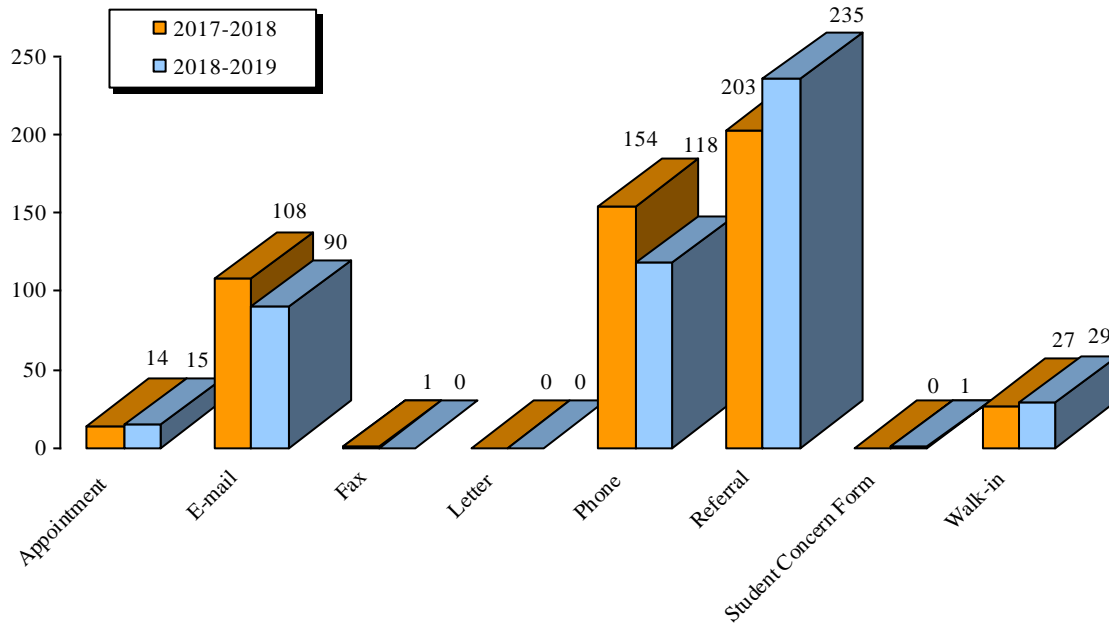
2018-2019 Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson Annual Report

- Probation Undergraduate in good standing whose overall UTSA grade point average fell below a 2.00 or a graduate who failed to achieve a grade point average of 3.00 in any term at UTSA, or who earned a grade of “D” in any course in a term, also includes undergraduates and graduates admitted on probation and those who have been reinstated following dismissal.
- Provisional Undergraduate admitted as provisional due to deficiencies in entrance scores or high school records.

Note: If a parent or other (i.e. aunt, uncle, etc.) were assisted, academic status of the student was included in this report.

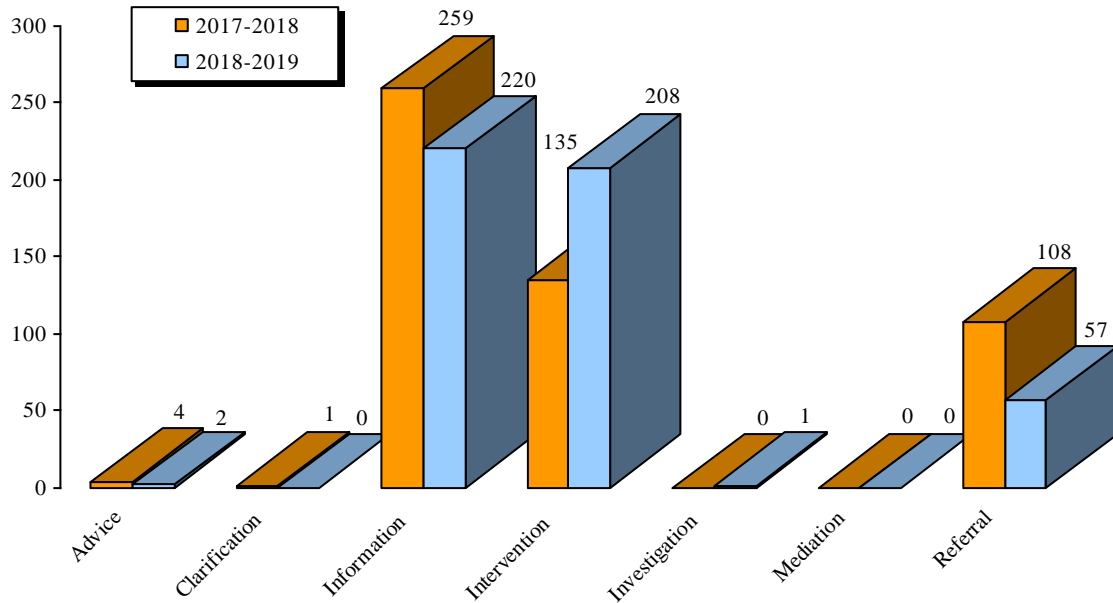


**Contact Type**



Referrals (48% for 2018-2019, 40% for 2017-2018), phone (24% for 2018-2019, 30% for 2017-2018) and email (18% for 2018-2019 and 21% for 2017-2018) were the types of contact used most often to communicate concerns for both years.

**Action Taken**

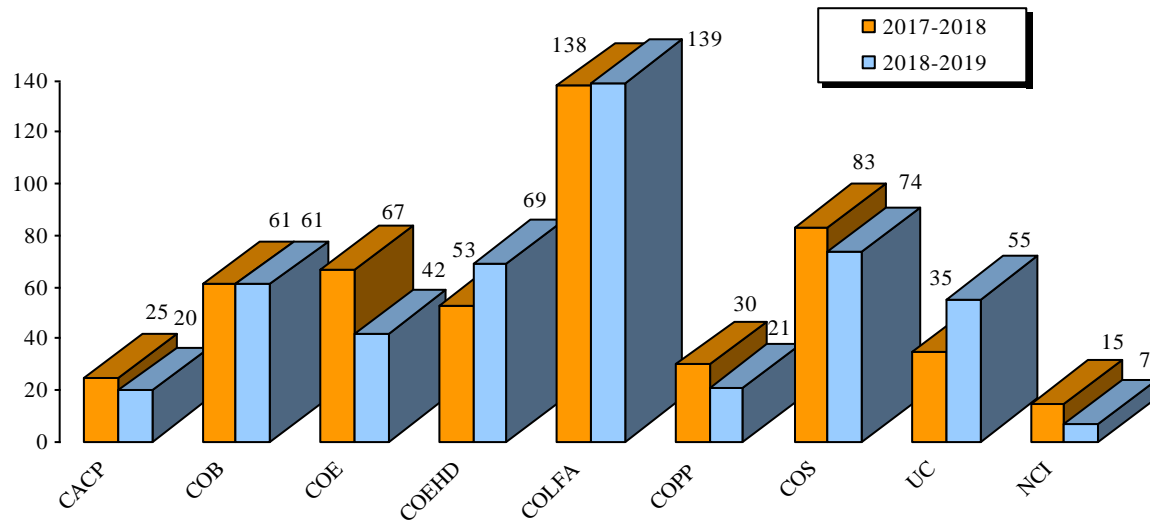


During 2018-2019, the actions used most often to help those seeking assistance included providing information (45%), intervention (43%) and referrals (11%) to other offices, departments, subject matter experts, services and/or resources.

These actions, providing information (51%), intervention (27%) and referrals (21%), were also used most often during 2017-2018.

Note: Some actions included multiple actions. The primary action taken is included in this report.

**College of Major**



For both years, individuals assisted most often were from COLFA (28% for 2018-2019, 27% for 2017-2018) and COS (15% for 2018-2019, 16% for 2017-2018).

COEHD (14% for 2018-2019 versus 10% for 2017-2018) and University College (11% for 2018-2019 versus 7% for 2017-2018) showed increases from one year to the next including a minor increase for COLFA.

- CACP College of Architecture, Construction and Planning
- COB College of Business
- COE College of Engineering
- COEHD College of Education and Human Development
- COLFA College of Liberal and Fine Arts
- COPP College of Public Policy
- COS College of Sciences
- UC University College
- NCI No College Identified

Note: If a parent or other (i.e. aunt, uncle, etc.) were assisted, the college of the student’s major was included in this report.

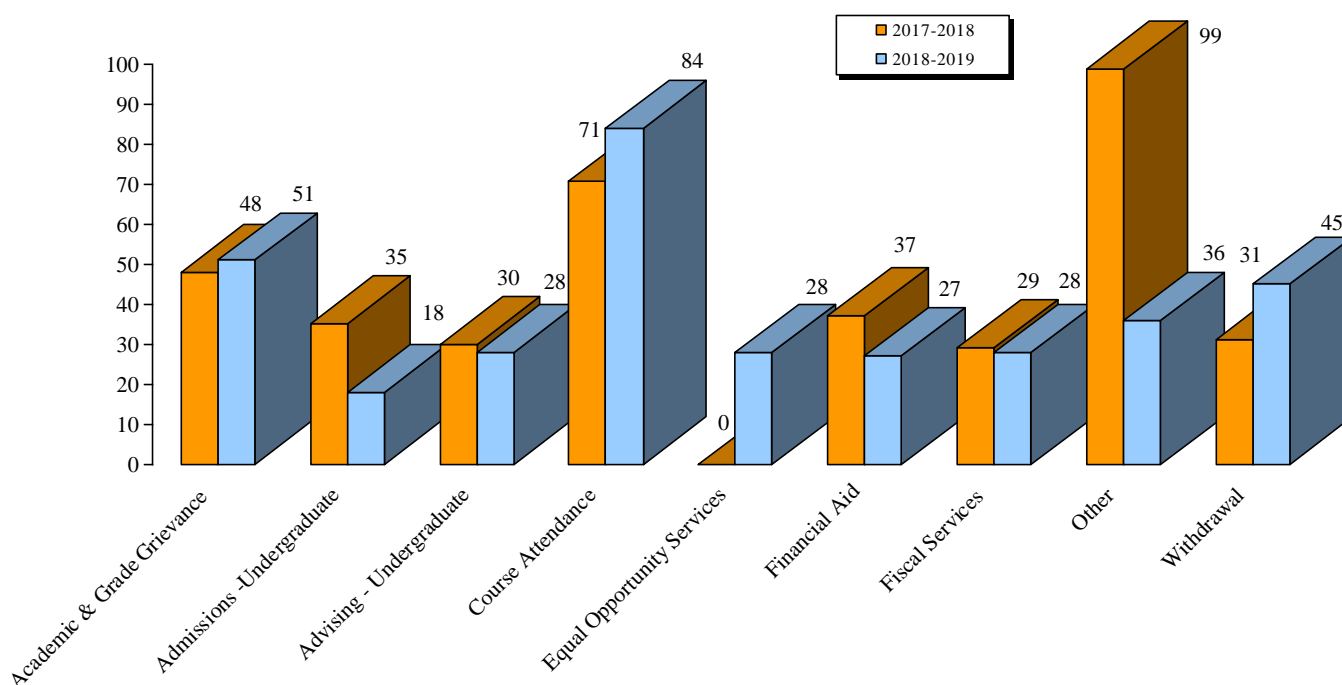
# The University of Texas at San Antonio

## 2018-2019 Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson Annual Report

### V. Areas of Concern

Area of Concern	Total 17-18	Total 18-19	Area of Concern	Total 17-18	Total 18-19
Academic and Grade Grievance	48	51	Fiscal Services	29	28
Accessibility	0	0	Grade Point Average	0	1
Admissions – Undergraduate	35	18	Grades	3	1
Admissions - Graduate	3	2	Graduation	0	6
Advising – Undergraduate	30	28	Grant	0	0
Advising – Graduate	0	1	International Programs	6	3
ASAP	0	0	Internship	5	3
Bookstore	0	1	Library	0	0
CAP	1	0	Military Orders	0	0
Card Office	1	0	Meal Plan*	---	1
Challenge Exam	0	0	myUTSA email	0	0
Change of Grade	5	2	Off-Campus Housing	4	6
Classification Change	0	0	On-Campus Housing	12	10
CLEP	0	0	Other	99	36
Computer Lab	0	1	Paisano	0	0
Core Curriculum	0	0	Parking and Transportation Services	8	9
Course – Attendance	71	84	Registration	6	6
Course – Drop	9	16	Reinstatement	11	13
Course – Grading Process	0	1	Repeat Policy	0	0
Course – Instruction	2	5	Residency	6	3
Course – Make-up Exam/Work	2	2	Safety	1	6
Course –Missed Quiz	0	0	Scholarships	6	6
Course – Schedule	5	4	Student Conduct and Community Standards	5	3
Course Load Reduction	0	0	Scholastic Dishonesty*	---	9
CPE	0	0	Student Disability Services	3	4
Cheerleading/Dance Team	1	0	Student Health Services	2	2
Counseling and Mental Health Services*	---	2	Student Organization	4	2
Diploma	0	0	Study Days	0	0
Dissertation	0	1	Testing Services	0	1
Enrollment Verification	1	0	Transcript Request	3	0
Equal Opportunity Services*	---	28	Texas Success Initiative	0	0
ExCET/TEExES	0	0	Tuition	0	0
FCSA Evaluation	0	0	University of Texas System Online Consortium	0	0
Fees	3	3	University Police	0	1
FERPA	3	1	Veteran Affairs	5	5
Field Placement	1	0	VISA	0	0
Final Exams	0	0	WebCT	0	0
Financial Aid	37	27	Withdrawal	31	45
* New category beginning 2018-2019			<b>Grant Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>488</b>

Note: If there were multiple areas of concern, the primary area of concern was included in this report.



Concerns voiced most often for both years were associated with the following areas: Academic and Grade Grievance, Admissions-Undergraduate, Advising-Undergraduate, Course Attendance, Financial Aid, Fiscal Services, Other and Withdrawal. Concerns affiliated with subject matter overseen by Equal Opportunity Services (EOS), a new category beginning 2018-2019, were also voiced most often.

For 2018-2019, these areas (total of nine) represented seventy-two percent (71%) of the concerns brought forward for assistance, while for 2017-2018, these areas (total of eight) represented seventy-five percent (75%).

The following summary provides details about the nine areas of concern communicated most often during 2018-2019 including a comparison of the eight areas of concern expressed most often for both years.

### **Course-Attendance**

- Students unable to attend class due to care of sick child, religious holy day, birth of child, off-campus burglary, concussion, car accident, loss of family member, medical/mental health condition, etc.
- More time needed to recover following surgery.
- Concerns about behavior/control of service animals in classrooms.
- Referrals to academic advising if student decided to drop a course(s), withdraw or delay future enrollment.
- Concerns about academic standing.

**Course-Attendance continued**

- Referrals to University Police to check on welfare of student and for safety information and resources.
- Students unable to complete final exams due to unexpected hospitalization.
- Referral to the Tomás Rivera Center (i.e. academic coaching, tutoring, etc.).
- Referral to Center for Military Affiliated Students for questions about impact to veteran educational benefits if student decided to drop a course(s) or withdraw from the university or if student received a grade of incomplete (IN).
- Referrals from Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT).
- Inquiries about student absences due to military service.
- Questions about student status (i.e. active/inactive) due to uncertainty of when the student would be able to resume his/her studies.
- Impact on course attendance due to Hurricane Harvey (i.e. students unable to return to San Antonio due to road closures, homes were flooded, clean up and salvaging efforts, relief efforts, active duty military service, etc.).
- Provided information about the UTSA Bluebook.
- Change or delay to expected date of graduation due to student illness, hospitalization, or loss of family member.\*
- Inquiries about leave of absence to care for parent who was ill/in intensive care; student was primary care provider.\*
- Provided drop, refund and withdrawal deadline information.\*
- Referrals to EOS (i.e. Title IX issue, allegation of discrimination).\*
- Referrals to the Office of Financial Services and University Bursar for information about account balance if student decided to drop a course(s) or withdraw and appeal process for non-attendance.\*
- Referrals to community resources such as Care Link and United Way for students without medical coverage and the Crime Victims' Compensation Program.\*
- Parent, professor or staff member concerned about well-being of student due to no contact from student.\*
- Questions about the instructor-initiated drop policy and impact to gateway course requirements, the Six Drop Policy, Three-Attempt Rule and Undergraduate Credit Limitation for dropped courses and/or withdrawals from the university.\*
- Informed students and parents about the Student Authorization to Release Education Records process (i.e. proxy web access), whereby students can grant a parent or third party access to their student record/account.\*
- Referrals to the Financial Aid Office to discuss impact to financial aid award including scholarships, Return of Title IV and Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) if a student decided to drop a course(s) or withdraw from the university, emergency aid/re-evaluation of financial aid award for students who were experiencing financial hardship and/or the cancellation of future financial aid for students who decided to delay future enrollment or not return to UTSA.\*

\* Similar for both years.

**Course-Attendance continued**

- Referrals to Student Disability Services for information about registration process and possible academic accommodations based upon medical/mental health condition, recent diagnosis, return to school after accident/car accident, surgery, etc.\*
- Information about transitory/minor medical conditions.\*
- Referrals to Counseling and Mental Health Services, Student Health Services and/or Roadrunner Pantry due to medical/mental health condition, personal and/or family issues, crisis situations, etc.\*
- Referrals to academic departments to request assistance with contacting professors.\*
- Contact information for professors and/or academic departments; provided link to online directory.\*
- Inquiries about course attendance requirements and/or course participation grades as outlined in syllabi including online course requirements.\*
- Available options (i.e. drop course, possible grade of IN, extra credit, seeking approval to make up missed assignments and/or complete assignments remotely, independent study request, medical or mental health reduced course load or withdrawal, regular withdrawal, etc.).\*
- Assisted students with notifying professors about accidents/car accidents, death of a family member or relative, illnesses, hospitalizations and other extenuating circumstances.\*
- Assisted parents when student was unable to contact the university himself/herself (i.e. student in coma, sedated/medicated due to accident, emergency medical treatment, short-term inpatient care).\*
- Inquiries about Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) 5.09-Class Attendance Policy, Excused Absence from Class Attendance Form and filing an academic and grade grievance/levels of appeal.\*

**Academic and Grade Grievance**

- Concerns about an unexpected assignment by professor; students were given short notice about the assignment.
- Lack of and/or untimely posting of grades/grade updates.
- Concerns about change of date for final exam.
- Referrals to Counseling and Mental Health Services due to anxiety/stress about academic concerns.
- Concerns about communicating with department.
- Referrals to advising and financial aid due to non-passing grades.
- Disagreement about supplemental assignment.
- Plus/minus grading system used, but not indicated on syllabus.
- Request to utilize the credit/no-credit option retroactively.

\* Similar for both years.

**Academic and Grade Grievance continued**

- Course transition and notification concerns when there was a change to the professor of record.
- Concern about Campus Carry Policy.
- Questions about course evaluation process and providing feedback anonymously versus through the online course evaluation process.
- Inquiries about HOP 2.40-Administrative Grade Change Policy.
- I-clicker issues, access code concerns, software/technological errors, purchase of online tools/subscriptions, need for technological support.\*
- Lack of response from professor.\*
- Request for more time to make up missed work due to illness/hospitalization and recovery.\*
- Concerns about grading subjectivity and peer evaluations.\*
- Requests to change to a different section of the same course.\*
- Questions about class participation grade and excused absences.\*
- Referrals to Institutional Compliance and Risk Services, Office of the Registrar, department chairs and deans.\*
- Provided information about grade of IN, repeat policy and challenge examination process for undergraduate students and course drop deadline.\*
- Professor cancels class, arrives late or leaves class early; professor arrived late for final exam – students felt rushed.\*
- Questions about implementation of approved academic accommodations.\*
- Referrals to EOS as some students may have opted to engage in both grievance options (i.e. academic and grade grievance and EOS complaint processes) simultaneously due to nature of concerns.\*
- Allegations of discrimination, retaliation and/or differential/unfair treatment.\*
- Allegations of scholastic dishonesty (i.e. cheating, plagiarism).\*
- Concerns about grading rubric, score distribution on exams, passage rates, percentage of students who dropped a course(s).\*
- Concerns about behavior of professors and/or teaching assistants, lack of professionalism, inappropriate and/or unfavorable comments, tone of voice, students felt singled out during class, etc.\*
- Request to engage in the grade grievance process beyond the appeal timeframe.\*
- Concerns about classroom environment, management and structure of courses, quality of course instruction, teaching strategies, communicating with professors, former professors and academic departments.\*
- Provided students with information about the academic and grade grievance procedure.\*
- Requests for a copy of the Student Academic and Grade Grievance form.\*

\* Similar for both years.



**Academic and Grade Grievance continued**

- Contact information for grievance levels: professor, department chair, dean of the college where the course is offered, dean and vice provost of university college (for undergraduate students) and dean and vice provost of the graduate school (for graduate students).\*
- Questions about status of grievance, time limit on submitting a grievance, grievance decision, change of grade, change of academic status, etc.\*

**Withdrawal**

- Questions about changes to medical and/or mental health withdrawal policy (i.e. reduced course load no longer an option).
- Request to reexamine/revisit medical or mental health withdrawal request/paperwork.
- Withdrawal due to military service/duties.
- Request for an explanation about the denial of a medical or mental health withdrawal request.
- Provided information about grade of IN.
- Students initially withdrew under the regular withdrawal process and then pursued a retroactive medical or mental health withdrawal. This resulted in the return of additional financial aid funding because the withdrawal date changed to an earlier date due to the onset of the medical or mental health condition.
- Request for contact information for professors.
- Deadline to request a medical, mental health or regular withdrawal had passed.\*
- Requests to remove enrollment from student record due to non-attendance with supporting documentation from professors.\*
- Questions about academic standing/status and the repeat policy.\*
- Referrals from BIT to discuss options.\*
- Inquiries about the financial appeal process and scheduling payment arrangements through the Office of Financial Services and University Bursar.\*
- Questions about the appeal of the Limitation on Attempting Gateway Courses, Six Drop Policy, Three-Attempt Rule and Undergraduate Credit Limitation for reduced course load requests and/or a withdrawal from the university.\*
- Impact of withdrawal on university and outside scholarships, stipend and/or expected date of graduation.\*
- Referrals to academic advising, EOS, the Financial Aid Office, Fiscal Services, One Stop Enrollment Center, the Registrar's Office and the Center for Military Affiliated Students.\*
- Concerns about processing time of medical or mental health withdrawal requests.\*
- Assisted with the regular withdrawal process (i.e. faxed form, took completed form to the Office of the Registrar, etc.) when students were unable to complete the process on their own due to hospitalization, severe medical conditions, etc.\*

\* Similar for both years.

**Withdrawal continued**

- Questions about the regular withdrawal process including instructions about how to withdraw via the Automated Student Access Program (ASAP), where to find the withdrawal form online, etc.\*
- Inquiries about medical and mental health withdrawal processes, reduced course load/partial withdrawal requests, whether students could pursue a second medical and/or mental health withdrawal, appeal options and contact information for and/or referrals to Counseling and Mental Health Services, Student Disability Services, Student Health Services, University College and community resources.\*
- Questions about drop/withdrawal deadlines, refund timeframes, effective date of withdrawal and impact on Return of Title IV, SAP, veteran funding and/or third-party payments, cancellation of a student's financial aid award, meal plan and/or housing contract/lease and return of parking permit and textbooks.\*
- Retroactive withdrawal requests and emergency financial assistance requests due to extenuating circumstances.\*

**Other**

- Questions about HOP 1.33-Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, and Outside Activities, HOP 4.01-Code of Ethics and HOP 9.37- Peaceful Public Assembly (regulation and scheduling of amplified sound).
- Allegation of identity theft.
- Questions about service animal training for faculty and scholastic distinctions (i.e. President's List, Dean's List and Honor Roll).
- Classroom incident; risk management concern.
- Concerns about increase in tuition and cost of textbooks.
- Background check for alumnus who applied for a security sensitive position.
- On-campus solicitation concerns; HOP 9.10-Solicitation on UTSA Campuses.
- Customer service concerns.
- Referrals from BIT.
- Funding support to participate in conferences and leadership opportunities.
- Request to establish a new degree.
- Requests for healthier food options.
- Difficulty accessing e-book.
- Feedback about student experience at UTSA.
- Lack of reply from department/office.
- Housekeeping concern.
- Compliance issue.
- Request for additional merchandise to be sold at Provision on Demand (POD) locations, the Rowdy Campus Store and RowdyMart.
- Concern about behavior of fans/visitors during athletic events.

\* Similar for both years.

**Other continued**

- Suggestion that university curriculum needs to be more rigorous.
- Create awareness about the importance of proper hydration.
- Supporting documentation inadvertently faxed to incorrect department/office.
- Provided information about the First-Generation and Transfer Student Center, Summer Law School Preparation Academy, Principals of Accounting Competency Exam (PACE), Career Closet and academic success coaching.
- Interest in pursuing a career in Student Affairs.
- Inquiry about the reduction of trash cans in the parking garages.
- Injury during intramural game.
- Follow-up with students who were hospitalized.
- Request to apply late for a tuition rebate.
- Information about program requirements for the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC).
- Requests for shuttle service to and from the Downtown Campus.
- Questions and concerns by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) students.
- Provided students with Rowdy Ready information.
- Assisted students impacted by Hurricane Harvey (i.e. course attendance concerns, students unable to return/travel to San Antonio, emergency funding requests, inquiries about extending payment deadlines and/or requests to waive late fees, requests to travel home to help family members with clean-up and salvaging efforts, active duty/emergency deployments, referrals to professors, financial aid, counseling services, academic advising, Roadrunner Pantry, etc., assistance with late registration, concerns about gas shortages, inquiries by students and student organizations to coordinate and support donation drives and volunteer efforts, inquiries from transfer students to apply and enroll at UTSA, etc.).
- Referrals from EOS and the PEACE Center; provided information and discussed options to consider based upon a comprehensive review of the student's record including referrals to on and/or off-campus support services and resources.
- Questions about how the university holiday schedule is determined, length of holiday break periods and requests for Good Friday and Veteran's Day to be designated as university holidays.
- Referrals to community resources such as the United Way and the Bexar County Dispute Resolution Center.
- Concerns about curriculum changes.\*
- Concerns about research job duties/expectations: student dismissed from a work-study position; referrals to University Ombudsperson.\*
- Needs of food insecure students, foster care students and homeless students.\*
- Questions about completing the visitor application form for volunteer work at The University of Texas Health Science Center.\*

\* Similar for both years.

**Other continued**

- Assisted families of deceased or missing students, who inquired about withdrawing their student from the university, closing out their account, moving out their belongings from the residence hall, returning textbooks, awarding of degree posthumously, etc.\*
- Questions about the Student Fitness for Professional Practice policy, Level III review process and field placements/practicums.\*
- Referrals to EOS (i.e. Title IX issues, allegations of discrimination based upon disability, concerns about implementation of approved academic accommodations, allegations of defamation and harassment, service animals, pregnant and parenting students).\*

**Advising-Undergraduate**

- Concerns about processing of requests for waiver of Undergraduate Credit Limitation surcharges when a SAP appeal is also in the process of review to determine financial aid eligibility.
- Tracking for compliance of approved surcharge waiver requests.
- Technological error in DegreeWorks for core curriculum; manual correction needed.
- Independent study requests.
- Request to waive signature experience due to extenuating circumstances.
- Request for letter of degree completion for employment purposes.
- Inquiry about different math courses which are considered equivalent with regard to the surcharges associated with the Three-Attempt Rule.
- Request to utilize credit/no credit option retroactively.
- Questions about evaluation of transcript when not enrolled, but students have an active student status.
- Reason for denial of petition.
- Inquiries about the possibility of adjusting the enrollment cap on courses to allow for registration.
- Concerns about lack of course offerings, waitlists and progression toward degree completion.
- Request to take more than 12 semester credit hours while on academic probation.
- Questions about next steps/onboarding process for newly admitted transfer student.
- Advisor availability during peak periods, walk-in times, by appointment, etc.
- Concern about advising experience/guidance provided, miscommunication and/or allegation of being misadvised/receiving inconsistent or incorrect information.
- Referrals to Graduation Help Desk and Resilience and Retention advisors.\*
- Questions about change of major process; 75 hour major change petition not approved.\*
- Questions about the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), challenge examination process and competency based exams to meet degree program requirements.\*
- Prerequisite override requests and questions about when new prerequisite requirements go into effect.\*

\* Similar for both years.

**Advising-Undergraduate continued**

- Questions about admission requirements for certain degree programs, pursuing two degrees from different colleges simultaneously, seeking a second degree and participating in commencement.\*
- Requests for refund of duplicate course, retroactive drop of course or removal of course from student record.\*
- Questions about appeal, grievance and petition processes (i.e. course substitution, request for catalog extension, Petition for Exceeding 30/45 Semester Credit Hours (SCH) Above Degree Requirements, 30/45 SCH Fee Waiver Contract to Graduate, Limitation on Attempting Gateway Courses, Six Drop Policy, Three-Attempt Rule, Undergraduate Credit Limitation, student denied admission to or exited from a college, waiver of core curriculum or university requirement, etc.).\*
- Inquiries about academic status, core complete, evaluation of advanced placement, dual and transfer credit including study abroad course work, math placement, prerequisites, registration, repeating courses, the Texas Common Course Numbering (TCCN) System and Texas Success Initiative (TSI).\*
- Questions about degree audit process (pre and post), submitting an appeal to apply late for graduation, incorrect final degree audits/clearance for graduation, semester credit hours remaining to complete degree program.\*

**Equal Opportunity Services**

- Referrals to EOS (i.e. Title IX issues, allegations of discrimination based upon disability, concerns about implementation of approved academic accommodations, allegations of defamation and harassment, service animals, pregnant and parenting students).
- Respondent advisor/support services.
- Referrals from EOS; provided information and discussed options to consider based upon a comprehensive review of the student's record including referrals to on and/or off-campus support services and resources.
- Concerns about online postings, on-campus demonstrations, domestic/relationship issues, retaliation.
- Inquiries about emergency aid, grade of IN, SAP appeal process, Six-Drop policy, withdrawal options, etc.
- Questions about HOP 9.01-Nondiscrimination, HOP 9.02-Persons with Disabilities and HOP 9.04-Consensual Relationships.

**Fiscal Services**

- Awarded enough financial aid to cover balance due and future enrollment charges.
- Nonsufficient funds (NSF) submitted.
- Direct deposit not set-up; refund was cancelled and a refund check was issued.

\* Similar for both years.

**Fiscal Services continued**

- Request for copy of promissory note.
- Late payment to account as student was waiting for tuition reimbursement from employer.
- Requests for copy of statement of account/itemized bill.
- Request to expedite processing of refund after withdrawal and checking on status of refund.
- Course schedule dropped due to non-payment.\*
- Requests for assistance by parents or relatives of deceased students.\*
- Requests to waive interest charges and late payment fees.\*
- Partial payment requests due to financial hardship to permit registration or release of official transcript for educational, employment or scholarship purposes.\*
- Providing supporting documentation from professors indicating non-attendance for financial appeals.\*
- Questions about applying for a tuition and fee loan, paying online, installment payment options, third party payments (i.e. Texas Tomorrow Fund), posting of payments, payment deadlines and refund periods.\*
- Fiscal Services, Perkins Loan or athletics hold on account; unable to register, receive diploma, request official transcript, obtain enrollment verification or apply for a scholarship.\*
- Questions about outstanding balance due to citation charges, housing charges, medical, mental health or regular withdrawal, Return of Title IV and surcharges associated with the Three-Attempt Rule and Undergraduate Credit Limitation.\*
- Account sent to collections, balance owed from previous terms, scheduling payment arrangements and signing a payment agreement.\*

**Financial Aid**

- Inquiry about awarding process; federal regulations change which impact funding availability and amount of awards from year to year.
- Question about employee educational benefit.
- Emergency aid requests.
- Request to re-offer student loan funding to help with housing costs.
- Funding options for studying abroad.
- Hazlewood educational benefit reversed because limit on tuition exemption hours had been reached.
- Question about foster care exemption and cost of attendance.
- Request for a comprehensive review/audit of financial aid award(s).
- Question about census date and eligibility for financial aid.
- Questions about requesting and submitting a tax transcript.

\* Similar for both years.

**Financial Aid continued**

- Students unable to find/secure a work-study job/position.
- Inquiries about applying for and receiving financial aid during the summer (i.e. proration of grant, packaging block prevented student from being awarded).
- Students no longer eligible for Pell grant; used 100% of Pell grant eligibility.\*
- Requests for grant housing assistance.\*
- Referrals to University Career Center and Fiscal Services.\*
- Referrals to the Roadrunner Pantry and community resources such as the United Way.\*
- Questions about projected budget, expected family contribution, end of term processing and disbursement of financial aid award.\*
- Questions about Return of Title IV guidelines due to dropped courses which resulted in a change in enrollment hours or withdrawing from the university.\*
- Questions about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA), Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) and correcting errors.\*
- Questions about alternative/private loans, the College Access Loan (CAL), Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), loans for graduate students, the tuition and fee loan application process, renewal requirements for the Texas B-On-Time Loan, loan counseling, master promissory note and applying for a book loan.\*
- Students selected for verification and questions about the verification process (i.e. estimated processing time).\*
- Referrals to the Financial Aid Ombudsperson.\*
- Adjustments to financial aid awards due to audits, changes in enrollment status, exemptions, graduation and scholarships.\*
- Available funding options for international students (i.e. international student grant) and questions about eligibility requirements (i.e. valid F-1 Visa, I-20 form, etc.) for the international student grant.\*
- Funding options when aggregate loan limits had been reached.\*
- Special financial circumstances (i.e. dependency override, loss of income/job, seeking independent student status, etc.) and financial hardship requests (i.e. apartment fire, bankruptcy, currency devaluation, eviction, homeless students, Hurricane Harvey, parent extremely ill, etc.).\*
- Questions about outstanding documents and/or processes that needed to be submitted/completed for awarding and/or disbursement purposes (i.e. entrance and/or exit loan counseling requirements, submitting student information and/or I-94 forms, registering with selective service, processing of consortium agreement, letter from lender indicating student was no longer in default, etc.).\*
- Inquiries about SAP, appeal process for those who did not meet standards or missed the deadline and/or the impact to veteran educational benefits and status of a SAP appeal.\*

\* Similar for both years.

**Admissions-Undergraduate**

- Questions about applying online via the ApplyTexas portal and Academic Fresh Start.
- Request to update student record information.
- Lack of or delayed reply from admissions counselor.
- Referrals to academic advising and the Financial Aid Office for readmitted students.
- Appeal for possible waiver of application fee.
- Request to refund application fee.
- Transfer applicant requesting to apply with unofficial transcripts due to impact of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico.
- Request to add letter of recommendation to admission file.
- Error with evaluation of transfer course credit; request for reimbursement of duplicate course credit completed at UTSA.
- Requests to expedite the processing of admission application/file.
- Request to change from special student status to degree seeking.
- Student unable to register; admission transcript hold was subsequently cleared.
- Requests to change term of admission, delay enrollment or cancel admission to the university due to extenuating circumstances.
- Request to visit campus; provided UTSA Day information.
- Inquiries about admission policies (i.e. beyond initial admission/acceptance to the university) for various majors at UTSA.
- Questions about reapplying to the university including after first or subsequent dismissal.\*
- Student status inactive due to non-attendance.\*
- Questions about holistic admissions review process.\*
- Questions about onboarding process (i.e. orientation, testing, etc.) for newly admitted undergraduate students.\*
- Appeal process for those who were denied admission or missed the application or deferred admission deadline; checking on status of appeals/reason for denial.\*
- Status of incomplete files; checking if credentials had been received; monitoring admission status via ASAP.\*
- Questions about application deadlines and admission requirements for various student types (i.e. freshmen, transfer, international, special, non-degree seeking and transient).\*
- Provided information about the TCCN System, transfer credit calculator, transfer plans and contact information for Transfer Specialists.\*

\* Similar for both years.



**VI. Recommendations**

Suggestions for consideration include the following:

- Create accessibility map(s) to locate American with Disabilities Act (ADA) entrances, parking and paths along with directional signage (also recommended in 2017-2018).
- Establish a policy/guidelines for animals (i.e. service animals, emotional support animals) on campus.
- Create a bereavement/grief absence policy for students.
- Include information/guidelines in HOP 5.09 to address absences due to transitory/minor medical conditions and pregnancy.
- Review the notification and tracking/compliance processes for assessment of the undergraduate credit limitation surcharge.
- Offer various options/pathways versus only a singular option/pathway to complete a signature experience degree program requirement (i.e. internship, practicum, study abroad, capstone course, etc.).
- Modify the grade of IN policy to include an appeal option with supporting documentation for the three-fourths attendance requirement due to mitigating circumstances.
- Change the deadline date for dropping an individual course(s) with an automatic grade of “W” to match the last day to withdraw (i.e. drop all courses with grades of “W”) through the regular withdrawal process.
- Add the following dates to the Academic Calendar: financial aid priority deadlines for the FAFSA and TASFA and installment meal plan payment deadlines.
- Raise funding for the Student Emergency Fund.
- Update the online directory with current phone information for all faculty and staff versus N/A for the phone section. For adjunct faculty without an extension, consider adding the appropriate departmental extension. For staff, either a direct or main department/office extension would be available.

## **The University of Texas at San Antonio**

### 2018-2019 Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson Annual Report

#### **Abbreviations**

Academic Fresh Start	Statute whereby course credit or grades earned ten or more years before the semester for which the student seeks enrollment are not considered for admission purposes
ADA	American with Disabilities Act
AFROTC	Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps
ApplyTexas	Online common admission application for two and four year public colleges in Texas
ASAP	Automated Student Access Program
BIT	Behavioral Intervention Team
CACP	College of Architecture, Construction and Planning
CAL	College Access Loan
CAP	Coordinated Admissions Program
CLEP	College Level Examination Program
COB	College of Business
COE	College of Engineering
COEHD	College of Education and Human Development
COLFA	College of Liberal and Fine Arts
COPP	College of Public Policy
COS	College of Sciences
CPE	Center for Professional Excellence
DACA	Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival
DegreeWorks	Web-based degree audit system
ExCET/TEExES	Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas/Texas Examinations of Educator Standards
EOS	Equal Opportunity Services
F-1	Non-immigrant student visa which permits academic studies and/or language training programs in the United States
FCSA	Foreign Credentials Service of America
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
HOP	Handbook of Operating Procedures
I-Clicker	Electronic Student Response Device
I-20	Certificate of eligibility for non-immigrant (F-1) student status for academic and language students
I-94	Initial nonimmigrant arrival-departure document
IN	Grade of incomplete
ISIR	Institutional Student Information Record
N/A	Not applicable
NCI	No College Identified
NSF	Nonsufficient Funds
PACE	Principals of Accounting Competency Exam
Paisano	Independent Collegiate Student Newspaper

## **The University of Texas at San Antonio**

### 2018-2019 Student Assistance Services/Student Ombudsperson Annual Report

#### **Abbreviations continued**

PEACE	Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Consultation and Empowerment Center
PLUS	Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students
POD	Provision on Demand
Return of Title IV	Return of unearned financial aid
Roadrunner Days	Various programs and events to engage and inform new and returning students
Roadrunner Pantry	Resource area which provides free food and toiletries to students
Rowdy Campus Store	Bookstore
RowdyMart	Convenience store at the Student Union Paseo
Rowdy Ready	Onboarding/To-Do List Information for undergraduate students
SAP	Satisfactory Academic Progress
SCH	Semester Credit Hours
TCCN	Texas Common Course Numbering System
Title IX	Federal law that prohibits discrimination based on gender in educational institutions which receive federal financial assistance
True Colors	Personality Assessment
TSI	Texas Success Initiative
UC	University College
University Ombuds	Serves as the ombuds for university employees (faculty, staff and student employees) regarding work related matters
UTSA	University of Texas at San Antonio
UTSA Bluebook	Public access to department, faculty, course information, etc.
UTSA Day	Recruiting event for undergraduate prospective, applicant and admitted students and their families
Visa	Conditional authorization granted by a country to enter and temporarily remain within, or to leave that country
WebCT	World Wide Web Course Tools

#### **Contact information:**

Carol Gonzalez, Director of Student Assistance Services and Student Ombudsperson

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Student Assistance Services

Student Union (SU) 1.02.22

Direct (210) 458-4040, Main (210) 458-4985

[Carol.Gonzalez@utsa.edu](mailto:Carol.Gonzalez@utsa.edu)

<http://www.utsa.edu/students/ombudsperson/>