

The Blueprint for Welcome Week

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LSU

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

“Be the change that you wish
to see in the world”

-Ghandi

"The difference between 'involvement'
and 'commitment' is like an eggs-and-
ham breakfast: the chicken was
'involved' the pig was 'committed'."

- unknown

Historical Reference Points

- There is very little information on the history or evolution of Welcome Weeks.
- They essentially evolved out of new student orientations on most campuses.
- As enrollments expanded campus began to have more orientation sessions and Welcome Week became a separate event.

Louisiana State University

- Bengal Bound – has served as the official Welcome Week of the University.
- It has been administratively housed within the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Life.
- It basically involved printing a calendar of the traditionally scheduled events on campus beginning with Housing move in.

Assessment

- A random sample of 1,000 first year students was provided by the Registrar's Office.
- The survey was a short.
- The response rate was horrible, but the data was valuable.
- The most important finding was that students did not know what Bengal Bound was.

Instrument

- Gender
- Housing location
- Rate first in terms of academics
- Rate first year in terms of student life
- Do you feel connected? If no list why.
- Identify obstacles to success so far

Instrument

- What programs or services have been helpful?
- Did you participate in BB activities?
- What do you think should be available for first year students?
- What do you like about attending LSU?

Committee Structure

- There was a planning committee in place, but there were some constituents missing.
- Intentional efforts went into ensuring the committee structure was correct.

Committee Structure

- Multicultural Affairs
- Disability Services
- Career Services
- Student Support Services
- Center for the Freshman Year
- Union Programs
- Career Services
- Univ. Recreation
- Admissions
- Graphic Services
- Center for Student Leadership & Involvement
- Health Center

Committee Structure

- Office of the Chancellor
- Student Media
- Residential Life
- Center for Civic Engagement
- Orientation

Political Communication

- Once the committee was in place monthly meetings were established from January – August.
- The committee had not previously met and most constituents were anxious to discuss potential changes.

Political Communications

- Since the committee was composed of several constituents who had been on campus varying lengths of time there some key things to consider when preparing to engage them.

My Communications Plan

- Succinct meetings. No meeting was ever longer than one hour.
- Agendas were sent at least 3 days prior
- Student focused language
- Carefully selected peer comparisons
- Directed communication

My Communications Plan

- No institutional FYE – so examples from successful peers were utilized.
- As the flagship, some constituents may not appreciate comparisons.
- A list of 25 institutions was generated and provided to the committee.

My Communications Plan

- It was important to identify potential obstacles to success.
 - Turf wars
 - Operating Budget
 - Resistance to me as the newcomer
 - Resistance to change

Strategy

- Utilize a dedicated work study student
- Identify a student to design the poster
- Develop an intentional marketing plan
- Used student directed language – to keep everyone focused on the students and not each other.

Strategy

- Send out minutes within a week of each minute.
- On the minutes include the responses or information discussed under each agenda item. This reminds them of what was discussed.

Marketing Plan

- Developed first website
www.lsu.edu/bengalbound
- Sent email through admissions to all incoming first year students
- Had posters in each residence hall room at check-in
- Distributed color posters across campus

Marketing Plan

- Providing posters to the academic advisors, RA's, and other key staff that first year students would come in contact with immediately.
- Information was distributed at all orientation sessions directing to students to the new website.

Results

- Realigning some programs. Some were moved out of the week and one was added.
- Enhanced dialog surrounding more intentionality on first year students
- More student involvement
- Building a recognizable brand

Results

- More staff buy in from across the division and other constituents in academic affairs.
- Some new directions for Fall 2008 events.

Future Plans

- Adding more resources to the website
- Backing up the advertising timeline
- Realigning the programming with where students are developmentally.
 - For instance, a program on study skills was not as helpful when the students had not taken their first test or college assignment.

Future Plans

- Special section on the website for transfer students
- Assess transfer student needs at summer orientation
- Develop a plan to include students in the planning

Future Plans

- Discussion of how to connect with and support second year students.
 - Potentially a newsletter focused on their issues
 - Working through the academic advisors to connect second year students to resources

Things to Consider

- Always acknowledge those areas that could pose difficulties
 - Other Staff
 - Budget
 - Events
- When you plan with the challenges in mind they are easier to overcome

Things to Consider

- Find a sounding board to discuss prior to introducing them to the committee
- Identify what is important to key stakeholders and be sure to integrate that into your planning
- Determine how you will assess efforts as you plan them

Conclusion

- It can be very easy to develop a successful Welcome Week with a detailed plan of execution.
- Don't reinvent the wheel – there are several successful models out there.

Welcome New Tiger,

The Office of the Dean of Students would like to congratulate you on the decision to attend Louisiana State University and welcome you to your new home. This is an exciting time in your life and a great time to be a student at LSU. In preparation for your arrival to campus the University has coordinated “**Bengal Bound 2007**” welcome week activities!

Bengal Bound is a freshman tradition filled with activities to expand upon what you learned during orientation, showcase campus services, and allow students meet and relax before the start of classes. This year's activities will take place from **Thursday, August 23 – Sunday, August 26, 2007**. Take some time and explore the **Bengal Bound** site at <http://www.lsu.edu/bengalbound>. The resources available on this site will better inform you on services designed for your success.

Another LSU tradition available is the **S.T.R.I.P.E.S.** (Student Tigers Rallying, Interacting, and Promoting Education and Service) program. This program is designed to prepare you for the transition into LSU by introducing you to the history, traditions, and unique campus culture. Learn more and register for the program at <http://www.lsu.edu/stripes>.

Louisiana State University is a large and diverse community with its own unique character and enormous opportunities. There is something here for everyone, and we are here to help you find that “something.”

Welcome Home & Geaux Tigers!

K.C. White, Ed.D., Assist. Vice Chancellor &
Dean of Students
<http://www.lsu.edu/deanofstudents>

Darrell C. Ray, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of Students
<http://www.lsu.edu/csli>

University of Florida - <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/nsp/>
Great website with lots of links and info

UCLA - <http://www.college.ucla.edu/up/ORIENTATION/fyschedule.htm>
Family orientation - <http://www.college.ucla.edu/up/ORIENTATION/fam.htm>

North Carolina State - http://www.ncsu.edu/for_students/welcome_week/programs.html

Duke University - <http://orientation.studentaffairs.duke.edu/programs-student/orientation/first-year-students/Orientation%20Brochure.pdf>

Indiana University - <http://www.indiana.edu/~orient/welcomeweek/events/index.html>

Auburn University -
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/welcomeweek/events.htm

Arkansas State - <http://asunews.astate.edu/WelcomeWeek06b.htm>

Mississippi State -
http://www.olemiss.edu/student_life/campus_programming/welcomeweek/welcome.htm

Arizona State - http://webapp.poly.asu.edu/union/welcomeweek/events_r1.aspx and
http://webapp.poly.asu.edu/union/welcomeweek/events_r1.aspx

Rice University -
<http://cohesion.rice.edu/CampusServices/OWeek/emplibrary/Schedule.pdf>

New York University - <http://www.events.nyu.edu/?cmd=calmonth&cal=cal49>

New Mexico State University -
<http://www.nmsuwelcomeweek.org/calendar.php?type=Participants>