

Office of the Registrar

Strategic Plan

2012-2017

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Summary of Revisions:

- Updated description of customer service work group, page 4
- Updated committee participation chart, page 5
- Updated external connections, page 6
- Updated the status of strategic goals and action items, page 7-8
 - Under goal 6 replaced “set goals and implement a strategic approach” with “create continuous process improvement”
- Deleted organizational chart, page 11

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Summary of Revisions:

- Updated primary responsibilities to align with organizational structure changes, pages 3-4
- Updated committee participation chart, page 5
- Updated strategic goals and action items, pages 7-8
 - Added veterans certification processing and fee classification processing goals
 - Added “status” for each action item
- Organizational Chart, page 11

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Office of the Registrar Strategic Plan

Introduction

The Office of the Registrar is an academic service unit, reporting to the Associate Provost for Academic Services. In collaboration with the Office of Admissions and the Office of Financial Aid, the Office of the Registrar provides services and information to students, faculty, staff, and other constituencies. The Registrar's Office strives to maintain the balance between supporting existing quality services and solutions while exploring, developing and utilizing technological advances and opportunities. The following questions consistently guide our daily operational activities as well as our short-term and long-term initiatives: What are we best at doing? How can we do things right and do the right things? How may we steward our resources wisely? How may we efficiently and effectively serve each other and the campus community?

This strategic plan is designed to highlight our efforts to ensure our activities, decisions, and initiatives support the mission and values of our department, Enrollment Services, and the university.

Our location and contact information follows.

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Historical Overview

The profession of registrar is one of the oldest within higher education administration. Before the Civil War, most higher education institutions had a president, a treasurer, and a part-time librarian. Additional administrators became necessary in response to increased enrollment, demand for new services, and to free faculty from the work associated with managing an institution. After the Civil War, administrative positions were typically created in the following order: secretary of the faculty, registrar, vice president, dean of women, chief business officer, assistant dean, and dean of men (Rudolf, 1990).

At Michigan State University, the responsibility of recording students' standings was given to the Secretary of the Faculty, Marvin Babcock in September 1901. In April 1908, Secretary Babcock recommended to President J. L. Snyder that a college registrar be employed. Babcock knew that much more could be done, if a person were devoted to this work on a full-time basis. Babcock's recommendation was honored when Elida Yakeley became the first person to serve as registrar for Michigan State University. A chronological listing of registrars, and the years they served, is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of MSU Registrar Appointments		
Name	Title	Years
Elida Yakeley	Registrar	1908 - 1938
Robert S. Linton	Registrar	1939 - 1956
Kermit H. Smith	Registrar	1956 - 1962
Horace C. King	Registrar	1962 - 1991
Linda Lou Smith	Acting Registrar	1991 - 1999
Thomas A. Scarlett	Acting Registrar	1999 - 2000
Linda O. Stanford	Registrar	2000 - 2006
Dugald McMillan	Acting Registrar	2006 - 2009
Nicole G. Rovig	University Registrar	2009 - present

It is appropriate to recognize the involvement of former MSU registrars in the founding of national organizations such as the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) in 1910 and the Registrars of the Association of American Universities (AAU Registrars) in 1986. These organizations continue to provide guidelines and standards for higher education officials regarding best practices and forums for discussion of policies and practices. Over the years, many individuals within the Office of the Registrar have represented MSU and the profession within the State of Michigan, regionally, and nationally. Contributions include serving in leadership roles, presenting at conferences and workshops, writing articles, gathering and disseminating data, facilitating sessions, and actively participating in committees and taskforces. Staffing levels have declined dramatically in the last 40 years. In 1970, the Office of the Registrar had 96 staff members; in 1985, there were 80; and in 2000, there were 49.

Organizational Context

Overview. The University Registrar serves as the leader of the Office of the Registrar. The office includes 40 experienced and talented staff members. Associate registrars oversee functional areas within the office. In addition, the University Curriculum Administrator manages the catalog functions for the university. Many areas of responsibility and specific functions connect to and span across the office. An organizational chart is available at: <http://www.esp.msu.edu/RO%20Organizational%20Chart.pdf>. Office of the Registrar core functions include: academic records and transcripts; certificates and diplomas; classroom and event scheduling; degree certification; enrollment and registration; grade collection and recording; fee classification; student athlete and veterans certification; transfer credit processing; and university curriculum. In addition, we lead internal, cross-unit, and institution-wide initiatives.

Mission, Vision, and Values. Table 2 shows the mission, vision, and values of the Office of the Registrar.

Table 2: Mission, Vision, and Values
Mission
Steward academic records and data accurately, effectively, and efficiently
Vision
Anticipate and support the needs of the campus community and continuously challenge ourselves to provide exemplary services and solutions
Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ link operational and behavioral decisions with strategic goals ▪ provide exceptional service ▪ foster an environment of ongoing learning, growth, and teamwork ▪ consistently examine policies and procedures with a mindset towards improvement ▪ engage in active, two-way communication with each other and the campus community ▪ be innovative in how we utilize technology ▪ effectively communicate and administer federal, state, and institutional policies and legislation

Primary Responsibilities. Our primary responsibilities are displayed within broad categories below.

Academic Records

- maintain student academic records and data from 1855 to present
- produce transcripts for current and former students
- manage end-of-term processes to include recording grades, calculating GPA, and processing academic status decisions
- coordinate and oversee Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- process subpoenas in compliance with FERPA
- process students' requests to restrict directory information
- monitor students' progress toward degree requirements, certify students' completion of requirements, and issue diplomas and certificates
- post teacher certification recommendations to student academic records
- manage enrollment and degree verifications
- oversee reporting to the National Student Clearinghouse and update students' records
- publish and maintain the Dean's List
- support admit-to-upper school and change of major processes
- conduct record verification for posthumous degree requests
- records retention and imaging
- manage processes associated with dual and linked programs
- manage general person functions such as address changes, deceased student processes, ethnicity reporting, gender changes, name changes, and tracking majors

Compliance and Articulation

- review requests for transfer credit, process requests for equivalency determination, update equivalency tables, and update student academic records
- provide training to the campus community regarding FERPA and MSU's Access to Student Information policy
- certify student-athletes in compliance with university, Big 10, and NCAA regulations
- oversee lifelong education processes including admission applications, advising, enrollment, and academic record functions
- process readmission applications
- process graduate assistantships
- create and publish the commencement program
- review and serve as a repository for articulation and consortium agreements
- manage enrollment processes and academic records for special student groups such as the China Turfgrass program, CIC course share, Post-Doctoral appointees, Study Abroad, Traveling Scholars, Visiting International Professional Program, and Great Plains Interactive Distance Education (GPIDEA)

Registration Services and Classroom Scheduling

- oversee all facets of enrollment-related processes, including student withdrawals from the university
- schedule university classrooms and computer labs for courses and events
- edit work copy by examining class scheduling data to ensure alignment with grading, refunding, reporting, and academic policies and procedures
- schedule final examinations and publish final exam schedules
- assist students using veterans education benefits; identify and explain education benefits and resources
- oversee marketing and administration of Summer Study
- enroll incoming students into core classes prior to Academic Orientation Program
- provide enrollment-related support during Academic Orientation Programs
- assist with course demand analysis, providing academic and administrative units with data

- establish and manage refund and grading deadlines for all course sections
- determine in-state fee classifications
- determine and process refund appeals

RO Technology Services

- specialize in student data extraction, reporting, and dissemination
- work closely with University Systems Support Team to support the Student Information System, Degree Navigator, and other systems
- maintain and support systems including but not limited to: academic integrity, academic progress reporting, academic programs, courses, degree audit, electronic student academic folder, emergency contact system, event scheduler, pre-enrollment, readmission, Registrar's Office Instructor System, satisfactory academic progress, Schedule of Courses, subterms, textbook, transfer credit articulation, web enroll, and work copy
- produce census, end-of-term, and ad-hoc reports for the campus
- manage Office of the Registrar web systems

Curriculum and Catalog

- provide guidance related to curriculum, academic policies, and procedures
- create, publish, and update the academic calendar and University catalog (Academic Programs and Course Descriptions)
- review all curricular items and facilitate movement through academic governance process
- update and maintain academic programs in Degree Navigator, and load courses into the Student Information System
- manage the Statewide Academic Program Review process

Cross-functional

- comply with and educate the campus about state and federal legislation
- facilitate SIS Governance
- provide enrollment services related support to the College of Law
- facilitate non-attendance reporting to ensure compliance with Federal legislation
- provide support to commencement ceremonies
- represent the Office of the Registrar, MSU, and the profession within the State of Michigan, regionally, and nationally
- manage access to the Student Information System
- oversees Student Information System data integrity and operations

Work groups. Internal work groups exist within the Office of the Registrar to ensure that our responsibilities are coordinated and completed timely, efficiently, and effectively. Work groups include:

Core. The University Registrar and Associate Registrars meet weekly, or as needed, to: (1) prioritize the department's projects, tasks, and responsibilities (2) examine and address issues affecting the department and institution, (3) create, review, and implement communication plans and (4) develop and oversee strategies to ensure compliance with university, state, and Federal legislation.

Customer Service Continual Improvement Process: A customer service continual improvement process has been developed for the department and a customer service workgroup has been established to facilitate the process. In addition, the workgroup's purpose is to establish, articulate, and oversee an office-wide, strategic approach for providing exceptional service through friendly, accurate and consistent information, and services to all Michigan State University customers in a timely and efficient manner.

Functional Area Teams. Primary responsibilities in the Office of the Registrar are grouped within functional areas (e.g. registration and classroom scheduling; academic records and certification; phone bank; and technology services). The supervisors and staff members representing these functional areas meet on a regular basis, formally and informally.

Management Team. Individuals serving as supervisors within the Office of the Registrar meet biweekly, or as needed, to: (1) share updates and issues from the functional areas they represent (2) discuss matters affecting the department and the institution and (3) review, provide feedback, and assist with decisions concerning projects, initiatives, priorities, organizational structure, resources, and other topics. High-level meeting notes are distributed to the entire Office of the Registrar staff via email.

Committee participation. Committee involvement and leadership contribute to the Office of the Registrar’s functional and strategic vision. Positive outcomes such as building and maintaining positive work relationships, contributing to cross-unit and institution-wide initiatives, and enhancing professional knowledge and growth may be attributed to active involvement.

Table 3 summarizes staff members’ committee participation.

Table 3: Office of the Registrar Committee Participation		
Committee	Representative(s)	Role
Advisory Consultant Committee - ISP	Assoc Registrar-Articulation/Compliance	Ex-officio
Classroom Energy Consolidation	Asst Registrar-Classroom Scheduling	Member
Commencement Committee	Assoc Registrars	Member
Criminal Conduct Review Board	University Registrar	Member
Enrollment Management Operations Committee	University Registrar and Assoc Registrar-Registration	Member
Enrollment Management Advisory Committee to the Provost	University Registrar	
Graduate Associate and Assistant Deans	Assoc Registrar-Academic Records	Member
Leadership Learning Community (FO&D)	University Registrar	Co-facilitator
Learning Systems Advisory Committee	University Registrar	Member
MSU Be Spartan Green Sustainability	Asst Registrar-Academic Records	Member
MSU IT Council	University Registrar	Member
Non-Credit Registration System Advisory Committee	Assoc Registrars-Academic Records and Technology	Member
Out-of-State Fees Committee	University Registrar and his/her designee	Ex-officio
Out-of-State Fees Review Committee (RO)	University Registrar, Assoc Registrar-Registration, Fee Class Supervisor	Member
Satisfactory Academic Progress-University Review	Assoc Registrar-Academic Records	Member
SIS Data and Operations Committee	Assoc Registrars-Academic Records and Technology	Chair/Member
SIS Strategy and Prioritization Committee	University Registrar	Chair
SIS Technical Team	Assoc Registrar – Technology Services	Member
Spartan Bookstore Advisory Board	Assoc Registrar-Academic Records	Member
Student Athletic Eligibility Review Committee	Univ Registrar & Asst Registrar-Articulation/Compliance	Member
Student Veterans Resource Team	Assoc Registrar-Registration & VA Certifying Official	Member
University Committee on Curriculum Sub	University Curriculum Administrator	Ex-officio
Undergraduate Asst/Assoc Deans Group (UGAAD)	University Registrar and Assoc Registrars	Member
University Classroom Technology Committee	Asst Registrar-Classroom Scheduling	Member
University Committee on Curriculum	Univ Registrar and Univ Curriculum Admin	Ex-officio
University Council	University Registrar	Ex-officio

External Connections. The Office of the Registrar has connections to professional organizations, external agencies, and vendors. Collaboration with these entities is facilitated through annual conferences, workshops, webinars, listservs, and phone consultations. External connections include:

Professional Organizations:

- American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- Registrars of the Association of American Universities (AAU Registrars)
- Association of Veterans Education Certifying Officials (AVECO)
- Consortium of MI Veterans Educators (CMVE)
- Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC)
- Extended Education and Professional Development
- Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (MACRAO)
- North American Association of Summer Sessions (NAASS)
- North Central Conference on Summer Sessions (NCCSS)

External Agencies:

- CollegeNet
- College Source, Inc.
- Michigan Department of Education
- Decision Academic Incorporated
- Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)
- Big Ten Conference and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)
- National Student Loan Clearinghouse (NSLC)
- Perceptive Software

Stakeholders. The Office of the Registrar strives to build and maintain trust, engage in strategic collaboration, and facilitate a strong team environment with stakeholders. Broad categories of stakeholders include faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, employers, legislators, and colleagues at other institutions. Specific partnerships with units across campus are highlighted in Table 4.

Unit	Linkage
Academic Units	all aspects of registrar-related functions
College of Law	enrollment services related support
Commencement Office	university commencement activities
Controller’s Office	tuition assessment, billing, tuition assistance, Title IV
Facilities Planning & Space Mgmt	classroom scheduling
International Studies and Programs	international agreements, study abroad
IT Services	course management systems, identity management, Student Information System, and Degree Navigator
Office of Admissions	Academic Orientation Program, enrollment management, and transfer credit processing
Office of Financial Aid	Satisfactory Academic Progress, student enrollment, compliance
Office of the General Counsel	FERPA, FOIA, subpoena for student records, compliance
Office of Planning and Budgets	institutional, external, and ad-hoc reporting
Physical Plant	classroom scheduling
Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities	classroom scheduling, student enrollment, veterans services
Student-Athlete Support Services and Office of Compliance Services	student-athlete eligibility and certification
Student Life	Classroom scheduling, records verification requests, judicial affairs, club sports certification
Undergrad Univ Division & Graduate School	policies and procedures, advising, student success, curriculum

Other Units	units utilizing student-related data*
*including, but not limited to: Advancement, Career Services, English Language Center, Department of Police & Public Safety, libraries, Human Resources, Office of International Students & Scholars, Olin Health Center, Residential & Hospitality Services, Service Learning, MSU Research, and University Archives	

Envisioning the Future

The strategic goals of the Office of the Registrar support MSU’s Boldness by Design strategic imperatives to enhance the student experience and strengthen stewardship. The goals also meet one or more of the following criteria: having a large positive impact on the campus community; reducing risk; improving efficiency and saving resources by reducing duplicative and/or manual labor; increasing the accuracy of data; and complying with state and federal legislation. While these criteria may apply to any point in time, there is a greater sense of urgency to complete these goals within the next 1-3 years in order to position the office for a successful implementation of a new Student Information System.

Short-term Goals. Table 5 identifies the strategic goals and action items to be completed by the Office of the Registrar within the next 1-3 years. These are presented in alphabetical order, rather than priority order.

Table 5: Stakeholders	
Action Items	Status as of 8/7/14
Goal 1: conduct business process analysis and prepare documentation	
student athlete certification processes and reporting	complete
classroom and event scheduling	complete
enrollment-related processes such as mass appointments, study abroad, and readmissions	not started
enrollment/record verifications	complete
fee classification processing	complete
general person functions such as addresses, SIS table maintenance, and zip codes	complete
records retention policy	in-progress
transfer credit processing	complete
veterans certification processing	complete
Goal 2: develop, enhance, and implement systems and resources	
articulation and consortium agreements database	complete
ATHInfo	complete
academic room scheduling software	in-progress
course demand tools	complete
early course reservation and pre-enrollment systems	complete
final exam scheduling	not started
office dashboard	not started
Office of the Registrar annual report	not started
student self service (STUInfo)	complete
transfer credit processing	in-progress
Goal 3: enhance our physical work space	
accommodate all Office of the Registrar staff members in Suite 150	complete
allow for work space grouping by functional areas	complete
make public areas welcoming and inviting	complete
update the overall look of the office	complete
foster a positive, productive, and peaceful work environment	complete

Table 5: Strategic Goals and Action Items (Continued)	
Action Items	Status as of 8/7/14
Goal 4: establish clear performance expectations	
provide performance feedback at least twice a year	complete
coordinate and promote learning and development opportunities, especially those with an emphasis on business process analysis, communication, productivity, management and leadership, and team work	complete
Goal 5: overhaul tools, resources, policies, and procedures related to FERPA	
develop training for the campus community	in-progress
examine MSU directory information	not started
examine non-credit and affiliate systems	not-started
Goal 6: take customer service to the next level	
establish, communicate, and enforce consistent performance expectations among the primary service points: department phone lines, email, and front desks	complete
develop a work group for customer service initiatives	complete
create continuous process improvement	complete
review and enhance content of web pages	not started
gather and utilize feedback from stakeholders	in-progress

Intermediary Goals. The intermediary goals, to be completed within 3-5 years, are presented with the expectation that the office will have a significant role with the Student Information System implementation and that the implementation efforts will be underway. Broad categories of goals for 2016-2017 include:

- identify, prioritize, and communicate primary responsibilities, and initiatives for the next five years;
- sustain critical business processes and systems;
- stay well informed of best practices, institutional priorities, and stakeholders' needs and priorities;
- identify and implement effective communication and training strategies; and
- assist with making the Student Information System implementation as seamless as possible for the campus community.

Long-Term Goals. Long-term strategic goals for the Office of the Registrar include:

- ensure decisions, priorities, and activities align with and support the mission, vision, and values of the department, Enrollment Services, and the university;
- perform core functions effectively and efficiently;
- provide exemplary services and solutions;
- steward resources wisely;
- represent our office and institution within the State of Michigan, regionally, and nationally; and
- serve as a highly-regarded leader within the profession.

Communication and Integration Strategies

The strategic plan for the Office of the Registrar will be communicated and integrated into the organization as follows:

- provide each staff member the opportunity to review the strategic plan and provide feedback
- provide a printed copy of the plan to staff members
- provide a printed copy of the plan to new employees
- place a link to the plan on the Office of the Registrar website, under the "About Us and Data" tab
- notify members of the RO Listserv and provide them with a link to the plan
- reference key points of the plan to campus groups, when appropriate

- reference the plan before making major commitments and decisions
- review and discuss the strategic plan as an office at least annually; ask staff members to consider where we are at as an office, what is missing from the plan, our accomplishments, and how they see their contributions aligning with the plan
- monitor progress regularly through internal work group meetings

If updates need to be made to the strategic plan, a new version will be saved and made available on the web. A version control page within the document will summarize the revisions made.

Reference

Rudolph, F. (1990). *The American college & university*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.

