

Selected Goals from 2004-2005 Annual Reports

Unit: Admissions

Strategic Plan Goal	Unit Goal
With which 1 or 2 goals from the 8 current strategic plan goals does your 2004-2005 goal best align?	What were your unit level goals for 2004-2005 as contained in your 2003-2004 Annual Report?
Strategic Plan Goal 8 - Ongoing Quality Improvement, specifically 2.1 unit assessment plans.	Engage the staff in the development of a quality improvement program with the objective of improving response time and reducing errors.

What action did you undertake to achieve this goal?

As a direct result of the substantial increase in the number of applications received, the emphasis this year has been on reduction of response time in application processing. To that end, the entire process cycle was evaluated and numerous changes were implemented. Specifically, the initial, limited application entry was moved from the admissions officers to the support staff who open the mail. Concurrently the maintenance of a separate tracking system was eliminated. The sequence of entry screens was streamlined and several screens were eliminated. Additional staff were added during peak periods. Most hand written items (file labels, missing information form letters, etc.) were computer generated with a communications plan. An acknowledgement letter reduced the number of status-check phone calls. Finally, a self-service status check screen was activated on the on-line system.

By what means did you assess goal achievement?

The direct measure was the reduction of response time for both initial application receipt and for a decision letter for complete files. An indirect measure was the reduction in non-productive phone calls to check on application status.

Describe the assessment results and the conclusions about goal attainment you inferred from them.

Response time to application receipt went from non-existent (we didn't do an acknowledgement before January 2005) to one day. Response time for complete files dropped from about eight weeks to three weeks. We do not have adequate data for precise measures of phone calls, but calls have become less frequent and more of the calls relate to actual problems which require individual attention (e.g. appeals). This has occurred in spite of a 20% increase in overall applications.

What continuous improvement resulted from the use of the assessment data?

The improvements of shorter response times benefit from a multiplier effect. As response times improve, distracting phone calls are reduced. This allows staff to work more effectively which further reduces response time, etc., leading to a spiral of improvement. In addition,

the improved response times are likely to lead to better applicant satisfaction which will lead to better show rates for the applicant pool. This makes the overall admission effort more effective.

The methods employed in this quality improvement program will be applied to the recruitment "back office" processes next year.
