

Student Admissions

Overview

The goal of the undergraduate admissions personnel at Lancaster Bible College is to recruit students who desire to be educated according to a biblical worldview and prepared for professional Christian ministry. Although each program, traditional undergraduate, Degree Completion, Graduate School, and Institute of Biblical Enrichment, functions as a separate entity in regard to admissions, they all have common goals in marketing and recruitment. The differences lie within the target audience for each program and that audience's specific needs. Recently, LBC adopted an enrollment management approach in an effort to coordinate campus-wide enrollment efforts. While Chapter One of this report included a review of enrollment management from the planning and resource allocation viewpoint, this section will address the areas of marketing, recruitment, and admissions, especially in light of the following MSA and ABHE standards.

Standards

MSA Standard 8

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission.

ABHE Standard 7

The institution has developed and implemented an enrollment management plan that is consistent with its mission and addresses issues of recruitment, admissions, financial aid, and retention.

Compliance Documented

It is the finding of this self-study process that LBC is in compliance with the stated standards and subsequent elements. Data sources demonstrating this compliance include: undergraduate catalog, degree completion catalog, graduate catalog, admissions and financial aid brochures, student handbooks, college website, curriculum sheets, credit evaluation forms, and degree completion assessing prior learning handbook.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this section:

1. How can LBC best position itself over the next five years to meet the admission and enrollment management needs of its growing student population?
2. Are current strategies sufficient to attract a diverse population of students who would benefit from an LBC education?

Analysis of Key Issues

Enrollment Management

One of the most critical areas consuming the time of the President's Cabinet over the last couple of years has been LBC's enrollment growth and the formation of a growth strategy, leading to the establishment of an optimal operational size across all educational levels. [Appendix 2.1](#) summarizes the enrollment growth over the last 10 years. Clearly, LBC has experienced numerical growth outside of a specific growth strategy. In 2003, the administration adopted a more scientific method to project growth (see [Appendix 2.2](#)), but even this was not a growth strategy.

In the fall of 2005, the president initiated discussion with his cabinet concerning a growth strategy. Discussions at subsequent cabinet meetings and a retreat in early 2006 solidified the administration's decision to appoint a cabinet level position to develop a specific growth strategy leading to the establishment of an optimal operational size. As noted in Chapter One, this vice president level position was established in the summer of 2006 and centralizes marketing, recruitment, and retention strategies.

The primary goal of enrollment management is to develop the life cycle of student enrollment across all educational levels at LBC. Other goals include: continuing a pattern of enrollment growth; developing a consistent, comprehensive, integrated system of student enrollment; ensuring a successful and diverse student population; and engaging the entire campus community in the enrollment process. These goals are achieved through a more thorough coordination of marketing, advertising, and recruitment efforts across departments.

Current departments that fall under the auspices of enrollment management include admissions, student services, financial aid, placement, and alumni services. Plans are in place to renovate Esbenshade Hall into an office complex that will serve in part as an enrollment management center. Locating key offices in one facility instead of being spread across the campus will further facilitate the transition to this new enrollment management approach.

Our own internal analysis indicated a need for an outside consultant to review our practices consistent with this endeavor. David Conway of Teresa Farnum & Associates was retained for his expertise, and several recommendations are underway including: a flat rate tuition approach, flat rate scholarships versus percentage based, an easy-to-understand merit-based scholarship matrix augmented by need-based assistance, and the use of more data driven search strategies. The full report can be found in Appendix 2.3.

A more comprehensive enrollment management approach in identifying, recruiting, admitting, and retaining students will have a positive effect on all academic levels at LBC: traditional undergraduate, degree completion, graduate, and the Institute of Biblical Enrichment.

Traditional Undergraduate Program

LBC has seen a growth rate of over 62% in the undergraduate student body within the past 15 years and projects steady growth through 2010 (see [Appendix 2.1](#), LBC Enrollment Projections and [Appendix 2.2](#), LBC Market Analysis and Strategy). According to the market analysis and strategy report, 60% of LBC students come from public schools, 30% from

Christian schools, and the remaining 10% from other types of schooling such as home schooling. Therefore, to continue to reach our diverse population base, LBC has included in its intentional recruitment trips visits to public high schools, public college fairs, Christian high schools, Christian college fairs, conferences, conventions, and transfer colleges.

Other avenues of contact with prospective students include LBC's ministry and recruitment team, PROOF, which has been successful in reaching Christian schools, church youth groups, and youth conventions. [Note: While PROOF is currently not in operation, money is still in the budget for re-starting this team in the future.] The Admissions Office also works with several alumni who have agreed to serve as ambassadors in spreading the word about LBC and bringing youth for on-campus visits. Additional contacts with churches in diverse communities have been made, with plans to increase those contacts.

Marketing to a diverse population of students over the past few years has moved beyond just showing pictures of a diverse sea of students' faces on brochures, although that aspect has been helpful. Because of the college's geographic location, a diverse population has been difficult to attract. Personal contact between the Admissions Office and predominantly African-American or Hispanic churches has been established and has translated into applications and enrolled students. One such student who enrolled for the spring 2006 semester came as a result of a church contact in the Philadelphia area. In January of 2006, an African-American graduate of LBC was the keynote speaker at our weeklong missions conference where the emphasis was on reaching the hip-hop culture. A concert by his hip-hop group was part of the conference. Then, at the January 2007 missions conference, a native African graduate of LBC was the keynote speaker. Despite these efforts, the overall numbers of enrolled minority students remain small. Over the past five years (2001 to 2005) an average of over 80% of LBC's traditional undergraduate population classified themselves as being white non-Hispanic. The fall 2005 number was 92.9%. It is a goal of the Admissions Office to partner with more inner city churches that would support and encourage eligible students to attend LBC. The key to recruitment of any student population is to make students feel as if they would be a good fit for LBC and to help them see themselves as LBC students. More personal contact and strong ties with key churches of diverse backgrounds could translate into a larger, more diverse student population. Having a more diverse faculty and staff would also be helpful in recruiting and retaining minority students. In the summer of 2006, a minority was hired as an admissions counselor. While all counselors are sensitive to the desire to recruit minority students, it is anticipated that having a counselor who is from a minority group will help give LBC insights into the needs of minority students.

In another attempt to attract a more diverse population, undergraduate recruitment expanded abroad in 2006 through the sending of an admissions representative on an Association of Christian Schools International college fair route through Moscow and other parts of Europe. This trip allowed LBC's Admissions Office to interact with international students as well as US students living overseas. One student enrolled in the fall of 2006 as a result of this recruitment trip.

The Admissions Office is continuing to assess its strategies to see if they are sufficient for future need. Currently, admissions personnel attempt to record the source of each prospective name that is received by LBC. Regular follow-up then occurs through the mailing of letters and printed material, as well as through phone calls by telecounselors. Keeping records of a

prospective student's initial contacts helps the Admissions Office evaluate what advertisements are working, what kinds of brochures are most viewed by prospective students, and what kinds of other contacts are being made to bring in student names.

As the generations of students become more and more technologically advanced, the number of inquiries through the LBC website and e-mail is significant. The Admissions Office recognizes the need to make additional strides to capitalize on this new form of recruitment. Plans are in the works to build a new website that would be more attractive and user friendly. The college's recently purchased campus management system will greatly enhance admissions recruitment follow-up tracking and help all departments record and access data more efficiently. In addition, the new database will assist students by giving them the ability to register online and view student accounts online. This will help applicants to be better informed about their academic and financial aid status. This new database came online in the summer of 2006, with its full benefits yet to be utilized and evaluated. An evaluation should be conducted after one full year to determine whether or not its capabilities in the area of recruitment procedures are being utilized to their fullest.

Tuition costs and financial aid packages are two other important aspects of an enrollment management strategy. According to the July 2006 Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania, LBC is on the lower end of the scale of tuition costs among private colleges in the commonwealth. On the other hand, according to the 2005 ABHE Annual Report, LBC's tuition costs are on the higher end of ABHE institutions. The rising cost of tuition has been a concern as the Admissions Office has sought to recruit a diverse population by increasing recruitment within the inner cities (mainly in but not limited to Lancaster, York, and Philadelphia). LBC has continued to offer a generous scholarship of 50% off tuition, room, and board to students of full-time Christian workers. There are also scholarships that exist for those with high academic standing and exceptional leadership capabilities; yet, most scholarships are merit-based rather than need-based.

As admissions counselors meet with prospective students who fit the admissions criteria and who feel called to ministry and study of God's Word, additional scholarships to aid in recruitment of students from lower-income families would be a benefit to the college. The newly established Mallalieu Need Endowment Scholarship will be a great help in providing additional monies to students who still have a need after all other financial aid options have been exhausted, since many of the college's scholarships are based on a percentage of tuition. The budget for scholarships continues to grow, not only in proportion to the increased student population but also in proportion to the rise in tuition rates. This may necessitate a further study of the need to establish a cap on certain scholarships and how that would affect the decision of prospective students in coming to LBC. With this goal in mind, the president established a task force in 2006 to look at financial aid issues across all levels of the college and will be reporting its findings in the near future.

Degree Completion Program

The Degree Completion Program (DCP) at LBC is in a state of flux in the areas of both enrollment and marketing. While the first seven years of the program saw fairly stable enrollment using well established marketing techniques, the past five years have been unstable. With the advent of taking DCP online, enrollment projections and marketing

strategies need to change dramatically. It is anticipated that a more comprehensive enrollment management strategy should be able to provide the changes needed.

In its attempts to maintain a stable enrollment, DCP has been adding new offerings over the past 12 years. Additional courses in Bible, the arts and sciences, and in counseling have been added. Options for a certificate and a second degree (for those already holding a bachelor's degree in another discipline) have been added. Since the start-up year in 1994, DCP enrollment has ranged from a low of 35 to a high of 84. After that peak, a steady decline was seen in 2002 and 2003 with enrollment dropping to 43 students. Since then, enrollment has fluctuated between 38 and 64, with the fall 2005 enrollment being 64. With the advent of an online delivery mode for DCP, overall enrollment is expected to rise considerably. Detailed projections of DCP enrollment figures can be found in the alternative delivery modes section of Chapter Four, as that section discusses the effects of offering DCP via an online delivery format.

DCP's distinction within the market has been and continues to be a strong emphasis on Bible in the preparation of ministry leaders. Since DCP's launch, marketing has been based on a regional approach indexed to the offering of essentially one degree program and the absence of any extension sites. This audience is determined by the main campus's accessibility for the prospective student. While some students have had to travel up to four hours to get to campus, this is not a realistic ongoing expectation.

The primary marketing vehicles for generating new students have been major media pushes through radio, direct mail, and, more recently, web keywords. Varying successes have crafted the mix of the media. For instance, after initially dividing marketing dollars somewhat equally between print and radio ads in the first few years, it became obvious that print ads were not bringing in the inquiries and that those who did inquire via print ads were less likely to convert into students. Therefore, in 2000 DCP started putting the bulk of its advertising dollars into radio. Two Christian radio stations remained its mainstays for several years after that. Since 2000, however, the number of inquiries via radio has dropped from 25% to 11% in 2005. In addition, the conversion rate of inquiries into students has dropped from 41.6% to 37.6%. Those two drops, combined with the increased cost of radio spots, have resulted in a 49% increase in cost per conversion. In 2000 radio cost \$602.43 per conversion. In 2005 this amount rose to \$896.59, a 48% increase.

In place of radio, the Internet and/or LBC's website has taken over as the primary source of inquiries. The web is a relatively new tool for LBC. DCP continues to evaluate its success and tweak keyword strategy based on results. In 2005, 26% of inquiries were generated by a web search or a visit to LBC's website. In 2005, DCP started using marketing dollars to purchase placement hits with the search engine Google. With the advent of DCP online, an overwhelming majority of marketing dollars will need to be shifted to strategies that will further capitalize on web-based inquiries.

An evolving marketing strategy for DCP is the development of personal referrals via alumni and LBC staff and faculty. While producing fewer inquiries, personal contacts have always resulted in a higher conversion rate (between 20% and 30%) than radio and the Internet. Plus, inquiries through personal contact have been on the increase lately. In 2005, inquiries from those who had personal contact with someone associated with the program or the college represented 25% of total inquiries. A concerted effort has been made to tap into this valuable

marketing arena. Memos are sent to faculty, staff, and current students asking them to promote the program. Postcards announcing information sessions are also sent to faculty and staff so that they may pass them on to potential students. The college family is kept apprised of new student events on the monthly prayer sheet. Pens, bookmarks, and other trinkets containing the program logo and contact information are periodically given to faculty, staff, current students, and prospective students. DCP's marketing strategy for the next several years will continue to include an overt system of raising program awareness and recognition of program referrals with some appropriate expression of gratitude.

Due to the nature of the program, DCP attracts a much more diverse population than the other traditional undergraduate programs. Since the format requires class attendance just one night a week, the program is able to attract working adults from a greater distance, including the urban areas of Baltimore and Harrisburg. Therefore, between 2001 and 2005 only 64.5% of all DCP students were white, non-Hispanic, compared to 82.2% in the traditional undergraduate programs. Females outnumber males in DCP, constituting 58.5% of the student population as compared to 45% in the traditional programs. As would be expected in a program geared for adults, the age of a DCP student ranges from 25 to 70, with an average age of 40. The average age of a traditional undergraduate is 24.

Given the nature of a single degree program offering and geographic limitations, DCP is in the process of adding an online option for potential students. It is believed that this approach is superior for LBC over extension site development. This new delivery mode will be marketed in a blended approach via direct mail, mass media, and the web, seeking to capture market share within LBC's traditional program non-completers and certificate and associate degree students, as well as among students who have had no previous relationship with the college.

The addition of online education will have the most impact on the DCP program. While individual classes will be offered online for the traditional undergraduate and graduate programs, only DCP will offer its entire program via this mode. In light of the potential increase in enrollment due to this new method of delivery, an assistant director for DCP was hired in the summer of 2006. Part of the duties of this individual is to promote online education to prospective students.

One of the benefits of adding online education to the menu of choices at LBC is the ability to attract students who are unable to attend the college in person. International students, alumni who are serving in non-local parts of the US and abroad, as well as others currently in ministry who need continuing education credits or further higher education are prime targets for this program. Eventually, each program—traditional undergraduate, graduate, and DCP—will have the ability to reach out to a more diverse population of prospective students who will benefit from this mode of education. Further discussion of biblical online education, especially as it relates to DCP, can be found in Chapter Four.

Graduate School

Since its inception in 1995, the Graduate School program at LBC has seen phenomenal growth. This growth can be attributed to marketing and recruitment, the addition of new faculty and staff members, new degree programs, and word of mouth.

Efforts made in marketing and recruitment can be broken down into two categories: off campus and on campus. Off campus marketing and recruitment for the Graduate School consists of advertisements (both radio and printed ads), postcards and other mailed information, the LBC website, information sessions, and representation at college fairs and conferences. At fairs and conferences, material is handed out to prospective students by a representative of LBC (either from the Graduate School Office, undergraduate Admissions Office, or Marketing and Communications Office) who is on hand to connect with the student at that time.

Information sessions have proven to be an effective means of recruiting students for the Graduate School. Basic information is provided to prospective students, including available degree programs, course descriptions (in the form of the Graduate School catalog), financial aid information, and general campus information, all in a setting that is informal and allows interaction between the Graduate School staff and students. Looking ahead to the addition of online education, the Graduate School needs to work closely with the Vice President for Enrollment Management to research marketing and recruitment techniques more thoroughly and develop a more comprehensive marketing and research plan.

Progress has also been made in the area of on-campus marketing and recruitment. Currently, LBC holds several on-campus conferences, which have proven to be valuable times of promotion for the Graduate School. These conferences, although not directly sponsored by the Graduate School, have been useful in distributing printed promotional materials to participants who may be prospective students. The Graduate School also contacts students in the undergraduate program who are due to graduate with a bachelor's degree and encourages them to attend an information session and take advantage of the free graduate course that is given to them upon graduation. In the future, the Graduate School will continue to use these proven methods of effective marketing and recruitment on campus.

The Graduate School is attracting a diverse student body in regard to race, gender, and age. Currently, the Graduate School population consists of 149 male students and 130 female students. Of those students, 56% are under the age of 40, while 44% are over the age of 40. Currently, the ethnic make up consists of 1% Asian American, 1% Hispanic, 8% African American, 71% white non-Hispanic, and 15% not listing their ethnicity. In addition, 4% of the students are international students (non US residents). To continue this success in diversity, the Graduate School will consider intentional marketing to diverse populations through churches, using current students as recruiters, and will also research the possibility of extending geographical boundaries as the program structure allows.

As the Graduate School continues to grow, the need arises for additional personnel. Currently, the Graduate School consists of the dean of graduate education, an administrative assistant to the dean, and two graduate student coordinators. Five individuals serve as directors for the graduate programs. Four of them are full-time LBC faculty members who have reduced teaching loads due to their responsibilities as program directors, and the fifth individual is a part-time LBC faculty member. Graduate School faculty are drawn from LBC's full-time, part-time, and adjunct instructors, as well as visiting professors. The Graduate School has been assessing the need for additional faculty and staff in various areas and, partly as a result of this self-study process, the second graduate student coordinator was added starting with the 2006-2007 school year.

Institute of Biblical Enrichment

The Institute of Biblical Enrichment (IBE) is the non-credit continuing education arm of LBC that offers continuing education units (CEUs) through adult education classes. Currently these classes are held in four area communities—Lancaster, York, Elizabethtown, and Coatesville. The program is designed to enrich and inspire adult learners to bridge the gap between life experiences and biblical truth. While IBE courses are primarily a service to the Christian community, anecdotal evidence has indicated that they also tend to serve as an additional recruitment tool for LBC's other academic programs. At least one IBE student was influenced to enroll in for-credit courses in the undergraduate program within the last five years, and at least a dozen IBE students have been referred to the DCP with at least three of them actually enrolling.

Overall, enrollment in the IBE has grown significantly over the last 10 years. Nevertheless, the last three years has seen a fairly consistent enrollment due to a shift in two specific areas: Bible institutes and extension programs. The enrollment in Bible institutes that are affiliated with LBC is increasing while the enrollment in extension programs is decreasing. The classification of extension programs represents individual churches that request a single IBE course offering. These are very sporadic and have seen a decline in the past few years. The extension programs classification also includes IBE courses taught at Mid-Atlantic Christian School Association seminars. LBC is invited to participate in these conventions on a rotating basis and, when we do, our enrollment numbers in the extension programs spike for that year.

In addition to the classes offered at the four campuses that are staffed by LBC, the college works with 10 existing Bible institutes to grant CEU credits as part of an extension program. The college administers the program by processing the CEU credits but does not provide curriculum or staffing. This area of IBE has the greatest potential for future growth, as evidenced by requests for new extension campuses in Pottstown as well as among some of the urban churches in inner city Philadelphia.

Marketing for the IBE is accomplished through mailings to churches and current and previous students. The mailing list currently reaches approximately 9,000 individuals and organizations. Each church on the mailing list is issued a certificate for a free class that the pastor can award to anyone in the congregation. Flyers are also sent to adult Sunday school classes, and advertising is done through local community papers and on the LBC website.

As part of this self-study process, it has been determined that several steps could be taken to expand the IBE program. As mentioned earlier, the greatest potential exists in expanding LBC's outreach by teaming up with additional Bible institutes as extension campuses. In addition, the start of Saturday morning IBE classes on the main campus last year attracted more students. Increasing the number of classes offered on Saturdays at all four of the LBC-sponsored campuses should help boost enrollment. Nevertheless, surveys conducted in 2005 indicated that maintaining a conservative tuition fee structure is crucial to enrolling and retaining students in the IBE. Therefore, while the IBE is not expected to generate revenue for the college, the service that it provides to the Christian community positions LBC in a positive light, which, in turn, results in residual effects such as giving, enrollment in other programs, and referrals.

Retention

LBC's new enrollment management approach will include an emphasis on the retention of students. As we seek to focus on the total lifecycle of our students, from prospects to alumni, retention becomes a key component in fulfilling our mission statement. As can be seen in Table 2.1, retention has been steady over the last five years with a difference of less than 2% over the last four years. [The retention rate percentage is a representation of the number of students registered in the fall semester of the year indicated who returned in the following fall term versus the total number of students registered in the fall semester of the year indicated who were eligible to return the following fall semester.] Accurate records of the reasons for attrition have not been kept up to this point, with the exception of the Degree Completion Program. Anecdotal evidence indicates that three of the top reasons for students dropping out of LBC are because LBC does not offer the major in which they are really interested, they incur financial hardships, and they determine that LBC just is not the right college for them. The three main reasons degree completion students do not continue in the program, according to the Withdrawal from Program forms they complete, are time constraints, finances, and a change in their personal or job situations. Meetings of the enrollment management departments have already noted that tracking of the reasons for attrition is a high priority that needs to be addressed immediately.

Table 2.1 Retention Rates for the Past Five Years

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Retention Rate	76.9%	78.1%	76.7%	77.1%	81.4%

Key Strengths Noted in This Section

1. The establishment of the cabinet level position of Vice President for Enrollment Management demonstrates the college's commitment to the whole life cycle of the student.
2. The future enrollment center will place key departments under one roof to provide a more coordinated enrollment management process.
3. The improvement of the college's website with the addition of on-line applications as well as the institution of the student portal will facilitate admissions recruitment and follow-up activities across all programs.
4. An outside consultant noted the success of the Admissions Department's high touch approach to recruitment and suggested key strategies for enhancing LBC's enrollment management efforts.

Recommendations for Growth and Improvement

The following recommendations for consideration are being made by this study group:

1. Partner with more inner city churches and establish stronger ties to churches of diverse background that can support and encourage eligible students to attend LBC at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
2. After one full year of use, evaluate the use of the new campus database system to determine if it is being utilized to its greatest potential in the area of enrollment management. [A similar recommendation is made by other study groups.]

3. Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of LBC's scholarship program with the goal of increasing the recruitment of lower-income families as well as minorities.
4. Research marketing and recruitment techniques for the Graduate School in relation to online education.
5. Explore additional ways to market the on campus and online DCP through the Internet and personal contacts.
6. Evaluate the expansion of the IBE program through adding Saturday classes and more extension sites.
7. As part of a comprehensive enrollment management strategy, consider more proactive ways in which other academic programs could be promoted at IBE locations.

Student Support Services

Overview

The Student Services Department exists to provide a Christ-centered living-learning environment and to promote the holistic growth of students. Students are given numerous opportunities to enhance their spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth. Biblical principles learned in the classroom develop the "biblical worldview" that is primary to fulfilling our mission statement, and each area of the Student Services Department is actively involved in reinforcing these principles. This section of the self-study report will examine how the seven goals of the Student Services Department reinforce the mission statement of the college and the five core knowledge and skills, especially as they relate to the following MSA and ABHE standards.

Standards

MSA Standard 9

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.

ABHE Standard 8

The institution provides services that contribute to the holistic development and care of students and that are appropriate to the level of education and delivery system.

Compliance Documented

It is the finding of the self-study process that LBC is in compliance with the stated standards and subsequent elements. Data sources demonstrating this compliance include: Student Services Department student goals, chapel evaluation (spring 2005), April 2006 Student Services survey, and the weekly student counseling chart.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this section:

1. How effective is the Student Services Department in contributing to the development of the core knowledge and skills in the lives of students? Are there any aspects of the core knowledge and skills that should be better addressed by Student Services?
2. In anticipation of future enrollment growth across all educational levels and modes of delivery, how is LBC planning to meet the needs of the increased diversity of student populations?

Analysis of Key Issues

The 2005-2006 academic year was a year of transition in the Student Services Department, the most notable being the resignation of the Vice President for Student Services (VPSS) and the turnover of 64% of the department staff. There was also a sense of disconnect among the department staff, students, and the faculty. The Vice President for Academic Affairs filled the interim role as the VPSS and worked to fill the vacancies. As of the fall 2006 semester, all positions were filled, including the VPSS position. The new team members learned their job responsibilities quickly and were successful in leading the start-up of the 2006-2007 academic year. As with any new team, it is critical that the new Student Services staff is mentored to ensure seamless student service throughout the transition.

The new VPSS is intent on reestablishing connection with the student body as well as the faculty. One of the side benefits of the Vice President for Academic Affairs serving as interim VPSS was that there is a renewed effort to intentionally connect the academic function with the student service function of the college. The goal of Student Services is to provide services and programs that will facilitate the education and development of students, enabling them to achieve the college’s core knowledge and skills. Student Services is committed to assisting students in seven areas. These seven goals are extensions of the college’s mission statement and its five core knowledge and skills (Table 2.2). In short, Student Services strives to enable each LBC student to demonstrate proficiency in knowing, interpreting, integrating, and applying the Scriptures and developing the principles necessary for a biblical worldview resulting in a dynamic understanding of one’s role in relation to God, self, and the world.

Table 2.2 Student Services Goals as They Relate to LBC’s Core Knowledge and Skills

Core Knowledge and Skills	Student Services Goals
1. Demonstrate proficiency in knowing, interpreting, integrating, and applying the Scriptures.	1. Experience a maturing Christian life.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and proficiency in acquiring, evaluating, communicating, and applying information.	
3. Develop an understanding and appreciation of and compassion toward cultures of the world.	2. Demonstrate world awareness and responsibly participate in their community.
4. Develop the principles necessary for a biblical worldview resulting in a dynamic understanding of one’s role in relation to God, self, and the world.	3. Assess life situations in light of biblical principles.
5. Demonstrate an understanding and application of the knowledge and skills necessary for professional Christian ministry.	4. Discover, enhance, and utilize their unique gifts and abilities.
	5. Manage personal finances.
	6. Maintain habits of health and hygiene.
	7. Assume leadership.

The rest of this section will look at the four areas that encompass LBC's Student Services Department: Christian formation, care and counseling, health services, and athletics.

Christian Formation

Christian formation is that process by which the life of Christ is formed in the life of the believer. This process is transformative, engaging every component of a believer's person, including intellect, values, feelings, and choices, and transforming these into conformity with the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5-13).

Proficiency in knowing, interpreting, and integrating the Scriptures provides the foundation for the ultimate purpose of biblical studies, which is to apply it to one's own life. LBC's core knowledge and skills numbers one and two relate directly to the receiving and processing of truth. The development of a biblical worldview (CKS #4) is an outcome of core knowledge and skills numbers one and two. A biblical worldview, in turn, enhances and strengthens the ongoing process of knowing, understanding, and applying the Scriptures. An appreciation of and compassion for the diverse cultures of the world (CKS#3) is a natural outcome of a biblical worldview. Supervised ministry opportunities (CKS#5) provide students with experience and feedback vital to continued skill development and competence.

The Office of Christian Formation leads multi-disciplinary efforts intended to initiate, empower, and encourage spiritual growth in the lives of everyone in the LBC community. The primary conduits for these efforts are teaching offered by the Director of Christian Formation through FS101 Spiritual Life and Evangelism, daily chapels, weekly LIFE groups, weekly student led worship services, student leadership training, and ongoing pastoral counseling and discipleship.

As one of the primary means of Christian formation, a great deal of effort has been placed on making daily chapels fulfill their four-fold purpose:

1. To spiritually strengthen the LBC student body, faculty, and staff through the teaching of God's Word.
2. To invigorate the body of Christ at LBC through opportunities for authentic, passionate worship.
3. To broaden the worldview of the LBC community.
4. To encourage biblical body life among the LBC community.

Chapel services provide a wide variety of topics and presentation methods, including biblical preaching, president's chapels, the "options" series, lecture series, days of prayer, solitude and silence chapels, student organization chapels, world awareness chapels, praise chapels, spiritual life series, and LIFE groups. When asked how effective chapel speakers and topics were as a means of encouragement for spiritual growth, 66% of students rated them as effective or very effective ([Appendix 2.3](#)). Student involvement in planning and implementing chapels has increased, as evidenced by student led praise chapels, the senior preaching series, and the organization of the Christian Formation Student Forum (discussed later in this section). Sixty-four percent of students surveyed note that praise chapels are very helpful as a means of strengthening their spiritual life. A weekly, student led praise and worship event provides additional opportunity for authentic worship, as well as ministry and leadership training for the students who lead it. The ministry is attended by approximately

20% of the undergraduate student body, as well as many high school and college students from the surrounding community.

Students are also taking a leadership role in weekly discipleship meetings called L.I.F.E groups (Loving, Intentional Fellowship and Exhortation). Over 50% of LIFE group facilitators are students. Faculty and staff members make up the remaining leadership positions. LIFE group leaders receive training and support through the Director of Christian Formation. The quality of relationships between believers is an important indicator of their spiritual health. LIFE groups exist on the campus of LBC to help ensure the establishment and growth of relationships between students, faculty, staff, and administration. LIFE groups are rated as very helpful in strengthening spiritual life and encouraging student success by 62% of students surveyed in the spring 2005 chapel evaluation survey ([Appendix 2.3](#)).

Christian formation is pursued and encouraged in many ways that go beyond these formal programs. Sports teams conduct Bible studies and accountability groups, as well as pray and serve together. All resident life staff seek to integrate spiritual truth into every interaction they have with students. Action groups minister in various ways throughout our community by leading Bible clubs, interacting with teens in detention centers, and evangelizing. Spiritual care and nurturing permeates the services offered through the Counseling and Care and Health Services offices.

While many positive aspects of Christian formation have been noted on campus, it is obvious that more work could be done towards this end. It is the finding of this study that attention should be given to the development of intentional, structured student leadership training. While opportunities for student leadership are increasing, intentional training to prepare for such leadership appears weak. The fall 2006 implementation of CF2 is one effort to address this need. Christian Formation Student Forum (CF2) is a group of students who, under the supervision of the Director of Christian formation, have taken increased responsibility for chapels, peer pastoral care, and other Christian formation efforts on campus. Data to evaluate the effectiveness of this program was not available at the time this document was assembled. Additional opportunities may exist in the training of dorm assistants in resident life.

There is also a need to examine if and how Christian formation is taking place in the Degree Completion Program and the Graduate School. Questions that should be addressed include: What is currently being done in these programs in the area of Christian formation? Is there evidence that it is effective? What, if any, integration should there be between these programs and the Christian formation efforts in the traditional undergraduate programs? In addition, consideration should be given to how Christian formation will be encouraged and enhanced through online courses.

Given the breadth and complexity of the multidisciplinary interactions involved in the area of Christian formation, it is apparent that the organizational progress of Christian formation at LBC is slowed by a lack of personnel. Consideration should be given to the development of an expanded team approach to Christian formation on LBC's campus.

Resident Life

Within the walls of the residence halls, a dynamic understanding of one's role in relation to God, self, and the world is learned and developed. Community life provides real life lessons

in leadership and social skill development. Community life also provides mentoring and peer accountability that have the potential to greatly influence the Christian formation of the dorm students.

The Director for Resident Life and two resident directors direct all aspects of resident life at LBC. These three full-time staff members mentor 28 resident assistants (RAs) who give oversight to daily residence hall life. The RA program not only provides an accountability system for resident students, but it also allows an avenue by which the RAs themselves can further develop their leadership skills and gives them a preview of skills that will be utilized in professional Christian ministry.

Through interaction within the residence halls, resident students are exposed to a culturally and socially diverse population, furthering their understanding and appreciation of other cultures. Resident life goals are addressed through weekly dorm meetings. The meetings provide an opportunity for spiritual and social growth through accountability, Bible study, and community activities. The dorm meetings also integrate issues of politics, diversity, health, and worldview through training and discussions. The primary purpose of the resident community is to complement what the students are learning in the classroom and to provide practical applications for them to live out the Christian life.

In the April 2006 Student Services survey ([Appendix 2.4](#)), 60% of students who responded rated their residence hall experience as above average. The same survey said they were most satisfied with the social interaction in the residence halls and least satisfied with the spiritual growth and cleanliness in the dorm. These last two areas are of concern, and the resident life staff is in the process of assessing how to address these issues. The resident life staff should consider holding focus groups with resident assistants and students to assess ways to better meet the spiritual development of students in the residence halls through more intentional programming. As spiritual issues are discussed, personal responsibility for maintaining a healthy residential environment and displaying a concern for others as well as campus appearance could be emphasized. Cleanliness in the residence halls has been an ongoing issue that may need to be addressed with the hiring of additional housekeeping personnel.

In the survey, students also indicated that Student Services could offer further assistance in their community life by planning additional activities on the weekends. While a large majority of dorm students have permanent residences within a few hours of the campus and go home on most weekends, those that do stay on campus find few, if any, social activities. Student Services should continue to develop additional social activities on campus, especially on weekends.

Care and Counseling

Care and Counseling Services seeks to provide counseling consistent with biblical truth and to cultivate the application of God's Word to students' lives. This office strives to help students understand that positive mental health is essential to one's relationship with God, other believers, and ultimately the world.

The recent restructuring of the Student Services Department allows the Director of Care and Counseling (DCC) to focus primarily on student counseling issues. The DCC wants to assist students in maturing in their Christian walk, assessing life situations in light of biblical

principles, and utilizing their gifts and abilities in a healthy manner to maintain their personal health.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the DCC met with approximately 30 students. As indicated in the weekly student counseling chart, the DCC handles a wide range of topics and issues weekly, with the heaviest concentration in the areas of depression, anxiety, and self-esteem. During the 2005-2006 school year, the DCC serviced approximately 30 students, including graduate and DCP students. When students were asked on the April 2006 Student Services survey whether they were aware of counseling services offered to students, 73% responded in the affirmative, while 12.5% said they had utilized counseling services. When asked if there was a time when services could have been utilized and were not, 22.1% indicated that there were times when they could have utilized the care and counseling services but didn't. Some of the reasons given for not utilizing counseling services were schedule conflicts, not feeling comfortable talking about issues, and being able to find help outside of the college.

Partnerships have been formed with Day Seven Ministries of Lancaster, PA, and Family Resource and Counseling Center of Gap, PA, to provide additional counseling resources for LBC students. Care and Counseling Services has specifically partnered with Day Seven Ministries to provide group counseling for students dealing with addictions to pornography and other sexual behaviors. Family Resource and Counseling Center has assisted Care and Counseling Services by meeting with students needing long-term counseling.

One of Family Resource and Counseling Center's counselors presented a seminar on eating disorders during the spring 2006 semester, with twelve students and one staff member attending. Responses to an evaluation survey were positive. Of those who attended, 69% strongly agreed that the information presented was helpful and 53.8% strongly agreed that it increased their knowledge of the subject. There was 100% agreement that they would attend another seminar, so additional educational seminars on mental health issues that are pertinent to the student body are planned. Students attending the seminar suggested topics such as relationships, purity, and modesty be addressed in the future. In the meantime, Care and Counseling Services has provided educational materials through e-mail, flyers, and bulletin boards for a variety of mental health topics. Specific focus on National Depression Screening Day, Eating Disorder Awareness Week, and Suicide Prevention Week are a few of the areas addressed.

While the current methods have proven somewhat successful, Care and Counseling Services should consider additional methods of providing educational seminars and information for students in regards to pertinent mental health issues.

Health Services

Health Services recognizes that a Christian's physical body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and a testimony to the world. Since one's self-esteem and physical abilities are influenced by health and hygiene, Health Services encourages students to see how maintaining positive health and hygiene habits will further the kingdom of God and increase an understanding of one's relationship to God, self, and the world.

The Director of Health Services (DOHS) encourages wellness for all students and is available from 8 AM to 4 PM Monday through Friday of each week for student consultation. The DOHS or a substitute nurse attends college events that require a health service professional's presence.

When asked in the April 2006 Student Services survey ([Appendix 2.4](#)) if Health Services is effective in meeting the students' physical needs, 74.5% rated Health Services as average to good on a five-point scale. There was no previous data collected with which to compare these findings, so Health Services will monitor these needs and collect data through future surveys for comparison.

The fall 2005 semester saw the renewal of a partnership with a nearby medical practice that provides office hours for a doctor on campus one afternoon each week for student consultations. The DOHS also provides health tips via an office bulletin board and through a weekly correspondence piece to students. According to 59.9% of the students who responded to the April 2006 Student Services survey, e-mail was the most effective method of communicating health information, and 41.6% said posters in various locations on campus were also effective. The DOHS wants to continue finding better ways to educate students on making better medical choices and promoting healthy care of self.

Besides the services provided by the DOHS, LBC attempts to instill good health and hygiene practices in our students through two required physical education courses and through the availability of athletic activities.

Athletics

Just as Student Services promotes the overall health and wellbeing of students, LBC's Athletics Department strives to mold physically and spiritually mature leaders through the daily disciplines of sport. LBC offers an intramurals program to its students. In the past, intramural activities have included dodgeball, volleyball, and three-on-three basketball. Our goal is to introduce more intramural activities for our students during the upcoming year.

In addition to intramural sports, LBC students can choose to participate in ten intercollegiate sports, five for men and five for women: men's and women's soccer, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's volleyball, men's and women's basketball, men's baseball, and women's lacrosse. These teams are part of the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA). In addition, the college is currently in the first year of a four-year provisional membership with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). NCAA participation would be in addition to the NCCAA, giving us dual affiliation.

LBC athletics excel in creating a community among athletes and non-athletes. Athletics also provide student athletes with an avenue to minister to non-Christians during competitions by demonstrating godly character and sportsmanship. LBC athletics excel at being an extension of the classroom by using practices and games as a teaching tool. By being involved in LBC athletics, students have the opportunity to grow in their faith and Christian walk by participating in devotions led by coaches and peers. Daily prayer is a part of the athletic experience. LBC athletics also offers students an opportunity to participate in service projects throughout the season.

With the addition of the Good Shepherd Chapel to the campus in 2001, the Horst Athletic Complex (HAC) became primarily an athletic facility. In 2002, the fitness room was renovated and two classrooms were added to expand the use of the facility and provide the means to better meet student as well as faculty and staff needs. The ceiling in HAC was redone in 2005, which is just the initial step of a three-year process of renovations in the gymnasium. The gymnasium was painted during the summer of 2006 and new lights installed. A new hardwood floor will be installed during the summer of 2007. There are also plans to add a new mezzanine to the north side of the gym, which will expand the fitness center. The entire fitness center will move to the new mezzanine and its current space will be filled with offices, classrooms, and new locker rooms. A new baseball field and a new soccer field were completed in 2006. All of these renovations and additions are not only resources for LBC students for maintaining their health and physical conditioning, but will also help to meet the needs of the two new academic programs in Health and Physical Education and Sports Ministry.

The self-study process revealed that LBC athletics can improve in the area of sports promotion. The Athletic Department is working to do a better job of informing the faculty and staff about athletic events and results of competitions. They are also working to promote more of a campus-wide team spirit. To accomplish this, the department will offer more activities in which all students, whether athletes or non-athletes, can participate.

Concentrating on a Biblical Worldview

Through the responses from the April 2006 Student Services survey and other means initiated during this self-study process, the Student Services Department identified instilling a biblical worldview in our students as an area of needed concentration. While a part of LBC's mission statement for some years now, the concept of a biblical worldview has been growing, evolving, and taking a clearer shape in the past few years.

If the purpose of LBC is to "educate Christian men and women to live according to a biblical worldview and to serve through professional Christian ministries," the college needs to study the role community life standards play in the accomplishment of that objective. In the fall of 2006, the Office of Christian formation implemented a plan to strengthen our treatment of the issue of biblical worldview. "A Biblical Worldview" was designated as the chapel theme for the 2006-2007 academic year. Theme-related activities included a week-long chapel series, several chapel messages focused on specific areas of interest or conflict regarding biblical worldview, a look at the media's role in promoting conflicting worldviews, and the integration of these topics into classrooms, dorm devotions, LIFE group discussions, and ministry opportunities. In the spring 2007 semester, a Biblical worldview is the topic of the president's chapels each Monday morning.

Student Services recognizes the need to work closely with the academic side of the campus to formulate a concept of what the ideal student will look like upon graduation. What characteristics are exhibited by a person with a biblical worldview? That is, what will that person's beliefs, values, attitudes, and actions be? In essence, what type of student is LBC trying to produce?

The Student Services Department believes the LBC graduate should have the ability to analyze, think critically, and demonstrate sound judgment, in essence, to be a critical thinker.

The ideal LBC student will understand biblical principles, will be able to critically analyze situations in light of these principles, and will make wise decisions and lifestyle choices as a result of an understanding of these principles.

While the teaching of biblical principles is an integral part of the classroom experience, Student Services recognizes the need to reinforce these principles outside of the classroom. As just one means of accomplishing this goal, consideration is being given to the implementation of a “critical concerns series” sponsored by Student Services. As a required component of the LBC experience, the critical concerns series would include student discussion groups and targeted events with speakers well versed on culturally relevant topics and issues.

Concentrating on Diversity

As LBC continues to grow across all educational levels and modes of delivery, changes will need to be made in the Student Services area to meet the needs of the increased diversity of the student population. The college has identified different types of diversity based upon gender, age, and ethnicity. Table 2.2 shows these types of diversity as found throughout LBC’s three main educational levels and delivery formats (traditional undergraduate, Degree Completion, and Graduate School) from 2000 to 2005. The section on student admission found earlier in this chapter dealt with the need for greater diversity among the student body. What follows here concentrates on providing services to the current diverse student population.

Of those traditional undergraduate students completing the April 2006 Student Services survey ([Appendix 2.4](#)), 66.2% stated that LBC does a good job meeting the needs of an ethnically diverse student population. They also recognized, however, that more could be done. Suggestions given by the students as to how LBC could be more successful in meeting these ethnically diverse needs included celebrating the unique aspects that different cultures can bring to the spiritual development of a student and having these modeled during chapel services. Some students were unsure about how to increase the awareness of ethnic diversity at LBC and felt that the steps taken at this time were adequate. This will continue to be an area that Student Services will need to address as the ethnicity of the student population changes.

Table 2.2 Gender, Age, and Ethnic Diversity, 2001 to 2005

Program	Traditional Undergraduate	Degree Completion	Graduate School
Total Students	2096	200	495
Gender: Male	55.1%	41.5%	43.8%
Female	44.9%	58.5%	56.2%
Average Age	24	40	40
Ethnicity:			
Non Resident Alien	1.4%	0.0%	3.2%
Black Non-Hispanic	1.8%	13.5%	6.5%
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Asian Pacific Island	1.0%	0.0%	1.2%
Hispanic	1.6%	0.5%	1.0%
White Non-Hispanic	82.2%	64.5%	70.3%
Unknown/Undeclared	11.5%	21.5%	17.8%

Gender diversity does not seem to be an issue at LBC overall. The traditional undergraduate, degree completion, and graduate populations all have a fairly even split between males and females, as noted in Table 2.2. Gender diversity, however, is an issue in certain programs. Teacher Education, as a department, is primarily a female population due to the fact that the majority of the students are enrolled in one of two programs: Early Childhood Education or Elementary Education, both professions that are heavily dominated by women. Within the Church and Ministry Leadership Department, the Women in Christian Ministries Program is, obviously, geared towards female students. The courses are open to men, and there are a few male students who enroll in these courses each semester. Likewise, while women are not excluded from the Pastoral Studies program, it is a male-dominated program due to LBC's doctrinal stance on women's role in ministry leadership positions and due to the theological perspective of the churches that represent the majority of LBC's constituency.

Meeting the needs of the older student on campus is not so much an issue of age diversity as it is educational level and delivery method diversity. As Table 2.2 indicates, the average age of a student in the traditional undergraduate program is 24, with most of the older students being commuters. Historically, only the traditional undergraduate resident student has come to Student Services for assistance. Anecdotal evidence has indicated that even traditional undergraduate students who commute to campus are less likely to take advantage of the services offered. In the last 10 years, LBC added a Degree Completion Program, added a Graduate School, and most recently approved the addition of online education as a delivery method. With the addition of these educational entities comes the need to evaluate services and make adjustments where needed.

The majority of LBC's adult population can be found in the Degree Completion Program (DCP) and the Graduate School. The DCP is designed specifically for adults 25 years of age or older. The current average age of a DCP student as well as a graduate student is 40 years. Because these two programs are designed for adults, they meet during non-traditional times, such as evenings, weekends, summers, and normal college breaks. Most of the services provided by the Student Services Department are not available to the adult students during these times. Likewise, other areas of student services that do not fall under the Student Services Department (i.e. Food Services, Information Systems, the library, and the college bookstore) are not fully staffed or available at all during these non-traditional times.

Because of the unique needs of its adult students, the college has made a conscious decision to decentralize some aspects of its student services. Therefore, the DCP and the Graduate School have hired individuals specifically tasked to deal with student services.

Currently only the DCP is offering for-credit courses online. To meet the unique and diverse student services needs of these online students, an associate director for the DCP was hired during the summer of 2006. His two-fold responsibilities are recruitment and student services for both the on-campus and online DCP students. Long-term projections for the growth of the DCP online include adding additional personnel to deal with student services as the needs warrant. (See appropriate sections in Chapter Four for more details on both the DCP and the Graduate School.)

Whether or not all student services should be decentralized by educational level and modes of delivery or centralized and whether or not other departments providing services to LBC

students should be brought back under the umbrella of the Student Services Department are two issues open for review. The Student Services Department is in the process of learning how other colleges of similar size handle student servicing needs throughout all educational levels and delivery modes and how student servicing is integrated into undergraduate, graduate, and distance learning areas. This study has been slowed due to a turnover in the administration of the department during the summer of 2006.

Key Strengths Noted in This Section

1. The Office of Christian formation targeted “biblical worldview” as the chapel theme for the 2006-2007 school year to emphasize its curricular and extra-curricular ramifications.
2. Students are responding positively to the encouragement in their spiritual growth through chapel speakers, praise chapels, and LIFE groups.
3. Students are expressing an above average experience in the resident halls, being mostly satisfied with their social interactions.
5. Health Services and Athletics have been able to increase the awareness of health issues and provide more physical conditioning opportunities to the student body.

Recommendations for Growth and Improvement

The following recommendations for consideration are being made by this study group:

1. Develop a critical concerns series to help reinforce the biblical principles the student is learning in the classroom.
2. Continue to develop additional social activities on campus, especially on weekends.
3. Address the growing awareness of ethnicity in the student population by providing more exposure to different cultures through activities on campus.
4. Examine how other colleges of similar size handle student servicing needs throughout all educational levels and how student servicing is integrated into undergraduate, graduate, and distance learning areas.
5. Cleanliness in the residence halls is an ongoing issue that needs to be addressed by hiring additional housekeeping personnel and stressing the need among the residents for personal responsibility for maintaining a healthy community.
6. The Director of Christian formation should continue to interface with the academic departments, especially the Biblical Division, in planning activities to encourage a biblical worldview in LBC students.
7. Task the Director for Resident Life with holding focus groups with resident assistants and students to assess ways to better meet the spiritual development of students in the residence halls through more intentional programming.
8. Care and Counseling Services needs to consider different methods of providing educational seminars and information for students in regards to pertinent mental health issues.