



**Unit Plan Annual Narrative  
(2007-2008)**

**Directions:** Use the "Unit Plan Narrative Guide Sheet" to complete this planning form. Be sure that under each section, you write a narrative which discusses all elements listed under each heading. If a particular element does not apply to your area, note that within your narrative. Again, this form should be completed as a narrative, not bulleted.

**Department/Unit: Records Office**

**Unit Administrator: Lori Chisem, Registrar  
Darren Allen, Assistant Dean**

**Date: June 17, 2008**

**A. Unit Description**

**a. Connection of the unit to the institution's role and mission:**

Lawson State Community College is a comprehensive, public, two-year, multi-campus college, which seeks to provide accessible quality educational opportunities, promote economic growth and enhance the quality of life for people in its service area. The College is dedicated to providing affordable and accessible lifelong learning opportunities in order to prepare students for employment or career advancement enable students to transfer to senior colleges and universities, and provide customized training needs for business and industry. The mission of the Records Office is to provide services that enable students to enroll in classes with minimum effort and to maintain an accurate profile of the student's tenure at the college. The registrar and staff accurately maintain academic student records and comply with the institutional, state, and federal regulations that apply to retention, release, and disposal of student records.

**b. Unit Achievements:**

Maintaining the privacy and security of student information is vital to providing quality student service. Our office developed FERPA brochures for faculty/staff to specifically address issues pertaining to privacy of student records. The issues included, but are not limited to, posting of grades, distribution of student personal information, etc. This information has been shared a number of faculty and staff; however, brochures will be distributed at the August Faculty/Staff mandatory in-service.

Our office worked with Instructional Services to build and maintain accurate student degree plans based on the latest catalog. 100% of the new or revised degree plans have been built into the AS400 system and are available for use by college personnel. This has significantly reduced the number of student with processing delays due to have out of degree plan courses listed on schedules.

One of the major functions of the office has been transcript processing. The office established guidelines for requests to afford staff the opportunity to respond in a timely and professional manner. All official transcripts requests are filled within 24-48 hours of receipt. The offices on both campuses processed 4,294 official transcripts for various colleges, university, employers and agencies.

The current goal of 500 records scanned has been met and exceeded. Approximately, 486 students re-entered during the 2007-08 academic year which required that old records be pulled and scanned for easy retrieval. We are currently using student assistants to prepare existing records in the Records File Room on the Birmingham Campus for scanning. The preparation process takes the majority of the time, as the scanners

can scan images at a rate of sixty pages per minute. We expect to have the entire collection of physical file folders scanned within the next academic year. This process greatly increases our ability to respond to student requests and other inquiries thereby improving student/customer satisfaction with the services provided. A partnership with National Student Clearinghouse has helped with provided verifications of degree, enrollment and status of current and former students. This partnership significantly reduced the amount of paperwork, postage, and time associated with providing such services in the past.

- c. Instructional Units within your division: N/A

## **B. Unit Effectiveness**

a. Staff Description:

In the Birmingham Office, one full time staff person is associated with records, with a records assistant sharing duties on this campus three days per week. The admissions/records secretary serves as receptionist and primary transcript processor for the campus. In the Bessemer Office, there is a full-time secretary and the shared records assistant working on this campus two days per week. We occasionally receive support from admissions personnel on the Bessemer campus in cases of absence of heavy traffic flow.

- b. Instructional Effectiveness / Student Success: N/A

c. Support Services Connection & Resource Availability: The areas within the Student Services Division work in tandem to provide support to areas in need. Student Records personnel works closely Admissions and Recruitment to ensure that students receive the optimal service. Further, the office maintains historical and current curricular offerings in the AS400. New courses and programs are added to the curriculum files as they are approved by the Department of Postsecondary Education and forwarded by the respective instructional areas. The office's nearly total reliance on computer technology requires significant information technology support. A number of computer/information technology personnel provide invaluable technical support.

d. Customer Service Ranking: No available recent survey data suggests more than 5% of respondents were dissatisfied or strongly dissatisfied with the services received. However, additional, on-going survey instruments are being used to collect relevant data to evaluate more current perceptions, including "suggestions" boxes within the offices.

### **C. Value Added**

**a. Support of the unit to other program and units:**

The collaborative efforts between the Admissions, Management Information Systems, and Instructional Services help our office provide quality service to our students/customers.

**b. Strengths:**

The collaborative efforts between the Admissions, Management Information Systems, and Instructional Services help our office provide quality service to our students/customers.

**c. Areas Needing Improvement:**

An additional permanent person should be assigned to the Records Office on the Bessemer campus. This would allow greater attention to administrative, systemic and processing issues by the registrar.

**d. Departmental or Unit Needs:**

The department has been well funded in terms of supplies and equipment. One physical resource desperately needed on the Birmingham campus continues to be work space. Two additional professional staff maintains weekly office hours on the Birmingham campus yet neither has adequate work spaces including desks and telephones.

**e. Recommendations: N/A**

That an additional permanent person be hired and assigned to the Records Office on the Bessemer campus. This would allow greater attention to administrative, systemic and processing issues by the registrar.

### **D. Projections**

**a. Staff needs:**

An additional permanent person should be assigned to the Records Office on the Bessemer would allow greater attention to administrative, systemic and processing issues by the registrar.

**b. Resources needs:**

Two new computer packages have been ordered for the Bessemer campus office. The reliability and functionality of the telephone and facsimile systems continue to be problematic.

**c. Professional development needs:**

The registrar and assistant dean actively participate in local, state and regional professional organizations. This has helped ensure that office remains current and relevant to technological trends and legal requirements. The clerical staff could benefit greatly from attendance at local workshops and training opportunities.

**d. Other (if applicable):**

None.