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Area Student Affairs
Applicability Shared Documents

Undergraduate Student Orientation

POLICY STATEMENT

Delta State University is committed to providing a comprehensive and engaging student orientation program supporting the successful transition of students, new and readmitted, into the university community. The purpose of this policy is to establish the guidelines, expectations, and procedures for conducting student orientation, ensuring all incoming students receive the necessary information, resources, and support to thrive academically, socially, and personally.

DEFINITIONS

"Orientation", which may be referred to in publications, marketing materials, and/or University communications and webpages as **"Okrotation"**, serves as the process of introducing new students to the university's academic programs, student life, campus facilities, services, policies, and culture to facilitate their integration into the university community.

"New Students" are an individual who has committed to attending Delta State University, registered for classes. Furthermore, this refers to undergraduate students who have been newly admitted to Delta State University, including the following types of students:

- a. First Time Freshmen, students who are enrolling in the University after previously attending a secondary educational institution.
- b. Transfer students, students who are transferring to the University from another institution.
- c. Readmitted students, students who previously had been enrolled at the University but not within the last academic year.

"Orientation Leaders", which may be referred to in publications, marketing materials, and/or University communications and webpages as **"Delta Diplomats"**, are trained upper-class students responsible for assisting new students during orientation sessions, providing guidance, answering questions, and

serving as role models.

PROCEDURES and RESPONSIBILITIES

Orientation Program Development

All accepted students who enroll for fall or spring semester courses are required to complete an orientation program prior to or simultaneously as the term begins at Delta State University. The completion of the orientation program is a means to familiarize students with University policies, procedures, and resources, enhancing the student experience. This policy applies to all accepted part-time and full-time undergraduate students registered for 1 or more credits at the University.

Exceptions include:

- a. A student who previously had been enrolled at the University within the last academic year.
- b. A student classified and enrolled as a Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit student.
- c. A student classified and enrolled as a Non-Degree Seeking Student
- d. A student classified and enrolled as a Transient student.
- e. A student classified and enrolled as Post Baccalaureate student.

The Office of Student Affairs, under the guidance of the Director of Engagement & Advocacy, shall be responsible for the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the student orientation program. The orientation program shall be designed to address the specific needs and concerns of new students, providing them with information on academic requirements, campus resources, student life, and support services. Collaboration with faculty, staff, and student organizations shall be encouraged to ensure a well-rounded orientation experience.

Orientation shall be scheduled for immediately prior to the start of each fall/spring academic term. Orientation shall be an in-person event for all new students, especially for students starting in the fall semester. An online or virtual undergraduate student orientation shall be offered for:

- a. Students who are employed full or part time by the University in a position that is not a regular student employment or work study position.
- b. Students who are participating in a fully online program.
- c. Students who are participating in a pre-season athletic preparation program.
- d. Students who enroll in coursework during or after the in-person orientation has occurred.
- e. Students who express, prior to the start of in-person orientation in writing to the Director of Engagement & Advocacy, conflicts which prohibit the student from participation in an in-person orientation.

Students who begin classes during the summer will delay their orientation until the fall, in-person event. A resource guide will be provided to all students who enroll in summer courses.

The University shall charge a fee for Orientation, applicable to all students. The fee shall be listed in the Tuition and Fees section of the University website and/or publications. The fee shall be assessed on the

student's ledger after the student has made a commitment to attend Delta State University. Once paid, the orientation fee is non-refundable. The only exception is if the student is employed as a full or part time employee of the University, and not in a regular student employment or work study position. The fee will not be charged to the student who is an employee, but the student shall participate in the virtual orientation.

Orientation Components

During Delta State University's student orientation program, new students will engage in a comprehensive series of sessions and activities designed to equip them with the necessary knowledge and resources for a successful transition into university life. These orientation components are carefully curated to address various aspects of student life, including academics, campus facilities and services, policies and procedures, campus involvement, and community building. By participating in these components, new students will gain a deeper understanding of the university's offerings, connect with their peers and campus resources, and establish a strong foundation for their academic and personal journey at Delta State University.

Component areas include, but are not limited to:

- a. **Academic Information:** Orientation sessions shall include information about academic programs, degree requirements, course registration, academic support services, and opportunities for research or internships.
- b. **Campus Facilities and Services:** New students shall be introduced to essential campus facilities, including libraries, computer labs, health services, dining facilities, residence halls, and recreational areas.
- c. **Campus Policies and Procedures:** Orientation sessions shall provide an overview of important policies and procedures, including code of conduct, academic integrity, student rights and responsibilities, and campus safety guidelines.
- d. **Campus Involvement:** Students shall be informed about various extracurricular activities, clubs, organizations, and leadership opportunities available on campus, encouraging their active involvement.
- e. **Community Building:** Orientation shall include team-building activities, social events, and opportunities for new students to connect with their peers, faculty, and staff members.

Virtual Orientation Components

Delta State University is committed to offering a robust virtual option for orientation components. This virtual platform will provide new students with a comprehensive and accessible orientation experience by addressing the various components of orientation. Through the virtual option, students will have the opportunity to absorb information covering academic information, campus facilities and services, policies and procedures, campus involvement, and community building. This virtual approach ensures all students, regardless of their location or circumstances, can access vital orientation resources, connect with campus support systems, and establish meaningful connections with their peers. By leveraging technology, the virtual option for orientation components ensures inclusivity, flexibility, and a seamless transition into the Delta State University community for all incoming students.

Assessment Based Continuous Improvement of Orientation

At Delta State University, undergraduate student orientation is a vital component of ensuring a successful transition for new students. An assessment-based approach focusing on continuous improvement will be utilized to enhance the orientation program. Through regular evaluation the effectiveness of orientation initiatives, gathering feedback from students, orientation leaders, and other stakeholders, and incorporating best practices from within our institution and the wider higher education community, the University seeks to create a dynamic and tailored orientation experience.

In developing and refining the undergraduate student orientation program, Delta State University shall review and consider best practices from other universities with successful orientation policies. This may include:

- a. Studying orientation programs from universities known for their effective student transitions.
- b. Conducting benchmarking surveys and attending conferences to gather insights into innovative approaches and emerging trends in student orientation.
- c. Establishing partnerships with other universities to share resources, ideas, and collaborative initiatives related to orientation programs.

Review of Policy

Under the direction of the Vice President for Student Affairs, this policy shall be reviewed at least every two (2) years in odd numbered years or as necessary. The policy review period will begin immediately following Spring Commencement ceremonies. The review and any edits must be approved by the University Cabinet no later than August 1 of the same year.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Tuition & Fees](#)

Approval Signatures

Step Description

Approver

Date

Applicability

Delta State University External, Delta State University Internal