

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.  
President

**FROM:** BG Joe E. Ramirez, Jr. (Ret.)  
Working Group Chair

**SUBJECT:** Implementation Memo – Working Group #20

**Recommendation to be Implemented:** Reorganize Student Affairs and expand student “High Impact Practice” (HIP) services.

**Strategic Considerations:** The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) was charged to develop a strategy to implement the MGT report’s recommendation #20. Given that the Division has a pre-developed High Impact Practice (HIP) recognition process originating from the previous QEP, this proposed strategy is two-fold (1) to refine the current DSA HIP recognition process (including the previous evaluative rubric) in order to identify and celebrate existing High Impact Practices within the Division of Student Affairs, and (2) establish a new process to increase the number of programs and experiences across the division that contain High Impact Practice Elements (HIPEs).

Several current programs and experiences within the Division of Student Affairs meet the eight-element threshold of what George Kuh and the AAC&U define as a High Impact Practice. These programs and experiences should be quantified and celebrated. However, for a program or experience to be designated a *true* High Impact Practice, a great deal of staff resources is required. Thus, the ability to effectively scale-up HIP offerings for all Texas A&M University Students is unrealistic. However, by developing a new approach to determine what programs and experiences have High Impact Practice Elements (HIPEs), we can more effectively identify, invest in, and cultivate programming and experiences that have stronger student learning outcomes.

- Eight Elements of High Impact Practices***
1. Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels
  2. Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time
  3. Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters
  4. Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those which students are familiar
  5. Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback
  6. Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning
  7. Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications
  8. Public demonstration of competence

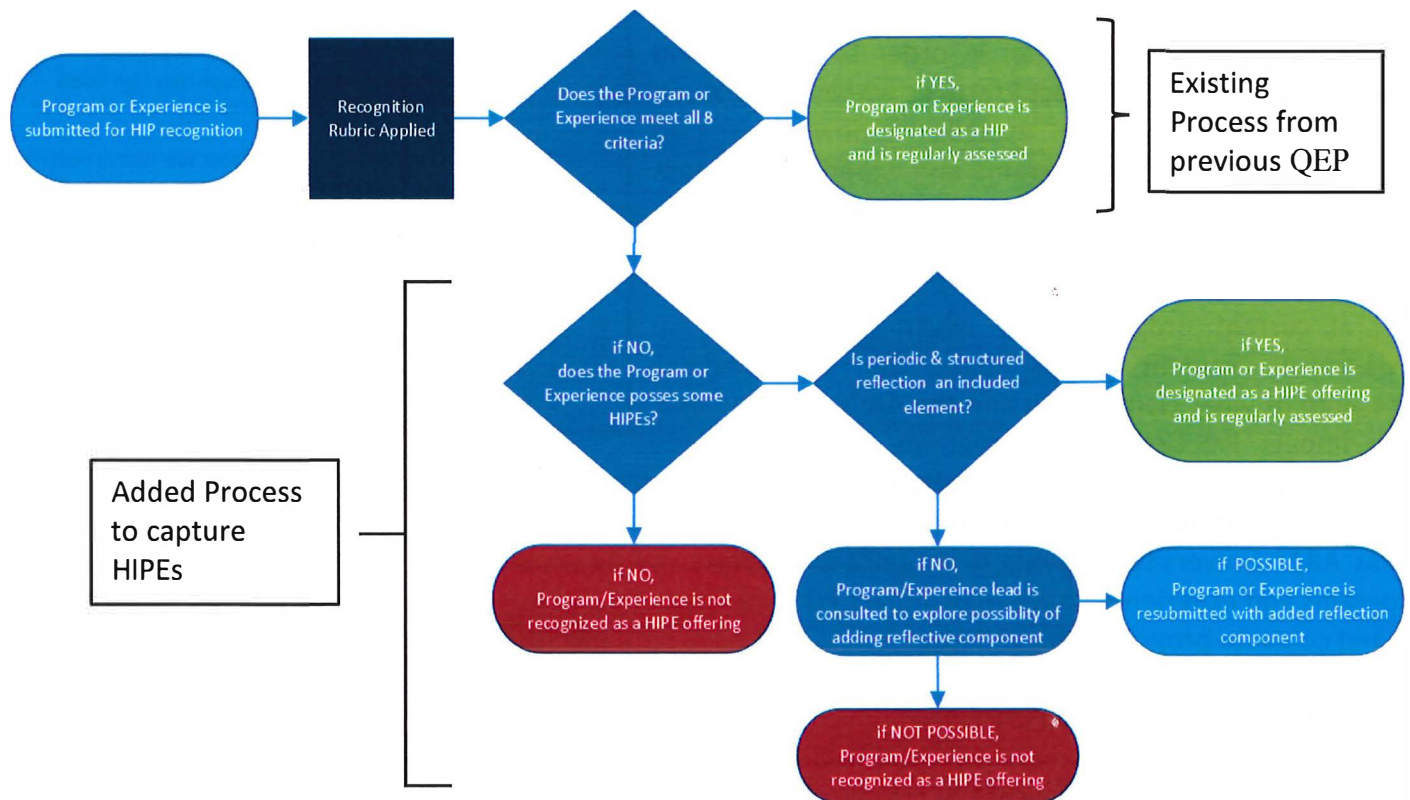
### ***Moving from Prescriptive to Permissive***

As stated, numerous programs and experiences across the Division of Student Affairs undoubtedly possess some elements of High Impact Practices but may not have all eight. However, the goal of this proposed strategy is the

identification and cultivation of programs and experiences across the Division of Student Affairs to (1) market programs and experiences on campus that contain these important HIPEs and (2) target these programs and experiences for further development to increase the number of HIPEs, which ultimately allows the Division to create a wider array of more impactful programs and experiences.

**Investing in a Foundation of Student Reflection**

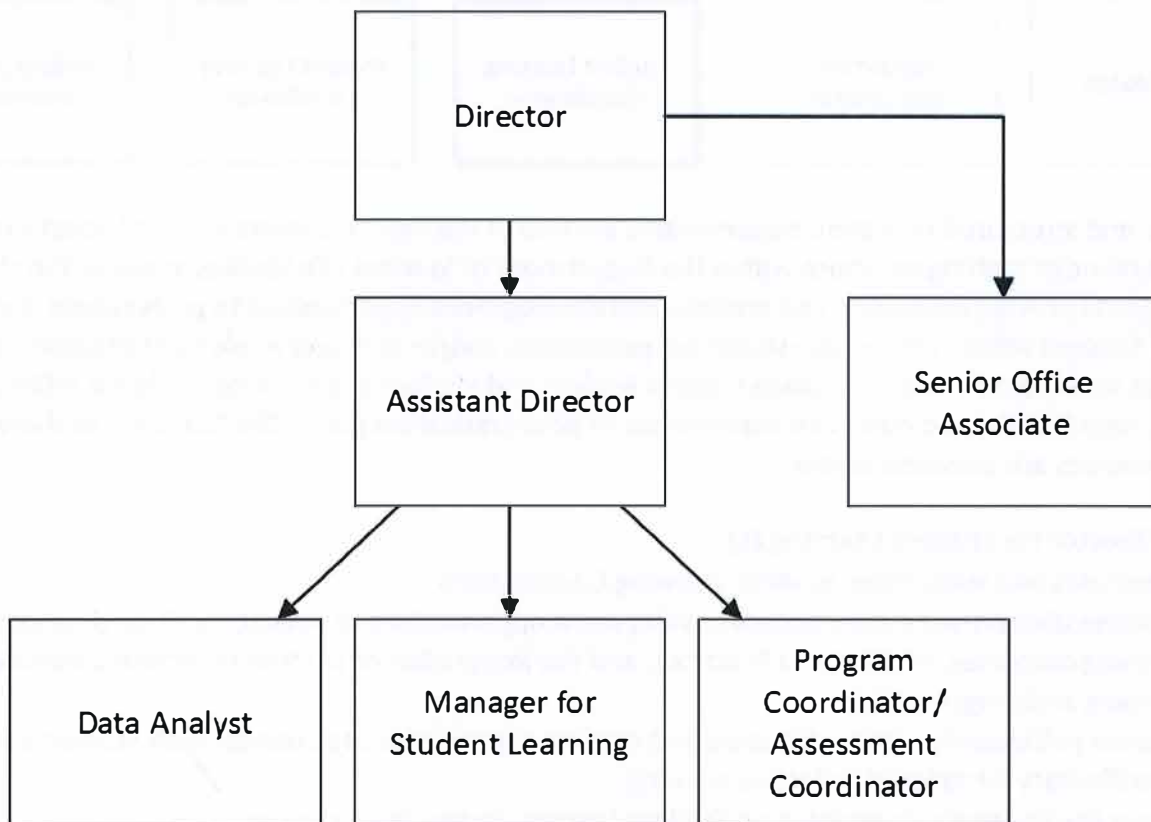
While this proposed strategy allows for greater flexibility in the recognition of programs and experiences deemed to be high impact, we also acknowledge that there must exist a baseline expectation to ensure the integrity of the new model. Through the conversations in this working group, a reoccurring theme of the power and importance of student reflection related to student learning emerged. Further, reflection continues to be a powerful strategy for student learning and development across the field of Student Affairs. In *Transformative Learning through Engagement* (2012), Fried and Associates wrote, "Reflection is critical to this learning/action process, yet so many times it is not integrated into experiential learning." Thus, this proposed strategy centers High Impact Practice Element #6 (periodic and structured reflection) as a foundational element for recognition of programs and experiences in the new HIPEs model. The process overview below visually explains this recommended strategy's approach:



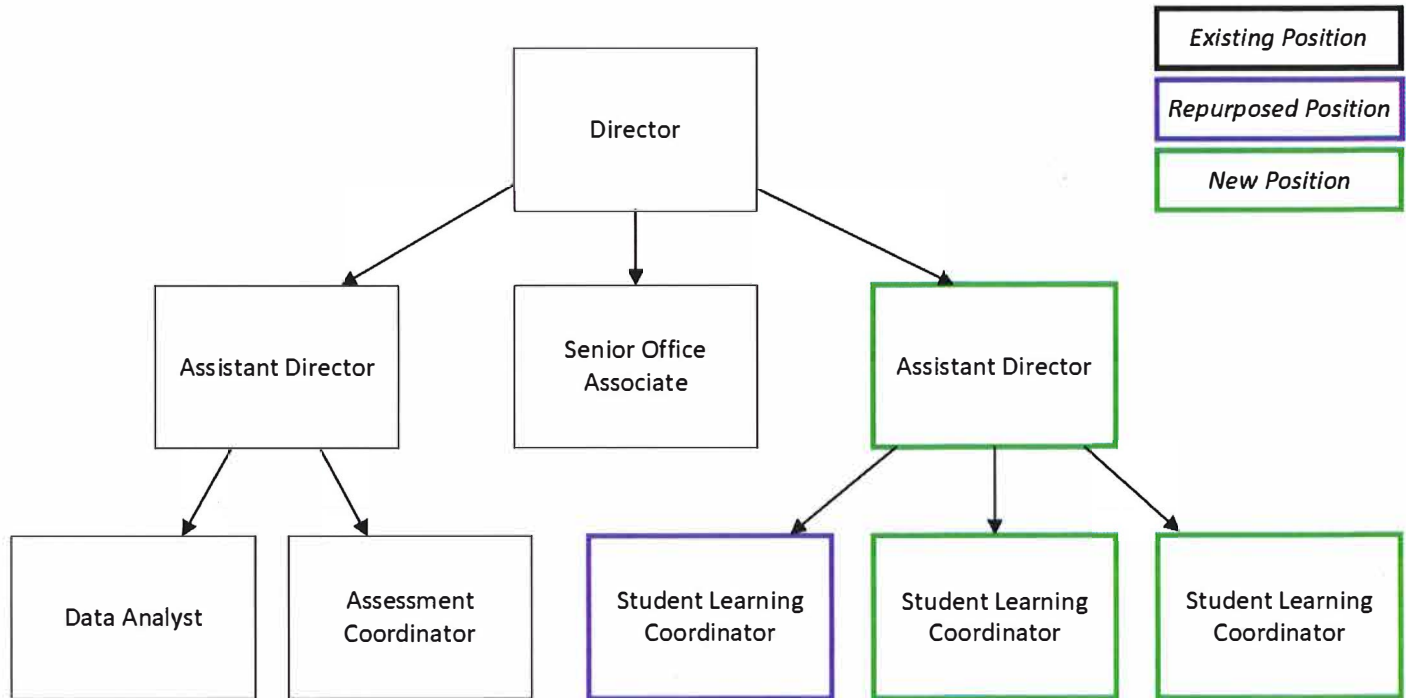
**Logistical Issues Addressed / Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:**

To support this growth of reflection across the Division’s work, appropriate staffing resources need to be present and strategically situated. As Fried and Associates (2012) wrote, “we should be asking ourselves how much more powerful and transformative reflection processes might become if co-facilitated by student affairs professionals who have group and individual advising skill in their repertoire” (p. 147). Currently, a portion of programs and experiences within the Division offer a staff assisted reflective component for student participants. However, given that reflection is critical in helping students realize the connections between themselves and others, and themselves and the world around them, an investment in additional professional staff resources and development is crucial to the success of this strategic initiative. Below is a proposed staffing structure that we believe will effectively increase the reflective component of programs and experiences across the Division, and ultimately lead to more programs and experiences that have HIPEs:

*Department of Student Life Studies – Current Structure:*



*Department of Student Life Studies – Proposed New Structure:*



As periodic and structured reflection opportunities are one of the eight elements of High Impact Practices, this new recommended staffing structure within the Department of Student Life Studies provides the staffing resources to (1) provide consulting and professional development opportunities to professional staff in the Division of Student Affairs who advise student organizations and/or plan and implement programs and experiences for students, and (2) provide student leaders and student organizations tailored reflective advising to help translate co-curricular experiences to post-graduation plans. The functions of these new staffing resources are provided below:

**Assistant Director for Student Learning (1)**

- Supervises and leads three Student Learning Coordinators
- Provides division-wide professional development opportunities to educate staff on developing student learning outcomes, High Impact Practices, and the integration of student reflection components into advising and programming.
- Creates pathways for student leaders and student organizations to connect with Student Learning Coordinators for tailored reflective advising.
- Chairs the Division’s Committee on Student Learning in the Co-Curricular



**Student Learning Coordinators (3)**

- Consults with advising and programming staff from designated departments (approximately 4 per coordinator) related to increasing HIPEs and ensuring reflective components for student experiences.
- Provides individual student leaders and student organizations advising focused on reflection and transferability of co-curricular experiences to post-graduation plans.

**Cost Estimates**

Position	Salary	Benefits	6-Month Adj.	Other*
Assistant Director for Student Learning	\$68,500	\$20,550	\$8,905	\$5,000
Student Learning Coordinators (x3)	\$40,000 x3 = \$120,000	\$12,000 x3 = \$36,000	\$5,200 x3 = \$15,600	\$4,500 x 3 = \$13,500
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$188,500</b>	<b>\$56,550</b>	<b>\$24,505</b>	<b>\$18,500</b>

\* Includes professional development funding and technology costs (i.e. computers)

**Total Cost for New Staffing Resources:**

New salaries/benefits (includes 6-month adjustment)	\$269,555.00
New technology costs	\$8,000.00
New professional development costs	\$10,500.00
New office space costs	\$200,000.00
Repurposed staff member salary/benefits, technology, and pro. dev. funding	- \$52,500.00
	<b>Total: \$434,555.00</b>
	<i>One-time costs: \$206,000.00</i>
	<i>New Reoccurring costs: \$228,555.00</i>

**Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline:**

The largest logistical issue to be addressed relates to the additional resources needed to appropriately staff the Department of Student Life Studies. These staffing resources are necessary to ensure that the Division has the capacity to grow student reflection components for programs/experiences, and ultimately increase the number of HIPs and programming/experiences that contain HIPEs. Attached is a timeline that outlines our plan for implementation and the necessary resources.

Approved:

M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.  
President

May 23, 2022

Date