

## Title III – Professional Development

### AccuTrack Training Summary

Aug. 10-11, 2005

Chapman University

Orange, CA

AccuTrack is a Learning Center Administration Software that has been purchased and implemented at the Somerset Community College, Somerset North Campus. It was determined that someone should be trained in the vast database tool that the Title III grant purchased to track and document student progress. I was asked to attend since I work with the Student Support Services grant program and retention.

The was an in-depth training, which covered virtually all aspects of the AccuTrack software. Mon Nasser is the owner of the company that produces AccuTrack and was the trainer for the workshops. The first day we covered reports, media checkout, traffic patterns, program assessment (case history on students), sending reports to instructors, messaging center, and a mention of Roll Caller. There was a section on using separate databases per center or sharing databases. Users have access to customize terminology as well. Under the appointments we learned how to send appointment confirmation via email. One application in SSS area would be the mentoring schedules. Using the web-link, this could make it convenient for students to cancel and reschedule appointments. Web-Link only utilizes students signing up for seminars and appointments.

Session logs can be used by tutors to include comments about the session with the student.

Media checkout could be a component SSS implements by December 2005. Each piece of media has a code number and students can then check out media for x amount of time. This would be useful for our TI-83 calculators and book loans.

There was a section on Mass Sign In which would be utilized when an instructor brings his/her class into the STAR center and at the end of the hour 30 students have to sign out. With the Mass Sign In one can set the amount of time allotted for the class or a card reader could be

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implemented so students would simply swipe their card as they leave to sign out.

Seminar is another aspect of the software. One can set up a seminar and students can sign in, thus tracking student attendance and report could then be sent to appropriate instructors in order to document attendance and or completion of that assigned or extra credit “workshop”.

The second day, Mon talked a bit about licenses and the different options available. If you purchase more than 3 sign in stations it would be wise to purchase a college wide license. The cost is about the same and the college could then grow as much as needed.

Email can be set up so that mass emails can be sent to student groups, everyone, or certain labs. Melissa Morrison already utilizes this feature but through Outlook and a distribution list she has created within Outlook for SSS students only. This aspect would be easy to incorporate given that the emails could be brought into the database through PeopleSoft and then instructors/tutors/administrators could send out messages accordingly.

Upgrades- we currently have version 8 and all upgrades (besides major version upgrades) can be accessed through the database software. The link is within the system setup and can be updated periodically simply by clicking on update. The software automatically links to the upgrade site and upgrades the database. The administrator must do this and Accutrack must be off at all locations throughout the campus.

Getting students information into the program is easy enough. Simply run a report of all students enrolled and convert it into excel and then import into AccuTrack. Mike Tucker and Dexter Alexander have been providing this access to us and since (I understand) Dexter has a certain level of administration to run requested reports we will continue to go through his office as well as the IT department.

Mon mentioned that TRIO programs want tutor assignments and tracking of tutors and those individuals assigned to the tutors. He briefly touched on this area since I was the only TRIO program person in attendance. He has written specific code into the software for certain colleges that run TRIO programs. That feature can be customized for a campus if needed.

On the retention side, I learned about two things that could help our efforts in this area. One being what is called Sports. Many universities track athletes we could change this terminology to Probation 1 (PR1) and

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Probation 2 (PR2) students. This is done by adding those students currently enrolled that are on probation into this Sports section. Then a report could be run periodically to see if these students have utilized the labs. A policy would have to be implemented where the PR1 students would be required to attend workshops, labs, tutoring sessions. The reports could show their progress and these students would be getting the help they need to become successful students. All along we are tracking their progress and can make decisions and contacts when needed.

There is yet another piece of software that Somerset Community College could utilize to help us in the R2T4 efforts. The Roll Caller. This software is a card reader where students simply swipe their cards as they come into class. This tracks their attendance, potentially, in every class on campus. If a student misses classes we would be alerted at the time they missed and contact the student to see if there is a problem. This software needs to be researched more because it would require student card ids and card readers in every class. The technology needed to create the cards has been around for awhile and I personally do not think it would be that expensive. I have inquired, via email, about a trial version. This would be a great asset for our college especially for the R2T4 issue. It would give us an accurate picture of those students attending up to the 60% date.

The AccuTrack training was well worth the while. I believe the college, Student Support Services, the STAR Center and R2T4 have great potential to reap the rewards of this powerful tool we can utilize to track students and help them be successful.

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