

## Student Services and Other Programs

This chapter highlights institutional programs that contribute to accomplishing the College's goals. As discussed in Chapter 10, the third group of goals relates to personal skill development. While the goal related to technological expertise is directly related to Cottey's academic program, the other three in the third group are accomplished through other programs and services. Programs that further these goals include the capstone trip to a European city, the athletic program, the Center for Women's Leadership, and the programs and services offered by the Student Life office—health services, counseling, spiritual life, housing, and campus activities.

### **Trip to a European City**

Enhancing knowledge of the global society is an important focus at Cottey. In 1998, the trustees approved a European travel experience for all second-year students to be taken during the first week of spring break and paid for through unrestricted reserves. The College pays for transportation and lodging for all second-year students, as well as for faculty and administrative staff selected to go on the trip. The only expense to students, faculty, and staff is for food and personal expenses. The trip combines free time for students to pursue individual interests with structured educational modules developed and led by the faculty and staff participants who submit proposals to be selected.

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The first two trips in March 2000 and 2001 were to London. London was chosen as the first city because of its history, its public transportation, and its English language. Faculty who did not participate the first year were given priority the second year. Paris was selected for the March 2002 and 2003 trips. The trustees approved an additional three-year period for this program, 2003-06.

Student evaluations of the trip indicate that it is an educationally rewarding experience. Following the trip to London in 2000, 85 percent of the students responded to a survey. When asked to rate whether the trip increased their understanding of the international and intercultural character of the global society, 95 percent agreed or highly agreed that it did. Following the Paris trip in 2002, 85 percent of the students responding agreed or highly agreed that their understanding with respect to this goal had increased. The response rate in 2002 was similar to the rate in 2000. (See Appendix 12-A for a summary of the evaluations. More complete information is available in the Resource Room.)

### **Athletic Program**

Cottey's competitive athletics program provides students the opportunity to continue to participate in competitive athletics, as well as further the College's personal skills goals by improving their physical fitness. The program was reintroduced at Cottey in 1999 upon the recommendation of a task force appointed by the President. The basketball program began in the 1999-2000 academic year, and the volleyball program was added the following fall. Cottey competes in Division II of the National Junior College Athletic Association and belongs to the Missouri Region of the National Junior College Athletic Association.

Intercollegiate athletics has impacted the College in several ways. It has been a useful recruiting tool and at the same time created a need for more scholarship money. Hinkhouse Center, built in 1970, has not easily

accommodated this new program. There is not adequate locker room space for two teams and the officials. In addition, scheduling conflicts have arisen in the gym between practice times for the teams and the intramural program. There are also competing demands for space between the athletics program and the physical education and dance programs. The College's physical fitness goal is related to the training of the athletes who participate in the program. Further, women's participation in competitive sports has been shown to develop some leadership and teamwork skills.

At Cottey there is some faculty concern about the demands of the athletic program versus the demands of the academic program for student athletes. Class attendance and course work requirements have sometimes conflicted with games and practices. The primary concern of faculty in this matter is the academic success of those students who participate in competitive athletics. The faculty and administrative personnel involved in these issues continue to work on resolving such conflicts.

### **Health Services**

Contribution to student personal health is also found in the free, limited care for Cottey students in Health Services in the Student Life Center. The Nevada Medical Clinic is contracted by Cottey to provide physicians' services to students for one hour each day, Monday through Friday, for minor illness and injuries. When appropriate, students are referred to the clinic or the Nevada Regional Medical Center for lab work, X rays, emergency services, and hospitalization. The following table shows the number of student visits to the physicians at Cottey Health Services over the past five years.

**Table 12.1 - Student Visits to Health Services**

	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-00</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-Jan. 03</b>
Total Visits	516	550	498	506	263

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## Counseling

The Counseling Office functions to assist students with their adjustment to college and to help with the developmental transition to adulthood. Counselors are concerned with early identification and therapeutic intervention for students experiencing adjustment, emotional and/or substance abuse problems. The primary goal is to provide services that enable students to return to a successful level of academic performance and social interaction. Services available include short- and long-term individual counseling, group counseling, conflict mediation, and consultation with faculty and staff. Individual therapy comprises the major use of counseling center resources. The following table shows the total number of students who attended individual counseling sessions.

**Table 12.2 - Total Students Participating in Individual Counseling**

	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-Jan. 03
Total Students	52	75	73	41

The Counseling Office has attempted to increase group counseling in test anxiety, assertiveness, and general interpersonal skills groups with limited success due to confidentiality concerns and scheduling conflicts.

Meeting students' psychiatric needs has been a challenge given the scarcity of psychiatrists in the Nevada community and a lack of adult inpatient facilities within a 50-mile radius. In 2002, the College changed contract providers to a different mental health center that could provide access to a psychiatrist. In addition, the Nevada Regional Medical Center opened an inpatient psychiatric unit for adults in fall 2002. These changes have improved the Counseling Office's ability to provide access to psychiatric care for students.

The Peer Empowerment Program (PEP) is a group of student volunteers trained to assist their peers to identify problems and make referrals

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to counseling or other services. PEP training in the fall includes sessions on assertiveness, listening skills, conflict resolution, and crisis intervention. Student activities sponsored by this program relate to the College goal regarding leadership development and active involvement in issues.

Since 1990, the Counseling Office has conducted a biennial drug and alcohol survey developed by Southern Illinois University. The Core Alcohol and Drug Survey collects information on students' attitudes, perceptions, and use. The results are used to direct programming at Cottey.

Despite a disturbing recent trend indicating increased use of alcohol by Cottey students, (e.g., 80.6 percent of students in 2002 versus 68 percent in 1998 responded yes to "alcohol consumed in the past year") results from the Core Surveys show that alcohol and drug use by Cottey students consistently falls below the national average. While annual prevalence data has risen, the percentage of students reporting binge drinking has remained somewhat more stable at Cottey with 24 percent of students reporting binge drinking "in the past two weeks" in 1998 compared with 29.4 percent reporting binge drinking in 2002, and both numbers are well below the national average.

Health Services and the Counseling Office jointly and annually update and disseminate the brochure Cottey College Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program, yet 2002 Core data suggests that 47 percent of Cottey students responded that they did not know whether the campus has an alcohol and drug prevention program. (A copy of the brochure and other information on the Core survey is available in the Resource Room.) The Core data will be used to direct improvements in the marketing of the prevention program. Also, awareness of the trends has led to plans to revitalize the Alcohol 101 program. Although the program has been in existence since 1999, it will receive renewed emphasis in fall 2003.

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## **Spiritual Life**

Finding the best method to meet students' spiritual needs in a nondenominational setting has been an ongoing challenge for the College. The current program provides opportunities to students for spiritual development in a nonsectarian atmosphere and emphasizes increased understanding of the significance of spirituality and an appreciation for its many forms.

A retired United Methodist minister serves as Cottey's spiritual life consultant. He is assisted by a Spiritual Life Committee, comprised of students, faculty, and staff. Programs coordinated by the committee include occasional chapel services, on- and off-campus nonsectarian retreats, opportunities for personal discovery, and activities designed to educate the Cottey community about various world religions. In addition to providing leadership for the Spiritual Life Committee, the spiritual life consultant is available to assist students in meeting their spiritual needs through both individual and group spiritual counseling.

Cottey has a long tradition of student involvement with churches in the Nevada community. Many churches have "host family" programs that serve not only to enrich the experience of the students and families involved, but also enhance the relationship between Cottey and the Nevada community. Cottey's nondenominational status is the guiding principle in the College's decision to support student involvement in area churches and not schedule regular chapel services.

## **Student Leadership Opportunities**

There are currently 35 registered student organizations with approximately 200 student officers. In addition to the Student Government Association (SGA) and the class organizations, activities and leadership positions are available in honor societies, discipline-related clubs, social organizations, political organizations, programming boards, and the student

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newspaper and yearbook. The activities of these organizations offer opportunities in leadership development and active involvement in issues important to students, again reinforcing one of the personal skills goals of the College.

Students also are active members of College committees. Students play a key role on the Student Academic and Spiritual Life Committees, as well as the Judicial Board and Residence Hall Conduct Board. The International Studies Week and Assessment Committees, as well as the Campuswide Planning Committee, and the Self-Study Steering Committee also have active student participants.

Cottey established the Center for Women's Leadership (CWL) in 2000. The CWL is housed in a 75-year-old historic home that sits on a square block adjacent to the south end of campus. The focus of CWL programming is on integrating leadership development needs of Cottey students with those of Nevada area community girls and women. Notable programs involving the Cottey community include: Congress to Campus, sponsored by the Stennis Center, where two former congresswomen spent three days on campus; Debate Watch, funded by the Ford Foundation to organize presidential debate-watching groups; and a Nutritionist-in-Residence program that included the development of individual nutritional plans as part of a total fitness program. Programs aimed specifically at girls in the community include a five-day leadership camp and a women's history summit in conjunction with Cottey students enrolled in the interdisciplinary leadership course. (More information on the CWL is available in the Resource Room.)

### **Suite Living**

Cottey's organization of its residence halls into suites provides a unique opportunity for students to live, work, and study in a nationally and internationally diverse residential environment. In each suite, 8 to 15 students

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share an attractively furnished living area surrounded by single and double bedrooms, a community bathroom facility, and a kitchen/utility area.

One of the objectives of housing assignments is to create a geographically diverse suite by including students from several states and at least one other country. With 34 suites in which to house students from approximately 40 states, in addition to 30 to 40 international students, Cottey's residential environment is diverse.

The characteristics of suite life provide a unique and meaningful opportunity for students to establish friendships and to learn to communicate and resolve conflicts. The residence hall staff, comprised of a live-in hall director and three student resident assistants in each hall, work to promote an atmosphere beneficial to all residents. In addition, each suite elects a volunteer chair. The suite chairs meet as a group with the director of housing every third week to discuss suite and hall issues and concerns.

The increased fee for air-conditioning, established in 1999 for residents of Robertson Hall (\$150 per semester), may have had an impact on the diversity of that hall as financial aid for international students does not include this additional cost. This was addressed by modifying College policy so that the fee is waived each year for 3 to 4 international students with demonstrated financial need.

### **Food Service**

Cottey operates its own Food Service department. Students, employees, and visitors highly praise the food. Most meals are served cafeteria style, although picnics, formal sit-down dinners, and lavish holiday buffets offer alternatives to the routine. Every effort is made to accommodate student diets for medical reasons, lifestyle choices, or cultural differences. For example, each menu for lunch and dinner includes one vegetarian and one vegan entree, and miso soup and rice is on the breakfast menu at the request of Japanese students. Throughout the year meals are planned with different

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cultural themes. The Student Food Committee meets with the director of food service to provide student input on the menu. A suggestion box is also made available. The Centennial Room, a formal dining room, is used on special occasions and for formal dinners for each of the 34 suites during the year. This dining room is also used to hold meetings during mealtime.

### **Student Traditions**

Cotley has a culture rich in student traditions, including Signing of the Cotley Book, serenades, secret pals, and Hanging of the Greens. Some students also participate in traditions centered around rivalry between first- and second-year students involving the senior mascot, a duck named "Hermitrude."

During the 1980s and early 1990s, the College struggled with the negative impact of some student traditions upon student retention. In January 1994, the College began an intensive examination of the Duck Game and a student group known as the "rec rats." The activities of these traditions, were, in some cases, bordering on hazing and harassment. Beginning in 1994-95, the College implemented a policy prohibiting organizations such as the "rec rats," and created the Student Tradition Review Panel to educate the campus community about hazing and harassment, and to oversee all student traditions.

In fall 2002, it was discovered that 12 students, some from each hall, had secretly continued to perpetuate the "rec rats." Because of the work done in 1994-95, the College had in place the policies and procedures to take action on this matter, and it was resolved.

### **Cultural Programs**

The quality of the residential experience at Cotley is enhanced by excellent cultural programs. In addition, Nevada is a small town with limited activities available for students and employees, so the variety of social, cultural, and educational programs and activities available through the College

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is important. Cottey students and employees are admitted free to all performances.

The Student Activities Committee (SAC) selects performers (with guidance from the coordinator of campus activities) at the regional conference for National Association for Campus Activities (NACA). An average semester might feature a coffeehouse musician, a large stage show, a band, a juggler or hypnotist, and a comedian. Compared with many colleges and universities, a high percentage of the Cottey student body attends performances. (See Appendix 12-B for a list of events, including attendance numbers, for the last eight years.)

The Cottey Lecturers and Artists Series (CLASS) is a source of pride for the College as well as the community. The series annually presents five or six performances (selected by a committee of faculty, students, and community members) that typically includes a lecture, a dance company performance, a theatrical production, and two musical performances. Cottey is the only institution within a 50-mile radius to present such high quality performances. Supported by Cottey's endowed cultural funds and community patrons, the CLASS program offers a season ticket to community members at a considerably reduced rate. The season ticket price is \$30, and would be about \$100 if the College relied solely on ticket income. (Event schedules and a CLASS Brochure are available in the Resource Room.)

In addition to these events, other organizations and departments offer social and cultural opportunities. A typical year will include dances (with men invited from colleges in the region), a foreign film festival, theater productions, plays designed for children of the community, professional art gallery exhibitions, student art exhibitions, and numerous vocal and instrumental recitals and concerts.

In response to student requests, several road trips are offered each semester, including shopping trips to Kansas City, Joplin, and the Lake of the

Ozarks; tours of Precious Moments Chapel and the Kansas City Country Club Plaza district during the Christmas season; and trips to see the Kansas City Royals, the Renaissance Festival, and musicals in Kansas City. Students are responsible for paying any admission fees and a small transportation fee.

### **Effectiveness of Programs and Services**

Cotley measures the effectiveness of the programs related to accomplishing the personal skill enhancement goals with the SOS. The table below summarizes the responses for the last four years for items related to the programs and services discussed in Chapter 12. Further analysis of this information appears in Chapter 14, which documents that Cotley is accomplishing its goals.

**Table 12.3 - Summary of Student Opinion Survey**

<b>ACT SOS Survey Item</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
2. Personal counseling services	4.33	4.07	4.08	4.03
7. Student health services	4.24	4.07	3.76	3.78
12. Residence hall services/programs	4.43	4.44	4.14	4.34
13. Food services	4.41	4.39	4.27	4.48
14. College-sponsored social activities	4.33	4.06	4.21	4.26
15. Cultural programs	4.17	4.12	4.16	4.27
18. Residence hall rules/regulations	3.50	3.68	3.72	3.93
21. Personal security/safety on campus	4.40	4.44	4.50	4.56
24. Athletic facilities	3.71	3.82	4.02	4.06
25. Study areas	4.32	4.37	4.29	4.23
34. Concern for you as an individual	4.22	4.29	4.16	4.20
35. Attitude of the college nonteaching staff toward students	4.07	4.40	4.17	4.22
38. Opportunities for personal involvement in campus activities	4.50	4.44	4.36	4.24
40. Religious activities and programs	3.59	3.43	3.51	3.56
42. This college in general	4.30	4.56	4.40	4.44

