Eagle View Orientation (EVO) serves as the gateway to Florida Gulf Coast University for incoming students and their families, by helping them better understand the academic, social, and personal transition from high school to college. Through a series of informational presentations, activities, and discussions, EVO helps participants learn all about our university: its resources, opportunities for involvement, and sources of support. In addition, we help our incoming students gain a clear understanding of the expectations that come with attending a university like FGCU, so they feel fully prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

As we planned for our programs in 2011, we relied on the data from program assessments conducted during the previous summer, which gave us a number of important issues to address. In 2011, we focused on:

• intentionally addressing the goals, content, and philosophy of our program with families, to help them understand the value of the entire EVO experience and their changing roles in the lives of their students
• providing more information and support for the families of commuter students
• creating a more structured set of experiences for students to help them learn academic information, select their courses, and create their academic schedule for the fall semester
• modifying the selection and training process for our EVO student staff, to fully prepare them for their role as paraprofessional peer advisors who assist the academic counselors of First Year Advising with the advising and registration process

Our program assessments from this past summer showed that the programmatic adjustments we made were received in a positive way and that they enhanced our ability to meet our program outcomes:

After attending EVO, students shared that they:
• Have a better understanding of General Education/major requirements – 98%
• Have a better idea about how to be successful in college – 97%
• Feel more relaxed/comfortable about attending FGCU – 96%

After attending EVO, parent/family members shared that they:
• Understand FGCU policies and procedures better – 97%
• Were more prepared to offer advice/support to their student – 94%
• Understand academic requirements better – 90%
First Year Advising

This past fall, First Year Advising (FYA) and student services professionals from around the university gave short presentations to students in over 100 sections of Composition I and II. Our Eagle Flight Plan presentation was developed to increase awareness of the campus resources available to assist students with their major selection and career exploration process. In October, the 9th Annual Majors Fair, co-hosted by FYA, Career Development Services and Student Government, was attended by nearly 500 students. This event was an excellent way for students, particularly for those with undeclared majors, to learn about the academic programs available at FGCU. It is our hope that we are able to conduct an additional Majors Fair during the spring semester to foster even stronger connections with faculty and staff across campus.

As we move ahead in the academic year, we are working hard to expand the scope of our advising services in a number of ways:

1) In collaboration with Housing and Residence Life, FYA has created a satellite office in Everglades Hall in South Village that will provide a full range of advising services to FTIC students living on campus;
2) We selected several of our outstanding Orientation Leaders to serve as Peer Advisors for our office, and these individuals have begun to assist the professional staff of FYA in the delivery of programs and services to our students;
3) We hope to offer several different workshops to our students over the course of the academic year, including a pre-registration workshop and a joint presentation with Career Development Services on the major selection process.

Parent and Family Programs

The Office of New Student Programs coordinated another highly successful Eagle Family Weekend during the weekend of October 21-23, 2011. Headline events included:
• A tailgate event prior to the FGCU-Lipscomb Men’s Soccer game
• Breakfast and a Movie
• Our Eagle Family Weekend Cookout, featuring Cruzin’ Vibes
• A performance by Illusionist Jason Michaels
• The Bower School of Music Fall Concert, which included a chocolate tasting event

Over 260 families (and over 900 individuals) participated in Eagle Family Weekend, and as you can see from the pictures, a great time was had by all!

Our online newsletter, which we have called Family Business, continues to feature reminders of important dates and deadlines, discussion of current events/programs on campus, as well as advice and suggestions to parents and families to help them support their students as they tackle some of the typical issues that come with adjusting to college life.