1973: Student enrollment: 18,410

1973: The Division of Student Services was created, and Dr. John J. Koldus was named Vice President for Student Services.


1974: The Department of Student Activities was created.


1974: The first woman was admitted to the Corps of Cadets.

1976: The MSC, originally dedicated to Aggies killed in World Wars I and II, was rededicated to all Aggies killed in all wars (past, present, and future).

1976: Student enrollment: 33,499

1980: Student enrollment: 41,171

1980: The Intramural Rec Sports Program (renamed the Department of Recreational Sports in 1989) moved into the Division of Student Services.

1985: Greek organizations began to be recognized as official student organizations at Texas A&M in response to Supreme Court decision on Gay Student Services v. Texas A&M University.

1986: Penberthy Intramural Sports Center opened.

1986: Beutel Health Center was renovated and expanded.

1987: Students approved construction of a Student Recreation Center and established a dedicated Rec Sports Fee.

1989: The Department of Multicultural Services was created.

1989: Student Services began providing services for students with disabilities through the Office of Handicapped & Veterans’ Services (renamed Services for Students with Disabilities in 1997 and elevated to the Department of Disability Services in 2005).

1990: Student enrollment: 41,171


1993: Dr. John J. Koldus retired. Dr. J. Malon Southerland served as Interim Vice President until he was appointed Vice President for Student Affairs in 1994.

1994: The Division of Student Services was renamed the Division of Student Affairs.

1994: The Departments of Residence Life and Student Life were created.

1995: The newly constructed Student Rec Center opened.

1997: Women’s Programs, part of Student Life, was renamed Gender Issues Education Services and included GLBT services. Eventually, this entity was split into the Women’s Resource Center and the GLBT Resource Center.

1998: The Department of Student Life Studies was created.

1998: The Texas A&M University Children’s Center was renamed the Becky Gates Children’s Center.

2000: Student enrollment: 44,026

2003: Dr. J. Malon Southerland retired. Dr. Bill Kibler served as Interim Vice President for Student Affairs.

2004: Dr. Dean Bresciani was named Vice President for Student Affairs.

2004: The Bonfire Memorial was dedicated.

2005: The University Center Complex and Rudder Theatre were reassigned to the Division after being removed in 2004.

2006: The Department of Information Technology was created.

2006: The Bonfire Memorial was dedicated.

2008: Dr. Dean Bresciani left Texas A&M. Dr. David Parrott served as interim Vice President until LtGen Joe Weber, USMC (Ret) was named Vice President for Student Affairs.

2009: Phase I of the Gardens Apartments was completed on the site of the former University Apartments, with Gardens Phase II following in 2010.

2012: The newly constructed Corps Buzbee Leadership Learning Center opened.

2012: The Veteran Resource & Support Center was created.

2012: The renovated MSC, which had been closed since 2009, was reopened and rededicated.

2013: University Center Complex and Rudder Theatre Complex were combined into one department: University Center & Special Events.

2013: The new north side Hullabaloo residence hall opened in Fall 2013, as did the renovated Corps dorms.

2013: The newly constructed Corps Buzbee Leadership Learning Center opened.

2013: The renovated MSC, which had been closed since 2009, was reopened and rededicated.

2013: Future milestones include expansion of the Student Rec Center. Milestones currently under discussion: possible construction of West Campus residence halls and the feasibility of building a new Band Hall.
Our Goals
Provide quality programs, services, opportunities and facilities that enhance students’ academic and developmental opportunities.

Promote an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity, the Aggie spirit and traditions.

Prepare students and staff for a future of lifelong learning, contributing to society, and leading in a global environment.

Develop and manage human, financial, physical and technological resources effectively and efficiently.

The Principles That Guide Our Work
Caring—We treat others as we want to be treated—with consideration, kindness, and compassion. We consider how our choices affect others, and we teach caring by our own example. As members of the Division of Student Affairs, we welcome and embrace all into the Aggie family.

Diversity—As a community, we recognize diversity is our strength. We are steadfast in our efforts to ensure that diverse perspectives and experiences are encouraged, valued and included.

Respect—We recognize and honor the dignity, worth, and individuality of each person and accept individual differences. We treat others with courtesy and civility. We pursue what is fair and just with openness, objectivity, and consistency.

Integrity—As individuals and as a Division and its departments, we honor our commitments and use the principles of honesty and trustworthiness to guide our decisions and practices. We strive to have the courage of our convictions to do what is right.

Excellence—We strive to be the best in all that we do. We commit to being reliable, prepared, and informed. We persevere to improve and develop our programs, services, staff, and students.

Service—We are dedicated to serving students and the University community as we contribute to the mission, goals, and values of Texas A&M University.
Brief History of the Division of Student Affairs at Texas A&M University

Post-War Era Ushers In Changes at A&M

The Agricultural & Mechanical College of Texas was founded in 1876. At the time it was an all-male military institution, membership in the Corps of Cadets was mandatory, and the Corps Commandant was responsible for most student activities and services. By the 1940s, however, enrollment had grown to more than 6,000 students, and although membership in the Corps was still required for many students, for the first time students were exempted from Corps membership on a limited basis.

Oversight and coordination of student activities and services to this new non-Corps student population was the responsibility of the Dean of Men, a new position at the college. The Student Senate, the Aggie Band, student housing, and other student organizations fell under the purview of the Dean of Men. As the non-Corps student population continued to grow, accounting for approximately 40% of the total enrollment of 7,000 students by the late 1950s, President James Earl Rudder in 1959 appointed Brig. Gen. James P. Hannigan, USA (Ret) as the first Dean of Students.

The new Dean of Students position signaled the beginning of a decade full of changes. During the 1960s the name of the institution was changed to Texas A&M University. Enrollment in the Corps of Cadets became voluntary. Historically, the enrollment of women in classes was restricted to female staff members and wives or daughters of staff members, faculty, and students only, but in the 1960s women who had no previous connection to Texas A&M were admitted as students for the first time. African-American students were also admitted for the first time during this decade. All of these changes resulted in perhaps the decade’s biggest change at Texas A&M University, a skyrocketing enrollment, which went from 7,000 students in 1960 to 14,000 students in 1970.
Increased Enrollment Follows a Turbulent Decade

As one might expect, these changes in the student body makeup and size had tremendous impacts on student life. The Dean of Students’ office, which included the Dean of Students, the Dean of Men—and now a Dean of Women as well—supervised student activities and services in addition to student discipline. A housing manager supervised the central housing offices, with area counselors and advisors located in various residence halls. Several student service-oriented departments such as the Memorial Student Center (MSC), Student Financial Aid, the University Police, the Student Health Center, and Counseling and Testing now reported to the Dean of Students.

The university’s physical environment also grew to accommodate the growing student body. 1972 saw construction begin on an expansion of the Memorial Student Center, “the campus living room.” The expansion not only resulted in the creation of the MSC Flag Room, which became one of the most popular spaces on campus, but also included the construction of Rudder Tower and the Rudder Theatre Complex. A couple of years later, in the wake of the end of the Vietnam War, the MSC was rededicated to “all Aggies who have died in all wars, past, present, and future.” Prior to that time the MSC had been dedicated to Aggies who had given their lives in World Wars I and II, but students in the 1970s saw fit to include those who had died in the Korean and Vietnam Wars as well.

The A.P. Beutel Health Center opened in 1973 to provide students with better access to medical care on campus. In 1974 the Personal Counseling Service began offering mental health services to students from its offices in the Beutel Health Center.

The Birth of the Division of Student Services

In anticipation of continued growth and diversification of the student body, President Jack K. Williams created a vice president position to oversee all student service functions on campus. He appointed Dr. John J. Koldus the first Vice President of Student Services in August 1973. According to Henry C. Dethloff in his book *Texas A&M University: A Pictorial History*, 1876-1996, Dr. Koldus came to Texas A&M from East Texas State University where he served as Vice President for Student Affairs. In his new position he was given oversight of fourteen areas and departments.

Dr. Koldus hired LtGen. Ormond R. Simpson, USMC (Ret) to serve as the first Assistant Vice President for Student Services. General Simpson, who graduated from Texas A&M in 1936 with a degree in mechanical engineering before going on to serve in three wars until his retirement from the military in 1973, also supervised the Commandant of the Corps and was Head of the School of Military Science.

In an effort to evaluate existing functions of the Division of Student Services and determine perceived needs on campus, Dr. Koldus immediately created a faculty advisory committee and solicited input from students, staff, and administration. His goal was to establish a Division of Student Services that would be fully equipped to meet the requirements of a rapidly growing student body. The report he submitted to President Williams in January 1974 became the blueprint for the reorganization of the Division in the fall of 1974. Dr. Koldus consolidated more than fourteen separate areas into eight departments, including three new departments and the Personal Counseling Service office after academic counseling and testing duties were reassigned to Academic Affairs.

Student Services Landscape Continues to Shift in the 1980s

Enrollment increased over the next three decades, growing from 18,000 to more than 45,000 students by 2003, and the Division of Student Services continued to evolve in order to serve this larger, more diverse student population. In 1979 the Department of Student Affairs shared supervisory responsibility for the Intramural Rec Sports Program with the Department of Health and Physical Education. In 1980 Student Affairs became the sole supervisor of the program. This decision was followed six years later with the opening of the Penberthy Intramural Sports Center on West Campus, and the next year, 1987, students voted to approve the construction of the Student Recreation Center and the establishment of a dedicated Rec Sports fee. In 1989 the Intramural program was renamed the Department of Recreational Sports.

What is today known as the Department of Disability Services originated in 1980 with the creation of the Office of Handicapped and Veteran’s Services. Although this office was not part of the Division of Student Services at the time, the Division began providing services to students with disabilities through this office in 1989. Two years later responsibility for providing disability services was moved solely to Student Services, which created the Services for Students with Handicaps office. In 1997 the office was moved under Student Life as Services for Students with Disabilities. In 2005 this office became a department and took its current name.

In 1984 A.P. and James Wiley, both Class of 1936, donated $600,000 to create the MSC Wiley Lecture Series. Since that time, the Wiley Series has featured more than 100 prominent individuals, including heads of state such as former Presidents Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George H.W. Bush, former Soviet Union Premier Mikhail Gorbachev, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and former Mexican President Vicente Fox.
In 1982 the Department of Security and Traffic (University Police) shifted from Student Services to the Division of Operations. Student Services added two departments, when the Department of Student Financial Aid came from Academic Affairs, and the Academic Counseling and Testing Center merged with the Personal Counseling Service to create the Student Counseling Service.

When LtGen. Simpson retired as Assistant Vice President in 1985, an administrative review of the Commandant and Head of the School of Military Science positions led to the decision to hire a retired flag officer (as opposed to an active duty officer, assigned by the United States Army) to serve in both positions. As Commandant, the officer would report to the Vice President for Student Services; as Head of the School of Military Sciences, to the Dean of Faculties.

Development Efforts Reap Rewards
Changes during the 1980s were not restricted to department consolidations, additions, and departures. The MSC, in particular, received several sizable donations during the 1980s. In 1986 Jessie Jordan donated $1 million to establish the MSC Leland T. and Jessie W. Jordan Institute for International Awareness. Leland T. Jordan ’29 was a petroleum engineer who was instrumental in the establishment of the Kuwait Oil Company. In honor of the international cultures the Jordans had grown to love, Mrs. Jordan established the Jordan Institute to nurture an appreciation of global cultures in Texas A&M students. The Jordan Institute offers international internship and service programs, and members of the MSC student programming committee help administer them and also provide on-campus international programming. The Jordan Collection, housed within the Institute’s office in the MSC and featuring artifacts from the Jordans’ travels around the globe, also provides students with on-campus access to the arts of other cultures.

In 1989 the MSC Forsyth Center Galleries, now known simply as the Forsyth Galleries, was established thanks to a donation by Bill ’35 and Ima Runyon. The Runyon Art Collection includes one of the finest collections of English cameo glass in the world and also includes pieces by Louis Comfort Tiffany, Steuben Glass Works, and the Mt. Washington Glass Company. Paintings in the collection include works by Maurice Prendergast, Albert Bierstadt, Frederic Remington, and Winslow Homer.

In 1989 a new position was added to the Office of the Vice President in an effort to coordinate fundraising initiatives for the Division of Student Services. The Vice President of Student Services and the Texas A&M Foundation selected the first Director of Development for Student Services. Later, in 1992, the Office of the Vice President for Student Services relocated from the first floor of the YMCA Building to the tenth floor of Rudder Tower.

New Leadership and a New Name in the Nineties
On August 31, 1993, Dr. John J. Koldus retired as Vice President after leading the Division of Student Services for exactly 20 years. In February, 1994, Associate Vice President for Student Services Dr. J. Malon Southerland, who had been serving as Interim Vice President, was named permanent Vice President. At the same time, on Dr. Southerland’s recommendation, the Division of Student Services was renamed the Division of Student Affairs to reflect more accurately the breadth of the division’s mission.

Services provided by the Division and facilities to house division operations continued to grow. In 1994 the Student Counseling Service moved to its own building in Henderson Hall, and the student HelpLine was created to replace the after-hours service previously provided by Dial-A-Nurse. In 1995, eight years after the referendum approving its construction, the Student Recreation Center opened on West Campus near Olsen Field. The Critical Incident Response Team was created that same year.

In 1995, the Division was reorganized and expanded from nine departments to twelve. The Department of Special Events Facilities, which included the Rudder Theatre Complex and Rudder Tower, was added, as was the University Art Collections and Exhibitions department. The Department of Student Affairs was separated into two departments, the Department of Residence Life, which was responsible for managing the University Apartments and on-campus housing, and the Department of Student Life. Two years later, in 1997, Women’s Programs, which was an area within Student Life, was renamed the Gender Issues Education Services to reflect the fact that the office was now providing services for GLBT students. Then, in 1998, Student Life Studies was added to the Division of Student Affairs, in order to provide assessment of students and programs. The Children’s Center also opened, making the division home to fourteen departments by the end of that year.

To assist with the increasing responsibilities related to departments within the Division, Student Affairs continued to add high level administrative positions. 1996 saw the creation of two important Division positions: an executive director of development, responsible for the Corps of Cadets Capital Campaign, and a senior management analyst, who provided central leadership for division-wide budgeting, technology, and planning issues.
A New Vision for the 21st Century

The Division’s influence on the quality of the Texas A&M experience is evident throughout Vision 2020. The plan’s goals recognize the importance of a residential campus, student organization involvement, and access to fine arts and cultural experiences to the academic mission of Texas A&M, all of which fall under the purview of Student Affairs. Vision 2020 also acknowledges the impact of Texas A&M University’s student enrichment and traditions on student learning both in and out of the classroom.

In 2001 a second director of development position was created, and the Aggie Spirit Development Council was formed to lead the division’s fundraising efforts during the University’s “One Spirit, One Vision” capital campaign. That campaign was inspired by Vision 2020 and its view of the future, but the Division also looked to the past as that same year marked the 50th anniversary of the Memorial Student Center. The festivities surrounding the event included a tribute to J. Wayne Stark, the first director of the MSC and the guiding force behind its programming.

Kudos

The Student Organization Assessment Center, part of Student Life Studies, also received kudos from Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education in the form of the NASPA Gold Excellence Award.

A Leadership Change at the End of Three Decades

In 2003, thirty years after the Division’s establishment, the Student Financial Aid department was shifted out of the Division and into Academic Affairs. A much larger change for the Division that same year was the retirement of Dr. J. Malon Southerland, who had been at Texas A&M for 36 years and had served as the Vice President of Student Affairs since 1993. In The Battalion article covering the retirement announcement, Zac Coventry, Student Government Association (SGA) President at the time, is quoted as saying, “If Southerland is evaluated by the quality of the student development programs he supervised during his long career, his tenure will be judged a resounding success.” Speaking on his own time at Texas A&M, Dr. Southerland is quoted as saying, “It’s been a remarkable 36 years, and the time is right for me. As a student I never imagined that I would see this institution evolve into a world class university while still recognizing important parts of its past.”

Dr. William Kliber, who had been at Texas A&M for 24 years and served under Dr. Southerland as an Associate Vice President for Student Affairs for nine years, was appointed interim Vice President, while a search committee, whose membership included three students, was assembled to conduct a search to find a new Vice President for Student Affairs.

That search ended with the late April, 2004 announcement that Dr. Dean Bresciani, who had been serving at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, would become the next Vice President for Student Affairs. Pablo Rodriguez, Vice President of MSC Diversity and one of the student members of the search committee, was quoted in The Battalion as saying about the hiring of Bresciani, “[he will create a] relationship between student affairs and academic affairs. He values and appreciates the unique A&M culture and that was apparent during his interview.”

Sadly, 2004 was also a notable year for the Division for reasons related to campus tragedies. On the last day of July an explosion and fire in the University Apartments claimed the lives of Lamiya Zainab and Rabeya Chaudhry, the former the daughter and the latter the mother of Texas A&M student Saqib Ejaz. Ejaz, his wife, Lutfahsa Rahman Kanta, and his father were also injured in the explosion.

Later that year, on November 18th, the university gathered to dedicate the Bonfire Memorial and remember the students who lost their lives or were injured in the Bonfire collapse of 1999. Jason Schriebb, a member of the Bonfire Memorial Dedication Student Advisory Committee, told The Battalion, “Hopefully the memorial can show how much went into Bonfire and what it brought to this campus. Hopefully it will inspire a lot of learning.”

The Division saw another departure, this time in the form of a retirement as Reveille VII, the first lady of Aggieland. A search for her replacement was conducted during the summer of 2008, and in August Reveille VIII attended her first classes as an Aggie.

The Department of Residence Life launched its Residence Hall Energy Challenge in 2009.

The Division received more kudos from NASPA, this time the Student Leader Learning Outcomes (SLSO) project, a collaborative effort involving professionals from across the Division, received the NASPA Silver Excellence Award in the Assessment Category and the Student Leadership Programs Knowledge Community Spotlight of the Year Award.

The Student Leader Learning Outcomes project provides methods for Division of Student Affairs staff to assess and document what student leaders learn through involvement in student organizations. The project originated in 2005 when the Department of Student Life Studies (DLS) conducted focus groups with faculty and student organization advisors to understand what students need to know, beyond discipline specific knowledge, to be successful in their field. The focus groups generated brainstorming sessions resulting in a set of common leadership skills that DSA staff want student leaders to develop by the end of their Texas A&M experience. The project is sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs and has broad participation of student organization advisors and other staff who work closely with students.
Expanded Services and Facilities Accompany Another Enrollment Surge

As the end of the first decade of the 21st Century drew closer, Texas A&M’s student population was again surging, and with it Student Affairs was expected to serve more students. The Texas A&M Children’s Center received a $1 million endowment from Arthur and Dorothy McFerrin in 2006. As a result of the endowment the Center was renamed the Becky Gates Children’s Center in honor of Mrs. Robert M. Gates, wife of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and member of the center’s board of directors. Two years later the center celebrated the opening of an expansion of its facility and the ability to serve more families.

In 2007 the Division continued to expand its ability to serve students with the addition of the Texas A&M Women and Gender Equity Resource Center (WGERC), which had previously been organized under the Dean of Faculties. A university committee assessing the work of the center also recommended that the center be split into two centers, one focused on women’s resources, and one focused on resources for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students. That separation resulted in the creation of the Women’s Resource Center and the Gender Issues Education Center, which was renamed the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Resource Center in 2008, as part of the Offices of the Dean of Student Life.

Plans for physical expansion continued with the announcement that the Memorial Student Center would close for renovations beginning in summer of 2009. In October 2007, the students passed, by a 2-to-1 margin, a referendum to increase the Student Center Fee to pay for a renovation and expansion of the MSC. Initial plans called for the building to be renovated in stages, thereby allowing for parts of the MSC to remain open throughout the life of the construction project, but President Elsa Murano announced that the building would close entirely to allow the building to be completed in a shorter time frame and at a greater cost savings.
The Lineup Shuffle Continues

Administrative evolution continued with the consolidation of Information Technology (IT) services, meaning all IT services for the Division would be provided by the Department of IT. Administration of Student Assistance Services moved into the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the Memorial Student Center Complex, which had only existed since 2006, was split back into its three original departments: Memorial Student Center, responsible for producing student programming; Rudder Theatre Complex, responsible for managing the Theatre facility and providing event technical services across campus; and University Center Complex, responsible for operations and scheduling of the MSC, Rudder Tower, Koldus Building, and All Faiths Chapel. After the dissolution of the Department of Journalism, Student Media became responsible for The Battalion; the office was shifted to the Offices of the Dean of Student Life in 2010.

2012 was particularly active not only with administrative changes but with the opening of long-awaited facilities. Administration of the Women’s Resource Center and Student Assistance Services was shifted to the Offices of the Dean of Student Life. Greek Life became part of the Student Activities department, and the Forsyth Galleries became part of the University Art Galleries Department. In an effort to better serve veterans from the armed services now enrolled as students at Texas A&M, the Division established the Veteran Resource and Support Center, placing special emphasis on the transition and retention of veterans.

In 2013 the University Center Complex and the Rudder Theatre Complex were consolidated into one department, University Center and Special Events, responsible for managing all of the facilities funded by the student center complex fee. Choral Activities, which is home to the Century Singers, the Women’s Chorus, and the Singing Cadets, moved from Student Activities to join the Texas A&M University Bands in the newly created department of Music Activities.

Grand Openings

The biggest news for the Division in 2012 was generated by the opening of two facilities.

The Memorial Student Center, which had been closed for nearly three years while undergoing renovations, reopened on April 21, 2012, sixty-one years to the day that the building was first dedicated. Aggies from all generations got their first glimpse of a bigger, better state-of-the-art MSC that featured full ADA accessibility, the area’s largest ballroom, approximately 400,000 square feet of space, and 150% more student lounge and activity space than ever before. The dazzling new facility was rededicated in a ceremony featuring both Governor Rick Perry ’72 and Chancellor John Sharp ’72, after which the building hosted its first program, the 2012 Muster Day commemoration. A weeklong Grand Opening Celebration in the fall introduced the MSC to a new class of Aggies.

The 18,000-sq. ft. Buzbee Leadership Learning Center, located on the Corps Quad, opened in August 2012, just in time for the start of the fall semester. Governor Perry was again on hand to dedicate the new building along with Vice President of Student Affairs LtGen Joe Weber, Commandant of the Corps of Cadets Brigadier General Joe Ramirez, and lead donor to the facility Tony Buzbee, all of whom were members of the Corps. According to coverage of the opening ceremony in The Eagle, the center was the first new construction on the Quad in 73 years, but represented just the first step in a series of planned improvements to Corps facilities. The center connects Harrell Hall and Lacy Hall, both of which were renovated at the same time the Buzbee Leadership Center was built. The center provides academic support for Corps members, giving them access to computer lab resources, tutors, and study lounges. Another learning center is planned for the east side of the Quad.

In Fall of 2013 the Department of Residence Life celebrated the opening of Hullabaloo Hall, the first new residence hall built at Texas A&M since the 1980s. Hullabaloo Hall features sustainable and environmentally-friendly building elements, and provides a “living room” environment for the north side residence hall community with its inner courtyard and first floor common area.