

LETTIE O'CONNELL RAAB

EDUCATION:

*Master of Arts, Human Relations/Public Administration
Webster University, 1980*

*Bachelor of Arts, Education (emphasis Special Education/Indian Education),
Arizona State University, 1972*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Executive Director: University College 2000 - present

I served on the planning team that developed the implementation plan for University College. University College is the unit at PVAMU responsible for all first time, full time (FTFT) freshmen. It has a budget of \$4.9M and employs over a hundred regular personnel and a large number of work study students. Each FTFT freshman is assigned to a University College Academic Team (UCAT) that is housed in a specific residence hall and includes the residents, a professional advisor (PA), a mature live-in residential staff and a Faculty Fellow. The UCAT staff and faculty work together to provide a supportive, academically-focused environment for the students. I am the senior administrator for University College (UC). In this capacity I supervise the three Divisions which comprise University College:

- ***The UC Division of Academic Advisement:*** Fifteen Professional Advisors (PAs) provide holistic advisement including academic and career advisement to all the incoming freshmen and serve as the initial POCs for freshmen in need of support services and referrals. The PAs work with ten Faculty Advisement Coordinators to insure that freshman advisement meets departmental and college requirements.
- ***The UC Division of Academic Enhancement:*** A cadre of twenty-six educational professionals provide developmental courses for over 1200 students in the areas of reading, math and English. This unit also supervises the Center for Academic Support that provides academic enhancement activities such as tutoring and SI for the entire student body. The Scholars Program is also housed in this unit. I was part of the group which centralized and restructured developmental education at PVAMU and I was one of the primary authors of the state mandated Developmental Education Plan.
- ***The UC Division of Student Life:*** Twelve Learning Community Managers (LCMs) and twenty-four Community Assistants supervise the residence halls and residence based activities that focus on academic success. With the assistance of the PAs and twelve Faculty Fellows, the residential staff provide a varied schedule of co-curricular activities for the residents, with an emphasis on academic success.

University College's mission is to improve retention and graduation rates, increase student academic success and facilitate a smooth transition into and through higher education. In its third year UC has produced statistically significant improvements in freshman retention and academic progress. The program was a finalist in 2002 for the THECB Star Award.

Academic Coordinator, Academy for Collegiate Excellence and Student Success (ACCESS) and the Panther Living and Academic Community Experience (PLACE). 1995 - present

I was part of the initial program team that developed and implemented both of these programs. **ACCESS** is a program for highly motivated students considered to be 'at risk' to graduate from college. It consists of an intensive summer, residential academic component (bootcamp) and a freshman follow-up component. To date 645 students have completed the ACCESS program. These students have surpassed their peers in retention, graduation rates (class of 1996) and academic performance. The strategies used in ACCESS were extrapolated to the **PLACE**. The PLACE was a Freshman Learning Community which combined holistic advisement, intensive academic enhancement, comprehensive support services and a structured, academically focused residence environment. In two years this program served nearly 1000 students from a cross section of the freshman class. Its results in terms of retention and academic success were excellent and led to the implementation of **University College**. University College is the final evolution of ACCESS and the PLACE providing all incoming freshmen with an exceptionally supportive, structured academically focused first year experience.

Instructor, Army Education Center, Ft. Bliss Texas and the United States Disciplinary Barracks, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas

I was part of the original team that developed the Military Reading Program for soldiers at Ft. Bliss. I helped formulate curriculum and materials for this adult reading program. I was also the coordinator and instructor for the Army's FLIT program and I provided reading enhancement classes for LPN students. At Leavenworth I was responsible for the reading, GED and CLEP preparation programs for prisoners.

Council Aide, Office of the Mayor and City Council Dallas, Texas

I was the primary point of contact for the constituents of Councilmen Stahl and Goldblatt. I provided research support and was involved in the earliest stages of the development of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit System (DART).

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Leadership and Communication Facilitator, Army War College

Following 80 hours of training, I served as a primary facilitator for a variety of workshops for senior military wives. I also designed, staffed and supervised an ESL program for the wives of senior foreign military officers.

Board Member, American Women's Activities Germany (AWAG), FRG

I helped provide training to American and German women in the form of regional and countrywide seminars covering topics from the management of non-profits to fund raising regulations.

Coordinator, Army Family Action Plan, Army War College, USARSO, the Republic of Panama and Ft. McClellan, Alabama.

I planned and implemented local ‘town hall’ meetings on the named military installations and represented these local communities at MACOM and Department of Defense level conferences.

PVAMU INVOLVEMENT:

*Member of the Athletic Council
Member of the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee
Member of the Developmental Education Advisory Council
Member of the Homecoming Committee
Escort for PV Band to Inaugural Parade*

PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS:

*PVAMU’s President’s Award for Commitment to Excellence
Students’ First Award, Student Government Association
Primary investigator: \$400K FIPSE grant on recruitment, retention and remediation (ongoing)
Presenter at numerous national conferences to include the Freshman Year Experience Conference (5 years), NACAS, NISOD and NAFEO.
Presenter at the Access and Equity Conference, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Keynote Speaker Regional NACADA Conference
Department of the Army Commanders Award for Public Service
Department of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal
South Central Pennsylvania’s Most Vital 101 People for 1988*