

Student Services Assessment Institute: Program Review

Overview and Purpose

In 2010, the University of Northern Colorado instituted a new policy that mandated annual and comprehensive program review for all non-degree granting programs within the division of Academic Affairs. A committee comprised of representatives from each Academic Affairs division developed recommendations for the new policy and procedure, which were approved by Provost Abe Harraf on January 6, 2010.

Although some programs have participated in comprehensive review for accreditation or other purposes, prior to 2010, UNC had not required participation from all programs. To assist program directors and staff in meeting their new responsibilities regarding program review, the Office of Assessment, in partnership with the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, provides training and support through the Student Services Assessment Institute-Program Review (SSAI-PR), which has been modified with a special focus on program review.

The SSAI: PR is intended to assist programs with understanding the requirements of the new process, provide information about administrative processes associated with managing program review, and provide a forum for developing assessment plans and strategies to support the process. Small teams consisting of a program director (or other management-level individual) and one or more staff members will complete a three-day training workshop. At the end of the SSAI-PR, programs will be prepared to participate in their first comprehensive review.

Format

The SSAI: PR consists of a three-day workshop to introduce and orient programs to each stage of the program review process. A description of each session topic is provided below.

SESSION 1 – GETTING STARTED: ORIENTATION TO PROGRAM REVIEW

Session 1 will provide an orientation to the new policy and guidelines. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the purpose of program review, the framework used at UNC, the main processes associated with conducting the self study, and the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.

SESSION 2 – WRITING THE COMPREHENSIVE SELF STUDY

Session 2 will focus on how to structure the report, tips on how to make the strongest case for supporting resource needs, and what happens after the report is submitted. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the major sections of the narrative report, characteristics of an effective SWOT analysis, and how to organize the evidence binder.

SESSION 3 – INTRODUCTION TO THE CAS STANDARDS

This session will provide an introduction to the CAS Standards. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the guiding principles supporting the standards, the difference between standards and guidelines, and the major steps for completing the CAS evaluation process.

SESSION 4 – CAS 1: MISSION

This session will describe the CAS expectations for program mission. The session will include a discussion of the importance of establishing a well-defined program mission that aligns to institutional mission and strategies for evaluating and, if necessary, revising current mission statements. By the end of the session, participants will be able to explain the CAS expectations regarding program mission and identify the differences between weak and strong mission statements.

SESSION 5 – CAS 2: PROGRAM

This session will focus on understanding the CAS expectations for student learning outcomes. The session will include a discussion of how to write learning outcome statements. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the learning and developmental domains embedded in the program standard, identify learning and outcome domains associated with their program, and match appropriate methods for assessing the various domains.

SESSIONS 6 – CAS 3: LEADERSHIP AND CAS 4: HUMAN RESOURCES

This session will focus on understanding the expectations of the CAS Standards in relation to the people who deliver program services. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the expectations for these standards and identify different strategies for evaluating and documenting compliance.

SESSION 7 – CAS 5: ETHICS AND CAS 6: LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

This session will discuss the ethical and legal responsibilities associated with delivering program services. Participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the ways in which ethical and legal considerations affect their program. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the CAS expectations for legal and ethical behavior, articulate any specific issues associated with their functional area, and identify appropriate methods for documenting compliance with the standards.

SESSION 8 – CAS 7: EQUITY AND ACCESS AND CAS 8: DIVERSITY

The CAS Standards for Equity and Access address requirements for compliance with state and federal laws regarding non-discrimination, while the standard for diversity deals with issues related to climate. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the expectations for both standards and identify implications associated with each standard in relation to their functional area.

SESSION 9 – CAS 9: ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT AND CAS 10: CAMPUS & EXTERNAL RELATIONS

This session will introduce participants to the CAS standards related to effective program management. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe expectations for effective program structure and communication with internal and external constituencies.

SESSION 10 – CAS 11: FINANCIAL RESOURCES, CAS 12: TECHNOLOGY, AND CAS 13: FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

This session will discuss the standards related to program infrastructure. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the expectations for each standard and identify appropriate strategies for documenting compliance.

SESSION 11 – CAS 14: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

In addition to introducing participants to this standard, this session will also provide an introduction to basic assessment principles and methods for assessing student learning and program outcomes. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe the CAS expectations for the standard, define the assessment process, and explain the different methods and their appropriate uses.