

**Division of Student Affairs**

**Departmental Review Process**

**Statement of Purpose:**

The Division of Student Affairs at Missouri State University is committed to a comprehensive program review and evaluation process as part of a larger emphasis on Division-wide planning and assessment. Program review gives an opportunity for departments to thoroughly assess programs and services in the context of nationally accepted guidelines, standards, and benchmarks. The departmental program review process will consist of several distinct and important steps which are detailed below. Those steps include the departmental self-assessment, the internal review, the external review, and preparation of an action plan based on the results of the review. Departments will complete the review process as follows: The departmental self-assessment process in summer semester, the internal review in the fall semester, the external review in the spring semester, and development and submission of the Final Action Plan in the following summer. Every Student Affairs department will complete a program review once during a five year cycle. Training will be provided annually to the departments assigned to a program review in that year. All final departmental action plans and external review reports will be submitted to the Vice President Executive Staff (VP Staff).

**The Self-Assessment:**

Departmental Self Assessments will be conducted in accordance with the Council for the Advancement (CAS) **Self-Assessment Guides** (**SAGs**). “Users of the SAG will gain informed perspectives on strengths and weakness or deficiencies of the program and services. Student Affairs staff members benefit from having a common language and purpose for reflection. This leads to and encourages planning for future improvement” (Carretta, 2008). Departments that do not ascribe to specific CAS standards will identify recognized professional standards within their field by which a meaningful self-assessment can be conducted.

Major steps in the Self-Assessment process are described as follows:

1. Initiate the Self Study. Departments will receive training on this process. The most up to date **SAG’s** will be distributed to departments during the assigned review year as the CAS standards are periodically updated.
2. The departmental self-review will be conducted by the director and department staff working through the CAS standards for specific to their area. A preliminary review with ratings, comments and suggestions for improvement will be prepared. This review will be shared with the internal and external review teams.
3. Concurrently with the departmental review, documents to support the case made by the departmental review team will be collected and placed on display for use by the internal and external review teams. A list of suggested documents, reports and/or office publications that are recommended for posting will be provided.
4. Establish and prepare the Internal Review Team. This team will be led by the departmental director. The director will determine the composition of the review team with the following suggested composition: at least two members should be external users of the department; a Student Affairs departmental leader outside of the area; a faculty member when appropriate; and one or two students as appropriate. The department’s staff can and should be involved in the process but should not be the only people on the review team. It is also recommended that the director appoint a scribe to take notes at the meetings of the Internal Review Team to leave his/her time free to conduct the meeting. The scribe may be a member of the department.
5. Compile and review documentary and evaluative evidence for the Internal Review. Departments may be asked to review departmental data, host focus groups with constituents, review publications, websites, and other materials. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be important to this process. A summary of the findings of the internal review team as well as access to documents to support the results should be available to be shared with the External Review Team.
6. The External Review Team will be convened to review the work of the previous groups, documents and whatever other documents or materials they deem necessary to complete the external review.
7. With the results of the departmental, internal and external review teams, the director will create a “**Preliminary Action Plan**” based on the “Summary Action Plan” in the CAS Self-assessment Guide. The SAG worksheets provide opportunities to identify areas of discrepancies between current practices and the accepted standards and guidelines. Self-assessment reports should also include information about areas for corrective action and program enhancement. The Preliminary Action Plan will be reviewed with the AVP to whom the director reports. After this review, the department director will create a “**Final Action Plan**” for submission to VP Staff and the vice president.

**The External Review Team:**

The External Review team should comprise three people including the CAS liaison for the functional area (or a person who is well renowned in the functional area if the CAS liaison is not available) and two additional persons. Criteria to consider when selecting external reviewers include:

* Director level or above
* Employment at a public institution comparable to MSU
* Diversity of the team needs to be considered
* A peer from a public institution in the state of Missouri may also be considered

The names and brief biographical information (name of institution, title, and work history) about the external reviewers should be forwarded to the Vice President prior to contacting the reviewer for approval. Once approved, departments will then make contact with the reviewers and coordinate the review schedule for the spring semester. In keeping with the sample schedule provided for departments during the annual training, departments will be responsible for coordinating the review schedule. Payment to the external reviewers will be managed by the Vice President’s office.

The review will be funded by the Vice President for Student Affairs’ budget. Departments which exceed this budget will pay the overages from their departmental budgets.

The external review team should submit a preliminary report based upon the CAS standards and their experiences during the program review visit within 2 weeks of the visit. The department will review the preliminary report and provide feedback to the reviewers about missing pieces or need for clarifying information. A final report by the external review team will be due within four weeks of the visit.

**Action Plans:**

At the conclusion of the external review, departments are responsible for synthesizing the information received from the self-assessment process and the external review report. A format for the **Action Plan** will be distributed to departments in the annual training process. Preliminary **Action Plans** should be submitted by July 1 of each year at the end of the review cycle to the appropriate AVP. Departments will then submit a final **Action Plan** by October 1 based upon the feedback received. External review teams’ final reports will be submitted along with “**Final Action Plans**”. All **Final Action Plans** and external review team final reports will be archived by the Division.

**Review Schedule:**

All Student Affairs departments (with the exception of Magers Health and Wellness Center who have their own accreditation process) will participate in the Program Review process once during a five year cycle. Each year two to three departments will be participating in a program review. The cycle will be as follows:

2023-2024

Family Programs- continuation

Access Programs/BEARS Lead

Veteran’s Student Center

Student Conduct

2024-2025

ResLife/Housing

OSE

Public Affairs

2025-2026

New Student Orientation

Bookstore (They won’t do CAS but will want to reassess their CBC Report)

Multicultural Programs

Career Center

2026-2027

Foster Recreation Center

Wellness Services

Community Engagement

Magers is not on this list because they do AAAHC and COLA accreditation which is outside of the scope of these reviews.

**References:**

Carretta, P. (2008). Using *CAS standards and review process for improving student learning and program outcomes.* Presentation at NASPA International Assessment & Retention Conference. From https://www.cas.edu/index.html

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. (2009). *CAS professional standards for higher education* (7th Ed.) Washington, DC: Author.

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