

Program Review Issues Statement

What is an “Issues Statement”?

A one-page statement that clearly outlines the key issues and questions that you will use to guide the self-study process. An issues statement might focus on reviewing progress on the unit’s SLO, getting help on a particular issue (DEI, staffing, programming, collaboration with academic affairs), developing a strategic plan for growth, and/or anything else the unit decides to focus on in its program review.

Why do we need an issues statement?

The issues statement is shared with the VPSA at the beginning of the program review process to facilitate discussions about the scope and issues covered in the self-study. Once approved by the VPSA, it is also shared then with the external reviewers and incorporated into the self-study. This helps reviewers understand what issues are the most important to address during the site visit and in their report.

External review issues statement should:

- Outline the unit’s priorities and area of focus that will inform the theme of the program review.
- Identify key questions for external review.
- Provide a summary of how well the unit performs in relation to relevant outcomes, areas for improvement and challenges

It may be helpful to:

- Identify the student learning outcomes, resources, programs and/or strategic plans that informed the unit’s issue statement.
- Delineate any specific areas where the unit wants the external reviewer’s expertise or attention.

Examples of Issue Statements for DSA Program Review

Example 1: OIRE

The Office of institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE) would like to focus our program review on incorporating diversity, inclusion, and equity into our work. Specifically, we want to think about how we can promote culturally responsive and inclusive institutional research and assessment practices that take into account our increasingly diverse student, faculty, and staff populations. We hope to engage reviewers on the following topics:

- a. Ensuring our mission statement reflects our commitment to diversity;
- b. Applying an equity lens to our work;
- c. Supporting campus-wide D.E.I. efforts/helping make HMC’s commitment to D.E.I. actionable and visible;
- d. Ensuring IR and assessment professionals have access to and opportunities to learn about current trends in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Our approach is guided by Kendi's (2019) conceptualization of antiracism, and our self-study focuses on how and where OIRE has opportunities to make antiracist decisions in various aspects of our work, including how we frame institutional research and assessment, analyze, and label data, and interpret results given local contexts and structural inequities.

Example 2: Student Services Office

Student Services Office (SSO) is responsible for a broad range of student services and support outside of your classroom experience. In addition to supporting students' needs outside of classrooms, SSO serves as co-educators in support of the mission of Harvey Mudd College while cultivating student's life skills. In that regard, SSO would like to focus our program review on increasing and fostering collaboration and partnerships for an inclusive community while creating innovative programs that provide leadership and developmental opportunities for our students.

SSO includes the following foci:

- Experiential Learning;
- Inclusive Communities;
- Leadership Development; and
- Wellbeing and Holistic Development.

As we are examining on the strengths and areas of improvements in our programming, SSO would appreciate guidance and recommendations on more ways to partner with faculty and academic affairs especially in the areas of creating more inclusive communities and wellbeing and holistic development. We also want to know if our DEI efforts are on the right path and how we can improve them. Lastly, we want to know our areas of strengths and areas of improvements in the foci mentioned above.