Harvey Mudd College

Student Affairs Program Review Guidelines

Introduction

Following the 2021 WSCUC visit and recommendation to "move forward with their plans to begin reviewing the individual units of student affairs (rather than the entire division at once), and to establish a policy and schedule to support those reviews (page 26)", the Harvey Mudd College Department of Student Affairs (DSA), working in partnership with the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE) developed program review guidelines which are designed to document and understand how well its units fulfill the college mission and DSA Foci. The guidelines were informed by CAS (Council for the Advancement of Standards), examples from other liberal arts colleges, and Harvey Mudd's Program Review Guidelines for Academic Programs. These guidelines are suggestive, not prescriptive, and should be of help those in student affairs as they plan for, undertake, and interpret the results of program review.

The Purposes of Student Affairs Program Review

The student affairs program review process seeks to document and understand the ways in which the activities, programs, and learning experiences offered within the co-curriculum enhance the HMC experience. Reviews will typically include an internal self-study and a multi-day visit by external reviewers. The insights gained through this process provide feedback to help the unit do its job better, use its resources more efficiently, attract new resources to its programs, deepen the collaboration with academic affairs in support of the HMC mission through programming and activities, and enter a beneficial conversation about best practices with respected colleagues from other institutions.

Program review makes it easier to have data-driven conversations that help the unit understand and document its contributions to co-curricular outcomes and engage in strategic thinking about the unit's plans for the future to ensure that it is positioned to provide the kind of activities, programs and learning experiences that will help improve the HMC community.

Overview of the Program Review Process

In DSA, a unit typically undergoes program review every ten years. The review includes a self-study completed by the unit, followed by a visit from two external reviewers. Approximately one month after the visit, the reviewers submit their report to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students (VPSA) and OIRE, who then forwards the report to the unit. The unit director (often also the program review coordinator), VPSA and a representative from OIRE meet to discuss the content of the report and any response, if necessary. One year later, the unit director makes a brief follow up report to the VPSA outlining how the unit has responded to the external reviewer's report, and discussing any further recommendations for action.

The DSA pays for the external review.

The Schedule for Student Affairs Program Review

DSA program reviews rotate from unit to unit with typically one review in any given year. The program review schedule is available online here. The schedule may be amended at the discretion of the VPSA.

What Goes Into a Good Self-Study?
- Process of a Self-Study:
  - Develop Program Review Issues Statement and get approved by VPSA
  - Develop timeline
  - Identify, collect, and review evidence
  - Interpret findings
  - Write the report
  - Share with the unit members for revisions (If they are not heavily involved in the process already)

- Elements of a Self-Study

  Chapter 1: History and introduction of the unit

  Chapter 2: Program functions, highlights and population served

  Chapter 3: Student learning outcomes and relevant data

  Chapter 4: Assessment of outcomes (annual assessment reports)

  Chapter 5: Data on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity

Chapter 6: Comparative data from similar colleges or programs (NSSE, CSS, etc.)

Chapter 7: Financial support for the unit and programs (Grants received, etc.)

Chapter 8: Program Review Issues Statement

External Review Process

- Selection of external review team
- Preparation of invitation to the reviewers
- Planning the site visit ([Example schedule](#))

After the Review

- External reviewers submit their report to VPSA and OIRE approximately one month after the visit. The expectation from the reviewers can be found [here](#).
- VPSA forwards report to the review coordinator, any relevant administrators/committees for review; two weeks to address any errors of fact.
- If errors of fact, two weeks for reviewers to correct, resubmit final report
- Review coordinator disseminates final review to unit
- Within one month of receiving report, review coordinator arranges meeting with VPSA and unit director to discuss report recommendations.

- **One Year after Review:** One year after visit, the unit director submits follow-up progress report to VPSA and OIRE. VPSA makes further recommendations for action as appropriate.

Resources

In planning for and undertaking a program review, several resources are available to departments.

- CAS Standards
- Examples of Program Review
- The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness can provide:
    - Advice on the development of program review plans;

- Assistance articulating and revising goals and/or student learning outcomes;
- Help in identifying and providing existing assessment data from institutional surveys to inform the review where appropriate (The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the CIRP Freshman Survey and Senior Surveys cover many topics relevant to student learning and program review);
- Technical support for web-based surveys (of alumni and students);
- Assistance with the collection and analysis of other institutional data relevant to program review.