California State University, Chico

Division of Student Affairs

Program Evaluation Guidelines
Rationale for Program Evaluation:

“Program Evaluation enhances self-preservation, increases the quality of services offered, secures continued funding and equips service providers with the factual knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their program’s development” (Stufflebeam, 2002).

Program Evaluation:

• Clarifies divisional and departmental “fit” with institutional vision, mission, goals and/or strategic plans
• Clarifies to students and other constituents what students can expect to gain and what the program will accomplish
• Provides different kinds of data and evidence about services - moves beyond satisfaction and tracking utilization to describe program effectiveness
• Links Student Affairs and Academic Affairs - links curricular and co-curricular
• Builds a culture of evidence
• Helps tell our story!

There needs to be an important distinction made between Program Evaluation and Outcome Assessment: Program Evaluation is a large scale “big picture” look at an entire program across individual program offerings or administrative domains to develop judgments about the program’s effectiveness. Outcome assessment asks specific questions related to service delivery or program outcomes, including student-learning outcomes, and is one component of Program Evaluation.

Process for Program Evaluation:

There are five components to Program Evaluation: Pre-Planning, Self Study, Program Evaluation Team (PET) Study, External/Peer Review and VPSA Review.

1. Pre-Planning Meeting

Prior to the beginning of a program evaluation, a pre-planning meeting will occur. The VPSA will schedule a meeting with the AVPSA, program Director and Chair of PET to discuss priorities, specific self-study strategies and collaborate on PET membership.

2. Self Study

Directors will conduct a self-study of their program(s) utilizing CAS or other professional association self-study assessment tools as the framework for their self-study. If individual programs do not have CAS or other professional standards, Directors will develop a self-study incorporating the domains identified in the General CAS standards, which include:

1. Mission
2. Program
3. Leadership
4. Organization and Management
5. Human Resources
6. Financial Resources
7. Facilities, technology and equipment
8. Legal Responsibilities
9. Equity and access
10. Campus and community relations
11. Diversity
12. Ethics
13. Assessment and evaluation
14. Issues unique to CSU Chico Program
“CAS standards provide an important tool that expresses to students, faculty, and administrators the complex and vital nature of student support programs and services, and their relationship to student learning and development” (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, 2007).

“CAS has incorporated a number of common criteria that have relevance for each and every functional area, no matter what its primary focus. These common criteria are referred to as “general standards” and will be found embedded in all functional area standards, along with criteria that relate to specialized aspects. These general standards are designed to overcome the “silo effect” so common throughout higher education in which autonomous administrative units, programs, and services function independently and sometimes inconsistently. In effect, the general standards make the CAS standards highly utilitarian and promote inter-departmental, inter-program, and inter-service cooperation and collaboration. Users are encouraged to view the CAS standards and guidelines as vehicles that interconnect administrative units. Because what these various functional units have in common (e.g., educational purpose, student learning and development) often exceeds their differences, the effective practitioner will find that collaboration between and among units can enhance the educational environment in many important ways“ (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, 2007).

3. Program Evaluation Team (PET) Study

**Team Membership: (membership specific to each unit’s Program Evaluation)**

Chair- appointed by VPSA
Program Director
SA Assessment Coordinator (Assessment Office Coordinator)
Division-wide staff members (3-6 members)
Constituents/Stakeholders
  Students: program student employees, service users and others
  Faculty (invited by Chair)
  Community members as appropriate

**Program Director’s Role:** The Program Director is staff to the PET and coordinates program meetings, arranges access to data, serves as liaison with program staff and/or participants and constituents; provides PET with information and resources.

**SA Assessment Coordinator’s Role:** The Assessment Coordinator is staff to the PET and serves as a consultant providing resources and technical assistance regarding self-study and PET process.

**Team Responsibility:** The Program Evaluation Team will decide whether to include guidelines or other measures that go beyond CAS standards and will gather and analyze relevant quantitative/qualitative information including:

  - Program Documents
    - Mission statement, philosophy statement, policies/procedures, staff manuals
  - Administrative Documents including: organizational charts, financial reports, budget information, annual reports, and self-study report
  - Assessment Data
    - Usage data, outcomes assessment, self-study, satisfaction surveys

The PET will compile and review results and produce report and recommendations.
4. **External/Peer Review**
In consideration of Director’s priorities, Director will seek outside peer review from constituent, stakeholder or other CSU program Director.

5. **VPSA Review and Post Review Meeting**
The Vice President for Student Affairs will review the Program Evaluation report and recommendations and meet with the Program Director to discuss Program Evaluation results and recommendations, including areas of program strength and those areas that may require improvement. The Program Director and VPSA will use the Program Evaluation results to create short-term and long-term program goals.

**Schedule of Program Evaluation**
Each Program shall conduct/participate in Program Evaluation once every 5 years. Proposed Schedule (Subject to Change):

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**Suggested Program Evaluation Timeline:**
- October 1: Pre-Planning Meeting
- October – April: PET and External/Peer Review
- April 15: Report/Recommendations to VPSA
- July 1: Program Changes (if any) incorporated into director’s goals

**Miscellaneous:**
- Suggested training for program Directors:
  http://www.cas.edu/Presentations%20&%20Tutorials/CAS%20Standards%20and%20Self-Assessment%20in%20Higher%20Education.ppt
- Directors should incorporate data collection into daily office operations for data consistency.
- Use annual reports as a significant source of data; align annual report to PE general standards.
- Use PE to create leadership opportunities for staff members.