



Support Services Review

For Administrative and Student Support Services

Fiscal Year 2008-09

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Support Services Review Overview **For Administrative and Student Support Services** 2008-2009

Introduction

Support Services Review (SSR) is a representative, responsive form of assessment and self-evaluation to ensure continuous quality improvement and the enhancement of Servant Leadership in ACC's administrative and student support services. The primary aim of Support Services Review is to provide staff and stakeholders the opportunity for collective and purposeful reflection to clarify and refocus on the services and outcomes in their respective areas. Using a common framework, administrative and student support services staff identify vital services and intended outcomes and create a plan for achieving and continually improving those services and outcomes.

Support Service Reviews provide an opportunity to align support services up, down and across organizational lines to more effectively achieve the Mission of the College.

The Support Services Review process is designed to:

- Provide valuable feedback from the users of College support services
- Support continuous quality improvement
- Assess the level of compliance with effectiveness standards of the Commission on Colleges and Austin Community College
- Document important accountability and accreditation compliance
- Replace the former Internal College Survey process with a more comprehensive planning and evaluation tool

The products of the Support Services Review are:

- A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to target improvement of services and intended outcomes.
- A concise, written report responding to five fundamental questions.

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Five Fundamental Questions

1. What are the primary services or outcomes provided by the support service area and what is the impact of those services and outcomes on students and other key stakeholders?
2. What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats present that enhance or hinder the unit's ability to provide those services and meet expected outcomes during the next three years?
3. Using the answers to the first two questions, what improvements to primary services and/or intended outcomes will occur during the next three years?
4. How will the unit measure the extent to which planned improvements have resulted in better service or intended outcomes for students or other key stakeholders?
5. How will the planned improvements align with and contribute to the Mission and Intended Outcomes of Austin Community College?

The Principles of Support Services Review include the following:

- Support Services Review is one component of ACC's institutional effectiveness and accountability processes.
- Support Services Review is an integral part of ACC's ongoing assessment, planning, and Master Planning processes.
- Support Services Review should not be burdensome to review team members or to staff and administrators.
- Support Services Review requires integrity for critical reflection, accurate assessment, and genuine follow-through.

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Support Services Review Steps

Step 1:

Identify the self-study chair and self-study committee members.

- The appropriate administrative unit head will designate a self-study chair.
- The chair will appoint a self-study committee comprised of administrative and student support services staff, key personnel and outside stakeholders to bring a broad range of perspectives and expertise to complete the self-study and to implement the improvement plan.

Step 2:

Identify the purpose of the unit.

- Purpose broadly states what the office is responsible for providing and staff members are trying to accomplish collectively. It aligns the office's efforts with the College's larger Vision, Mission, and Intended Outcomes as reflected in policy and administrative rules.
- Purpose statements may already appear in accreditation documents, in the job descriptions of staff members, or purposes statements of other units or colleges.

Step 3:

Identify the primary services and outcomes of the unit.

- Services and outcomes describe specific desired performance of services, processes, products, or other outcomes, that the service unit directly provides to students or other stakeholders.
- Outcomes are results-oriented, stated using explicit action verbs with specific criteria for success such as *increase by 10%*, *provide ten opportunities*, *5% improvement*, and so on.
- Limit outcomes for the most important services or outcomes the unit provides.

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Step 4:

Identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT Analysis)

- The self-study team will perform a SWOT analysis, facilitated by a trained facilitator from outside the unit. The SWOT analysis will review each service or outcome, to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that enhance or hinder the unit's ability to provide specified services and/or outcomes during the three-year program review cycle
- SWOT strengths and weaknesses describe the service's internal capacities, while SWOT opportunities and threats are presented by the external environment.
- For each service or outcome the committee should identify how they can
 1. Use Strength(s) to best advantage
 2. Compensate for identified Weaknesses
 3. Take advantage of each Opportunity
 4. Minimize each Threat

Step 5:

Create a Quality Improvement Plan that includes the improvements desired (with target standards/measures), assessments to establish the extent to which the service area achieves improvement, estimated costs (if any) of the improvements, and a completion date.

- The Quality Improvement Plan is a rolling three year plan that targets measurable improvement to area services and outcomes.
- Assessment should yield results that are valid and reliable; provide information that is easily interpreted and communicated; can be completed in a timely manner within available resources; arises out of participation and process ownership of the service's staff; and that clearly illustrates continuous improvement.

Some service area Quality Improvement Plans may require new fiscal, human, and physical resources to create or improve services and outcomes. When this is the case, QIP improvements that align with institutional priorities should be directed to appropriate cluster groups to be input into the Master Planning Database for review by institutional and budget authorities before adoption by college leadership. The benefit of dovetailing the SSR and QIP with Master Planning is that approved initiatives may be funded for three years and not require annual budgetary renewal. For this reason, SSR is done on a three year cycle to coincide with rolling three year Master Planning and budget cycles.

Not all improvements, though, require additional fiscal, human, or physical resources. Some QIP improvements involve improved business practices and streamlining workflow to improve services and outcomes within the fixed limits of current resources. Support Service Review and

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the Quality Improvement Plan are intended to identify and implement these revenue-neutral improvements.

Step 6:

Review and Evaluate Support Services Reviews and Quality Improvement Plans

- Support Service Reviews and Quality Improvement Plans will be submitted for review and approval by service area leadership before implementation.
- Support Service Reviews and Quality Improvement Plans may, as necessary and appropriate, be subject to review and comment by larger organizational structures such as cluster groups to align and prioritize planning, Master Planning, and budgeting.
- Support Service Reviews and Quality Improvement Plans will be submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability for review by the Achieving Excellence Committee to establish compliance with accountability and accreditation standards.

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APPENDICES

Calendar for Support Services Review and Quality Improvement Plans

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
August	OIEA Staff	Collect and publish previous SSR and QIP
September	Pres, EVP, or AVP	Designate Support Services Review Self-study chair and notify Achieving Excellence Committee Chairs, Coordinator of Institutional Planning and Assessment
September	Self-study Chair	Appoint a Self-study Committee to complete the Support Services Review(SSR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
October	AEC members and OIEA staff	Orient Self-study Chairs
October - April	SSR Chairs and Committees	Conduct and write Support Service Review and Quality Improvement Plans
April 15	SSR Chairs	Share completed Support Service Reviews and Quality Improvement Plans with service area staff and leadership and submit documents to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability in electronic form
April 20	OIEA Staff	Publish current SSR and QIP
April - June	AEC Committee	Achieving Excellence Committee will review SSR and QIP and provide feedback to service areas
June - July	SSR Chairs and Committees	Review feedback from AEC and revise SSR or QIP if necessary
August - October	SSR Chairs	Present SSR findings and QIP to Pres, EVP, AVP, or other appropriate leader(s), and get authorization to enter QIP improvements as Master Plan initiatives
October - January	SSR Chairs	Enter authorized initiative from QIP into the ACC eMasterPlan database
March	SSR Chairs	Present the Master Plan Initiative to the Institutional Planning Council
September	Support Service Unit	Implement the QIP

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Annual Follow-up Years: Implement Quality Improvement Plans and evaluate progress

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
October	AEC Co-Chairs	Remind Self-study chairs that QIP updates are due in November
November	Self-study Chairs and OIEA staff	Chairs will send QIP updates to OIEA for publication
February	AEC Co-Chairs	Submit SSR/QIP Process Evaluation Report to Institutional Planning Council and Academic and Campus Affairs Council