



Co-curricular Assessment Report

Program/Department Name: Disability Support Services

Year of CAR Completion: 2016-17

CAR Cycle: 2015-16, 2016-17

Co-curricular Assessment Report

Organization of Program Review Materials:

- Component I: Response to Previous Co-curricular Assessment Report
- Component II: Review of Assessment Data
- Component III: Criteria for Co-curricular Assessment Report
- Component IV: Recommendations and Executive Summary
- Appendix A: Co-curricular Program/Department Summary Work Plan

NOTE: Please spell out any acronym the first time it is used.

NOTE: Whenever possible, link answers to supplemental documentation that you are providing.

Component I

Response to Previous Co-curricular Assessment Report

Based on your previous CAR review, identify strengths, areas of improvement, opportunities, threats, and progress to date. *(Please enter NA in these areas if this is your first CAR.)* ****If you are referring to supplemental documentation that you are including in this CAR, please identify that documentation clearly in your answers below.**

Program/Department: Disability Support Services (DSS)

The Disability Support Services (DSS) department at Stark State College serves over 1,000 students and provides equal access to educational programs and services for all qualified students with disabilities. The DSS staff assists students by providing academic support services and accommodations, academic advising, admissions and financial aid assistance, and career guidance. The college's DSS Office coordinates various services with academic and non-academic offices and serves as a liaison between the College community and state and local agencies.

Strengths:

DSS's strengths include providing comprehensive and high quality disability support services, physical accessibility, and availability of staff for appointments and assistance, including walk ins and urgent appointments.

DSS continues to experience high satisfaction scores from students, in part due to a spirit of continuous improvement which is a strength of DSS. Anytime a student provides feedback, the department discusses this feedback openly in order to understand either how to continue providing services that were identified as valuable, or how to improve based on the feedback.

Areas of Improvement:

DSS improved physical access with the move to the first floor in Fall of 2016. The quality of testing in the DSS testing center was also improved with the carefully planned design of the testing center, and the availability of noise-cancelling headphones at every station.

Opportunities:

The previous Co-curricular Assessment Report (CAR) identified accommodated testing as an opportunity for improvement. Students were dissatisfied with the testing space, which was often shared with another student and did not have private testing rooms. They found this to be a distraction, as well as the lack of soundproofing.

An area DSS continues to work on is physical accessibility of the campus. Significant opportunities were identified in the previous CAR, including the testing space and the overall location of DSS.

The previous CAR also identified continuous staff education in order to keep up to date in this ever-changing field as an opportunity. In addition to DSS staff education, education of Stark State faculty regarding the services of DSS was identified as an area of opportunity.

Threats:

N/A

Progress to Date:

DSS moved to the first floor Fall 2016 which significantly improved physical accessibility. The DSS testing center also improved sound reduction to minimize distractions for students utilizing this space.

Updated American with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) information was integrated into the DSS office's webpage, and conference learnings are shared with the department. DSS also now attends the new faculty member orientation to discuss our services available, how best to work with students with a variety of disabilities, and our contact information for quick responses to questions and concerns. Attending orientation in person has shown an improvement in students' satisfaction with faculty members providing the accommodations identified by DSS.

Component II

Review of Previous Assessment Data

*****If you are referring to supplemental documentation that you are including in this CAR, please identify that documentation clearly in your answers below.***

1. What changes have been recommended that have had a positive effect on your program's outcomes? (Please be specific.)

The changes recommended from the previous assessment included improving the location of the DSS office, and improving the testing center for students requiring a distraction-reduced setting. Both of these recommendations were implemented over the past year, and students have identified these changes as positive.

2. What changes to your program/department were made based on findings from the previous CAR?

By collaborating in the design of the new DSS testing center, we were able to make improvements intended to reduce distractions for students who rely on this space for optimal testing conditions. In the previous testing center there was one large room where multiple students were sometimes testing at the same time, and there was no specialized soundproofing. In the new testing center, we now have two private testing areas, and the walls

and ceiling of this space were soundproofed. Due to these facility changes, we have received fewer complaints regarding sound distractions than our previous location on the third floor of the Student Services building.

The location of our offices has also been a positive improvement for students. We are now located on the first floor, which is more accessible for students who have physical disabilities. Additionally, we are located near the Gateway Center, which is very convenient for the students we serve who utilize these services concurrently to DSS services.

Component III

Criteria for Co-curricular Assessment Report

Criterion 1.0 Mission, Values and Goals

Mission: The mission of the Disability Support Services department is to provide equal access to educational opportunities for all qualified students with disabilities and to ensure that all students can freely and actively participate in all facets of the college.

Values: The Disability Support Services department values equal opportunity and access for students who have disabilities, and believes that respect for every individual is important.

Goals:

Goal 1- To provide information, academic accommodations, advising, and support services

Goal 2-To empower students through advocacy

Goal 3-To maintain community partnerships

Goal 4- To continuously enhance the quality of Disability Support Services

Changes:

Goals

Goal 3 will be changed to “To provide quality information and services to students in College Credit Plus classes” for the next assessment cycle. This change reflects our increasing commitment and responsibility to working with College Credit Plus students who have disabilities and rely on the services our department provides. The third goal for this assessment cycle was “to maintain community partnerships,” and given our community outreach work over the past several years, we feel that our community relationships are strong and that this goal has been accomplished.

Values

Our department added a value statement, as we previously did not have one.

*Goals should align with current SSC Strategic Plan.

***Note if any changes have been made to the mission, values, and/or goals since the last CAR.**

Criterion 2.0 Baseline Data

1. What baseline data has your Program/Department collected during this CAR term?

Many different instruments and methods of assessment were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Disability Support Services department over this assessment period. A student satisfaction survey was administered in the spring and fall semesters each year. We also held two focus groups with students, one was in conjunction with the Maintenance department regarding satisfaction with the physical accessibility of the college, and one was focused on the services provided by DSS.

2. How is that data used to evaluate the Program/Department?

Results of all of these assessments, as well as the best practices gleaned from information presented at relevant conferences, were reviewed by all department staff and are integral in helping us better our department's services to students, faculty, and the college as a whole.

Criterion 2.0 Program/ Departmental Assessment Procedure and Action Plan

Program/Department Name: Disability Support Services
Individual Completing Report: Kathy Bernstein
Individual(s) Reviewing Report: Fedearia Nicholson-Sweval
Date: December 15, 2017

Program/ Departmental Assessment Procedure and Action Plan

Purpose:

To self-identify the status of Program/Department in the outcomes assessment process as well as the action-steps and timetable for the development of assessment processes.

Procedure:

All programs and departments must complete the assessment process. A follow-up assessment report on the implementation of the assessment plan will be due at the end of the following academic year. Programs meeting effective assessment standards will be required to submit an

assessment report on a three-year cycle (two years of assessment and one year of implementation).

Directions:

Mark the appropriate response to the Yes/No items with an X. Provide a brief summary of action steps to meet the Criteria (for example, the department will meet twice a month over the next term to develop goals). Please note that it is critical that due diligence is given to the development of goals and associated outcome measures.

Assessment Criteria

Goals:

Does the Department have specific student learning or academic/ student service goals which reflect the discipline or service area professional standards?

Yes X No

Outcome Measures:

Are direct and indirect outcome measures identified for each goal?

Yes X No

Research:

Is research systematically conducted to evaluate success or failure in achieving outcomes?

Yes X No

Findings:

Are research results analyzed and interpreted and findings determined?

Yes X No

Review Process:

Are findings discussed and reviewed by appropriate groups and individuals and recommendations made for action?

Yes X No

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

Proposed Actions:

Are recommendations acted upon?

Yes X No

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

What is the proposed timetable for the action steps?

Improvements:

Have actions resulted in documented improvements in student learning or academic/ student services?

Yes X No

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

What is the proposed timetable for the action steps?

Assessment Measures Inventory

***The matrix should contain all goals as they pertain to the CAR.**

Assessment Measures for Goals (Outcome measures from assessment report)	Is trend data available for the measure? (Yes, No, NA)	Has a performance benchmark(s) been identified for the measure? (Yes, No, NA)	Type of performance benchmark - SSC (internal), State-level (OACC, OBR, Etc.), National (Professional Org., accrediting group, etc.) List all that apply
Goal 1: To provide information, academic accommodations, advising, and support services	Yes	Yes	Internal: DSS satisfaction survey, case studies National: Noel-Levitz SSI items #17,77,86
Goal 2: To empower students through advocacy	Yes	Yes	Internal: Focus groups of students, Support Services Effectiveness Survey
Goal 3: To maintain community partnerships	Yes	Yes	Internal: Support Services Effectiveness Survey
Goal 4: To continuously enhance the quality of Disability Support Services	Yes	Yes	Internal: DSS satisfaction survey, Support Services Effectiveness Survey

Criterion 3.0: Assessment Results Report

Purpose:

The report is a summary compilation of key assessment methods, findings, review processes, actions, and improvements related to the academic/student service or learning goals of the Program/Department on an annual basis. As a historical record of assessment activities, the report provides for and supports the systematic assessment of academic support outcomes.

Instructions:

Enter the outcome measure in the space provided. Please note that for each goal it is expected that a mix of quantitative and qualitative as well as direct and indirect measures are employed.

Provide a brief summary of baseline data collected by the Program/Department and how that data has been used during the current CAR cycle.

Provide a brief summary of *key findings*, either as bulleted points or in short paragraph form.

Provide a brief summary on the review committee/review process (for example, Findings are reviewed by the Director and staff on a per term basis and recommendations are forwarded to the VP for further review).

Provide a brief summary of any proposed actions for the next term/CAR cycle. Please note that not all findings result in actions.

Provide a brief summary of any improvements from the previous CAR cycle (this does not apply to new measures the first year).

Goal 1:

Assessment Question Related to Goal 1:

Outcome Measure 1: DSS Satisfaction Survey

Terms of Assessment: Fall 15,16 Spring 15,16,17 Annual

Findings:

A survey was conducted of students who utilized Disability Support Services in 2015, 2016, and 2017. Each year, 21 students are surveyed in the Fall, and 20 students are surveyed in the Spring. The survey consists of twelve questions designed to give feedback on how satisfied the students were with the quality of the services provided, friendliness of staff, availability of staff for appointments, and access to the college as a whole. Students utilize a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “less than satisfied”, and 5 being “superior.” Students also have the opportunity to provide more information on services they are not receiving/recommendations.

DSS consistently scores high on these satisfaction surveys. Between Spring 2015 and Spring 2017, all surveyed areas showed improvement with the exception of the survey item “DSS Counselor Meetings” which showed a slight decline (see **Graph 1**). We have analyzed the areas students would like more information, and will adjust the DSS counselor meetings to ensure these topics are covered. Other comments from the satisfaction survey in Spring 2017 included:

- “All services are great”
- “I’m currently getting the help I need”
- “More walk in availability”

Graph 1: DSS Satisfaction Survey



Review Committee/Review Process:

Assessment results were reviewed with DSS staff every Fall and Spring semester.

Outcome Measure 2: Case Studies using Personal Growth and Responsibility Rubric

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall 2016 Spring 2017 Annual _____

Findings:

Each student for which a Case Study was completed was served by the Disability Support Services department and was evaluated using the Personal Growth and Responsibility Rubric

modified in 2013. These students received a great deal of services from the DSS department and were served over an extended period of time. Student A demonstrated an increase in every component evaluated in the several years he worked with the department and was provided with determination and assistance with implementing and troubleshooting academic accommodations, training on use of the various systems and support services in the college, and career advising and guidance. He is set to graduate in December 2017 with a very high GPA. Student B also received intensive personal, academic, and career advising from DSS and was able to demonstrate an increase in overall rating in all six components of the rubric compared to her initial rating in spring 2015. This student is close to graduating as well and has improved many skills based on her counselor's assessment of her via the rubric.

Review Committee/Review Process:

Assessment results were reviewed with DSS staff in May of 2017.

Outcome Measure 3: Noel-Levitz SSI (Items 77, 86)

Term of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring 2015 Annual _____

Findings:

Item 77 – “Availability of Disability Support Staff for appointments and assistance”. The satisfaction with this was a 6.05, and the importance was 6.25, so there was a small performance gap of .20. There was no National Community Colleges-Midwestern data to compare it with, so even though the small gap implies we are meeting expectations, this item will be carefully tracked over the next four-year assessment period, and we will initiate safeguards such as reminder calls and missed appointment calls to make sure we are serving our students as well as possible.

Item 86 - “Institution’s commitment to students with disabilities”. The satisfaction at SSC with this item was a 6.02, which exceeded the National Community Colleges-Midwestern satisfaction score of 5.68 by .34.

Review Committee/Review Process:

Results reviewed with DSS staff in 2015.

Goals 2, 3 and 4:

Outcome Measure 1: The 2016 Support Services Effectiveness Survey

Term of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring 2016 Annual _____

Findings:

The 2016 Support Services Effectiveness Survey was sent to key College Stakeholders such as faculty, staff, students, employers, and other community partners. This survey had over 280

respondents. It is very interesting to note that the trend over the three survey administration times is consistently upward for every item except for “Exhibits solid understanding of issues” which dropped very slightly from 2014 to 2016. Based on the results indicated below, the action taken by the DSS department will be consistently working to maintain these scores over the next CAR cycle. Since our Goal 4 is “To continuously enhance the quality of Disability Support Services”, we will attempt to improve our grade in at least one area to an A rather than an A- and will work to demonstrate we have a thorough and solid understanding of disability-related issues.

Disability Support Services	2012		2014		2016	
	Score	Grade	Score	Grade	Score	Grade
Meets personally with you	3.46	B+	3.62	A-	3.72	A-
Speaks by phone with you	3.51	A-	3.63	A-	3.71	A-
Provides help when needed	3.58	A-	3.66	A-	3.75	A-
Exhibits solid understanding of issues	3.51	A-	3.64	A-	3.60	A-
Provides accurate, helpful information	3.51	A-	3.66	A-	3.69	A-
Shows courtesy and respect	3.63	A-	3.70	A-	3.71	A-
Demonstrates appropriate level of confidentiality	3.70	A-	3.76	A	3.79	A
Responds in timely manner	3.54	A-	3.64	A-	3.69	A-

Review Committee/Review Process:
Results reviewed with DSS staff.

Outcome Measure 2: Focus Groups

Terms of Assessment: Fall _____ Spring 2015, 2017 Annual _____

Findings:

The 2015 focus group was intended to assess the accessibility of Stark State’s campus, a key goal for DSS. Eight students participated in the focus group in 2015. The 2017 focus group was intended to assess the services provided by DSS. Four students participated in the focus group in 2017.

2015 themes included:

- Concern with getting to ATC with suggestions for a shuttle or more scooter accessibility
- Doors across campus without a push button to automatically open
- Building G was consistently mentioned for accessibility issues including steep ramps, lack of push button doors, lack of shuttle service/scooters, etc.
- Classroom tables – would be helpful if designated spots without chairs were available for those who use wheelchairs
- Elevator locations were identified as an inconvenience
- Drop off areas (increase number, prevent people from parking/idling in the area)
- Found campus map revisions to show accessibility very helpful. Some revisions may still be needed

2017 themes included:

- Good awareness of DSS
- Academic advisors, accommodation letters, and quiet individual testing rooms were identified as the most helpful services provided by DSS
- Strengths of DSS identified by the students included the staff members who help solve problems and respond promptly
- Discussed that in general instructors provide accommodations identified by DSS, but that it often falls on the student, and there are occasional issues. Education/orientation was requested around what students should do if they are not getting accommodations.
- Opportunity to improve the process of getting a note taker
- Opportunity to improve technology (i.e. Zoomtext on all computers, audio books need improvement)
- Idea was raised for a DSS student-support mentoring network to supplement DSS staff

Review Committee/Review Process:

Results reviewed with DSS staff.

Provide a brief summary of any proposed actions for the next term/CAR cycle. Please note that not all findings result in actions.

As referenced in the narrative above, the action items include:

1. Modifying DSS counselor meetings to ensure they address all areas students identified as needing more information about in the DSS satisfaction surveys.
2. Monitoring Support Services Effectiveness Survey scores; improving score on ‘exhibits solid understanding of issues.’
3. Improve education/orientation for students around what to do if they are not getting accommodations as a result of the student focus group.

Provide a brief summary of any improvements from the previous CAR cycle (this does not apply to new measures the first year).

- Case studies using the Personal Growth and Responsibility Rubric showed improved scores in all areas.

- Improved student satisfaction survey scores in all measures except for DSS counselor meetings; addressed in action item 1 above.
- Improved Support Services Effectiveness Survey measure of ‘meets personally with you.’

Criterion 4.0 Program/Department members are qualified by professional background, experience, and continuing professional development and meet the needs of the Program/Department.

Yes	No	DNA		
X			4.1	Employee (full-time and part-time) credentials meet the program, college, state, and national accreditation requirements.
X			4.2	Annual Employee Performance Evaluations are on record in Human Resources.
X			4.3	Employees (full-time and part-time) are involved in professional organizations, presentations, and/or other scholarly works.
X			4.4	Employees are involved in the development of program/department initiatives that support the College Mission.

3. Additional Comments: (Please explain any “No” selections.)

Reflective Narrative Questions:

1. Describe how Performance Evaluations are being used to enhance the Program/Department.

Performance evaluations allow the staff to reflect on the work they are doing and determine personal, departmental, and organizational goals for personal improvement, and the improvement of the department.

2. Describe how professional development benefits the program.

Staff members utilize professional development to stay current in the field of disability services, as changes in laws continue to update and define the field.

3. Describe how employees are involved in the development of program/department initiatives that support the College Mission.

Employees are involved in quality improvement initiatives, and as a department satisfaction surveys are reviewed, corresponding action plans are developed to address any issues identified.

Criterion 5.0 Program/Department is responsive to changes in current technology and adequate resources.

Yes	No	DNA		
	X		5.1	Program/Department changes are consistent with technological and scientific advances, and Program/Department content incorporates new developments in the field.
X			5.2	Employees work with supervisors to ensure adequate and current resources available for the Program/Department.
X			5.3	Employees work with information technology staff to ensure availability of appropriate software and hardware components.

Additional Comments: (Please explain any “No” selections.)

Staff members keep up with legal advances and changes, and are working to improve their ability to keep up with the constant changes in technologies.

Assistive technology, and its interface with the curriculum technology, is a field with constant change. We are currently looking for a staff member skilled in technology, who is comfortable with the constant technological changes, and who is able to communicate to IT staff, e-Learning staff, technology staff at the various high schools, and national experts in the field in order to keep our department up to date. This person would also be responsible for teaching students how to use the assistive devices.

Reflective Narrative Questions:

1. Explain the changing conditions within the field.

The constant change in technology requires continual updating of the assistive technology that we use for accommodations. For example, many textbooks now come with online access, e-learning platforms change, classrooms incorporate new technology, and all of these advances must be compatible with assistive technologies.

2. How are these changing conditions addressed within the Program/Department?

We would like to either hire, or have a dedicated person within the IT department, who is skilled in technology, has knowledge of assistive devices, and can connect how changes to technology may impact our students who use assistive devices.

3. Explain how employees work with information technology staff to ensure availability of appropriate software and hardware components.

In the current state, when a student makes us aware of an assistive technology need that involves our IT department, we place a software request to have the assistive technology loaded. Then each semester when the computers are updated, we have to request repairs to the systems so they continue to work for the students. We also teach students how to use the technology.

Component IV

Recommendations and Executive Summary

Based on the results of this current CAR, list your strengths, areas of improvement, opportunities, threats, and recommendations.

Program/Department: Disability Support Services

Strengths:

DSS continues to provide high-quality support to the students it serves, as indicated by consistently high scores on the student satisfaction survey. DSS has an environment of continuous quality improvement and is always looking to respond to students' needs.

DSS has improved the availability of appointments, including urgent appointments and walk ins based on feedback from students. This is an ongoing objective that is reevaluated often to ensure this remains an area of strength.

DSS has also added a new strength for this CAR cycle: physical accessibility. By moving the office location and improving the DSS testing center, we can now serve our students better.

DSS has established wonderful relationships with our community partners as evidenced by the many referrals we receive from these partners, informal feedback and data received via the Support Services Survey, which was sent to community stakeholders in addition to College employees.

Areas of Improvement:

DSS continues to identify areas of improvement and respond to students' needs and feedback. Adding an additional staff member with specific skillsets, and increasing specialized training for existing staff will be a goal to address the opportunities above.

Areas of Opportunities:

1) An area of opportunity for DSS is improved access of specialized services to veteran students with disabilities. Military services were added to the scope of DSS three years ago which expanded the number of students served without adding additional staff. Keeping DSS services accessible for all students has been an ongoing goal. The number of military students has also been increasing year-over-year, with 150 additional students this past year. Additionally, the existing staff have strong disability services skills but limited additional training in support services specific to veterans, so additional training and education for this set of students is an opportunity.

2) The final area of opportunity is to improve communication with high schools participating in the College Credit Plus program. We have experienced some scenarios where high schools were providing accommodations that were not approved by DSS or appropriate for college level

classes. The Attorney General's office this year provided guidance that students participating in these programs must meet with someone at the college before receiving accommodations.

3) Another area of opportunity for DSS is within technology, specifically assistive devices and technology. Our department currently is lacking a technology expert who has the skills and bandwidth to keep up to date with the constantly evolving assistive technologies that could benefit our students. We are looking to add someone with this skillset and distinct responsibility to the team within the next year, and were actually able to do this in late July of 2017.

Threats:

The most significant threat to DSS is not having an adequate number or appropriate expertise of staff members to serve our growing number and type of students. Improving expertise of staff members in specific areas of disability support services will allow DSS to continue to provide high quality services in an efficient manner.

Priority Recommendations: *(For each area listed below, please number all recommendations as they will be prioritized on the [Summary Work Plan - Appendix A](#). Sufficient support for the recommendations must be included, either by reference to responses in the components or specific Criterion or by additional information included with this program review.)*

1. Continue the recruiting and hiring process for one additional counselor who will have a specialization in veterans, assistive technology, and College Credit Plus. This staff member will have responsibility for communication with high schools participating in College Credit Plus including creating a website with guidelines that can be referenced. They will also receive specialized training and education in veteran support services. This recommendation addresses Opportunities 1 and 2.
2. Foster relationships with staff members in the Information Technology department who will assist us with staying up to date on current assistive technologies, bringing these technologies to Stark State, and training students on these technologies. IT staff have more appropriate technology skills than a DSS staff member and this partnership will benefit our students.

Additional Information. On occasion, some programs may have additional documents that they feel should be included to complete the self-study. Supporting documents may include such things as program self-study reports, case study reports, survey statistics, focus group data, etc. All supporting documentation must be dated within this CAR period. Please list below the additional documents that you will be adding to this CAR in support of your recommendations.

N/A