



Co-curricular Assessment Report

Program/Department Name: TRiO Student Support Services

Year of CAR Completion: 2016-17

CAR Cycle: 2014-15 through 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: TRiO

S.W.O.T – Spring 2015

Strengths
Summary: While many strengths were identified, the following were a recurring theme:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All staff members are able to help• Diversity• Quiet atmosphere• One-on-one service• Help in improvement of study/time management/organizational skills, etc.• Open door policy• Help with services outside of scope of program• Help with FAFSA• Help with financial literacy• College visits• TRiO contract helps keep students focused• Study techniques are vital• Helps ease concerns about finances
Weaknesses
Summary: Students weren't able to cite many weaknesses with the TRiO SSS program, though a few were presented
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wasn't aware of the program for 2 years• New students tend to go to the back room and not interact with other students• Communal atmosphere has decreased in the past year• Only open until 4:30
Threats
Summary: Students could only identify a small set of threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SSC losing the program• People are reticent to join the program for fear of being labeled
Testimonials from SWOT Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Wouldn't be where I am without them."• "I see the light at the end of the tunnel."• "My self-worth and confidence has increased."

- **“Calming atmosphere”**
- **“I could have a ‘whine session’ before starting my studies.”**
- **“It provides more structure for me.”**
- **“The college visits were great!”**
- **“Last semester was very crowded.”**
- **“I miss how we all hung out.”**
- **“It’s not an IEP.”**
- **“I would be scared if the program wasn’t here.”**

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.)

Since the program is so specifically defined by the parameters of the grant, very few (if any) changes can be implemented operationally. That said, one-on-one service to specific skill sets of each student is never ending. This is an ongoing process in every student-oriented program. Assessments and Case Studies allow us to learn from our students and modify approaches, which will be discussed later in this report.

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

No changes.

Component III

Criteria for Co-curricular Assessment Report

Criterion 1.0 Mission, Values and Goals

Mission: The mission of TRiO Student Support Services Program is to provide support towards the completion of a postsecondary education to individuals who are traditionally under-represented because of income, family educational history, or disability.

Values: TRiO SSS doesn't have a value statement. It does, however, have a Vision Statement: Stark State College's TRiO Student Support Services Program serves students who are motivated to pursue and complete a postsecondary education. Through scholastic rigor, collaboration, intellectual curiosity and personal growth, students and staff build pathways towards academic success, as well as lay the foundation for leadership, opportunity, and service to others.

Goals: The goal of TRiO SSS is to increase the retention, graduation, and transfer rates of its participants through access to resources, academic support, and personal development. (SSC Strategic plan goals 6A, 6B, 6C and 6D.)

*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?

Baseline data is established every year through the Annual Performance Report to the U.S. Department of Education, which funds the TRiO SSS grant. ED measures include good academic standing, persistence, and graduation/transfer rates. SSC measures include case studies, advisor evaluations and focus groups.

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

Included in the grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Education are stated objectives that the program will meet every year. Besides being bound to those objectives, as well as using the data to improve services, "prior experience points" are awarded that apply towards the next grant cycle proposal score. The maximum prior experience points are 15.

Criterion 2.0 Program/ Departmental Assessment Procedure and Action Plan

Program/Department Name: TRiO Student Support Services
Individual Completing Report: Benjamin Tobias
Individual(s) Reviewing Report:
Date: 3/7/2017

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 No

Outcome Measures:

Are direct and indirect outcome measures identified for each goal?

Yes No

Research:

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

Yes No

Findings:

Are research results analyzed and interpreted and findings determined?

Yes No

Review Process:

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

Yes No

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

Proposed Actions:

Are recommendations acted upon?

Yes 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 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: Persistence Rate	Yes	Yes	National
Goal 2a: Graduation Rate	Yes	Yes	National
Goal 2b: Transfer Rate	Yes	Yes	National
Goal 3: Good Academic Standing	Yes	Yes	National
Goal 4: Advisor Evaluations	Yes	Yes	SSC
Goal 5: Case Studies	Yes	Yes	SSC
Goal 6: Focus Group	Yes	Yes	SSC

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 an 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 forward 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/Objective 1: Persistence Rate

Outcome Measure 1: 65% of all participants served in the reporting year by the SSS Project will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate and/or transfer from a 2-year to a 4-year institution by the fall term of the next academic year.

Terms of Assessment: Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual ___x___

Findings:

Persistence			
Reporting Year	Objective	Performance	Objective Met
2014-2015	60%	75%	Yes
2015-2016	60%	70%	Yes

Review Committee/Review Process: Data was reviewed by the United State Department of Education through the Annual Performance Report (APR), as well as the TRiO staff at the beginning of each semester. It was determined that since the stated outcome measure was exceeded, no change in the process was necessary.

Improvements: Since services to students are specifically defined by the TRiO grants, the stated services will be continued.

Goal/Objective 2a: Graduation Rate

Goal/Objective 2b: Transfer Rate

(2a) 20% of new participants served each year will graduate with an associate’s degree or certificate within four (4) years.

(2b) 10% of new participants served each year will transfer with an associate’s degree or certificate within four (4) years

Outcome of Measure 2: Data cycles for TRiO SSS don’t fall concurrently with this report. As such, the graduation/transfer rates are gathered from the 2012-2013 Cohort of 90 students.

Terms of Assessment: Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual ___x___

Findings:

Graduation			
Reporting Year	Objective	Performance	Objective Met
2012-2013	20%	11%	No

Transfer			
Reporting Year	Objective	Performance	Objective Met
2012-2013	15%	4%	No

Review Committee/Review Process: Though the objectives weren’t met for this reporting year, the very large cohort (90 students) made it extra difficult to achieve. This particular year was an anomaly, because typical TRiO cohorts run in the 30-40 student range. Data on the 2013-2014 cohort is expected to meet objectives, but that data has yet to be released by the Department of Education.

Improvements: It’s difficult to establish improvement measures, since the parameters for services are already defined by the grant. However, special notice will be reviewed if the next reporting year (with a smaller cohort of 32 students) garners a re-examination of project services.

Goal/Objective 3: Good Academic Standing

Outcome Measure 3: 70% of all participants served in the reporting year by the SSS Project will be in Good Academic Standing

Terms of Assessment: Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual ___x___

Findings:

Good Academic Standing			
Reporting Year	Objective	Performance	Objective Met
2013-2014	70%	89%	Yes
2014-2015	70%	90%	Yes
2015-2016	70%	89%	Yes

Review Committee/Review Process: Annual Performance Report to ED

Improvements Since services to students are specifically defined by the TRiO grant, the stated services will be continued.

Goal/Objective 4: Advisor Evaluations

Outcome Measure 4: 25 students were given a survey to evaluate Retention Specialist services. The chart below categorizes the services and average score.

Terms of Assessment: Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual ___x___

Findings:

2015-2016 Academic Year

Key: 4 = Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Average, 1 = Fair, 0 = Poor

Timeliness	Level of Preparation	Friendliness	Professionalism	Accuracy of Information	Willingness to meet needs
4	3.9	4	4	3.8	4

- TRIO is my support system
- Ben, Robin, and Murray have been very friendly and have gone the extra step. They are always there to talk about school on personal situations. When I was at my low point, Ben gave me encouragement and advice. Murray gave me the tools and advice to deal with my financial difficulty. I'm gaining confidence with my school work including time management and completing assignments. TRIO has helped me get my confidence back and to work hard.
- I like how this program. It's to help you get where you need to be and it benefits on your major that you're having trouble with.
- Wonderful, caring, always there for you. Very helpful.
- So far TRIO has been productive for me and it is helpful to have someone to answer any additional questions I might have. I like the program overall.
- I have always been very impressed by the staff of TRIO and the TRIO program itself. As students we are very fortunate to have them and the program as a resource. For

me personally I know I would not go as well as I do in my academic career without my retention specialist.

- I would encourage everyone to join TRIO. Sometimes we learn new things from another persons that we never heard of. I learn something new from TRIO and people from here are like my role model.
- I really enjoy the help that the TRIO team has provided me. Personal as well as school. I will continue to use TRIO services throughout my stay at Stark State.
- Everyone in TRIO is professional and very helpful. If I ever need help or just someone to talk to, I can count on TRIO.
- I believe everyone goes above and beyond with the help in these walls. If one doesn't know the answer they find someone who does. I have learned so much about myself and how to study. I only wish 1/2 the students I tell about this program would walk through the doors to improve on their skills as well. Thank you to all of you.
- I'm really glad that I joined this program. I can tell a big difference since I have first started this program. Everyone here is really nice and always willing to help, and concerned.
- I just want to say that the whole staff at TRIO has been very supporting of my journey here at Stark State. I've come a long way struggling my way here at Stark. I really appreciate all the encouragement that was giving to me from this organization. Thanks for everything. I wouldn't change it for the world!!!

2016 – 2017 Academic Year

Findings:

Key: 4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Average, 1=Fair, 0=Poor

Timeliness	Level of Preparation	Approachability/ Ease of Communication	Professionalism	Accuracy of Information	Willingness to meet needs	Overall Relationship
3.94	4	3.94	4	3.83	3.78	3.83

- My Retention Specialist is a “great guy” and “very helpful.”
- “Robin is absolutely amazing. She has been so helpful.”
- “Every time I see him [my Retention Specialist] he always is smiling and says hi. I don’t talk to many people here so it makes me feel good knowing someone cares.”
- My Retention Specialist is “one of the easiest people to talk to and I have always felt at ease speaking with him.”
- My Retention Specialist is “very kind and caring.”

- “I love my Retention Specialist because he/she genuinely cares not only about problems I may be having with life, or college, but about my well-being, about my future. All of the things the job entails but it’s all genuine. None is fake.”
- My Retention Specialist is “pretty awesome. Always makes time to talk even if I just show up. I value his opinion so much that I always come to him for his insight and opinion on matters pertaining to school related questions. Nice guy as is everyone in the office.”
- “Robin is a very flexible person with my schedule. She has helped me become aware of things I struggle with and has given me help to start fixing them. She is very patient and her kindness and willingness to work with me shows every time we meet. In my so far short time of knowing her I am already grateful for the things she has done.”

Review Committee/Review Process: Surveys were discussed as a staff. No procedural changes were made.

Improvements: Since services to students are specifically defined by the TRiO grants, the stated services will be continued.

Goal/Objective 5: Case Studies

Outcome Measure 5:

Terms of Assessment: Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual ___x___

Findings:

Every TRiO student, indeed every college student, brings personal and unique barriers to higher education. A recurring theme in each case study was that the initial process, the “intake” part of the TRiO program, helped recognize factors towards those barriers. Specifically, the LASSI (Learning and Study Strategies Inventory) assessment has proven to be the key instrument in providing TRiO personnel with ways in which to help students.

We know in education that early intervention is the best path towards success. In each case study, the use of the LASSI helped TRiO personnel pare-down the unique barriers into workable, real-world based adjustments. For example, time-management could be equated to raising children, financial literacy could be equated with the ability to pay bills, etc. In each case, the LASSI successfully identified which study and/or skill could be used to find success. Particularly vital is that it helps show the student how he or she can access strengths to improve weaknesses, and vice-versa.

Additionally, each case study showed the importance of how non-cognitive factors impact college success: mindset, social skills, perseverance, learning strategies, academic behaviors, academic performance. Applying strategies to address the non-cognitive factors provided valuable socio-cultural context in the classroom. Students who were able to resource their background characteristics towards the non-cognitive factors generally found success.

The case studies show that, not surprisingly, students come to Stark State lacking non-cognitive skills, which can be broadly defined as “thoughts, feelings and behaviors” (Garcia). TRiO provides a supportive atmosphere for students to develop their non-cognitive attitudes/adjustments. In each case study, while the goal was college success and graduation, the strategies applied towards helping students achieve self-actualization was a huge predictor of success.

In essence, they revealed what we already know: barriers, both intrinsic and extrinsic, play an enormous role in student growth and development. The lesson learned is that we must continue to find ways to use non-cognitive factors to help students reach self-actualization, while still guiding them towards the path of graduation. Clearly, cognitive and non-cognitive factors play an equal role, and the TRiO program will continue to operate under this pedagogy.

Goal/Objective 6: Focus Group

Outcome Measure 6: Focus groups were conducted on a one-on-one basis due to the difficulty of synching students’ schedules. Input was provided from 15-20 students

Terms of Assessment: Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual ___x___

Findings:

The focus groups were conducted as a SWOT analysis, presented at the beginning of this report.

Review Committee/Review Process: Review was done as a staff, without any procedural changes being made.

Improvements: N/A

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.

The 3 members of the TRiO SSS staff have been together for 10-12 years. As such, each person’s strengths and weaknesses are firmly established. That’s not to say that personal performance isn’t attempted to be improved upon from year to year. However, because we know each other so well and how each of us relates and works with students, we’re able to mix and match them to the counselor who best fits their needs. A recurring theme throughout this report is that the grant is specifically defined by the Department of Education. Because of this, performance evaluations are helpful in that they support or don’t support evidence that the necessary work is being done to meet the stated program objectives. It makes understanding roles, thus Performance Evaluations, easier.

2. Describe how professional development benefits the program.

The Department of Education mandated that we attend training this year, which was advantageous, since we haven’t had the budget to go to on-site training. I attended a financial literacy seminar in Monterrey, California; Murray went to record keeping and data gathering in Las Vegas; Robin attended recruiting and transfer training in Eugene, Oregon. The trainings, while useful, re-enforced what we already know and do in TRiO. It was nice to see that we’re on point when it comes to programming. A secondary, and perhaps more telling discovery, was that we are now a “senior” program in the TRiO community. Whereas in the past any training would have been an opportunity to network with experienced TRiO professionals, this year we discovered that we are the TRiO professionals that people want to network with.

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

Upon joining the program, TRiO students sign a “contract” stating they will commit 20 hours per semester in TRiO. This includes, but isn’t limited to meeting with Retention Specialist; financial literacy training; transfer advising; review of FAFSA information; LASSI, VARK and Myers-Briggs assessment, time spent studying in TRiO. Since there are numerous tutoring areas around the college, time spent in those area, i.e. writing lab, math lab, etc. is counted. The “contract” generally applies to first and/or second semester students. Once a TRiO student has established him or herself as a member in good standing, the contract isn’t applicable, unless performance suddenly drops.

Using these parameters, the staff meets at the end of each academic year, as well as the beginning of the fall semester, to determine who, if anyone, should be removed from the

program for lack of participation. Other factors weigh into the decision, but the true measure is active participation.

Several times in a semester, a representative from a local college or university meets with a student to discuss specific transfer plans. This is unique to the college, since TRiO is the only department that has a transfer advisor (Robin).

The very nature of the one-on-one relationships established in the TRiO program precludes the need for specific “events.” For example, if grades need to be reviewed, they’re reviewed with the student. If registration needs to be done, it’s done one-on-one. Referring back to the contract, the onus falls upon the student to work with his or her Retention Specialist to ensure everything is prepared for the current semester and beyond.

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.)

S.W.O.T. – Spring 2017

Information compiled from 10 TRIO students

Strengths

- Willing to help with personal and academic issues
- Assistance with financial aid processes
- Sense of feeling safe with retention specialists and sense of empathy
- Strong support system of retention specialists – most important resource
- Networking ability – connecting students to resources
- Quiet area to study
- Enough computers for many students to study at the same time – you don’t have to wait for resources to become available
- Each retention specialist is helpful and genuine

- Everyone typically gets along
- Retention specialists guide students in the right direction no matter what the student's next step is (transfer, graduate, etc.)
- Collaborative environment
- Retention specialists are great people
- Communication with retention specialists is easy – they answer phone calls and return emails quickly

Weaknesses

- Retention specialists – more understanding of when to support and when to challenge students
- Sometimes help that was offered was not given by retention specialists
- Lack of overall student awareness of TRIO program and benefits
- Coordination of when retention specialists come and go – students are trying to find them/want to know when they are coming back
- Office is only open 8:00 am – 4:30 pm – more difficult for evening students to join TRIO
- Located only at the main campus – more difficult for students who take classes at a different campus
- Some students do not apply for the program because they are embarrassed by first generation or low income status

Opportunities

- Increased math help
- TRIO students could promote program across campus
- Adding additional retention specialist to help more students
- Retention specialists could reach out to less active students in the program to make them more comfortable
- Students could Skype or have a phone call with retention specialists for their appointments, especially if they live far away or have classes on a different campus

Threats

- Lack of funding
- Unsure of the future of TRIO grant under Trump's administration
- Personal roadblocks – some students believe they would not “fit” into the program
- Lack of time – students are too busy with work, school, family, etc.

Testimonials

- Close knit community
- Retention specialists and other students are all here to help each other
- TRIO is a great place to come with other students to talk to – a sense of community
- Would not be in college if it weren't for TRIO – extra help has been amazing for academics
- Trio is an amazing program
- Retention specialists are genuine people

- Retention specialists are unique and help students in different ways

Progress to Date:

The SWOT definitely reflects the TRiO SSS program. The strengths are heartening, because they apply to what the program is exactly intended to do: help, assist, safe, support, guidance, collaborative, communication.

It was interesting to see the observation that new students “go to the back of the room.” We examined this and didn’t find it to be the case. Instead, what we discovered was that some new students who were ESL had a tendency to go to the back room. Numerous factors could contribute to this, including language uncertainty, lending itself to shyness, diligence, personal preference, need for quiet. Each student, ESL or not, has a unique way of representing themselves educationally.

Additionally, students have noted that the office is open from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM, thus evening students can’t be a part of the program. Unfortunately, staffing doesn’t allow it. Also, students would like to see the program at the different campuses. This would be ideal. Again, staffing makes it impossible.

Opportunities were understandable, though not able to be met. TRiO does not offer tutoring; it would be duplicitous and isn’t written into the grant. Additionally, more Retention Specialists can’t be hired, though it certainly would be a nice luxury to have. “Advertising” of TRiO was brought up. The program has never taken an “advertising” approach, since reaching the 165 required students served has never been an issue. Advertising comes in a less covert manner, i.e. lectures, classroom visits, referrals, and word of mouth. Some students can initially be concerned with being “labeled” as members of TRiO, i.e. low-income, first-generation. However, the program has found that any concern towards that quickly fades. They become less concerned with labels and more concerned with success.

It’s interesting to note that students see “lack of funding” and the uncertainty of the program’s continued existence under the new political scene to be a threat. It shows an understanding of current events, which is a learning opportunity.

Reflective Narrative Questions:

1. Explain the changing conditions within the field.

A distinct advantage of the TRiO program is that benchmarks, objectives, operational organization, budget, and assessment are all determined by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Benchmarks and objectives were explained earlier in this report. Since the 2010 grant cycle began, ED has mandated that the following needs be addressed by every TRiO program: financial literacy, transfer advising, understanding the FAFSA, educational services (student advising), application to 4-year institutions, and individualized counseling for personal, career, and academic matters. These services remain mandated for the 2015 grant cycle as well.

What has significantly changed is the budget. It was fortunate that one Retention Specialist retired, in that it would have been impossible to pay the entire staff. However, her retirement allowed me to replace her position, but lose a part-time administrative assistant.

An additional concern with this was how it would affect the program, and ultimately the students. All students rely on routine, specifically TRiO students. Losing a Retention Specialist who had been with the program for 10 years could have thrown the students for a curve, as well as changed the dynamic of the program. Fortunately, Robin was chosen for the job, which allowed us to seamlessly transition from one Retention Specialist to another. Plus, I didn't have to train a "new" person for the job.

In conjunction with budgeting is the changing funding environment in general. Looking ahead, we have to anticipate budget cuts and adjust accordingly.

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

We can't be certain yet how the change in funding will affect the program, in that we haven't yet been given a number. However, as far as program services, nothing will change. With two exceptions, all our testing and/or assessment instruments are free. Since we already run on a budget at the slimmest of margins, we should be ok once we know what funding will be revealed.

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

N/A

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: TRiO Student Support Services

Strengths:

- One-on-one service
- Safe and supportive environment
- Guiding students in the right direction (academic, financial literacy, FAFSA, college visits)
- Collaborative
- Authentic advisors
- TRiO contract keeps students focused
- Access non-cognitive factors to assist student success

Areas of improvement:

- Located only on main campus
- Office hours from 8:00 – 4:30
- Updated assessments
- No admin assistant
- Personal and unique roadblocks

Opportunities:

- Using Skype to advise
- Completion plan
- More TRiO specific professional development (ties into monies available)
- Updated computer hardware

Threats:

- Funding
- Budgetary restraints
- Time it takes to participate in the program
- Outdated computers discourage students from studying in TRiO

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.)*

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.