

INTRODUCTION

As part of MCC's program review process, Student Services is conducting comprehensive program reviews of all of its major units over a five-year period. The self-study for the Counseling Department Academic Advising unit was completed on September 9, 2005. In Spring, 2006 Student Services Dean Alvin Tagomori put together a Program Review team to assess the self study. The review team was comprised of:

Elaine Yamashita, Associate Professor, Human Services
Walette Pellegrino, Associate Professor, Cooperative Education
Ki'ope Raymond, Associate Professor, Hawaiian Studies

In addition to the entire team's review of the documentation, Ki'ope Raymond consulted with Michele Katsutani, former Counseling Department Director and primary author of the self-study, and Colleen Shishido, current Counseling Department Director to get a better sense of the document and process and to help ascertain possible priorities for the department.

The Counseling Department, under the direction of Dean of Student Services Alvin Tagomori, employed the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education's (CAS) Standard and Guideline 1 *Academic Advising Standards and Guidelines Self-Assessment Guide (SAG)*. The review team was impressed by the complexity and thoroughness of the SAG, and commends the entire Counseling Department for the commitment of time and effort in data collection and synthesis. The Counseling Department has gained an informed perspective on the strengths and deficiencies of their services and programs; and can plan for improvements accordingly. They have a framework to follow, have established a baseline and can now move forward.

DOCUMENT

The Document's focus is on Academic Advising; as the Department feels that Standard to be the one that most approximates the work they do with students. That effort may include discussing career and educational goals; reviewing course transferability and articulation; transcript evaluation; gaining an understanding of the student's educational, employment, and family history, and selecting courses for the semester and subsequent semesters.

The template of the CAS standards and guidelines is organized into thirteen components:

- Part 1. Mission*
- Part 2. Program*
- Part 3. Leadership*
- Part 4. Organization and Management*
- Part 5. Human Resources*
- Part 6. Financial Resources*
- Part 7. Facilities, Technology, and Equipment*
- Part 8. Legal Responsibilities*
- Part 9. Equity and Access*
- Part 10. Campus and External Relations*
- Part 11. Diversity*
- Part 12. Ethics*
- Part 13. Assessment and Evaluation*

The components were individually addressed using CAS criterion measures with Counseling Department's self-study ratings. Notations, if applicable, are included to explain the department's assessment and the referring appendix where evidence may be found. The CAS criterion measure rating scale consists of ND - Not Done, 1 - Not Met, 2 - Minimally Met, 3 - Well Met, 4 - Fully Met, and NR - Not Rated.

(N.B.) Clarification of the use of the ratings of the rating scale is something the review team feels should be revisited by the Counseling Department. We note that there may have been a misreading by the Counseling Department of how to use the ratings ND and NR; as explained on page A.3 of the appendix. In several instances, the review team believes the two ratings should be switched. NR requires clarification and may be a better way of providing rationale for practices the Counseling Department wants in place. Examples of the discrepancy ND for NR include pages 18, 3.4 and 3.5; and page 48, 12.1 and 12.2. By this logic, the reverse would be true for page 49, 12.6 where NR would be ND.

The review team thanks the Counseling Department for the clear correlation made, when necessary, between the Self-Study and the Supporting Documentation - Appendices.

PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE ACTION

STAFFING

There is a consistent message in the Self-Study that more stable, G-funded staffing is needed. The ratio of students to counselors - the highest in the UH system - is strong evidence that more support is needed. The need is exacerbated by the Counseling Department's realization that while they have all the responsibilities associated with academic advising, they are moving away from strictly academic advising and toward more true counseling. They acknowledge that students will become more electronically savvy with the advent of Banner and Star. However, there will always be a human touch and relationship needed. This semester, representatives of the Perkins Retention Strategic Team (Ho'okele) went in to Suzette Robinson, acting assistant dean of instruction, to propose a "retention coordinator" position for the campus. This may be initially funded by external grants. The Ho'okele group is moving towards encouraging faculty to do more academic advising. That may free counselors for other tasks, such as personal counseling and career planning. The review team supports the Counseling Department as they move in the direction of strategizing future scenarios which may include modification of job descriptions, additional staff, etc.

COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

The Counseling department has realized that it can be self-empowered. The action of approaching the assistant dean is an example, and another is the establishment of a Counseling Director. The challenge the Counseling Department now faces is a lack of definition and presence for the Director in the college organizational structure. It is felt that the Director should have a more clearly defined job description. This line of thinking was initiated in criterion Part 3: Leadership. (This was an area - previously mentioned - that warrants ND/NR rating attention.) Page 21 of the self-study refers to the Director of Counseling and its current process; and most of the Part 3 Leadership criteria are replete with examples of what the Director does. Page 19, however, has a notation that describes the Director not having the authority to manage fiscal, physical and human resources. It begs the question of the formal acknowledgement of the Director by the College. However, what is not clear from the self-study, and warrant inclusion in next year's report, are things like questions regarding compensation and opportunities for leadership. Currently, for example, a Counselor would not be able to receive assigned time should they

want to serve as Chair of a campus committee such as Curriculum or even Faculty Senate Chair. What the next step would be for this position needs explanation. Also necessary will be a statement of any budgetary implications. There is no apparent connection made between statement of needs and administrative budgeting. From that perspective, and from what the review team has gleaned from documentation and interview, an appropriate fit for the Counseling Director would be as a member of the Chancellor's Executive Committee. Currently, as the review team understands, the Executive Committee is comprised of representatives of constituencies. With no disrespect to the Dean of Student Services, it is possible that the Counseling Department could be better served - and serve - by having its own representation on the committee.

CONCLUSION

The review team congratulates the Counseling Programs on its accomplishment of the first phase of the five-year comprehensive review. The Review Team will continue its work on Appendix Work Forms B and C over the Summer of 2006.