Guidelines: Administrative Review Units Supporting the Student Experience

Last Revised November 2023

Overview

Units that support the student experience play an important educational role in in developing student learning and fostering students' personal development. These units go through an administrative review process approximately every seven years. This process was designed to:

- create an institutional culture that embraces continuous improvement and best practices;
- provide evidence demonstrating that FIT periodically evaluates the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience, for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education reaccreditations; and
- provide managers and staff the opportunity to review operations and services, assess effectiveness, and develop improvement plans.

The Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment welcomes comments and feedback, as this process is revised regularly.

Administrative review consists of three phases:

Phase 1 - a unit self-study,

Phase 2 - a review conducted by professionals external to the College who understand the unit's functions, and

Phase 3 - a wrap-up process, which provides an opportunity for the unit's representatives, the respective Vice President, and the Executive Director of Assessment to consider all of the information gathered during the review process and develop an action plan that will be used to improve operations as well as for future planning and decision-making.

Phase 1: Instructions for Completing the Self-Study

Unit profile

The unit profile provides essential background information and describes the unit to those who are not familiar with it. Keeping the purpose of the profile in mind, describe the unit in the context of its mission, history, services provided, future direction, and resources.

Mission
State the unit's mission, as approved by the appropriate divisional Vice President.

Please briefly explain how it links to the College's mission (fitnyc.edu/mission), the divisional mission and the strategic plan (fitnyc.edu/strategic plan). Further information on writing a mission statement can be found in **Attachment 1**. Units covered by the CAS Professional Standards, particularly those located in Enrollment Management and Student Success, may want to refer to these standards in creating the mission statement.

Unit history

In the review process, it is helpful to understand the unit's history and how it has evolved over the past five to ten years, or since the last review. Briefly discuss significant events that have affected the unit's operations. These could include mergers, expansions, and notable changes in mission or operating methods. If the unit has gone through a review previously, please note when the review took place, the major findings, and the actions taken as a result.

Narrative description of services

Provide a brief narrative describing the core services provided by the administrative unit. If you were an external reviewer, what information and relevant data about the unit would you need in order to evaluate it? For example, a reviewer for the Academic Advising Center might want an overview of how students make appointments, information on the advisor caseload, and to know whether visits to academic advisors are required, etc. In an appendix to the self-study, attach any up-to-date procedure manuals or other process documentation that would assist the reviewers in providing feedback. Units that follow the CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education may want to refer to the standards for guidance on what information external reviewers may find relevant.

Future Vision and Planned Initiatives

Outline the aspirational vision for the unit as well as any future initiatives that have been planned and/or are in beginning stages of implementation. Where does the unit see itself in five years?

Resources (staffing, specialized skills, budget, facilities and equipment, and technology)

Staffing

Current staff

Describe where the unit resides within the College's organizational structure. Provide the most current unit organization chart. List all staff members and include the following information for each:

- Employee name
- Classification (full- or part-time)
- Title
- Number of years working in the unit
- Area of specialization or expertise (if applicable)

Provide position descriptions for each employee in an appendix.

Specialized skills

Describe the expertise or specialized skills of current staff members and discuss whether these meet all of the unit's needs. Discuss the staff's mix of knowledge, experience, and disciplines and whether any improvements in these areas are recommended.

Vacancies and/or future lines

Identify any vacant positions and, if applicable, potential hiring or reorganization plans.

Succession planning and cross-training

Evaluate the unit's exposure to risks associated with staff and management turnover. Does the unit have critical, complex functions (which might be less than completely documented) that only one or two staff can perform?

Report on how the risks arising from the potential turnover of critical staff are mitigated or managed.

Facilities and Equipment

List the equipment and facilities currently used by the unit, noting any specialized features. Discuss how well they meet the unit's needs. Discuss long-term space requirements and any need for proximity to other departments. Describe how these needs have been addressed in the College's Master Plan.

Information technology

- List software packages utilized by the unit (e.g., Banner, Hyperion) and describe how the software is used to support the unit's major function(s).
- Discuss how the utilization of information technology (e.g., hardware, software, operating and application systems, networks) has changed and/or improved the quality of the unit's services in recent years.
- Evaluate the unit's use of technology. What is working well and what could use some improvement?

Budget

Report on the total budget for the unit in the most recent fiscal year. This should include operating dollars broken out by Personal Services (PS) and Other than Personal Services (OTPS) as well as any restricted accounts managed by the unit. Discuss the sufficiency of the budget to meet the unit's operational needs.

Key Functions and Student Learning and Development Outcomes

Units that offer services to students and also aim to promote student learning and development must consider their effectiveness in two ways that are related but distinct. Historically, units assessed their programs and services by evaluating students' participation in

and satisfaction with these programs and services. However, this type of assessment did not directly address student learning and development. Knowing the number of students that participated in an activity and whether they liked it did not demonstrate how the activity contributed to student learning or development. It is now recognized that it is also important to gather evidence on how programs and services contribute to students' learning, which requires different assessment questions and methods. For example, in addition to reporting, "How many students participated in the campus-wide event?", a unit should also examine, "What did students learn by participating in the campus-wide event?"

As the first step in in thinking about assessment of effectiveness, units identify the **key functions**, which is a list of the most important functions that the unit performs in order to fulfill its mission. In order to capture the effect of the unit upon student learning, the unit will also articulate **Student Learning and Development Outcomes** for the unit, or for programs within the unit. **SLDOs** articulate the knowledge, skills, competencies, developmental changes, or attitudes that students are expected to gain through a particular educational experience, including co-curricular, extra-curricular, and student support activities. Units in student services may align these SLDOs with the student learning and development domains defined in the CAS standards, if relevant. **Attachment 1** provides resources for identifying key functions and for writing and assessing SLDOs, along with examples.

In the first chart, units identify the most important functions that the unit performs in order to fulfill its mission. For each function, identify the kinds of data or other information regularly collected to assess the unit's performance of the function and the perceptions and attitudes of the unit's clients.

A few examples are below:

Key Functions	Metrics/Assessment Plan
Providing students with disabilities with access for curriculum and co-curricular activities (Office of Disability Services)	Track number of students requesting accommodations, when they completed the intake process, and when they received their accommodations letters.
Manage the administration of student, staff, and faculty surveys within the IRE office and coordinate surveys undertaken by other offices campus-wide. (Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness)	Monitor and report on response rates for NSSE, SOS, Alumni Survey, and ad hoc surveys; count of surveys and number of students surveyed.
Introduce students to the resources and support services available at FIT (Orientation)	Track attendance at all orientation sessions and determine percent of students participating.
Support students who take online, blended, or Web-enhanced face-to-face courses	Track visits to student support pages on website. Monitor annually the number of students who receive help from the office and

	from the helpdesk by counting resolved tickets. Report on the number of students met with in person and by phone each year.

In the chart below, list the Student Learning and Development Outcomes for the unit. Indicate if and how the SLDOs are assessed.

Student Learning and Development Outcomes	How Assessed
After attending orientation, students will be able to identify academic resources and student support services available to them.	Results of quiz given at end of orientation on resources and services; student self-report in survey.
Students participating in the career services workshop will be able to design an effective job search strategy based on interests, skills, values, and job market trends.	Student self-report in survey; student job search strategy forms, evaluated by counselor using rubric.

Assessing Key Functions and Student Learning and Development Outcomes

The next step in the review process is to present and discuss data/metrics and assessment results that are on hand, and to work closely with the Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment to design additional assessment, data collection, and analysis activities as needed. In this section, summarize evidence collected since the last review and design and conduct any additional assessments needed in order to fully evaluate the unit's performance of its functions. Conduct an analysis of this information to assess the unit's strengths and weaknesses in terms of carrying out its core functions and in supporting student learning.

Presentation of Assessments and Findings

Using the chart below, or an alternate way of presenting the information, list significant assessment and data collection activities related to effectiveness in performing the key functions completed during the last five years, prior to this self-study. Assessment information gathered and analyzed for this self-study will be discussed further on. Indicate how the results of these activities have been used to inform decision making and/or effect improvements or changes in operations. How has the unit assessed the student learning fostered by its activities? Enter a description of the methods used, the functions or SLDOs assessed, a brief summary of findings, and a brief notation of improvements or changes made as a result. The unit may go into more depth regarding findings, analysis, and changes below the chart.

If there is not a lot of assessment information on hand, the self-study process is an opportune time to develop additional assessment measures and to gather additional data to ensure that the unit has robust evidence about its effectiveness, both in terms of key functions and student

achievement of SLDOs. Units should work closely with the Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment to identify and design additional assessment methods, and /or collect relevant data if needed.

Assessments of Key Functions:				
Metrics/Data or Other Assessment Activity	Year Implemented/ Collected	Functions Assessed	Findings (in brief)	Improvements or Changes Made as a Result (if applicable)

(add additional rows if necessary)

Assessments of Student Learning:				
Assessment Evidence Collected	Year Implemented	SLDOs assessed	Findings (in brief)	Improvements or Changes Made as a Result (if applicable)

(add additional rows if necessary)

Please go into more depth below the charts if important information cannot be succinctly captured in the charts; lengthy assessment information may also be included in an appendix. If the unit has plans for future assessments or assessment improvements, discuss here.

Pulling it all together: Conducting a SWOT analysis

In a SWOT analysis, aspects of the unit's internal operations can be classified as strengths or weaknesses and aspects of the external environment can be classified as opportunities or threats. The primary purpose of this part of the review is to understand these internal and external factors and to begin developing strategies to effect improvement or mitigate problems. Units that use the CAS standards, or other standards relevant to the area (such as NACADA for academic advising or Quality Matters for online learning), may want to refer to the standards in thinking about the SWOT analysis.

Please answer the following questions as part of this analysis:

- What are the unit's <u>strengths</u> that contribute to fulfilling its mission and/or performing its functions?
- What are the unit's <u>weaknesses</u> (or FIT's weaknesses) that inhibit it from fulfilling its mission and/or performing its functions?
- What are the external <u>opportunities</u> that the unit might benefit from in the short and long term?
- What are the external <u>threats</u> that might make the unit's mission difficult to fulfill going forward?

A detailed guide to conducting a SWOT analysis is available as Attachment 2.

Specific areas to be Addressed by External Reviewers

In Phase 2 of this review, external reviewers will be engaged to evaluate the unit's operations and prepare a report with recommendations. Reviewers will be sent a scope of work that describes the areas they should address in their report; see below. If external reviewers should use CAS or other standards in the review, please discuss how reviewers should make use of those standards here.

List any specific questions or issues outside of the general scope of work that the reviewers should address during their visit.

Preliminary Action Plan

Using the chart below, develop a preliminary action plan based on all of the information gathered in the unit profile, the assessment process, and the analysis of the results of the SWOT analysis. Identify areas to focus on for continuous improvement in order to fulfill the unit's mission and perform key functions. In the preliminary action plan, list the initiatives proposed in the next 3 to 4 years, considering budgetary impact. Outline steps for implementation, and consider potential obstacles. At this point, the action plan reflects only preliminary ideas since reviewers' input, as well as feedback from the unit's vice president, are required before making final decisions. Include any actions/initiatives already planned or recently implemented.

Action Steps	Action Status New as a result of self-study; currently planned; recently implemented	Budgetary Impact List items requiring additional resources	Implementation Plan and Timeline	Potential Obstacles or Other Factors to Consider

(add rows as necessary)

After the site visit has taken place and the report has been received from the external reviewers, a meeting will be scheduled with the unit vice president and staff from the Division of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to determine final action steps. At that point, a final action plan will be developed that includes specific information about responsible personnel, an implementation schedule, and plans for assessing changes.

Appendices

Please include appendices, as applicable, that you believe will contribute significantly to the understanding of your unit and its operations. For example, organizational charts (illustrating how your unit aligns with the College's overall organizational structure), policies/procedures (provide links if policies are available online), survey results, etc.

Phase 2: The External Review

Early into the self-study process, efforts should begin to secure external reviewers. Reviewers are professionals with expertise in the unit's area(s), but who have no meaningful prior relationship with the unit. No financial relationship can exist between an external reviewer and the College. External reviewers can be professionally known by unit members, but should not have a close personal relationship.

Selection criteria and selection process

The selection of appropriate external reviewers is key to the success of the review. While most reviews have two reviewers, it is best to brainstorm a list of three to five possibilities. At least one reviewer should be from the local area. It is useful to identify reviewers from institutions similar to FIT, such as staff from other SUNYs or CUNYs. The Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment will provide sample recruitment language and a Scope of Work document.

Forward the names, contact information, credentials and a rationale for selecting the individuals to the Executive Director of Assessment, who will ensure that the reviewers meet the guidelines and will provide them to the area's Vice President for selection.

Reviewer tasks

The reviewers will:
- Review self-study materials and other materials as needed;
- Conduct a site visit to meet with unit staff and stakeholders; and
- Prepare a report summarizing findings.

A complete description of what is expected in a reviewers' report can be found in the Scope of Work (see below).

Site Visit

The purpose of the site visit is to give the reviewers a more complete view of the unit's operations and procedures than can be provided through the self-study alone. During the site visit, the reviewers will have opportunities to gather additional information, from unit representatives and FIT constituents outside the unit.

The Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment will forward the self-study to external reviewers at least two weeks prior to the site visit. Other relevant materials may also be sent as needed.

In most cases, the site visit can be completed in one day. Since units vary in terms of size, structure, and physical environment, there is some flexibility in how the day is scheduled, and in terms of whether a second day is needed to complete the review. In general, the schedule should include:

- Meetings with the unit's leadership team and relevant senior managers;
- Meetings with staff of the unit;
- Meetings with students who are supported by the unit;
- Meetings with managers who have close interactions with the unit;
- A meeting with the Executive Director of Assessment;
- A tour of the offices and physical working spaces of the unit; and
- Time allotted for conferring with each other throughout the day as needed.

A sample site visit schedule is included in **Attachment 3**.

Reviewers' report

The external reviewers should submit a joint report within two weeks of the site visit and sent directly to the Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment, which will forward copies to the unit head and the respective Vice President. The Scope of Work supplied to the reviewers to guide their report(s) can be found at the end of this section.

External Reviewer's Scope of Work, Administrative Review, Student Support Units

External reviewers are an essential part of FIT's administrative unit review process, providing independent and informed perspectives as to how a department compares to others in the field. Reviewers evaluate and offer constructive recommendations for a unit so that units can continually improve how they support and benefit FIT students.

The engagement to conduct an external review at the Fashion Institute of Technology consists of three components:

1. Review of the department's self-study, the FIT Strategic Plan, and other materials as needed.
2. A site visit, which usually lasts a full working day, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. However, the timing and length is flexible, depending on the unit's needs.
3. Preparation of a joint report, to be submitted within two weeks of the site visit.

Compensation for the work related to review of materials, the site visit, and the preparation of the report will be $1,000 for each reviewer. In addition, FIT will reimburse the reviewers for travel and lodging associated with the site visit.

External Reviewers' Report:

In a report of approximately 6-9 pages, reviewers will comment upon the strengths and weaknesses of the unit, with reference to the self-study report and site visit. The areas listed below should be addressed; in each area there is at least one guiding question to consider. Reviewers are encouraged to address other topics that arise during the course of their review that they see as relevant to the unit's success.

Overall

- Does the unit's self-study align with what you observed in your visit to the campus and discussions with various stakeholders? Why or why not?
- Do the unit's key functions and processes align with its mission and conform to the standards of the profession/field? What are your perceptions of the unit, in terms of overall quality, standout attributes, areas that could be strengthened, etc?

Resources and efficiency

- Does the unit have adequate personnel and budgetary resources to accomplish its key functions?
- Can the unit increase its effectiveness and efficiency through improved use of technology, changes in organizational structure, or increased staff training? If so, suggest how this could be accomplished.

Evaluation of self-study and assessment evidence

- Has the unit gathered sufficient assessment evidence to evaluate its operations? If not, suggest additional evidence that might be required.
- Has the unit drawn the right conclusions from the evidence presented in the self-study?

Overall Evaluation, Recommendations and Action Plan

- Please evaluate the unit in terms of best practices in the field. If there are widely accepted standards for the field, please use those as a general guide to the evaluation (no need to evaluate criteria by criteria, but keep the standards in mind). CAS standards may be relevant for many student services areas.
- Evaluate the unit's action plan. Are the recommendations supported by evidence? Are the items included reasonable and achievable?
- Please respond to any specific questions or issues for which the unit or College has asked for feedback.
- With only current resources or a modest infusion of new ones, what specific recommendations could improve the program, marginally or specifically? What recommendations do you have to help the program improve or strengthen?

We welcome other comments on topics not noted above.

Phase 3: Use of Results

The final phase of the administrative review process includes:

- The distribution of all informational materials (self-study, reviewers' report, latest version of action plan) to the wrap-up meeting participants and other interested parties;
- A wrap-up meeting; and
- The development of a final action plan.

Participants in the Use of Results process includes unit representatives, the respective vice president, and the Executive Director of Assessment

The meeting will include a discussion of the following topics:
- the meaning and significance of the assessment results;
- the findings of the self-study and conclusions of the reviewers; and
- the actions that should be taken in light of the findings of the review process.

To prepare for the wrap-up meeting, the unit will prepare a written response to the reviewers' report, using a template provided by the Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment, which lists the findings and recommendations. In addition, the unit should revise the original action plan based on the findings from the reviewers, if needed. The wrap-up meeting will be based around these two documents.

The wrap-up meeting should result in an agreement on the proposed outcomes and a commitment to move forward on the agreed upon action plan recommendations. The unit will prepare a final action plan based on the recommendations and send it to the unit's Vice President and the Executive Director of Assessment. The Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment will follow-up on progress of the action plan annually for approximately three years.

Note: Actions that have budgetary implications must go through the college budget planning process, with the administrative review results provided as supporting materials.

Administrative Review: Final Action Plan and Executive Summary

The final action plan serves as the documentation for completing the self-study and assessment process. It is posted for the College community on MyFIT, along with a brief summary of the self-study process and the findings.

Overview of Self-Study: Provide the timeline for the self-study (including dates of visit and wrap-up meeting) and reviewers' names and affiliations.

Brief Summary of Key Findings:

No.	Action Steps: In addition to the action step, please note whether this action is: New as a result of self-study; currently planned; recently implemented	Lead Responsibility	Implementation Plan with Timeline	Budgetary Impact. List items requiring additional resources	Intended Outcomes: What observable changes are expected as a result of the action step?
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

Note: Version published on MyFIT will only include the Action steps and Intended results; other columns will be hidden.

Attachments

1. Mission Statement, Key Functions, Assessment Methods, and Assessing Student Learning
2. SWOT Analysis Instructions
3. External Review Process
4. General Timeline for Administrative Reviews

Attachment 1—Mission Statement, Key Functions, Assessment Methods, and Student Learning Assessment

Writing a Mission Statement

A **Mission Statement** is a concise statement outlining the general purpose, functions, and principles guiding the practices of an institution, school, an academic department, or an administrative department. It is a broad statement of what the unit is, what it does and why, and for whom.

A mission statement should be <u>no more than a few sentences</u> in length. While it should be clear and concise, <u>it should also be distinctive</u>. If the name of the unit was removed, the mission statement should not be applicable to another office at FIT or elsewhere. In contrast to a vision statement, which looks to a unit's future aspirations, a mission statement clearly and concisely defines the current purpose and primary functions.

Relationship of Unit Mission Statement to College and Division Mission Statements

All units at FIT contribute to the mission of the Fashion Institute of Technology:

> FIT prepares students for professional excellence in design and business through rigorous and adaptable academic programs, experiential learning and innovative partnerships. A premier public institution in New York City, FIT fosters creativity, career focus, and a global perspective and educates its students to embrace inclusiveness, sustainability and a sense of community.

Units do not need to directly state that they support the FIT mission. Instead, the phrases and ideas used in unit mission statements will "align" with FIT's institutional mission and the division's mission by reflecting certain aspects of it. For example, some areas of student services are likely to bring in the concepts of inclusiveness and community, whereas a unit such as Career and Internship Services would emphasize the aspects of career focus and New York City partnerships. Units that support the mission but do not directly interface with students might emphasize their purpose within a public higher education institution.

Below are two examples of mission statements from offices at FIT:

Center for Excellent in Teaching:

> With the goal of improving teaching and student learning through professional development, the FIT Faculty Development Program, anchored by the Center for Excellence in Teaching, assists and supports faculty in the development, use and assessment of effective instructional and curricular strategies. The CET provides

support for innovative, educational exploration across the curriculum, and seeks to foster a community of teaching practice. CET also works collaboratively with faculty to incorporate student-centered, pedagogically-sound technology into the classroom.

Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness:

The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness collects, manages, and analyzes data and information to support internal planning, decision-making, and accreditation activities and to meet the reporting requirements of external constituencies. The Office promotes continuous improvement by providing leadership in the periodic program review for academic programs and administrative units as well as in assessing student learning.

Mission statements should periodically be reviewed, since purpose and functions can evolve over time. If the mission is no longer stated in a way that seems accurate and relevant, it should be revised or even rewritten.

Identifying Key Functions

The purpose of the assessment component of an administrative review is for a unit to evaluate itself in terms of how well it performs its key functions and to gather information to inform action steps for improvement, if necessary. Key functions are defined as the main activities that a unit performs in order to fulfill its mission. They should not be confused with goals (as in the strategic plan) which are those things we want to accomplish.

Below is an example of a key function and associated action steps for improvement in the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness. This demonstrates the difference between a key function and a shorter-term goal or initiative.

Key Functions	Action Step
Manage the administration of student, staff, and faculty surveys within the IRE office and coordinate surveys undertaken by other offices campus-wide.	A. Investigate new survey software as alternative to current SurveyMonkey account to identify better options
	B. Begin a campus-wide effort to improve and better manage alumni contact information to improve alumni survey response rates.

As action steps are identified, it is important to think about how to assess the success of the results. However, the assessment component of an administrative review should mainly

address assessing the key functions, since this review focuses on the unit overall. What evidence can the unit compile about how well it performs its basic functions? Assessment evidence can also help units identify their strengths and weaknesses, and point to areas of improvement.

Assessment Methods

For each key function, list assessment methods for measuring or otherwise evaluating its performance. For administrative units, assessment approaches should ideally include metrics that measure volume of the unit's activities as well as assessments that are more evaluative, providing information about quality and satisfaction. The chart below provides examples of these two types of assessment evidence.

Transactional Metric	Evaluative Assessment Measure	Comment
Number of students seen at Academic Advising Center each term	*Survey of students *Focus groups with students *Metric that relates to effectiveness of advising (e.g. # of students who report advising mistake)	The number of students advised provides important information about unit workload and ability to handle its mission but does not capture whether or not students receive effective advising
Number of teaching workshops offered to instructors; number of attendees to workshops	*Survey or focus groups with attendees * Metrics relating to effectiveness of workshops (e.g. # of instructors who adopt new pedagogy, etc.)	Tracking the number of workshops and attendees is important information, but it is also necessary to try to determine whether the workshops are effective at improving instruction and are meeting faculty needs

The Executive Director of Assessment can work with units to determine suitable assessment approaches.

Assessment of Student Learning

Writing Student Learning and Development Outcomes

Student Learning and Development Outcomes are written in clear, concise statements that describe an observable achievement a participant will be able to demonstrate. SLDOs can be written at a variety of levels, such as an entire program or for a particular event. For the self-study, units should articulate SLDOs for the entire unit or for the key programs within the unit. Unit-level outcomes are supported by the events, workshop, and activities offered by the unit, in the same way that learning outcomes for academic degrees are taught through individual courses.

This simple formula can help you write an appropriate learning outcome:

Through participation in this FIT program, students will be able to
_____ACTION VERB_____ + __WHAT STUDENT WILL LEARN/HOW STUDENT WILL DEVELOP__ .

As discussed below, learning outcomes should be written in explicit and observable terms.

Here are some hypothetical examples:

Through participation in the Leadership Workshop Series, students will be able to explain FIT's approach to leadership through the LEAD framework and articulate what leadership personally means to them.

Through participation in the Leadership Workshop Series, students will be able to accomplish a task in a group setting and successfully navigate challenges when working with others.

As a result of RA training and experience working in the dorms, RAs will be able to resolve conflicts in a fair and respectful manner.

FIT-ABLE, FIT's Office of Disability Services, connected its learning outcomes to CAS Domains and Dimensions. Here are a few examples:

Learning Outcomes	CAS Domain	CAS Dimensions
Students will be able to engage in reflective conversations with the FIT-ABLE office and periodically reevaluate their accommodation needs, making adjustments as required	Cognitive complexity	Reflective Thinking
Students will be able to use knowledge of other resources on campus to seek out the assistance they need	Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration and application	Connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences.
Students will be able to use the database system to schedule appointments, exams, and new accommodation requests	Practical competence	Technical competence

Characteristics of Effective SLDOs:

<u>They are stated in clear terms and describe specifically what students should be able to demonstrate</u>

- *Poor:* Students will appreciate diversity of students at FIT.
- *Better:* Students will be able to explain the educational benefits of interacting with a diverse set of students at FIT, providing examples from their own educational careers.

- *Poor:* After going to the job search workshop, students will understand how to search for a job.
- *Better:* After participating in the job search workshop, students will be able to describe a job search strategy that is suitable for their field and interests.

- *Poor:* Students will demonstrate the skills needed to serve as a Resident Assistant.
- *Better:* Students will be able to organize well-attended community building events on their hall.
    - *Explanation: Learning outcomes are supposed to define exactly what it is that students will demonstrate, in terms of knowledge, skills, or personal development. It is necessary to be specific about what students will be able to do. Avoid the term "demonstrate" since it is already implied in the concept of a learning outcome.*

<u>They are framed around the learning result and not the learning process, assignment or activities</u>

- *Poor:* As a result of the time management workshop, students will become better at time management.
- *Poor:* Students will learn time management.
- *Poor:* Students will participate in a time management workshop.
- *Better:* Students will be able to discuss time management strategies, identify those they find most appropriate for themselves, and describe a plan to implement them.
    - *Explanation:* Avoid framing learning outcomes around "improvement" or around the learning activity; instead, state what students will be able to do.

<u>They can be reasonably observed and measured.</u>

- One advantage of well-written goals is that they help guide the choice of assessment methods. In the "poor" examples above, it would be difficult to determine how to assess whether a student "appreciates" diversity or "understands" how to search for a job. It is easier to determine whether a student can describe a job search strategy or can organize a successful event.

Similar types of learning can be bundled together into the same outcome if they are accomplished in the same activity and can be assessed or observed at the same time.

Choosing Action Verbs

As may be evident, choosing the appropriate verb is the most important aspect of writing an effective student learning outcome. Learning outcomes phrased with concrete verbs will help guide the choice of assessment methods. It is much easier to assess whether a student can "define" something than whether he or she "appreciates" something. There are certain verbs that are fuzzy, passive, or unobservable…and are best avoided in learning outcomes. The "SINISTER Sixteen":

Understand   Appreciate   **Comprehend**   Grasp   **Know**   *See*   ACCEPT

Have knowledge of   Be aware of   Be conscious of   Learn

Value   Apprehend   Be familiar with   Perceive

Bloom's taxonomy is widely used in education as a framework for cognitive learning, and is the most frequent resource faculty turn to when constructing student learning outcomes statements. The taxonomy categorizes six levels of cognitive thought in order of increasing

complexity; learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at lower levels. The categorization of these verbs into levels is useful to help faculty choose verbs appropriate to the educational degree and situation. While this taxonomy covers the cognitive domain, most programs will also have learning outcomes in other areas, such intrapersonal development, practical competence, and more.

Action Words for Bloom's Revised Taxonomy (Revised by Anderson and Krathwohl 2001)					
Knowledge	**Understand**	**Apply**	**Analyze**	**Evaluate**	**Create**
define	explain	solve	analyze	reframe	design
identify	describe	apply	contrast	criticize	compose
describe	interpret	illustrate	distinguish	evaluate	create plan
list name	paraphrase	modify	separate	order	formulate
state	summarize	calculate	select	appraise	invent
match	classify	sketch	categorize	judge	hypothesize
select	compare	complete	connect	support	substitute
locate recall	differentiate	interpret	divide	compare	write
reproduce	discuss	teach	prioritize	discriminate	construct
tabulate	distinguish	administer	subdivide	recommend	integrate
enumerate	estimate	employ	survey	assess	modify
	translate	establish	conclude	choose	produce
	generalize	examine	correlate	convince	rearrange
	give examples	list	diagram	defend	rewrite
	group	predict	dissect	find errors	adapt
	order	simulate	estimate	grade	anticipate
	report		outline	measure	collaborate
				predict	devise
				rank	make
				test	negotiate
				critique	originate
				justify	propose
				persuade	reorganize

Assessment Methods for Assessing Student Learning

Assessment methods for assessing student learning generally differ from those used for assessing student effectiveness. Surveys can be used as evidence regarding student learning, as long as the questions are designed to capture what students think they've learned or how they've developed, rather than whether they were satisfied.

Assessment methods that more directly capture whether a student knows or can do something, rather than simply says he or she can, are generally more compelling. Possible tools to collect this sort of "direct" evidence include:

- Pre- and post-tests, or just post-tests
- Minute papers from activities or events
- Observations of student behaviors
- Demonstrations by students that they are able to do something (e.g. # of students who can do something)
- Evidence of changes in student behavior
- Assessment of student behavior through rubrics or checklists applied by faculty or staff
- Peer assessment of student behavior

Attachment 2--SWOT Analysis Instructions

There are a variety of ways to conduct a SWOT analysis. An approach should be adopted that fits the unit's circumstances and personnel.

A SWOT analysis is not meant to be completed by a single person, such as a director, sitting alone and documenting his or her views of the unit. It is important to consider who will add most value to this exercise and the best ways to secure their input. An open discussion might be useful with a small number of well-informed, highly engaged, and equally vocal participants. However, in other situations it could be beneficial to gather information on participants views through an informal or formal collection process, with a summary of responses provided to the group. That summary could then provide the basis for a discussion.

As part of the SWOT analysis, use the questions listed in the section below, *Questions to Ask During a SWOT Analysis,* for guidance*.*

After completing the analysis, create a final, prioritized version of the SWOT analysis and list the factors in each category (S, W, O, or T) in order from highest priority to lowest. These can be prepared as a simple list or summarized as shown in the SWOT template below.

Questions to Ask During a SWOT Analysis

These are meant as guidance or starting points; there are many other questions to ask and factors specific to the unit's mission to consider.

Strengths *(internal, positive factors)*; these describe the positive attributes, tangible and intangible, internal to the unit. They are within your control.

- What do you do well?
- What internal resources that are strengths do you have? For example:
    - *Positive attributes of people*, such as knowledge, background, education, credentials, network, reputation, or skills.
    - *Tangible assets of the unit*, such as funding, effective procedures, or technology.
- Do you have strong capabilities in redesigning or improving ways of doing the unit's work?
- What other positive aspects, internal to your unit, add value or offer you an advantage in fulfilling your goals?

Weaknesses *(internal to unit and/or FIT, negative factors)*; these are aspects of the unit that hinder the unit from fulfilling its mission. These aspects need to be enhanced areas in order to fulfill the goals and mission.

- Are there sufficient staff members and/or do the staff have appropriate training, skills and attributes to carry out the work?

- Are the goals and mission of the unit unrealistic?
- Have there been incidents or negative events that have resulted in a poor reputation for the unit?
- Is the technology lacking or inappropriate in some way?

Opportunity *(external, positive factors)*; these are external attractive factors that represent reasons your unit is likely to excel. An important part of conducting this part of the SWOT analysis is an environmental scan, gathering information within FIT and in the broader community, state, nation and world.
- What opportunities exist outside of FIT that you can benefit from?
- Is the perception of the unit positive?
- Has there been recent growth or other changes in the environment that create an opportunity?
- Is the opportunity ongoing, or is there just a window for it? In other words, how critical is your timing?

Threats *(external, negative factors)*; these include external factors beyond the unit's control that could place the unit's strategy, or the unit or FIT itself, at risk. The unit (and FIT) has no control over these, but may benefit by having contingency plans to address them if they should occur.

- What factors beyond the unit's control could place your unit or FIT at risk?
- Are there challenges created by an unfavorable trend or development that may lead to deteriorating likelihood of meeting the goals of the unit or FIT?
- What situations might threaten the unit's efforts?
- Have there been shifts in students' or others' behavior, the economy, or government regulations that could negatively affect the unit's work? Are such shifts anticipated to occur in the future?

SWOT Template
The template on the next page is designed to help in the brainstorming component of the SWOT preparation. In the self-study, list the elements in each category, along with a sentence or two that explains them.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Attachment 3. Site Visit

Arranging the Site Visit

The agenda for the site visit will be developed jointly by the unit and the Office of Academic and Administrative Assessment (OAAA). In cooperation with the unit, the OAAA will schedule the meetings and other activities that will take place during the site visit, and will serve as the overall guide and time keeper during the visit, adjusting the schedule as needed. The OAAA budget pays for the expenses of the visit.

Example of site visit schedule

Over the course of the site visit day, the reviewers will have opportunities to meet with the unit leaders and staff, senior managers (vice presidents, associate vice presidents, assistant vice presidents etc.) to whom the unit reports, managers who have close interactions with the unit being reviewed, and students. They should also have opportunities to tour the unit's offices and physical working spaces and confer with each other throughout the day as needed.

Below is an example of a site visit schedule:

8:00 am – 9:00 am	Breakfast meeting with unit director
9:00 am – 9:30 am	Tour of unit offices and work spaces
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Meet with senior managers (vice presidents, associate vice presidents, assistant vice presidents etc.) to whom the unit reports
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	Meetings with unit staff
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	Lunch and discussion with students
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Attendance at unit event
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Meet with Executive Director of Assessment
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Reviewers' meeting

Attachment 4—General Timeline for Administrative Reviews

Note: Depending on the workload and circumstances in the units, administrative reviews may start at different times of the year. Typically, an administrative review will take about a year to complete. The following is an example of how a unit whose review begins in January could complete the review process over the course of a year.

In the early stages of the review process, staff from the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness will work with the unit to create an individualized timeline for the review.

1. Administrative review schedule for the upcoming calendar year is determined. Division and unit heads are notified.	fall semester preceding the start of the review
2. Kick off meeting with staff from the Division of Strategic Planning and Effectiveness	January
3. Self-study	
a. Unit profile	January-March
b. Unit functions and assessment	January-March
c. Develop (and conduct) additional assessments	April-June
d. Pulling it all together (SWOT)	July/August
e. Action Plan	September
g. Complete self-study	September
4. External Review	
a. Selection of reviewers	Begin selection process early in calendar year. Reviewers should be approved at least three months before the planned date for the site visit.
b. Site visit and report	October
c. Unit's response to external reviewers' report and revisions to action plan	November
5. Wrap-up meeting	December