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**Academic Program Review**  
AQIP Action Project #1378  
Central Arizona College  
2009 Annual Update  
Submitted 09/11/09  
Reviewed 09/15/09 (Received 09/17/09)

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**A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.**

The Academic Program Review (APR) Committee consists of district-wide members to include representatives from each of the college's constituency groups. In September 2008, the Academic Program Review Committee began preparations for completing comprehensive reviews of four programs, using the revised process and instruments. Due to the changes in the process, annual program reviews were suspended for the 2008-09 academic year, only. The newly designed instruments were shared with directors and/or division chairs of the programs needing to complete a comprehensive review during the 2008-09 academic year. The Academic Program Review Committee members developed and provided training sessions for the program's directors, division chairs, and any others involved in writing the reviews (self-study). The training sessions were well attended and committee members were available for follow-up. Each program involved in a comprehensive review was assigned an Academic Program Review Subcommittee for assistance and mentorship with the process, forms, and questions; ultimately the subcommittee also acted as the evaluators of the program's self-study. Subcommittees worked with the programs as mentors, to explain and provide clarification of the process, assist them in acquiring the necessary data via reports and any other resources or information necessary to complete the review.

In January 2009, the four programs submitted their preliminary self-studies. Each was reviewed by the assigned subcommittees and returned to the individual programs for necessary revisions. Programs turned in final self-studies in late February 2009. Subcommittees provided final evaluation of the self-studies, using the rubric previously created by the Academic Program Review Committee in fall 2008. With the conclusion of the subcommittee evaluations, programs completed a survey requesting feedback of the Academic Program Review Process. Overall feedback was very positive. In addition to this feedback, the Academic Program Review Committee held two focus groups to solicit feedback from committee members. Using the feedback from the survey and focus groups, work on revision of the instrument and rubric began.

In April and May of 2009, significant improvements were made to the comprehensive instrument and rubric. Significant revision to the reports that will be included in the self-study and how the data will be reported in this instrument were also made. In addition, the annual instrument and process was further clarified and structured to closely mimic the comprehensive instrument and process to include in the information collected in each annual program review. In May of 2009, programs and Deans received the revised instruments, rubric, and timeline for the 2009-2010 comprehensive program reviews and annual program reviews. The process' timeline was

adjusted to have submission of both comprehensive and annual program reviews from the spring to fall semester, so the program review process is better aligned with the college's planning and budgeting process.

**Review (09-15-09):**

*Your efforts to comprehensively study and improve the program review process sets up a series of wins for your institution. You are at the heart of the continuous improvement process, and central to the AQIP Categories of Measuring Effectiveness, Planning Continuous Improvement and Helping Students Learn. Success with program review is a little like achieving a good paint job; 80% preparation, and the rest of the job goes smoothly! The informational sessions and mentoring you make available to those involved demonstrates to stakeholders a strong investment in assuring the process is understood and will succeed. Your check and balance approach to achieving success incrementally is a good one. A viable program review process really addresses most all of the AQIP Action Categories because aspects of good program review are threads pulled through all institutional operations.*

**B. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.**

The members of the Academic Program Review Committee are selected to represent the sites and/or campuses across the college's entire district and all employee levels (administration, faculty, managerial/technical, and support staff) are represented on the committee. A committee members' role is to represent and communicate the interests of their college site, area/unit/department, and employee group. In addition, members are expected to report the committee's work to each of these groups and, in return, provide feedback to the committee from these groups. In addition, the progress and revisions to the Academic Program Review process and instruments were shared with academic programs, during Faculty Senate meetings, and CAC's fall and spring all district in-services. Progress was also reported and available online via committee meeting minutes, emails announcements, with division reports and presentations available via the college's shared drive. The process was further enhanced from meetings between committee members and faculty, as well as program directors via training sessions, follow-up meetings for clarification, and the culminating survey. There was also a significant amount of informal communication between the subcommittees and programs completing the comprehensive program review, which was brought back to the committee and played a significant role in revision and improvements that are in place for 2009-10.

**Review (09-15-09):**

*Institutional efforts to comprehensively communicate across the college the work of the various groups assigned to this program review effort seem exemplary. Breaking down complex processes into packages that are easily understood by diverse units within the college is a difficult proposition. Your mix of meetings, online information, writings, surveys and word of mouth, all serve the AQIP Improvement Categories 4 & 5.*

**C. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.**

In the coming academic year, 2009-10, all CAC academic programs will either complete a comprehensive or annual program review (self-study) following a designated rotational schedule previously determined by the APR Committee. As in spring 2009 and following the completion of this year's process, program review participants will complete an evaluation of the Academic Program Review process and focus groups will be conducted. This period of assessment will be repeated annually and consist of gathering feedback from program directors, faculty, committee members, and Deans. Evaluation feedback and information gained from the assessment period will be used to determine and implement necessary revisions to the process in preparation for the 2010-11 academic year. Updates to the Academic Program Review process will be shared with all stakeholders before the end of the spring 2010 semester. To allow for implementation through one more academic year, an anticipated target completion date for this action project is June 2010.

**Review (09-15-09):**

*The efforts of CAC to include all programs in the review process is laudable. There is strength in shared-activity like this and improvements that will result. Of course it will need to be closely managed so the work can be completed in the appointed time. A suggestion would be to encourage a manageable number of action items (as outcomes) for each program to focus on in the following year. Some examples are: increasing graduation rates, course saturation, or curriculum updates. Faculty will need action items, but not an overwhelming number. No one wants to dread a process and the work they will have when they return the following fall, so phasing into the deliverables is advised, but seeing success from the work that has gone into this process is essential.*

**D. Describe any "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project.**

An effective practice CAC has discovered through the improved Academic Program Review process is the close mentoring relationship that needs to be in place between the APR Subcommittee and the program undergoing review. Other effective practices include addressing the concerns of last year's review to include increasing the multiple modes of communication to ensure all stakeholders received consistent information regarding the project's current status. In addition, the APR Committee requested program review participants evaluate the revised process and conducted focus groups. The results of these activities have improved this year's process by reflecting a higher concern and emphasis on developing and continuing the mentoring relationship between the APR Subcommittees and programs completing the comprehensive review.

**Review (09-15-09):**

*CAC's decision to provide a mentorship network around the program review process addresses the AQIP Category # 6, Supporting Institutional Operations. Additionally, the reach back to your previous year's concerns really provides a 360 degree web of support and should serve to convince all stakeholders that this process is critical to the continuous improvement philosophy of the college. A willingness to hold each component of the process accountable -towards final outcomes- will be important.*

**E. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?**

CAC has made strides in identifying and documenting its process for updating the Academic Program Review process. This process will ease the transition of future retirements of the Vice President of Academic Programs and Services and the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Advancement. In addition, the AQIP Liaison continues her second year in this position, but has identified the need for mentoring others in this key role.

**Review (09-15-09):**

*Succession planning for leadership of the major project areas of the college is so important. Transition is never easy, but you are demonstrating that CAC is proactively dealing with change that WILL affect you. This foresight promises that you will not be left flatfooted, and can steer a course that sets everyone up for continued success.*

**F. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this action project, explain your need(s) here and tell us who to contact and when?**

None at this time

*The institution is making reasonable progress towards completion of the project and development of an institution-wide continuous quality improvement culture. Reviewer 9969*