College Area Review
Academic Area
Review Manual

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College Area Review
Academic Areas

Introduction

The periodic and systematic review of our academic programs, disciplines, and courses is the primary assessment activity, along with the Outcomes Assessment Project, through which we attempt to determine that academic areas are effective and that students are learning. All academic areas and their related degrees, certificates, letters of recognition, and courses as well as special programs and student services are reviewed according to a schedule approved by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Senior Vice President of Student Services, and the Senior Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services. Programs that are accredited or approved by external agencies are reviewed on a cycle that mirrors their accreditation or approval schedule.

The College Area Review (CAR) gives us the opportunity to examine and evaluate academic areas using multiple measures by reviewing student learning, student persistence and completion, instruction, course content and goals, sequence of courses, support services, resources, and facilities.

Ultimately, an objective review of an academic area would determine the extent to which

1. Students are learning the knowledge, skills, and habits of thought necessary to achieve program/discipline/course goals and objectives.
2. Goals are derived from and support the College mission and goals, the general education goals, and the purpose of the program/discipline/course.
3. The curriculum, including course content, is coherent, current, and consistent.
4. Instruction effectively enables student learning.
5. Resources and academic support services are adequate and facilitate student learning.

The College Area Review provides information essential for academic planning, establishing priorities for resource allocation and budgeting as well as for assessing our effectiveness as an institution. The College Area Review offers an opportunity to consider program, discipline, and course needs and to identify actions necessary to ensure that student learning within the academic area will improve and that the program will continue to meet the needs of students, employers, and the community. Every effort has been made to integrate the College Area Review process with the collegewide planning, budgeting, and Outcomes Assessment processes. The College Area Review process is an attempt to have a unified approach to meeting the College's mission of empowering our students, enriching our community, and holding ourselves accountable.

Effective Academic Areas: Disciplines, Programs, and Courses

Effective academic areas have certain common characteristics. Effective instruction focuses on student learning, course content, and discipline objectives; employs the best practices in pedagogy, curricular design, and instructional modalities; and provides ready feedback to students about their learning. Effective academic areas continually assess student learning, evaluate the content and objectives of courses and disciplines/programs, and create learning environments that provide everyone with access to learning. Each of the following sections provides qualities and expectations to produce effective academic areas.

1.   Student Progress and Learning Outcomes

- Student learning outcomes are consistent with the purpose of the program/discipline/course.
- Students are appropriately placed and prepared to meet course goals and objectives.
- Students are achieving the goals and objectives of the program/discipline/course.
- Students are achieving the general education goals of the College.
- Student accomplishment is assessed through multiple means.
- Assessment results are used to improve student learning.

2.   Academic Area Goals

- Goals are derived from and support the mission of the College.
- Goals support the general education goals of the College.
- Goals are consistent with expectations of businesses employing students, transfer institutions receiving students, and the community.
- Goals are consistent with the purpose of the program.
- Goals make explicit the contribution of the discipline to student achievement of the general education goals, the goals of programs of which it is a significant part, and/or other core competencies required of graduates.

3. Curriculum

- Course content is consistent with the best practices in the field and the current thinking in the discipline.
- Course content is consistent across the College and across various instructional delivery systems.
- Courses display coherence through appropriate sequencing.
- Curriculum is comprehensive in addressing academic area goals, general education goals, and other core competencies required by the College.
- The catalog accurately reflects the purpose and the curriculum of the program/discipline/course.
- The curriculum is monitored through the updating of course content summaries.
- Information is sought from employers, graduates, advisory committees, and transfer institutions to assure the currency of the curriculum.

4. Instruction

- Students experience methods of instruction appropriate for their learning needs.
- Instructional methods are consistent with the best practices in pedagogy and current thinking in learning theory.
- Instructional methods are demonstrably effective in producing student learning.
- Instructional methods are appropriate to the purpose and goals of the program/discipline.
- Students have access to various distance learning opportunities and instructional delivery systems such as web-based courses, computer-based courses, and courses delivered through Distance Learning.

5. Resources and Instructional Support Services

- Fiscal resources are adequate to maintain and improve the program.
- Resources required by the program are justified by the program value and demand.
- Instructional support is appropriate, available, accessible, and adequate.
- Classroom and laboratory space is appropriate and adequate.
- Faculty members participate in professional improvement/development activities.
- Faculty development experiences are appropriate, available, and adequate.
- Students express satisfaction with the physical environment such as classrooms and labs.
- Students express satisfaction with the accessibility of appropriate learning assistance services and resources.
- Counselors work with faculty and students to ensure appropriate advisement.
- Support center materials are current, accessible, available, and adequate.
- Support center staffs are knowledgeable, well trained, and helpful.

At this time the College Area Review process does not purport to measure all of the common characteristics listed above. The intent of the CAR process is to measure currently available data and procedures and begin to make inferences from that information. As additional resources and data become available, they will be incorporated into the process. Together the College Area Review and Outcomes Assessment will provide a more complete picture of every academic area and will be used to improve the educational experience for all students at this institution.

Definition of Terms

Academic area is a group of closely related programs, disciplines, and courses that carry a common discipline designator. *Academic area* may also describe special programs such as Montgomery or Renaissance Scholars, the Macklin Business Institute; grant funded projects, Developmental English or Mathematics, General Education disciplines, the learning centers, student development and others. An academic area may exist on only one campus or may include offerings at multiple sites.

Administrative Units are the fourteen or more units at the College that support the academic mission but are not considered part of academics. All administrative units that report to the Senior Vice President of Administrative and Fiscal Services, the President's Office, and the Office of Student Financial Aid and the Office of Admissions and Records.

*CAR Action Plan Status Report*s are status updates reports that indicate the progress of the approved recommendations and are collected and monitored annually until areas and units are scheduled for the next review. Each area and unit has five years to implement the approved recommendations. These updates are sent to the CAR Coordinator.

CAR Course Report is the form used to evaluate each course in an academic area. This report is used to formulate recommendations.

CAR Discipline Report is the form used to evaluate each discipline in an academic area. This report is used to formulate recommendations.

CAR Program Report is the form used to evaluate each program (*degree(s), certificate(s,) and letter(s) of recognition)* in an academic area. This report is used to formulate recommendations.

CAR Recommendations Report is a composite report of all the recommendations for an academic area. This report lists the actual recommendations, rationale, the source of the recommendation, budget cost, and comments from the lead Dean, the lead Vice President and Provost, CARC and the Executive Team. This form is to be used for all academic area recommendations (course, program, discipline, or special program) and all administrative units. Space at the end of the form is provided for names and signatures of the participants and the administrators of the various areas and units.

CAR Special Program Report is a form used to evaluate special programs. This report is intended to be in narrative format. This report should not exceed 10 pages with a maximum of 5 additional pages for any attached appendix. Faculty or staff who review and complete a Special Programs Report should complete a CAR Recommendations Report also.

College Area Review Committee (**CARC**) is a 20-member collegewide standing committee composed of faculty, deans, Vice Presidents and Provosts, staff, and representatives from administrative units. The CARC assists in identifying areas for review and evaluates and responds to each completed CARR.

College Area Review Coordinator maintains the records of all College Area Review (CAR) packets and receives annual updates of past CAR recommendations. Suggests changes and amendments to completed CAR Reports, annually reviews and monitors the progress of an academic area or administrative units until the CAR recommendations are completed. Serves as the College's institutional memory for all the review information, the review process and schedule, the CAR Reports, and the CAR Action Plans and keeps such records as are needed to continue the review process and to determine the effectiveness of recommendations and improvement efforts.

College Area Review Report (**CARR**) is a complete package of all the materials and reports including emails, necessary signatures, and any additional documentation for review of an academic area or administrative unit. CARR is based on a systematic review and assessment of academic programs, disciplines, and courses using a variety of data and or administrative unit special report. CARR forms are completed by the Faculty Workgroup for each discipline, program, certificate, letter of recognition, course, or special program for the academic area. An important part of each CARR is a completed CAR Recommendations Report form that includes recommendations, budget cost, and comments from the lead Dean, the lead Vice President and Provost, and the CARC regarding the faculty recommendations. The Executive Team makes the final decision as to which recommendations will be approved and implemented.

Executive Team consists of the Senior Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Senior Vice President for Student Services, and the President of Montgomery College.

External Peer Reviewer is an outside faculty evaluator who has expertise in the particular academic area. As a part of each CAR cycle, one to two academic areas (including a special program) are identified for an outside peer review. The academic area that is being reviewed is solicited for suggestions as to possible names of peer reviewers, with final approval from the Executive Team. The peer reviewer conducts a one to two day visit of the College, usually after the CARR has been reviewed by the lead Vice President and Provost. After this objective review by the peer reviewer, he or she is expected to provide a written report that becomes a part of the CARR and is forwarded to the Executive Team as a part of the final review package.

Faculty Workgroup or *Workgroup* is an ad hoc faculty committee that reviews the data, evaluates the academic area, and completes the College Area Review Reports. The members, appointed by the lead Dean along with input from the faculty chairperson of the academic area, are faculty who teach in the area being reviewed.

Special Program is a unique entity that the College supports that does not fit into any specific academic discipline (for example, Montgomery Scholars, Collegewide Honors Program, and Pathways to Success) but adds value to the College's missions and goals and is being included in this review. The term academic area is defined to include either a discipline with its related courses, etc. or a special program. All special programs in the College are incorporated into the review process, including all Academic Support Centers.

College Area Review Committee

Success of the academic review process will depend on committee members who have vision for the future of the College and are willing to engage the College community while seeking innovative answers to academic success questions.

The College Area Review Committee (CARC) includes:

- College Area Review Coordinator 1
- All Vice Presidents and Provosts 3
- Vice President for Workforce Development & Continuing Education 1
- Three faculty representatives, one from each campus, appointed
  by the Collegewide Curriculum Committee 3
- Three faculty representatives, one from each campus, appointed
  by the Faculty Council 3
- Three representatives from the Collegewide Deans, one from
  each campus 3
- Two representative from the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis 2
- One representative from the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness 1
- One representative from the Office of Information Technology 1
- One representatives from the Office of Senior VP for Administrative and Fiscal Services ...1
- One representative from the Staff Council 1
- One representative from the Student Council 1

Total   **21**

The CARC is a collegewide standing committee composed of 21 members. Representations from all college stakeholders are included on the committee. Every effort will be made to ensure that the faculty members of the Committee represent a variety of disciplines and provide balanced representation. Faculty members serve renewable three-year terms. The terms will be staggered so that approximately one-third of the faculty is re-appointed each year.

The CARC
- Provides a cross-sectional review and makes recommendations to the Executive Team about academic areas and administrative units in the current review cycle and academic areas and administrative units that are required to submit annual updates on the progress of their CAR recommendations.
- Meets twice a year as a full committee to review the academic areas (spring semester) and the administrative units (fall semester). There is one additional meeting each semester. The CARC is divided into workgroup teams to conduct a more in-depth review of the academic areas (spring semester) or administrative units (spring semester) and report these recommendations to the larger committee. In total the CARC meets four times a year.

College Area Review Process
Academic areas

Each part of the CAR involves coordination, cooperation, and interaction among College and campus administration, the academic area faculty and staff, and the CARC. Effective communication is central to the success of the CAR. Timely notification of appointments, schedules, activities, decisions, and recommendations will occur throughout the CAR process.

The CAR examines and evaluates academic areas and:
- Reviews any multi-campus offerings in the academic area involves all campuses or locations. The Lead Dean and Lead Vice President and Provost, who are responsible for the area or who have been appointed for the review, coordinate the review among the sites. As determined by the Executive Team, some disciplines may include an external peer reviewer, usually two or three disciplines per year.
- Reviews the academic area that exists on only one campus involves only that campus and is coordinated by the Lead Dean and the campus Vice President and Provost.
- Reviews any given student input and comments about academic courses.
- Receives and reviews all minority reports.

Academic areas to be reviewed include:
- Programs
- Disciplines
- Courses
- Developmental Areas
- General Education Disciplines
- Student Services
- Special Programs
- Academic Support Centers (all learning centers and labs)

Approved recommendations at the culmination of the review process should:
- Center on student learning outcomes.
- Result in a plan to improve student learning.
- Result in inclusion of current/updated content in academic areas.
- Assist faculty in improving the effectiveness of the academic area and are useful to the College in planning, budgeting, and marketing efforts.

College Area Reviews produce recommendations to maintain, improve, or terminate existing academic programs. These recommendations are based upon historical data and trends, as well as a number of less measurable factors assessed through interviews, surveys, and external materials. The overall purpose is to preserve and enhance the quality and responsiveness of the College's overall curriculum. However, if a recommendation is for non-continuation of an academic area, the CAR process will facilitate a smooth phase out.

The CAR process will be periodically reviewed and modified by the CARC based on suggestions and surveys of those involved in the reviews.

The process of College Area Review consists of three major phases:

1. Initial/Start Up Activities
   - Selection of academic areas
   - Selection of faculty workgroups
   - Participation in orientation meeting
   - Collection/distribution of data

2. Analysis, Reporting, and Approval
   - Review of data and completion of CAR Forms and Reports by Faculty workgroup
   - Review and approval of CAR Reports by Lead Dean, Lead Vice President and Provost, CARC, and Executive Teams.
   - Peer Review, if appropriate

3. Implementation of the Approved CAR Recommendations
   - Periodic Review
   - Status Report Updates

Review Processes and Responsibilities

Initial/Start-up Activities

Selection of Academic Areas
- The CAR Coordinator notifies the academic areas that are to be reviewed for a given year. The CARC, the Lead Vice President and Provost and Lead Dean suggest to the Executive Team what areas should be reviewed and the Executive team makes the final decision.

Selection of Workgroup Members
- The Vice President and Provosts and Lead Deans identify faculty workgroup members and notify the CAR Coordinator.

Participation in Orientation Meeting
- The CAR Coordinator prepares review packets for each academic area being reviewed and conducts an orientation session.
- The review packet provides each academic area with instructions and directions to assist in the review process. Included in the packets are reporting forms and the CAR guidelines.

Collection/Distribution of Data
- Academic area data include several student enrollment measures, credit hours, program awards, program retention, summarized transfer data, student/faculty ratios, and full-time/part-time faculty ratios. This data is sent to the Lead Dean by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis early in the fall semester after third week enrollment.
- The Faculty Workgroup, Lead Dean, or Lead Vice President and Provost may request

additional information or data from the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis who will make every effort to accommodate such requests, if the data is available.

Responsibilities of the:

Faculty Workgroup
- Attends and participates in mandatory orientation session.
- Determines the processes, schedules, and activities necessary for the completion of the review.
- Implements strategies to communicate with discipline and program faculty both full-time and part-time to assure their total participation in the CAR process.
- Analyzes the CAR guidelines and data, gathers additional information as needed, and completes all CAR reporting forms.
- Communicates and collaborates with the Lead Dean, faculty chair person, and academic area colleagues, informs others of decisions and recommendations throughout the process, and solicits feedback to assist in preparing the report.
- Completes and submits to the Lead Dean the report packet that may include the CAR Course Report, CAR Program Report, CAR Discipline Report, and the CAR Recommendation Report. If the academic area is a special program, the package will include a CAR Special Program Report. Each package must include the CAR Recommendation Report and required signatures by necessary parties.
- Provides status and assists in periodic updates on CAR recommendation to lead dean, until full implementation.

Lead Dean
- Attends and participates in mandatory orientation with his or her workgroup.
- Analyzes the workgroup's preliminary review, provides feedback, and meets with the workgroup.
- Confers with the other deans who share responsibility for the area under review and evaluates the faculty workgroup's final report.
- Completes the Dean's column of the CAR Recommendations Report and obtains e-mail concurrence from the other deans who supervise the academic area under review.
- Submits the CAR report packet to the lead Vice President and Provost. *(Forwards original hard copies of the CAR packet in binder ensuring the appropriate sign-off.)*
- Sends the report back for revision if the workgroup's recommendations are considered insufficient to address identified strengths or weaknesses.
- Meets with the Lead Vice President and Provost to review and discuss any questions raised on the CAR Recommendation Report about a given discipline/academic area.
- Is accountable for follow-up, CAR Status Update Report, and implementation of approved CAR recommendations.
- Provides and submits a periodic status update of recommendations to the lead Vice President and Provost and CAR Coordinator.

Lead Vice President and Provost
- Conducts complete review and evaluation of the CAR package.

- Makes recommendations and offers comments on CAR Recommendations Report presented by the Lead Dean and Faculty Workgroup. Sign-off on the CAR Recommendations Report.
- Ensures that other Vice President and Provosts have an opportunity to review CAR reports and obtains email concurrence and comments from them.
- Reviews recommendations and ensures that any questions and discrepancies are resolved before moving the recommendations forward. Discusses any questions raised or concerns with lead dean.
- Determines that all reports, recommendations, and signatures have been completed before sending the packet to the CARC.
- Is accountable to communicate approved recommendations to lead dean and faculty workgroups.
- Is accountable to guide and facilitate the implementation of CAR recommendations with the help of the Lead Dean.

College Area Review Committee
- Reviews and analyzes the academic area reports from a collegewide perspective that considers such factors as the history of academic area and other College Area Reviews, on-going academic area commitments, and College budget and planning. The CARC responses include integrated priorities.

CAR Coordinator
- Implements and reviews any student input and comments about the courses and disciplines undergoing the review. Institutes the use of the CAR Student Survey and shares results with the faculty, disciplines, administrators and the Executive team.
- Submits the complete CAR report package and the committee's sign off sheet to the Executive Team.
- Receives and distributes Executive Team approved recommendations and response to the respective lead Vice President and Provost.
- Informs the College of review activities such as schedules, assignments, decisions, and recommendations throughout the process. Trouble shoots with faculty and lead deans and addresses any questions or concerns.
- Coordinates information, schedules, and other CAR activities with Outcomes Assessment efforts.
- Retains the CAR Committee notes and CAR reports as part of the historical record of review, decisions, assignments, and results for use in CAR evaluation and improvement.
- Reviews and analyzes annually the progress of the CAR Actions Plan from the academic areas.
- Conducts an evaluation/assessment of the CAR Process.

Executive Team
- Discuses their comments regarding the CAR recommendations with the President of the College.
- Responds to and returns the CAR reports along with the approved recommendations, decisions, and conclusions to the College Area Review Committee and the Lead Vice President and Provosts for implementation and dissemination of information to the Lead Dean, Faculty Workgroup, and the discipline under review.

Implementation of the CAR Recommendations

- The CAR recommendations are sent to the Lead Vice President and Provost for eventual distribution to the Lead Dean and faculty in the academic area. The CAR Action Plan and any additional recommendations will be included in the next fiscal year's collegewide planning and budget documents. The implementation should include action items and assessment criteria for each recommendation.
- The Chairperson or Coordinator of the academic area on each campus is responsible for leading the faculty and staff to implement the approved recommendations. The Chairpersons or Coordinators on each campus are responsible for submitting a collegewide annual progress report to the Lead Dean and Lead Vice President and Provost by the designated date. This report explains the academic area's progress toward completing the approved recommendations from the CARC.
- The Lead Vice Presidents and Provosts submit an annual progress report for the academic area to the Executive Team.
- The Lead Dean, Vice President and Provost, and the CARC must approve any changes to the plan.
- The Lead Vice Presidents and Provosts and Lead Deans work with the faculty to include all recommendations in the collegewide planning and budgeting process.
- The Executive Team will include and advise all components to include all approved recommendations in the new Budget Request Form and the Strategic Planning Form from the College Area Review process cycle immediately following the review.

CAR Annual Timeline Process

This is a general timeline. Exact dates may vary based on events in a given year.

August	CAR Faculty Orientation Meeting
September/October	College Area Review Committee (CARC) Meeting
August-January	Faculty Workgroups conduct College Area Review
January-February	Lead Deans and Lead Vice Presidents and Provosts conducts review
January-March	External Peer Review Visits
February	Lead Vice Presidents and Provosts complete CAR Recommendations/CAR packets submitted to CARC
March	CARC Workgroup Meetings CAR Action Plan Status Reports are due
April	CAR Committee Meeting CAR Reports are due to Executive Team

April   Executive Team Approved Recommendations are due

May   Vice Presidents and Provosts share approved recommendations
                                   to deans, chairs and disciplines. Other academic areas receive
                                   approved recommendations from Vice President and Provost and
                                   Lead Dean concerning their Special Program review. Integration
                                   of CAR Recommendations is reflected in collegewide planning
                                   and budget review process.

Forms for College Area Review Process

CAR forms and additional information about the CAR process can be accessed via the CAR Website at
www.montgomerycollege.edu/car. Each lead Vice President and Provost, lead Dean, and Faculty
Workgroup leader is provided a hard copy of the CAR manual instructions and all the forms listed below.
Anyone with questions concerning these forms or the CAR process should contact the CAR Coordinator
at CollegeAreaReview@montgomerycollege.edu or call (240) 579-5343.

CAR Forms:
- College Area Review Discipline Report
- College Area Review Program Report
- College Area Review Course Report
- College Area Review Recommendations Report
- College Area Review Special Programs Report
- College Area Review Action Plan Status Report

All Faculty Workgroups must complete the **CAR Discipline Report** form for each discipline being
reviewed. The CAR Discipline Report is in addition to the CAR Course Report that should be completed
for each course within the discipline.

Faculty Workgroups complete one **CAR Program Report** form for each degree, certificate, or letter of
recognition in the area. If the academic area has no degrees, certificates, or letters of recognition, then the
workgroup does not complete this form.

Faculty Workgroups complete one **CAR Course Report** form for each course with the discipline
designator. For example, Management would complete reports only on courses with the MG designator
and would not report on general education courses that are part of the Management curriculum. If a
course is taught on more than one campus, only one course review report should be submitted. CAR
Course Report is submitted on an as needed base.

If the academic area is a special program, only the **CAR Special Programs Report** is completed. **All**
academic areas being reviewed are required to submit a **CAR Recommendations Report** form.
Recommendations should to measurable and implementable in the five year review cycle time period.

The **CAR Action Plan Status Report** is used each year following the initial review year to update the
action taken on the approved CAR recommendations.