CAS: From Basics to Beyond
Rebecca Campbell June 14, 2024

Session Learning Outcomes
- One: Know a simple framework for understanding the CAS Self-Study Process and Standards.
- Two: Understand what constitutes a unit "activity."
- Three: Learn where to gather and document self-study evidence.

Part 1: CAS Simplified

"A CAS self-study is just answering 4 big questions through the lens of 12 standards in a 7-step self-study process."

1. Are unit activities mission focused?
   - Part 1. Mission
   - Part 2. Program and Services
   - Part 3. Student Learning, Development, and Success
2. Is there evidence that the unit's activities actually work?
   - Part 4. Assessment
3. Does the unit's work represent our values?
   - Part 5. Access, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice
   - Part 8. Collaboration and Communication
   - Part 9. Ethics, Law, and Policy
4. Does the unit have the resources it needs to implement all its activities?
   - Part 6. Leadership
   - Part 7. Human Resources
   - Part 10. Financial Resources
   - Part 11. Technology
   - Part 12. Facilities and Infrastructure

7. Implement Improvements
Put action plans into practice; work to navigate politics and secure resources; identify barriers to overcome; build buy-in to the program review results; and implement strategies for continuous improvement.

1. Plan the Process
Map out steps for process, develop timeline, build buy-in with all stakeholders, and explicitly identify desired outcomes of the self-study

6. Prepare a Report
Explain the process, evidence gathering, rating process, and evaluations; summarize strengths and weaknesses; describe the action plan; and draft an executive summary

2. Assemble and Educate the Self-Assessment Team
Determine who should be on the team and how to educate the team about the self-study process

5. Develop an Action Plan
Identify discrepancies, corrective action, and recommended steps (e.g., identify strengths, weaknesses, recommendations, benchmarks for achievement, resources, timeframe, and responsible individuals)

3. Identify, Collect, and Organize Evidence
Define what constitutes evidence; then gather, collect, manage, and organize evidence

4. Conduct and Interpret Ratings Using Evaluative Evidence
Clarify team's rating criteria; employ a process for rating [small group, individual, staff]; negotiate rating differences; and manage group ratings

Figure 1. Steps of CAS Program Review Process

Part 2: Identifying Activities

Unit Name: _____

We Serve (Audience): _____

Activity Themes	Activities	Mission

Activity Themes

Theme #1

Theme #1

Theme #1

Activities

1. Website

2. Front Desk Staff

3. Pamphlets/Tip Sheets?

4. Workshops?

5. Staff Development/Training?

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

Don't forget Peer Education!

Mission

Empower

Engage

Guide

Mission Statement : Mad Libs!

I live the DSS mission because I . . . . .

1. empower students to do this ___*outcome*___ with ___*this activity*___ .
2. engage students with ___*this activity*___ that guides/empowers them to ___*outcome*___ .
3. guide students to be able to ___*outcome*___ with ___*this activity*___ .

Your statement:

I live the DSS mission because I . . . . .

Part 3: Documenting the Evidence

See the Example Annual Report and CAS Templates.

Part 4: Determining Evidence

Tie your activities to each type of outcome that relates. You will have activities listed in multiple places.
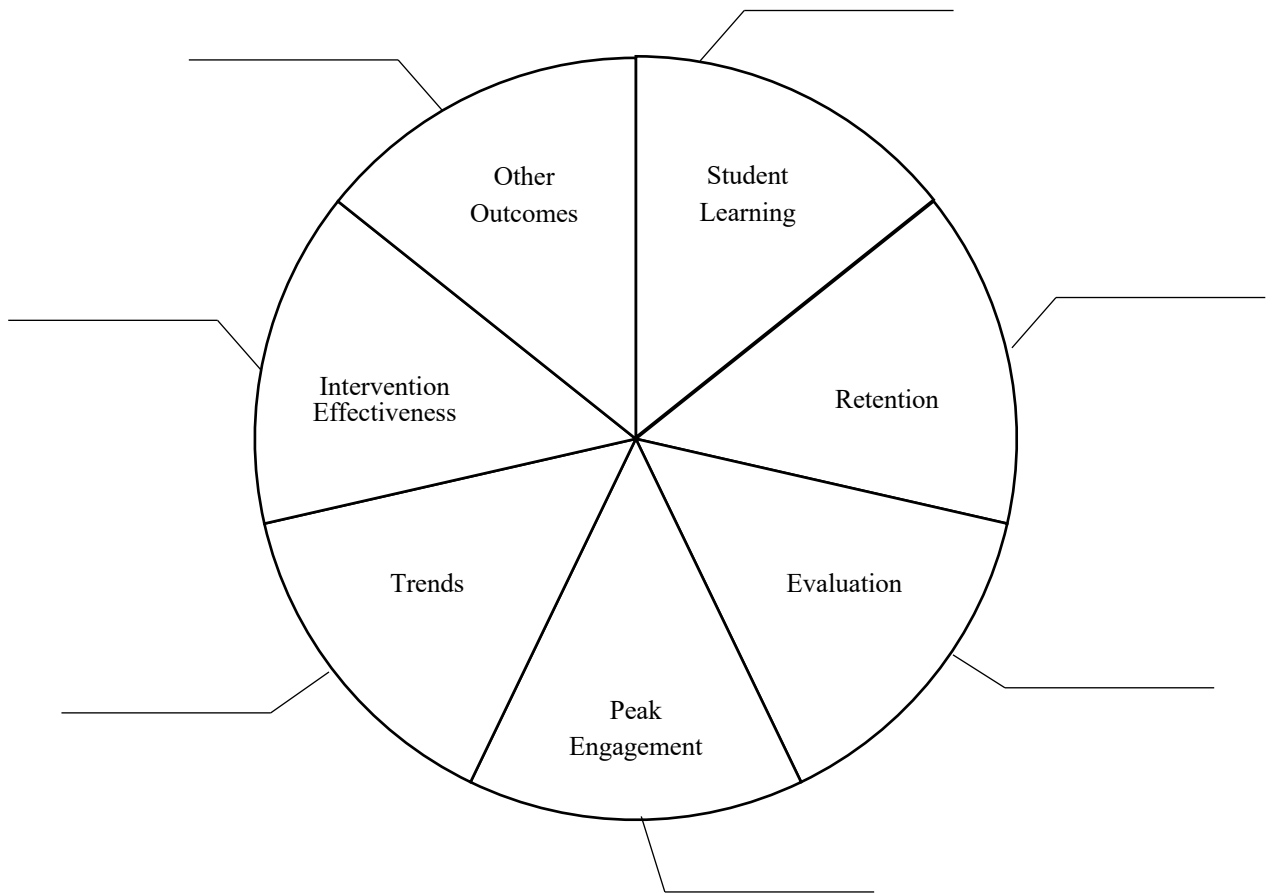
Part 5: Final Thoughts

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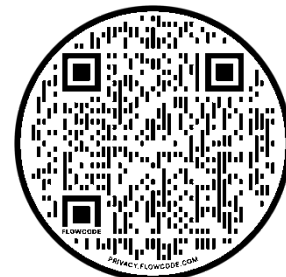
Annual Report
For
Back on Track

Example written by
Rebecca Campbell
June 2024

Unit Level Annual Reports

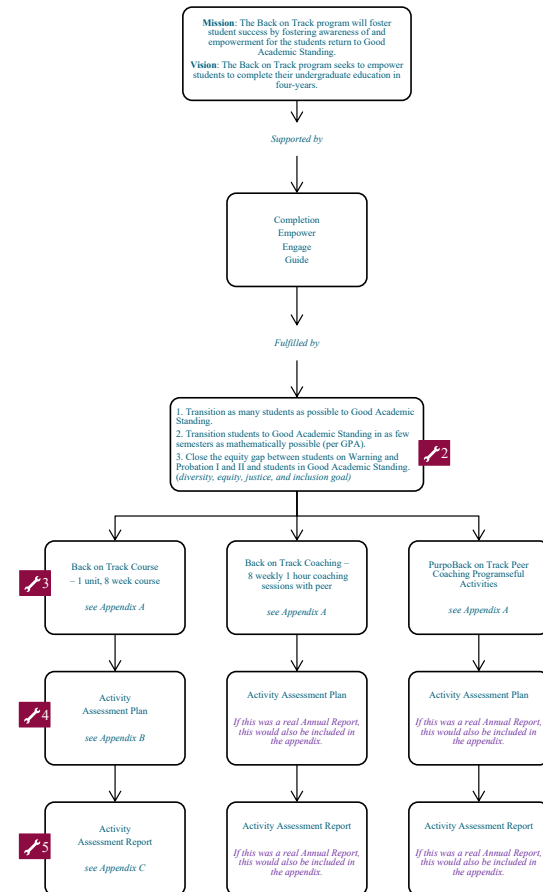Each year, the Annual Report documents everything needed for the CAS Self-Study.
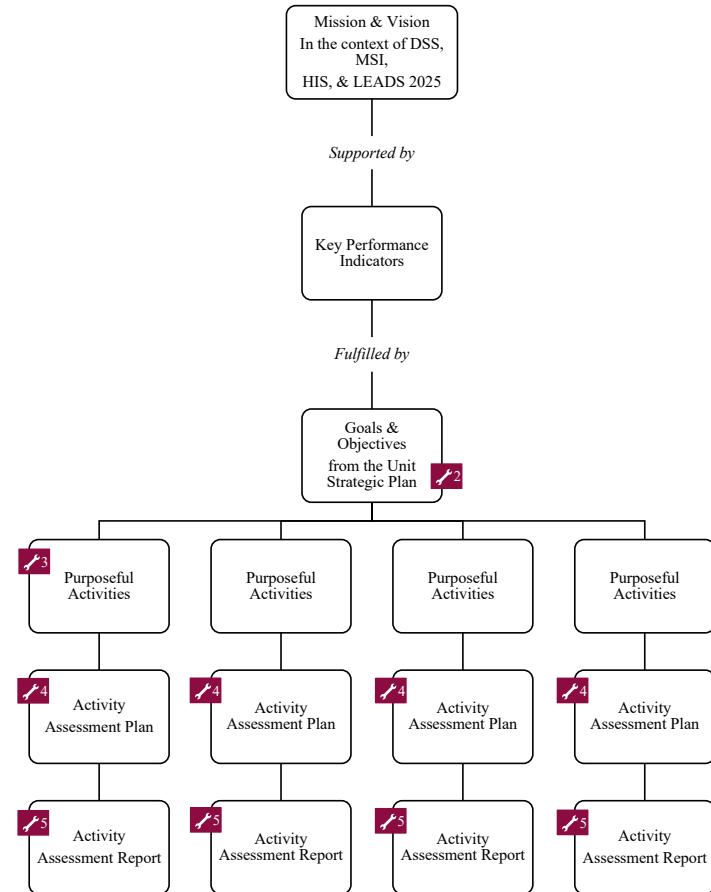
Master List of Tools

1	Annual Report: One per year. Ideally, the unit would have multiple years to use for the CAS self-study.
2	Strategic Plan: One per unit.
3	Purposeful Activities Map: This summarizes all of the activities in the unit.
4	Activity Assessment Plan: Needed for each activity. Notice on the graphic that there is a #4 tool for *each* activity.
5	Activity Assessment Report: Needed for each activity. Notice on the graphic that there is a #5 tool for *each* activity.
6	CAS Alignment to Assessment Map: This summarizes all of the activities in the unit.

Preface to the Example Annual Report
Back on Track

Mission: The Back on Track program will foster student success by fostering awareness of and empowerment for the students return to Good Academic Standing.

Vision: The Back on Track program seeks to empower students to complete their undergraduate education in four-years.

Supported by

Completion
Empower
Engage
Guide

Fulfilled by

1. Transition as many students as possible to Good Academic Standing.
2. Transition students to Good Academic Standing in as few semesters as mathematically possible (per GPA).
3. Close the equity gap between students on Warning and Probation I and II and students in Good Academic Standing. (*diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion goal*)

Back on Track Course – 1 unit, 8 week course

see Appendix A

Back on Track Coaching – 8 weekly 1 hour coaching sessions with peer

see Appendix A

PurpoBack on Track Peer Coaching Programseful Activities

see Appendix A

Activity Assessment Plan

see Appendix B

Activity Assessment Plan

If this was a real Annual Report, this would also be included in the appendix.

Activity Assessment Plan

If this was a real Annual Report, this would also be included in the appendix.

Activity Assessment Report

see Appendix C

Activity Assessment Report

If this was a real Annual Report, this would also be included in the appendix.

Activity Assessment Report

If this was a real Annual Report, this would also be included in the appendix.

Back on Track Annual Report
(CAS Tool 1: Standards 2.2.5, 4.1.5 & DSS Requirements)

Area Overview

CAS Reference	Item	Alternative
	Provide the Mission, Vision Program & services offered • Mission: The Back on Track program will foster student success by fostering awareness of and empowerment for the students return to Good Academic Standing. • Vision: The Back on Track program seeks to empower students to complete their undergraduate education in four-years. • Services: Courses and peer coaching for students on Warning and Academic Probation 1 and 2.	Provide a brief description of the office including program & services offered
1.1.2	Summarize how programs & services meet DSS mission, Engage/Empower/Guide • Empowerment will be offered through the course and coaching and assessed through the Academic Strategic Plan Assignment and Student Purpose Statements in the Back on Track Course. • Engagement will be offered through the course and coaching and assessed through coaching notes and Back on Track enrollment numbers. • Guide will be offered through the course and coaching and assessed through coaching notes and Back on Track assignments.	
DSS	Summarize how programs and services meet HIS/MSI mission at NMSU. Share evidence in Appendix. • Students on Warning and Academic Probation 1 and 2 are disproportionately students of color and indicators of low social mobility. The Back on Track program provides programs and services addressing access, diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion by (2.2.3) fostering college completion for students with academic risk.	
1.1.2	Summarize how your strategic plan advances NMSU LEADS 2025. • The program serves the diverse needs of learners through a comprehensive educational program. • The program increases access to higher education through a student-centered curriculum that fosters academic success and graduation.	

End of Year Assessment Outcomes

CAS Reference	Item
4.1.9, 4.6.1, 4.6.5, 4.6.7, 4.6.8	Report on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and the related individual assessment activities. Report on your area's understanding of increases or decreases in your KPIs and plans for improvement (if needed) for next year. Share evidence as Appendices. • Completion will be assessed through the Academic Strategic Plan Assignment in Back on Track as well as by using institutional data related to persistence and retention. • Empower will be assessed through the Academic Strategic Plan Assignment and Student Purpose Statements in the Back on Track Course. • Engage will be assessed through coaching notes and Back on Track enrollment numbers. • Guide will be assessed through coaching notes and Back on Track assignments. See Appendices for assessment of individual activities supporting the KPI's. KPI Outcomes for 2024: • Completion: • Empower • Engage • Guide
2.1.4, 4.2.2, 4.6.6, 4.6.9	Describe how this year's KPI outcomes led to any revision of goals, objectives, and outcomes. If no changes were needed, simply note "no changes." No changes
4.1.1, 4.6.4	Describe how you used your assessments and KPI outcomes to create and sustain a culture of assessment that is transparent, shared, and valued by its constituents. The Back on Track program Activity Assessment Plan was developed, implemented and improved by the following fiscal, human, and technological resources (4.1.6): • The Assessment Plan was developed collaboratively within the area involving all staff (aka human). • The Assessment Plan is tied to the area budget (fiscal) by including one staff member responsible for implementing the assessment plan. • The Assessment Plan is supported through dashboards built by ICT.

A Year in Review: Programming Highlights

CAS Reference	Item

3.1.7	Provide programming highlights from the year. Consider the following, but feel free to include all types of highlights (3.1.7):
	• Significant items from the academic year
	  o Back on Track hosted advisors in class.
	• Community Outreach Initiatives and Events
	  o Back on Track added parent information pages to it's existing suite of online resources.
	• Conference Presentations
	  o none
	• Grant Applications Submitted (indicate those that were funded)
	  o none
	• Accreditations or external reviews conducted and reported results
	  o Back on Track was accredited by the National Association for Academic Standing.
	• Department or individual awards or recognitions (including nominations) received (internally or externally)
	  o Back on Track won the NMSU Best New Program Award
	• Professional Association officer or committee assignments held by individuals within the department
	  o none
	• Other points of pride: new programs
	  o none
	• Include a few carefully selected pictures (see Appendix E)

3.1.7	Did any programs end, and how was that decided? n/a

Recommendations & Priorities for Next Year

CAS Reference	Item
4.6.5	What are your lessons learned for the year? • The Back on Track lesson plans and assessments appear to be effective in helping students understand how to get off of Warning or Probation.
4.6.9	What are strategic priorities for the upcoming year? • Do further data analysis to determine if particular courses led to warning and probation status. • Form data cohorts for each semester of the course and track these students to graduation.

Appendices

1. Include a current Organizational Chart as a separate attachment (not to be made public). *(CAS 2.3.2)* (see Appendix D)
2. Provide a copy of the Functional Area Strategic Plan. (see Appendix B)
3. Include all Assessment Reports. (see Appendix C)
4. Other material and supporting information (Raw data is available in the Back on Track OneDrive).
   - Assessment data
   - Evaluation data
   - Intervention effectiveness data
   - Retention data
   - Peak engagement data
   - Trend data

We plan to use this information to generate talking points for use with internal and external stakeholders. Please include compelling data that support the value of your program, including social media graphics, data sheets, and other evidence.

Appendix A: Back on Track Strategic Plan
(CAS Tool 2: Standards noted below)

Mission & Vision

NMSU Mission (CAS 1.1.1)
> The mission of the New Mexico State University system is to serve the diverse needs of the state through comprehensive programs of education, research, extension and outreach, and public service. As the state's land-grant and space-grant university, and as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, NMSU fosters learning, inquiry, diversity and inclusion, social mobility, and service to the broader community.

Division Mission (CAS 1.1.1)
> Empowering students by engaging them in all aspects of the student experience by guiding their development of self-advocacy skills.

Back on Track Mission (CAS 1.1.1):
> The Back on Track program will foster student success by fostering awareness of and empowerment for the students return to Good Academic Standing.

The Back on Track mission is updated and regularly reviewed (CAS 1.2.1) every year during the writing of the Back on Track Annual Report.

Back on Track collaborates with the following constituents to advance its mission and develop programming (CAS 1.1.3, 2.1.5, 2.1.4, 2.3.6):
- Advising
- Academic Associate Deans
- Registrar's Office
- Institutional Research
- First-Year Initiatives
- DSS Core Leadership Team
- Aggie *One Stop*

Back on Track Vision (DSS requirement):
> The Back on Track program seeks to empower students to complete their undergraduate education in four-years.

Goals (2.1.1, 4.2.1)

Back on Track Goals:
1. Transition as many students as possible to Good Academic Standing.
2. Transition students to Good Academic Standing in as few semesters as mathematically possible (per GPA).
3. Close the equity gap between students on Warning and Probation I and II and students in Good Academic Standing. (*diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion goal*)

The Back on Track program goals are aligned with the institutional vision, mission, and core values because (CAS 2.1.2) they support retention and student success.

The Back on Track program goals are aligned with student learning, development, and success outcomes using the CAS or other relevant frameworks because (CAS 4.2.1) they support:
- Domain 3: Intrapersonal Development by fostering a "realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect."
- Domain 6: Practical Competence by helping students in "pursuing goals" and "living a purposeful and satisfying life."
- Domain 4: Interpersonal Competence by fostering "Meaningful relationships" with peer coaches" and student "interdependence."

The Back on Track program goals are aligned with the our mission and core values because (CAS 2.2.1, 4.1.3):
- The program serves the diverse needs of learners through a comprehensive educational program.
- The program increases access to higher education through a student-centered curriculum that fosters academic success and graduation.

Activity Purpose Table
(CAS Tool 3: Standards noted below)

Activity	Outcome Domain	Outcome Dimension	Functional Area Learning Outcome	KPI	Related Theory
(CAS 3.1.1, 3.1.4)	(CAS 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.4)	(CAS 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.4)	(CAS 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.4)	(DSS Requirement)	(2.3.1, 4.3.1)
Back on Track – 1 unit, 8 week course	Domain 3: Intrapersonal Development	Realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect	Students enrolled in Back on Track will be able to understand their current GPA in the context of how to return to Good Standing.	Persistence Completion Empower	Hope (Snyder 2005); Cognitive belonging (Lang 2021), academic momentum (Attewell, Heil, Reisel, 2012), Motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2024)
	Domain 6: Practical Competence	Pursuing goals	Students enrolled in Back on Track will be able to articulate the steps required to pursue their goal of an undergraduate degree at NMSU.	Persistence Completion Empower Guide	See above
		Living a purposeful and satisfying life	Students enrolled in Back on Track will be able to describe how their undergraduate education can connect them to a purposeful and satisfying life.	Persistence Completion Empower	See above

Activity	Outcome Domain	Outcome Dimension	Functional Area Learning Outcome	KPI	Related Theory
Back on Track Coaching – 8 weekly 1 hour coaching sessions with peer	Domain 4: Interpersonal Competence	Meaningful relationships	Students enrolled in Back on Track Coaching will engage positively with their Peer Coach, answering questions and maintaining a dialogue during coaching sessions to foster a meaningful relationship with their coach as helpmate.	Persistence Completion Engage	See above
		Interdependence	Students enrolled in Back on Track Coaching will come to coaching sessions prepared to seek help from their peer coach.	Persistence Completion Guide	See above
	Domain 6: Practical Competence	Pursuing goals	Students enrolled in Back on Track Coaching will work with their Peer Coaching to identify the steps required to pursue their goal of an undergraduate degree at NMSU.	Persistence Completion Empower	See above
		Living a purposeful and satisfying life	Students enrolled in Back on Track Coaching will work with their Peer Coach to design a Personal Purpose Statement.	Persistence Completion Empower	See above
Back on Track Peer Coaching Program	Domain 1: Knowledge Acquisition, Construction, Integration, And Application	Connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences	Students in the role of Peer Coaches will be able to listen to coaches needs and connect them with resources and strategies.	Empower Engage	See above

The Back on Track program provides programs and services addressing the diverse needs of its constituents by (CAS 2.2.2) addressing the academic recovery holistically, that is examining learning, motivation, emotional and health as potential opportunities to improve student success.

This is enhanced by using multiple modes of delivery such as (CAS 2.2.7):
- In class instruction
- Engaging and personalized class assignments
- Peer coaching

The Back on Track program provides programs and services addressing access, diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion by (CAS 2.2.3) fostering college completion for students with academic risk.

The Back on Track program collaborates with the following institutional leaders to identify relevant, desirable and feasible student learning outcomes (CAS 3.1.6):
- Back on Track Faculty Advisory Board
- Director of CAAS
- Directors of all TRIO Programs
- Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs

Assessment:

Back on Track program Key Performance Indicators
- Completion
- Empower
- Engage
- Guide

Based on the Back on Track program Activity Assessment Plan (see Appendix B) describe how the individual assessment activities will contribute to the area's Key Performance Indicators (DSS Requirement).

- Completion will be assessed through the Academic Strategic Plan Assignment in Back on Track as well as by using institutional data related to persistence and retention.
- Empower will be assessed through the Academic Strategic Plan Assignment and Student Purpose Statements in the Back on Track Course.
- Engage will be assessed through coaching notes and Back on Track enrollment numbers.
- Guide will be assessed through coaching notes and Back on Track assignments.

The Back on Track program Activity Assessment Plan was developed, implemented and improved by the following fiscal, human, and technological resources (4.1.6):
- The Assessment Plan was developed collaboratively within the area involving all staff (aka human).
- The Assessment Plan is tied to the area budget (fiscal) by including one staff member responsible for implementing the assessment plan.
- The Assessment Plan is supported through dashboards built by ICT.

Professional development was supported for those responsible for the assessment plan by (CAS 4.1.7) workshops provided by the DSS Co-Curricular Working Group.

Area Structure and Resources

The Back on Track Program is structured and resourced to (CAS 2.3.4, 2.3.5):

- balance efficiency and effectiveness (CAS 2.3.4.a) because of the dual role the Back on Track instructors play in training and supervising the peer coaches.

- respond to the needs of its constituents and distinct populations (CAS 2.3.4.b) which we accomplish by using the data warehouse to identify first-year students on warning or probation.

- ensure access for its constituents (CAS 2.3.4.c) which we achieve by offering the course at multiple times of the day and online.

Within the context of efficiency and effectiveness, is your area losing effectiveness because you are doing too much? What would you propose as a solution for this dilemma? (DSS Requirement)
Recently, we were asked to transition our peer coaching training program to be more general so that other peer educators could participate. While this creates an efficiency across the division, we are concerned that the training is now too general and the large number of peer educators we are supporting during training has diverted us from curriculum development. We would like to go back to the old model.

Outreach, Marketing & Promotion

Consistent with our mission and goals, the Back on Track Program area uses the following strategies for outreach, marking and promotion (CAS 2.2.6):
- Postcard to students who are on academic probation explaining the Back on Track program.
- Email to students on academic probation explaining the program.
- Guest presentations during advisor training.

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Appendix B:
Activity Assessment Plan for Back on Track Course
(CAS Tool #4; CAS Standards 3.1.1, 3.1.4, 4.1.2.3, 4.3.1)

Description: Back on Track is a 1 unit, 8 week course for academically at-risk first-year students.

Outcome Type	Specific Outcomes Assessed	KPI (DSS Requirement)	Frequency of Assessment (4.2.2)	Type of Data & Analysis (4.1.2.g, 4.4.2)	CAS Alignment?
Learning (CAS 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.4)	Students enrolled in Back on Track will be able to understand their current GPA in the context of how to return to Good Standing.	Persistence Completion Empower	Every semester course is taught.	Academic Strategic Plan Assignment	Yes
	Students enrolled in Back on Track will be able to articulate the steps required to pursue their goal of an undergraduate degree at NMSU.	Persistence Completion Empower Guide	Every semester course is taught.	Academic Strategic Plan Assignment	
	Students enrolled in Back on Track will be able to describe how their undergraduate education can connect them to a purposeful and satisfying life.	Persistence Completion Empower	Every semester course is taught.	Student Purpose Statement Assignment	
Retention (DSS)	Students enrolled in Back on Track will be retained at greater rates than prior to the Back on Track Intervention.	Persistence	Each Fall FTFT Cohort will be tracked for retention.	Institutional Data; Frequency comparisons	Yes
Evaluation (DSS)	Instructors teaching Back On Track will be evaluated for teaching effectiveness.	Persistence	For each faculty, every semester of teaching.	Student Evaluations of Teaching (SET)	No
Peak Engagement (DSS)	The student enrollment data for all Back on Track courses will be documented each semester.	Engage	Every semester course is taught.	Numerical Tables, Frequency counts and percentages	No
Trends (DSS)	Each semester, comparisons for student success (standing, GPA, retention, graduation rates), disaggregated by student groups will be compiled.	Persistence	Fall to Fall and Spring to Spring data will be compiled.	Numerical Tables, Frequency counts and percentages	No
Intervention Effectiveness (DSS)	See Retention Outcome	↓	↓	↓	No
Other Outcomes Assessment	n/a	↓	↓	↓	*n/a*

Appendix C:
Back on Track Assessment Report for
Academic Strategic Plan Assignment
(CAS Tool #4; CAS Standards 4.1.1, 4.1.2)

Title Of Assessment Report (10 word limit)
    Back on Track: Fostering Understanding for Returning to Good Standing

Authors
    Director of Back on Track
    Associate Director of Back on Track

Executive Summary/Abstract
The "Back on Track" program assessment focuses on whether students understand their GPA, the steps to return to good standing, and pursue their degrees with Peer Coaching assistance. It highlights the importance of this for student success and retention, especially for those on academic probation. Findings show first-generation, Pell-eligible students are more at risk. While most students grasp GPA calculations and recovery steps, improved training for coaches and faculty is needed. The program is effective overall.
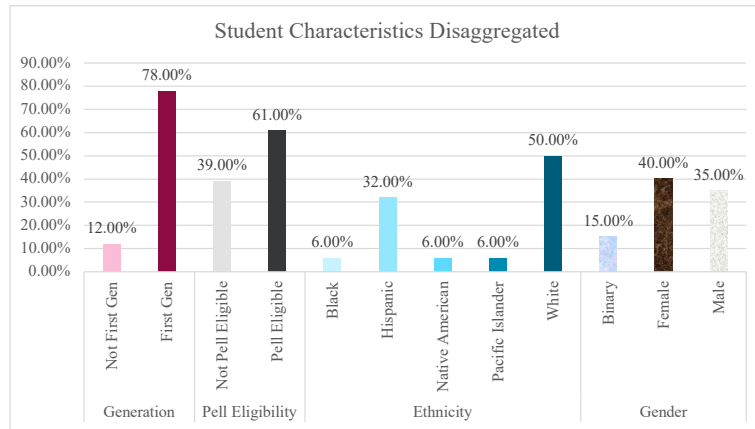

WHAT

Assessment Questions: (3.1.3)
1. Were students enrolled in Back on Track able to understand their current GPA in the context of how to return to Good Standing?
2. Were students enrolled in Back on Track able to articulate the steps required to pursue their goal of an undergraduate degree at NMSU?
3. Were students enrolled in Back on Track Coaching able to work with their Peer Coaching to identify the steps required to pursue their goal of an undergraduate degree at NMSU.

Why This Outcome Is Important For Student Success? (3.1.1)
- This outcome is important for student success because students on Warning or Probation status can become unmotivated and leave the institution without a clear path forward for academic recovery.
- This is important to Goal 1: Student Success through improved retention and graduation rates and decreased equity gaps.

Assessment/Methods

Student Participants (4.4.1)
- 100 students enrolled in Fall '25 Back on Track courses.

Key Performance Indicators/Materials/Measures (4.1.2.g)
- Data for assessment was embedded in required course assignments.
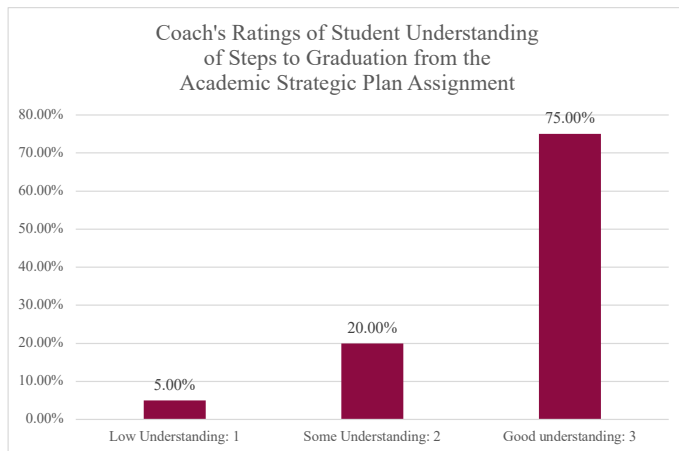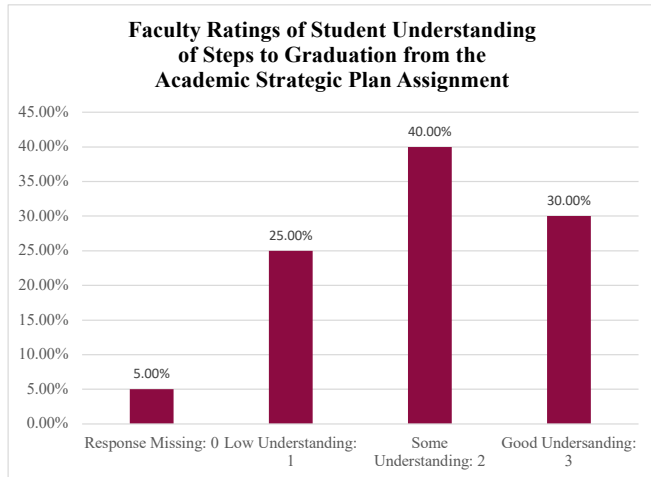
Procedure (4.4.2)
- Data for assessment was embedded in required course assignments.

SO WHAT

Results/Findings/Outcomes (4.1.5)
- Data was derived from the grades on the Student Strategic Plan Assignment questions.

Faculty Ratings of Student Understanding of Steps to Graduation from the Academic Strategic Plan Assignment
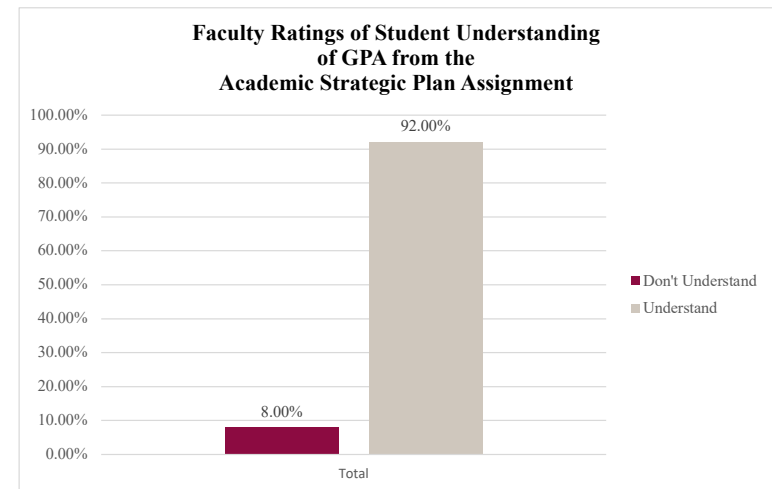
NOW WHAT

Continuous Improvement (4.1.4, 4.1.9)

- The data indicate that first-generation, Pell eligible students were more likely to be on Warning, P1, or P2 status.
- There was little difference between other demographics within the group of students on Warning, P1, or P2 status.
- Coaches rated students much higher as to their understanding of how to return to Good Standing than the faculty. This suggests that more training is needed for both groups on the grading rubric.
- The majority of the students appear to understand how to calculate GPA and how to return to Good Standing and complete their degrees. Thus this assignment and related class experiences appear to be effective.

References (4.3.1)

Success, M. (2020). *How to Move Students Off of Academic Probation*. Probation Press.

Coach's Ratings of Student Understanding of Steps to Graduation from the Academic Strategic Plan Assignment
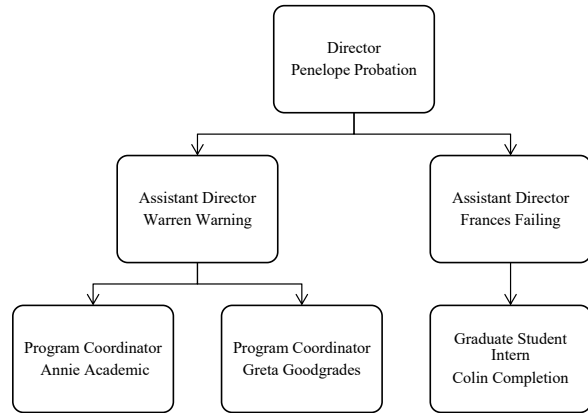

CAS Bells and Whistles Checklist:
Did your assessment include any of the following? If so, be sure you added enough details in the report to document these items for your CAS Self-Study.

This assessment:	
✓	Was created in collaboration <u>within</u> area (4.1.2.a)
	Was created in collaboration <u>between</u> areas
	Addressed the role of power and positionality for those conducting assessment 4.1.2.e)
✓	Was ethical for participants (4.1.2.f)
✓	Was equity-centered for participants (4.1.2.f)
✓	Was manageable for gathering and evaluating data (4.4.4)
✓	Included disaggregated data (4.5.3)
	Used multiple measurement approaches (4.4.2)
	Used best practices in qualitative or quantitative research methods. (4.5.1)
	Avoided deficit-based reporting of results. (4.6.2)
✓	Reflects data informed decision-making for continuous improvement. (4.6.5)
	Used measures and methods that were valid, reliable, and trustworthy. (4.4.5)

Appendix D:
Back on Track Organization Chart

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                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │     Director     │
                    │ Penelope Probation│
                    └──────────────────┘
              ┌──────────────┴──────────────┐
              ▼                             ▼
    ┌──────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────┐
    │ Assistant Director│          │ Assistant Director│
    │  Warren Warning   │          │  Frances Failing  │
    └──────────────────┘          └──────────────────┘
       ┌──────┴──────┐                     │
       ▼             ▼                     ▼
┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
│Program       │ │Program       │  │Graduate Student│
│Coordinator   │ │Coordinator   │  │    Intern     │
│Annie Academic│ │Greta Goodgrades│ │Colin Completion│
└──────────────┘ └──────────────┘  └──────────────┘
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Appendix E:
Pictures