

Program Review in a Time of Limited Resources: Aligning Institutional and Departmental Goals and Budgets

Stuart J. Sigman

Suzanne Benally

Goals for Today's Presentation

- Describe the context that led to the creation of the Department Systematic Review (DSR)
- Present the main features of the DSR
- Clarify roles and responsibilities for main participants
- Report the intended and achieved outcomes over a 3-year period
- Project future modifications and uses of the DSR



Naropa
UNIVERSITY

Context: Naropa University

- **Young university**
 - Founded as summer institute in 1974
 - Fully accredited by HLC in 1986
- **1050 FTE students**
 - 450 undergraduates
 - 600 master's students (residential and low-residency)
- **95% tuition dependent; 45%+ PELL-eligible students**
- **Contemplative pedagogy** infused in liberal arts and professional studies

Mission Statement

... Naropa students explore the inner resources needed to engage courageously with a complex and challenging world, to help transform that world through skill and compassion, and to attain deeper levels of happiness and meaning in their lives ...

Context:

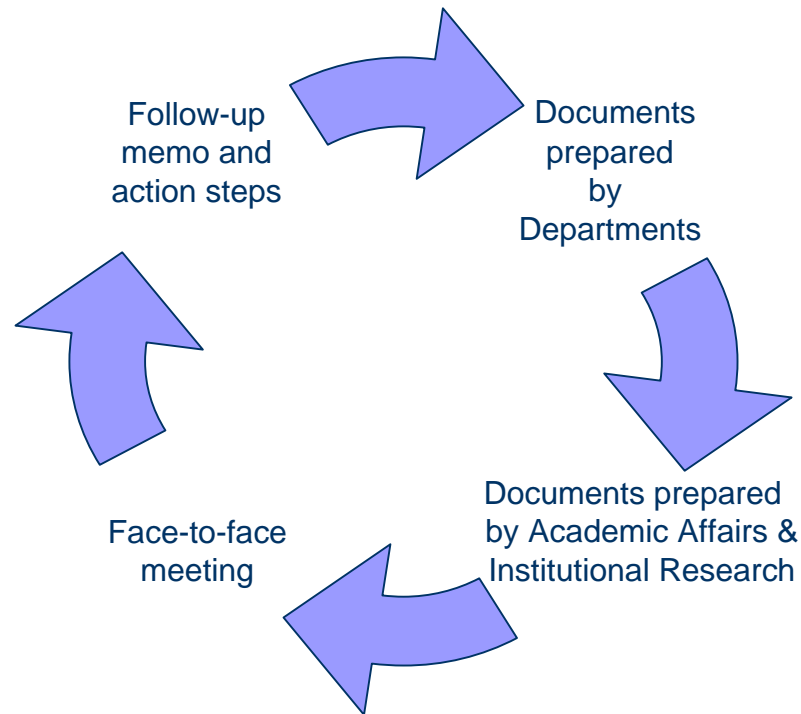
The Situation in Summer 2006

- New Academic Affairs leadership team
- Early stages of outcomes assessment planning
- Department self-studies complete, but no plans for follow-up
- No tradition of comprehensive program review
- Lack of multi-year budgeting
- Financial concerns about study abroad and other academic programs
- Complaints about lack of transparency (“backroom deals”)

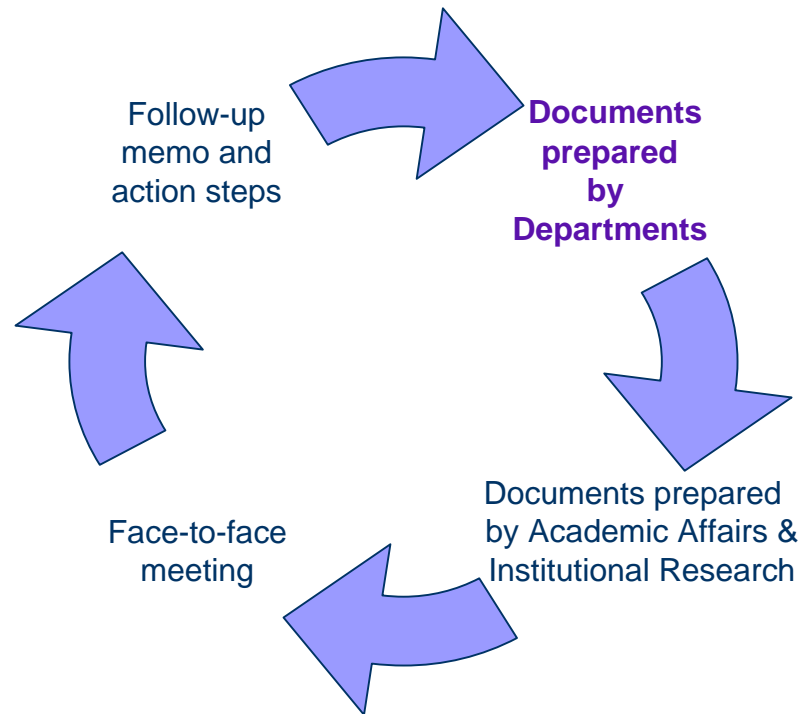
Solution: Department Systematic Review (DSR)

- Introduce new VPAA to Chairs and Administrative Directors
- Build common vocabulary about curriculum and finances
- Provide communication channel from/to Departments and Academic Affairs
- Integrate curricular planning, outcomes assessment, enrollment and financial analysis, and resource allocation
- Build accountability from/to Departments and Academic Affairs
- Currently Year 3: Model a culture of institutional planning

Structure of the DSR



Structure of the DSR

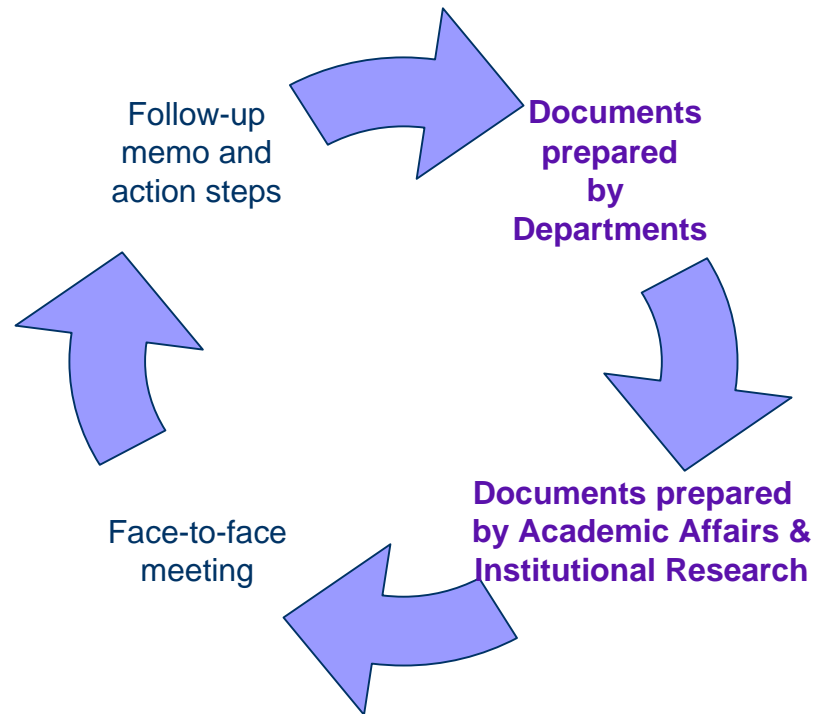


DSR documents

Department

- **SWOT analysis**, emphasizing program plans
- **Student learning outcomes assessment**
 - 3-Year Plan
 - Annual Implementation Plan
 - Report
- **Budget request**, emphasizing funding needed to implement program plans

Structure of the DSR



DSR documents

Department

- **SWOT analysis**, emphasizing program plans
- **Student learning outcomes assessment**
 - 3-Year Plan
 - Annual Implementation Plan
 - Report
- **Budget request**, emphasizing funding needed to implement program plans

Academic Affairs

- **Enrollment and retention data**
- Results of **student satisfaction surveys**, NSSE, etc.
- **Financial analysis:** “Contribution to Overhead”
 - Individual department or program data
 - Comparative data

SWOT template

Department of _____ Planning Document
Office of Academic Affairs
Naropa University
2008-2009 Academic Year

Part I. Department SWOT Analysis.

In order to develop plans for the future, it's helpful for the department to take stock of its current circumstance: what is the department most proud of in terms of its curriculum, faculty, student learning outcomes, etc.? What keeps the chair and others in the department worrying about in the middle of the night? What is happening in the internal Naropa context or external academic and social landscape that provides the department with a way of strengthening or expanding its current operations and offerings? What is happening in the internal Naropa context or external academic and social landscape that threatens the sustainability of the department and/or specific programs?

A. Strengths.
B. Weaknesses.
C. Opportunities.
D. Threats.

Part II. Establishing Chair and Department Goals for 2008-09.

A. Goal 1. Statement:

a. Strategy 1. Statement:

1. Tactics.

2. "Driver."

1

1. Time Frame.

2. Personnel Resources Required.

3. Financial Resources Required.

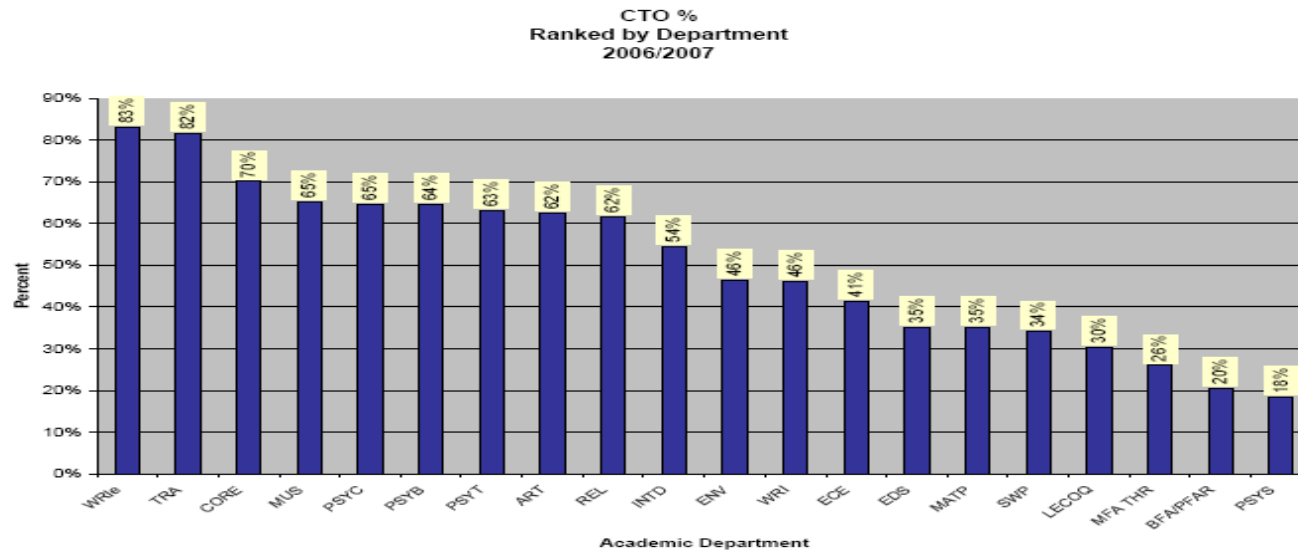
4. Physical Resources Required.

5. Projected Outcome.

6. Measure of Success.

7. Confounding Factors.

Comparative CTO analysis



Annual Assessment Implementation Plan

V. Annual Assessment Implementation Plan

Learning Outcome	Measure	Expected Results	Rubric?	Reviewers	Data Collection & Storage	Completion (Est.)
1.a. Students will be able to apply a clear methodological perspective in their writing.	Course instructor will complete an assessment rubric sheet for each senior theses. Assessment committee will review 30% of theses.	90% of student theses will demonstrate consistent methodology.	Will be developed before the review process in Spring 2008 and refined after first use.	Department Chair & Course Instructor for Senior Theses	Class instructor for senior thesis will instruct students to make two copies of the paper. One paper will be given to the department AD for storage until review.	Review of theses for learning outcomes in those goal will take place in alternating years.

Annual Assessment Report

Assessment Findings

- Goals and learning outcomes
- Assessment activities
- What was learned through data analysis
- Information use

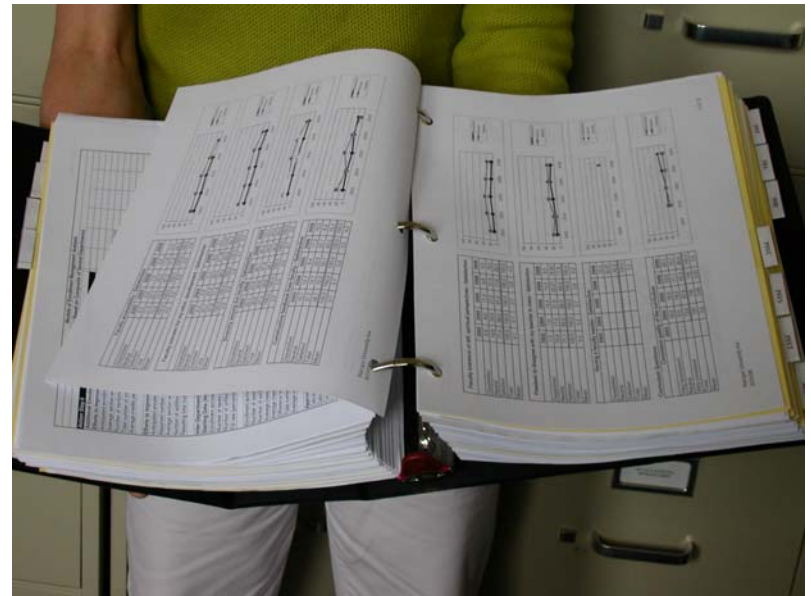
Assessment Utilization

- Process of dissemination of assessment results
- Curricular development based on results
- Changes to department structure
- Summary of all action

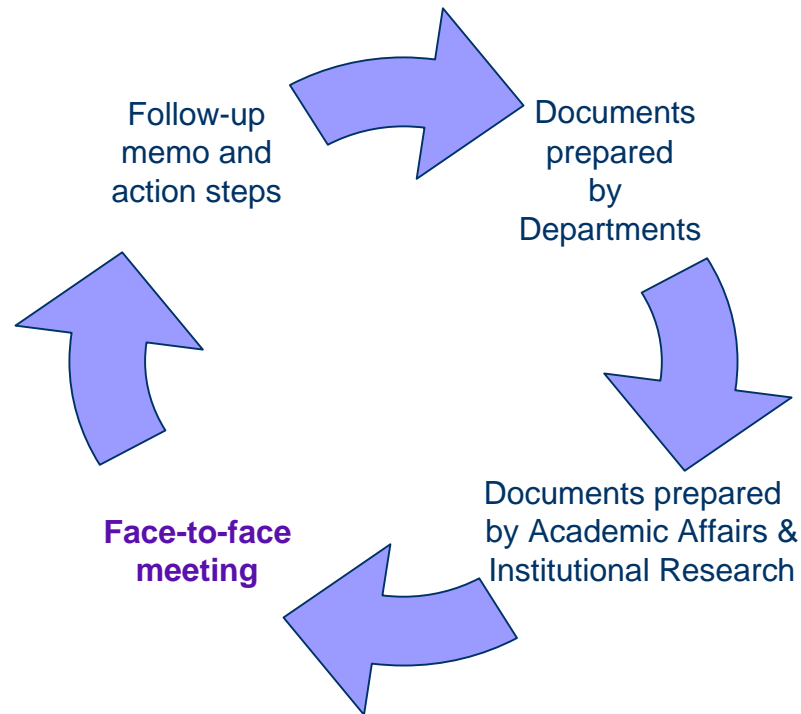
Assessment Planning

- Summary of best practices
- Recommendations for changes to plan, goals and learning outcomes, or steps for additional research

The Cumulative Library of DSR Materials



Structure of the DSR

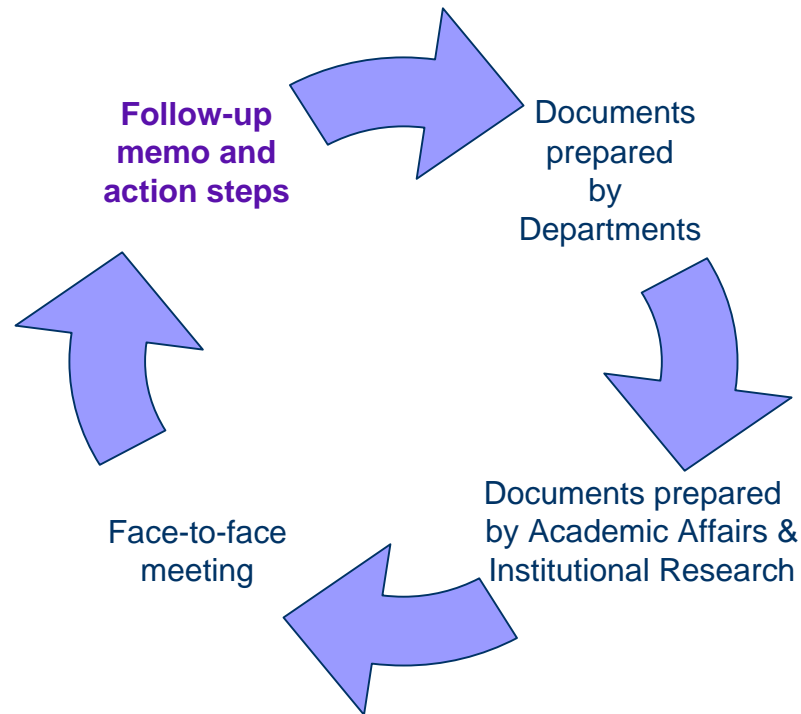


Meeting Agenda for DSR

- **Preliminary set of questions communicated in advance to focus each meeting**
 - Year 1: Building common vocabulary
 - Year 2: Focused attention on assessment planning
 - Year 3: Strategic Plan “efficiencies” structure the meeting
- **Review of SWOT analysis, CTO/budget, enrollment**
- **Student learning outcomes, student satisfaction**
- **Identification of follow-up and action steps**

On average, the DSR process results in 21 meetings, each approximately 90 minutes in duration, spread over 4 weeks.

Structure of the DSR



DSR Follow-up Memo and Action Steps

- Records department accomplishments
- Creates a feedback loop
- Provides documentation of the meeting
- Establishes agreements and accountabilities between Academic Affairs and academic departments

DSR Follow-up Memo and Action Steps: Examples

- **Performing Arts:** Establish task force to propose degree change from B.F.A. to B.A.
- **Academic Affairs:** Meet with Student Administrative Services to revise student satisfaction survey
- **Interdisciplinary Studies:** Complete Gender Studies proposal and transmit to Curriculum Committee

DSR Accomplishments (1)

- DSR data and notes used by Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Team to target degree programs for investment and enrollment growth
- Academic Affairs and Faculty Executive Committee prioritize collated budget requests
- Assistant Dean writes report on curricular alignment with Mission Statement for HLC self-study

DSR Accomplishments (2)

- Academic Affairs prepares multi-year hiring plan based on department resource priorities, mandates of strategic plan
- Departments self-identify, or are identified by Academic Affairs, as needing assistance in meeting diversity goals (recruitment & curriculum)
- Academic Affairs brings together departments experiencing similar problems (e.g., logistical and budgetary relationship with Extended Studies)

Meta-Analysis of DSR

- **Outcomes grid**
- **Academic Affairs staff debriefing**
- **Survey of Chairs and Administrative Directors**
- **Annual modifications**
 - Responses to debriefing and survey
 - Changes in institutional circumstances (strategic plan implementation)

Outcomes Grid (1)

4/14/2009

2008/ 2009 Department Systemic Review:
Academic Affairs Meta-Analysis

Goals	Expected Outcomes	Activities	Timeline	Measure	Results/ Suggestions (Department Perspective)	Results/ Suggestions (Academic Affairs Perspective)	08-09 Status of Plans for Modifications	Plans for Future Modifications
1) To engage all academic departments in a culture of planning and assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty & administrators will articulate a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of program review and the review process. All departments will participate in an annual DSR. Meet the NCA requirements for documentation and evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct department systematic reviews on an annual basis. Build multi-year documentation for NCA. 	<p>October – DSR Prep DSR Mtgs</p> <p>Nov – Follow-up Revisions</p> <p>Annual - AA June Assessment of DSR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeliness meeting required reports. Adequate preparation of materials. Participation in evaluating and interpreting results. Comprehensive documentation of DSR and evidence of continuous improvement. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct orientation/training session prior to the departmental preparation for 08-09 DSR. Training session should not be formulaic; should attempt to get at needs expressed by departments to have better understanding and control of their operations. 08-09 DSR will ask departments to record success in follow-up from previous DSRs and SWOT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

1

Outcomes Grid (2)

- Records DSR accomplishments
- Uses an assessment template with goals, expected outcomes, activities, timeline, measures, results
- Tracks results/suggestions from both department and AA perspectives
- Establishes plans for future modifications of DSR
- Indicates progress on previously agreed-upon DSR modifications
- Proposes future modifications

Academic Affairs Staff Debriefing

Sample comments:

- “Departments do not have a system in place for using course/instructor evaluations.”
- “The CTO model is inadequate for evaluating health of undergraduate programs. Even small departments contribute student enrollments to rest of university.”
- “Post-DSR survey results are good, but we need to encourage participation of more department faculty for each DSR session.”

Future Developments of the DSR (1)

- **Cross-department resource analysis**
 - Build greater information transparency
 - Establish equitable resource allocation across departments
 - Provide data for Academic Plan, Enrollment Management Plan
- **Strategic plan will increasingly become the lens for future DSRs**
 - Year 3: Instructional “efficiency” theme structured DSR
 - Year 3: Separated financial and outcomes assessment portions
 - Year 4: Department alignment with new Academic Plan
 - Year 4: Department contributions to university-wide retention initiative
- **Possibly continue separation of financial and curriculum outcomes portions of DSR**

Future Developments of the DSR (2)

- Expand DSR to non-degree programs, other academic units
- Seek greater involvement by Faculty Executive Committee
- Form hypotheses/questions for external program visitors for targeted departments
- Digitize the DSR library for HLC self-study and site visit in 2010

Summary: Accomplishments

- DSR documents relational actions between departments and Academic Affairs
- Serves as a model for other administrative units of the university in tracking effectiveness
- Provides continuous feedback
- Sustains an annual cycle of review
- Fosters decision-making culture based on common understanding of University values & priorities, outcomes assessment, and financial benchmarks

I SURVIVED!
DSR!



Naropa
UNIVERSITY

DSR Resources

www.naropa.edu/academicaffairs

Click left navigation bar: **Resources**