

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Program Review
Student Leadership and Engagement

EXTERNAL REVIEWERS
Bernie Liang, Seattle University
Andrea Niemi, Loyola Marymount University

CAMPUS VISIT:
November 28-29, 2018

The review team was provided with a self study report and other documents including: assessment tools and rubrics, recent assessment data, position descriptions, training outlines for various programs, and a copy of the training manual. The team also reviewed the completed Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) functional standards and those developed by the appropriate professional associations in the field. A review of benchmarking data and comparison of best practices were also included in this study. During their visit, the reviewers were able to meet with and interview a variety of students, faculty and staff, who **Student Leadership and Engagement (SLE)** serves. They were also able to tour the University Center fourth floor space and other facilities on campus used for SLE operations, programs, and events. Prior to their visit, the reviewers were provided with USF's Vision, Mission, Values Statement, and Division of Student Life's Commitment Statement along with other University materials.

1. **How did the external review committee rate the overall quality of the department- excellent, very good, good, adequate, or poor? How does the department compare with well established/recognized programs nationally? Please provide a brief rationale for the external review committee's rating.**

SLE received a "good" rating from the external reviewers. SLE is functionally in alignment with other student activities/involvement offices across the nation. Rapport with with students, faculty and staff is solid. Their strong presence allows the organization to be effective in its work with students. There is a significant amount of support and guidance for student leaders, organizations, and collaborators. Staff members' diligent work ethic is a strength that prioritizes the student experience. In the interest of continuous improvement the external reviewers also identified opportunities for innovation and growth they believe will further strengthen program effectiveness.

2. **What are the most important general issues that emerged from the external review process?**

Recommendations included strengthening the connection to Catholic and Jesuit identities both in the mission statement and lived experience of the department. The observers noted that the current values that are presented need to be explicitly articulated. In addition, a realignment of assessment strategies should be considered. Reviewers were impressed with SLE's quantitative data collected internally to demonstrate strong student participation while recognizing the need to develop retention-based outcome assessments. Overall, they expressed a need for SLE to develop a three to five year strategic plan.

SLE is adequately resourced with the exception of Greek Life; significant focus and attention is needed to better align the support of fraternity and sorority programs with professionally accepted standards. If there will be a significant increase in students on campus and expansion in programming, there is also a concern with the advising needs of student organizations which will require additional personnel.

3. What specific recommendations for improving the department's quality has the external review committee made to the supervisor?

In the Ignatian spirit of Magis, the restless pursuit of excellence, the reviewers recommend the following action items to further the good work currently being accomplished in Student Leadership and Engagement at the University of San Francisco.

1. Create a three to five year strategic plan for Student Leadership and Engagement. This plan should include a learning goals and outcomes assessment plan, a program evaluation process, the collection of comprehensive engagement data and utilize a collective all-staff model for development and implementation.
2. Review and reimagine the use of the University Center fourth floor space to better serve the students. Consider the strategic co-location of students, graduate interns and staff based on their area of responsibility, identify the true space needs based on type of usage (work space vs. storage), encourage more visibility of student leaders through office hours, and implement a coordinated storage policy.
3. Refocus the Director role to include strategic planning and visioning, setting and measuring goals, creating staff accountability structures, budgetary oversight, creating collaborative bridges with University partners, leveraging existing relationships and creating more with untapped resources.
4. Intentionally create a comprehensive educational experience for the Graduate Interns that includes enhanced training, support, and development. This should include creating written instructional materials and foundational documents about SLE and their respective programmatic areas.
5. Implement measures to strengthen the quality of collective and individual relationships and interaction between SLE staff and other departments within the

- Student Engagement Unit. These measures should aim to increase a mutual sense of trust and collegiality and ensure an environment of inclusiveness, equity, and collaboration in office spaces and interactions. Re-affirmation of aspirations, expectations, and staff accountability for supporting this goal as well as opportunities for cross-staff development and reconciliation efforts are recommended.
6. Define the role, relationship, scope of support, expectations, and value-add of Greek Life on campus. It is imperative for Student Life to make a clear statement regarding their vision for the fraternal experience at USF and then adequately resource the program. A strong partnership between collegiate members, advisors, the University and National Organization is essential and must be built on a mutual understanding.
 7. Reevaluate the staff salary funding structure. Consider funding the Director salary from the SLE budget to provide stability for the department and then utilizing student fees for staff salaries that serve the students most directly.
 8. Simplify and create more sustainable student processes. Reevaluate the path to student involvement, student organization structures (green and gold status) and expectations for registration, publicity and funding requests, and general policies and procedures in order to streamline the student organization experience. Create written material (including diagrams or flow-charts) to assist independent navigation of the various policies or procedures.
 9. Incorporate Ignatian values more visibly into the work of SLE. This should include work with the Graduate Interns with SLE.
 10. Cultivate new partnerships and creative collaborations across campus. SLE is well respected with their campus partners and strong collaborations currently exist. There is an opportunity develop even more meaningful collaborations with Athletics, Residence Life, Bon Appetit, University Ministry and the Title IX office to enhance the student experience.
 11. Continue to imagine new ways to enhance graduate student life. Focus on strategic growth within the Associated Graduate Students of USF (AGSUSF) and the cultivation of conversations and partnerships with graduate admissions, program directors and graduate students.
 12. Innovate intentional ways to collectively outreach to undergraduate students about involvement. Partner with other areas of co-curricular involvement to brand the USF involvement experience at the macro level. Lead the campaign to promote all campus involvement opportunities which may make it easier for students to navigate their journey.
 13. Expand leadership program offerings as resources permit. Explore how the program could be expanded through collaborative partnerships with other

departments. Also evaluate the depth versus breadth of the various leadership programs offered.

14. Evaluate the current usage and benefit of OrgSync and the potential use and benefits possible. If a decision is made to continue the platform then a plan must be created to garner staff support and buy-in, increase student usage and add value to the student experience.
15. Consider alternate staffing models for SLE. A structure with two Associate Directors may be beneficial for departmental oversight along with the creation of a dedicated Sorority and Fraternity Life advisor.
16. Explore the creation of one comprehensive Student Engagement department. Combining the three departments that currently report to the Assistant Vice Provost for Student Engagement (Cultural Centers, Orientation and Student Leadership and Engagement) could enhance the overall effectiveness and learning in the areas of student leadership and engagement.

4. In the opinion of the external review committee, is the department advancing the University's strategic initiatives and the divisional goals and commitments in the programs and services it offers?

Yes, the department is advancing the University strategic initiatives; however, the department must improve in the articulation of its goals in alignment with the University and Division of Student Life.

5. Is the department in compliance with professionally accepted standards? What best practices have been adopted and implemented?

SLE's CAS Standards are Campus Activities, Leadership Programs, and Greek Life. Greek Life would need greater attention in accordance to the CAS Standards. However, this recommendation comes with a caveat considering the unique USF student and how their needs may not reflect national trends with Greek Life. USF should continue to pave its own path in this area informed by student experience and observations from best practices and trends. Greek Life specifically should be reviewed externally in three to five years after current recommendations have been implemented.

6. Does the department have adequate space, personnel, and budget to carry out its programs and services?

The department has limited space that will impact their ability to move forward with all the recommendations. Because the department resides within the Student Engagement Unit, there is limited space to expand without infringing on programming space, offices, and resource centers of other departments.

7. Has the department identified appropriate learning outcomes and implemented assessment strategies to measure progress in this area?

Yes, the internal self-study has identified appropriate learning outcomes. However, work is needed to assess the effectiveness of these outcomes. SLE is aware of this limitation and has begun work on developing assessment strategies and improving capacity to track student involvement in programs/services aside from signature events such as involvement fairs and concerts.

8. What is the timetable for the response to the external review committee's recommendations for program improvement? What can the Vice President's Office do to appropriately respond to the review?

As the report was completed in January 2018, it is feasible that many of the recommendations will be discussed and planned for implementation in Summer/Fall 2018. SLE already committed to reviewing all policies and procedures related to student organizations oversight, professional staff responsibilities and reorganization, the hiring of additional staff, and a review of Greek Life.

The Vice Provost of Student Life has been consulted to move on some of the more immediate items sooner. A staff resignation in February 2018 provided an opportunity for SLE to review the staffing structure, adjust job descriptions, and create a new Associate Director position focused specifically on supporting Greek Life, graduate student organizations, and organization advisors. Meanwhile, the Student Engagement Unit has focused on building collective goals and values, stronger interpersonal relationships, joint operational support systems, and a review of space allocation and usage on the University Center fourth floor.

9. What general comments or issues, if any, are crucial to understanding the reviewer's report?

Please view the full External Review report.