

The Process

Units in the College of Letters, Arts & Social Sciences (CLASS) will conduct the second round of focus group assessments of graduating seniors in their programs this spring.*

Unit Responsibilities

- Select one undergraduate program for evaluation in a 90-minute focus group/structured interview. These revolved around the following questions: (1) How well did you achieve the program learning goals? (2) What aspects of your education in this program helped you with your learning and why were they helpful? (3) What might the department do differently that would help you learn more effectively and why would these actions help? (4) How well did the program provide accurate, timely, and quality academic advising? (5) How well did the program provide career, internship, and graduate student advising?
- Unit administrators are required to (a) find possible times for the focus group through correspondence with facilitators, (b) find rooms, (c) locate 10-15 graduating senior (or senior) participants, (d) provide facilitators with most recent program learning outcomes, (e) compensate facilitators for their service at a rate of \$100 per facilitator per session after their reports are submitted to CLASS, and (f) make sure food and refreshments (or whatever other inducement) are in place at the session.

College Responsibilities

- CLASS will provide a 1-credit p/np graduate internship to train 4-8 CLASS graduate students to facilitate and record the sessions. Internship announcement will be posted through CAPP office and emailed to all CLASS graduate students. Academic benefits for graduate students include: training of focus group methodology, supervision of focus group practice, and report writing.
- CLASS Associate Dean will serve as internship faculty and will train and supervise interns.
- Graduate student interns will complete the on-line NIH course required by HAC. Per institutional protocol, HAC approval is not required if focus group data is for institutional assessment purposes only.
- CLASS will collect facilitator notes and edit them to ensure that the data is anonymous and clearly written.
- CLASS will distribute findings to each unit.

Internship Responsibilities

- Each graduate student will complete the on-line NIH HAC online course.
- Graduate students will participate in a training session on focus group facilitation methodology and report writing process.
- One graduate student will serve as point person for sending and receiving email from unit administrators.
- The graduate students will work with unit administrators to set the calendar for the focus groups.
- Two graduate students will attend each session, one as facilitator and one as recorder.
- The graduate students will come prepared with a handout for each session containing (a) the program learning outcomes, and (b) the questions they were to ask.
- Upon arrival, the graduate students will prepare cards with identification numbers for each of the participating seniors, given that these are to be anonymous.
- The sessions will not be audiotaped or videotaped unless there are specific requests to do so (and, in this case, a consent form will be required). The recorder will be responsible for tracking the discussion and recording the main points.
- Afterwards, the two participating graduate students will compare notes from the session, and one of them will write up the record in a brief report for use by the program.

*units may chose to engage in a different type of assessment procedure (i.e. graduating senior individual interviews).