

# Academic Support Unit Assessment

Academic Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Asian American Resource Center

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**Northern Illinois  
University**

Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation (AAE)

## Academic Support Unit Assessment

### Part I: Assessment Plan

#### 1. History and Context

##### *History*

The Asian American Center was initially established as a part-time program in March 2000 under the auspices of the office now known as Student Involvement & Leadership Development. The part-time program moved to the Jacob House in September 9, 2004, and was re-named the Asian American Center. The part-time opening of this Center represented a significant step toward establishing a “home away from home” for a growing population of Asian American college students attending NIU. The Asian American Center opened its doors for full-time operation on July 1, 2005. From FY 2005-FY 2018, the center was staffed with 1 FTE, 1 graduate assistant, and student workers.

In FY 2006, the Center’s Pilot Peer Mentor Program received national recognition as NASPA’s Bronze winner, which is third for its category. Subsequently, in FY 2007, 2008, and 2009, the Asian American Center, in conjunction with other NIU diversity centers, received Target Campus Grant funds to support the Joint Peer Mentor Training Program (involving participants from respective peer mentor programs from the Center for Black Studies, Latino Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, Center for Accessibility Resources, CHANCE Program, and Asian American Center).

In FY 2010, the Asian American Center was awarded funds to develop a Study Abroad program for a diverse cohort of undergraduate students. These funds were used to conduct a site visit to the Philippines to develop a Leadership, Service, and Culture program with Gawad Kalinga, a not-for-profit organization that builds homes in the Philippines. In FY 2011, when the

Philippines experienced a travel alert prohibiting NIU's undergraduates to travel there, efforts were re-focused, and China became the central focus for a study abroad trip.

In FY 2012, to support the University's Vision 2020 strategic plan, the Asian American Center implemented two new initiatives. The first initiative involved active recruitment of prospective new and transfer students to NIU. The Center, in conjunction with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, created tailor-made visits for eight high schools, youth groups, and community colleges and was involved with active recruitment within the northern Illinois region. The second initiative involved the implementation of the new Study Abroad trip to China: "Leadership, Service, and Culture." The focus of this study abroad trip was to engage a diverse cohort of undergraduate students in leadership exchange at three universities, service with not-for-profit organizations in China, and cultural exploration at significant historical sites in Beijing, China.

In FY 2013, under the leadership of Dr. Katrina Caldwell, the AAC shifted its focus away from direct recruitment and back to a primary focus on retention efforts. The AAC was allocated additional financial resources to enhance the Peer Mentor Program, leadership development, cultural education programming, and outreach. As a result, the AAC realigned its programs and services to focus on the following core elements:

- Advocacy & Academic Success: Advocacy and academic success efforts help remove barriers, further the work of social justice, teach cultural competencies and dismantle Asian American stereotypes. Serving on university committees also furthered advocacy efforts on behalf of Asian American students.
- Cultural Education: Cultural education workshops, programs and class presentations educate about Asian history, cultural traditions, intersecting identities, stereotypes and diverse sub-populations; Cultural programming also promotes faculty and doctoral research focused on Asian culture
- Student Leadership Development and Peer Mentoring: impacts retention and promotes engaged learning. The graduation banquet recognizes academic achievement.
- Cultural Engagement: Cultural engagement is supported through student involvement in cultural traditions, and cultural celebrations.

- Community Building: community building and outreach to Asian communities solidifies students' decisions to enroll at NIU and support NIU recruitment efforts. Community building and outreach with faculty, students, community members and alumni provides opportunities for engagement.
- Resources and Services: use of the facility promotes small gatherings, study space and cultural space.

In 2013 the Asian American Center also submitted its UAP Report and received feedback on how to improve its programs. The UAP acknowledged that the Asian American Center was doing worthwhile programs, and suggested that the AAC approach program offerings in a more cohesive and comprehensive fashion. The panel suggested that we “build” our program to reflect/measure a growing membership and engagement of students.

**FY 2014:** The Asian American Center underwent its second Internal Review Process which focused on 14 key areas as outlined by the CAS standards: mission & goals, human resources, program & services, diversity & equity, financial resources, technology, facility & space. Due to lack of resources, the Asian American Center was rated an overall score of 1.75, which would be described as “there is some evidence that the criterion has been attempted, but it is has not been met.” (See Appendix F: Other Data for Ratings, p 18.) Based upon 2013 UAP feedback, the institutional shift to focus back on retention efforts, limited human resources, and the 2014 Internal Review the AAC re-vamped its approach for program offerings and student engagement. The Asian American Center re-focused its efforts on re-building its retention initiatives such as the Peer Mentor Program and OHANA Retention Program. Instead of providing multiple programs on various nights and days, the AAC re-developed and re-aligned its program offerings to meet new departmental goals through a comprehensive program: OHANA Retention Program. “OHANA means family and family mean no one left behind or forgotten.” The OHANA Retention Program is now a multi-faceted, multi-tiered program that takes place once a week with rotating topics. The Peer Mentor Program is also seamlessly integrated into the “OHANA!” Retention Series with a requirement for mentors to attend and they are expected to invite their assigned protégés. All OHANA events and topics align with the following departmental goals:

- Academic Success
- Cultural Education/Engagement
- Leadership Development
- Community Building

Also in FY 14, the center revamped its cultural education offerings and began to implement a series of mini workshops to departmental units and in the resident halls. This initiative was further expanded in FY 15 & FY 16.

In FY 14, the Asian American Center implemented a new initiative, Asian & Asian American Overnight Leadership Retreat, through funding from Career Services and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. This overnight Leadership Retreat was held, Friday March 28, 7:00 P.M. to Saturday, March 29, 7:00 p.m. at Walcamp, Kingston, IL. The purpose of the retreat was to engage 22 student leaders in activities and discussion to strengthen the Asian and Asian American community at NIU. In particular there was an emphasis on strengthening connections between Asian international students and the Asian American students did not engage much with each other. The learning outcomes were for students to:

- Learn how to build community
- Develop leadership skills by engaging in various activities;
- Identify stereotypes between Asian & Asian American students;
- Discuss ways to strengthen the Asian & Asian American community at NIU.

**FY 15:** The new approach to the OHANA Retention Series was piloted in FY 15 and resulted in very encouraging outcomes with 1339 participation rates. The OHANA Retention Program is designed to:

- assist students in their academic and leadership success at NIU;
- actively engage students by offering rotating topics and culturally relevant activities
- support mentors in building their relationship with protégés;
- provide students with opportunities to take on leadership roles in planning “OHANA!” Nights

Data show an exponential increased level of participation and steady satisfaction rates. A table with participation numbers are listed in Appendix A: Retention Data, p. 1

**FY 2016:** NIU underwent an extensive Program Prioritization Review and the Asian American Resource. The Asian American Center was identified as one of the departments categorized under “Transform.” Also during this year the Asian American Center’s OHANA Program doubled its participation expanded on its cultural education offerings

**FY 2017:** To facilitate the “Transformation” process, the Asian American Center Task Force, convened by the Director in Spring 2017, submitted a report which identified key deficiency areas that needed transformation. This report, “*A Campaign for Institutional Change: Making the Invisible Visible*,” highlighted several areas, namely: human resources, programs and services, financial resources, technology, facility & space

allocation. (**Appendix XX**). As a result, financial resources were approved and allocated to provide the following resources for the Asian American Resource Center:

- Full-time Office Manager (Spring 2018)
- Fulltime Associate Director (hiring in process)
- Re-location to a new Interim Facility (Fall 2019)
- Enhanced technology (Fall 2019)
- Additional Programs: Asian American Graduate Celebration & Pilot Program for

**FY 2018:** the Asian American Centers Task Force recommendations were approved and a new interim facility was identified. Full-time office manager started in March 2018 and renovations began in Summer FY 2018. The reporting structure for the diversity resource centers, including the Asian American Resource Center, moved to the Chief Diversity Officer.

**FY 2019:** The Asian American Center moved to a newly renovated facility on October 5, 2018, which included a name change to Asian American Resource Center (AARC). The AARC is now located at 375 Wirtz Road, TS 114. The newly renovated location is central to campus and instills intuitional pride. The newly renovated space provides a reception area, a conference room, spacious multi-purpose area, kitchenette, three offices, upgraded technology, updated equipment, and a small outdoor space along the west side building that is yet to be renovated. The move to this interim location creates a strategic opportunity to enhance the centers' mission, goals, and visibility on campus. It also creates an opportunity to strengthen the AARC's existing synergistic collaborations with academic and non-academic units, including Asian American Studies Programs.

#### **Synergistic Relationship with NIU Diversity Centers:**

In addition to providing student-centered cultural and student leadership programs, the Center Directors advocate to remove institutional barriers that negatively impact student recruitment, persistence/retention, and graduation. They also educate campus partners on trends, issues, and opportunities that affect campus climate and the university's stated commitment to building a diverse, equitable and inclusive community. The synergistic relationship between the Centers is managed and maintained through a shared organizational structure, grounded theoretically using a shared planning and development framework and practiced through joint and co-sponsored programs. As the student racial and ethnic demographics shift and student activism

and advocacy intensifies, the Centers will continue to find meaningful, intentional and strategies to work together to support the dignity and success of our diverse students.

The diversity resource centers at Northern Illinois University work together to provide "brave" spaces for students traditionally marginalized in higher education. The individual centers develop programs and services that meet the specific and complex needs of the priority population they are missioned to serve and work collaboratively to address the intersections of other identity markers including class, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, nationality and age.

### *Context*

In the midst of the previous AARC Five-Year Assessment Plan (2013-2018), four significant changes occurred at NIU that affected the AARC assessment: (1) NIU embarked on Program Prioritization—a data-informed year-long undertaking with the goal of aligning NIU's financial resources, throughout programs and units, with the goals of the university; (2) Multiple changes in reporting and organizational structure; (3) NIU implemented Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Goals in January 2019; ADEI conducted an update of the goals to align with the SEM plan; and (4) the Asian American Center moved to a newly renovated interim location in Fall 2019.

- 1) NIU Program Prioritization. The AARC, along with most units within Student Affairs, were identified in the final report for Program Prioritization in the "Transform" category. It is within this context and the subsequent changes in organizational-reporting structure and shifts in associate vice presidents that the AARC's data collection and assessment plans also transformed.
- 2) Multiple changes in reporting and organizational structure. The Asian American Resource Center along with the other diversity resource centers, began reporting to the Chief Diversity Officer in Spring 2018;
- 3) Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Goals. During the 2019 spring term, the units within the Division of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI) revised their goals, aligning them with the university's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEM) and the newly established goals of ADEI itself. Figure 1 on the next page shows the goals and their alignment for the AARC to both ADEI and the SEM Goals.
- 4) Relocation to New Interim Facility. FY 2019 data indicates that the enhanced resources and relocation of space resulted in an exponential increase in the AARC's resources and services, including the utilization of the facility (**Appendix E**).

Figure 1: Goal Alignment of the AARC to both ADEI Goals and the SEM Goals

<b>ADEI Goals</b>					
Goal 1: Design and implement programs, practices, curriculum, and services that support a diverse and inclusive community. (SEM 1&2)					
Goal 2: Support programs that educate students, faculty, and staff on diverse and rich histories, cultures and traditions. (SEM 1&3)					
Goal 3: Analyze relevant policies and practices, ensuring equity and inclusion, in partner with senior leadership and stakeholders. (SEM 1&3)					
Goal 4: Ensure all students have diverse cultural and academic experiences that strengthen and promote academic success. (SEM 1&3)					
Goal 5: Leverage ADEI as the hub for social justice and community engagement and to serve as a community resource to develop strong partnerships to advance					
<b>ADEI-level Goals</b>					
<b>Units</b>	<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Goal 4</b>	<b>Goal 5</b>
Asian American Resource Center	AARC 1, 2	AARC 4	AARC 3	AARC 1, 4	AARC 1, 3

  

<b>Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Goals</b>			
Goal One: Strengthen our distinctive identity as a public university that combines educational opportunity with student engagement.			
Goal Two: Achieve student enrollment that respects our mission and values while positioning NIU for fiscal sustainability.			
Goal Three: Support equitable access, opportunity and success for students from diverse backgrounds where diversity is broadly defined. equity, and inclusion in the Dekalb County community . (SEM 1)			
<b>Strategic Enrollment Management Goals</b>			
<b>Units</b>	<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>Goal 3</b>
Asian American Resource Center	AARC 1, 2, 3	AARC 1	AARC 2-4

<b>AARC Goal (2019)</b>	<b>UAP Goal &amp; Annual Planning Priorities (2013)</b>
Goal 1: Provide Academic Support programs and services to enhance persistence and academic achievement among the Asian American student population at NIU.	Goal 1: Support university efforts to recruit and retain Asian American students at NIU; provide student-centered programs and services to a diverse Asian American student population
Goal 2: Engage the NIU campus in cultural education to enhance understanding of the background, history, traditions, and current issues relevant to Asian Americans.	Goal 3: Establish an inclusive environment by providing outreach and advisement to Asian American student organizations and by raising awareness of the rich culture, heritage, and various ethnicities of Asian American college students.
Goal 3: Engage students in leadership experiences that are educationally and culturally relevant.	Goal 2: Provide programs and services that enhance student learning opportunities through leadership opportunities, student partner/employee positions, and internships
Goal 4: Conduct outreach efforts to Build Community and to enhance one's sense of belonging at NIU.	Goal 3: Establish an inclusive environment by providing outreach and advisement to Asian American student organizations and by raising awareness of the rich culture, heritage, and various ethnicities of Asian American college students
Goal 5: Utilize facility as an alternative educational and cultural space on campus to meet the diverse needs of faculty, staff and students and to support departmental goals.	Goal 5: Manage resources through effective management of Asian American Resource Center's facility, equipment, and human resources
Note: These goals were developed for divisional priorities and are not included as goals presently. Current goals are related directly to student learning, engagement and satisfaction.	Goal 4: Engage staff in ongoing professional development and service to the field and encourage students' professional development as well
	Goal 6: Utilize relevant technological resources and services in the support of creating an inclusive environment for Asian American students.

## 2. Mission, Goals and Objectives, 2019

### *Mission Statement*

The center creates an inclusive environment where Asian American students cultivate a strong sense of community at NIU, and where campus and community partners collaborate to raise awareness about the rich cultural heritage of Asian Americans. The Asian American Resource Center provides:

- Student-centered services
- Student learning opportunities
- Leadership development
- Student organizational advisement
- Educational/cultural programs

### *Unit Goals and Objectives*

**Goal 1.** Provide Academic Support programs and services to enhance persistence and academic achievement among the Asian American student population at NIU.

**Objective 1.1.** Asian American Resource Center will contribute to the NIU retention efforts by establishing a benchmark retention rate for NIU students engaged with the AARC Peer Mentor Program and AARC employment.

**Assessment Method:** Data analysis from IE (Institutional Effectiveness) in conjunction with AARC participant data

**Target:** Establish benchmark data for 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> semester retention of protégés in Peer Mentor Program (TBD based on data from 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, FYs 16-19)

**Objective 1.2.** Asian American Resource will launch pilot Boey Honors Program in FY 18

**Assessment Method:** Tracking numbers; monthly meetings

Target: 10 students will enroll in the pilot Boey Honors Program by September 30 FY

19.

**Objective 1.3.** Asian American Resource Center will Facilitate Graduate Celebration for Asian and Asian Americans and recognize graduates with 3.0 and above

**Assessment Method(s):** Registration data of students and guests.

**Target(s):** Achieve 10% attendance of NIU Asian American graduates at the AARC Graduate Celebration.

**Goal 2.** Engage the NIU campus in cultural education to enhance understanding of the background, history, traditions, and current issues relevant to Asian Americans.

**Objective 2.1.** Students' participants will enhance their understanding of Asian American culture, identity development, traditions, issues, and diverse Asian ethnicities

**Assessment Method:** Student journals, surveys or focus groups

**Target:** 50% of students attending the Classroom Presentations will increase their knowledge about culture, identity development, traditions, issues, and diverse Asian ethnicities by at least 1 point on a 4-point Likert scale

**Objective 2.2.** Staff participants attending the Mini-Training Workshops will increase their understanding of stereotypes common to Asian American cultures

**Assessment Method:** surveys

**Target:** 50% mini-training workshop participants will increase their understanding of stereotypes common to Asian American cultures by at least 1 point on the Likert scale

**Results:** 85% **mini-workshop** respondents (n= 85) indicated that they increased their knowledge about Asian or Asian Americans by at least one point on the Likert scale.

**Goal 3.** Engage students in leadership experiences that are educationally and culturally relevant.

**Objective 3.1.** Asian American Resource Center will Provide students with peer mentoring through the AARC's Peer Mentor Program focusing on leadership and pre-professional skills development

**Assessment Method:** Surveys or personal reflection; data related to participation-to-percent of population at NIU served

**Target:** 60% of peer mentors will indicate acquisition of personal, leadership, and preprofessional skill development.

**Objective 3.2.** Asian American Resource Center will facilitate peer mentor leadership training retreat

**Assessment Methods:** Student journals, survey, direct observation, focus groups

**Target:** 50% of students will enhance self-identified leadership skills as a result of leadership training sessions.

*-Objective 3.3 begins on next page -*

**Objective 3.3.** Asian American Resource Center will Support AARC staff and student employees to stay current with professional knowledge by making available at least one professional development opportunity per year.

**Assessment Method:** Self report

**Target:** 100% of ARC staff will attend at least one professional development session per year.

**Goal 4.** Conduct outreach efforts to Build Community and to enhance one's sense of belonging at NIU.

**Objective 4.1.** Asian American Resource Center will develop community cohesion through the OHANA program, where students will develop sense of belonging

**Assessment Method:** Student survey

**Target:** 90% of participants will report an enhanced sense of belonging as a result of participation in programs offered by the Asian American Resource Center

**Objective 4.2.** OHANA students will be able to analyze their connections to Asian American cultures and heritage through participating in one or more of the 13 organizations connected to the AARC

**Assessment Method:** student surveys, focus groups, social media posts

**Target:** 90% of the participants in OHANA will participate in one of 13 organizations to demonstrate their analysis of connections between themselves and Asian American culture.

**Goal 5.** Utilize facility as an alternative educational and cultural space on campus to meet the diverse needs of faculty, staff and students and to support departmental goals.

**Objective 5.1.** Streamline Online Reservation Process to enhance utilization of the center with departments and organizations that support AARC goals

**Assessment Method:** Tracking numbers and goal alignment

**Target:** Establish a baseline utilization numbers from FY 19

### 3. Assessment Methods

**ASSESSMENT METHODS TABLE**

Assessment Method	Explanation			
	Description	Assessment-Level Target <sup>a</sup>	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible
Data analysis from IE (Institutional Effectiveness) in conjunction with AARC participant data	Peer Mentor Program Retention data for 1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester retention rate	Benchmark data from FY 2016-2018	At Institutional Research	AARC Director and Institutional Research
Participation numbers	Pilot Boey Honors Program	Benchmark data from FY 2019	Annually	AARC Director
Registration data of students and guests.	AARC Graduate Celebration	Achieve 10% attendance of NIU Asian American graduates at the AARC Graduate Celebration.	Annually	Office Manager
Student journals, surveys or focus groups	Cultural Education	80% of AARC participants will be able to describe at least three characteristics of Asian American culture, heritage.	Annually	GA
student surveys	Cultural Education	90% of the participants will be able to understand the origins of stereotypes common to Asian Americans and how to dismantle them.	Annually	GA
Surveys or personal reflection; data related to participation-to-percent of population at NIU served	Peer Mentor Program	60% of peer mentors will indicate acquisition of personal, leadership, and preprofessional skill development.	Annually	GA
Student journals, survey, direct observation, focus groups	Peer Mentor Training Retreat	50% of students will enhance self-identified leadership skills as a result of leadership training sessions.	Annually	GA
Sel-f-Report	Professional Development	100% of ARC staff will attend at least one professional development session per semester.	Annually	Director

Assessment Method	Explanation			
	Description	Assessment-Level Target <sup>a</sup>	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible
survey	Community Building	90% of participants will report an enhanced sense of belonging as a result of participation in programs offered by the Asian American Resource Center	Annually	Director & GA's
Self-Report-	Community Building	90% OHANA students will connect to Asian American cultures and heritage through participating in one or more of the 13 organizations associated with the AARC	Annually	Director & GA
Tracking numbers	Facility Utilization	Establish a baseline utilization numbers from FY 19	Semester	Office Manager
<i>Note.</i> <sup>a</sup> Assessment-level target is the level of performance the unit hopes to see on the assessment (e.g., 85% percent of participants demonstrate X, Y, and Z).				

**ASSESSMENT METHODS-BY-OUTCOMES MATRIX**

Assessment Method	Goal				
	1. Academic Support programs and services.	2. Engage campus in cultural education	3. Engage students in leadership experiences	4. Conduct outreach efforts to Build Community and to enhance belonging at NIU.	5. Utilize facility as an alternative educational and cultural space on campus.
Retention Data analysis from IE (Institutional Effectiveness) in conjunction with AARC participant data	S, D				
Participation numbers Pilot Boey Honors Program	F, D	F, D	I	I	F,D
Registration data of students and guests (AARC Graduate Celebration).	F, I				
Student journals, surveys or focus groups (Cultural Education)		S, I	S, I	S, I	
student surveys (Cultural Education)		S, I	S, I	S, I	
Surveys or personal reflection; data related to participation-to-percent of population at NIU served (Peer Mentor Program)			S, D		
Student journals, survey, direct observation, focus groups (Peer Mentor Training Retreat)	F, D				
Self-Report (Professional Development)		S, D	S, D	S, D	
Survey (Community Building)				S, D	
Tracking numbers (Facility Utilization)					I