

SOAR Retreat

SOAR (an acronym for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) is a framework to guide strategic conversations related to leveraging and building on academic program strengths. The CTL's SOAR retreat allows programs to take a strengths-based approach to curricular visioning and planning. Retreat participants can include a range of program stakeholders (instructors, administrative staff, students, employers). The CTL Curriculum Team works with the curriculum lead to select appropriate SOAR questions and facilitates conversations.

Outcomes

1. Identify program strengths and explore opportunities for future curricular growth and improvement.
2. Articulate aspirations for program growth and development.
3. Generate and prioritize a list of measurable results and next-steps for implementing program vision.

Sample Half-day Agenda

Length	Activities
15 mins	Introduction Introduce SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) visioning process.
1 hr	Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations In small group brainstorms, record responses to questions about: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengths: Identify key program strengths, areas of expertise, and achievements• Opportunities: Reframe current and future challenges as potential opportunities for program growth and development• Aspirations: Brainstorm aspirations for future ambitions and strategic initiatives for the program.
30 mins	Identify key aspirations As a large group, create themes to represent all program aspirations. Prioritize key program aspirations of focus for the results stage.
1.5 hrs	Results In small groups, identify and prioritize the measurable results and essential next steps in achieving each key aspiration.