

Academic Reduction and Program Elimination Process: Reflections & Feedback for CC 10.02.20

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

- Employees across all groups welcome the opportunity to honor diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in this process.

The Executive Team, the Instruction and Student Service Deans and I very much agree that honoring diversity, equity and inclusion is critical in this, and every, process at the college.

- The DEI Committee has been reviewing and finalizing the DEI framework; please use that framework for this process. There will likely need to be training/norming for using any kind of framework.

A number of us on the Executive Team and Leadership Cabinet have reviewed a draft of the framework. We look forward to working with the DEI committee on learning more and applying it as a regular part of decision-making.

- Avoid referencing “DEI initiatives” in the rubric as there are Priorities, Goals, Objectives, and Actions in the DEI strategic plan.
- Do we need to single out specifics in the DEI strategic plan for the rubric, or is it more important to develop a process that honors diversity, equity, and inclusion? And what does it mean to do so in this process?
- How do we include feedback from the DEI Committee without creating a greater burden for that committee? Will there be a sub-committee that will be involved and report to the DEI Committee?

These are important questions. I am curious to understand what others at the institution think. Certainly, applying the framework to the process and resulting analysis are key. As President Cook has expressed, we should all be growing and learning about diversity, equity and inclusion so that we all share in the responsibility for making our institution more diverse, equitable and inclusive, rather than assume that the DEI Committee only bears that burden.

General Process:

- Thank you for allowing us to pause this process over the summer so that we could focus on the Return to Campus Plan and elements of our Shared Governance Process Design.
- We have an entire division dedicated to being an effective institution. Would it be more efficient for this process to be led by that division?

The Division of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning is key to supporting many very important initiatives this year, as well as providing data, learning, and support on an ongoing basis to all of us at CCC. As with many areas at the college, we need to be careful about overtaxing their capacity.

More importantly, this division is intended to provide service and support. We hope that departments across the college turn to them for data and information, for understanding about instruction and curriculum, for learning about assessment, and for support in scheduling. The division has established itself as a place that all in the college can turn to for help. The Academic Reduction and Elimination process inevitably provokes concern and anxiety. It is critical that this

division continue to be seen as a trusted partner for all at the college, and not be associated with a process that is perceived as threatening.

- What will be the venue for effective feedback since it is challenging to develop robust conversations around these topics during large shared governance meetings such as College Council?

There could be a number of different ways to engage, particularly when it comes to the results of applying criteria in the winter, such as smaller groups or breakout sessions, surveys, guided focus groups, asynchronous conversations in a Moodle site. It seems like a first point of engagement would be to learn from our community about how we all want to participate.

- How did the survey from last December inform decisions regarding the process? What should we expect this year regarding effective feedback and analysis of that feedback?

When the process and criteria came a second time to College Council, there were changes to the timeline and changes to the criteria. For instance, the criteria related to diversity equity and inclusion were moved to the beginning of the document and the language in those criteria focused more specifically on “barriers” and “vulnerable populations.” In addition to College Council and Presidents’ Council, the process was presented at a Chairs and Directors’ meeting and there were two open forums (in Barlow 240 and in Gregory Forum) where feedback and ideas were shared in Fall 2019.

- Is support for program improvement an essential element of an equitable process?

That is an excellent question to ask when it comes to the deeper conversations about the limited number of programs or subject areas we might consider reducing or eliminating. In an environment where we may not have all the resources we need to support all that we do, is it equitable to continue a program for a few, when we could allocate those resources to programs or services that support many, and many who are quite vulnerable?

- How will this process inform decisions regarding budgetary issues such as layoffs?

The question presumes that there will be expenses reduced as a result of the process, which we do not know. If there were savings, it is possible that layoffs in other parts of the college would not be necessary.

- How are we connecting reductions and eliminations in InSS to the College Services side of the College?

The question should be reframed. Consideration of reductions and eliminations in areas that primarily provide internal or external services, for instance advising, maintenance, admissions, scheduling, human resources, or custodial services are reviewed through the Budget Advisory Group, which is composed of classified, part-time faculty, full-time faculty, and administrative / confidential employees. Consideration of the reduction or elimination of a program or subject area is complex – and decisions like these often permanently change the offerings of an institution.

- How will this process inform decisions regarding a reorganization of the entire college?

There is not currently any ongoing thought regarding a reorganization of the entire college, since the Governor's Office and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission are no longer communicating such dire financial circumstances to community colleges.

Elements of Current Shared Governance:

- How can we partner to identify important elements of our current shared governance process that need to be included in this endeavor?

For the time being, there are two clearly defined elements of shared governance: College Council and Presidents' Council. Those elements can be supported by other means of feedback. Perhaps the elected representatives of associations, in Presidents' Council, can provide input.

- For each of the elements in the process, what do the teams look like?

For some elements, like the drafting of rubrics, they are broadly representative. There are other parts of the process that depend on dialogue and collaboration within divisions, between deans and departments.

- Will team members who contribute be able to bring assessment criteria, including rubrics and process, back to their respective groups for feedback: Classified Staff (ACE), Part-Time Faculty (PTF), Full-Time Faculty (FTF), and Administrative-Confidential (A-C)? Will those items go back to their governing groups (board/senate) and allow sufficient time for feedback?

Let's work to make that happen.

- Is there an Employee Resource Group (ERG) that should be included in this process?
- How is Associated Student Government (ASG) being included in this process?

Student representation, and any employee groups, have been participating through College Council. Students have also participated through Presidents' Council. When it comes to the time for robust discussion of the limited number of programs and subject areas, we will continue to design a variety of ways to engage and include all voices at the college.

ARE Rubric (very rough draft) brought to 5.01.20 CC meeting:

- What is the plan to develop one or more rubrics for programs that fall outside of the CTE/Lower Division Transfer realm? How will a rubric team be informed about essential criteria associated with these programs?
- While it was mentioned at a Board of Education meeting during spring term that programs such as the Library, Spanish GED, ESOL, etc. wouldn't be cut, it isn't clear how that determination was made. We need transparent processes so that we feel confident in the processes we are building and participating in.

Some academic programs are hybrids of instruction and service. Those don't fit well within this framework for review. For others we have long-term grant commitments, e.g. Title II, which require a longer time frame for consideration.

- Bond investment is only one way that the public has shown support of programs at our college. What other ways of public support have we overlooked? (For example, the public has shown great support for Horticulture programs through our spring plant sale.)

No other ways of public support of have been overlooked. The rubric is a means to apply criteria in order to enable deeper conversations. Those conversations will allow for a number of considerations to be surfaced that apply to particular programs.

- What are we assessing when we examine retention and persistence rates?
 - Are we assessing the effectiveness of a program, or are we assessing the wraparound support systems that are available to students? If students don't persist, do we know why they don't persist?
 - How might this element not fully take into account the reality that certificates of completion may not be needed for some programs, such as welding, in order for students to meet their personal/career goals?

The purpose of having a number of criteria through which to examine programs and subject areas is precisely to enable the best decision possible given all that we know about a program and the circumstances of the college. No one criteria can provide a perfect lens.

- How will rubrics be constructed for the narrative elements that are part of the larger rubric? What are the criteria, and how will those questions be ranked and/or weighted?

Those remain questions that need to be answered as we finalize rubrics in the process.

- "Program exists to remove barriers for marginalized or otherwise vulnerable students." It is unclear why this element is listed twice in the rubrics, both as a quantitative question in the rubric, and as a narrative question in the rubric.
 - What will be the quantitative measure? It is unclear how this part of the rubric will distinguish between the existence of a program and the effectiveness of that program.
 - Is it equitable to require programs to address this item twice?

Each question addresses different criteria – one is more or less a yes or no. Was a program or subject area specifically designed to respond to systemically underserved or underrepresented students? The other criteria seeks to understand how the reduction or elimination of any program might affect diversity, equity or inclusion priorities, whether or not that program is focused on the underserved or excluded.

- In December of last year, it was indicated the weighting of the rubrics would be done after the rubrics were created and feedback was given. Where does this fall in the timeline, and how will this be a part of the shared governance process?

To be completed Fall 2020, and through College Council and Presidents' Council? I have tried to give succinct answer to the questions – and many of these question need to be considered with the input of others.