

Foothill Academic Senate 2020 Summer Cabinet

Establishing a Process for Considering Instructional Programs for Possible Reduction or Elimination

Context: At the July 20, 2020 meeting of the joint Advisory Council/Revenue & Resources Council (AC/R&R), the Councils tasked the Academic Senate with taking the lead on establishing a process for program elimination in the context of budget reduction. It was further clarified that Academic Senate was working on a process for *instructional* program reduction/elimination, and AC/R&R would need to simultaneously create processes for other budget reduction strategies, including program elimination of non-instructional programs and services.

Though a deadline was not established for the Academic Senate to return with a proposed process for instructional program reduction/elimination, it was understood that this work needed to happen as quickly as possible, since AC/R&R would need to make recommendations for how to accomplish the mandated cuts to the College's budget for the 2021-22 year before November 1, 2020. Further, it should be noted that thus far, neither the AC/R&R nor the Academic Senate have yet had the opportunity to review dollar amounts in Foothill's instruction budget.

Lastly, members of AC/R&R and the Academic Senate have advocated strongly for the exploration of consolidation of programs between Foothill and De Anza as a strategy to avoid or minimize program elimination. Given that Foothill Academic Senate cannot propose specific consolidation strategies without further collaboration between Foothill & De Anza faculty and administration, we have focused on a process for program reduction/elimination *at the College* solely. Nevertheless, we advocate for consolidation before reduction or elimination, and will continue to advocate that the District support consolidation efforts.

Definition/Scope: We are using the following definition of an “**instructional program**” for purposes of budget reduction: An organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective(s), degree(s), certificate(s), diploma(s), or License(s); or leading to eligibility for transfer to another institution of higher education.

Process: We propose establishing a set of criteria that can be used to evaluate the strength of programs. In other words, programs that score the “lowest” in the full set of criteria we decide on, would emerge as programs to be considered for reduction or elimination at Foothill, should that be required to produce cuts of the magnitude that would result in instructional program reduction.

How well any given program meets the criteria for program “strength” will be determined by available data. Some data may be quantitative (rendered in numerical/statistical form, and likely accessible via in-house or regional databases); other data might be qualitative (rendered in words, and likely only generated via interviews, including “anecdotal data,” or surveys). It will

be important to be transparent with data we do/do not have available to determine a given criterion. We recognize that it is likely impossible to acquire all of the data, particularly the qualitative data. This means an actual list produced with an incomplete data set will necessitate further discussion with a broad group of stakeholders prior to deciding on program cuts.

Proposed criteria for ranking programs:

The criteria recommended by the Academic Senate Summer Cabinet at the 8/4/20 meeting and ranked at the 8/11/20 meeting are:

- 1) **Equity:** The program serves a proportionately higher number of DI students¹ (quantitative)
- 2) **Program Outcomes:** A high number of students graduate/transfer/find work (quantitative)
- 3) **Impact on Other Programs:** The program offers courses that are “critical” to students in other programs/majors to complete their programs (qualitative)²
- 4) **Strategic Vision:** The program is core to the College’s and/or Board’s strategic plans (qualitative)³
- 5) **Program Duplication:** There is no other program at the College with a comparable set of courses or outcomes (qualitative)
- 6) **Enrollment Trends:** Program FTES is increasing (quantitative)
- 7) **Mission:** The program is core to the College’s mission (qualitative)
- 8) **Productivity:** The program has high productivity (quantitative)
- 9) **Labor Market:** The labor market associated with the program is experiencing growth (quantitative)
- 10) **Perception:** The program is perceived to be of high importance to students/transfer institutions/industry (qualitative)
- 11) **Program Size:** Program FTES is high (quantitative)
- 12) **Cost:** The program total cost and/or relative cost to the enrollment is low (quantitative)
- 13) **Faculty Availability:** There is currently a sufficient number of faculty (full-time and/or part-time with REP) to offer a viable program (qualitative)

Next Steps: TBD

¹ Only one of many indicators that can impact equity, and should be recognized as such. In terms of equity impact, this is a starting point for discussion, not a final yardstick.

² This may include a wide array/high enrolled GE courses.

³ Requires further clarification of which strategic plan/which Board priorities are to be considered.