



Designing the Ideal Program Portfolio

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In our session today, we'll discuss

1. Academic program planning and building the ideal program portfolio
2. Identifying opportunities for program investment, reinvigoration, expansion, or pause
3. Moving from planning to implementation
4. Tips, tricks, and words of caution



Academic Planning and the Ideal Program Portfolio

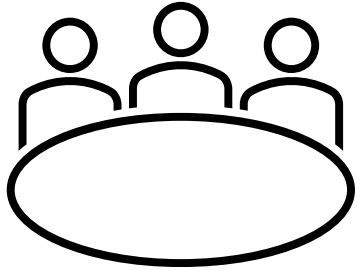
Academic Program Planning

What is academic program planning?

A successful academic program planning process typically:

- is on-going, data-informed, and intentional
- aligns the academic program portfolio to institutional mission, vision, and strategic priorities
- considers the current state, internal and external trends, and the desired future state
- utilizes research to inform the process
- engages the campus community in planning processes

Who is at the planning table?



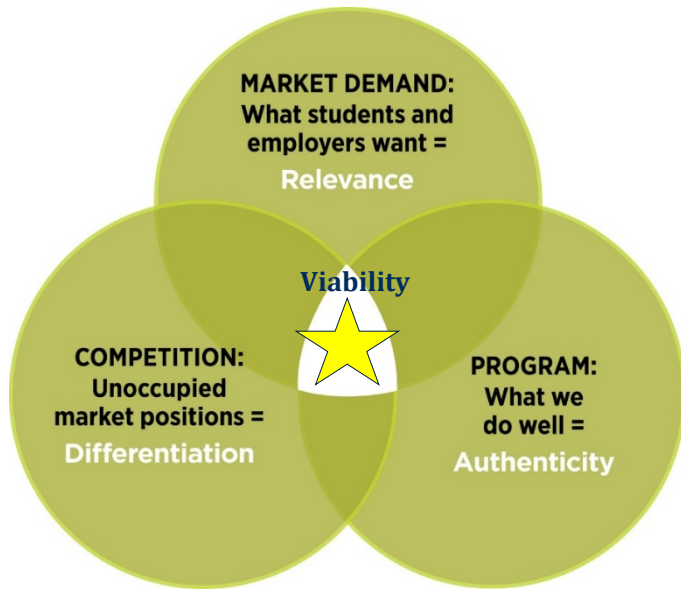
- Faculty
- Academic affairs
- Finance
- Enrollment management
- Marketing and communications
- Institutional Research

Planning Considerations

- Market demand
- Enrollment trends
- Curriculum
- Modality and location
- Capacity and existing expertise
- Competitive landscape
- What other things no longer make sense?

What is the Ideal Program Portfolio?

Rooted in relevance, differentiation, and authenticity leading to viability



- **Relevance**
 - Is there demand from interested *students*?
 - Is there demand from *employers* for students with *skills* this program will provide?
- **Differentiation**
 - Differentiation *by degree*
 - Qualitatively better in some dimension
 - Geography
 - Differentiation *by type*
 - Elements of the student experience
 - Modality/delivery
- **Authenticity**
 - *Passion* of faculty and staff
 - Track *record of success – alignment to brand*
 - *Commitment of resources* for ongoing success
- **Culminating in Viability**



Identifying Opportunities

What data do you need to get started?

Internal Information

- Historical funnel data
- Clearinghouse competitors
- Degree completion data
- Financial metrics (if available)
- Institutional knowledge and context

External Information

- Market size (HS seniors, population change)
- Student demand
 - Sources of student interest by program
 - Competitor degree completion trends
- Employer/labor market demand

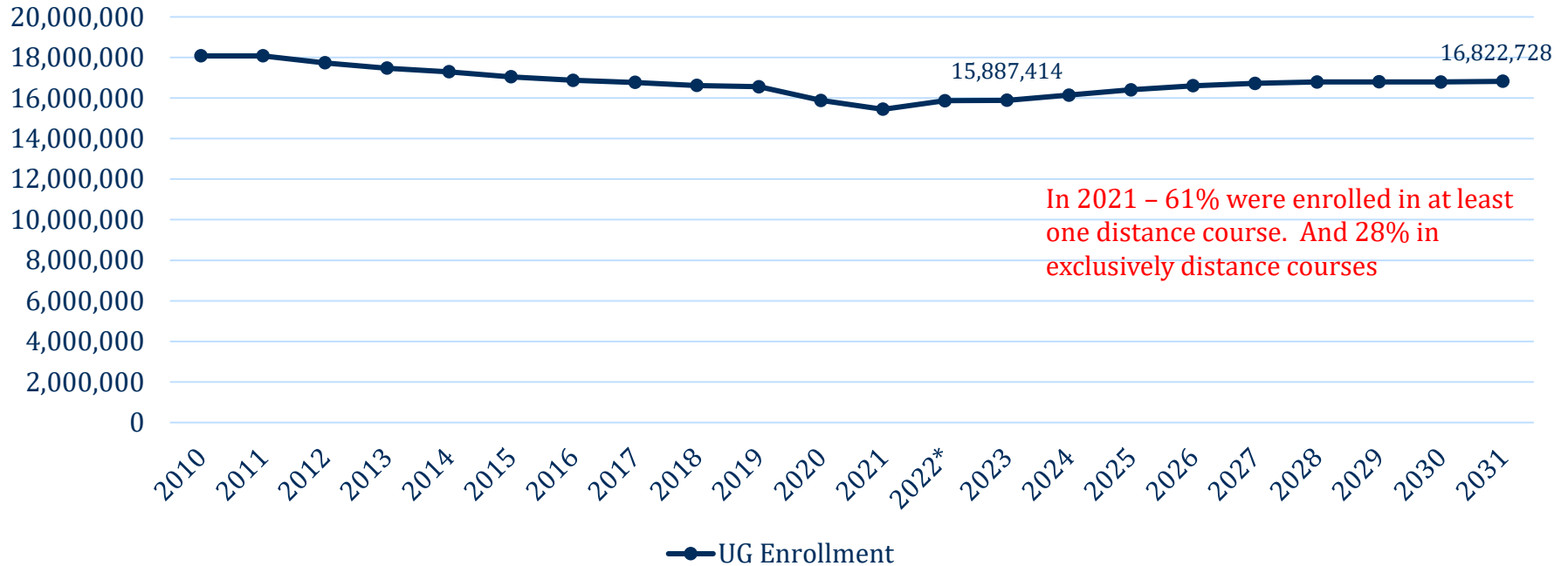
Internal – Admission Funnel by Program

Trends in Funnel Information

AWARD	CIP Code	Program	Total 3 Year Applicants	Total 3 Year Admits	Total 3 Year Enrolled	New Transfer as Share of All New Students	3 Yr. Pct. Change in Applicants	3 Yr. Pct. Change in Enrolled	Admit to Enroll	Conversion: Applicants to Enrolled
		Computer and Information Sciences,								
Bachelors	11.0101	General	383	226	112	35.2%	20.9%	19.4%	49.6%	29.2%
Bachelors	11.0103	Information Technology	726	413	160	40.5%	5.2%	15.8%	38.7%	22.0%
Bachelors	11.0701	Computer Science	705	430	245	49.9%	17.0%	-6.2%	57.0%	34.8%
		Computer and Information Systems Security/Auditing/Information								
Bachelors	11.1003	Assurance	701	460	301	35.1%	8.7%	-13.4%	65.4%	42.9%
Bachelors	13.1001	Special Education and Teaching, General	224	64	36	29.9%	-82.5%	-52.6%	56.3%	16.1%
Bachelors	13.1202	Elementary Education and Teaching	365	203	119	79.5%	-14.3%	64.0%	58.6%	32.6%
Bachelors	52.0101	Business/Commerce, General	837	499	252	29.4%	194.2%	32.3%	50.5%	30.1%
		Business Administration and								
Bachelors	52.0201	Management, General	2638	1209	485	27.1%	19.3%	0.0%	40.1%	18.4%
Bachelors	52.0301	Accounting	305	157	75	41.3%	0.0%	-11.5%	47.8%	24.6%
Bachelors	52.0601	Business/Managerial Economics	221	125	76	52.0%	-12.0%	-28.1%	60.8%	34.4%
Bachelors	52.0801	Finance, General	100	43	22	23.0%	6.5%	-33.3%	51.2%	22.0%

Projected Undergraduate Enrollment Stabilizes

NCES projections to Fall 2031

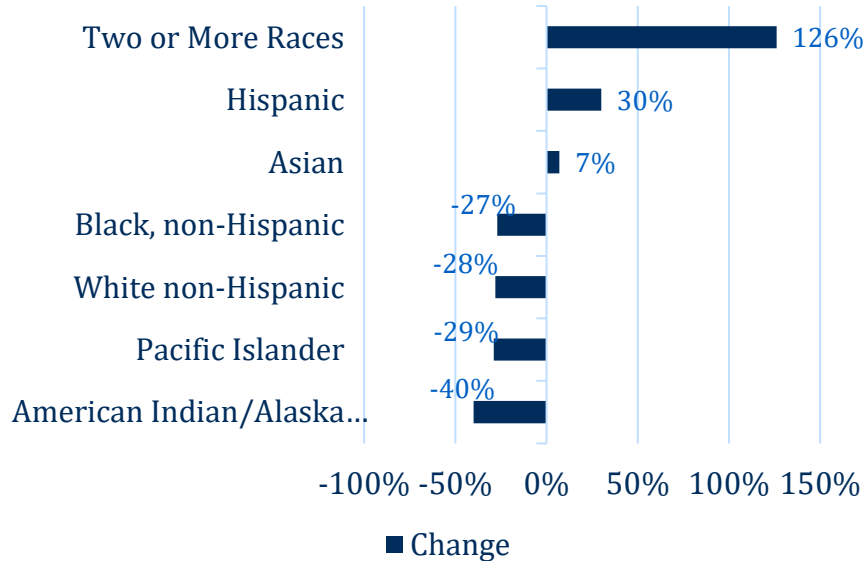


Changes Vary Across Demographics & Region

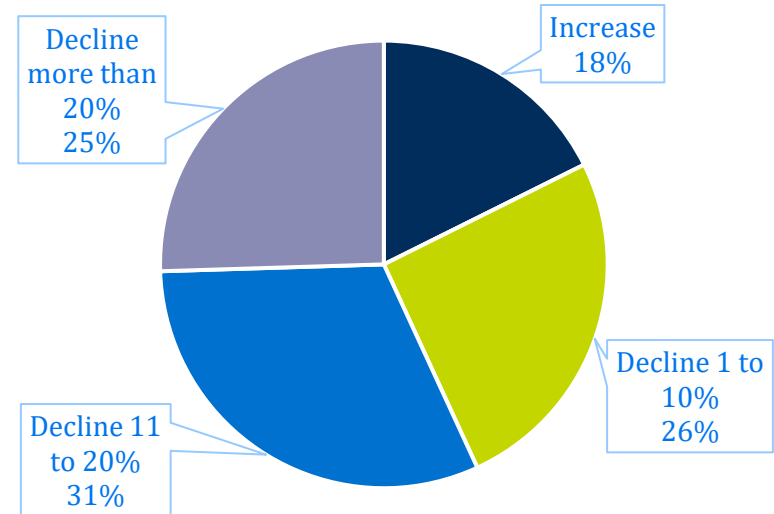
NCES UG Enrollment 2010-2021

RNL Projection of HS Seniors to 2033

Change in UG Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

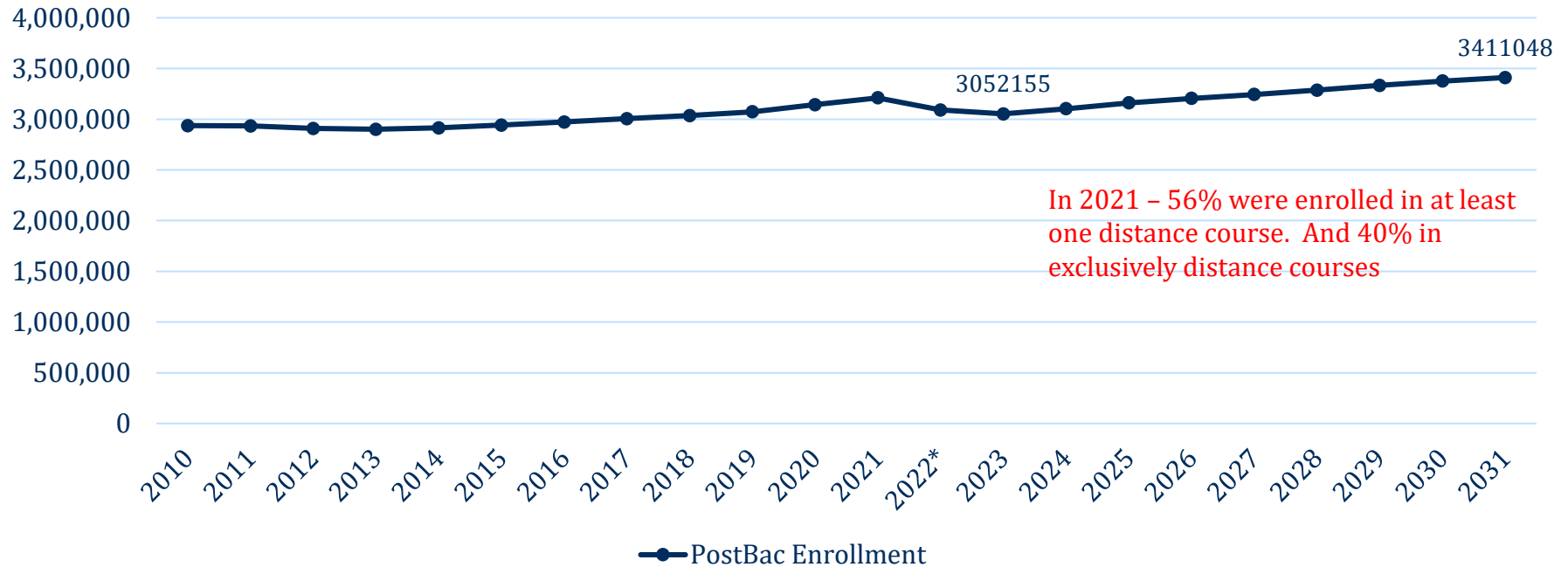


State Trends in # HS Seniors



Projected Post-Bac Enrollment Increases

NCES projections to Fall 2031



Degree Completion Trends

Example – CIP 51.xx, Florida, 3 Year Completions

CIP Code	Description	All Programs > All Completions > 2021 Completions	All Programs > All Completions > % Completions Change (2019-2021)
51.00	Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General	4,357	24%
51.02	Communication Disorders Sciences and Services	1,159	(8%)
51.06	Dental Support Services and Allied Professions	1,989	16%
51.07	Health and Medical Administrative Services	11,094	(0%)
51.08	Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services	6,706	(12%)
51.09	Allied Health Diagnostic, Intervention, and Treatment Professions	8,679	2%
51.10	Clinical/Medical Laboratory Science/Research and Allied Professions	1,238	18%
51.12	Medicine	1,218	4%
51.15	Mental and Social Health Services and Allied Professions	1,423	(2%)
51.20	Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Administration	1,153	(11%)
51.22	Public Health	2,034	2%
51.35	Somatic Bodywork and Related Therapeutic Services	1,419	(3%)
51.38	Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research and Clinical Nursing	21,318	13%
51.39	Practical Nursing, Vocational Nursing and Nursing Assistants	4,182	(4%)

Understanding Labor Market

Example – St. Louis MSA, Bachelor's, English

Job Postings Overview

1,031

Unique Postings
3,119 Total Postings

329

Employers Competing
22,554 Total Employers

30 Days

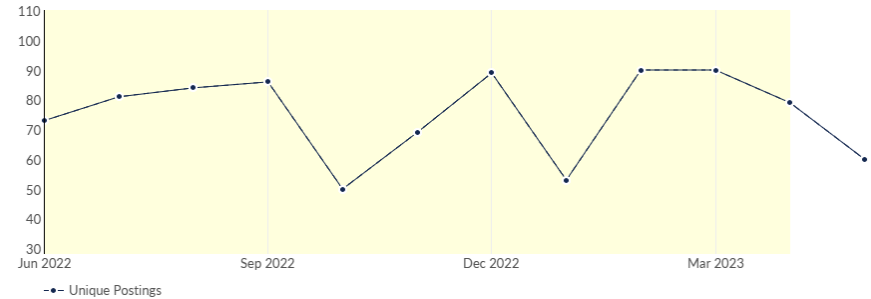
Median Posting Duration
Regional Average: 28 Days

3 : 1

Posting Intensity

Regional Average: 3 : 1

Unique Postings Trend



Advertised Salary

There are 347 advertised salary observations (34% of the 1,031 matching postings).

\$64.9K

Median Advertised Salary



Understanding Labor Market

Example – St. Louis MSA, Bachelor's, English

Top Companies Posting

Company	Total/Unique (Apr 2022 - Apr 2023)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
Washington University in St. Louis	176 / 108	2 : 1	50 days
U.S. Customs And Border Protection	92 / 46	2 : 1	22 days
Sysco	253 / 43	6 : 1	43 days
PricewaterhouseCoopers	32 / 21	2 : 1	26 days
Health Care Service Corporation	24 / 18	1 : 1	n/a
Edward Jones	41 / 18	2 : 1	23 days
SYGMA Network	38 / 14	3 : 1	n/a
Super Bright Leds	15 / 11	1 : 1	24 days
Spectrum	42 / 11	4 : 1	21 days
Deloitte	12 / 11	1 : 1	12 days

Top occupations in demand

Example – Massachusetts, Master's degree

Occupation Title	Entry Annual	Experienced Annual	Typical education needed for entry	Total Postings	Unique Postings	Median Posting Duration
Healthcare Social Workers	\$41,580	\$75,420	Master's degree	1337	631	34 days
Nurse Practitioners	\$100,510	\$144,210	Master's degree	2967	1328	19 days
Instructional Coordinators	\$49,940	\$93,090	Master's degree	605	316	33 days
Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	\$48,360	\$85,580	Master's degree	555	327	33 days
Speech-Language Pathologists	\$62,770	\$104,630	Master's degree	1790	761	34 days
Physician Assistants	\$92,300	\$149,070	Master's degree	594	275	31 days
Data Scientists	\$58,550	\$137,660	Master's degree	3167	1348	26 days
Statisticians	\$79,470	\$135,130	Master's degree	868	404	25 days
Marriage and Family Therapists	\$40,740	\$60,530	Master's degree	1283	396	42 days
Counselors, All Other	\$35,690	\$67,590	Master's degree	916	275	38 days

Demand/share matrix

Matrix position helps us know which questions to ask to build a portfolio strategy



Make use of the information

Align your program portfolio

- Prioritize current programs
 - **Grow/Invest:** high demand, high yield, potential as a distance ed program
 - **Cap:** program you want to continue but within defined parameters
 - **Pause:** low demand, low share, low yield, not aligned with mission, vision, priorities
- Consider potential new programs
 - **Add** (high student and employment demand, large number of job postings for related occupations, aligned to your mission, vision, priorities)
 - Programs that could fill a labor market gap
- Consider the modality
 - High demand, high yield programs that you have the resources to offer online
 - Doesn't have to have high distance ed demand if you want to be first to market

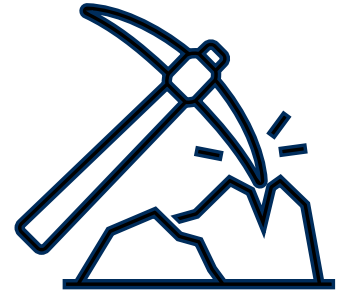


Digging in Deeper

New Programs

- ✓ Reviewed internal data
- ✓ Reviewed external data

- ❑ Primary research – surveys on new programs
- ❑ More secondary research at the program level
 - ❑ Analysis of competitors programs
 - ❑ Analysis of competitor program web presence
 - ❑ Analysis of pricing



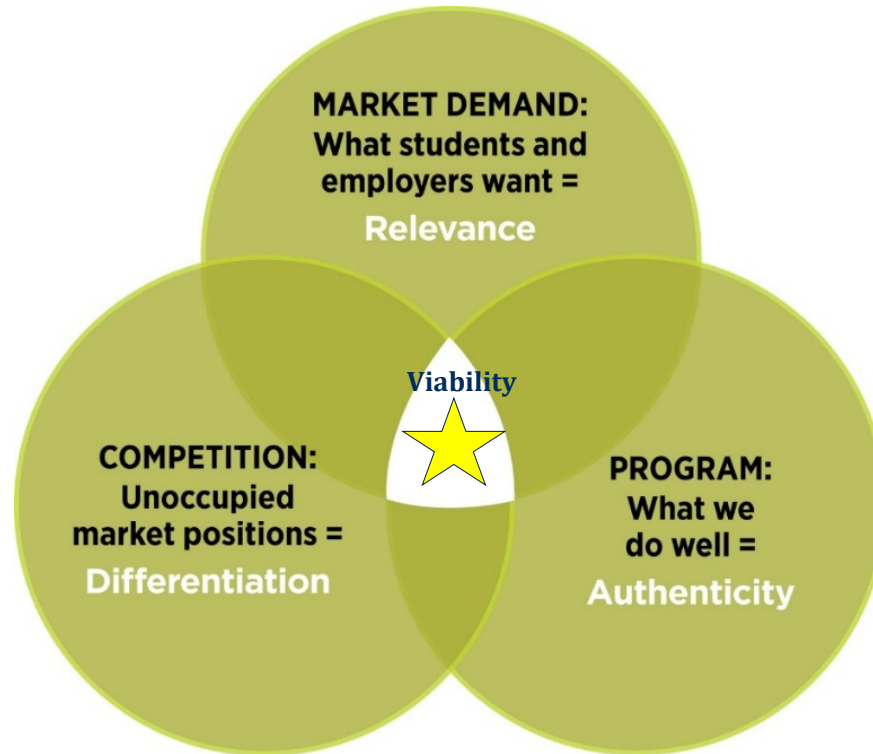


From Possibilities
to Planning and
Implementation

Planning Considerations

- Market demand
- Enrollment trends
- Curriculum
- Modality and location
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Planning Considerations



Planning Considerations

- Accreditation requirements
- Co-curricular and experiential
- Program-specific influencers
- Recruitment and outreach events
- Faculty, student, and alumni engagement
- Industry partnerships
- Finances
- Prospecting and communication flow

Why build an action or business plan?



- Further workshop the idea – Do we have or what will it take to build the expertise, capacity, and will?
- Determine program viability – What is the financial ROI?
- Develop an implementation blueprint or roadmap – How do we make this actionable?

Action Plan Elements



Strategy description (the “what” and the “why”)



Broad implementation steps with responsibilities and completion dates (the “how” and the “who”)



Detailed budget (the “how much”)



Enrollment impacts and rationale for those projections

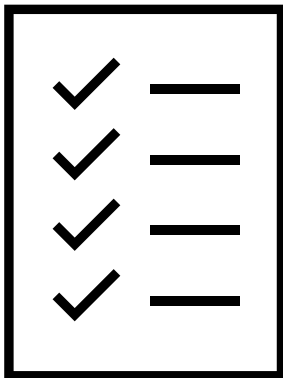


Evaluation and assessment plan

Building the Program-Specific Message

- Collaborative process
- Originates with the faculty
- Refined by marketing and recruitment
- Benefits-centered
- Employ a message-building tool
- Fully integrate academic programs into your recruitment communications flow

Sample Academic Program Questionnaire



1. What are your program's strengths?
2. What are your program's weaknesses?
3. Is there anything unique about your program that distinguishes it from similar programs at other colleges and universities?
4. What other colleges and universities do you believe we most compete with for students in your program?
5. What are the benefits to a student derived from studying in your program? In essence, why does studying in this program at your institution matter?
6. What are some of the accomplishments or unique qualities of your faculty members?
7. Give an example of an interesting assignment or class exercise in which a student might participate.
8. What opportunities are available in the major for research, field work, independent study, travel or other experiences outside the classroom?
9. Are there any special facilities or resources available to students in the major? Are there any campus clubs or organizations associated with this area of study?
10. What kinds of employment or graduate/professional school opportunities are typical paths for graduates? Approximately, what percentage of your students goes on to graduate school immediately after graduation and what percentage goes directly into the workforce?
11. Provide us with two or three alumni success stories. Who are they? Where are they? What are they doing? How did their experiences at your institution contribute to their success?
12. Please provide the names of two or three students in the major whom we might contact to discuss their experiences in the program.
13. Feel free to add any other information that may be helpful as we discuss your program with prospective students.

Implementation Essentials



Continue
collaboration



Accountability
structures



Troubleshooting
and support
channels



Clear performance
metrics



Continuous
assessment



Annual updates/
modifications



Capacity and
funding trip lines



Communicate,
Communicate,
Communicate!



Tips, Tricks, and
Words of Caution

Tips, Tricks, and Words of Caution

- Be data informed, not data-driven.
- Build your program portfolio from strengths. Consider adjacencies.
- Include academic planning in on-going, integrated planning efforts, including budget planning.
- Share the goals and your process in advance if possible.

Tips, Tricks, and Words of Caution

- Remember, it is a process, and the process is iterative.
- Not everything will move at the same pace or on the same timeline.
- You can't do it all at once.
- Engage your campus community.
- Understand the campus climate.
- Engage employers.

A group of people are sitting on a wooden bench in what appears to be a classroom or lecture hall. They are engaged in various activities: some are looking at laptops, others at smartphones. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text "Questions & Discussion?" is centered in white, sans-serif font.

Questions & Discussion?

Thank You

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