

Best Practices in Academic Program Review

In this report, Hanover Research provides an overview of methodologies and a series of case studies related to the management and evaluation of academic programs at colleges and universities. Specific attention is paid to balancing efficiencies in resource allocation while respecting both traditional program strengths and institutional mission.

Executive Summary

In this report, Hanover Research provides an overview of best practices in academic program review, drawing on secondary literature and relevant case studies. The report is comprised of two main sections:

- ❖ **Section I** presents an overview of the literature relevant to strategic program review at U.S. universities and colleges. In particular, we focus on the variety of methodologies that have been employed by institutions to judge the viability of programs within the liberal arts context.
- ❖ **Section II** provides a series of case studies, focusing on aspirant institutions that have recently employed the program review methodologies discussed in Section I. Where possible, we examine the outcomes of specific program review methodologies. Special consideration is given to institutions exhibiting effective program review and resource management in an environment of fiscal constraints. The institutions profiled in this section are:
 - Howard University;
 - Indiana State University;
 - The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire;
 - Washington State University; and
 - The University of Cincinnati.

It is important to note that while the information presented in this report offers a general overview of academic program review methodologies, it is by no means an exhaustive representative of models currently in use. While many universities develop evaluation processes based upon common assessment principles, such approaches are often adjusted to suit the unique needs of the individual institution. As such, the success of a given model or methodology should always be considered within the institutional context of its implementation.

Key Findings

- ❖ Broadly speaking, an academic program review can be defined as an attempt to evaluate the performance of curricula, departments, faculty, and/or students at a degree-granting institution. While there is no universally-accepted model or methodology for conducting a program review, three primary elements are commonly employed:
 - An **internal, faculty-driven self-study** conducted by the institution itself;
 - An **external evaluation**, conducted by a committee appointed by the institution (typically comprised of academic peers and other specialists); and

- A **comprehensive evaluation** of the two studies, resulting in targeted recommendations or an action plan.

- ❖ **Institutions tend to vary in their approaches to the internal self-study**, depending on specific institutional needs and strategic objectives. However, most incorporate historic, current, and projected data related to program purpose; resources required for effective functioning; and student performance (both during and after the program). An overarching evaluation of unit performance is also typically included.

- ❖ Most institutions engage in comprehensive program review on a regular basis (a rolling five- or seven-year cycle is common), and **timing is often designed to coincide with institutional reaccreditation processes**. Many institutions also model their own reviews and evaluations after the requirements guiding their respective reaccreditation requirements. For many institutions, coordinating program reviews with reaccreditation better ensures an effective use of time and resources, and reduces the chance of duplicating “separate-but-similar” evaluation processes.

- ❖ The challenge of maintaining and improving program quality in an environment of tight fiscal resources has become a key factor in program review. In terms of cost savings, **many institutions have found strategic resource reallocation effective in lieu of simply cutting programs**. For instance, a university may reduce the number of sections for a particular course suffering from under-enrollment, creating substantial savings while still meeting student need. Turning a major into a minor, combining two programs into one, or merging academic departments are also viable strategies for balancing costs and academic quality.

- ❖ A large number of institutions have employed the methodology (or a version thereof) presented in Robert Dickeson’s seminal work *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance*. Dickeson’s model emphasizes **reallocation and redistribution of resources** (“doing more with less”)—an attractive prospect for institutions seeking a strategic balance between the cost and quality of program offerings. Though somewhat less common, other institutions have also turned to business sector approaches, such as Jim Collins’s “Good to Great” model, in implementing program review.

Strategies for Evaluation: Literature Review & Popular Models

The purpose of an academic program review is to determine the viability and effectiveness of a given institutional unit. Perhaps best described in Brown University's 2012 *Academic Program Review Guidelines and Procedures*, an academic program review is meant to:

...improve the quality of academic units individually and the university as a whole. Academic reviews provide an opportunity for each academic unit to **reflect, self-assess, and plan**; they generate in-depth communication between the unit and the university administration, thus offering a vehicle to inform planning and decision-making... By stimulating program planning and encouraging strategic development, academic program reviews can be a central mechanism to advance the University mission.

Recently, many institutions have faced increasing pressure to streamline their offerings in the face of declining funding and under-enrollment. More efficient operations, and more effective use of resources, are increasingly becoming the modus operandi on campuses across the country. As a result, more U.S. universities are conducting institution-wide program reviews to plan strategically for the future.¹

While academic program reviews are common, they may take many forms. Most institutions choose to name their review processes depending on what may be preliminarily identified as the 'big-picture need'—whether this is an **“academic prioritization program” (resource management)**, a **“performance control assessment” (increased efficiency creation)** or a **“strategic directions task force review” (long-term central planning)**. But despite such divergences in nomenclature, the common thread connecting most institutional reviews is self-examination.

While the process of program review almost always involves an external evaluation (conducted consultants, a committee of selected scholars and peers from other academic institutions, or a state-level entity), the majority of the assessment is conducted internally. Most academic program reviews are conducted over a six- to 12-month span, but some can take significantly longer, depending on the scope of the evaluation and the desired outcomes.

While there is no universal approach to academic program review, there are a set of commonly accepted and popular models that have been used over the last 10-15 years. Below we examine several such models, offering a brief overview of the potential benefits and drawbacks of each.

¹ Olson, G. “Why Universities are Streamlining Their Curricula.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dec. 1, 2010. <http://chronicle.com/article/article-content/125556/>

Dickeson's Prioritization Model

First published in 1999, Robert Dickeson's *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance* has emerged as a seminal work in the literature on program review. Unlike many other models, which are designed to be implemented on a program-by-program basis, this comprehensive approach is meant to assess *all programs simultaneously*, allowing for cross-program comparisons. Dickeson emphasizes program prioritization and resource re-allocation, rather than quality enhancements or other types of program improvements.² Dickeson's approach has been employed by a large number of institutions, including the University of Southern Mississippi, Indiana State University, and Winston-Salem State University, among others.

“The economic crisis has opened a window of opportunity for institutional leaders ... to engage the campus community in strategic planning.”

The use of the Dickeson's model (and variants thereof) over the past 10 years reflects its popularity among both faculty and administrators—despite the fact that results of restructuring have led to controversy in some cases, most recently at Columbia College Chicago.³ Indeed, the root cause of such controversy is also partly responsible for the model's popularity: the financial constraints placed on institutions as a result of the economic downturn have left many colleges and universities open to a variety of cost-cutting measures that otherwise might have been employed.⁴ Writing recently in *Higher Ed Impact*, Dickeson noted that **“the economic crisis has opened a window of opportunity for institutional leaders.** This can be a time to make previously unpopular cuts, and to engage the campus community in a strategic planning and prioritization efforts.”⁵ The promise of more efficient resource management and effective program prioritization offered by Dickeson's approach has generated a great deal of interest in the higher education sector, particularly in a climate where new sources of funding are increasingly scarce.⁶

Dickeson's model identifies **10 primary criteria** that should drive any program review or evaluation. These criteria are shown in Figure 1.1, on the next page.⁷

² Dickeson, Robert. *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance*. Revised & Updated. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2009.

³ Smith, M. “Restructuring Proposal at Columbia Chicago Prompts Criticism.” *Inside Higher Ed*, March 6, 2012. <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/03/06/restructuring-proposal-columbia-chicago-prompts-criticism>; Isaacs, D. “Columbia College President to Student: ‘Shut Up.’” *Chicago Reader*, March 27, 2012. <http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/columbia-college-president-to-student-shut-up/Content?oid=5900767>;

⁴ “Securing New Resources in a Difficult Financial Climate.” *Higher Ed Impact Monthly Diagnostic*, October 2010. http://www.academicimpressions.com/hei_resources/1010-diagnostic.pdf?&q=6971v274891yT

⁵ *Ibid*, 6.

⁶ Glenn, D. and Schimdt, P. “Disappearing Disciplines: Degree Programs Fight for Their Lives.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 28, 2010. <http://chronicle.com/article/Disappearing-Disciplines-/64850/>

⁷ Dickeson, Op. cit., 66 & Dickeson, R. “Higher Education Tackles Program Prioritization: Practitioners Raise

Figure 1.1: Dickeson’s Program Prioritization Model – Key Criteria

Criterion	Associated Considerations
<i>History, Development, and Expectations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Historical enrollment patterns ❖ Alignment with institutional mission ❖ Relationship to labor market trends/demand ❖ State requirements ❖ Extent to which program is “core” to the educational experience
<i>External Demand</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Labor market projections ❖ Employer feedback ❖ National and state policy/economic projections ❖ Placement data
<i>Internal Demand</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Enrollment levels ❖ Whether program supports majors and minors and/or other programs ❖ Courses delivered ❖ Student credits generated
<i>Quality of Program Inputs and Processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Student academic profile ❖ Program review data ❖ Quality of faculty
<i>Quality of Program Outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Graduate satisfaction ❖ Graduation rates ❖ Job placement and success ❖ Employer satisfaction
<i>Size, Scope and Productivity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ratio of students to faculty ❖ Enrollments ❖ Section fill rates ❖ Graduation rates
<i>Revenue and Other Resources Generated</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Tuition ❖ Program-allocated resources ❖ Grant income ❖ Other revenue ❖ Special program fee income
<i>Costs and Other Expenses</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Fully allocated cost per full-time student ❖ Allocated institutional support (library, computing, tutoring) ❖ Marginal cost of program, including faculty salaries, capital expenses, and equipment
<i>Impact, Justification and Overall Essentiality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Contribution to institutional reputation ❖ Contribution to state economy ❖ Degree to which program is “mission critical” ❖ Other measures of institutional value
<i>Opportunity Analysis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ New program opportunity ❖ Potential net revenues ❖ Alternative delivery mechanisms ❖ Potential for interdisciplinary programs ❖ Opportunity to realign or strengthen program

Source: Dickeson, R. *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance*

Questions, Provide Answers.” Academicstrategypartners.com, 2010.
<http://www.academicstrategypartners.com/Program%20Prioritization%20Update.pdf>.

Despite the general applicability suggested by these criteria, and Dickeson's strong recommendation that institutions incorporate all ten in any approach to program review, he stresses that:⁸

In a very real sense, an institution's curricular portfolio represents its *academic allocation of values* and is therefore unique to that institution... What may work in one institution may not necessarily be implantable to another, primarily because its mission is different... It is necessary to be informed about how other institutions are conducting programs, but the programs themselves are rarely comparable, and benchmarking is likely to be inexact.

Collins' "Good to Great" Approach

Published two years after Dickeson's guide, and focused on the factors that define corporate success, Jim Collins' *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... And Others Don't* began to peak interest within academe shortly after its release. Realizing that the work was ill-suited to non-business sectors, Collins released a companion volume entitled *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, designed to apply the core elements of the model to the non-profit and academic sectors.⁹

In Collins' view, the hallmark of a great organization is that it makes a distinctive impact and delivers superior performance over a long period of time. While for a business, performance principally means financial results, **social sector organizations must be assessed first and foremost in relation to the institutional mission.** Collins' model examines the differences between good and great based on what he identifies as an institution's inflection point—the moment when an institution chooses to concentrate on what it does best, and channels its energies accordingly (something he calls "the Hedgehog Concept").¹⁰

Less a strict model than an approach, "Good to Great" is designed around four stages, outlined below:¹¹

❖ Stage One: Disciplined People

- *First Who ... Then What.* Those who build great organizations make sure they have the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the key seats before they figure out where to drive the bus. They always think first about "who" and then about what.

⁸ Ibid., 66-67.

⁹ Collins, J., *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great*, p. 1. New York: Harper Collins, 2005.

¹⁰ *Good to Great Diagnostic Tool*, developed by Jim Collins. Individual Worksheet Packet, p. 3. 2006.
<http://www.osu.edu/eminence/assets/files/GoodtoGreatTool.pdf>

¹¹ Ibid., 5. Bullet points quoted from source.

❖ Stage Two: Disciplined Thought

- *The Hedgehog Concept.* Greatness comes about by a series of good decisions consistent with a simple, coherent concept—a “Hedgehog Concept.” The Hedgehog Concept is an operating model that reflects understanding of three intersecting circles: what you can be the best in the world, what you are deeply passionate about, and what best drives your economic or resource engine.

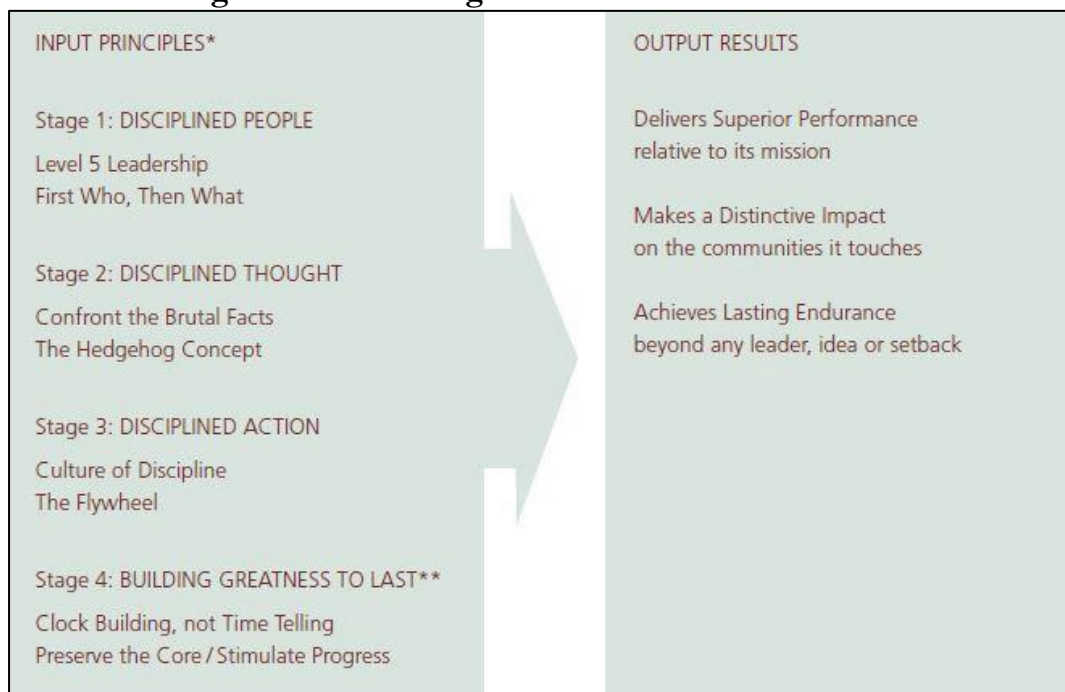
❖ Stage Three: Disciplined Action

- *Culture of Discipline.* Disciplined people who engage in disciplined thought and who take disciplined action—operating with freedom within a framework of responsibilities—are the cornerstone of a culture that creates greatness. In a culture of discipline, people do not have “jobs;” they have responsibilities.
- *The Flywheel.* In building greatness, there is no single defining action, no grand program, no one killer innovation, no solitary lucky break, no miracle moment. Rather, the process resembles relentlessly pushing a giant heavy flywheel in one direction, turn upon turn, building momentum until a point of breakthrough, and beyond.

❖ Stage Four: Building Greatness to Last

- *Clock Building, Not Time Telling.* Build an organization that can adapt through multiple generations of leaders; the exact opposite of being built around a single great leader, great idea or specific program. Build catalytic mechanisms to stimulate progress, rather than acting as a charismatic force of personality to drive progress.
- *Preserve the Core and Stimulate Progress.* Adherence to core values combined with a willingness to challenge and change everything except those core values—keeping clear the distinction between “what we stand for” (which should never change) and “how we do things” (which should never stop changing).

Figure 1.2: Four Stages of *Good-to-Great* Process¹²



Source: Collins, J. "Good to Great Diagnostic Tool."

Fewer institutions have adopted Collins' approach in recent years, particularly in comparison to Dickeson's. This is possibly due to the relatively unstructured and esoteric nature of the approach, but may be more likely attributable to the model's close association with business, as opposed to academia.¹³ However, among those that have adopted elements of Collins' approach (including the University of Cincinnati, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Bemidji State University), the emphasis on a culture of discipline and focus has been deemed a valuable jumping-off point for achieving long-term goals.¹⁴

The Kirkpatrick Steps

First published in 1994 (though based on ideas first introduced by the author in 1959), Kirkpatrick's *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels* was also originally developed to benefit the private sector, but has been adapted for higher education. Geared primarily toward improving learning outcomes in a simplified way, the

¹² Ibid., 4.

¹³ Rosenzweig, P. *The Halo Effect*. New York: Free Press, 2007. May, R., "Why 'Good to Great' Isn't Very Good," Business Pundit, January 31, 2006. <http://www.businesspundit.com/why-good-to-great-isnt-very-good/>; Klein, P. "Good to Great: Neither Good nor Great." *Organizations and Markets*, December 19, 2008. <http://organizationsandmarkets.com/2008/12/19/good-to-great-neither-good-nor-great/>

¹⁴ "University of Cincinnati Self-Study, 2009: Report to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools." http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/hlccaccreditation/docs/self_study.pdf; "Bemidji State University Master Academic Plan." December 2005. <http://www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/affairs/pdf/Master%20Academic%20Plan.pdf>

“Kirkpatrick Model” is well-known and relatively straightforward. Since its introduction, the model has been widely applied in the corporate, government and academic sectors.

Kirkpatrick suggests **four levels for evaluating programs**, dubbed the “Four Levels of Learning Evaluation.” He notes that as institutions move from one step to another, the evaluation process becomes more complex, but that each step provides increasingly valuable information. Starting with the first level (based around gaining direct feedback), the four steps progress by guiding organizations to more effectively develop techniques for gauging satisfaction, analyzing learning outcomes, and improving evaluation methodologies. A general guide to the utilization of the model is outlined below:¹⁵

- ❖ **Reaction** – Measure participants’ reaction to a training program, paying close attention to what the perceived strengths and weaknesses of a program are. *(Are students satisfied with their learning experiences? Satisfaction is important because dissatisfaction is a clue that students may not have learned some important things. Student satisfaction, however, leaves unanswered the questions of what students have learned and what they value).*
- ❖ **Learning** – Determine what participants in a training program learned as a result of participation by measuring knowledge, skills, attitudes and interpreting the outcomes over time. *(Are students learning what the institution wants them to learn? Learning outcomes are the knowledge, skills and values that students take with them from their learning experiences. The achievement of learning outcomes is the focus of most academic assessment efforts).*
- ❖ **Behavior** – Determine whether or not participants’ behavior and relative success in post-training program activities (i.e., job success) has changed as a result of participation in the program, and exactly how the transfer of the learning from step two was successfully transferred to behavior. *(Are students using the knowledge, skills and values that they’ve learned in their later pursuits?)*
- ❖ **Results** – Discover whether or not the training program had organizational impacts (i.e., affected the success or the visibility of the organization by way of the performance of the individuals who participated in the program). *(Are the knowledge, skills and values that students have learned helping them achieve their goals? Goals can include obtaining appropriate employment positions, placements in appropriate graduate programs, etc.).*

¹⁵ “Kirkpatrick’s 4 Levels of Evaluation of Learning Experiences.” Bullet points partially quoted from source. Keane University, Accreditation and Assessment Resources. <http://www.kean.edu/admin/uploads/%20Kirk4LevelsofEval.doc>

Despite widespread use of Kirkpatrick's technique, the model has been criticized for being both too simplistic and too narrowly centered on learning outcomes alone—as well as for exhibiting intellectual paucity, given the perceived lack of causal or relational correlation between the various levels he outlines.¹⁶ The fourth level in particular is often cited as the least explained, and the most lacking in rigor: It neither estimates the impact of training over any significant timeframe, nor does it provide an analysis of the outcome in terms of value as a return on investment for the institution. **Other criticism has centered on the need for a more explicit focus on the needs of the organization/institution,** and how these tie into the development of objectives and solutions.¹⁷

The Massy Model

The work of William F. Massy, through the popularity of his 1996 edited volume *Resource Allocation in Higher Education*, as well as his 2003 *Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education*, has also become a popular source upon which institutions base their academic program review models. The latter in particular has made waves within academic circles given its central premises are that 1) trust in U.S. higher education stems more from past achievements than current practices, and 2) the core competencies of colleges and universities lie less in teaching and instruction than in knowledge creation:¹⁸

Professors do research and scholarship and make knowledge available to their students, but ... don't think deeply enough about the assessment of learning outcomes. They don't try regularly to substitute lower-cost for higher-cost processes while maintaining quality. A true core competency in education would include all of these things.

Massy's plan for approaching program review focuses less on assessing quality and more on the process of assessment itself, in order to help institutions develop a practical guide for improvement, as opposed to pursuing basic stock-taking. This guide is comprised of seven quality principles identified by Massy as being the components necessary to ensure program excellence. These principles are elaborated in Figure 1.3, on the next page.¹⁹

¹⁶ Alliger, G. M., Janak, E. A. "Kirkpatrick's Levels of Training Criteria: Thirty Years Later," *Personnel Psychology*, 42 (2), 1989. 331–342; Wick, C. W., Pollock, R. V. H., Jefferson, A. K., Flanagan, R. D. *The Six Disciplines of Breakthrough Learning*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer, 2006.

¹⁷ Zinovieff, M. "Review and Analysis of Training Impact Evaluation Methods, and Proposed Measures to Support a United Nations System Fellowships Evaluation Framework," prepared for the WHO's Department of Human Resources for Health on behalf of the UN Task Force on Impact Assessment of Fellowships, July 2008. 23-4.
http://esa.un.org/techcoop/fellowships/SFOMeeting/ParticipantArea/BackgroundDocuments/6_REVIEW%20report%20FINAL%20.pdf

¹⁸ Massy, W.F. *Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education*, p. 6. Figure contents quoted from source. Bolton MA: Anker Publishing, 2003.

¹⁹ Ibid, 167.

Figure 1.3: Massy's Seven Quality Principles

Principle	Description
<i>Define quality in terms of outcomes.</i>	Desired outcomes should relate to the unit's mission, not some abstract notion of mission. Exemplary units define the kinds of outcomes they want and then focus their efforts on achieving those outcomes.
<i>Focus on how things get done.</i>	Units should think carefully about how things are done and how they can support and integrate processes. They should search out impediments to achieving their goals and mitigate them to the extent possible.
<i>Work collaboratively.</i>	The unit should demonstrate collegiality in its effort to support teaching and research. Members should share information and help one another solve difficult problems because such teamwork makes the unit a 'learning organization.'
<i>Base decisions on evidence.</i>	Units should review the literature and consult with outside experts to identify trends in the field, and then ask how the trends are likely to impact their missions. They should marshal facts about their performance relative to peer units and use these facts to develop realistic goals and strategies.
<i>Strive for coherence.</i>	Units should view learning through the lens of the participants' entire experience. Programs should build upon one another to provide the desired depth and breadth.
<i>Learn from best practice.</i>	Leaders should identify and analyze good practices in comparable units and institutions, and then adapt the best to their own circumstances. They should compare good versus average or poor-performing practices within their own department, assess the causes of the differences, and seek ways to improve the lesser performers.
<i>Make continuous improvements a priority.</i>	Units should strive to improve the quality of their efforts on a regular basis. The unit should work with other related units to determine how they can improve their services and foster education and scholarship on campus. They should continuously check to see if their efforts match the institutional priorities.

Source: Massy, W.F. 2003. *Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education*.

Massy's work is often cited by institutions conducting program reviews, but the lack of specificity in his approach (which constitutes a set of general guidelines rather than direct instructions) makes it less applicable as a model that institutions can immediately deploy.

The QPC (Quality, Potential, Cost) Model

The QPC model was first introduced by Jamie Comstock and Cathy Booker in 2009.²⁰ The model was developed primarily in response to an increasing demand for "transparency, accountability, quality assurance, and quality improvement" in higher education.²¹ The QPC model seeks to address the shortcomings in Dickeson's model, which in Comstock and Booker's view focuses too heavily on the financial dimensions of successful program review without counterbalancing quality

²⁰ Comstock, J. and Booker, C. "Self-Study Leveraging: The QPC Model for Comprehensive Academic Program Review," p. 1. *A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement*, Volume 1, Chapter 4, 2009.

²¹ Ibid.

considerations. The QPC model aims to develop a **long-term resource allocation plan** “designed to sustain stable environments and support an evolving mix of high-quality, market-smart, mission-driven programs... [through a] program review process driven by a concern for quality improvement, but also grounded in diligent attention to the market and fiscal realities.”²²

The QPC model is based on the systematic assessment of program quality, potential, and costs. Given that these three multidimensional variables naturally vary from institution to institution, the model stresses the need to **begin the process by meeting with all relevant parties** (deans, department chairs, program directors, etc.) in order to collaboratively develop institution-specific definitions. Doing so may encourage those responsible for delivering academic programs to contribute openly to the evaluation process, “engender[ing] buy-in and quell[ing] fears of administrative bias.”²³

Figure 1.4: Key Elements of QPC Model²⁴

Quality	Potential	Cost
External validation	National and local demand	Total student credit hours produced per major
Faculty and student inputs	Internal impact	Discount rate
Student outputs	Essentiality to mission	Cost per student credit hour
Curricula and program factors	Other justification, future opportunities	Contribution margin (net tuition revenue minus direct costs per program)

Source: Comstock, J. and Booker, C. “Self-Study Leveraging: The QPC Model for Comprehensive Academic Program Review.”

The main principle of the model is that **no one variable is viewed in isolation from the others** during the review process. Instead, each variable exerts an impact on the others, contributing to a comprehensive, balanced review. The matrix shown in Figure 1.5, on the next page, provides an illustration of program assessment using the QPC approach. Comstock and Booker describe the matrix as follows:²⁵

Application of the QPC model results in the ability to situate all academic programs into one cell of a twenty-seven cell matrix, representing a 3 (high, moderate, low quality) x 3 (high, moderate, and low potential) x 3 (high, moderate, low cost) design. Placement in the matrix requires careful amalgamation of the qualitative and quantitative data gathered for each key component of the QPC model. Each program should be rated as high, moderate, or low on each of the dimensions of quality, potential and cost. **These sub-ratings can then be used to compute summary ratings** for each of the three overarching variables.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 2.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

Figure 1.5: Example QPC Matrix²⁶

Potential	Low Quality			Moderate Quality			High Quality		
	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High
High Cost				Physics, Philosophy				Finance	Nursing, Accounting
Moderate Cost			Comm.	Art Mgmt., Music Perf.		Chemistry, Poli-Sci		Music Ed.	Management
Low Cost	Sociology	Org. Leadership , Spanish, Fitness and Sport		Psych., Applied Math,	PE, Eng. Ed.				Human Services

Source: Comstock, J. and Booker, C. "Self-Study Leveraging: The QPC Model for Comprehensive Academic Program Review."

Once administrators have constructed such a matrix, they can more easily share results and work collaboratively to develop short and long-range plans for how to best allocate resources to support quality enhancement and program effectiveness.

Independently-Devised Methodologies

As noted above, many institutions elect to construct their own methodologies for conducting program reviews, opting to avoid externally defined guidelines and procedures. More often than not, however, colleges and universities choose to **coordinate program review methods with accreditation requirements.**

Most program reviews can be broken down into two categories—qualitative and quantitative—however, a combination of both is advisable. Independently-created program reviews tend to be fashioned after one of four generic models:

- ❖ **Decision-Making Model:** Emphasizes accountability and may be used to reallocate resources or decide on continuation of program(s).
- ❖ **Goal-based Model:** Compares information gathered in the review to the program goals, objectives and standards.
- ❖ **Responsive Model:** Focuses on concerns and issues of stakeholders.
- ❖ **Connoisseurship Model:** Depends on the expert judgment of an experienced individual in the discipline.

As already discussed, the academic program review process is typically faculty-driven. Generally, however, the process must also be codified by Academic Senate policy and by other academic or administrative units involved in the review process. Various levels of institutional governance, from the Provost and Vice Provost to Academic Affairs offices, normally take on the task of appointing members of the various

²⁶ Ibid.

committees involved in program review. While the specific focus of each model varies, there are typically **three primarily elements** of program review: a self-survey, and external survey, and a review of findings that leads to an action plan. Common features of the **internal survey** portion of an academic program review include the following:²⁷

- ❖ Descriptions of program/department/school goals and mission;
- ❖ Descriptions of staff and work environment(s);
- ❖ Breakdown of budget and costs associated with program/department/school, over time (i.e., operating expenses, capital, historic and projected costs);
- ❖ Evaluations based on:
 - Who makes use of the program/number of users (student demographics and overall numbers)
 - The needs of those served (student need)
 - Identifying strengths and weaknesses of program/department/school
 - Determining factors in identifying how/if needs are being met
 - Method by which department/school/university use evaluation results to improve their own performance and better meet program/department/school goals and mission
 - Overall evaluation of program/department/school maturity level, including evaluation of methods currently employed to improve quality;
- ❖ Descriptions of innovations employed by program/department/school (i.e., new policies or practices put in use that have had demonstrably positive impacts);
- ❖ Opportunities for improvement (i.e., fiscal prioritization, efficiency generation, redundancy reduction) from both internal and external surveys; and
- ❖ List of recommendations and actions that can be taken both immediately and over a longer-term timeframe as a result of the needs identified by the investigation.

²⁷ See, for example: “Program Prioritization Task Force Draft Report, November 5, 2010.” University of Central Oklahoma. <http://busn.uco.edu/facultysenate/downloads/documents/all/2010-2011/889-program-prioritization-task-force-draft-report-dated-november-5-2010/download.html>; “WASC Resource Guide for ‘Good Practices’ in Academic Program Review.” Western Association of Schools and Colleges. http://wascsenior.org/findit/files/forms/Program_Review_Resource_Guide__Sept_2009.pdf; “Academic Program Review Procedure Manual, 2011-2012.” University of Arizona. <http://provost.arizona.edu/files/2011%2012%20APR%20Manual%20Web%20042811.pdf>; “Self-Study Guidelines.” Boston University, Office of the Provost. <http://www.bu.edu/provost/resources/apr/self-study/>; “Guidelines for Academic Program Review & Regent Policy.” University of Wisconsin System, April 2010, http://www.wisconsin.edu/acss/planning/guidelines/Guidelines.rev_Oct2010.pdf; “Program Review Criteria.” University of Maine System, Office of the Vice President & Provost <http://umaine.edu/provost/program-review-criteria/>

Academic Program Review – Institutional Case Studies

In this section, we present case studies of institutions that have conducted a university-wide academic program review in the past 10 years using one of the methods discussed in Section I. We focus primarily on undergraduate liberal arts/general education programs. The institutions examined in this section offer examples of institutions that have approached wide-ranging program evaluation initiatives under circumstances similar to those at our member institution—namely, fiscal constraints and evolving demands of students and employers.

Our selection of institutions was driven primarily by the availability of relevant information. Preference was given to institutions that have conducted program reviews in the years since the onset of the global financial crisis, as these cases are more likely to accurately reflect the current fiscal realities facing U.S. institutions.

Howard University

Howard University's Presidential Commission on Academic Renewal (PCAR), which convened in 2009, was a university-wide initiative announced by incoming president Sidney A. Ribeau, "in a bid to secure and expand Howard University's distinguished legacy."²⁸ Described as an aggressive program review effort, the Commission was comprised of "a select body comprised mostly of faculty, but that also include(d) staff members, other stakeholders and nationally recognized external academic leaders."²⁹ More specifically:³⁰

Based on PCAR's charter, the renewal process is designed to: identify, develop and support programs of excellence and distinction; align resource allocation with priorities; enhance operational performance and enhance the Howard University brand. **Program review, meanwhile, is guided by broad parameters including relevance to the University's mission, academic quality, research value, levels of enrollment and program sustainability.**

The strategic vision for meeting 21st century challenges that President Ribeau identified was made up of five critical areas of improvement: enhancing the University's status as a major metropolitan research university; increasing the excellence of the University's teaching and learning profile (national distinction in undergraduate and graduate programs); expanding the University's international footprint and role in world affairs; providing an environment of open discourse; and expanding the University's public service role through engagement with local,

²⁸ Virtue, G. "New Commission to Conduct Aggressive Academic Program Review." January, 2010.
<http://www.howard.edu/capstone/jan2010/feature1.html>

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

national, and international communities.³¹ To achieve these goals, the University elected to strategically focus resources on the most viable academic programs—with the aim of “assur[ing] enhanced national reputation and increased growth of the programs that best align with the University’s mission and future.”³²

Howard University chose to model its review on Dickeson’s criteria for program prioritization, and rated each program in six categories, shown in Figure 2.1.³³

Figure 2.1: Howard University Program Review Criteria

Evaluative Criterion	Description
Tie to the Mission	Relationship of each program to Howard’s distinctive mission, vision, and goals. These include recognition of Howard’s legacy, distinctiveness and irreplaceable role in producing leaders to serve the nation and the world. The contribution of each program to Howard’s commitment to public and community service is included here, as well as the development of new knowledge that supports its service, social and economic roles (i.e., each program’s research and scholarly products and its creative activity in support of Howard’s mission)
Academic Quality	The definition or measurement of academic quality incorporates academic reputation; student success; graduate placement; faculty vitality including innovation, scholarship and creative activity; program visibility and recognition; program performance in producing graduates and graduation rates; performance against externally defined learning outcomes; performance against internally specified learning outcomes; quality of student scholarship; and academic awards and honors.
Research	The operative definition of research includes externally funded research; scholarly publications, books, citations; honors and awards; scholarly/creative productivity unrelated to funding; quantity and quality of graduate and undergraduate student research; extent to which research addresses problems of national and international importance.
Academic Centrality & Interdisciplinary Focus	The extent to which a particular program provides core academic components or is a needed precursor to other programs (i.e., is the program or are the faculty necessary to be able to offer other programs that will be in the University’s portfolio); comparative advantage vis-à-vis other providers of comparable educational/research services.
Enrollment	The enrollment criterion includes having sufficient numbers of students and the ability to develop and maintain the desired student profile for its student population, including: measured performance/ potential (e.g., entrance scores); areas/disciplines of preparation, geographic distribution, and gender. The ability to manage enrollment, including matriculation, retention and graduation rates and the time to degree are included here, as well as Howard’s own and national enrollment trends and their impact on being able to mount and continue an academic program.

³¹ “PCAR Executive Report, September 2010,” p. 12. Howard University
<http://pcar.howard.edu/PCAR/Reports/PCAR-Report-Absolutely-FINAL.pdf>

³² Ibid., 21.

³³ Ibid., 83. Figure contents quoted from source.

Evaluative Criterion	Description
Sustainability	Sustainability includes cost effectiveness and the efficient use of resources ; fund raising; being a source of national prestige, and visibility for itself and the University as a whole; and the strength of the program's support network as established by a demonstrated record of external support and assistance.

Source: Howard University

Using these six categories, the Commission created a **five-point scale** to rate programs (five signifying a program performing well on all indicators, one signifying a weak program unlikely to survive even with the infusion of additional funding and support). The process was primarily driven by faculty, and was focused on insight gained from an internal review. The process additionally included external evaluations conducted by groups of experts (drawn from academe) chosen by the Commission.

The review was completed in September 2010, and the final recommendations regarding Howard University's undergraduate programs (encompassing a review of 53 individual programs) were boiled down into **four primary categories for improvement**:³⁴

- 1) *Specific program recommendations* and
- 2) *General program recommendations* to improve teaching, learning, collaborations and interdisciplinary interactions;
- 3) *Revised process model* for undergraduate education; and
- 4) *General recommendations* to improve undergraduate education.

Specific outcomes were categorized as relating to student, program and institutional needs, and included the following recommendations:³⁵

- ❖ Aligning the Art Department more closely with the School of Business to support the growing popularity of the Fashion Merchandising concentration within the Art Department's B.F.A. program;
- ❖ Consolidating Hospitality Management, Leisure Studies and Sports Management programs within the School of Business as opposed to maintaining as stand-alone programs;
- ❖ **Eliminating programs whose concentrations are duplicated** across schools, or across other programs;
- ❖ **Supporting the creation of new initiatives** to improve student writing skills, mathematics skills, critical thinking skills (i.e., enhancing interdisciplinarity across departments, improve academic advising and counseling);
- ❖ **Investing more heavily in infrastructure** (smart rooms, laboratories) and in personnel (both administrative staff and academic faculty) to increase enrollment and retention; and

³⁴ Ibid., 48.

³⁵ Ibid., 53-65.

- ❖ **Strengthening minor options** in most departments, enabling students to more easily pursue minor options.

A comprehensive list of University-wide recommendations is available on the Commission's [website](#).

Indiana State University

Indiana State University (ISU) assembled its Prioritization Task Force in 2006.³⁶ The goal was for the University to become more aggressive in clarifying purposes, setting priorities, allocating resources, and identifying future areas of potential growth. ISU had been suffering from low enrollment in a number of programs, and the need to address that shortcoming—while simultaneously finding ways to effectively manage resources—was the driving force behind the creation of the Task Force.

ISU's program review aimed to reallocate approximately \$2 million from low-performing academic programs to successful programs.

ISU hoped to identify approximately \$2 million for reallocation from low-performing to high-performing academic programs, and to reduce the overall number of programs offered.³⁷ Like Howard University, ISU also based their approach on Dickeson's model.³⁸ The result was an across-the-board reduction in courses, and the elimination of a number of programs,

resulting in nearly \$1.3 million being freed up for use over the following three years.³⁹

All programs were rated and ranked by college governance groups, the respective dean, and by the Task Force. The reports addressed the following criteria, adapted from Dickeson:⁴⁰

- ❖ Consistency with University mission, vision, values, and goals (as well as state goals for higher education);
- ❖ External and internal demand;
- ❖ Quality;
- ❖ Productivity, costs, and efficiency;
- ❖ Potential; and
- ❖ Crucial information not addressed by other criteria.

³⁶ "Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services." Indiana State University, October 4, 2005.

http://www.indstate.edu/academicaaffairs/program_prioritization/prioritizing_acad_programs.pdf

³⁷ "Report of the Program Prioritization Task Force," p. 34. Indiana State University, September 28, 2006.

http://www.indstate.edu/academicaaffairs/program_prioritization/final_prioritization_report.pdf

³⁸ "Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services," Op. cit.

³⁹ ³⁹ "Report of the Program Prioritization Task Force," Op. cit.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 7-8.

The Task Force used “**an independent rating for each program report**, along with the ratings from the college level, to rank all academic programs.”⁴¹ The ranking of a program by the Task Force began with a numerical analysis based on rankings across all programs. The Task Force evaluated each program individually, with a view across the entire University. Preliminary recommendations were distributed in July and departments were given until early September to respond. The Task Force reviewed the responses prior to making its final recommendations.

The results of the review process indicated that ISU needed to consider significant cutbacks in the overall number of programs, and pursue consolidation in several areas. When the process began in 2006, ISU had identified 214 individual programs—50 percent of which were serving 90 percent of the student body. This meant that of the approximately 10,600 students enrolled in 2006, 8,800 were enrolled in 107 of the 214 programs, while only 1,800 were enrolled in the remaining 107 programs. The decision reached in the study was thus to cut down the number of programs to a more manageable level: from 214 to approximately 150.⁴² The impact on undergraduate programs in particular, which numbered 116 before the prioritization study, was the elimination of 14 programs, and the reevaluation/enhancement/re-categorization of 89 others. The specific breakdown, including examples of some affected programs, was as follows:⁴³

- ❖ **Retain and Possibly Enhance** – 97 programs; 64 undergraduate
- ❖ **Monitor and Address Issues** – 22 programs; 11 undergraduate
 - Information Technology
- ❖ **Realign, Reorganize, or Integrate** – 58 programs; 27 undergraduate
 - Communication Studies, Journalism, Radio/TV/Film – merged into one program with three tracks
 - Anthropology, Geology, and Ecology and Organismal Biology – combined into one program
 - Music, Merchandising and Business – merged into one program
 - Music Composition, Music Education, Music History & Literature, Music Theory, and Musical Performance – merge into two tracks
 - Health, Community Health Promotion and School Health – merge into one program
- ❖ **Eliminate** – 37 programs; 14 undergraduate
 - Art History
 - Clinical Lab Science
 - Philosophy (selected courses maintained)
 - Physics (selected courses maintained)

⁴¹ Ibid., 8.

⁴² “Prioritizing Academic Programs – Provost Report to the Campus, January 30, 2007.” Indiana State University. http://www.indstate.edu/academicaffairs/program_prioritization/prioritizing_acad_programs-report_to_campus.doc

⁴³ “Report of the Program Prioritization Task Force,” Op. cit., 9.

- Sociology (selected courses maintained)
- Environmental Health Science

The majority of the programs eliminated were low-enrollment programs; other low-enrollment programs were, for the most part, merged to form new programs. In order to fully realize the required savings of approximately \$2 million, a number of additional cost saving measures were recommended that either modified or cut programs (primarily from the General Education program). Some of these sources of savings included:⁴⁴

- ❖ Reducing the number of sections offered by the Liberal Studies courses across departments and programs (a reduction in 27 courses, or 43 sections) while teaching the same overall number of students—generating a savings of \$355,225.
- ❖ Increasing section size in five courses per semester: Each course reduced from 3 sections to 1 allows reallocation of \$15,438—generating a savings of \$154,380.
- ❖ Cutting altogether the nine lowest enrollment sections—generating a savings of \$70,163.
- ❖ Instituting a 15 percent reduction of Liberal Studies courses, eliminating an estimated 93 sections, either by reducing the number of sections of multi-section courses and/or by changing the rotation so that fewer courses are offered in a given semester. This action did not eliminate any courses from the inventory—generating savings of \$725,022.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

The Program to Evaluate and Enhance Quality (PEEQ) initiative at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire was launched on August 25, 2009. Much like Indiana State University, the goal was to devise an approach to integrative planning by assessing the value of all programs, making necessary adjustments or cuts, and identifying ways to reallocate and make better use of existing resources. While declining state funding was a significant driver in the implementation of program review, **the University emphasized that associated streamlining would not be influenced by fiscal considerations alone.**⁴⁵

The PEEQ program at UW-Eau Claire, while guided somewhat by Dickeson's model, featured eight categories of evaluation specific to its institutional needs and

⁴⁴ Ibid, 12; 32-33.

⁴⁵ "Chancellor's Response to PEEQ: A Report to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Community," p. 3. University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Dec. 14, 2009.
<http://www.uwec.edu/Chancellor/stratPlan/PEEQ/upload/ChancellorsPEEQReport-3.pdf>

interests—particularly regarding the difference in spending patterns identified between UW-Eau Claire and its peer institutions. These categories were:⁴⁶

- ❖ Curricular Signature
- ❖ Enrollment Management
- ❖ Student Success
- ❖ Equity, Diversity and Inclusiveness
- ❖ Student Affairs
- ❖ Assessment
- ❖ Faculty & Staff Support
- ❖ Institutional Effectiveness

The review process began with a **departmental self-study assessment**, comprised of four areas of evaluation (Mission Centrality; Quality; Cost; Opportunity Analysis), and with room to provide expansive answers to roughly 25 questions related to the activities of the program under review.⁴⁷ Once completed, the assessments were handed up the administrative chain for further evaluation at each level (i.e., from department to dean, dean to Evaluation Team).⁴⁸ Once the Evaluation Team made its preliminary assessments based on the self-studies, it shared its analysis with the departments.⁴⁹

Key findings and recommendations within the report included:⁵⁰

Instructional Investments

- ❖ Build on the clear strengths and regional visibility of academic programs. Develop emphases that have evolved within and across disciplines.
- ❖ Increase capacity for high-demand disciplines based on future opportunities for graduates.

Recommendations - Programmatic Restraint

- ❖ Replace discipline-specific foundation courses with a smaller array of broadly applicable core course (e.g. statistics, research methods).
- ❖ Establish a University-wide requirement that all programmatic and unit changes include cost, opportunity, and enrollment impact analyses.

⁴⁶“PEEQ Academic Program Self Study and Evaluation Criteria.” University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

<http://www.uwec.edu/Chancellor/stratPlan/PEEQ/upload/Academic-PEEQ-Criteria.pdf>

⁴⁷ Chancellor’s Response to PEEQ . . .,” Op. cit.

⁴⁸“PEEQ Process Narrative.” University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

<http://www.uwec.edu/Chancellor/stratPlan/PEEQ/upload/Process-narrative-1-12-09.pdf>

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Chancellor’s Response to PEEQ . . .,” Op. cit., 5-7. Bullet points quoted from source.

- ❖ Require that all new program proposals include a sustainable funding plan that includes reallocations.
- ❖ Develop a mechanism for the review of low-enrollment programs with a set of performance criteria and outcome indicators that would trigger review and action.
- ❖ Continuously review credits required by programs, student credits at graduation and time to degree, and work with programs that exceed reasonable norms and targets.
- ❖ Establish a University-wide curriculum committee to oversee all curricular revisions to seek out, reduce, and prevent duplication among colleges, departments, and programs.
- ❖ Eliminate small-enrollment graduate programs that do not directly enhance undergraduate learning and/or contribute resources to support undergraduate programs and faculty.

Structural Realignment

- ❖ Effect a cost-neutral reassignment of duties in the Office of Academic Affairs to better support quality undergraduate and graduate education, high-impact learning practices and closer collaboration.
- ❖ Continuously review and realign reporting relationships of student service offices under Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

A full list of recommendations is available on the University's [website](#).

Washington State University

The process of academic prioritization at Washington State University, which took place in 2008, is an example of a custom-made, individually tailored program review.⁵¹ The review was coordinated through the work of two task forces appointed by the provost, and took place in two phases: the Phase I task force was charged with designing the review process, while the Phase II task force implemented the process and, through its analysis, developed a set of institutional recommendations.⁵² Phase I was dedicated to the creation of a framework, described as one part evaluation matrix, one part criteria guide:⁵³

The framework consists of an ‘alternative futures’ matrix for the review of Teaching and Learning, Scholarship and Research, and Outreach and Engagement... The matrix will assist programs in placing themselves on the

⁵¹ “Overview of Proposed Prioritization Process, Phase I.” Washington State University, Academic Affairs.
http://academic-prioritization.wsu.edu/P1_documents/Phase_I_Overview.doc

⁵² “Academic Affairs Program Prioritization.” Washington State University, Office of the Provost.
<http://academic-prioritization.wsu.edu/index.html>

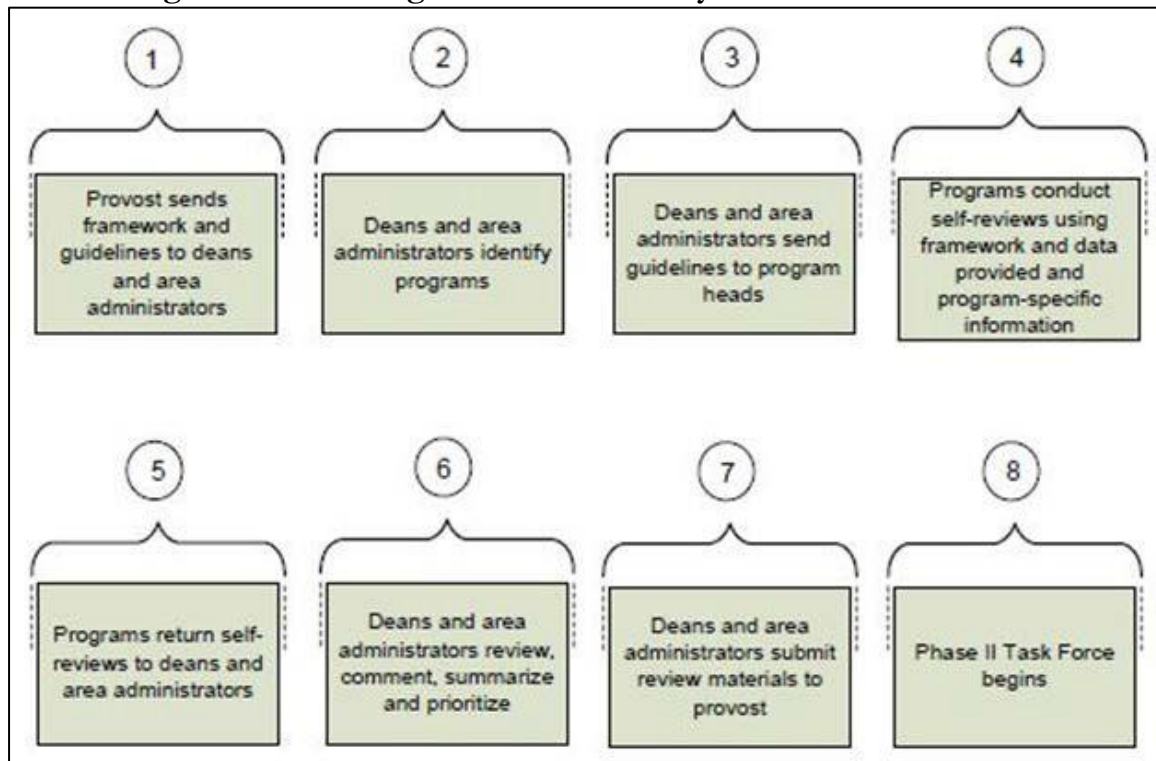
⁵³ “Overview of Proposed Prioritization Process, Phase I,” Op. cit.

alternative futures continuum. A second key element of the framework is a set of criteria to guide the reviews. The suggested criteria include **centrality, cost effectiveness, internal and external demand, impact, productivity, quality and size.**

The criteria used in the framework are listed below, along with associated evaluative dimensions:⁵⁴

- ❖ **Centrality:** Advancement of WSU’s strategic goals; unit of a kind that should be present in every land-grant university; necessity of a unit based on statute, government regulation or other internal or external mandates; number of other units of the same kind or similar kinds in Washington or in the Pacific Northwest; potential effects on other WSU units; production compared to other institutions.
- ❖ **Cost Effectiveness:** Operational expenditures compared to comparable institutions; unit efficiency; investment in facilities and equipment; potential economies of scale, proportion of administrative to total costs; self-sustaining and revenue generating activity.
- ❖ **Demand – External:** Present and future demand for services as measured by market demand for graduates, economic/scientific/social trends; partnerships with external stakeholders; the uniqueness of the program.
- ❖ **Demand – Internal:** Degree to which other units rely on the program for instruction or support including courses required by majors in other units, general education offerings, research collaboration, and core laboratory services.
- ❖ **Impact:** Demonstrates positive change in behavior and condition of priority stakeholders (an element of outreach and engagement).
- ❖ **Productivity:** Quantitative measures of performance.
- ❖ **Quality:** National and international reputation of the program; faculty recognition; comparisons with peers; student experiences; faculty achievements in teaching, research and scholarship, and service.
- ❖ **Size:** Critical mass of faculty, students, curricular offerings or research/scholarly activity.

⁵⁴ “Phase I: Academic Affairs Program Prioritization Criteria.” Bullet points quoted from source. Washington State University, Office of the Provost.
http://academic-prioritization.wsu.edu/P1_documents/AAPP_criteria.doc

Figure 2.2: Washington State University Self-Review Process⁵⁵

Source: Washington State University

Key recommendations regarding the Liberal Arts program offerings at WSU included:⁵⁶

- ❖ Combine American Studies, Comparative Ethnic Studies, and Women's Studies into a single unit.
- ❖ Focus research and graduate programs by distributing the Liberal Arts College's numerous units into one of the following new schools:
 - Social and Behavioral Science
 - Humanities
 - Arts and Culture
 - Interdisciplinary and small programs
- ❖ Implement a faculty hiring strategy where the primary criterion is to build a critical mass in research/scholarship and teaching themes rather than filling existing specific teaching assignments.
- ❖ Consider merging Clinical Psychology and Counseling Psychology program in College of Education.

⁵⁵ Washington State University, Academic Affairs Program Prioritization, "Self-Review Process." http://academic-prioritization.wsu.edu/P1_documents/Visio-self-review-flows.pdf

⁵⁶ Washington State University, Academic Affairs Program Prioritization, Phase II Task Force Recommendations, April 15, 2008 – Final. Bullet points quoted from source. <http://academic-prioritization.wsu.edu/p2-tf-recommendations.html>

University of Cincinnati

Undertaken in 2009, the University of Cincinnati's (UC) self-study program review was an attempt to take stock of the institution's progress toward becoming a "new urban research university" and 21st century academic leader.⁵⁷ The University conducted the review as part of its reaccreditation process. Despite using five pre-defined criteria for evaluation, the review process was largely unique to UC.

The self-study (conducted over the course of two years) was administered in coordination with the institution's Academic Priorities Council, and focused on **five criteria** identified by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Criteria were as follows:

- ❖ **Mission and Integrity:** "The institution operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students."⁵⁸
- ❖ **Preparing for the Future:** "The institution's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities."⁵⁹
- ❖ **Student Learning and Effective Teaching:** "The institution provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission."⁶⁰
- ❖ **Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge:** "The institution promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission."⁶¹
- ❖ **Engagement and Service:** "As called for by its mission, the institution identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value."⁶²

⁵⁷ "Self-Study, March 2009 – A Report to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools," p. i. University of Cincinnati.

http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/hlccaccreditation/docs/self_study.pdf

⁵⁸ "Institutional Accreditation: An Overview," p. 5. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools,

<https://content.springcm.com/content/DownloadDocuments.aspx?Selection=Document%2C19508682%3B&accountId=5968>

⁵⁹ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 7.

The UC strategic development framework—a roadmap known as UC|21—was central to the self-review process. UC|21 outlines the institution’s goal of becoming “the new urban research university” in the 21st century. Goals of UC|21 follow six principles: Scholarship, Citizenship, Stewardship, Leadership, Partnership, and Cultural Competence.⁶³

Using a foundation formed by the work of the Academic Priorities Council and guided by the six principles of UC|21, an “Academic Coordinating Committee” (ACC) conducted the comprehensive academic program review at UC (called ‘e-Review’). The ACC, at the request of the Provost, “outline[d] and define[d] a set of processes whereby UC [could] review, assess, and benchmark its inventory of undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs.”⁶⁴

Comprehensive review data have not been made available to the public; however, the final self-study document notes that the process recommended a reduction in the overall number of program offerings (from 574 to 328) by increasing collaboration and eliminating redundancies.⁶⁵ Beyond this information, few details are provided on the results of the program review.

⁶³ “UC|21 at a Glance.” University of Cincinnati. <http://www.uc.edu/president25/uc21/ataglance.html>

⁶⁴ “University-wide Program Review, Charge and Program Review Plan,” pp. 1-2. University of Cincinnati, Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost. http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/provost/docs/academicplanning/university-wide_program_review/Program_Review_Process-ACC_Draft_Doc.pdf

⁶⁵ “Self-Study, March 2009 ...,” *Op. cit.*, 34, 64.

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