Questions Regarding the Clarification of Criteria

Some of the examples of traits (the open bullet items) are unclear. Will the Committee provide further clarity on these items? The Committee’s work is consistent with the viewpoint of the task force that created the policy. Therefore we believe that faculty within a program should define how and what each trait means for their program. The Committee, however, would like to make it clear that these criteria were not created in a vacuum. In fact, they were developed based on the Sacramento State 1991 Policy on Instructional Program Priorities, the Academic Values Statement passed by the Faculty Senate in 2010, the book on Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services by Robert Dickeson, and the prioritization rankings that have already occurred at other universities (links provided on the task force website). While the Committee will not be using these resources to evaluate evidence provided by programs (the determination of benchmarks and the evaluations of evidence will be determined by the evidence provided), we do advise programs to understand the history and context of this task.

(New) My department has many undergraduate programs. GE and service courses (of which there are several) are not actually a part of any of these programs, as they are not intended for our majors. However, they do represent significant faculty time and use of departmental and individual program resources. There are criteria that ask about GE/service, but only in the context of the program being discussed, and as we do not have any programs that actually use these courses. How do our programs show this in our reports? Programs should clarify their relationship to the service programs to which they contribute. They should also describe the different contexts. One way to approach this issue is in the Internal Demand criterion. A program could state that the faculty who teach in program A also teach service and GE courses X, Y, and Z, so the program gets “credit” when the faculty help satisfy the demand for service and GE courses, without which the university could not function.

The Committee understands that many criteria in the policy overlap, and therefore this issue could also be addressed in the Impact, Justification and Centrality criterion, as service courses and GE are central to the University’s mission. If there are significant resources shared between the program and related service and GE courses, this efficiency could be written up as part of the Quality of Program and Resource Utilization criterion.

Questions Regarding the Deadlines

What happens if a program fails to submit a report by the March 5th deadline? Hard deadlines have been established to preserve the fairness of this process. Programs should make every effort to submit a report by the March 5th deadline. Programs that fail to submit any documentation by March 5th will not be reviewed by the Committee and their ranking will
automatically be placed in the lowest quartile for the final ranking. Furthermore, these programs will not be able to submit for the May 7th response.

What is done with evidence that is submitted past the March 5th deadline? Evidence submitted late will not be added to a program's full submission and therefore will not be reviewed or scored for the preliminary overall quartile placement.

Can a program “voluntarily declare insufficient evidence” by the deadline, knowing that the Committee will be giving feedback on incomplete information? The committee will assume that all evidence is complete and accurate as submitted on March 5th. Please refer to the follow-up question below.

Questions Regarding the Ranking Process and Ranking Feedback

What can programs expect to receive from the committee on April 16th? The preliminary overall quartile placement and the program's relative standings within each criterion. The committee will only provide its holistic evaluation along with "insufficient evidence", "strength" or "weakness" in its response to each criterion.

What does the committee define as "supplemental information" to be submitted by the May 7th deadline in response to the initial recommendations for prioritization? The May 7th deadline is intended to provide programs with the opportunity to clarify incomplete or inaccurate information submitted in the initial documents.

Will the full learning outcomes document be used in the ranking process? The learning outcomes synopsis will be used in Phase I and the full learning outcomes document submitted to Academic Affairs will be used for Phase II of the evaluation process.

Questions Regarding the Template

(New) Can programs remove the instructions (in italics) from their submission? Yes.

(New) If programs do not use the full space for a criterion can they use that space for another criterion? Yes, however new criterion must start on a new page. The template has been pre-formatted with page breaks at each new criterion.

(New) Do tables need to follow the same formatting requirements of the whole document? No. Flexibility in the formatting of tables is permitted for the purposes of accommodation.