


Office of Academic Affairs

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Date: September 30, 2022

To: Rowanna Carpenter, Presiding Officer of the PSU Faculty Senate
Lindsey Wilkinson, Presiding Officer Elect of the PSU Faculty Senate

From: Susan Jeffords, Provost and VP of Academic Affairs 

Subject: OAA Report to Faculty Senate in Response to the June 13, 2022 Resolution

At its June 13, 2022 meeting, the Faculty Senate passed a Resolution [Foregrounding the APRCA Guiding Principles and Priorities for the Program Review/Reduction Process](#). One component of that Resolution requested “a written response from OAA with a detailed plan for how the Guiding Principles and Priorities will be upheld during Phase III of the PRRP.” The Resolution also asked the questions listed below:

- a) What evaluation was applied to the quantitative driver metrics to determine why the 18 units were selected to write Phase II narratives?
- b) What criteria were used to evaluate the qualitative data from the Phase II narratives to select units to write Phase III plans? And
- c) What are the goals of the Group phase III plans, and by what criteria will they be evaluated?

In response, this report outlines how OAA has upheld the [Vision, Assertions and Guiding Principles & Priorities](#) during Phases I and II of the Program Review/Reduction Process (PRRP), along with intentions to continue those commitments in Phase III. Answers to the specific questions are also presented below.

The Provost and OAA leadership acknowledge that the [Program Review and Reduction Process](#) (PRRP) has been, and continues to be, a disruptive and difficult process, particularly for those units most affected by the work. Such processes are not, nor should they be, undertaken lightly or without the kind of serious deliberation that has gone into this process. In PSU’s case, the significant budget shortfalls that have accompanied a ten-year decline in enrollments have served as the principal cause for the initiation of the PRRP. Our commitment to and tradition of shared governance led to designing an approach that recognized the combined roles and responsibilities of administration and Faculty Senate in development and implementation of the PRRP.

It is important to acknowledge that a great deal of deliberation, research, and reflection has been undertaken by both the administration and the Faculty Senate in developing and implementing this process. The Provost and Deans are grateful to Faculty Senate leadership, the APRCA committee, and faculty in the involved units for their ongoing

commitments to continued collaboration and transparency as we complete this process. The Provost and Deans commit to continued engagement with the Faculty Senate, APRCA, and units involved in PRRP as we complete Phase III.

Background

As part of efforts to support the President's priority of achieving financial sustainability and reflecting our mutual commitments to shared governance, the Provost and Faculty Senate collaborated to develop one component of the overall strategy of [Closing the Gap: the Program Review and Reduction Process](#) (PRRP). While additional efforts would be undertaken as part of Closing the Gap (such as participation in the [Support Services Review](#) and efforts to stabilize enrollments), joint conversations between the Provost and Faculty Senate leadership concluded that the multi-year practice of eliminating vacant positions to balance budgets was eroding units and, in some cases, instructional and scholarly capacity, often where enrollments were increasing. Consequently, it was jointly decided that the Provost, in partnership with the Faculty Senate, should undertake a more intentional approach to considering program reductions. In recognition of the importance of articulating guidelines for this process, in October 2020, the Faculty Senate appointed the [Academic Program Reduction and Curricular Adjustments Committee](#) (APRCA). After considerable deliberations, APRCA set forth its [Vision, Assertions, and Guiding Principles & Priorities](#) to frame the Program Review and Reduction Process.

Throughout the PRRP, these principles and priorities have guided and informed the work undertaken by OAA. The Provost met regularly (see below) with the APRCA committee and the chair of APRCA to consult on processes and concerns raised by faculty. The PRRP was also a regular topic of discussion during the Provost's regular meetings with the Faculty Senate Budget Committee and monthly meetings with the Presiding Officers and Presiding Officers Elect.

While guidance and feedback from APRCA shaped the overall approach and implementation of PRRP, input from the APRCA committee was utilized throughout to revise and alter the process, including:

- Ensuring that meetings were held in each college/school to discuss PRRP
- Ensuring that ReImagine funds would be available to support units throughout the process
- Supporting the creation of the APRCA website
- Extending deadlines for both the Phase II and Phase III reports;
- Providing summary reports of Phase II narratives rather than posting the entire reports
- Making OAA resources available to support units with the information needed to develop their reports (i.e. making Vice Provost Amy Mulkerin available to discuss budget materials)
- Discussing how a trauma-informed approach could be used in the process

- Convening a session with Laura Nissen to explore how a Futures lens could inform the PRRP reports

Responses to Questions Posed by the Faculty Senate

Numerous questions were raised during the discussion of the PRRP and the Resolution at the June 13 Faculty Senate meeting. As promised, those questions were collected so that OAA could provide responses. Those responses are presented in the [Program Review/Reduction Process Frequently Asked Questions webpage](#).

In addition, the Resolution posed the following specific questions:

- 1) What evaluation was applied to the quantitative driver metrics to determine why the 18 units were selected to write Phase II narratives?
 - a) Units asked to write Phase II narratives had multiple entries in the Driver Metrics [Dashboards](#) that fell below University medians
 - b) As a component of these deliberations, Value Metrics were reviewed by the deans and provost to consider contributions that units made in support of the Value Metrics
- 2) What criteria were used to evaluate the qualitative data from the Phase II narratives to select units to write Phase III plans?
 - a) Phase II narratives were reviewed in light of efforts that units had taken/were undertaking to address areas in which their Dashboard data fell below the median
 - b) Qualitative assessments focused on those areas articulated in the APRCA Guiding Principles in reviewing the narratives: *Focus on Student Access, Quality Learning Experiences and Completion*
 - c) Qualitative data was reviewed in light of College/School priorities and plans
- 3) What are the goals of the Phase III plans, and by what criteria will they be evaluated?
 - a) The goals of the Phase III plans are:
 - i) To inform decision-making relating to how the PRRP can contribute to Closing the Gap
 - ii) To ensure that information is available to be considered as part of that decision-making process
 - iii) To ensure that units have opportunities to present information they believe should be considered in reviews of the reports
 - iv) To ensure that stakeholders have clear opportunities to participate in the process
 - b) Decision about units will be informed by:
 - i) Phase II and Phase III unit reports
 - ii) Unit and college/school data
 - iii) Unit budgets in context of overall college/school and university budgets

- iv) Assessment by the Provost and deans of proposals put forward by units for mechanisms to address questions raised in response to Phase II narratives

Communications

OAA was committed throughout the process to sharing information and ensuring communications with stakeholders. While not comprehensive, the following list of events/conversations shows opportunities where input and feedback about PRRP were sought from multiple stakeholders. To ensure access, various formats were utilized, including webinars, school/college meetings, emails and newsletters, participation in Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate committee meetings, and presentations to the PSU Board of Trustees by the Provost and by the Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate.

Date	Communication
12-07-20	Creation of the Faculty Senate Ad-hoc Committee on Academic Program Reduction and Curricular Adjustments (APRCA) webpage for transparent information sharing and school/college meeting information
03-11-21	Program Review / Reduction Process Forum - click this link for the video
04-01-21	Email: Academic Affairs Budget Town Hall Follow-Up: Closing the Gap
April 2021	Development of the Program Review/Reduction Process webpage for sharing information about the process with campus partners.
04-28-21	Email: ReImagine PSU and Call for Proposals
Spring 2021	School/College Meetings held with APRCA, the Program Working Group, and the Provost to discuss and seek feedback on the principles, priorities, and metrics for PRRP and to outline the PRRP process and timeline - FAQ Page
06-08-21	Email: School and College Meeting Follow-Up
11-12-21	Email: Closing the Gap
Date	Communication
01-24-22	Newsletter: PRRP Phase II Timeline and ReImagine PSU Project Announcement
01-27-22	Email: Phase II of the Program Review/Reduction Process

02-11-22	Unit Narrative Report Discussion for the 18 units asked to write unit narrative reports to meet with the Provost and Laura Nissen for Q&A and futures thinking exercises to assist with report writing
03-23-22	Newsletter: Deadline for Unit Narrative Reports Extended
04-05-22	The Provost presents the PRRP Process to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the PSU Board of Trustees
06-13-22	Email: Academic Affairs Closing the Gap Progress Report
08-15-22	Posting of the Phase II Unit Narrative Report Summaries Including Provost Responses webpage .
08-16-22	At their request, the Provost met with the Applied Linguistics Department regarding their Phase III report.
Multiple	Members of the Program Reduction Working Group met with several chairs and associate deans regarding the development of the metrics used in the dashboards.
Multiple and Ongoing	Engagement between deans and the units asked to prepare Phase II and Phase III reports
Multiple and Ongoing	The Provost meets with Academic Deans to discuss the PRRP process and unit progress.
Date	Communication
Multiple and Ongoing	Regular updates to Faculty Senate through reports from APRCA and the Provost
Multiple and Ongoing	Faculty Senate Budget Committee Meetings - Regular attendance by the Provost and Vice Provost for Academic Budget and Planning
Multiple and Ongoing	Faculty Senate Academic Program Reduction and Curricular Adjustments Committee - Regular attendance by the Vice Provost for Academic Budget

	and Planning and Chief of Staff to the Provost and frequent attendance by the Provost
Multiple and Ongoing	Faculty Senate Steering Committee: Attendance by the Provost
Multiple and Ongoing	Faculty Senate Educational Policy Committee: Attendance by the Provost
Multiple and Ongoing	Regular Updates by the Provost at Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the PSU Board meetings

Continuing to Uphold APRCA Principles in Phase III

A number of questions have arisen as to how the APRCA principles and guidelines will continue to be upheld as we enter Phase III of the PRRP. Efforts to enact each guideline are identified below:

- 1) Equitable and Meaningful Engagement of All Stakeholders:
 - a) Stakeholder engagement happens at multiple levels throughout the process, from engagement with the Provost to faculty meetings at the unit level;
 - b) Units are encouraged to include stakeholders in the development of their Phase III plans;
 - c) Deans will continue to engage with stakeholders through meetings with chairs, units, and college-level meetings;
 - d) The Provost will continue to engage through meetings with the deans, Faculty Senate Committees, APRCA, and through campus communications;
 - e) The Provost will continue to be available to meet with units at their request.

- 2) Focus on Student Access, Quality Learning Experiences, and Completion
 - a) Key metrics in the dashboards reflect attention to student success priorities. These include three-year trends in the number of majors/minors/graduate enrollees, the number of degrees awarded, and the percentage of BIPOC students.
 - b) Funding from a previous position in OAA was repurposed to appoint the Vice Provost for Student Success to provide critical leadership for student success efforts. The Vice Provost will provide feedback on student success goals during the Phase III process.

- 3) Our Work Will Change, Let's Make it for the Better
 - a) ReImagine funds have been utilized throughout the PRRP to support units in developing ways to adapt to the university's changing enrollment patterns, student demographics, student demands, and financial constraints. Projects that took place during summer 2021 and the 2021/2022 academic year can be found on the [ReImagine PSU Project Information webpage](#). ReImagine funds were awarded to projects supporting units asked to prepare Phase II reports (for example, [Linguistic Diversity and Discrimination Awareness](#), [Collaborative Model for Interdisciplinary Programs: International Development Studies](#), [Universal Design Learning Course](#), Evaluating Future Scenarios for Doctoral Education in CUPA, [Reimagining a Community Centered Climate Change and Sustainability Graduate Education at PSU](#)) and all five units that were asked to prepare Phase III reports have been allocated ReImagine funds.
 - b) Numerous units throughout the Phase II process have shown remarkable innovation in developing ways to revise curricula and programs to support student success. The Provost and Deans encourage and will continue to support these efforts as we continue the PRRP process.
 - c) The Provost continues to invest in opportunities to support faculty in adapting to these changing contexts, including increased support for the development of online classes, support for the implementation of the RESR requirement, and allocating resources to Advance Curricular and Pedagogical Innovation through the [President's Strategic Investment Plan](#).
- 4) Research and Data-Informed Decision-Making
 - a) While data from the dashboards prompted the initial identification of units asked to develop Phase II reports, Phase III reports will benefit from additional research and data that units choose to provide. For example, a number of Phase II reports added contextual information about national enrollment and degree trends in their respective fields. OAA is available to support units in gathering data needed for development of their Phase III reports. OAA is available to support units in gathering data needed for development of their Phase III reports.
- 5) Seek Feedback Prior to Decision Making
 - a) Summaries of Phase II narratives have been posted on the [Phase II Unit Narrative Report Summaries Including Provost Responses webpage](#). In reflection of this principle, summaries rather than full reports were developed at the request of the APRCA committee. While OAA developed the summaries based on unit reports, summaries were reviewed by each unit for correction or editing.
 - b) As in Phase II, OAA will consult with APRCA as to the best format for sharing Phase III plans on the [PRRP website](#).
 - c) The Provost will be available to meet with units as they develop their Phase III reports and as the responses to those reports are developed.

- d) As responses to the Phase III reports are developed, the Provost will share updates at appropriate Faculty Senate committee meetings to seek feedback.
 - e) As outlined below, the Provost and relevant Deans will consult with units asked to develop Phase III reports before final decisions are made.
- 6) Devote Resources to the ReImagining Process
- a) ReImagine Funds have been made available to each of the five units asked to develop Phase III reports; funds have been transferred to each college for units to access on timelines of their choosing.
 - b) Throughout the PRRP, [ReImagine Funds](#) have been committed to units.
- 7) Transparent Process and Open Communication with All Stakeholders
- a) Deans will continue to be in direct consultation with their units throughout Phase III.
 - b) Communication from the Provost will happen in the following ways:
 - i) Updates to the [Program Review and Reduction Process](#) website
 - ii) Attendance and updates at various Faculty Senate committee meetings
 - iii) Provost emails and OAA Newsletters
 - iv) Presentations at the [Academic and Student Affairs Committee](#) of the PSU Board
 - v) Posting of the Phase III communications section of the PRRP website with links to communications and presentations.

To sustain these commitments during Phase III of the PRRP, OAA will continue to affirm the following practices:

- Ensuring that Deans remain engaged with units writing Phase III reports as the narratives are developed
- Ensuring that ReImagine Funds are available to support units in developing their Phase III reports
- Continuing to meet regularly with APRCA for guidance and feedback
- Continuing to include data in the decision-making process
- Continuing to inform campus on activities relating to Phase III
- Providing time for feedback from units as decisions are formulated and finalized

Phase III Timeline

Date	Action Item
04-28-22	In the response to their Phase II Unit Narrative Reports, five units were asked to develop Phase III Unit Narrative Reports

05-27-22	The Provost sent a memo to the five units asked to develop Phase III Unit Narrative Reports with further clarification of what those reports should contain
07-11-22	After the June 13, 2022 Faculty Senate meeting and resolution regarding the PRRP, the Provost sent the five units further clarification about their Phase III Unit Narrative Reports
04-28-22 - 01-15-23	Deans engage with units throughout this period in support of development of Phase III reports; the Provost is also available to meet with units as requested
01-15-23	Phase III Unit Narrative Reports due to Provost and Deans
02-01-23	Complete review of Phase III Unit Narrative Reports by Provost and Deans
02-15-23	By February 15, 2023, the Provost and respective Deans will meet with each of the five units asked to prepare Phase III Unit Narrative Reports to review and seek feedback on proposed responses to those reports
03-01-23	By March 1, 2023, the Provost and respective deans will meet with the APRCA committee and FSBC to seek feedback on proposed outcomes
03-01-23	Decisions on Phase III outcomes will be finalized and shared with campus

CC: Steven Percy, President