

Portland State University Faculty Senate Motion
5 December 2022

Responding to the Provost's Program Review and Reduction Process Phase III Report and Calling for a Strategic Budget Process

Motion presented by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee and the Ad-Hoc Committee on Academic Program Review and Curricular Adjustment

Resolved that the Faculty Senate:

Determines that the PRRP Phase III plan as presented does not adequately address key questions, including the range of options being considered by Deans and OAA for the five units under scrutiny; the process for decision making, including the benchmarks for successful proposals; and how such decisions will move PSU forward strategically in resourcing our faculty and academic staff to serve our students.

Recognizes the cost, including time, labor, and emotional toll that the PRRP has taken on our colleagues.

Calls on the administration to engage in a budget process that looks beyond the current budget cycle and aligns resources with strategic priorities by:

- Providing a summary of the overall budget gap that PSU (not just OAA) has faced over the last five years and is projected to face over the next several years.
- Sharing the range of strategies being considered across PSU, arrayed together, including timelines, and the cost to implement each strategy.
- Sharing the anticipated budget savings or revenue generation of each strategy, including budget savings from administrative reorganization, and impacts on core functions of education and research and strategic priorities (racial justice and equity, student success, and community engagement) of each strategy.
- Convening campus for an intentional and participatory process based on the budget and strategy information requested above as well as providing facilitation and the time necessary to discuss ways to move PSU toward a financially sustainable institution that supports our students and curriculum and fulfills our vision. Here we would offer the winter symposium or the Time to Act convenings as examples of venues for such discussions.

Background, rationale, and preliminary discussions

The PRRP Process

Portland State University has been engaged in a Program Review and Reduction Process that began during the fall of 2020. While faculty were interested in a strategic conversation about the ways in which PSU might meet the evolving needs

of our students and community, the PRRP has primarily focused on budget reduction that is not guided by our mission. Phase II of the process involved eighteen academic units being asked to provide narrative reports related to their offerings, plans for growth, and other mechanisms that could address budget issues. After review of the Phase II reports, five units continued into Phase III and were asked to provide an additional report to further explain the plans they have to adjust or improve their programs. The process has been extremely stressful for the faculty in the units in question, and has failed to take a strategic approach to curricular adjustments. Throughout the PRRP, and particularly during Phases II and III, faculty raised concerns about how decisions were being made, what criteria were being used to make decisions, and how the PRRP contributed to strategic decision making for PSU.

During its June 13, 2022 meeting, the Senate passed a resolution endorsing the Academic Program Review and Curricular Adjustments (APRCA) committee's [guiding principles and priorities](#), requesting a written response from OAA with a detailed plan for how the guiding principles will be upheld during Phase III, and asking for the process to pause until Faculty Senate approved the plan provided by OAA.

OAA has submitted a written report regarding Phase III of the PRRP, and Senate Steering Committee and APRCA have reviewed it.

Fall 2022 Budget Context

During Fall 2022, at the same time that the PRRP Phase III is continuing, enrollment at PSU failed to meet projections, which exacerbated an already anticipated budget gap. A range of strategies to address the budget gap, in addition to PRRP, have been discussed: hiring freeze; retirement incentives; recommendations stemming from the [Huron report](#); and investments in efforts aimed at increasing enrollment, retention, or revenue. Faculty are concerned about the seeming lack of connection among these budget-related efforts and the lack of a strategic, goal-oriented approach to the budget decisions. Budget decisions, including administrative, structural, and organizational changes, have curricular and research implications because those decisions represent the resources available to carry out our core functions. Moving forward with any approach without coordination risks undermining our core purposes of education and research and hinders our efforts towards the institutional priorities of racial equity and justice, student success, and community engagement.