

# Program Prioritization Initiative

*Office of Academic Affairs*



**OLD DOMINION**  
UNIVERSITY



## Start with why: the need for reform

The budget reality and future enrollment trends require that we take a close look at our academic programs and courses to determine how the academic affairs community believes it should prioritize its resources.



# Goals

---

- Shape the future of academic programming at ODU
- Use a data-driven process to prioritize academic programs
- Identify opportunities for program enhancements
- Identify potential areas for resource reallocation
  - Consolidations
  - Potential program or unit closures
  - Course offerings
- Submit report to the provost, deans, and faculty senate
  - Inform application of Policy 1462 (Policy for the Review of Academic Programs, Departments or Colleges for the Purpose of Possible Curtailment or Discontinuance)



# Tenets Guiding the Process

- Shared governance
- Transparent
- Future-focused
- Inclusive
- Use ODU faculty as experts
- Build on ODU Strengths
- Academic quality
- Evidence-based
- Student success and social mobility
- Across the board cuts are not in the institution's best interests



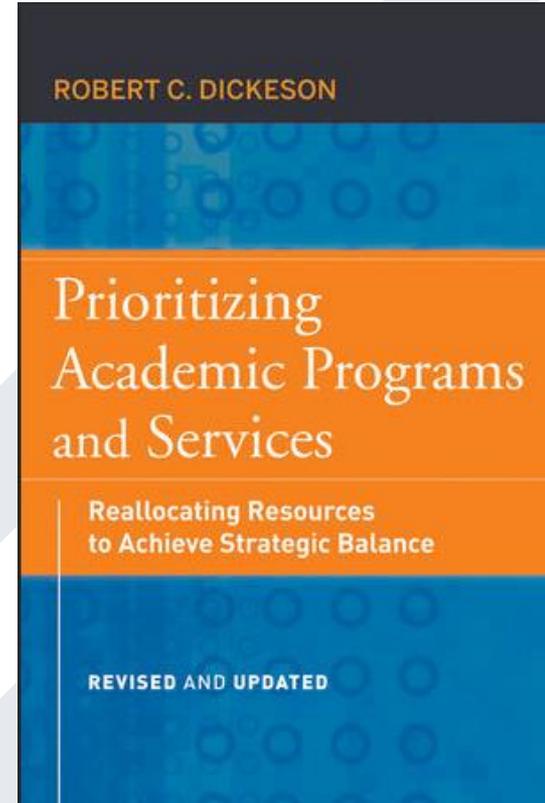
# Workplan

- Regular meetings of the task force
- Data review and presentations by stakeholders
- Data will come from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment and the Office of Academic Affairs
- Task force members will identify additional data gathering mechanisms
- Activities guided by Dickeson's Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance



# Postulates from Dickeson:

- Academic programs are not only the heart of the institution; they constitute the real drivers of cost for the entire enterprise, academic and nonacademic.
- Many institutions are unrealistically striving to be all things to all people in their quest for students, reputation, and support rather than focusing their resources on the mission and programs that they can accomplish with distinction.
- There is growing incongruence between the academic programs offered and the resources required to mount them with quality, and most institutions are overprogrammed for their available resources.
- Traditional approaches, like across-the-board cuts, tend toward mediocrity for all programs.
- The most likely source for needed resources is reallocation of existing resources, from weakest to strongest programs.
- Reallocation cannot be appropriately accomplished without rigorous, effective, and academically responsible prioritization (p. 15).



“The prioritization effort’s success or failure is largely based on how effectively the process is managed—including goal setting, enabling faculty and staff ownership of the process and its outcomes, and ensuring effective communication” (Mrig, 2013).



# Focus of Prioritization and Review

- Degree programs, majors, and certificates
- Frequency of university-wide course offerings
- Arrangements and functions of academic affairs units
- Organizational structures in academic affairs
- Task force will make recommendations to provost, deans, and faculty senate, not decisions
- Final decisions to be guided by shared governance with decisions made by authorized parties using existing practices and policies
- This is NOT general education review or program review



# Factors to be considered for academic programs (identified in BOV policy 1462)

- Relevancy and relationship of program to college/university mission and objectives
- Quality of academic programs
- Cost and revenues of academic units
- Student enrollment/productivity
- Current and projected relationship to other units
- Distinctive and unique features of units
- Impact on women and minorities
- Research implications
- Impact on student needs
- Placement and employment opportunities for students



# Another perspective for Consideration

---

1. External demand for the program
2. Quality of outcomes
3. Size, scope and productivity of the program
4. Impact, justification and overall essentiality of the program
5. Costs and other expenses associated with the program
6. Internal demand for the program
7. Revenue and other resources generated by the program
8. History, development, and expectations of the program
9. Quality of program inputs and processes
10. Opportunity analysis of the program (Robert C. Dickeson)



# Proposed Timeline

**October**

**Kick-off**

**November &  
December**

**Data review**

**January**

**Develop  
preliminary  
actions**

**February**

**Write reports**

**March**

**Final  
recommendations  
/ reports  
submitted**



# Report to Provost, Deans, and Faculty Senate

- The provost and deans will share the information with program directors and chairs.
- Information will assist in deciding whether to initiate program closure process
- Per Policy 1462, “the unit’s program director, chair, academic dean, or provost and vice president for academic affairs (“initiator”) may initiate the action for possible curtailment or discontinuance.”
- If one of the decision makers decides to use the information to initiate program closure, the process will follow Policy 1462.
- Information may also be used to suggest consolidations, unit closures, frequency of course offerings, etc.

