

Prioritization Outline

Year 1: Getting to Know Ourselves

This first year units were asked to familiarize themselves with existing data and based on this high level analysis to look for places where cuts could be made (we had made several cuts after 2008).

The university was divided into "units" based on function (ultimately, every budget and personnel line needs to be tied to unit).

Academic Affairs:

- A set of questions built around modest data and based on Dickeson was designed.
- The focus was on low enrollment classes and the cost per student credit hour benchmarking that we are doing through the Delaware Data project.
- Units were asked to discuss their measures of success (this was fairly easy since our assessment process is well built out).
- We also did some analysis of release time and unfunded load (e.g. faculty getting more units for a class than the students were getting).
- RESULT: modest changes in curriculum were done and a significant realignment/reduction of release time (we have the mathematical model that we used for release time that takes into account a number of aspects of a department and its programs)

All Other Units:

- We have very limited measures of success for these units so they were asked to consider what information they are using for decision making.
- A set of questions was built based on Dickeson with the goal of helping these units to become more self-reflective about decision making and expenditures.
- RESULT: modest savings identified.

During Year 1 we went through a major change in Institutional Research (I ran it on an interim basis and then we hired a new IR director with good IR experience).

Year 2: A Deeper Dive on Data and Making Decisions

The commitment was to finish the year with decisions made and a timeline for the implementation of changes.

Academic Affairs (by academic program or function):

- Presented with detailed data about quality, efficiency, effectiveness and cost of program.
- Data arranged around specific questions adapted from Dickeson (based on review of processes from several institutions). This included data from the Delaware Data project and other cost information. The reports were in template form.
- Asked to identify cost savings and to explain all of their data. Departments also given space to talk about mission, research, and distinctives of their program.
- 50 reports generated that are being reviewed by Academic Prioritization Committee

All Other Units:

- Provided with a list of questions that paralleled the questions for academic programs but were adapted for non-curricular units.
- Much more limited performance data available for these units, but they were asked to provide the data that they use for decision making.
- Detailed financial data (budgets, etc.) used in the analysis of this units.
- 50 report generated that are being reviewed by the Administrative and Support Prioritization Committee

Finishing the process:

- Committees were given targets for savings to be identified.
- Committee members signed a confidentiality agreement.
- An individual familiar with all costs and how to cost academic programs to refine savings computations for each committee recommendation.
- Confidential committee recommendations will exceed targets.
- Cabinet will make the final decisions about which cuts to implement. This will include all or part of specific recommendations from the two committees and may also include new things that Cabinet includes. No member of the Cabinet is participating in either of the review committees.
- In late April the changes will be announced with a timeline for implementation (all full-time faculty will retain their employment for the 2014-15 academic year).