

**Presidential Task Force on
Sustaining the Academic Priorities at StFX
November 14, 2013
Coady 342; 4:30pm-8pm**

Present: Leslie MacLaren (Chair), Jeff Orr, Janice Landry, Shannon Morell, Helen MacGregor, Leo MacPherson, Laura Sandre, Corinna Fitzgerald, Charmaine McPherson, Tara Callaghan, Rachel Hurst, Yvon Grenier, Keith De'Bell, William Sweet, Matthew Meyer, Tim Hynes, Richard Nemesvari, Robert van den Hoogen, Lisa Lunney-Borden, Taylor Mason

Staff: Gina Sampson, Candice Finbow

1. Approval of Summary of Last Meeting

1.1 The summary notes from the November 7th meeting were approved with minor corrections and clarifications

2. Finalization of Guiding Principles

2.1 The version of its guiding principles presented in the PowerPoint slides were reviewed and approved with minor edits.

3. Project Timelines & Communications

3.1. An updated version of the project timeline was approved for publication on the website. The Task Force members remain committed to completing the project by the June 30, 2014 deadline.

3.2. Task force members discussed some of the concerns they've heard on campus about the prioritization process. Typical questions included: Will this process actually produce any change? Will a program that is rated low automatically be cut? Will this process produce a lot of work?

3.3. Task force members discussed the need to address these concerns directly and to hold information sessions and activate the website quickly.

3.4. Potential dates for public information sessions were identified. Two times will be set in early to mid-December for a session open to all faculty, staff and students. Recognizing that December is not a good time for students, a third session will be held in early January for students.

3.5. Discussion emphasized the need to give a lot of notice for these sessions and to publicize them in a variety of ways. At the November 28th meeting, members will discuss the format of the Information Sessions and decide which members will attend.

3.6. As the project progresses, the Task Force will revisit the potential need to pull in additional support so that the project timelines are met.

4. Program Lists for Review Update

- 4.1. The updated lists of programs identified for review will be distributed to Deans, Chairs, Directors and Managers in the next few days for a final check before posting on the website.

5. Determination of Program Evaluation Criteria

- 5.1. Samples of template questions used by other universities undergoing program prioritization were reviewed and discussed. Feedback will be compiled and presented at the next meeting.
- 5.2. There was discussion of which criteria capture the following aspects of STFX: student-focused, high quality, economically sustainable, and uniqueness/differentiation. The influences of varying the weighting of criteria on those four broad aspects were also discussed.
- 5.3. Methods for integration of quantitative and qualitative data were discussed, including the use of rubrics to assist in scoring. Staff will provide a more detailed overview of scoring rubrics at the next meeting.
- 5.4. Members considered clustering criteria in the academic/administrative support template. Additional clustering options be presented at the next meeting as well as the pros/cons identified by other universities of this approach.

6. Report on potential data sources and options

- 6.1. Jeff Orr reported on a meeting he held with staff members who will assist with data preparation, storage, and processing, including Randy Peters, Aimee Lyons, Shannon Morrell, John Delorey, Robert VandenHoogen, Dave Mattie and Tom MacDonald
- 6.2. The following points were made at the meeting with the data management group:
 - The Task Force must decide what data will be collected centrally and then provided to programs.
 - Most quantitative data can be centrally collected; the data management group felt this would significantly improve reliability and comparability across programs, as well as assist them to manage the workload.
 - Significant resources will be required to collect, organize and analyze data. As the Task Force members finalize evaluation criteria, they must carefully distinguish data that is necessary to assess programs against criteria and data that might be interesting, but is not required.
 - TSG will create a data management system to house and process the data that comes back from program leads. Programs will be able to enter their responses directly into the system.

7. For next meeting:

- 7.1. Complete draft descriptions of and finalize draft weightings of criteria for evaluation of programs

Consider what data will be provided to programs and what will be reported by them?

- 7.2 Explore options for inviting someone experienced in program prioritization to participate in one of the Task Force meetings through Skype.
- 7.3 Provide summary lessons learned from program prioritization processes at other institutions.