Planning for Distinction— A Sample Process

Northern Michigan University
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January 31-February 2, 2017 1

Agenda

- Welcome / Introduction
- Survey
- Presentation
- Questions, Comments, and Reactions
- Break
- Input to the Process
- Wrap-up

January 31-February 2, 2017 2

Dickeson Model

- Presented in *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services*, Jossey-Bass, 2010
  - Revised and updated version of book originally published in 1999
- Successfully employed at dozens if not hundreds of institutions
  1. Reduce and redirect resources
  2. Finance strategic plans
  3. Direct incremental resources
  4. Evaluate new program proposals…

January 31-February 2, 2017 3
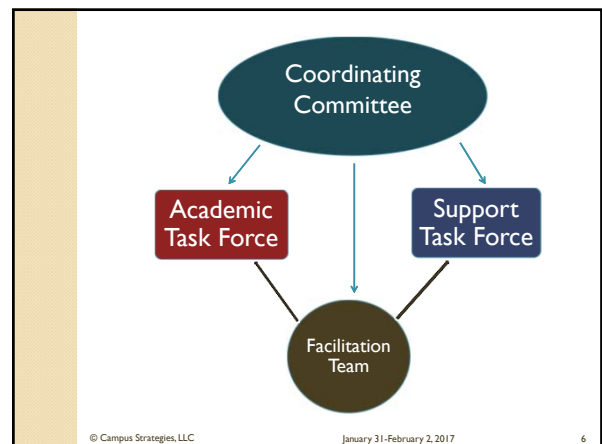
Dickeson's Postulates (adapted)

1. Academic programs drive institutional costs
2. HE adds programs but rarely subtracts them
3. Too many "try to be all things to all people"
4. Insufficient resources to do everything well
5. Across-the-board cuts lead to mediocrity
6. Reallocation of resources is best option
7. Reallocation requires prioritization…

January 31-February 2, 2017 4

Dickeson Model Characteristics

- Top down / bottom up
  - Carried out by those most affected by outcomes
- Data driven
  - Qualitative *and* quantitative
- Transparency with appropriate confidentiality
- Comprehensive
- Treats all activities fairly…

January 31-February 2, 2017 5

January 31-February 2, 2017 6

Approach

- Get organized
  - Identify coordinating committee
  - Select task force
  - Identify facilitation group members
  - Agree on target and / or stratification goals
    - Target represents a specific financial or personnel amount to be reallocated…

Approach *(Contd.)*

- Stratification refers to the specific categories in which programs and functions will be classified
- Based on extensive experience, the recommendation is for quintiles…

Approach *(Contd.)*

- Sample categories
  - Candidate for enhanced resources
  - Continue with current resources
  - Continue with reduced resources
  - Requires transformation
  - Candidate for phase-out; subject to additional review by senior leadership…

Approach *(Contd.)*

- Develop communication plan
- Communicate with key stakeholders
- Educate the community / gather input
- Conduct kickoff training
  - Key decisions
    - Establish criteria and weights
    - Identify guiding documents
    - Select task force co-chairs…

Approach *(Contd.)*

- Define programs and functions
  - A common set of activities that can be discretely measured and consumes resources…

Approach *(Contd.)*

- Resources include
  - People
  - Money
  - Space
  - Technology
  - Equipment
- Distribute programs and functions between task forces…

Approach *(Contd.)*

- Release lists for review / feedback
- Assemble relevant data
- Develop templates
- Test templates with pilot programs and functions
- Release template for review / feedback
- Establish schedule for template submissions
- Conduct template training…

Approach *(Contd.)*

- Review and assess all submissions
- Categorize submissions in quintiles
- Develop package of recommendations
- Review by institution leadership and stakeholders
- Implementation overseen by leadership through governance process
  - Must adhere to all laws, contracts, policies, procedures, etc.
- Maintain system going forward •

Questions?

Recommended Criteria

- For academic programs
  1. History, development, expectations
  2. External demand
  3. Internal demand
  4. Quality of inputs and processes
  5. Quality of outcomes…

Recommended Criteria *(Contd.)*

6. Size, scope, and productivity
7. Revenues / resources generated
8. Expenses / other costs incurred
9. Impact, justification, and overall essentiality
10. Opportunity analysis…

Recommended Criteria

- For support functions
  1. Impact, justification, and overall essentiality
  2. Internal demand
  3. Mandates and external demand
  4. Quality
  5. Cost effectiveness
  6. Opportunity analysis…

Why It Works When It Works

- Transparency
- Credible participants
- Faculty involvement
- Fairness
- Committed leadership
- Good—though not perfect—data
- Reasonable timeframe for completion
- Adequate support…

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What Leads to Failure

- Sacred cows
- Relying on "usual suspects"
- Token faculty participation
- Perceived inequities
- Leadership waffling / or unanticipated leadership turnover
- Corrupt data
- Rushing the process or taking too long
- Not pursuing recommendations…

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Strategic Resource Allocation

Questions, Comments, and Reactions?

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