Planning for Distinction Steering Committee Comments on
Instructional Programs Task Group Report
June 20, 2014

Introduction

- **Purpose of Planning for Distinction**
  “This review will lead to the development of a plan to increase resources supporting our highest priority programs, maintain steady funding for programs that remain central to our mission and eight shared strategic commitments, and reduce funding for those programs that are determined to be less central to our mission and eight shared strategic commitments.”
  (President Leroy M. Morishita, July 30, 2012)

- **Limitations**
  - While Cal State East Bay has conducted academic program review through the Academic Senate Committee on Academic Planning and Review for many years, there were no precedents for the scope of analysis in the PFD review.
  - The Instructional Programs Task Group report describes its limitations in detail in section 11 of its report. Three particularly important limitations are that:
    - IPTG used a self-reported list of academic programs that did not exactly correspond to the official list.
    - While student data is available at the program level, it is often not current, because many students do not declare a program until they file for graduation.
    - All non-student data is only available at the department or course prefix level.

- **Value**
  PFD represents an attempt to conduct a simultaneous review of all instructional programs. Despite its limitations, it constitutes a valuable baseline and an opportunity to improve future review processes. Further, the reports indicate how academic programs see themselves as supporting the University’s mission, shared commitments and institutional learning outcomes (ILOs).

- **Next Steps**
  The Instructional Programs Task Group Report along with the Steering Committee’s comments is being forwarded to the Cabinet through the PFD Sponsors (the Provost and CFO). The Cabinet will consider the task group report and steering committee comments in detail and forward recommendations that are the purview of the University faculty for further review.¹

¹ Note: the Support Programs Task Group report has been forwarded separately, on June 6, 2014.
PFD Steering Committee Process

- Availability of the Instructional Programs Task Group Report was announced on May 16, 2014.
- Two Public Forums were held – on Thursday, May 29 and Friday, May 30, 2014 with an approximate attendance of 50-60 at the first forum and about 25 at the second forum. 29 comments were recorded. The forums also were streamed through the Pioneer WebTV with a total of 128 people watching the live stream.
- Additional comments were invited from the University community through June 13, 2014 and 12 were received, reviewed and addressed as appropriate by the Steering Committee.
- The Steering Committee deliberated during four open meetings: May 23, May 30, June 6 and June 13, 2014.

PFD Steering Committee Recommendations Regarding How the Instructional Programs Report Should Be Used

- Take into consideration additional information to account for the following:
  - Changes that have occurred since the inception of the process;
  - The most recent data provided were for the 2011-12 year;
  - Lack of directly comparable metrics, including costs; and
  - Subjectivity of self-reported data and information - not possible to validate.
- Recognize the importance of holistic undergraduate education, including the contribution of different disciplines to meeting the University’s mission and ILOs as well as satisfying General Education and other graduation requirements.
- Examine the scores for each criterion (and individual questions where appropriate)\(^2\), so as to identify program strengths and areas for improvement. The Steering Committee noted that many faculty who spoke or wrote comments were sincerely interested in improving the quality of their programs.
- Be aware that scores were influenced by how well reports were written in response to the criteria and rubrics.
- Provide a common understanding of what the categories (commend, maintain, and review) mean and how they are to be used.

PFD Steering Committee Recommendations for Future Review Processes

- Ensure that there is an official list of academic programs (including options, minors, and certificates; including those offered in self-support) that is maintained centrally by Academic Affairs and documented in the University catalog. This list can then be used consistently for data collection and analysis.

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\(^2\) The Steering Committee understands that the question-by-question scores are being compiled and will be posted.
o Institute measures of program quality and effectiveness that are less subjective than self-reported information – with a common understanding of definitions.
o Balance reliance on quantitative and qualitative measures.
o Incorporate measures of the following where applicable:
  ▪ Student learning;
  ▪ Alumni satisfaction;
  ▪ Preparation for advanced education and/or career-readiness.
o Develop better and more comparable metrics and collect the data across programs – Cal State East Bay needs to foster a culture of gathering data that are meaningful for review.
o Provide more forums and other opportunities for dialogue throughout the process.
o Consider how to integrate the lessons learned from Planning for Distinction with regular Academic Senate Committee on Academic Planning and Review procedures (annual report and five-year review).
  ▪ Focus on “formative” evaluation – to assist programs in improving quality and effectiveness – with follow up to ensure that recommended changes are made.
  ▪ Recommend that draft reports be made available to program faculty, staff and students with sufficient time for input prior to submittal of the final report.

PFD Steering Committee Membership, May 2014
  o Debbie Brothwell, administration (2012-13)
  o Chris Chamberlain, faculty
  o Jerry Chang, student
  o Debbie Chaw, administration
  o Linda Dalton, administration (chair of Steering Committee)
  o Linda Dobb, administration
  o Kim Geron, faculty
  o Anne Harris, administration (2012-13)
  o Stan Hébert, administration
  o André Johnson, administration
  o James Murray, faculty
  o Carolyn Nelson, dean
  o Sue Opp, administration
  o Ara Serjoie, administration (2013-14)
  o Greg Smith, administration (2012-13)
  o Sam Tran, staff
  o Mitch Watnik, faculty
  o Meiling Wu, faculty

Attachments
Planning for Distinction Instructional Programs Task Group Report. May 2014
Edited transcript of forums, May 29 and 30, 2014
Transcript of comments received electronically, through June 13, 2014
Thursday, May 29, 2014

Jennifer Eagan – Philosophy
I just wanted to say at the outset that a lot of us from the faculty have been opposed to this PFD process from the beginning and we see it as a usurpation of faculty governance and the appropriate channels through Senate. The evaluation and ranking that the PFD Instructional Program did, we feel, is the province of CAPR, the committee on resources and academic planning. To that effect, the Academic Senate passed last year a resolution that said that the criteria for ranking programs, currently under development by members appointed to the Instructional Task Force be submitted to the Academic Senate via CAPR for approval prior to the use of criteria prior to the use of criteria to rank programs for the purposes of reallocating funds. This resolution passed in the winter of 2013 and we received no response. This is a resolution form the Academic Senate questioning the validity of this process and a plea for this process to be more democratic and more transparent and it was met with silence. So for that reason, I would like us to next year, before we act on any of this reallocation of funds, have a genuine democratic, transparent process where we discuss the PFD data and results, the validity of the process, and how we should have done it differently in the first place. And I’ll be advocating that for the first thing next year. Unfortunately for us faculty folks, it’s almost summer. A lot of us are not eligible to teach over the summer and will not be teaching and will be working on our research. And for a lot of in the senate, that was one of our worries, that we would leave and somehow this reallocation process of moving funds from certain departments and towards other departments would continue outside of our purview. This is a plea to make this process more democratic and more transparent as we move forward next year.

Norman Bowan – Political Science
First of all, I would like to thank my colleagues on the committee for the enormous amount of work that they put into this effort. I realize how much work it was. I know how much time I put into it. I did a rough calculation of how much it cost the university just for the work that I did and I think that it probably went into the thousands. I would like to see an accounting of the total costs of this Planning for Distinction process. I’ve not seen it so far. I would also like to thank members of the committee and chairs, in particular, for meeting with me to discuss interdisciplinary program that I direct, a program that simply did not fit into the template of the PFD process and it was clear that for many of the categories, I simply had nothing to put into the boxes. The fact that my program ended up in the 4th category is, I think, a reflection of the indistinct nature of the model that was used. But that’s not really what I’m concerned about with respect to this PFD process or the results. Quite simply, I think that the PFD process is a house of cards built on a foundation of sand. First the foundation: There’s no evaluation of the quality of academic programs, no level to look at the level of instruction, the rigor of assignments, the proficiency of the graduates, or any efforts of the programs to help their students improve. When I asked the committee members, at the meeting, how we were to deal with this core of the university which is instruction, they said, “you can write up some comments in the narrative boxes.” In other words, anecdotal evidence self-described anecdotal evidence. No critical think professor would ever accept that kind of evidence as evidence of quality of an academic program. The PFD document has no other basic information about the quality of programs and the level at which they’re taught. So
the second thing I wanted to comment on is the fact that there’s no serious effort made to look at advising for students, support for students, or even of assessment itself. I’ll make this very brief: We’ve been obliged to do assessment for over 10 years at this institution. Some program did so and many programs did not. The PFD document, somewhat cynically in my view, said you could either say that you’ve done assessment in the past or you claim you’re going to do assessment in the future. Those two things should not be equal and yet they were made absolutely equal in terms of the rating in the PFD document. Finally, one last point: I think there was a very flawed but understandable, given the pressure from the legislature, effort to link academic programs to job opportunities and employment. However this was deeply flawed. Why? First of all, the fact that we assume that all of our students are going to be looking jobs here in California. That’s simply not the case, particularly for interdisciplinary programs with lots of international students or students who want to work internationally. There is no way for us to build that in. That’s the first part and for many programs, I think that’s also the second. And finally the assumption is that students in an academic program are going to seek their employment in an area of their academic degree. We know that’s not the case. In most liberal arts programs, that’s simply not going to be the case. Even political science, for which fortunately, there are lots of jobs out there in all kinds of areas, we did a focus group and the graduating senior, almost half of them said they were in it because they wanted to get into politics because they’re citizens, because they wanted to work in PTAs… They already had jobs and were not seeking employment in the field. I think fundamentally the process is flawed. I understand you’re going to reallocate resources. I approve of that. I think doing it on the basis of PFD would be a grave mistake. Thank you.

Linda Ivey – History
I want to thank my colleagues who preceded me. They both make excellent points. I heartily agree; especially the jobs. But I have a specific question and that is can we get the data? In the best case scenario, this is an opportunity for us to look at our programs and see where, through this particular rubric, as this particular rubric was set up, we could improve or strengthen. But we only have gross scores for criteria and absolutely no data for the specific question which we were asked. And I think it would be pretty easy to give us that data so we can reflect on it and see where our scores landed our programs.

Susan Gubernat – English
I want to thank you all for the hard work and I’ve already sent a written response and probably will send more written responses between now and June 13th but many people in this room haven’t read that response so I’ll try to synopsize it very quickly with two comments and an additional suggestion. I would have less skepticism about this process if, after it had all been completed, among the commendable there had been at least one program in the arts or the humanities or the pure sciences that found its way into the commendable category. But it’s difficult for me to look at that commendable category and see anything but those. What we see are a kind of rubric that privileges career orientation, technical orientation, and forgets the nature of a comprehensive university which is what we are. I think it’s important to recognize the ways in which it all fell out. At the top of the heap are those programs that seem to lead (I say “seem to” because I don’t agree that there is enough data to suggest that people in those programs are going to get a job upon graduating) to a career. That’s not true. Those of us who have been outside of the academic world for a long time, myself included, with liberal arts degrees, wound up in jobs that had no direct connection. But the connection as between what we had learned in the world of general education and in the world of liberal arts. Many of our students are working class, are underrepresented minorities, are from poor backgrounds, and I’m afraid that if we reallocate our funding to the kinds of programs that are commendable or even high level here, we’re going to deny them the opportunity to go into the humanities and the arts and deny them
the opportunity to be musicians, dancers... This concerns me quite a bit because this is a socioeconomic tracking. Things change in the market place so to link what we do here with specific careers or job orientation is probably a misnomer and we will give our students the wrong advice. And finally, I want to recommend a book for your summer reading: It’s by Henry Giroux and it’s called Neoliberalism’s War on Higher Education. I found the CSU and East Bay on nearly every page of it and I think there a lot of neoliberal warriors among us.

Nickolas Baham – Ethnic Studies
I think we should really be having an open dialogue here where there’s some response. I’d like a little bit more than someone simply taking down usual suspects as usual things. In my opinion, my problem with this program is that it’s utterly tone deaf. You have great faculty on this campus who have been committed to lower income students and we’ve been working with less and less every year. Our wages are flat. We’ve done furlough and then we get this. In my opinion, that’s a legitimate slap in the face. It promotes divisiveness. It ghettoizes some departments, and it promotes fear. IF what you want at the end of the day is a great university, you will never have it in a climate of fear. It will not happen. I’d like to see real dialogue and real engagement and real democracy over this issue. I think it’s insulting, at the very least, to call this a town hall and to have us at the mic venting. I want to talk with somebody about this. In rankings, I’m somewhere in the middle, and the on my grading scale, that gives me about a C. And I’m going to tell you that I don’t do C work on this campus. If you want to talk about people whose lives I have saved on this campus for 14 years and tell me that that’s a C, I don’t believe you can do it. PFD doesn’t take any of that into account. We are saving lives and putting people into the economy. Where does that fit on the ranking? It’s not anywhere on the rubric. The real work we do is not legitimately covered here. The rubric itself is flawed, some of the thinking behind it is flawed, and the way it was formed in an undemocratic fashion is also flawed. If we’re going to build a great university, let’s do it by hiring great faculty and letting them do their jobs. We are all committed to making this a great place. Frankly, I’m here for more than a paycheck; this is my life and I want to do something great here and I want you to respect that in all ways.

Nila Farahim - Student, Senior
It was mentioned that students were consulted through ASI but ASI has not made any specific efforts to bring about awareness to the student body as a whole. I am a senior and have been here as a freshman and I am actively involved in a lot of clubs and organizations and I don’t recall being consulted about the very programs that serve us. I spoke to quite a few other students and they have no idea what PFD is. I believe just as many students believe that all the programs here are valuable and hold value. Thank you.

Patricia Jennings – Sociology and Social Services
The first thing I want to mention briefly, we are PhDs. We think abstractly and don’t talk about feelings. I want to talk about how this made me, and other colleagues that I spoke to, feel. I asked one of my colleagues to come to this session and she said, “I have nothing to say. I looked at the rankings. I looked at the report and I just felt so demoralized that I started looking for another job.” I looked at the rankings and thought... this is the last nail in my worker satisfaction coffin. I have also been on the market looking for other work at places where this has already been done and died out. In terms of this being a business model, it’s really a very ossified model. In the new corporate world, there is much more creativity being pushed and this is outdated with ranking, rating and closing of departments. I want to now switch to some questions about the criteria. Program quality criterion which carries some weight... No one asked me for syllabi and this links to you not have the tools. This is not a valid measure when you didn’t have the tools to really look at the quality of instruction. No one asked for syllabi that would at least give you some sense of the kind of books we’re using, how abstract they are, how
rigorous the course is, the types of assignments we use, etc. If you’re using teaching evaluations, and departments score high on those evaluations, that concerns me because we know there is often a correlation between rigorous courses and lower course evaluation. I don’t know if you controlled for that. I want to know how you weighted each other items in each category. Was teaching evaluation weighted differently than program design and to what extent? What had higher weights? What had lower weights? And how was that calculated? Was that valid? I want to see our detailed information for each criterion. Otherwise, this has no use to me. And finally, I don’t really know what it means to be “maintained at the current level.” Can I pick up my feet and stop applying for new TT hires because I’m not going to get them because I’m ranked in a lower category? It’s about reallocating money so let’s talk about what that really looks like. I’ll stop there. Thank you.

Lori Price – Anthropology
I am very impressed with the quality of faculty here and their dedication when working under adverse circumstances in many cases. So that is the context for these comments: In my view the PFD process has, as its outcome, if not as its original agenda, the aim of cutting many smaller programs and departments from the CSUEB offerings. There are obvious deficiencies of scale to have 15 mega departments rather than 35 departments of mixed sizes or 120 large programs rather than 253 programs that are of mixed sizes. But students don’t come in one size. Their interests and passions are very diverse. There’s a word we like to honor on this campus. The student passions can’t be funneled into 15 departments or 30% fewer programs without their education opportunities and life opportunities being profoundly eroded. As in the centralized production model of soviet Russia, this model of PFD is one-size-fits all with fewer options. This erosion in program diversity may look attractive using a corporate efficiency model or technical training model but that corporate model is not appropriate, in my view, for higher education and this plan of eliminating smaller programs and smaller departments will do a huge disservice to CSUEB students if it proceeds. Thank you.

Luz Calvo – Ethnic Studies
I was reading section 10 of the report about general education and after I read the section, I went back to look for the report submitted by GE and it wasn’t there so I was wondering if I’m just not seeing it or did you choose not to put it on the website? It’s hard to figure out how you came to your recommendations without also seeing the report and because it deviated from the others, I had a lot of concerns about the kinds of recommendations that are implicit in the findings. I’ll leave that until I can find it and then I’ll write a comment if I have something to say. I also want to address just how demoralizing this process has been to faculty. When I saw my colleague’s rating, it broke my heart because I see the quality of advising that he does and how many hours he spends with students giving that one-on-one advice that is, honestly, kind of life saving for some of our students. I’m not that kind of a researcher and I don’t believe in metrics but there is so much of what we do that is so profound. To have it reduced to a number just seems so wrong. I don’t know how that can be remedied or if it can be. I feel like this process is bringing us down. This is my home and I am devoting my life, the best of what I can, to my students. I want this university to be great because I love our students. I mourn for the fact that all of this energy that has been toward producing these number and rankings. I can imagine if that energy had actually been put into sitting down in small groups and saying, “what could we do to be better? What innovative approaches could we take?” Then we could have ended somewhere distinct. But instead we are following the path of neoliberal number crunchers and I don’t see where it’s going to get us. Thank you.

Terry Jones – Social Work
I’ve been here for 40 years. When I first came to the university, I was told “we don’t do jobs. We teach people how to think.” It’s not an either-or. Some of my colleague sound a bit discouraged but I would urge them to take this as just the beginning and hopefully people in the positions of administrators would not have their heels dug in and would pay attention to my colleagues to my colleagues. We deeply care about this university and it’s potential to be a force in this community. What I’m seeing is a move toward a top-down administrative force that looks something like HEALD business college where faculty are tossed a syllabus. We deserve better. This is a transformative experience in his profession and what we ask, what we demand, is that you pay attention to us in a better way than you are doing now. And I would challenge my colleagues not to give up. I would challenge you to be more open minded and tear up what has been done and negotiate in terms of how should the legitimate process move forward. How should the faculty be involved. While that may have been a mistake, that notion of pushing the Academic Senate out there to the right, I would have preferred them to be at the center of what we do. Students, faculty are the heart and soul of the university and it just appears as though we’ve been disrespected in this process. What I have come to understand it is that it takes both parts is we are going create a great institution. I would really urge you to pay attention to my colleagues who are asking to be heard. And to my colleagues, I have been in these trenches for more than 40 years and in that time there has been change and a piece of a beginning to do what needs to be done here which is to create an institution that welcome all. I think we can do a much better job and this is a wrong-headed attempt to bypass the faculty. My colleagues in the department of Social Work ranked well. We know that many of ours students have fantastic positions throughout the community in social work and they could not be where they are today without philosophy, communications, history or all the things that make up a real university. You cannot separate these things; it blends together to create what it is we consider an educated person and we are losing sight of that. So why don’t we just tear up where we’ve been and meet halfway with my colleagues and plan—I wouldn’t call it Planning for Distinction. That’s a terrible word now—but to call it something where we could move forward together in a more just process.

Donna Goducke[sp?] – Chemistry and Biochemistry
All of our programs got a “maintain” but when other people mention “what does maintain mean” I felt I had to respond. First of all, I want to say that I know all the people involved in this process did an impossible task and I recognize that as someone who did a lot of writing for my department. I felt it was almost impossible to do it in that amount of time. I can’t even imagine reviewing that many reports so I appreciate your efforts. I also want to bring attention to the name of it: Planning for Distinction. I feel like it could have been framed in a more positive way. What I think is distinctive about CSUEB is the fact that I can make connections with my students and make a difference in their lives. I don’t think this is reflected at all in the report and I understand a lot of people whose feelings are extremely hurt by the way this report is and the idea that we could get rid of certain programs. In my opinion, all the programs on this campus need more resources. I think most people agree with me. I’d also like to speak to the student’s point: Because I think that’s what’s distinctive about CSUEB and why I’m proud to work here, is because of the effect we can have on students. WE are not Berkeley. There nobody cares about the students. Here, we care. We know all their names. We talk to them whenever they come to our office. We answer their phone calls and emails. The students should have had an opportunity to add to the individual program reports because I think that’s where we can shine. I also would like any program that is in the bottom 10%, rather than seeing “reallocate” or “combine,” what would really be helpful in Planning for Distinction would be if we took what was really good about the programs that we’re commending and see if there are actual lessons or strategies that can be used to help those programs that you are saying are at the bottom. The other thing is that a lot of the faculty feel that we are being assessed from some may different way right now. It’s overwhelming and a lot of
resources that faculty are putting into filling out reports for external evaluations to prepare for WASC, to prepare for PFD, it’s thousands and thousands of dollars worth of time that is on top of our other jobs here at the university. My final point is that it’s very confusing how each individual option was ranked and I understand some reason for that. If you look at chemistry, we have several options that all got maintain. However they are all over the place and it’s the same faculty doing it. It just doesn’t help us. In other programs they had some option “commend” and some options to get rid of even though some options tend not to actual take that much additional resources and faculty time. And in giving students options, we give them ideas about careers that they might not necessarily have. Thank you.

Amy June Rowley – Modern Languages and Literatures
I think this here is a really good example of the university that doesn’t know what to do and is not in tune to diversity. For me to be able to present and speak in front of you, you have interpreters. I did read the report and of course I was upset and before I even read the report, I knew what to expect. I had a feeling that things were stacked against me. For a long time I’ve been working here and I’ve been feeling frustrated with trying to get information because my program is a minor only. And the program doesn’t have enough names attached to it to become a major. A lot of people ask who they should talk to for their minor but the university doesn’t address this problem. So who gets stuck with the problem of the program not having an advisor? Me. So now you give me this document but you’re not really helping me resolve the issues that I already have. You put my program last on the list because of problems that were already there so I feel like if you want to discuss problems that are already there, that’s one thing. But to criticize me for problems that are there and you’re not providing me with resources for them, I feel like that is a sustainable purpose. Also, I work very closely with many people in my department to make sure that our numbers are accurate. One report was very close to us. We did very similar work. Somehow that person received a maintain score where my program got the lower percentage. So with that itself, I just lost confidence in the whole process. We both did the work together, we both had a lot of similarities, and yet we got two separate scores. That doesn’t seem to make any sense. I feel like we cannot rely on this process in general just based on that. I agree, yes, we do need the money to somewhere but places like mine are where we really need to send it and I haven't gotten any support and, so far, I’m still waiting.

Luz Calvo – Was each program within a department scored by the same team or were programs potentially scored by different teams?

Carl Stempel – Sociology and Social Services
If this is just the beginning of what will become a dialogue, then I’m okay with it. But if this is our one chance then I really hope you listen to what Terry said which is that we need to have a dialogue that includes administrators that can see certain things that professor don’t but that really seriously listens and responds to all the issues that have been raised so far. At this point, I don’t see that dialogues planned and I hope that it ends up that way. I’d like to mention a couple other things. One is that I think it’s really important that we get the detailed numbers on the criteria so we can see where our departments can improve. That is an important step. There are a lot of faculty that feel that at the very beginning there was this poorly named “Planning for Distinction” which is really like ranking for distinction or evaluating for distinction instead of planning for excellence. I think what we ended up with is exactly what we thought from the beginning which is that you would identify a few programs that would get more funding. ...or will apparently get more funding but that is unclear as to how it will happen. And that lack of dialogue adds to that demoralization that we’ve heard so many people talk about. I’m in a department where the number of majors has gone up about one and a half times over the last ten to fifteen years whereas the number of TT faculty has dropped about half. Yet, we ended up
in about the middle and what does it say? “Maintain.” And with the lack of dialogue and lack of understanding of what comes next, I can only interpret that as we’re screwed. We’ve been swimming really hard to tread water for a long time and we’re going to be stuck doing this even longer. But we’re looking to build and expand the program and reach out to all these new majors. The dialogue, some more communication, and a better understanding of what the next steps are, some planning for what is going to be done which includes us is really essential.

Patricia Jennings – Sociology and Social Services
We put in a lot of hours that we didn’t have to put in to do new innovative kinds of programs and I, too, feel that, what’s the point if it just means that we are going to keep having this constantly overload without the means to support us? Beyond that, I also feel that if the dialogue would have started with the faculty senate, with faculty, there would have been a much better outcome. This really does circumvent the senate process. We have the distinction of having a program that is the lowest ranked program in the ranking, bottom of number 4. We have already, through our 5-year review process, made a determination to eliminate that program and put through the paperwork and it worked. Doing the CAPR review in a discussion with our Dean, we made that decision. Some of the options have zero budgetary impact but could be very important for other reasons.

Susan Gubernat – English
I want to go back to some commentary about the GE section of this report and the distinct way that that it is treated separate form all other programs. I am concerned about that because we get a very different handling of General Education in this report than we do all the other programs. And I read that this is distinctive and unique and doesn’t fit into any of these categories. That’s a little suspicious to me because when we look at the narrative (and there’s a narrative instead of a rubric)... There’s quite a long narrative in section 10 about the observations that someone is making about GE. There are so many questions included here that are very leading questions. Should GE SCUs get the same level of resources as SCUs for major courses? Is the correct distribution model based on history or sound academic goals? How does the program that serves primarily GE enrollment but, without many majors, maintain its distinctiveness? These are question that are not motiveless. They are not pure research quantitative questions. They suggest what I really fear—One of the real impotencies behind this kind of process is a major attack on GE. There are lots of ways to talk about or improve GE but if we are going to have a comprehensive university, we need to look hard at GE and not throw it under the bus. What worries me most of all is that you decided not to pass it through the rubrics but you are spending a lot of time questioning it’s value. Very disturbing.

Jennifer Eagan – Philosophy
The GE section is deeply odd. I want to go back to my original point about the usurpation of shared governance in this process. GE is the province of the GE subcommittee which I’ve been on consistently for years. That committee reviews courses and measures them against learning outcomes. They do it in a rigorous way. This part of the process has not only bypassed the faculty but is slapping them in the face. So I think that PFD really grows out of a dissatisfaction of certain people in the administration who are disrespecting the work of shared governance and the work that goes on in the faculty senate. So I what to reiterate that shared governance means that the faculty have primary voice in matters of courses, curriculums, and programs, and that has to be maintained. And that is the primary fault of PFD, at least on the instructional side. I have problems with the other side too. But at least on the instructional side, this has been an administrative arm that has come and scooped out the province of the faculty and handed it to an unelected committee, using metrics that the faculty themselves would not have chosen.
Unknown
I want to make a pitch for arts and sciences falling to the bottom of the ranking because I was alarmed to see that because I think these are very profound numbers that we’re looking at. It would be a shame if people were harmed by this because we don’t know what kind of jobs the future will hold. We do know that our country needs scientist and we do have the STEM program and we also know that if we look at the data, all the arts, combined employ more people in the Bay Area than any other single industry. If you want to look at careers and futures for students, a lot of them are going to be in that arts and sciences.

Meiling Wu – Modern Languages and Literatures
I have a question as a Steering Committee member. So, what we are planning now si we listen to all the comments and then deliberate in our meeting. So then what are we going to do after we discuss about people’s comments? Are we going to respond to each of them with an agreed upon answer or what is the plan?

Carl Stempel – Sociology and Social Services
You talked about this being a “baseline.” Can you explain what you mean by that? When I hear “baseline” I think you are going to start looking at a trajectory. I think it comes back to what I was saying about communication. We don’t know what that means. Can you explain to us what that is and how this exists as a baseline? I hope to hear more about that in more detail in the future.
So if I was to think that we would have an opportunity to improve on this then I would be mistaken?

Luz Calvo – Ethnic Studies
I have one more question about process. The chart that you put up in the beginning... it goes to the Cabinet and then it says recommendations will come out of the Cabinet. Now you said that nothing will be done during the summer but would we expect that the Cabinet would be meeting on this during the summer to produce those recommendations that would come to the Senate during the fall?
So there will be charges coming to the Senate?

Pat Jennings –
Can you clarify what’s the relationship with CAPR going forward since CAPR is the process? What will this look like going forward? Will CAPR continue to function as it is? Will CAPR be circumvented by administrative decision ranking? I’m not sure if you’ve envisioned that. What does that look like? To dovetail on Carl’s question, if this is a baseline, and it’s about process, and you obviously have had numerous comments about the invalidity of the methodological approach to creating some of these rubrics, then does that mean there will be no budgetary changes until that’s improved? And will we be doing this again with improved methodological tools?

Carl Stempel – Sociology and Social Services
Science works where people take a stab at something, they do their best job, and then other people come along and critique it. So I want to reiterate that this needs to be a process. This needs to be a dialogue and part of that process and dialogue does need to be very specific numbers on each of the criteria so people can see where the distinctions are being made. Then we can see if that’s how we want to make our distinctions. We won’t be able to do that without the details. That’s essential that this become public and transparent because that’s the way science is.

Terry Jones – Social Work
A smart professor from Stanford talked about how children play. He talked about parallel play. Children play but not with each other. My colleagues are suggesting that we stop parallel play and we engage in an interchange. Just how easily you say that you’ll take our feedback and think about it, that demonstrates a high level of misunderstanding of what it means to engage the faculty. I think my colleagues want to play too. We can think. We can work and we can come to conclusions. And anything short of that is a perversion of the process that involves the faculty at the highest level in anything that involves curriculum at the university.

Friday, May 30, 2014

Gretchen Reevy – Psychology
I’m interested in the meaning of the two lower levels of the rankings call the “Review Categories.” I’m just concerned about what’s going to happen to the degree programs that are in those lower ranking review categories. And I’m concerned. If I was a student I’d be concerned. Could it mean that I wouldn’t be able to see a BA degree in geology, anthropology, computer science, music, Spanish, math, or French, etc. I’m hoping that there would be some consideration that perhaps assuming the process was a valid process, if the programs were ranked low that they might get more funding or more support.

Jennifer Eagan – Philosophy –
I want to let the steering Committee know that the CFA Executive Board passed a resolution explaining their opposition to PFD which the Steering Committee has. Speaking on behalf of other faculty, with the more than 300 faculty members who received the emailed CFA resolution, no one responded in disagreement which is unusual. A lot of untenured faculty members and lectures tell me they are dismayed and concerned about a lot of the points that were brought up in yesterday’s forum. This is a plea to the Steering Committee: I would like you to listen to these faculty voices. I would like you to listen to the grievants who filed a statutory grievance saying that this process violated campus policies regarding shared governance. I want you to listen to that AUP policy on shared governance which says that faculty members need to pick their own representatives on processes like this which did not happen in this case. And I want you to listen to all of the people that talked to me privately in my office because they were afraid of this process and afraid of speaking against it. Thank you.

Jeff Seitz – Earth and Environmental Sciences
For full disclosure, all the programs in my department were ranked in category 3. I guess I have the same sort of concerns then Jen just talked about. I agree with the CFA position on this. I also am concerned that rather than giving programs meaningful feedback, that this creates a competitive environment between programs and departments instead of us working together. Rather than getting any valuable information or feedback, the report creates kind of a top ten list rather than any meaningful narrative about how a program can improve itself with the criteria that had been set in this process. I also think that the process has been more of an exercise in effective writing to the prompts and I have to say that my department has failed in being able to write effectively to those prompts. I think the objective data about the quality of our program as far as course evaluations and research opportunities for students, and external funding for grants wasn’t really very well communicated in our report. I think that there are kinks and opportunities for improvement and I’m just afraid that this process has already given us a scarlet letter. We already work too hard and this was really a burden for a smaller department like mine. We have 4 faculty and 3 programs that went under review. I have a concern about where this is going since we are in category 3. We are uncertain about what this means for the future. Lastly, I think there are some errors in our report and I think I report might have been
scored differently than I’ve looked at other program reports and I think it would useful if there was an opportunity for a formal response from a department to this report.

Susan Gubernat – English
I do want to say a few things about the genesis of programs and processes like this. We aren’t the only CSU that’s taken on this kind of project. And we’re not the only university. Where do these projects and programs come from? A lot of time the come from consultants to higher education. They are created by people who, if you read what they say about faculty, suggest that faculty are self-interested, that we are interested in preserving our turfs and territories, etc. That’s a real misrepresentation of who faculty are and what they’re doing. What we’re in this for is to think about students who go to school and don’t only need a job, but also need to understand what they need to create a life for themselves. Don’t let the rubrics define who you are or what you do. Let’s move forward together in faculty governance to make sure that the programs that are here and that are valuable and important to students are maintained and supported. We don’t have to buy into this particular matrix. It’s not our matrix.

Jesus Diaz-Caballero - Modern Languages and Literatures
I was reading all the documents from the beginning of the process. I think most of the faculty shows concerns about the process. I basically agree with that. Probably the best way to continue would be to discuss and listen to programs. After reviewing this report, I think there are some positive things in this process. It allows us to discuss the future of our university. Particularly in my department, we are teaching languages. Also we are realizing that we have to adapt to change. My program was in the category of review. I would like to see this process continue with the thinking that addresses issues. We have had many challenges in the past. All departments have problems but we need to be positive and identify resources in the future. We have to have a clear vision for the future of these programs, especially language programs.
May 20

In order for the report scores for each department to be useful in terms of being able to improve, the scores for each question/section for each program need to be provided. Only that way can one determine what elements of one's program need improvement, especially relative to others.

Chris Moreman

May 20

Can it ever be the case that all programs could fall into the top category? It seems as if things are structured such that there must be some programs in the bottom tier. If so, then moving forward, if some programs are eliminated then the next time around, there must be other programs that appear in the bottom, and so, and so forth, until there are only a couple of programs left.

May 21

This report confirms how utterly flawed this process has been. So, an interdisciplinary program, which does not have its own faculty and therefore could not fit into the template and provide all the data asked, was given by default the LOWEST scores for those categories. Therefore it is in writing, on the record that all of our interdisciplinary programs are underperforming. As the administrations asks that faculty leave their silos, and collaborate -- now formally supported by the Provost via Affinity Group hires -- those programs that have done just that are categorized as poor programs.

May 21

We really need to be able to see more data. A program can see that they got, for example, an 7.9 for Criterion 1. You absolutely need to provide a further breakdown of the scores. How on earth can we respond, or improve if that is part of the hope, if we cannot see where are scores were low? The Criterion level is not specific enough. It is essential that we are all provided with more detail. If this evaluation is data-driven, then we need to see the data.

May 22

CFA’s Response to the “Planning for Distinction” Instructional Report


We have communicated why this process is unfair, not at all new or innovative, and how it hasn't served the CSU and other institutions well in its past incarnations. We object to the PFD process for the following reasons:

1) PFD violates shared governance.
Faculty should be in charge of academic programs, and their representation on committees should be the result of a faculty vote. In the case of PFD, participants were hand chosen by the administration. Further, PFD duplicates the work of CAPR, thus disrespecting the hard work of our elected faculty committees. (see AAUP: https://www.aaup.org/report/1966-statement-government-colleges-and-universities). Faculty are already stretched too thin in terms of service to the University, and this process stretches them even thinner.

The Academic Senate passed a resolution (12-13 FUFM 2, http://www20.csueastbay.edu/faculty/senate/committees/excom/12-13/12-13-documents/12-13-fufm-2-prog-prioritization.pdf) saying that the criteria used by the PFD instructional group (and not only the outcomes) need to go through the Senate. The administration did not respond to this resolution. The Senate should have been a part of the process from the outset rather than being asked to consent to the product of this illegitimate process after the fact.

Some claim that faculty do not honestly evaluate and assess their own programs. This is simply not true, and the claim is disrespectful of the work we do. When programs or options become out of date and lose students, the faculty changes their curricula. We cut options and transform our programs regularly because we are the ones who know our disciplines and our students.

2) **Labor was not consulted.**

PFD could result in layoffs on either the instructional or student service sides of the process, but the labor unions on campus whose members may be affected were never officially notified about this process and were not invited to participate.

3) **Upper administration is not being reviewed.**

If we want to look for inefficiencies, duplicated services, and waste in our institution, then the administration should have been included in such a process and their value should be under review by faculty, staff, and students.

4) **PFD was developed using a privatized, neoliberal, corporate model that is inappropriate for a public university.**

Rather than being truly innovative and integrative in creating a planning process using the human capital already present and connected to our campus, our administration has chosen to purchase an unproven approach that is rife with unproven assumptions and market values inappropriate for our institution.

This process is divisive on its face. PFD pits faculty members against each other and asks us to save ourselves and our programs at the expense of other faculty members and their programs. Rather than being a genuine and thoughtful strategic planning process, PFD is structured more like *The Hunger Games*.

What faculty can do …
If faculty members want to take control of their departments, programs, curriculum, classes, and positions, then we have to work together. To do that in ways that are of our own creation and democratically and pedagogically sound, the first thing that we need to do is to thwart this process. PFD as a Dickeson-driven corporate model is set up to demand the judgment that certain programs are underperforming, and therefore should be cut. There was no way for the instructional group to form a judgment that all of our programs are valuable and that each creates a unique and rich opportunity for our students to learn, connect to the world, and to succeed.

Let us reiterate that, since this is our position: All of our programs are valuable, and each one creates a unique and rich opportunity for our students to learn, connect to the world, and to succeed.

Please join us in resisting the PFD process by 1) demanding that programming and curriculum planning and decisions be brought back into the Academic Senate, 2) come and voice your dissent at the two forums on Thursday, May 29, 3:00-4:30 in VBT 124 and Friday, May 30, 10:00-11:30 in MB 1055, 3) email comments to Lori Erdman, lori.erdman@csueastbay.edu, about the unfairness of the process or use the anonymous feedback form: https://adhayweb13.csueastbay.edu/about/planning-for-distinction/feedback/index.php, and 4) contact your CFA representatives to find out what more we can do going forward.

This statement was approved unanimously by the Executive Board of the East Bay CFA Chapter on Monday, May 19, 2014.

May 26

I quote your report below and will address my comments specifically to this (though I could go on for days):

"Individual task group members of IPTG and SPTG were elected and invited to participate by the executive sponsors of the PFD process (VP and Provost James Houpis and VP and CFO Brad Wells) based upon knowledge and expertise related to the charge of the committee, and in consultation with those faculty (including committee chairs and officers of the Academic Senate), administrators, and staff most familiar with the programs and activities under review."

This narrative is at the very least misleading and at its worst - filled with lies:

1. this process (as described by you above) was a top down process ("executive sponsors") without faculty participation at PFD's inception. You may not think this was a problem, but a critical mass of faculty do.
2. What does "consultation" mean to you (executive sponsors)? STOP implying that this process was participatory and democratic. "Consultation" means you TOLD faculty what you were going to do after you decided to do it.

I didn't think the wrecking ball the previous CSUEB administration took to shared governance could cause any more damage - but this latest administration has proven that wrong.

I delayed in taking the time to write this - because, based on years of past experience, I knew
you wouldn't/won't bother listening, let alone creating a space for an honest dialogue about program review.

Rita Liberti

May 27

It does appear that a bias on workplace training has emerged in the professional programs being ranked so much more highly than other programs. This is a problem in that it does not reflect the aims of the university or of higher education overall.

May 28

I am impressed with the overall effort to begin this process. I have a lot of concern about the limitations of counting on it for decision making for this year. However I think it is an excellent "baseline" on which to build future planning and I think it should be a part of strategic planning.

May 29

I would have less skepticism and more of an ability to suspend my disbelief in this whole PFD process if one, just one, program in the Arts or in the Humanities made it to the top tier and was found commendable.

Instead, what we seem to value at CSUEB most are professional/technical, career-preparation degrees. I didn’t realize that somewhere along the line we had stopped being a COMPREHENSIVE university and became an institute. And as a first-generation college student from a working-class background myself, I am fearful that my students will be too readily tracked into professions whose programs of preparation are more heartily endorsed and better funded than the arts and the humanities.

I note that the GE program was exempt from the kind of quantitative “rubriced-up” review everyone else had to go through.

But that did not stop the committee from making wholesale suggestions about GE, nor from suggesting, for example, that the SCUs accorded GE might not be equivalent to those for major coursework. I would direct attention to pages 57 through 59 in this report, where GE gets its own “special” treatment. It would almost lead one to believe that this entire exercise was taking direct aim at GE in this institution with the intention of “transformation” but based on opinion and not on data, as the rest of this report purports to be based one.

Those of us who came here for a decade or more are experiencing a sea change about what it is we came to be a part of. Those of us who believe that our students deserve as much of a chance to be musicians or dancers or poets as much as they deserve to be accountants or marketing analysts, or yes, even teachers (“What can I do besides teach?” being something we are asked regularly in advising) are broken-hearted by this report. We’re not only acting like a business, becoming a business, we’re valuing business and other skill-producing and technically-oriented fields, seemingly a directed career orientation more than anything else. We’re about the arguably false promise of jobs upon graduation (should one pick the right major), like those for-profits out there--DeVry and the like. But having worked for a major
corporation for seven years before I came back to academe, I can tell you that there are many ways to make a living having been educated in the liberal arts, ways that are not as easily identified by the kinds of rubrics measuring value in the Planning For Distinction matrix.

Susan Gubernat

May 30

I agree that the three categories make sense, but not that there should be an explanation of what REVIEW means. While the explanation mentions several potential results, it implies that programs in the category are on the block (for discontinuation). This will give institutions with competing programs something to point at ("See, it says right here in their planning docs- that program at EB is in danger of being discontinued.").

Who would it hurt to release all the scoring data?

June 13

Our department (Earth and Environmental Sciences) would like to provide a formal response regarding the methods and outcomes of the PFD process. This would require a formal rebuttal process and a response by the PFD committee. Will there be such an opportunity as part of the process?

We have found errors and omissions in the PFD report that should be addressed in an open and formal manner.

Jean Moran

June 13

Given all of the issues that have been identified (both formally in the report itself, and informally in discussions and forums), will there be an opportunity for a formal rebuttal process? I am concerned that the process as-is, with all of the issues with data and objectivity, yields a "garbage in, garbage out" result.