Criteria for Program Analysis

1. History and relevance to university mission

   This criterion shows how the program is aligned with the university mission:

   Eastern Illinois University is a public comprehensive university that offers superior, accessible undergraduate and graduate education. Students learn the methods and results of free and rigorous inquiry in the arts, humanities, sciences, and professions, guided by a faculty known for its excellence in teaching, research, creative activity, and service. The university community is committed to diversity and inclusion and fosters opportunities for student-faculty scholarship and applied learning experiences within a student-centered campus culture. Throughout their education, students refine their abilities to reason and to communicate clearly so as to become responsible citizens and leaders.

   The university mission statement sets standards and expectations for programs. Programs will vary in their purposes, clienteles, and methodologies, but all programs are expected to support the university's mission in some way and achieve its stated expectations of excellence. The pattern of achievements and expectations is different for a mature program than a nascent one, so program history is relevant.

2. Internal demand for the program

   No single program can achieve the university's mission on its own, and this criterion captures the interconnections among programs. Academic programs provide students with general education courses, foundation and principles courses, and specialized curricula in support of other programs. Administrative programs may serve a variety of internal clientele, and the choice between internally or externally provided services may be relevant in some cases.

3. External demand for the program

   The external demands for programs stem from a number of sources: students and their families, employers and business partners, alumni, donors and other friends of the university, and the general citizenry. The establishing legislation for the university requires it to offer courses of instruction, conduct research, and offer public services. The Illinois Board for Higher Education's Public Agenda for Illinois Higher Education establishes expectations for increasing educational attainment, ensuring college affordability, addressing workforce needs, and enhancing economic development.

4. Quality of program outcomes

   Assessment and accreditation of academic programs today tend to be more focused on program outcomes than inputs. This criterion focuses on external validations of quality and uses multiple measures to identify exemplary performance and achievements. Both student and faculty outcomes will be relevant for academic programs. Administrative programs are expected to use best practices and provide value to the clienteles served.

5. Resources generated by the program
Programs may generate resources in a number of ways: enrollments, grants, fundraising, income-producing contracts, ticket sales, and provision of services. Interconnections among programs create implicit cross-subsidies, with some programs being net payers and others being net receivers. Resources in this context need not be financial. Relationships with community colleges, schools and businesses, and government bodies also benefit the university.

6. Productivity of the program

Productivity refers to the outcomes and resources generated by the program relative to its size and scope. Productivity measures tend to be quantitative, based on metrics like student credit hour production, degree completions, and number of students or other clientele served, relative to the size of the faculty or staff assigned to the program. A program's productivity can be negatively impacted if its resources are too thinly spread to achieve a critical mass or if its resources are imbalanced relative to program needs.

7. Costs associated with the program

Program analysis will be tied to the university's financial ledgers. A program by definition uses university resources, and tying to the accounting system helps ensure that no programs are overlooked in the analysis. Metrics in this criterion are used to identify all of the costs of delivering the program. Many of these costs are direct, but some may be implicit or indirect costs not directly associated with any financial payment. Programs may also be drivers of efficiencies that can help reduce the costs of delivering other programs.

8. Program impact on university mission

This criterion may be considered a catch-all for relevant information not covered elsewhere. It focuses on reasons why a program should be maintained or strengthened, the essentiality of the program to the university and its mission, the contributions that the program makes to other programs' successes, and the benefits that the university receives from having the program. The university's vision calls for making personal connections and having a global reach and impact, and programs may have unique aspects that contribute to this vision.

9. Future opportunities for the program

No program has all the resources it wants or needs, and new or reallocated funds are scarce. This criterion provides an opportunity analysis to identify new and innovative ideas to promote a sustainable academic and financial future for the university. Identifiable trends in student demographics and interests, technological developments, and partnerships with businesses, schools, alumni, and donors are just a few possible avenues for future opportunities. Many of the opportunities that programs identify will tie back to the university's strategic plan, which specifies six key areas that we want to enhance or strengthen.