

Priorities for Program Planning

As per the Planning & Priorities Committee (P&P) Terms of Reference, the committee is to provide advice to Senate regarding the priorities for implementation of new programs.

In the planning phase of the *New Program Approval Process*, the Planning & Priorities Committee receives presentations from Faculties with new program ideas. The committee will use high-level priorities to ensure that the proposed programs align with the priorities of the university, and prepare a three-year program development schedule to better facilitate data collection (e.g. student surveys) and prioritize work by the Office of University Planning & Analysis.

The “Framework Document to Prioritize New Programs Working Group” recommends the following high-level priorities for Planning & Priorities consideration:

- Indigenous Perspective:
 - How are Indigenous students supported and/or encouraged to enroll?
 - What is the role of First Nations Scholars and/or Elders (ie. providing perspective or engaged in the process)?
 - What is the relationship with Indigenous communities?
- Inter-disciplinary Activity
 - Is there any inter-disciplinary content?
 - How is interdisciplinarity expressed (ie. team-teaching, multi-department proposal/courses, mixed student background)?
- Retention of Students:
 - How are students supported to complete the program at VIU?
 - Opportunities for undergraduate research?
 - Opportunities for community engagement, co-curricular record activities, or work-integrated learning?
 - Are there investments in upper level courses and/or first year courses to reduce waitlists and provide more diversity for course selection?
- Increased Enrollment of International Students:
 - How does this program attract International Students?
 - How are International students supported?
- Experiential Learning
 - What is the experiential component to the program?
 - Consultation with work-integrated learning office?
- Labour market needs
 - How does this program meet labour market demand?
 - What graduate attributes will the students meet in this program?

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- If labour market information is difficult to specify, then what is the value added proposition for employers relative to graduates from this program?

These high-level priorities for programming should be seen as guidelines: since they were developed to reflect the values and priorities outlined in the Academic Plan and the Summative Program Assessment, new program proposals should be able to comment or respond to relevant priorities. Program proposals may also be adjusted in order to address specific and emerging community or labour market needs, however, these priorities should guide Faculty Councils and Deans in considering what new initiatives they will bring forward. The guidelines are meant to guide the discussion and comments provided by P&P: they are not meant to be a checklist or to act as a ranking system that would prevent the proposal from going forward. Rather, they are meant to guide proponents and the committee as they attempt to address VIU's priorities.

These priorities will be re-examined and updated at the annual retreat of P&P.