Porterville College

Program Review Handbook

Contents

The Porterville College Mission and Values

Our Mission

With students as our focus, Porterville College provides our diverse local communities quality education that promotes intellectual curiosity, personal growth, and lifelong learning, while preparing students for career and academic success.
In support of our values and philosophy, Porterville College will:

- Provide quality academic programs to all students.
- Provide comprehensive support services to help students achieve their personal, career, and academic potential.
- Prepare students for transfer and success at four-year institutions.
- Provide courses and training to prepare students for employment or to enhance skills within their current careers.
- Provide comprehensive support systems tailored to each student's skill level.
- Recognize student achievement through awarding degrees, certificates, grants, and scholarships.

Our Values

Porterville College's core values define the character of the institution and are active ingredients in all that the College does. Through our commitment to these values, the College can better serve and be more responsive to its students, staff, and community:

- ***P**articipation* - fostering and encouraging the involvement of staff and students in campus activities and the various aspects of the College decision-making process.
- ***I**ntegrity* - holding one another accountable and remaining transparent by adhering to the highest academic and professional standards.
- ***R**espect* - treating each other with respect, trust, and dignity.
- ***A**daptability* - nurturing and supporting exploration of innovative ideas, programs, and services to enhance our service to the community.
- ***T**eamwork* - working together to encourage input and dialogue in a collegial and cooperative manner.
- ***E**quity* - supporting students in achieving their full educational potential regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, religion, ability, culture, and learning modality.
- ***S**uccess* – striving to continually support students in achieving their academic, career, and personal goals.

Our Philosophy

In support of our mission and values, Porterville College will base its decisions and actions upon the following beliefs:

- All students at Porterville College will be treated with respect and dignity regardless of who they are or the goals they have established for themselves.

- Porterville College will provide the best possible service to its students in order for them to meet their individual academic or vocational goals.
- Porterville College will encourage innovation, creativity, and new ideas and will support professional development opportunities.
- As an integral part of the community, Porterville College will develop and enhance partnerships with schools, colleges, universities, businesses, and community-based organizations to respond to the educational, workforce, and economic development needs of the region.
- As an integral part of the Kern Community College District, Porterville College will participate in and be actively involved with all district-wide committees and governance structures.

Purpose of Program Review

Program review at Porterville College is the process by which we self-reflect, review the progress we have made in recent years on existing goals and plans, examine data relevant to our programs, and plan for continuous improvement. We do it so that in each of our programs, we can seek to maximize the chances for students to succeed, which is after all, the ultimate mission of the college as reflected above.

Who Completes a Program Review?

Every area and function at the college should be reflected in a program review. By way of organization, instructional program reviews are conducted by division. Some divisions choose to divide their program reviews into pieces by subject, but the document that is submitted should be one compiled document.

For non-instructional areas, program reviews are conducted according to the person to whom they report. The same three-year cycle applies, with programs reporting to the vice presidents of Instruction, Student Services, or Finance and Administrative Services rotating. Also included are those areas that report directly to the president.

The Program Review Cycle

Each program is on a cycle, completing a program review every three years. The work of gathering data for the document, collecting input, and completing it should mostly take place in the fall term, with program reviews due on February 1st of the spring term.

In addition, each year, an annual update is completed for each program. This document is required regardless of whether the program is under review that particular year. The update form is simpler and includes questions asking about changes since the most recent program review in outcomes, program goals, and resource allocation. Regardless of changes, the form also includes the annual budget request for the program. *These documents should be completed even if the budget is categorical and not determined by the college.*

How Program Reviews are used in Planning and Resource Allocation

Program review is the grassroots basis of the Porterville College planning and resource allocation process. The chart below provides a visual outline of the process. Here, we describe how it works for programs.

Most of the work for program review should be done in the fall term of the year in which it is due. The data are typically available from the KCCD Office of Institutional Research in August. The final document is due to the Strategic Planning Committee by February 1st.

It is important to note that while one person may coordinate input, program review should be a collaborative effort by all of the faculty and staff of a program. Everyone should be involved.

Strategic Planning Committee goes over each program review document in detail and provides guidance to the program using a rubric that is available online. The rubric identifies what the expectations of the college are for each section of the program review. When the committee meets, a lead person involved in the creation of the document is typically invited to the discussion so that they can hear directly from the committee. When all requested corrections are made, the program review is forwarded on to College Council for approval. Once approved at College Council, the document is posted on the web on the Program Review page.

Once completed and approved, program reviews do not just wait on a shelf until the next cycle. As a first step, your program should be using it as a planning guide for your next three years, including addressing each of the goals you set in your review. In addition, these documents drive our planning process. The primary groups that use them include Budget Committee, Enrollment Management Committee, Strategic Planning, and Grant Oversight. Budget Committee uses the staffing, budget, and other resource requests in program reviews to prioritize needs at the college and establish the college’s annual budget. When Academic Senate and other groups receive faculty and other staffing requests each year, they expect these requests to be outlined and justified in each area’s program review. Enrollment Management must be aware of planning needs, possible curriculum changes, etc. Strategic Planning, in addition to overseeing the program review process, manages strategic planning for the college and uses program review to understand program-specific and collegewide needs.

The documents are used by other committees as well, including Curriculum, which approves new programs and changes to existing programs and courses, Information Technology committee, which plans for technology needs across campus, Facilities Planning, Distance Education, and Safety/Security Committees use the documents in their planning efforts. All of these planning committees provide recommendations to the college president regarding the short and long-term planning and resource allocation needs of the college.

Program reviews are also used in longer-term planning efforts. Strategic Planning Committee considers these documents in its development of the college’s strategic plan. The Educational Master Plan is the document that is used for long-term planning of the college, including program development and space needs. The most recent program reviews for each area are used in the compilation of that document. That Educational Master Plan is then used to develop the Facilities Master Plan for the long-term facilities and space needs of the college.

Additionally, program reviews are key to other key periodic planning documents, including the Information Technology Plan, the Staff Development Plan, and the Distance Education Plan, all of which must take into account the needs of each program. In short, while all of the college’s planning efforts require substantial input and dialogue from the entire college and community, the first building block of all of them is program review.

Program Review Process

Linking Program Reviews to Budget,
Enrollment Management, Strategic Planning, and other College Committees

The Role of Program Review in Accreditation

Of course, we don't do program review because accreditation requires it. But, ACCJC standards document the reasoning behind the process described above. Standard I.B.5 reads as follows:

> The institution assesses accomplishment of its mission through program review and evaluation of goals and objectives, student learning outcomes, and student achievement. Quantitative and qualitative data are disaggregated for analysis by program type and mode of delivery.

So, program review is the grassroots basis of the entire college planning process, the manner by which the college mission and the mission of each program is evaluated. The rest of standard I.B. makes this clear, showing that program review is central to the planning and resource allocation process. As it concludes in standard I.B.9:

> The institution engages in continuous, broad based, systematic evaluation and planning. The institution integrates program review, planning, and resource allocation into a process that leads to accomplishment of its mission and improvement of institutional effectiveness and academic quality. Institutional planning addresses short-and-long range needs for educational programs and services and for human, physical, technology, and financial resources.

In brief, the college mission statement is the foundation for what the college wishes to be and program review is the means by which we evaluate how well we are meeting that mission and the mission of each program to which the college mission is linked, and how we determine how to allocate resources across the institution to meet that mission.

Where (on the Web) to Find Information on Program Review

To get started on your program review, you need documents. These can be found online on the college's program review page. There, you will find several important documents, starting with program review forms. These forms differ slightly for instructional and non-instructional programs, mostly in the area of outcomes and assessment. Also, on that page is the program review schedule, which shows where each program fits in the college's 3-year cycle, and the rubric, which provides documentation on the college's expectations for the program review documents. Lastly, on the bottom of the page, is the most recent completed program reviews for each area.

One thing you will not find on the college's program review page is your data. Program review data are compiled by the KCCD Office of Institutional Research and Reporting. On that page, you will find program review data for each of the three colleges in the district. Instructional data is available by subject, which is often the best way to analyze it, but also division and course, and college wide. There are course-level and student-level filters that allow you to break out your data by different organizational and demographic characteristics. In the instructional data, there are filters available for most Student Services programs, which allow those programs to evaluate how they are doing. A separate dashboard provides specific data for some Student Services programs.

To get to the PC Program Review page, go to the college website, click 'About,' then 'Research.' The program review page is a part of the PC Institutional Research page.

To get to program review data on the KCCD IR page, go to the KCCD web page, click on 'About KCCD,' then on 'Institutional Research.' You can see the 'Program Review Data' page there.

A Guide to the Steps of Program Review

The program review rubric is a valuable tool that outlines the expectations for how each section should be completed. This is the document the Strategic Planning Committee uses to evaluate program reviews and assess whether they meet the standards the college has established. The rubric is just one page and will help you avoid many of the pitfalls that may occur.

The rubric corresponds to the sections of the program review forms. What follows below is a listing of the sections of the forms and a guide as to how to best complete each section.

Mission Statement

The first part of the program review is the college mission statement and a place for the program mission statement. The college statement is reviewed regularly by College Council and approved by the KCCD Board of Trustees. Just below the college mission statement, you will find the Guided Pathways Framework, including the four pillars of Guided Pathways. These, along with the six goals set out in the college mission, will be useful when setting program goals later in the document.

Of interest here is the mission statement for each program.

In the rubric, the program mission statement meets requirements if it "accurately describes the program and is linked to the college mission statement." How does one write a statement that does this? Basically, by describing what your program does and how that connects to the overall mission of the college. Each instructional program, for example, might include information about the kinds of instruction and learning that takes place in their program. The college mission statement discusses the college's focus on degree attainment, career and transfer preparation, and support services. Some programs focus primarily on one of these, some on multiple, or all of them. Your mission statement need not specify every link, but it should be clear how the program furthers the college mission

For non-instructional programs, the same link should be made. No program exists for its own sake, but rather for that of the students of the college and the community. If the mission statement is unclear, or if it seems as though the program has strayed from the mission of the college, it may be rejected.

Outcomes

This is the section in which the instructional and non-instructional program review forms differ most, but even here, the differences are fairly small. For both, the goal is to have a program of assessment that, according to our rubric, is "ongoing, clear, and complete" and to have "decisions based on assessment results." One recent change in the rubric notes that if you are not where you want to be in assessment, a program is in compliance if the program review "accurately documents where its current assessment efforts stand and plans for improvement."

In other words, if you are behind schedule, we would prefer that you show us honestly where you are and how you plan to get caught up, rather than try to cover up or pretend you are further along than you are.

Programs have some latitude as to how to express this in their program review documents. Some provide calendars and schedules for when and how their programs are assessing each outcome. Programs vary tremendously, in size, complexity, and the number of outcomes being assessed. So, your approach can vary. The bottom line is that each must document that assessment is taking place on a regular basis, that the program is discussing those assessments, and that decisions about the future of the program are being made based on the results of these assessments. These decisions may be such things as changes in curriculum and andragogy, refinement of the outcomes and methods of assessment, and reallocation of resources to address gaps.

It is important to note that while refining the outcomes and methods of assessment is perfectly acceptable, a program should not get caught in a loop of continual changes in the outcomes rather than addressing the needs of students. Assessment methods may never be perfect, but we should focus on acting on the best information we have thus far while simultaneously working to assess as accurately as possible.

Another key issue here for instructional programs is that both course and program-level outcomes should be addressed. For many programs, there may be too many course-level outcomes to list them all and all assessment methods, but the document should make clear that all course outcomes are being assessed regularly and that those assessments are discussed and used. For program level outcomes, the form provides a simple table that allows you to input outcomes, assessment results, and changes made based on those results.

For non-instructional programs, we call our outcomes Service Area Outcomes (SAOs). These are whatever outcomes the program uses to measure its effectiveness in serving its and the college's mission in serving students. Most, though perhaps not all, should be student focused. Such outcomes might assess what the recipients of the service (e.g., students, employees, members of the community) should be able to do or the attitudes they will have after receiving the service.

It is important to distinguish between the outcomes discussed in this section and the goals that will be listed later in the document. While both should be specific and measurable, goals are things that the program wishes to accomplish in a specified time period for a specific purpose; outcomes are things the program believes recipients should be able to accomplish. Outcomes should only change as the program changes, the needs of students change, or better methods of assessment are developed. Goals are likely to change with every program review cycle.

If you have questions about establishing or assessing your outcomes, contact your Outcomes Committee representative on campus or the Outcomes Coordinator.

Program Analysis and Trends

In this section, the program evaluates itself and looks to address trends, data, and strengths and weaknesses. Within it, there are five sub-sections: data review, changes in program, report on previous goals, program strengths, and areas of improvement.

Data Review

Every program should review data that are relevant to the operation of the program and the completion of its mission. A great deal of data are provided by the KCCD Office of Institutional Research and Reporting, but programs are not limited to these data. You should use whatever suits the program's purpose and mission.

For instructional programs, the KCCD research office provides data in a set of dashboards, which most areas will want to filter by subject. Program review is conducted by division and most divisions include several subjects. The data for each should be reviewed, analyzed, discussed by members of the program, and trends included in the program review document. What we note below are a series of possible questions a program may ask as it reviews instructional data.

Often, programs will include screenshots of the data they believe is most relevant. Should you do so, be sure your screenshots do not include any data with small numbers of students (<10) to protect student privacy.

Demographics: One of the first items to review are demographics data. These can be found in the unduplicated headcount dashboard (and similarly, in a separate enrollments/FTE dashboards) which can be filtered by several demographics. Five years of trend data are provided, and you can filter by several demographics, including gender, ethnicity, age, first-generation status, and participation in several Student Services programs, such as EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKS, etc.

Questions to address would include, but are not limited to the following:

- Do the program's demographics differ from collegewide demographics, and if so, is that a natural result of the kinds of students who choose this discipline or an area of concern for which outreach or other efforts might be considered?
- Have the demographics of the program changed, and if so, will these changes necessitate changes in curriculum, policies, or resource allocation?
- Pulling unduplicated students by program of study, is the number of majors growing or shrinking?

And, Student Services programs, such as those mentioned above, can use this section to get information on the number of students in their programs. The same dashboard can be used by those programs to get the number of enrollments or FTES in those programs by simply changing the filter mentioned above.

Enrollment Data: Next, the data include information on enrollment and related trends for the program, including waitlist and productivity data and information on faculty broken out by contract type. For much of these data, the section-level dashboard will have the information. The faculty information is provided in a separate dashboard, which is otherwise similar.

Questions to address would include, but are not limited to the following:

- Is enrollment in the program is growing or declining?
- Are waitlists preventing students from completing certain classes?
- Is program efficiency (FTES/FTEF) changing?
- Is the proportion of distance education enrollments changing, and if so, how will that impact program planning and other needs? Are you offering the appropriate number of sections of each, given current and expected demand?
- Do the enrollment trends suggest a need for additional staffing (which you will have the opportunity to request later in the document)?
- Is the program over-reliant on adjunct and overload teaching (and consider the extent to which adjunct faculty are available in the area)?
- Are recent or upcoming changes in the program likely to impact enrollment trends and staffing needs?
- How does your program meet the needs of the community (especially for CTE)?

Course Completion and Success Rates: The five years of data on course completion (which we previously called retention) and success rates are also broken out by traditional and distance education, and you can see whether your course success rates are improving over time. There has, at times, been a substantial gap between traditional and distance education success rates. This gap has narrowed over time, but it is important to examine it for each program and determine whether your program needs to make changes in curriculum and/or andragogy to address any gaps.

Success rates are typically the more important to consider. The dashboards include filters allowing you to examine demographic groups separately or compare them. In program review, course success rates are the most important data point for examining student equity. For example, you can compare data on success rates by gender, ethnicity, first-generation status, DSPS participation, and other demographics.

Should your program see substantial differences in success rates among demographic groups, you should consider whether changes in policy, curriculum, or strategy might help narrow these equity gaps. Substantial differences should not be ignored or assumed to be natural.

When reviewing these data, one should usually compare each subject to itself over time. Collegewide data are provided for context, but programs differ naturally. Some may have good reason to have higher or lower success rates and it is not helpful either to brag or worry about differences from the college average. It is almost always more useful to compare the program's rates to the same program a couple of years ago and note differences there.

Data for distinct Student Services programs can be filtered or used as comparison groups. For example, one can compare EOPS students with non-EOPS students to see if there are differences in course success rates. The same would be true for other Student Services programs and each should review these data, in some cases, by subject or division, to see if there are significant differences they should address.

Questions to address would include, but are not limited to the following:

- Are course success rates improving or worsening over time in your area?
- Is there a significant gap between traditional and distance education success rates, and if so, what might be done to address it?
- How do success rates vary by demographics? Are some groups more successful than others, and if so, what can be done to bring about equity in rates?

Awards: The last section of instructional program review data is on the number of degrees and certificates awarded. These data include all award types, associate degrees (both of art and science), associate degrees for transfer, certificates of achievement, job skills certificates, and non-credit certificates of competency. This is another area where you can examine trends over time to see whether the program is increasing or declining. You can also check the ratio between the number of majors reported earlier in the document with the number of degrees awarded to see if there is a barrier to student completion.

Data can also be broken out for Student Services programs, so each can see the number and type of degrees and certificates awarded to students in their programs. This will show what kinds of programs are attracting interest in their area and whether students are having difficulty in achieving success.

Questions to address would include, but are not limited to the following:

- Is the number of degrees and certificates being awarded increasing or decreasing?
- Is the number of awards issued reasonable considering the number of majors each year, or are students having difficulty completing in a timely manner?
- Are the students getting degrees and certificates in your program similar demographically to the college demographics (remaining aware that numbers by program will often be small)? If not, are outreach or other efforts warranted?

Non-instructional areas should also complete the data review section. As noted above, most instructional data can be broken out by most Student Services programs, so each program can see demographics, enrollment trends, course retention and success data, and awards information for students in their programs. These can be used, in a similar way as instructional programs, to gauge how a program is doing over time. Are more or fewer of your program's participants meeting key indicators such as completing an education plan and being successful in their courses?

In addition to the instructional data provided, there are data for a few specific Student Services programs. For DSPS, we have some information broken out by type of disability. For counseling, data are provided showing the percentage of first-year students who complete each of the four steps of matriculation: assessment, orientation, seeing a counselor, and completing a student education plan (including plan type). For enrollment services, data are provided on transcript requests.

In summary, programs should not rely only on these data for the data review section. You can ask Institutional Research for specific data if something on which you would like to evaluate your program is not available in the KCCD sources. (Please allow sufficient time for data requests.) The Chancellor's Office Data Mart also contains comparison data that you can use to compare your program against those of other colleges, much of it by TOP code. Cal-PASS Plus and the California Community College CTE LaunchBoard may also be sources of data. There may be other sources of outside data that are relevant to your program. Your data needs should be determined by the needs and mission of the program and should not be limited only to what is given to you.

In short, data review should be about asking how your program is doing in meeting its mission, questions including, but not limited to the following:

- What are the trends over time?
- Are you improving?
- Are there gaps, especially equity gaps?
- What can you do to improve, even in areas where you are doing well?
- What additional data might be needed?

Changes in Program

What kinds of changes in program are noteworthy? In most cases, your most recent program review was three years ago. So, things to include would be additions or deletions of curriculum, program growth or decline, significant changes of personnel or policy, state or federal mandates that impact the program, new or reduced resources, changes in how the program is organized and managed within the college, etc. Also include any unexpected events that affected your program, how it operates, and any challenges or opportunities such events might have engendered.

Any of these can impact the program and how it accomplishes its mission. In some cases, they may improve outcomes and in others, they may put forth challenges. Either way, each change should be noted, along with how the program itself is adapting to the change.

Report on Previous Goals

In the current version of the program review forms, reporting on existing goals from the previous program review is separated from new goals, which come in a later section. Here, you simply have a two-column table, allowing for a listing of each of the goals from your last program review and what progress has been made toward them. Circumstances or priorities may change within the three years between program reviews; such changes are not unusual. If a goal was not completed or you changed your mind as to whether it was an important priority, simply say so. The important thing is to document what, if any, progress was made so that we close the loop on plans for each goal.

Program Strengths

Now that you have reviewed your outcomes, your program data, and a history of recent program changes, it's time to use this information to assess the strengths and weaknesses of your program. In our rubric, a program review that meets requirements is one in which "Conclusions drawn are clear and evidence-based and reflect an in-depth discussion within the program citing specific examples."

First, discuss your strengths. The key here is that they should be evidence-based and specific. We sometimes see documents that cite "our faculty and staff are highly dedicated" as a strength. This is hopefully true of all programs at PC, and while saying so is fine, a statement of that sort doesn't tell us much that is new and useful. Think more specifically. Which of the people in your program have won awards or presented at conferences? What has your program done recently that is noteworthy and beneficial to students? How have you furthered the program's and the college's mission in important ways? Are there improvements in student achievement or narrowing of equity gaps? This is the section where you promote your accomplishments.

Areas for Improvement

Just as you promote your strengths, you also need to communicate the things you could do to improve. This isn't just a section to ask for things (that comes later). It is a section to self-reflect. When you reviewed your outcomes, what deficiencies were noted? Did the results of your assessments suggest any areas where changes in curriculum, andragogy, policy, or practice should be made? When you reviewed your data, were there gaps in student success or equity that could be addressed?

A way you can consider this is to start with the sentence, "The students served by our program would really benefit if…" Beginning there, you can use this space to consider the opportunities available to you to improve your program, even if you are already doing very well. Be sure to discuss this section thoroughly with everyone in your program and be specific about the things you believe can be improved.

Goals

So, now that you have evaluated your program and honestly assessed your strengths and weaknesses, it's time to set some goals. No, that doesn't mean ask for things (still coming later). This is where you use what you have learned about what you're doing well and what you'd like to do better to set some specific, measurable goals that you will try to accomplish between now and your next program review (in another three years).

According to our rubric, this section meets requirements if "Goals are clearly related to the mission of the program and of the college. Goals are clearly stated, a time frame is provided, and assignment of responsibility is evident. Goals are linked to concerns identified in previous sections."

To assist with ensuring that you address all of these requirements, the goals section is structured as a table, with a row for each goal and columns for each piece of information that should be included about the goal. In that table you should list the goal, provide an anticipated completion date, needed resources, designate the person(s) responsible, and note any possible obstacles to completion. If you think these through and identify each, your goals section is likely to meet requirements.

This section also asks you to identify the part(s) of the college mission statement (which you can find on the first page of the program review form) that the goal addresses. This gives you a chance to reflect on how your goal impacts the mission of the college. While it might be nice, for example, to redecorate faculty offices, it might be hard to argue the importance of that project to furthering the mission of the college in serving its students. (Though you could try.) Similarly, the goal asks which of the four Guided Pathways pillars will be furthered with this goal. You can find those pillars listed on the first page of the form, just under the mission statement.

If some of the goals from your last program review were not completed, you can restate them in this section, possibly with some modifications, thus keeping them in your list of priorities.

How many goals should you have in your program review? As many as you need. From your previous program review, all goals that were not fully completed should carry over unless the need is no longer there or priorities have changed. For new goals, you should create as many as you have projects you'd like to accomplish in the next few years. Programs vary tremendously in size and complexity. Rarely do we see fewer than two and some have a dozen or more. You should include all of the significant things you are planning that will affect your ability to further the mission of your program and the college.

Staffing

You've assessed your program and established some goals. Now, it's time to ask for stuff, right? Yes, the rest of the program review is resource requests and we start with staffing. As we begin here, note that any staffing, resource, or budget requests should be justified based on the previous sections of the document. If you are proposing to add staff, for example, that addition should be to address a deficiency noted in your areas for improvement section or a goal established in that section, or needs identified elsewhere. If the reader is seeing the need for the first time here, you've left something important out.

First, we start with outlining current staffing, both full-and part time. Simply list the number of full and part-time faculty, management, and classified staff serving your program. Then, request new positions, if any.

While it is useful to note whether a requested position is new or replacement, that is not a primary factor in determining whether a position is likely to be funded. The needs of the college change over time and a new position may sometimes take precedence over replacing a vacancy, even if both are very much needed.

If you request multiple new positions, please place them in the priority order your program would give them. Doing so does not mean that the positions will be hired in that order, but you should make your preferences known.

For every position requested, you should provide a justification. Nothing here should be new or surprising. Your justification should stem from the analysis and findings you have already conducted into your program, the outcomes assessments conducted and program changes they suggest, the review of data, and the compilation of your program strengths and areas for improvement. With all of these, you have established goals for your program. Your overarching goal—and our primary goal in all we do—is to improve student success and equity. Your resource requests, including staffing, should reflect how the request will help your program, and the college, improve its focus on student success.

Your justification need not be long. Use this space to remind us of the assessment information and data that suggest a need for the new position and the consequences to the college if the position request is not filled.

Resource Requests

Our rubric simply calls the next section "resource requests," but it is really four sections in a similar format. These four sections are for technology, facilities, safety/security, and professional development. In these sections, you simply identify your need, along with a brief justification. Of course, like all other resource requests, your needs should be dictated by the evidence established in your previous analyses as to what is needed to improve success and equity for students.

In these sections, you identify the needs related to these areas. If those needs have an associated cost, please provide an estimate in your budget request.

For information technology requests, the IT Department will provide a general quote for office and classroom equipment (i.e. computers, laptops, and printers) to assist departments/divisions prepare their program review and program review budget update forms. After items are approved in the tentative or adopted budget, the budget manager should submit a Technology Request Form for ordering and installation.

For facilities and safety/security, the Maintenance & Operations Department will provide a general quote for office and classroom furniture (i.e. chairs, desks, and cabinets) to assist departments/divisions prepare their Program Review and Program Review Budget Update Forms. After items are approved in the tentative or adopted budget, the budget manager should submit a SchoolDude request for ordering and installation.

For professional development, budget managers should list and estimate their area's professional development request on their program review and program review budget update forms. Administration will work with the budget managers to determine the appropriate funding for the request (unrestricted or restricted).

Budget Request

The last section is your budget request. This is where you ask for the amount of money you expect your program will need annually over the next three years. You list the amounts in your current budget for each section, and also any changes (increase or decrease), along with a revised total. Any budget changes should have a justification included. As with previous sections, your budget requests should be based on the mission and needs of the program and the how your program will improve student success and equity.

A number of caveats and clarifications are important for this section. First, you should complete a budget request for your program even if it is entirely paid from categorical funding, not dependent on the usual college budget process. This inclusion is to ensure that the college is informed about how we spend our resources and what we spend it on, regardless of the source.

Some things do not need to be included here. Because staffing has already been covered in a previous section, you can leave this information out of your budget request. An exception is funding for student workers. The cost estimates from the resource requests in the previous section should be included here.

Common Errors and Pitfalls

As the college now has been through several cycles of increasingly successful program review, we have had a chance to see certain patterns emerge. The Strategic Planning Committee evaluates each document according to our rubric and sends the reviews back to the programs for corrections when they fail to meet standards. You can save yourself a great deal of time if you read this next section and avoid these common errors and pitfalls when writing your program review.

Using old forms. You don't want to start from scratch and that's understandable. But one mistake we sometimes see is a program starting with their most recent program review, usually from three years prior, and simply updating that document. The problem with this approach is that the forms are often updated. The changes are sometimes minor, but they can affect the way you approach the work of writing. And sometimes, the college updates the expectations for what we would like to see between your program review cycle. Always get the most recent forms from the website. You can still copy and paste items from your previous document if you are sure they are still current. Doing so while checking each one will help to ensure that your document is as current as possible.

Misunderstanding assessment. Every program at PC should have gone through multiple cycles of assessment and program improvement by now and we are definitely seeing improvement through each cycle. But, some programs still mix up the concept of establishing outcomes and setting goals and some have an incomplete understanding of the assessment process, how to document dialogue, and how to show that you are using assessment to improve your program. You can refer to the rubric to understand what we look for here, but also understand that you can consult with the Outcomes Committee about this process. You should have a representative on that committee, or, if you prefer, you can contact the committee chair for advice on establishing outcomes, assessing them, documenting the results of those assessments and program dialogue about those results, and making changes to your program based on assessment.

Confusing goals and resource requests. Many times, we have seen goals written as something like "Hire a new…" Your goals should be based on the documentation you have already completed about your outcomes and the areas in which your program needs to improve. Your goals should be self-reflective about how your program can improve in its mission to serve Porterville College students. Resource requests, like additional staffing or funding, may be necessary to achieve your goals, but these are not goals in themselves. A goal might be that you wish to expand program offerings in a certain area of need. Additional staffing or funding necessary to achieve that goal should be made in the staffing or budget areas of the document. They are not goals.

Assuming some parts of the process or forms do not apply. Our program review processes and forms are designed so that all, or nearly all, parts should apply to all programs across the college. In some cases, we have received program reviews with no budget information because changes weren't being requested or budgets were all from categorical funds. Or, with resource requests left out because those resources had already been provided. Program review should be understood as including the process by which programs document all of their needs, even if there is little leeway in the resources or those resources already exist.

Not consulting the rubric. Before completing your program review, always consult the rubric so that you know what the college's expectations are regarding the document and documentation. Occasionally, we see completed reviews in which programs misunderstood the purpose of certain sections or thought they did not apply to their particular programs. The rubric (and now, this document) should help.

Using program review to air grievances. Requesting certain resources, sometimes multiple times, in the program review process and not having the college prioritize those requests in the budget process can be frustrating, but be careful not to use your program review as a way to air grievances, past or present.

These are public documents, displayed on the college website, and as such, are available to students and the community. Keep the tone of your writing civil and avoid language like "we've asked for this every year, but we never get it!" Also, beware of using language like "we need to do this to be in compliance with…" unless you are certain of the accuracy of the claims.

Not integrating all sections of the document. As the guide above should make clear, the various sections of your program review document are not separate and distinct, but combine to make an integrated whole. You should never have goals or resource requests that come out of nowhere, nor should we see items discussed in areas for improvement that do not lead to any plan of action or goal-setting. Each part of the document should connect with all others to support the mission of the program and of the college.