Introduction

In August 2020, the SBVC campus community was asked to provide feedback regarding program review, needs assessment, and Educational Master Plan sheets via an anonymous survey. What follows is the data analysis of responses related to needs assessment.

Quantitative data is presented using percentages based on the total number of individual question respondents and counts. Responses to open-ended qualitative questions were read no less than four times by two readers and themes developed. Themes that arose for each such question are presented and reported by frequency counts. The themes for all questions were then combined into three meta-themes and frequencies utilized to report results.

Please rank the following criteria used by the Program Review Committee in consideration of needs assessment requests.

Overall Rank	Criteria
1	Job market/industry demands
2	Number of full-time equivalent students (FTES) in the program
3	Number of full-time equivalent faculty (FTEF) required by the program
4	Number of degrees and certificates awarded by the program
5	Program's promotion of equity and access
6	Currency of curriculum and outcomes
7	Relation to the campus mission
8	Program efficiency as determined by WSCH/FTEF
9	Cost of program upkeep/needs request
10	Current efficacy status (i.e., continuation, conditional)

What other considerations would you suggest the Program Review Committee include in their criteria for ranking needs assessment requests?

Other – Text Themes	Frequency
Separate lists/forms/process for each area (e.g., instructional, student services, administrative)	6
Current process is unfair/biased	4
Overall need for increased communication	3
Return on investment	3
Funding history/"back of the line" if previously funded	3
Community benefit/industry need	3
Balancing of smaller vs. larger programs	3
Waste of time	2
Actual needs of the program/fully explained needs	2
Impact on diversity and equity	2
Impact on campus as a whole	1
Priority should be given to career programs/CTE	1

Which statement most accurately describes your thoughts on needs assessment?

Answer	%	Count
I find the needs assessment process to be an effective way for my department/program to secure the additional funding we need in our budget to function well.	33.80%	24
I find the needs assessment process to be ineffective and/or in need of change.	47.89%	34
I do not have an opinion on the needs assessment process.	18.31%	13
Total	100%	71

Please let us know why you find needs assessment ineffective or in need of change. (Check all that apply.)

Answer	%	Count
It is unclear how the Program Review Committee prioritizes needs requests.	23.96%	23
It is unclear who decides to fund or not fund prioritized requests	25.00%	24
I do not think programs/departments on probation should be excluded from this process, as those programs/departments may have unmet needs that could improve their programs.	16.67%	16
Funded requests are not clearly communicated to the campus.	19.79%	19
Other	14.58%	14
Total	100%	96

Please let us know the top contributor to your lack of opinion with regard to needs assessment.

Answer	%	Count
I am not included in needs assessment discussions or requests.	30.77%	4
I do not feel as though I know enough about the process to form an opinion	53.85%	7
Other	15.38%	2
Total	100%	13

Please let us know the top contributor to your lack of opinion with regard to needs assessment.

Other - Text
I would answer yes to both of those statements.
none

Please let us know why you find needs assessment ineffective or in need of change. (Check all that apply.)

Other – Text Themes	Frequency
Needs are rarely met via needs assessment process	6
Unfair/biased	4
Instructional-focus/need for separate lists or processes based on dept. type	2
Process/form is too large and cumbersome	2
Should not have to ask for things **required** to run a class or program (i.e., microscopes, chemicals)	1
Upper administration should take recommendations seriously and use them to make needs decisions and otherwise prioritize campus budget structures	1

Thoughts on needs assessment from other questions/sections of the survey

Open-ended Comments	Frequency
Upper administration should take recommendations seriously and use them to make needs decisions and otherwise prioritize campus budget structures	6
Misalignment of how things are prioritized vs. actual need	3
Smaller departments cannot compete with larger departments	3
Subjective/unfair	1
Number of degrees awarded/student success should a priority	1
Consideration ought be given to unfunded prior needs	1
Intradepartmental "fighting" over needs ranking	1
Needs are rarely met	1

Overall Meta-themes Regarding Needs Assessment

Prioritization	Frequency
Unfair/biased	9
Separate lists/forms/process for each area (e.g., instructional, student services, administrative)	8
Smaller departments disadvantaged/cannot compete with larger departments	6
Community benefit/industry need/career programs	4
Misalignment of how things are prioritized vs. actual need	3
Number of degrees awarded/student success should be a priority	2
Impact on diversity and equity	2
Intradepartmental "fighting" over needs ranking	2
Impact on campus as a whole	1
TOTAL	37

Overall Meta-themes Regarding Needs Assessment

Funding	Frequency
Upper administration should take recommendations seriously and use them to make needs decisions and otherwise prioritize campus budget structures	7
Needs are rarely met via needs assessment process	7
Return on investment	3
Funding history/"back of the line" if previously funded	3
Consideration ought be given to unfunded prior needs requests	3
Should not have to ask for things **required** to run a class or program (i.e., microscopes, chemicals)	1
TOTAL	24

Overall Meta-themes Regarding Needs Assessment

Communication/Follow-through	Frequency
Overall need for increased communication	3
Actual needs of the program/fully explained needs	2
Process/form is too large and cumbersome	2
Waste of time	2
TOTAL	9

Summary

In summary, the highest percentage of respondents (47.87%) feel as though the current needs assessment process is ineffective and/or in need of change, and many cited the lack of clarity as to how the Committee prioritizes needs requests (23.96%) and who decides to fund or not fund prioritized requests (25%) as top reasons for believing so.

Analysis of text responses to questions concerning needs assessment directly, as well as other needs assessment-related comments throughout the survey, revealed three primary meta-themes regarding respondents' beliefs about the process; these center around issues of: 1) Prioritization; 2) Funding; and 3) Communication/Follow-through. For those who mentioned prioritization of requests, the perception that the entire process is unfair and biased was a top theme, as was the call to have separate forms and processes for each of the three primary types of departments/programs. Those who mentioned funding seemed to believe that most requests go unfunded and that upper administration needs to take the funding requests more seriously and use them to guide larger budget discussions. An overall call for increased communication/follow-through in all aspects of the needs assessment process was noted.