



Executive Brief

Rightsizing the Program Portfolio

Program Portfolio Optimization a Critical Necessity

To remain financially sustainable in an era of increasing cost and enrollment pressures, colleges and universities must better manage a balanced program portfolio that advances the institutional mission, responds to market demands, and contributes to the bottom line.

To this end, campus leaders are beginning to think more critically about the programs that they launch, knowing that the “if we build it, they will come” days are over. Yet, unlike the enthusiasm generated by launching new programs, efforts to reevaluate existing offerings often meet resistance from a broad range of campus stakeholders. Without an effective strategy to review and realign the academic program portfolio, institutions face an ongoing drain on financial and reputational resources.

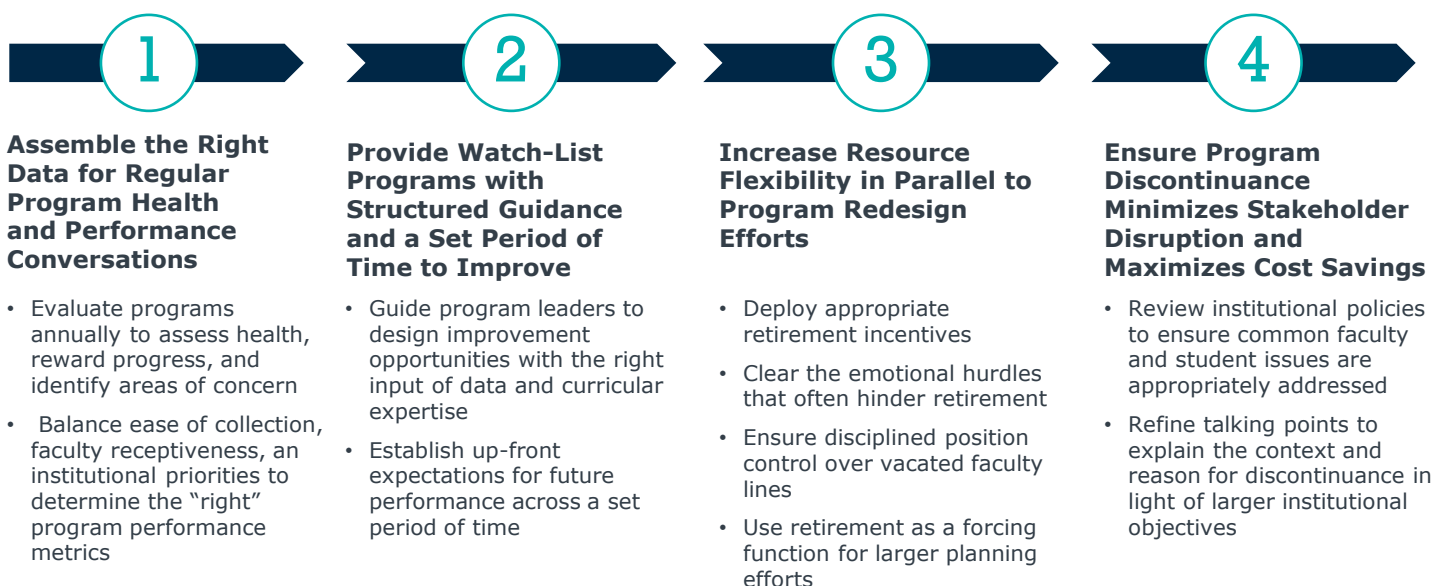
In Need of a New Approach

EAB endorses a holistic approach to academic program review that fosters a continuous improvement mindset, rather than relying on one-off, herculean efforts.

Regular program assessments identify struggling programs early. Ideally, these interventions will translate to improvements. However, when revitalization is not successful, this method also eases the path toward downsizing or discontinuance. These decisions are never easy—and only with careful planning and communication can campuses expect to realize savings and reinvest resources into growth areas.

Four Imperatives to Guide Campus Leaders

Rightsizing the Program Portfolio focuses on the four imperatives listed below to guide campuses in transforming their program review processes. Leaders should begin implementing these imperatives now to condition their campuses to start working toward the long-term health of the academic program portfolio.



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