

Academic Program Review
Office of the Provost

Key Issues Template and Guiding Questions
2024-25

What are “Key Issues”?

The Key Issues document is a hi

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Guiding Questions for Faculty Discussion of Key Issues

The Working Group may want to share a list of guiding questions with faculty prior to any brainstorming sessions or requests for feedback on potential Key Issues. Sample questions the department might pose to faculty to support this idea generation are listed below.

- *Faculty:*

How has the makeup of our faculty changed since the last review?

What are our upcoming hiring plans and how do they support the department's research priorities and goals?

What faculty retirements and new hiring can be anticipated in the next five years?

How will the department approach these opportunities?

How does our department mentor junior faculty? Are there any areas for improvement needed here?

How does the department foster and promote intellectually-rewarding collaborations among faculty within the department?

Is the department's faculty diverse, in regard to gender, racial and ethnic diversity? How does the department monitor and assess progress towards its goals?

- *Governance:*

Does the current governance structure support the department's goals? Are there any areas for improvement?

Does the current committee structure represent the breadth of the department?

Are the committees functioning effectively?

Does the department do a good job of engaging diverse faculty feedback on important decisions (i.e., faculty hiring, student admissions, etc.)?

How are service assignments determined? Is the current approach equitable?

- *Research:*

What are the department's main areas of research strength? Where are the department's gaps?

How has research in the department changed since the last review? Are there any new/emerging areas of research in the discipline that the department should prioritize in hiring?

Relative to other top departments in the discipline, how does the department compare? What most impacts the department's relative position?

- *Teaching and Learning:*

Is the current curriculum meeting the needs of undergraduate and graduate students? Are any changes needed in the near future?

Are student learning outcomes on par with intended outcomes? How are learning outcomes assessed in the department?

What can the department take away from its teaching evaluations?

How does the department recognize outstanding teaching?

Outside of the classroom, how does the department support academic experiences like student research?

- *Internal and External Collaborations:*

How does the department collaborate with other units across Northwestern? How could these relationships be improved? Are there any new units the department wants to collaborate with?

How is the department a leader in the field more broadly? How does the department collaborate with faculty at other institutions, through associations/organizations, etc.?

How does the department engage with communities outside of Northwestern/academia?

- *Departmental Support:*

Is the current staff structure aptly supporting the academic operations of the department?

Are there any potential issues related to faculty support in other areas (e.g., RAs, TAs, curriculum support staff, etc.)?

- *Facilities and Space:*

Are there any major facilities or space concerns that need to be flagged in the upcoming review? How do these issues impact the academic operations and success of the department?

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Key Issues for {Department Name}
2024-25

1. **Key Issue 1**
 - a. 2-3 paragraphs providing high-level overview of key issue
2. **Key Issue 2**
 - a. 2-3 paragraphs providing high-level overview of key issue
3. **Key Issue 3**
 - a. 2-3 paragraphs providing high-level overview of key issue
4. **Key Issue 4**
 - a. 2-3 paragraphs providing high-level overview of key issue
5. **Key Issue 5**
 - a. 2-3 paragraphs providing high-level overview of key issue