Market-Smart Self-Assessment

How Market-Smart is Your Academic Program Portfolio?

This toolkit will help Enrollment Managers and their teams implement best practices from *Making the Academy Market-Smart*. This first tool, the "self-assessment" will help you figure out where your university is already market-smart and where there is room for improvement.

Category	Market-Smart Activity	Yes	No
Academic Program Review	All programs participate in regular academic program review		
	EM involved in program review		
	Program review measures current enrollment performance (see Tool 2)		
	Enrollment portion of program review can be completed in under 10 minutes		
	Program review assesses future enrollment demand		
	Program review avoids publishing university-wide rank-ordered program list		
	Underperforming programs automatically targeted for EM interventions		
Program Enrollment Data Reporting	Program enrollment growth is benchmarked to university average (Tool 3)		
	Enrollment reports show enrollment demand versus instructional capacity (Tool 4)		
	Program enrollment demand is benchmarked to course specialization (Tool 5)		
Academic Program Growth Potential Identification Tools	EM has filled out Matrix of Pipeline Vital Signs (Tool 6)		
	EM has completed Pipeline Performance Reports (Tool 7) for relevant programs		
	EM has completed Enrollment Share Variance Reports (Tool 8) for all programs		
	EM has completed Application Share Variance Reports (Tool 8) for relevant programs		
Marketing Quality Control	Program websites are reviewed regularly (Tool 9)		
	Program names and specializations are benchmarked using NSC data		
Curriculum Refreshment Market Research	Admitted, Non-enrolled student surveys are mined for relevant market intelligence		
	Surveys about career interests are mined for relevant market intelligence		
	Workforce alignment reviews are mined for market research (Tools 10 and 11)		
New Program Launch Demand Validation	Pre-proposal process for faculty limits wasted time on unviable programs (Tool 12)		
	Independent majors are tapped for source of new program ideas (Tool 13)		
	University tracks employment trends to spot untapped market demand		
	New programs are launched with flexible targets that automatically trigger infusion or withdrawal of resources depending on program performance		

Sample Program Review Form

There are many approaches to undertaking individual program reviews from an enrollment perspective. EAB's belief is that a lengthy, laborious enrollment review process is unnecessary. Instead, streamline enrollment review by minimizing the number of enrollment targets to only those that matter most and deploying a standardized template for all programs. Enrollment data aggregation can be made easier by involving the Office of Institutional Research, which can provide each year's program-level data to enrollment management. Each program's enrollment review should take less than five minutes to complete annually.

Program Name: _____ **Degree:** _____

Program Chair: _____ **Review Completed By:** _____

College: _____ **Date of Review:** ___/___/_____

Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment:

Target: _____ Current Year Actual: _____ Change from Last Year: _____ 5-Year Average: _____

Student Credit Hours:

Target: _____ Current Year Actual: _____ Change from Last Year: _____ 5-Year Average: _____

Degrees Conferred:

Target: _____ Current Year Actual: _____ Change from Last Year: _____ 5-Year Average: _____

Assessment:

☐ Program is Hitting Targets   ☐ Program Requires EM Attention

Templates for Enrollment-Focused Program Reporting

Hardwiring Enrollment Analysis into Academic Resource Allocation

To make effective resource allocation decisions that benefit both individual programs and their institutions, academic leaders require enrollment insight. To meet that need, EMs should proactively deliver easy-to-interpret enrollment data to provosts and academic deans.

To that end, EAB has produced three templates we recommend for delivering enrollment data to academic leaders. The templates below are all available at EAB.com as part of the Market-Smart Toolkit.

To use the templates, download the PowerPoint file, click on the chart, navigate to the "Design" pane at the top, and select "Edit Data." This will allow you to input your university's data into the charts. Further instructions for each of the templates is contained within the Excel file that opens when you click "Edit Data."

3 **Program Growth Share**
Adding Context to Departmental Enrollment Growth

4 **Demand-Capacity Opportunity Maps**
Identifying Mismatches Between Supply and Demand

5 **Course Proliferation Index**
Benchmarking Course Specialization to Enrollment Demand

Source: EAB Analysis.

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Pipeline Vital Sign Monitoring

Uncovering Programs Best Positioned for Growth

Universities tasked with growing enrollment need to know which programs to target. One strategy is to consult programs across a series of admissions pipeline metrics to see which programs behave inconsistently-i.e., they perform well on some metrics and poorly on others.

Tools 6 and 7 in the Market-Smart Toolkit allow you to do this for your university's programs. Tool 6 is the matrix of pipeline vital signs, allowing the enrollment management team to easily spot those programs best positioned for growth. Tool 7 is a template report for individual programs Visit the Market-Smart Toolkit website at EAB.com to download the Excel file that will allow you identify those programs ripest for growth. The Excel file contains detailed instructions about how it should be used.

Tool 6: Matrix of Pipeline Vital Signs (a snapshot)

Program Name	Inquiries	Conversion Rate	Applications	Change in Applications	Yield Rate	Retention Rate	Enrolled Students
Program 1	100	23%	23	-5%	20%	90%	32
Program 2	342	22%	75	4%	21%	88%	33
Program 3	415	17%	71	1%	22%	86%	21
Program 4	689	15%	103	-1%	25%	91%	45
Program 5	134	24%	32	-2%	21%	90%	34
Program 6	87	20%	17	-4%	18%	75%	22
Program 7	65	19%	12	6%	17%	88%	17
Program 8	96	17%	16	2%	16%	87%	54
Program 9	222	18%	40	1%	18%	86%	16
Program 10	201	17%	34	4%	19%	90%	34
Program 11	548	17%	93	3%	18%	91%	37
Program 12	324	19%	62	5%	21%	86%	33
Program 13	690	20%	138	2%	22%	87%	30
Program 14	54	21%	11	3%	15%	85%	15
Program 15	323	24%	78	2%	22%	80%	11
Program 16	376	25%	94	6%	20%	90%	87
Program 17	109	26%	28	8%	18%	89%	25
Program 18	187	23%	43	-1%	17%	88%	28
Program 19	178	25%	45	-2%	16%	89%	34
Program 20	200	31%	62	3%	19%	89%	12
Program 21	200	11%	22	2%	21%	87%	22
Program 22	200	14%	28	1%	25%	86%	25
Program 23	200	15%	30	2%	19%	88%	32
Program 24	200	16%	32	0%	15%	85%	33
Program 25	200	22%	44	-1%	14%	88%	67
Program 26	200	15%	30	3%	19%	90%	55
Program 27	200	16%	32	4%	25%	79%	45
Program 28	200	17%	34	5%	12%	90%	32
Program 29	200	23%	46	2%	22%	87%	21
Program 30	200	24%	48	6%	21%	84%	15
Program 31	200	22%	44	2%	22%	88%	105
Program 32	200	21%	42	3%	21%	88%	15

Tool 7: Individual Program Pipeline Vital Sign Report (a snapshot)

Program Name	Inquiries	Conversion Rate	Applications	Change in Applications	Yield Rate	Retention Rate	Enrolled Students
Program 1	100	23%	23	5%	20%	90%	32
University Average	229	20%	45	2%	19%	87%	32

Insights and Recommendations:

Next Steps for Marketing Team:

- _____
- _____

Next Step for Academic Program Leadership:

- _____
- _____

Next Steps for Admissions/Financial Aid Staff:

- _____
- _____

Enrollment Share Variance Reports

It can often be difficult to know which programs are best positioned to grow enrollments, or what changes would need to be made to help them do so. This pair of graphs will help diagnose if the program is ripe for growth and whether its current difficulties are more a result of the program's positioning or its content.

The two-step analysis below uses prospects' intended majors from College Board to benchmark each program's enrollment and applications to broader trends. The first step (Enrollment Share) reveals whether a program should be performing better based on its external market demand. For underperforming programs, the second step reveals where immediate efforts should focus to turn it around.

To input your own data, click on the chart you wish to edit, navigate to the "Design" panel at the top, and click "Edit Data." This will open an Excel file with instructions about what data to put where.
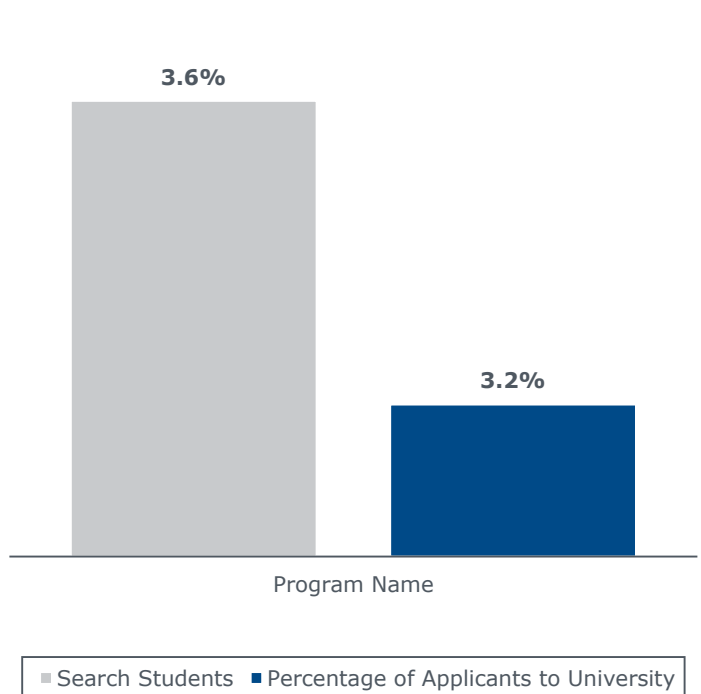
Enrollment Share

*Proportion of Prospects
Interested or Enrolled in Program*
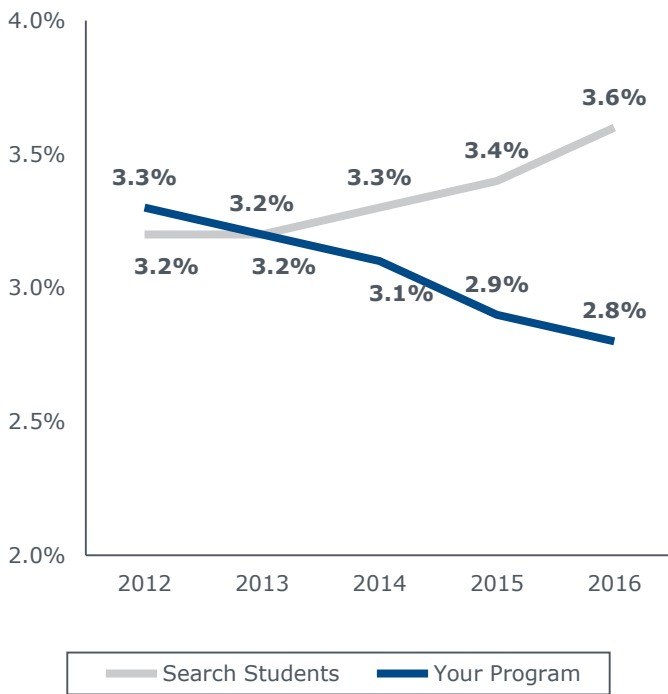
Application Share

*Proportion of Prospects Interested in Program
Compared to Proportion of Applicants to Program*

Market-Smart Toolkit: Tool 9

Student Centricity Website Diagnostic

When program websites are not designed with students in mind, prospective students' most common first point of entry to your website becomes a turn-off. Program websites are often designed by faculty for faculty than for prospective students. A well-designed, student-centric website helps attract new students by communicating the program's value, providing insight into student opportunities and experiences, and facilitating navigation to the application.

Use this diagnostic to assess how student-centric your program websites are and where you should allocate time and effort to improvement.

Student Usability Audit Worksheet for _____

	What should I look for?	Yes	No
1.	**Search-Engine Optimization**		
	Do a Google search. Can students find the website easily?		
	Is it easy to navigate to the program page from your institution's main website?		
2.	**Readability and Navigability**		
	Will a non-academic visitor find the content easy to grasp?		
	Are menu items sub-divided into intuitive categories that are meaningful for prospects?		
	Does the website include program-specific FAQs?		
	Does the menu remain consistent at the top of the page when browsing?		
	Are the home, contact us, and about links located in the same place as they are for other programs?		
	Can information on the program's homepage be viewed in no more than 2 vertical screen scrolls?		
3.	**Student-Centeredness**		
	Review the unit's homepage. Does it primarily contain information geared toward prospective students?		
	Is unit content for current students, alumni, faculty/staff accessible only through a separate link?		
	Does the website include program-specific testimonials?		
	Are testimonials easy to find (linked to from both the program page and about us page or previewed on the home page?)		
	Watch or read 2-3 program testimonials. Does the content include specific outcomes and concrete examples?		
	Does the website include student photos?		
	Does the website include content contributed by faculty about what the program is like for students?		
4.	**Timeliness**		
	Is the website updated annually?		
	Are broken links regularly removed or updated?		
	Are events, important deadlines, and departmental news easy to locate from the program's homepage?		
5.	**Features Calls-to-Action**		
	Does it prominently link to calls-to-action, such as the admissions application and financial aid information?		
	Do the calls-to-action use simple and direct language ("apply now" versus "click here to start your application now"?)		
	Do the calls to action stand out (using bold, different colored text, or off-sets)?		
	Is there enough space around the call to action to avoid it feeling cluttered?		
	Do secondary calls to action (registering for events, downloading material, connecting through social media) exist on the home page?		
	Are the secondary calls to action positioned below primary calls to action?		

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6

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Workforce Alignment Review Discussion Questions

Workforce alignment committees are an oft-underutilized resource in ensuring the academic program has career relevance. These should be conducted for all programs, and the following questions should be used to ensure the committee helps assess those questions which would most aid the program's enrollment.

Program Positioning

What majors and specializations are employers looking for in graduates? Do we have those?

_____

_____

Are there untapped student populations we could be targeting? What types of students?

_____

_____

Should we be considering alternative delivery formats? Why? Would this help enroll more students? If so, how?

_____

_____

Program Content

How do names and specializations reflect current trends or should we think about updating them?

_____

_____

What skills do graduates from this program require to have viable employment options? Does the program teach all of these required skills?

_____

_____

Are there additional workforce trainings we could provide as part of the program? What would those be?

_____

_____

Post-Review Report to Academic Planning Committee

Rarely is workforce alignment committee feedback incorporated. To ensure follow-through, the department chair should synthesize the feedback for senior university leaders on proposed next steps for how the academic program and the enrollment management team can help the program improve. This has the added benefit to the department chair of ensuring that proposals for program improvement that require investment are vetted by senior university leadership. The form below can be a guide for what should be included in these post-review reports.

Report of the Department Chair on Workforce Alignment Committee Review

Program Name: _____

Department Chair: _____

Session Leader: _____

Session Attendees: _____

What are the proposed next steps by department and/or EM to improve the program positioning?

Academic Department   Enrollment Management Team

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

What are the proposed next steps by department and/or EM to improve the program content?

Academic Department   Enrollment Management Team

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

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New Program Pre-Proposal Form

Name of Proposed Program: _____

College/School: _____ Department: _____

Submitted by: _____ Ext: _____ Email: _____

Program Type (Check one):

Bachelor's Degree: ☐ B.A. ☐ B.S. ☐ Minor ☐ Certificate

Graduate Degree: ☐ M.A. ☐ M.S. ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Certificate

Other: _____

Modality (Check one):

☐ In-Person

☐ Online

☐ Hybrid

Program Characteristics:

Target Audience (e.g. full-time, part-time, traditional, working adults, etc.): _____

Total Number of Required Credit Hours: _____ Expected Time-To-Completion: _____

Proposed Start Date: _____

As an attachment, please address the following categories (in short narrative form):

    I.   **Market Demand Analysis** (e.g. What types of students will the program enroll? How many students would be interested?)

    II.   **Program Value Proposition** (e.g. Where else is the program offered and how has it fared? What is the unique value proposition of the program?)

   III. **Required Investments** (e.g. How much will it cost to get the program off the ground? What existing resources can be leveraged?)

   IV. **Mission-Alignment** (e.g. How does the program advance the institution's strategic plan?)

For a detailed description of these categories, please see the attached guidelines on the next page.

Pre-Approval Signatures

_____   _____

College Dean (preapproval)   Date

_____   _____

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education or equivalent (preapproval)   Date

New Program Pre-Proposal Form (cont.)

Attachment Guidelines

I.   Analysis of Market Demand

In this section, include a market assessment, surveying the competitive landscape and market demand for the proposed program. Address the following:

- What types of students will the program enroll?

- How many students would be interested?

- How long will it take the program to reach capacity?

- Once reached, will this capacity allow the program to maintain a sufficient number of tuition paying students to remain financially viable?

- What types of jobs require this credential and how will the number of these jobs change over the coming years?

- Identify competing programs.

II. Articulation of Program Value Proposition

In this section, describe how the program would be distinguished from competing programs. Address the following:

- Where else is the program offered and how has it fared?

- What is the unique value proposition of the program?

- Provide information for how the program will draw students from other university programs or locations.

III. Itemization of Required Investments

In this section, describe the resources that needed to initiate and support the proposed program, distinguishing between existing resources and those that must be acquired; include strategies that may be employed to acquire these external resources. Address the following:

- How much will it cost to get the program off the ground? Provide a detailed account of the financial resources available and budgeted to cover all start-up costs as well as anticipated costs to maintain the necessary administrative, instructional, and support personnel for the proposed new program.

- What existing resources can be leveraged? Include any human, financial, physical (classroom, lab, etc.) and instructional resources that can be leveraged to support the proposed program.

IV. Description of Mission-Alignment

In this section, provide a description of how the proposed program aligns with the institution's mission and values. Address the following:

- What is the "history" of the idea? Describe the key dynamics – institutional mission and internal or external forces – that motivated this proposal.

- How does the program advance the institution's strategic plan?

- How would the proposed program help realize the institution's mission and values?

Self-Developed Major Form

Students who design their own majors can be a valuable source of intelligence about what new interdisciplinary programs it may make sense for your university to launch. To gather that data systematically, student proposals should be systematized. To that end, the form below details the key components of student self-developed major proposal forms.

Students proposing their own self-developed majors should submit this cover sheet to the appropriate office, attaching the required supplemental documents outlined below in the application checklist.

Student Name: _____   Student Identification Number: _____

University Email: _____   Phone: _____

Title of Proposed Major: _____

Faculty Sponsor's Name: _____

University Email: _____   Phone: _____

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Application Checklist

Included with this application, attach the following supplemental documents, the core purpose of which are outlined below:

_____   *Statement of Purpose*

The statement should address the purpose of the proposed major. Specifically, it should address how it fits with career or academic goals and explain why no existing major can accommodate these goals.

_____   *Course Curriculum*

List the course curriculum for the proposed program, including the following information for each course: department, course number, course title, units, and semester/academic year. Provide total counts for general education, upper-division, and major credit hours (as opposed to electives) and verify that university requirements for each are met.

_____   *4-Year Program Plan*

Outline how the proposed program can be completed within a total of 4 years, including existing progress, taking into account the semesters and years in which courses are offered, as well as course prerequisites.

_____   *Faculty Sponsor Letter*

Faculty sponsor needs to write a letter verifying that the course of study is coherent and preserves the academic rigor of the academic fields it incorporates.

_____   *Departmental Chairs' Approval*

Approval required from the chair(s) of all department(s) suggested in the wording of the title and/or from chair(s) of all department(s) offering primary and secondary coursework that the proposed major incorporates.

The best
practices are
the ones that
work for you.ᔆᴹ

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