

# Make Data-Informed Faculty Line Requests Using APS

APS Faculty Line Request Toolkit

## **Academic Performance Solutions**

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Now more than ever, institutional success depends on university leaders taking a strategic, methodical approach to university management—and that starts with the right data. Academic Performance Solutions (APS) is a solution designed to empower academic and financial leaders with the department-specific performance and cost data—as well as reliable peer benchmarks—they need to make more effective decisions.

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## Introduction

#### Introduction

#### Significance of Embedding Data in Faculty Line Requests

The process to allocate new faculty lines varies widely both within and across institutions. Although most faculty lines are allocated during the Spring term to align with budgeting, openings may arise throughout the year due to various reasons. Faculty lines have a large impact on departments and the institution as a whole, so it is critical for institutions to establish a standardized and data-informed process for leaders to follow.

#### Why Data Should Be Used in Requests

Instructional staff are an institution's most valuable resource, but also one of its largest investments. As such, leaders need to have a better understanding of how faculty lines impact budgeting and resource use across departments – areas that data can help illuminate.

#### Impact of Including Data in Requests

- Improves Transparency: Leaders gain insight into resource use and needs beyond their own department, allowing instructional staff to understand why a request was or was not approved
- Aligns Institutional and Departmental Priorities: Institutions can assess departmental health and make efforts to bring it in line with institutional goals
- **Enfranchises Instructional Staff in Budgeting**: Improved visibility into budget process via resource allocation decisions puts greater onus on instructional staff to share responsibility in managing the budget

#### **How Metrics Help Tell a Story**

Including the right data in faculty line requests tells a more comprehensive and compelling story about why a new faculty line is needed and complements qualitative observations.



#### **Establish Need**



Demonstrate how demand for student credit hours (SCH) is changing and why an additional faculty line will better support student progress.

Sample metrics: SCH taught per IFTE, 3 year trend of attempted SCH, percent of attempted SCH taught to own majors



## **Showcase Current Efficiencies**



Show that there are few opportunities to reallocate current resources though collapsing sections or increasing class sizes by including information on current fill rates and class sizes.

Sample metrics: Class fill rate benchmark, percentage of sections with less than 10 students, number of collapsible sections



#### **Highlight Impact**



Illustrate the impact of a new faculty line on department productivity and student progress by showing a reduction in faculty overload and more opportunities for students to enroll in bottleneck courses.

Sample metrics: Projected SCH per full time faculty member, number of courses that the new faculty member with teach that are bottlenecks

Throughout this toolkit, you'll find seven tools to support your institution's faculty line request initiative.

- **✓ Tool 1**: Milestones
- ✓ Tool 2: Talking Points Worksheet
- ✓ Tool 3: E-mail Template to Introduce New Initiative
- ✓ Tool 4: How-to Guide for Supporting Faculty
  Line Requests with APS Data

- ✓ Tool 5: Faculty Line Request Worksheet
- ✓ Tool 6: Results Worksheet
- ✓ Tool 7: Reflection Guide



## **Milestones**

TOOL

Use this timeline to guide and track your progress as you design and implement a new faculty line request initiative.

### **Milestones**

The high-level set of milestones provides guidance for key steps to create and implement a new faculty line request initiative. Please reach out to your dedicated consultant to create a more detailed and customized plan for your institution.

To efficiently accomplish the last phases of the process, measuring results and reflecting on the process, ensure your institution is keeping track of the time it takes to complete each step of the initiative and any observations you would like to consider upon completion of the initiative.

Phase	Milestone	Who	Target Date	Actual Date
Planning (1 month)	Determine goals and ownership	Provost's office and deans		
Template Creation (1 month)	Create a templatized faculty line request worksheet by selecting APS metrics  Tool 4: How-to Guide for Supporting Faculty Line Requests with APS Data	Provost's office, deans, and APS dedicated consultant		
Launching Initiative (1 month)	Introduce objectives of the new initiative and worksheet with department leaders  Tool 2: Talking Points Worksheet  Tool 3: E-mail Templates to Introduce Initiative	Provost's office and deans		
APS Platform Training (1 month)	Collaborate with your APS dedicated consultant to organize and hold platform trainings with department leaders	Provost's office, deans, department leaders, APS dedicated consultant		
Execution (1-2 months)	Complete faculty line request worksheet using APS data  Tool 5: Faculty Line Request Worksheet	Department leaders		
	Meet and discuss faculty line decisions	Provost's office and deans		
	Measure results, such as dollars reallocated, and communicate them to appropriate leaders  Tool 6: Results Worksheet	Provost's office, deans, and APS dedicated consultant		
Reflection (1 month)	Reflect on the initiative's process and results  Tool 7: Reflection Guide	Provost's office, deans, and APS dedicated consultant		



## **Talking Points Worksheet**

TOOL

Once your institution has established goals and ownership for the new initiative, fill out the worksheet to prepare for questions you may receive from department leaders.

## **Talking Points Worksheet**

When launching a new initiative, it is critical to gain buy-in and understanding among involved leaders from the start. Complete this worksheet as a starting point for crafting your talking points addressing anticipated questions about the new initiative.

N	Vhy are we using APS o	lata?"
Alt	though we may use additi	includes various metrics aggregated across our student, HR, and finance data. ional sources of data to complement requests, use of the APS platform to provide it everyone is looking at the same information.
Со	nsider: We will use metri	will be included in the requests?"  cs that support faculty line requests by establishing need, showcasing current ing impact. There are four specific types of metrics:
1	Department	Establishes the state of the department and broader context for the request
2	Instructional Staff	Assesses instructional headcount and workload, as well as how staff impact student progress
3	Course	Provides insight into use of instructional resources and demand for courses
4	Student Progress	Demonstrates how productive instructional staff are in terms of generating earned credits

"Are factors, such as service and publications, accounted for in APS data?"	
Consider: These factors are not included in APS data, but the APS platform serves as one data source to info faculty line requests and tells one part of the story. We will also use other data sources available to us.	rm
	_
	_
"How will these requests be used or evaluated?"	
Consider: Requests will be evaluated by deans and the Provost's office to assess the department's resource use and need for additional faculty line(s), ultimately informing resource allocation and budgeting decisions.	
	_
	_
"How will departments be evaluated against peer benchmarks?"	
Consider: Peer benchmarks are used as a point of comparison, but our departments are not expected to exa match. Departments below benchmarks will not be penalized. We will consider other data and qualitative info	
	_
	—
	_
"When are we expected to submit a data-informed request using the template?"	
Consider: This process will apply to all faculty line requests, even ad hoc requests.	
	_



## E-mail Template to Introduce New Initiative

TOOL

To ensure a new initiative is positively received across campus, it is important to first introduce the topic and use of data in person. This allows for discussion and clarification, which can be difficult to achieve over e-mail. After the verbal introduction, we recommend sending an e-mail in follow up.

## E-mail Template: Follow-up Introduction

From: Provost or Dean (suggested)
To: Department leaders (suggested)

Subject line: New initiative to support faculty line requests

#### Dear [Names],

I am excited to share more details about a new initiative to help instructional staff by streamlining and supporting the faculty line request process. As we discussed, our current faculty line request process is not transparent and has resulted in a need for greater understanding into why faculty lines are or are not granted.

This new process will begin on [date] to align with our budgeting cycle and will continue throughout the year whenever a faculty line is left empty or a need arises. To support you in completing the templatized faculty line request worksheet, I have attached a guide to help you locate critical metrics in the Academic Performance Solutions (APS) platform. Once faculty line requests are submitted and reviewed, we'll discuss outcomes with you.

I look forward to kicking off this new initiative and am excited to see how it strengthens our institution. If you have any questions, please let me or [Name of designated project owner] know.

All the best,

[Name]



# How-to Guide for Supporting Faculty Line Requests with APS Data

TOOL

Use this guide to locate metrics in the Instructional Staff Capacity Workflow to include in your faculty line request template. If your institution selects metrics different from the ones included in this guide, work with your dedicated consultant to determine the best ways to use APS metrics.

## Guided Analyses to Support Your Decision-Making

Throughout the Instructional Staff Capacity Workflow, the data builds upon itself to arm users with context on course demand, efficiency of course offerings, and instructional capacity before considering adding or removing a faculty line. Start your analysis by selecting the appropriate filters, then move down the page.

#### **Summary Trends**

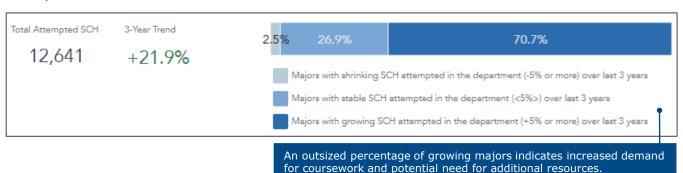
The dashboard starts with Summary Trends, which consists of metrics found later in the dashboard. Use this section to achieve a high-level look into the state of the department.



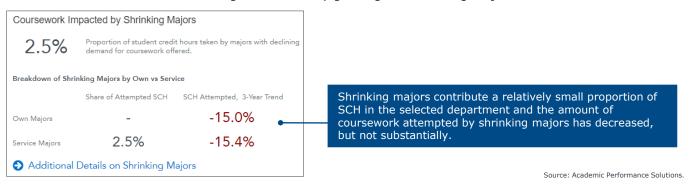
#### [I] Attempted Student Credit Hours (SCH): How is Course Demand Changing?

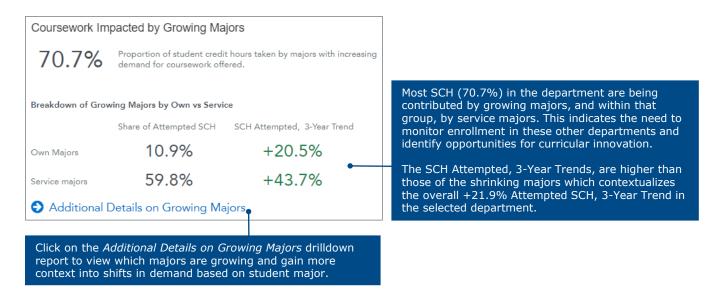
View enrollment demand by shrinking and growing majors for the department's courses.

1 Use the Coursework Broken Down by Growing or Shrinking Majors report to view the projection for demand in the department.



2 Use the Coursework Impacted by Shrinking Majors and Coursework Impacted by Growing Majors reports to assess how much coursework is being contributed by growing and shrinking majors.

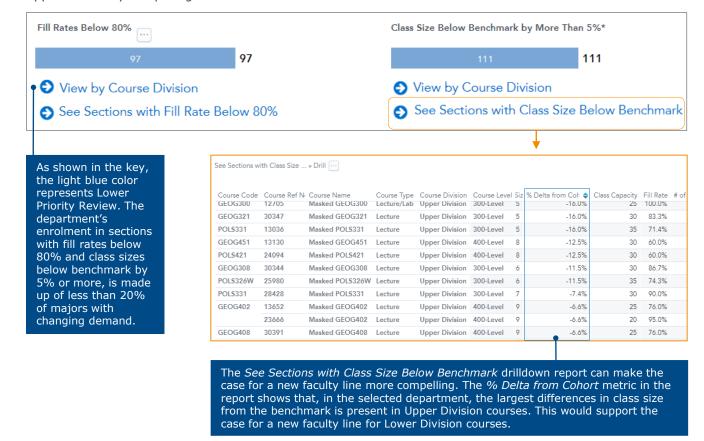




#### [II] Seat Utilization and Class Size: How Efficient Are Current Course Offerings?

With an understanding of demand for the department's courses, now assess efficiency of course offerings and determine if there are opportunities to offset the need for new instructional staff by consolidating sections. This part of the dashboard includes prescriptive guidance on where to prioritize attention based on whether enrollment in a section is the result of growing or shrinking majors, or neither.

3 Use the Consolidation Opportunities: Sections Below Recommended Range reports to pinpoint consolidation opportunities by comparing fill rates and class sizes to benchmarks.



4 Use the Expansion Opportunities: Sections Above Recommended Range reports to identify expansion opportunities by comparing fill rates and class sizes to benchmarks.



In this example, the distinction between Higher Priority Review (darker shade of blue) and Lower Priority Review is prominent. In these reports on the dashboard, Higher Priority shading represents sections above recommended range consisting of only growing majors. There are 13 potential opportunities to expand classes with fill rates at or above 90% and 8 opportunities to expand class sizes above benchmark by 5% or more – which represents need for instructional resources.

The See Sections with Fill Rate Above 90% and See Sections with Class Size Above Benchmark drilldown reports provide more context and illustrate that these courses may require additional instructional capacity to accommodate enrollment from growing majors.

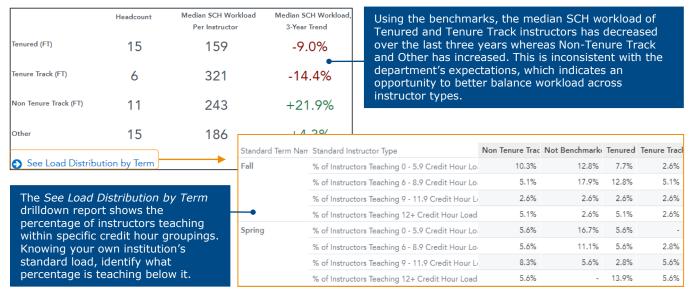
#### [III] Median SCH Taught: Do You Have The Right Instructional Capacity to Meet Course Demand?

Now that you have context about the selected department's enrollment trends and efficiency of its course offerings, use the last part of the dashboard to assess current instructional capacity and workload.

5 Use the *Headcount* metrics and *Instructor Mix* report to see how many instructors assigned to the selected department and other departments are teaching in the selected department.

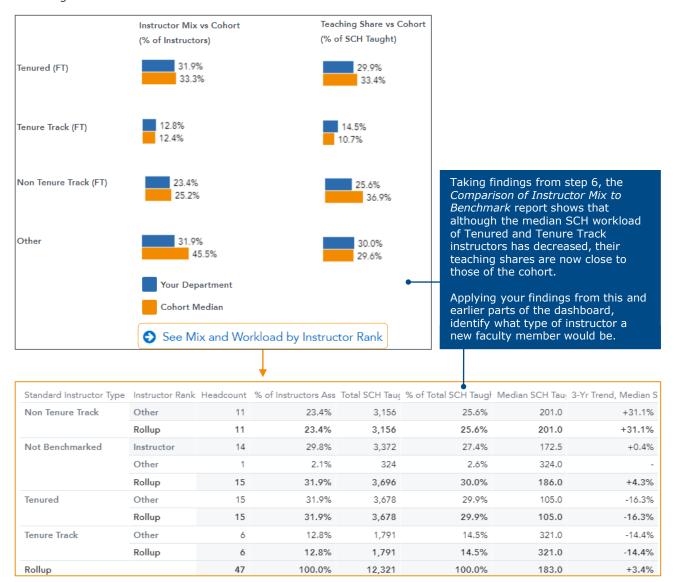


6 Use the *Distribution of Instructor Teaching Load Within Your Department* reports to view how much the department's instructors are teaching and how it has changed over three years.



Source: Academic Performance Solutions.

Use the Comparison of Instructor Mix to Benchmark report to compare the department's instructor mix and teaching share to the cohort.





## Faculty Line Request Worksheet

TOOL

Once your institution has selected metrics for leaders to include in faculty line requests, create a templatized worksheet for them to easily provide metrics.

## **Faculty Line Request Worksheet**

Create a worksheet, like this one, for leaders to easily provide the required metrics for faculty line requests. Ensure leaders apply the appropriate filters before answering questions.

#### [I] Attempted Student Credit Hours (SCH): How is Course Demand Changing?

Use the first part of the workflow to answer the following questions.

% Coursework from Growing SCH:

1	Use	e the	Cou	rsework Broken Down by Growing or Shrinking Majors report to view demand for the department.
	a)	Wh	at pe	ercentage of coursework come from shrinking, stable, and growing majors?  % Coursework from Shrinking SCH:
			ii.	% Coursework from Stable SCH:

Use the Coursework Impacted by Shrinking Majors and Coursework Impacted by Growing Majors reports to assess how much coursework is being contributed by growing and shrinking majors.

	3.
	4.
	5.
b)	What are my top five growing majors?

a) What are my top five shrinking majors?

2.

1. 2.

- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

#### [II] Seat Utilization and Class Size: How Efficient Are Current Course Offerings?

Use the second part of the workflow to answer the following questions.

- 3 Use the Consolidation Opportunities: Sections Below Recommended Range reports to pinpoint consolidation opportunities by comparing fill rates and class sizes to benchmarks.
  - a) How many sections does the department have that are below the fill rate of 80%? In which course division(s)?
  - b) How many sections does the department have with a class size below benchmark by more than 5%? In which course division(s)?

#### Tool 5

- 4 Use the Expansion Opportunities: Sections Above Recommended Range reports to identify expansion opportunities by comparing fill rates and class sizes to benchmarks.
  - a) How many sections does the department have with a fill rate at or above 90%? In which course division(s)?
  - b) How many sections does the department have with a class size above benchmark by more than 5%? In which course division(s)?
  - c) Does the department have relatively more expansion or consolidation opportunities, and mostly in which course division(s)?

#### [III] Median SCH Taught: Do You Have The Right Instructional Capacity to Meet Course Demand?

Use the third part of the workflow to answer the following questions.

- Use the *Headcount* metrics and *Instructor Mix* report to see how many instructors assigned to the selected and other departments are teaching in the selected department.
  - a) What is the instructional headcount of instructors assigned to your department?
  - b) What is the 3-year trend in growth/decline of instructional headcount assigned to your department?
  - c) What is the instructional mix of the instructors assigned to your department (Full time Instructors vs. Other Instructors?)
  - d) What is the instructional headcount of instructors assigned to other departments?
  - e) What is the 3-year trend in growth/decline of instructional headcount assigned to other departments?
  - f) What is the instructional mix of the instructors assigned to other departments (Full time Instructors vs. Other Instructors?)
- 6 Use the *Distribution of Instructor Teaching Load Within Your Department* reports to view how much the department's instructors are teaching and how it has changed over three years.
  - a) Complete the chart below.

Instructor Type	Headcount	Median SCH Workload (Per Instructor)	Median SCH Workload (3-Year Trend)

	b)	Has the median SCH workload of Tenure and Tenure Track instructors decreased or increased over the last few years?
	c)	Has the median SCH workflow of Non-Tenure Track and Other instructors decreased or increased over the last few years?
	d)	Are these trends consistent or inconsistent with your department's expectations?
	Had	the Comparison of Instructor Mix to Renchmank, report to compare the department's instructor mix and
7		the Comparison of Instructor Mix to Benchmark report to compare the department's instructor mix and ching share to the cohort.
	a)	What is the percentage of tenured instructors in your department? What is the % of tenured instructors in the cohort?
	b)	Is the mix of tenured faculty in your department aligned with the cohort or fairly different?
8	Ref	lection and Action Planning
	a)	Which opportunities identified can better support the department's instructional staff and students, as well as use resources more efficiently?
	b)	Is there a need for an additional faculty line(s) to support the department? Why?



## **Results Worksheet**

TOOL

After completing the process, measure results of your faculty line request process. Ensure your institution is measuring and keeping track of the information asked in the following questions throughout the process.



## **Results Worksheet**

Measure results of your institution's initiative using this worksheet. Before implementing your new initiative, ensure your institution is measuring and keeping track of the information asked in the following questions.

How many faculty lines were and were not approved? How does this compare to the process before the standardized APS template?
What is the cost savings associated with the faculty lines that were not approved?
What is the cost savings associated with faculty lines that were reallocated to departments with demonstrated need?
How many additional sections were you able to create in bottleneck courses? Did the new sections accommodate all student demand?

Tool 6

5	How much time did it take for department leaders to complete the request template? How does this compare to the process before the standardized APS template?					
6	How much time did it take for leaders to review the requests? How does this compare to the process before the standardized APS template?					
7	How has the new faculty line(s) impacted instructional workload in your department?					
8	Has your new faculty line(s) brought instructor workload in line with peers?					

## Cases in Brief: Impactful Results from New Initiative

#### Using APS Data to Inform Faculty Line Requests and Decisions



St. Ambrose University (SAU) is a private master's university in Davenport, IA. In the past, SAmbrose SAU's Faculty Finance Committee (FFC) could only review a handful of departments each year because the process was very time-intensive. To accomplish better insight into departmental health, including the need for faculty lines, SAU implemented a new annual departmental

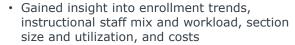
review process supported by metrics in the APS platform.

#### **Accomplishing Administrative and Financial Results**

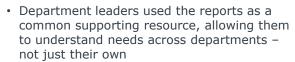
Rathe than manually collecting and analyzing data for a few departments under review, SAU's finance team used APS metrics to create comprehensive reports for every department. By including operational and financial metrics, department chairs could understand how their operational decisions impacted their financial results.

#### Department-Level Reports Created with APS Data

FFC created reports for all 40 departments at SAU using 18 APS metrics









#### 700 Hours

saved in manual data collection and analysis, as well as creating reports



\$446,000

reallocated faculty lines to two growing and new programs instead of filling five retired faculty lines



100%

departments reviewed, instead of a few



Samford University is a private master's university in Birmingham, AL. Historically, there was not a formal faculty line request process in place. Department leaders and deans took a haphazard approach to filling faculty lines and submitted different types of data, if any, to support requests. Samford transformed their process by requiring all leaders in the College of UNIVERSITY Arts and Sciences to complete a templatized faculty line request document using APS metrics.

#### **Implementing a Standardized Faculty Line Request Process**

#### Samford's Previous Process

#### **New Data-Informed Process**

#### **Achievements**

- Requests were made based on subjective need and desire to maintain status quo
- Requests were approved solely dependent on budget and history, with an overreliance on maintaining faculty lines
- Leaders did not have insight into why requests were or were not approved, especially across departments

Provost piloted the process with the College of Arts and Sciences



Created templatized request form using APS faculty line request how-to guide and Excel sheet

Chemistry and Biology Depts. each submitted a request to replace an existing faculty line

- Requests were approved based on data submitted
- Data showed that each was at or reaching capacity and could not reallocate current resources

- Enhanced Efficiency: Decreased reliance on Office of Institutional Research and Analytics (OIRA) to provide data allows leaders to save time and expectations are clear for what data to include
- Better Transparency: Leaders can assess resource use and needs across departments, as well as understand why requests were or were not approved
- Improved Process: Samford is undergoing an effort to expand this new process university-wide



## Reflection Guide

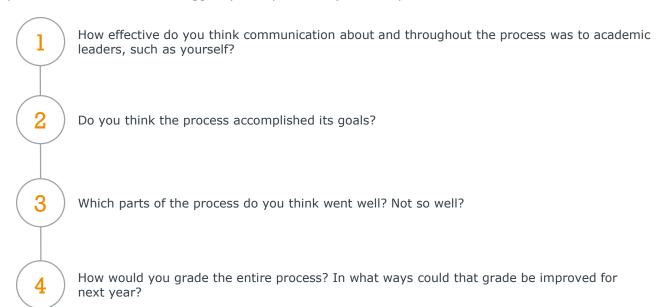
 $\mathtt{TOOL}$ 

Once your institution has completed the new faculty line request process and filled out the Results Worksheet, use this guide to reflect. This will help you proactively prepare for next year.

## Reflection Guide

Use this guide to reflect on your institution's new faculty line request process. This will help you proactively prepare for next year.

Ask the following questions to gather feedback from academic stakeholders who were involved in the process. To promote honest candor, we suggest you request anonymous responses.



To inform strategy for next year's review process, answer the questions above and use the collected feedback. Additional questions for initiative leaders are below.

