

April 25, 2024

Planning and Resource Allocation Committee Members
College of Marin
835 College Avenue
Kentfield, California 94904

Via Email

Re: PRAC Role in Review of Vacant/New Positions; Recruitment Prioritization

Dear Planning and Resource Allocation Committee members:

This letter outlines my understanding of when College of Marin (COM) positions go to the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee for review and recommendation, as well as how the COM administration prioritizes recruitments for vacant positions. We have discussed these issues in recent meetings, and I understand they have been a topic of discussion in the past as well.

Please note: This letter outlines my own understanding of *existing* practices. I have written it and am sending it with the goal of being transparent about these practices. This letter does not establish new practices.

PRAC's Role, Generally

Departments' staffing is guided by strategic planning, program review, enrollment, participatory governance processes and structures, and more. Over the years, PRAC members and co-chairs have worked hard to ensure PRAC takes a bigger-picture view of staffing, rather than risking the micromanagement of individual departments. The bigger-picture view is reflected in PRAC's charge, posted online at <https://gov.marin.edu/prac>. I will not copy the full charge here, but include the following for reference:

The Planning and Resource Allocation Committee provides oversight and makes recommendations for institutional planning and resource allocation, linking program reviews and strategic planning to the resources needed to accomplish College goals and ensuring antiracist practices, equity, and access are embedded in all recommendations. PRAC embraces its responsibility to dismantle systems and ideologies that perpetuate inequities and white supremacy, replacing them with intentionally anti-racist policies and plans designed to eliminate equity gaps. The committee reviews all plans and recommendations made by participatory governance committees and ensures their compliance with Board policy and planning priorities.

Faculty Positions

In a nutshell, full-time faculty positions come before PRAC because faculty need is tied to enrollment, both within disciplines and across the College, and involves tenure. They also come before PRAC as an added layer of faculty involvement in decision-making. Affording PRAC the opportunity to discuss full-time faculty positions was agreed upon by the faculty and administration over a decade ago. Dr. Eldridge's recollection from his time co-chairing PRAC is that there were only a couple of instances where full-time faculty requests were not recommended (one example was in dance, where enrollment was down so far over time that a new full-time hire would not have had a load to teach).

Staff and Management Positions

Positions that are posted for recruitment without going through PRAC are existing vacancies which have already been established as institutional commitments. Many positions were specifically recommended by PRAC at some point in the past. When staff and management positions become vacant, it is incumbent upon the supervisor to evaluate whether it is necessary to refill the position, whether position duties need to be updated, and whether the funds for the salary and benefits of the position should be redirected to another classification. For example, if an Enrollment Services Associate I position becomes vacant, the Dean of Enrollment Services should evaluate whether the position should be refilled or converted to an Enrollment Services Associate II position.

Positions that are vacant and budgeted are shown in the District's adoption budget report. I have [linked the 2023-2024 adoption budget here](#). Budgeted vacant positions may be listed as "vacant," or with the name of the employee who last served in the position.

Staff and management positions are proposed to PRAC when there is the request for a new position (one that has not been budgeted in the past, and for which funds will need to be allocated) as well as if there is a proposed area/office reorganization, where duties have shifted from what is in the approved position description(s) and resources are either needed for the reorganization or the positions are dramatically shifting in some way. As one example, Dean of Educational Success Programs Tonya Hersch included in her area's PRAC requests a new Administrative Assistant III position. If this position is recommended and approved and filled, and then becomes vacant later, it would not return to PRAC for a subsequent recommendation to continue the position.

Should PRAC have questions about the organization of an area, those are appropriate at any point. PRAC reserves the right to ask any manager to consider the efficiency and effectiveness of programs in their areas and bring back information to support how the program is staffed, but as a governance committee, PRAC does not engage in day-to-day or micromanaging of personnel or budgets once in place.

Positions that are Funded Categorically or Externally

Generally, when a position or other equipment/resource is requested that does not require any contribution from the District general fund, this should go to PRAC as an informational item. I acknowledge that this may not have been consistent over time, and the PRAC presentation template and instructions should be revised to make this more clear.

With respect to budgeted vacancies, replacing existing classified and management positions, and categorically/externally-funded positions, PRAC does not make recommendations on these items as expenditures within its role for resource allocation. That said, PRAC may ask questions or express its views on such items as part of PRAC's planning role and in program review as discussed above.

Prioritizing Recruitments

When PRAC recommends a position and the Superintendent/President approves it, or when a position becomes vacant and needs to be filled, the District executive team – currently consisting of the Superintendent/President, the Executive Director of Human Resources, the Assistant Vice President of Administrative Services, the Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Student Learning and Success, and the General Counsel positions – reviews the list of positions needing to be filled. In consultation with area managers and Human Resources staff, the team identifies the number of recruitments that can be conducted at any given time (across full-time faculty, part-time temporary pools, classified staff, and management), and then prioritizes recruitments based on that number.

In prioritizing recruitments, a number of factors are relevant:

- Student needs;
- Enrollment;
- Programmatic needs;
- Facilities and operations-related needs;
- Legislative mandates;
- Chancellor's Office mandates;
- Strategic plan implications;
- Alignment with College mission and values;
- Department/manager prioritization recommendations;
- Current staffing levels in the department/area;
- Ability to obtain temporary assistance (internally or externally) pending a recruitment;
- How long the position has been vacant;
- Potential candidate pool and difficulty of recruiting candidates;
- Ability to form a screening committee; and
- Other factors depending on the particular vacancy.

If you have any questions, please contact Academic Senate President Maria Coulson and me as PRAC co-chairs. For clarity, Academic Senate President Coulson is not a co-author of this letter. That said, I anticipate that any questions you may have should be shared with both PRAC co-chairs.

Thank you for your commitment to the College's participatory planning and resource allocation process as demonstrated by your service on PRAC.

Sincerely,



Mia Robertshaw
Interim Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Student Learning and Success

Enclosure: PRAC Ground Rules and Guiding Principles

C: Maria Coulson, Academic Senate President
Jonathan Eldridge, Superintendent/President