

A photograph of a modern building with large glass windows and a curved roofline, illuminated from within at dusk. The building is set against a clear blue sky. A dark blue semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing the title and presenter information.

In It for the Long Haul: Prioritizing Academic Programs

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OBJECTIVES

This session provides key highlights related to the program prioritization efforts undertaken by the College of Online and Continuing Education



Gain an understanding of the current landscape of portfolio management and program prioritization



Discuss the project's efforts and hear about best practices and limitations discovered along the way



Consider the framework for future prioritization efforts to support an interoperable model

SOME CONTEXT ABOUT SNHU



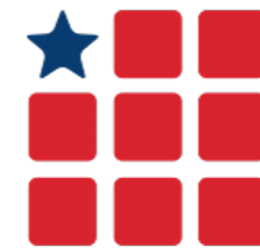
College of Online and Continuing Education

Fully online graduate and undergraduate programs primarily focusing on adult and nontraditional students



University College

Traditional college experience for undergraduate and international students at a campus setting



College for America

Undergraduate competency-based programs primarily focused on students within the workforce

2017

May 2017

Curriculum Teams completed a Program Refresh survey to gain an initial list of program priorities. Submissions were used to create the initial 5 yr. audit plan.

June 2017

Dr. Milkovich invited to present *Institutional Portfolio Management for Higher Education* to the Academic Team, aimed at increasing our knowledge of portfolio management and crafting applicable tools to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of COCE's prioritization process.

July-October 2017

Based on Dr. Milkovich's research, a small group collaborated to design a scalable prioritization framework that could be leveraged to aid in discussions regarding program prioritization.

November 2017-February 2018

Academic teams completed business cases for the 76 applicable programs.

February 2018 and Onward

Refining program criteria based on collected data and beginning to schedule next steps in program audits and development.

Working with colleagues at University Campus to begin discussions of University-wide prioritization efforts to ensure consistent resource allocation.

PRIORITIZATION DRIVERS



Negative Drivers

- Fiscal issues
- Accreditation concerns
- Performance budgeting
- Governmental expectations



Positive Drivers

- Achieve quality goals
- Fund new programs
- Achieve strategic initiatives



Neutral Drivers

- Institutional characteristics
- Mission fragmentation

PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

is not the same as PROJECT MANAGEMENT



Portfolio Management (PPM)

DOING THE RIGHT PROJECTS

- Alignment of programs with University objectives
- Consistent oversight of multiple initiatives
- Controlled allocation of scarce resources
- Alignment and coordination of interdependent programs



Project Management (PM)

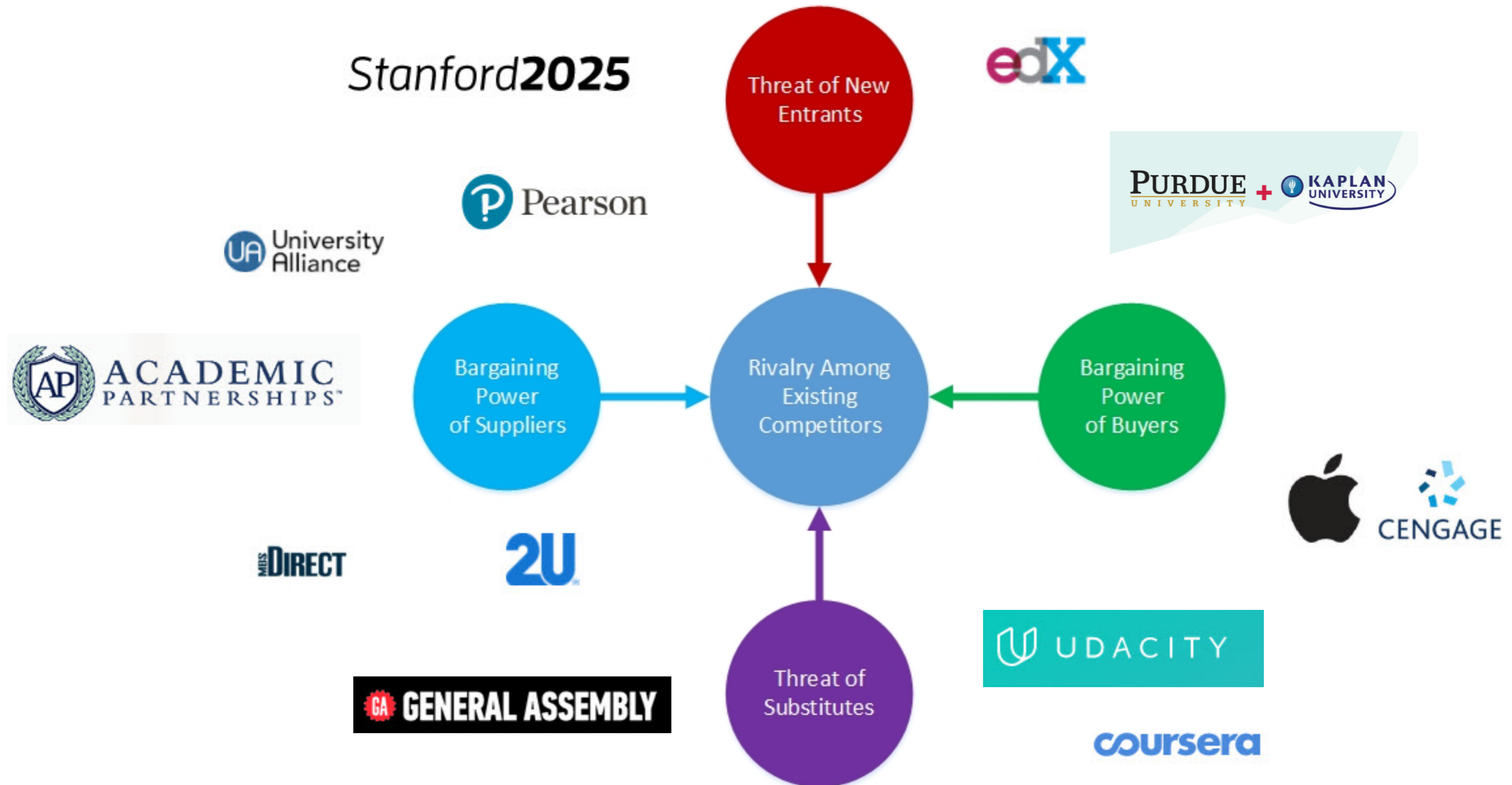
DOING PROJECTS RIGHT

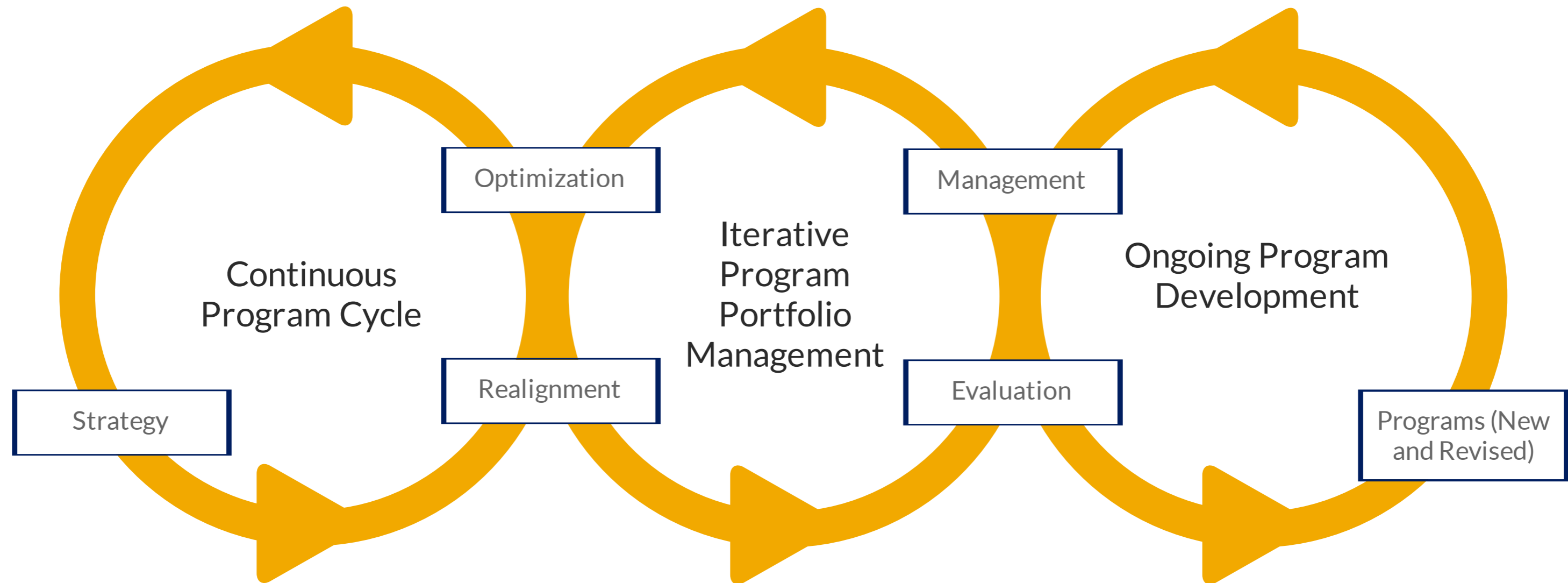
- Consistent application of best practices in program development for improved efficiency and effectiveness in program oversight and execution

DEFINING PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION

Program portfolio prioritization is a data-driven approach for higher education leaders to systematically evaluate all programs in order to elevate academic program performance and align with strategic institutional objectives.

PORTER'S FIVE FORCES





GOALS OF PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION

- Provide a framework for comparison
- Align program portfolio to strategic goals
- Allocate resources across the University
- Govern development with data-driven decisions
- Increase cross-functional collaboration in program delivery

PROGRAM PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

Methods and Tools

1. Business cases
2. Prioritization criteria
3. Shared proposal documentation
4. Financial and Resource management

Execution and Delivery

1. Interoperable teams for agile development practices
2. Program prioritization (biannual)
3. Program reviews (3-5 yr. cycle)

Portfolio Governance

1. Provides centralized oversight and guidance
2. Increase transparency and cross-functional communication related to programming decisions

Strategic Alignment

1. Integrated into SNHU strategic planning processes
2. Maximize University-wide commitment to interoperability
3. Focus on maximizing resource allocation for development decisions
4. Establish criteria for decision-making

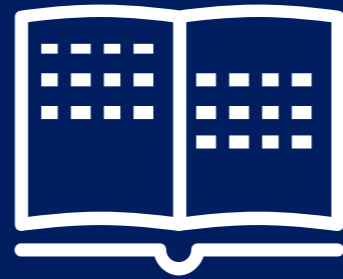


STEPS IN PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT



DEVELOP STRATEGIC PLAN

- Outlines the high-level University strategies aligned to the management of the program portfolio
- Provides long-term direction



DEVELOP PORTFOLIO CHARTER

- Used to define the portfolio management process at large
- Identifies programs, including related projects, timelines, priorities, and goals.



DEVELOP PORTFOLIO ROADMAP

- Graphical representation of all elements necessary to achieve portfolio
- Used to identify dependencies and impact



DETERMINE CHANGE MANAGEMENT

- Process by which portfolio is reviewed and adapted based on changes in strategic plans
- Comparison of 'as-is' to 'to-be' state to identify gaps and realignment

Documentation is not an academic exercise!

This is about
RADICAL TRANSPARENCY

PORTFOLIO CHARTER

The purpose of the portfolio charter is to clearly outline the goals for the program portfolio and authorize the committee to proceed and apply organizational resources.

- Objectives – What specifically is this portfolio going to accomplish in line with the overall organizational strategic objectives?
- Roles and responsibilities – What will individual and group responsibilities be to the portfolio itself, to the rest of the institution, and to each other?
- Expectations and requirements of relevant stakeholders– Who, outside of the committee, have a relevant stake in the portfolio and will need to be kept apprised of its progress?
- Communication requirements – Of the individuals and groups identified, who needs to know what, when, and in what format?

PORTFOLIO CRITERIA



Internal Factors

- Mission | 20%
 - Alignment to strategic goals
 - Institutional history
 - Leverage potential
- Quality Measures | 40%
 - Outcome achievement
 - Avg. success rate
 - Debt-to-Income ratio
- Sustainability | 40%
 - Enrollment
 - YoY Growth
 - Graduation rate
 - Conversion rate
 - Cost measures



External Factors

- Market Demand | 50%
 - Market size
 - Competitors
 - Conferrals
 - SEO opportunity
- Employability | 50%
 - Posting rate
 - Job Outlook
 - Employment change

PROGRAM BUSINESS CASE

Sustainability					
Current Enrollment	-	→	YoY Growth	-	
Active Past 3 Terms	-		→	YoY % Growth	-
% Active	-			Graduation Rate	-
Retention	-		% Conversions	-	
			Leads	-	
Quality Measures					
Avg. Success Rates	-		Debt:Income	-	
Outcome Achievement	-				
Employability					
Job Outlook	-		Employment Change	-	
Posting Rate	-				
Market Demand					
Market Size	-		Conferral Rate	-	
Competitors	-		SEO Opportunity	-	

Best Practices

- Training is essential to ensure consistent and reliable results
- Keep business cases to the one-page rule - these are not meant to be program reviews
- Create a data dictionary as a supplement to define each category

Data Sources

- Institutional Research department
- LMS data
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- EMSI or other data aggregators like Burning Glass

SCORING RUBRIC

SUSTAINABILITY			0%	1	4	9
Enrollment	UG Program's enrollment		0	≤ 599	600-700	≥ 701
	GR Program's enrollment		0	≤ 249	250-350	≥ 351
Growth	Program's YoY growth (3 term active students)		0	Decline	Consistent ±10%	Growth
Conversions	Change of yeild of accepted vs. enrolled students		0	Decline	Consistent ±5%	Growth
Retention	First-to-second year retention rate		0	≤ 30%	31-50%	≥ 51%

Best Practices

- Keep data definitions connected to the rubric to ensure transparency and consistency
- Use a 1-4-9 scale to help distribute data

LIMITATIONS

Decision Making

The role of professional judgement cannot be ignored - data should not be the sole determination for institutional decisions

Data Arbitration

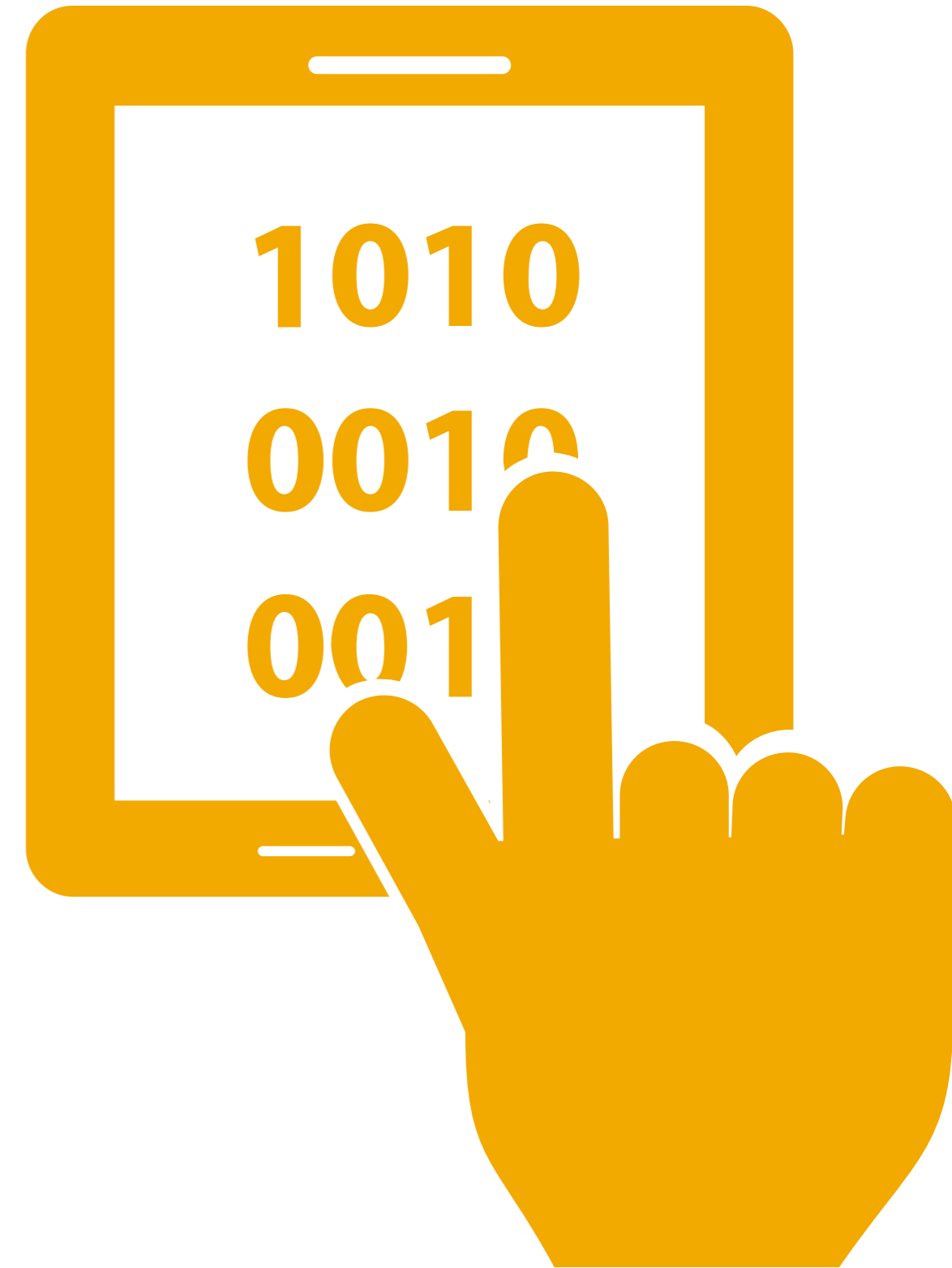
Key metrics aligned to the institution's mission and strategic plans should be decided cross-functionally and guide decision-making

Data Validation

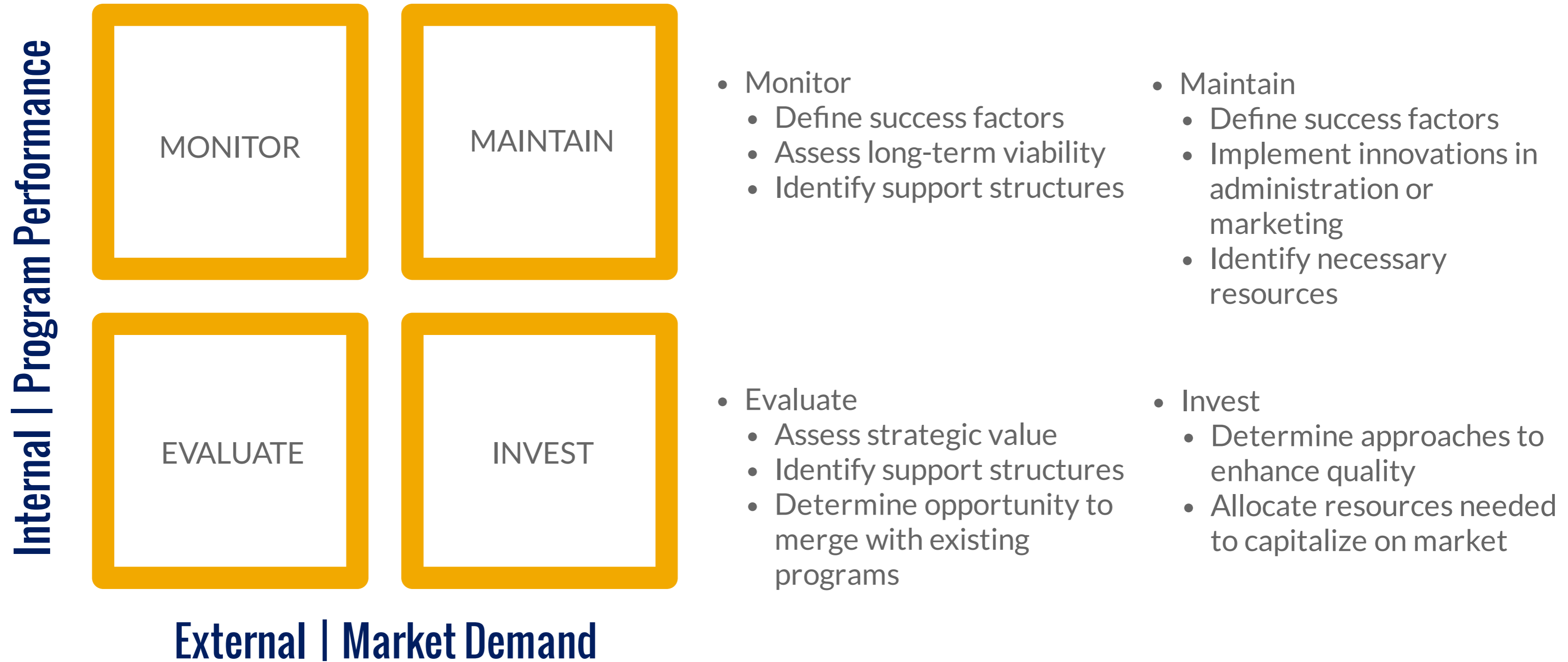
While most data points will be internally driven, certain metrics should have external validation

Employment Data

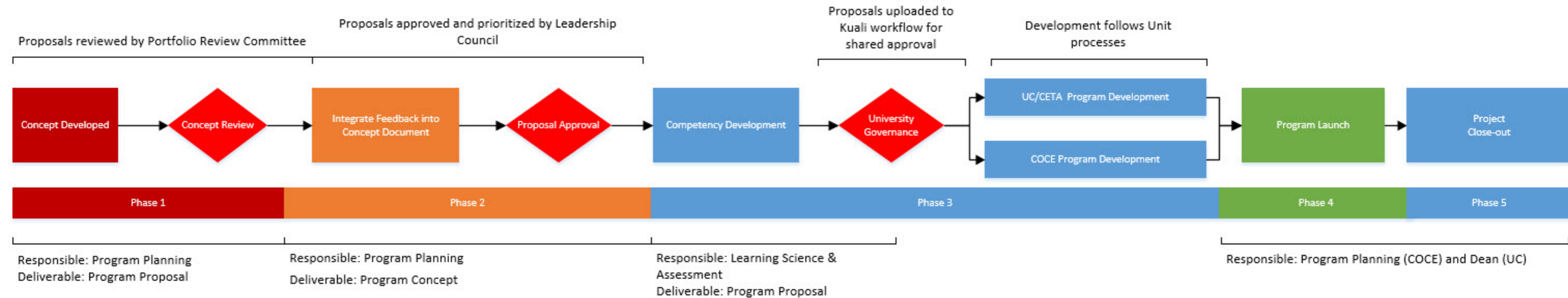
Some programs have clearly defined employment outcomes; however, programs across many disciplines do not have precise career outcomes, which can skew data



MATRIX



PROCESS WORKFLOW



MEETING CADANCE



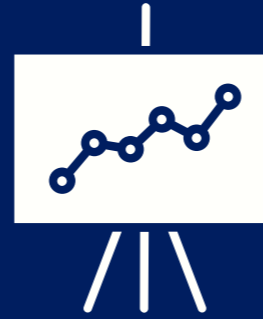
PROPOSAL

WHEN: As needed

WHO: Initiator and Portfolio Manager

GOAL: Completed Proposal

ACTIVITY: Initiator explains idea in detail; Portfolio Manager provides feedback and assists in development of formal proposal.



PORTFOLIO REVIEW

WHEN: Monthly

WHO: Portfolio Review Committee

GOAL: Ranked list of program-related projects

ACTIVITY: Committee reviews newly submitted proposals; vets new programs against current rankings; analyze status of ongoing development



PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

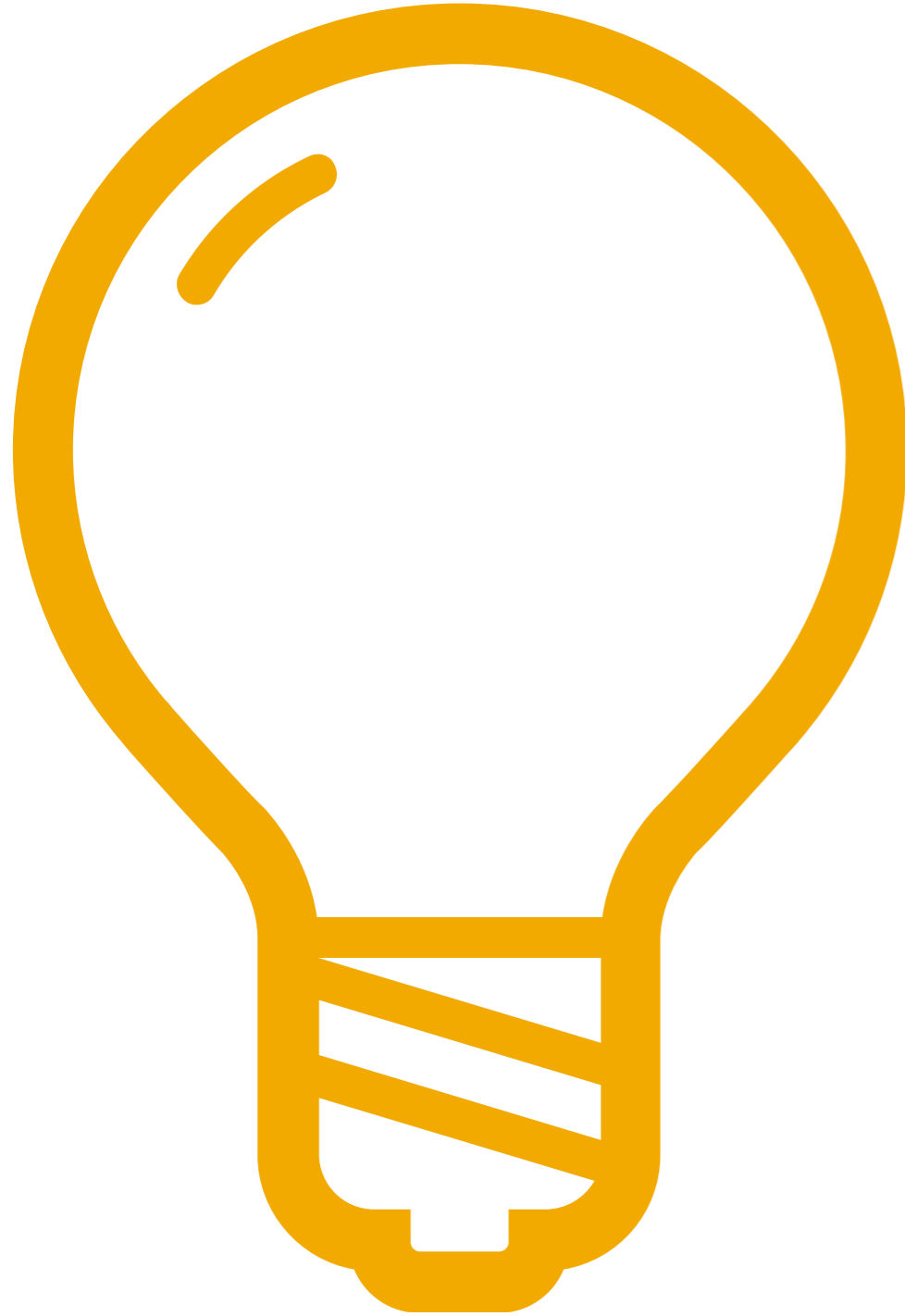
WHEN: Bi-Monthly/Quarterly

WHO: Leadership Council

GOAL: Assessment of portfolio strategy

ACTIVITY: Discuss program strategy for budget planning; assess criteria and weighting; determine future considerations for portfolio

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Portfolio management and prioritization is a **STRATEGIC APPROACH** that must be conducted as an **OPEN PROCESS**

It is an **ITERATIVE PROCESS** that cannot happen in isolation

The prioritization and management of your institution's portfolio can be as **SIMPLE** or **COMPLEX** as you make it

If your institution does not have a data management practice already in place - **START IT NOW!**

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

What external forces or internal pressures is your institution confronting?

What cultural characteristics make your institution unique?

What success factors are achievable?

What are your institution's primary drivers for portfolio management?



Questions

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