

Preparation Program Cost Tool *for admins and users*

INTRODUCTION

Considering opportunities for programmatic shifts and exploring potential budget flexibilities requires deep insight into how structures are set up and how different program budgets work. Complex systems and institutionalized processes are often viewed as too complicated to understand and as a result, inaccessible to those outside budget offices, including program leadership. The [Program Cost Tool](#) offers an opportunity to bridge this information gap through a comprehensive dual-user type (leadership user and administrative user) tool. It enables the “leadership user” to consider different programmatic scenarios to explore potential reductions or reallocations within existing budgets across a program using information entered by the “administrative user.”

The Program Cost Tool is designed such that the technical and administrative information entered is readily available to leadership to estimate, project, or explore alternate possibilities in various decision-making scenarios, including reducing costs to candidates. It doubles as a record-keeping tool when fiscal year-end actuals are entered in place of estimates.

Users may choose to progress through the tool’s five-year timeframe, entering estimates for all upcoming years then entering actuals as each year is finalized. Alternatively, multiple versions of the tool could be saved for separate purposes, with record-keeping versions preserved for later reference.

LEGEND

Tabs

Purple: for use by admin user(s)

Green: for use by leadership user(s)

Blue: final report

Gray: background reports, the engines of the tool, could be hidden if desired

FIELDS

White: data-entryable

Light gray: data-entryable, optional

Dark gray: protected

Blue: totals

INSTRUCTIONS

Considering the appropriate administrative and leadership users

- Administrative professionals (“admin user”) must have access to tuition, fees, budgetary, program, personnel, and course details. Note: Information can be entered by multiple “admin users” if necessary. As this tool is currently created as an excel file, all data entered would need to be saved before sharing with additional users.
- Leadership professionals (“leadership user”) would be those considering how aspects of tuition, fees, budgetary, program, personnel, and course details might be changed to produce different results over a period from one to five years.

Entering the data

- The admin user proceeds first by entering all data on the purple tabs, in all white fields, and in the light gray fields if desired. Note: The “FT faculty total credits/year including promotion & service” MUST be entered. None of the formulas will work without it.

Exploring possibilities

- The leadership user may then proceed by entering data on the green tabs, in white fields only. Note: Description fields indicate in what unit an entry should be made, e.g. dollars.

RESULTS

The blue “balance report” tab shows the resulting bottom line for each of the five years. This is a high-level net revenue and alternative funding report. Some programs may maintain their own tuition revenue and some may not. This report offers both scenarios.

The project has also developed a separate web-based resource including several standalone [Mini Calculators for Program Costs and Structures](#) that can be used to answer more discrete questions such as program cost to students, enrollment, faculty ratios and more. You can access the mini-calculators here: <https://tinyurl.com/residencyminicalcs>.