

# DISCONTINUANCE OF AN ACADEMIC PROGRAM

As recommended for implementation by the Faculty Senate

Motion #5-0506 10 February 2006

## Policy

The University may discontinue an academic program. Consideration of faculty teaching in the program must be consistent with the provisions of the Handbook regarding faculty status (see especially section 25.4). Timely, careful and meaningful consultation with faculty and academic administration is necessary at all stages of the process, as well as due consideration for the students in the program. While responsibility for curriculum at the University lies with the faculty, including its academic administrators, any discontinuance of an academic program must meet with the approval of the Provost and, in the case of a major program, the President of the University and the Board of Trustees.

## APPENDIX

### The Process

#### A. Identification of Programs to be Considered for Discontinuance

A proposal to discontinue a program may originate at the level of faculty, department, Director, Dean or Provost and will involve input at all levels. Faculty, academic Chairpersons/departments, or interdisciplinary Interdepartmental Program Directors, may notify the appropriate Dean(s) about an interest in discontinuing a program. Likewise, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is in a position to compare academic programs across the colleges and recommend a list of discontinuance-eligible programs. Working with the Deans, the Provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs may structure the discussion for cross-college study of academic programs that are potential discontinuance candidates.

#### B. Relevant Identifying Criteria

In order to maintain an open and supportive environment for program discontinuance discussion, discontinuance-eligible academic programs must be identified in a systematic and uniformly applied process.

##### 1. *Enrollment Based Criteria:*

- a. Inquiries to the program and trends (most recent year, 2 year average, 5 year average);
- b. Applications to the program (most recent year, 2 year average, 5 year average);
- c. Admissions to the program (most recent year, 2 year average, 5 year average);
- d. Graduation from the program (most recent year, 2 year average, 5 year average);
- e. Enrollment in the majors-required sections (most recent year, 2 year average, 5 year average);
- f. Enrollment in the majors-elective sections (department based courses only)  
(most recent year, 2 year average, 5 year average);
- g. Environmental scans and marketing studies indicating level of interests in the program;
- h. Comparison of enrollment in similar and/or competitor institutions;

*Financial Based Criteria:*

- a. Capital and capital support funds (most recent year, 2 year average, 5 year average);
- b. Cost per credit hour generated in the program (most recent year, 2 years, 5 years);
- c. Excess revenue generated after direct and indirect costs (most recent year, 2 years, 5 years);

*Quality Based Criteria:*

- a. Qualitative and quantitative information from accrediting associations;
- b. Post-graduate destinations of program graduates;
- c. Level of standards and quality of outcomes from department-generated program improvement plans;
- d. Contribution to University mission;

The criteria identified in this section are established for use in preliminary screening of academic programs for discontinuance. These criteria, and the review mechanism using these criteria, are not to be the sole basis upon which program retirement is determined. These are base criteria and others may be added, if appropriate to the field, after consultation with the Faculty Senate.

C. Review Process

1. The discontinuance-eligible program is identified using procedures and criteria outlined in A and B above.
2. Regardless of origin, any proposal to discontinue a program goes first to the home Dean(s), after which:
  - a. The home Dean(s) consults with the Chair(s) and/or Interdepartmental Program Director(s), and Faculty of the department(s) with primary responsibility for offering the program and reviews relevant data and criteria with these individuals. The Dean(s) may also add additional commentary as relevant to the case;
  - b. Following consultations outlined in (a.), the Dean gives notification to the Department Chair(s) and/or Interdepartmental Program Director(s), and to the appropriate Dean's Conference(s) that the program will be considered for discontinuance;
  - c. The Chair, Interdepartmental Program Director, or designate examines the case and, with the collaboration of department faculty, prepares a response to the notification;
  - d. Within 60 days of notification, the Chair and/or Interdepartmental Program Director, submits a response report to the Dean(s) and to the appropriate Dean's Conference(s). The report will include a departmental position on the discontinuance-eligible program along with the basis of the position. A minority report, where applicable, will be included in the Chair's or Interdepartmental Program Director's communication. In the case of interdepartmental programs, departments will meet jointly to discuss the case and prepare a joint report to be communicated to the relevant Dean(s) and Dean's Conference(s). The departmental report may include all relevant information including:
    - i. History and expectations from the program;
    - ii. Demand for the program;
    - iii. Quality of the program;
    - iv. Quality and value of program goals and outcomes;
    - v. Impact, justification and essentiality of the program;
    - vi. SWOT analysis focusing on opportunities for the program.

- e. The relevant Dean(s) will prepare a summary report to the Provost and provide a copy to the Chair(s) and/or Interdepartmental Program Director(s). In the case of a cross college interdisciplinary program, the Deans will file a joint report to the Provost.
3. The Provost will consult the Deans with respect to the department report and the recommendation from the home Dean(s). The Provost will present the case, along with relevant commentary, to the Academic Policy Committee for their recommendation.
  4. The Faculty Senate's Curriculum Committee will design and maintain the review process for the Faculty Senate and the full Senate will have ample opportunity to consider the proposal and make its recommendations.
  5. Using the appropriate Curriculum Review Form, the Dean submits the required information to the Faculty Senate through posting on the Curriculum Review Bulletin Board.
  6. The Faculty Senate communicates its recommendations to the Chair(s) and/or Interdepartmental Program Director(s), Dean(s), and the Provost through procedures outlined in the Curriculum Review Process.
  7. The Provost communicates his/her decision to the Chair(s) and/or Interdepartmental Program Director(s), and the Dean(s).
  8. In the case of a major degree program, the Provost seeks approval for discontinuance from the Board of Trustees and notifies the Chair(s) and/or Interdepartmental Program Director(s), and Dean(s) of the Board's decision.
  9. If a decision is made to discontinue an academic program; then a protocol for phasing-out the program must be developed.
    - a. An action plan for phasing out the program is designed by the department or interdisciplinary program board in consultation with the Dean. The plan includes a timeline of steps and actions, including sites of responsibility. (These sites will include the Offices of Publications, Admissions, relevant Deans, Provost, Advising Centers, relevant community-based sites of cooperation, etc).
    - b. Current students receive personal letters with instructions on how to respond to the situation and where to go with questions.
    - c. The Dean will review the final draft and recommend action to the Provost. The Provost in turn, may ask for changes or authorize appropriate action.