

E20.0 POLICY ON THE DISCONTINUANCE, REDUCTION OR TRANSFER OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Given accurate and appropriate information, it is to be assumed that departments and colleges will reallocate resources, reduce programs, and, in serious cases, end them with order and care. Good management by departments and colleges based on good information should prevent invoking the extraordinary condition of financial exigency by the board of trustees.

1. Program Review

Management of educational programs depends on regular and consistent information being available for department and college decision making. Such information should consist of both quantitative and qualitative indicators. These indicators by themselves don't make decisions. They provide a basis on which college faculty and administration can make decisions.

There should be an ongoing system by which all departments and colleges review indicators on their various programs:

- enrollment
- completion/attrition
- placement
- student/faculty ratio and/or FTEs
- direct and indirect costs
- consultation from appropriate advisory boards

Indicators such as these will be available in writing annually to all affected faculty and administrators, departments and colleges for budgeting, planning, staffing, and resource allocation.

Academic programs also will be subject to appropriate qualitative reviews based on the qualitative criteria used for the introduction of new programs and/or those of accrediting agencies. Given regular quantitative data and quality reviews, faculty, their departments, and colleges will be expected to allocate resources and, when deemed appropriate, reduce or discontinue programs.

Of prime importance will be the need for consultation and communication among the dean, program administrator, faculty and staff. Notification of all affected parties will occur before actions are taken to allow sufficient time to address problems and to minimize any negative impacts of such a decision. The consultation and notification are to be documented by a memorandum of understanding, written by the chair(s) of the

relevant department(s) made available to all members of the department, and copied to the dean of the relevant department.

2a. Program Discontinuance

Just as there are times and opportunities for starting new academic programs, there are also times when programs should be ended. The impetus to discontinue a program should typically come from the dean and be based on consultation with full-time faculty from the relevant department(s), quantitative indicators, and qualitative review(s). A proposal for discontinuance will then be submitted to the college curriculum committee for formal recommendation to the provost. If the dean and college curriculum committee or its equivalent differ, the provost, after consulting with the college's tenured faculty, will meet with the dean and curriculum committee to resolve the matter. If agreement is not reached, the provost shall make the final decision. If the program provides service to programs in other colleges, the affected deans and department heads should be consulted.

A proposal for discontinuing a program must address the following questions:

- i. The reason the program is no longer needed, that is, an accurate presentation of those facts, projections, and contingencies which support the proposed action, as well as those which argue against it.
- ii. A timeline that describes not only the intended actions to discontinue the program but also outlines the deadline for any possible recovery of the targeted program.
- iii. A plan for the orderly discontinuance of the curriculum.
- iv. Documentation of support for discontinuing the program.
- v. A plan for accommodating the needs of students who are currently enrolled in the program.
- vi. A plan for reassignment, career development, and/or termination of affected faculty.

A procedure such as this is designed to create a fair, orderly and considered approach to program discontinuance including thoughtful provisions for the students and faculty affected.

2b. Program Reduction

While it is recognized that management of a program requires occasional adjustments in resources, reduction of an active program is defined as a more severe set of steps that directly affects tenured and tenure-track faculty in that program. This process is not intended to be as onerous as that for active program discontinuance, yet requires increased documentation and communication when compared to standard active program management.

Any program reduction which results in the termination of a tenured faculty member must follow the processes in section 4.

Documentation that may lead to the reduction of a program will address the following questions:

- i. The reason the program no longer needs the full complement of its current resources, that is, an accurate presentation of those facts, projections, and contingencies which support the proposed action, as well as those which argue against it.
- ii. A plan for program viability, faculty reassignment, career development, and/or termination of affected faculty members.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty members will have the opportunity to review the documentation and participate in the process.

A procedure such as this will create a fair, orderly, and considered approach to program reduction including thoughtful provisions for the students and faculty affected.

3. Transferring a program from one college to another

The transfer of an academic program or department from one college to another requires that a formal proposal recommending the transfer be sent to the curriculum committees of each of the colleges involved. Prior to that formal proposal, the deans of the colleges involved will discuss the possibility with the full-time faculty of the affected departments. The final decision on transfer will be made by the provost and the president. Faculty, their tenure, and time toward tenure, will typically transfer with the program to the new location. However, a tenured faculty member may elect to retain tenure in the current college.

4. Termination of a Tenured Faculty Member

In the event that it becomes necessary to terminate a tenured faculty member because of the reduction or discontinuation of a program the following procedures will apply:

- a. The university will issue notice to tenured faculty members at the earliest possible date of the intention to terminate their appointments because of program discontinuance or reduction. From the date of notification of termination by the provost, the tenured faculty member who is to be terminated will continue to be employed (or receive equivalent salary and benefits) for twenty-four months. This period may be extended in the interest of serving the university.
- b. The university then will make every reasonable effort to offer the terminated faculty members alternate employment consistent with their professional background and institutional needs. If placement would be facilitated by a reasonable period of training, not to exceed the period specified above (4a), financial and other support for such training will be offered at least on the same basis as a leave for professional development (E18.0). Early retirement and/or reduced appointment may in some cases be a suitable alternative.

- c. The appointment of a tenured faculty member shall not be terminated in favor of retaining a non-tenured faculty member except in the case where the termination of the non-tenured faculty member would seriously distort the college's academic mission. The recommendation on termination in such cases should be made by the dean to the Provost in consultation with appropriate faculty including the college tenure committee.
- d. In all cases of termination due to program discontinuance or reduction, the position or similar position of a tenured faculty member will not be filled by full- or equivalent part-time appointments within three years, unless the released tenured faculty member has been offered reinstatement at the same position title, tenure status, and at least the same salary as at the time of termination and given one month in which to decide to accept or decline the offer. In the event a part-time appointment to teach the same or similar courses arises within one year of termination, the part-time appointment must be first offered to the terminated tenured faculty member.
- e. A tenured faculty member who alleges that the policies and procedures set forth above (4a-d) have not been properly applied may seek review of the alleged violation through the grievance procedure (E24.0).

5. Termination of a Tenure-Track Faculty Member

- a. The university will issue notice to a tenure-track faculty member of the intention to terminate an appointment because of a program discontinuance or reduction according to the schedules for non-reappointment (E5.0).
- b. The university will make every reasonable effort to offer the terminated faculty members with one or more years of service alternative employment for the faculty members in a manner consistent with their professional background and institutional needs. If placement would be facilitated by a reasonable period of training, not to exceed the periods specified in 5c below, financial and other support for such training will be offered at least on the same basis as a leave for professional development (E18.0). Early retirement and/or reduced appointment may in some cases be a suitable alternative.
- c. If the normal schedule for non-reappointment cannot be followed for a tenure-track faculty member, termination shall be according to the following schedule from the date of notification:
 - 1. less than one year's service: four months' notice (or equivalent salary and fringe benefits) or the duration of the contract, whichever is greater.
 - 2. more than one year but less than two years: seven months' notice (or equivalent salary and fringe benefits) or the duration of the contract, whichever is greater.
 - 3. two or more years: annual contract period (or equivalent salary and fringe benefits.)
- d. A tenure-track or faculty member who alleges that the policies and procedures set forth above (5a-d) have not been properly applied may seek review of the alleged violations through the grievance procedure (E24.0).

Responsible Party:

Effective Date:

Approved May 10, 2010

Policy History:

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