

1 **D 01.6 – clean copy (3-21-2019)**

2 **Policy on Academic Program Review, Reduction, Discontinuance, or Transfer**

3 Responsible management of academic programs depends on regular and consistent information made  
4 available to departments and colleges for the purposes of monitoring academic quality and resource  
5 requirements. With accurate and appropriate information accompanied by careful review, departments  
6 and colleges can make informed programmatic decisions and may find it necessary to reallocate  
7 resources, reduce a program(s), discontinue a program(s), or transfer a program(s). Regular monitoring  
8 of programs by departments and colleges should avoid any need by the board of trustees to take the  
9 extraordinary step of invoking financial exigency. (In the unlikely case of financial exigency, E22.0 Policy  
10 on Financial Exigency shall be followed.)

11 **A. Academic Program Review (APR)**

12 Academic Program Review (APR) is a transparent, collaborative and comprehensive process  
13 overseen by the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The purpose  
14 of APR is to provide faculty and administration with reliable and centrally collected information  
15 needed to support and guide a university process of continual program planning, quality  
16 improvement and resource allocation. Such a process helps guide the university to make informed  
17 decisions about program enhancement, continuance, consolidation, reduction, or discontinuance.

18 1. APR Process

19 The process shall include a tiered approach designed to provide data and analysis to the college  
20 and department on an annual basis with the option of conducting a deeper analysis, if needed  
21 and requested. The approach shall include at a minimum, the following components:

- 22 • Presentation of program data related to established outcome metrics
- 23 • Notification of any program metric results not meeting established benchmarks for  
24 program performance
- 25 • Submission of a response by program and college to notification of program  
26 performance concerns
- 27 • Provision for a sufficient period of time to develop and implement a plan to correct the  
28 cited performance concerns

29  
30 The current approach in use at RIT is located at  
31 <http://www.rit.edu/academicaaffairs/policiesmanual/e200>

32 2. APR Metrics

33 Academic Program performance will be reviewed on a set of key agreed-upon metrics which fall  
34 into performance outcome categories. These outcome categories shall be included in every tier  
35 of APR and include: Enrollment, Student Learning Outcomes, Student Success, and  
36 Revenue/Expense. Based on tier 1 analysis, additional data may be requested in tier 2 in order  
37 to more clearly understand and interpret annual data. The metrics and data included in tier 1  
38 include but are not limited to:

- 39 • Three Year Enrollment Trends
- 40 • Student learning outcomes assessment results
- 41 • Student success outcomes: first year retention; graduation and placement rates
- 42 • Revenue and Expense

43 In addition, programs are expected to also establish an ongoing system by which other valuable  
44 information on program quality can be collected and systematically reviewed as defined by the College.  
45 Examples of this information include but are not limited to: advisory board input; student and graduate  
46 feedback; instructional activity report/data warehouse analysis; and specialized accrediting body  
47 requirements and recommendations.

### 48 3. Notification of APR results

49 Communication among the dean, relevant program administrator, faculty and staff is of prime  
50 importance in this process. Deans, associate deans, and department heads shall receive annual  
51 APR results, including the data and the algorithms used to determine the results, from the  
52 provost's office. Department heads shall share the results with the relevant program  
53 administrator, and full-time faculty of the program.

54 If the APR results warrant a follow-up report or action plan, the relevant program administrator  
55 and the full-time faculty of the program shall be included in the development of the report and  
56 action plan. In addition, any response from the provost's office regarding the submitted  
57 program information shall be shared with the program administrator and the full-time faculty of  
58 the program.

### 59 **B. Academic Program Reduction**

60 While it is recognized that management of an academic program requires occasional adjustments in  
61 resources, reduction of an active program is defined as a more intentional set of steps that may  
62 directly affect tenured, tenure-track faculty, and faculty with multi-year appointments in that  
63 program. This process requires increased documentation and communication when compared to  
64 standard annual program management. In addition, the process provides an orderly approach to  
65 program reduction which includes thoughtful provisions for the students and faculty affected.

66 1. Program reduction shall be based on information and data that support a decision that the  
67 program no longer needs the full complement of its current resources and should include  
68 the following steps: Any program reduction which results in the termination of a tenured  
69 faculty member shall follow policy E20.0 Policy on the Termination of Faculty Members due  
70 to Program Discontinuance or Reduction.

71  
72 The decision to reduce a program shall typically come from the dean and shall first be  
73 shared with the relevant department head and program administrator. After this initial  
74 notification, the full time faculty and staff of the program shall be notified.

#### 75 2. Process

76 a. Once it has been decided that an academic program shall undergo reduction and  
77 the notifications of the decision have been made according to this policy above  
78

79 (Section B.1.), a proposal that outlines the plan to implement the reduction shall be  
80 developed by the relevant department head in consultation with the relevant  
81 program administrator. The proposal shall include, but is not limited to:  
82 1. a plan for program viability moving forward,  
83 2. plans for faculty reassignment, or career development, or termination of  
84 affected faculty members that are consistent with policy E20.0 .  
85 b. The relevant department head and program administrator shall share the proposal  
86 with the program curriculum committee (if one exists) for review and input. After  
87 the program curriculum committee has provided input on the proposal to the  
88 department head and program administrator, the proposal is shared with the  
89 faculty and staff of the program for review and comment. The input from the faculty  
90 and staff of the program shall be forwarded to the relevant department head and  
91 program administrator.  
92 c. The proposal, along with input from the program curriculum committee and the  
93 program faculty and staff shall be submitted to the college curriculum committee  
94 for review and comment.  
95 d. The college curriculum committee shall forward the proposal, along with all input  
96 received, and the committee's comments to the dean of the college in which the  
97 program resides.  
98 e. The dean shall forward the proposal with any comments along with all other input  
99 that has been collected to the provost.  
100 f. The provost shall make the final determination regarding the proposal for the  
101 implementation of a reduction in an academic program.

## 102 **C. Academic Program Discontinuance**

103 On occasion academic programs are discontinued. The APR process provides a mechanism, data and  
104 information critical for determining the ongoing viability of an academic program.

105 If the APR process and this policy have been followed, and it has been determined that a program is  
106 being considered for discontinuance the process below is designed to create a fair, orderly and  
107 careful approach to the discontinuance of the program including thoughtful provisions for the  
108 students and faculty affected.

### 109 1. Decision and Notification

110 The decision to pursue program discontinuance shall typically come from the dean and shall first  
111 be shared with the department head and the relevant program administrator After this initial  
112 notification, the full time faculty and staff of the program followed by the administrators of the  
113 programs affected, followed by other affected faculty shall be informed.

### 114 2. Proposal for Discontinuance

115 The Proposal for Discontinuance of an academic program shall include but not be limited to the  
116 following:

- 117 • Rationale and data supporting discontinuance.

- 118 • A plan for the orderly discontinuance of the curriculum.
- 119 • A plan for accommodating the needs of students who are currently enrolled in the
- 120 program.
- 121 • A plan for reassignment, career development, and/or termination of affected faculty
- 122 and staff. See policy E20.0 Policy on the Termination of Faculty Members due to
- 123 Program Discontinuance or Reduction.
- 124 • A timeline that describes the intended actions to be taken toward the discontinuance.
- 125 •

126 After completion of the required Proposal for Discontinuance, the following steps shall be  
127 taken.

- 128 • All paperwork shall be submitted to the relevant curriculum committees for review and
- 129 comment.
- 130 • The curriculum committees shall submit all paperwork along with any committee
- 131 comments to the college curriculum committee for review and comment.
- 132 • The college curriculum committee shall submit all documentation and comments
- 133 received along with its comments to the college dean.
- 134 • The college dean shall submit the proposal, any comments on the proposal, along with
- 135 all associated paperwork that have been received through the process to the provost for
- 136 final decision on the Proposal for Discontinuance.
- 137 • If the dean and college curriculum committee differ, the provost, after consulting with
- 138 the college's tenured faculty, shall meet with the dean and curriculum committee to
- 139 resolve the matter. If the matter is not resolved, the provost shall make the final
- 140 decision.
- 141 • The Provost's Office shall send an announcement of the action to the Intercollege
- 142 Curriculum Committee (ICC) or Graduate Council (GC) whichever is appropriate.
- 143 • If the program provides service to programs in other colleges, the affected deans and
- 144 department heads shall be informed of the timeline proposed for discontinuance and
- 145 shall ensure that the timeframe allows for proper adjustment to the affected program
- 146 prior to any pertinent print deadlines.
- 147

#### 148 **D. Transfer of an Academic Program**

##### 149 1. Decision

150 At times, the transfer an academic program or group of programs (*e.g.*, department) from one  
151 college to another or from one department to another may be warranted. The basis for the  
152 decision of program transfer shall be well founded and may include but shall not be limited to  
153 financial viability or alignment of curriculum. Regardless of the underlying reasons to transfer a  
154 program(s), any transfer shall be based on the best educational interests of students.

##### 155 2. Process

- 156 a. A formal proposal for the transfer of a program that includes the rationale for the transfer  
157 shall be written by the faculty of the program or department.

- 158           b. The proposal shall be submitted to the dean of each college (if more than one dean is  
159           involved), and to the college or department curriculum committees of each college (if more  
160           than one college is involved).
- 161           c. If two curriculum committees do not exist, such as in the case of a new department or new  
162           college, the tenured faculty of the program shall serve as the curriculum committee. Prior to  
163           that formal proposal, the relevant dean(s) of the college(s) involved shall discuss the  
164           possibility with the full-time faculty of the affected departments.
- 165           d. After review of the proposal, the curriculum committee(s) shall forward the proposal along  
166           with its recommendation for transfer to the dean who shall share the proposal with the  
167           whole of the college.
- 168           e. The dean shall forward a response to the proposal to the provost along with the original  
169           proposal and any documents received from curriculum committee(s) regarding the transfer.
- 170           f. The final decision on transfer shall be made by the provost.
- 171           g. If the transfer of a program affects faculty members, the timing of the transfer of the  
172           program shall be consistent the time line established in Policy E21. 0.
- 173           h. If the transfer of a program affects faculty or the reassignment of faculty, see Policy E21.0  
174           for Policy on Re-assignment or Transfer of Faculty.

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