



Campus Administrative Policy

Policy Title: Academic Program Discontinuance

Policy Number: 1025 Functional Area: Academic and Faculty Affairs

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Supersedes: Program Discontinuance for Internally Initiated Program Discontinuance When Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty Face Dismissal (January 17, 2006, July 1, 2019)

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Applies to: CU Anschutz
CU Denver

A. INTRODUCTION

Regent Policy 4.B requires that each campus have a process for the discontinuance of academic units and degree programs consistent with the CU System Administrative Policy Statement. This policy defines that process.

As stated in Administrative Policy Statement 1015, *Implementing Academic Unit or Degree Program Discontinuance*: “ Program discontinuance is the formal termination of an academic unit or degree program by the Board of Regents for educational, strategic realignment, resource reallocation, or financial reasons, or a combination of these reasons.” For the purpose of this policy, the term “program” refers to a degree program or an academic unit. Academic unit is defined as a school, college, department, or program that offers at least one degree program or serves as the tenure home of tenured or tenure-track faculty. These definitions are consistent with APS 1015.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

A recommendation to discontinue an academic unit or degree program on the Denver Campus or Anschutz Medical Campus must follow the procedures outlined in this campus policy.

Consistent with APS 1015, in some circumstances the Vice President of Academic Affairs may approve a chancellor’s request to waive certain procedures. This may be warranted when program discontinuance has no impact, or negligible impact, on students and faculty.

In all cases, the Board of Regents shall make the final decision with respect to program discontinuance and any subsequent revocation of tenure.

C. TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Introduction.....1

B. Policy Statement.....2

C. Table of Contents2

D. Initial Request.....2

E. Components of the Initial Request2

F. Review Process.....3

G. Decision Process Following a Committee Report4

H. Implementing Program Discontinuance.....4

I. Definitions5

Notes5

Appendix A: Faculty Program Discontinuance Review Committee6

Appendix B: Program Closure Considerations.....7

D. INITIAL REQUEST

A request (Request) to initiate the program discontinuance review process must be submitted in writing to the provost or chancellor. A Request may also be generated by the chancellor or provost. If the Request is initiated at a level below the dean or from another school or college, the dean of the school or college which offers the program in question will be notified and asked to comment on the Request. The discontinuance review process cannot be initiated without the consent of the chancellor or provost.

E. COMPONENTS OF THE INITIAL REQUEST

A Request shall include at a minimum the following elements:

1. Name of the program.
2. Names and titles of persons submitting the Request.
3. Rationale for Request; this must include the educational, strategic realignment, resource allocation, financial reasons, or combination of reasons. (See [APS 1015](#))

Appendix A for examples).

4. Data or other relevant metrics associated with the Request.
5. Anticipated number, rank of faculty (by type) and students possibly affected.
6. Comment by the dean (if the Request is generated at a level below the dean); comments by both deans (if the Request is generated by another school or college); comments by both deans (or unit head if there is not another dean) when faculty in the program hold their tenure or appointment in another academic unit.
7. Reference to any formal planning document(s) that cite the program, e.g. an academic master plan.

F. REVIEW PROCESS

1. Upon receipt of a Request for program discontinuance from the campus level, the chancellor may reject it as unwarranted by notice to the requestor(s). In all other cases, the chancellor, or their designee (e.g. provost) shall promptly notify all faculty and staff members in the affected academic unit(s). The affected unit's faculty members shall have the right of reasonable participation in all phases of the process for review of the request.
2. Following a decision to initiate a program discontinuance review process, the chancellor or their designee (e.g. provost) shall convene a faculty review committee (the "Faculty Program Discontinuance Review Committee" or "Committee") (see Appendix A of this policy) to undertake a review and submit a written report. The Committee shall collect information to ascertain whether the grounds for discontinuance, as stated in the Request, are warranted. In carrying out their charge, the Committee shall take input from the faculty members of the program recommended for closure and from other faculty members, students, and administrative units affected by the possible closure. All faculty, staff, and students of the academic unit shall have the opportunity to present written evidence or arguments related to the potential discontinuance. The Committee will make a determination on whether there are grounds for discontinuance and will prepare a written report of its findings for the chancellor.
3. Committee Obligations
 - a. The Committee should function as a neutral, confidential body and carefully consider the Request and all relevant information. The underlying presumption is that all Committee discussions, deliberations, and written materials are confidential.
 - b. Committee members will use all available qualitative and quantitative information to make a recommendation.
 - c. The Committee will base its recommendation on whether the evidence supports discontinuance based on the rationale provided in the Request.
 - d. A quorum will be defined as 75% of members. A super majority (at least 2/3)

is required to support the recommendation to discontinue a program.

- e. Committee members not supportive of the recommendation may choose to develop a minority report. It must be developed on the same timeline as the recommendation and it will also be forwarded to the chancellor along with the recommendation.
- f. The Committee will be available to consult with the chancellor in the preparation of the plan for program closure.
- g. The Committee will act in accordance with University policies and Code of Conduct regarding Conflicts of Interest, Responsible Conduct and Ethical Requirements.
- h. The Committee chair shall submit its report to the chancellor within 90 days of convening. Written evidence or arguments provided to the committee by faculty, staff, or students must be submitted with the committee report.

4. Criteria for Committee Review

The decision to discontinue an academic program is a decision that should never be taken lightly. Those involved in such a process shall endeavor at all times to assess each program/unit in the context of the mission of the campus and university at large through a process that is highly consultative, transparent, and collegial. In producing their final report and recommendation, the Committee shall be guided by the evidence gathered during the review process.

G. DECISION PROCESS FOLLOWING A COMMITTEE REPORT

The chancellor shall review the report and recommendation of the Committee. If the chancellor determines that discontinuance is not warranted, the process will end. If the chancellor determines that discontinuance is warranted, those affected shall be informed of the decision and the chancellor will provide a report to the president. The chancellor may elect to meet with the Committee to discuss the decision.

The president will review the report and forward the chancellor's recommendation to the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents shall make the final decision on the discontinuance of a degree program or academic unit.

H. IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE

Following a decision by the Board of Regents to discontinue a program, the chancellor will develop a plan for implementation. Consistent with APS 1015, this plan must include: 1) the timing for phasing out the program; (2) plans for reassigning faculty to other academic units, if applicable; (3) a strategy to allow students enrolled in the program to complete the degree in a reasonable time; (4) identification of, rationale for, and timing of, all tenured and tenure-track faculty appointments that may be terminated; (5) analysis of other faculty and staff appointments affected by discontinuance; and (6) any other issues related to discontinuance of the program.

The chancellor may request the assistance of the Committee in preparing the implementation plan.

Faculty who may be affected by a decision on program discontinuance shall be notified in accordance with the timelines and processes outlined in APS 1015. If tenured faculty are to be terminated due to program discontinuance, the action to terminate is contingent upon the revocation of tenure by the Board of Regents.

I. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, all definitions incorporate those outlined in Regent Law and Policy, and Administrative Policy Statement 1015.

NOTES

1. January 17, 2006: Adopted/Approved.
May 3, 2018: Modified
July 1, 2019: Revised
July 1, 2020: Revised
2. History:
May 3, 2018: Updated to reflect a Campus-wide effort to recast and revitalize various Campus policy sites into a standardized and more coherent set of chaptered policy statements organized around the several operational divisions of the university.
July 1, 2019: Amended and revised to ensure consistency with APS 1015.
July 1, 2020: Amended and revised to ensure consistency with updates to APS 1015.
3. Initial Policy Effective Date: January 17, 2006
4. Cross References/Appendix:
 - [Regent Law, Article 4, Academic Organization and Program Planning](#)
 - [Regent Policy 4B, Academic Planning and Accountability](#)
 - [CU Administrative Policy Statement 1015, Implementing Academic Unit or Degree Program Discontinuance](#)

APPENDIX A: FACULTY PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The program discontinuance review committee will include:

- One faculty representative from each school and college on the relevant campus.*
Selection of the faculty representatives will be a collaborative decision of the chancellor or their designee (e.g. provost) and school/college faculty governance leaders.
- Two members of the faculty assembly of the relevant campus,* to be selected by the faculty assembly leadership.

The committee will select a member to serve as chair during the review process.

* Relevant campus refers to the campus that is home to the program under consideration for discontinuance.

APPENDIX B: PROGRAM CLOSURE CONSIDERATIONS

Program closure considerations are non-exclusive lists of factors that may be considered during review of a program being considered for discontinuance. The most current list may be found in [Appendix: Program closure considerations in APS 1015](#), and is adopted in its entirety for the purposes of this policy.