

PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE

BACKGROUND AND UNDERLYING CONCEPTS

This procedure is based on the guiding principle that: 1) considerations of program discontinuance are distinct from program improvement; 2) if there is mutual agreement between the affected faculty of a program and the administration, and when students will not be adversely affected, the processes of this procedure (i.e., two semesters of program review and convening of the Program Discontinuance Review Committee) do not need to go into effect; 3) program discontinuance is both academic and professional for local academic senates, and insofar as the procedure impacts employment, it is a matter of collective bargaining in all cases. As a result, this procedure will be kept separate from development of Department/Discipline portfolios. In addition, if this procedure needs to be invoked, or if a program is to be discontinued on the basis of mutual faculty/administration agreement, the College of the Sequoias Teachers Association will be notified and given the necessary time to resolve the issues of collective bargaining.

Vital academic considerations include the following: effects on students, balancing the college curriculum, education and budget planning, and issues of regional coordination for occupational programs. Qualitative as well as quantitative data need to be used as a result. Qualitative data are less statistical and more value-laden. The quality, breadth, and depth of the curriculum and the teaching and learning process should be taken into consideration. Student satisfaction and how the program is perceived by articulating universities or employing business and industry are factors as well. Quantitative data include the following: weak enrollment trend (e.g., lack of demand); insufficient frequency of course section offerings to assure reasonable availability for students; poor retention; poor term-to-term persistence for those in courses in the major; poor rate for student achievement of program goals; lack of demand in the workforce; and/or unavailability of the transfer major.

PROCESS

1. A review process will go into effect when the Vice-President for Academic Services, in consultation with the discipline faculty and the Division Dean using the factors listed above, has determined that a program is in jeopardy. Department/program/discipline members and the administrator working directly with the program will identify aspects, i.e., qualitative and quantitative data, which apply to the specific program, and then do a preliminary analysis of items related to the mission of the college, enrollment trends, workforce-related issues, completion rates, articulation issues, course availability (both lower and upper division), and outside agency requirements. Then formal notice, including the factors used to make the determination,

will be sent to the President of the Academic Senate, the co-chairs of the Curriculum Committee, the President of COSTA, and the College President.

2. The department/discipline will then work internally for one semester to review program goals and attempt to ameliorate the situation. Ongoing documentation will be needed. Notice of progress will again be sent to the President of the Academic Senate, the co-chairs of the Curriculum Committee, the President of COSTA, the Vice President of Academic Services, and the President of the college.

3. After one semester, the Vice President of Academic Services and the President of the Academic Senate will convene a Program Discontinuance Review Committee (PDRC). The membership of this committee will include the President-elect or President of the Academic Senate, the affected faculty as determined by the Academic Senate, the Division Dean, the VP or his/her designee, and one faculty member chosen by the Academic Senate. The PDRC will supervise a comparative study on the quantitative/qualitative factors identified as pertinent to the program. The charge of the Program Discontinuance Review Committee is to make a recommendation to continue or delete the program. This committee will hold meetings with provision for public comment and will have a first and second reading of action items.

4. If it is determined, by the Program Discontinuance Review Committee, that the program should be discontinued. There will also be a recommendation for a phase-out period to ensure that all students in the program have the opportunity to complete the program and to ensure that the COSTA may resolve contractual issues for faculty in the affected program. These recommendations will then be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval.

5. If extreme financial hardship is declared by the District, 1 through 4 will be condensed to start no later than October 1 of an academic year and must be completed by February 25 in order to make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees in advance of the March 15 statutory requirement for potential for faculty lay-offs.

References: Education Code 78016; Title 5, Sections 51022 and 55130