

PROGRAM REVITALIZATION OR DISCONTINUATION PROCESS

Purpose

College of the Redwoods recognizes that academic programs must be responsive to the changing needs of students and the community. Thus, a process for identifying and assessing at-risk programs for possible revitalization or discontinuation is essential for ensuring that all programs are viable and effective and that they continue to serve the mission of the college. The Revitalization or Discontinuance Process is separate from the Program Review Process. The Program Review process is formative, providing evaluation that leads to continual improvement. The Revitalization or Discontinuance Process provides a summative evaluation of a program or discipline's viability and may lead to the termination of a program or discipline. For the purpose of this document, programs and disciplines are defined as they are for Program Review.

Identification of At-Risk Programs

Only programs with trends showing consistently low or continual declining enrollment, decreasing demand for service, or clear obsolescence shall be considered for discontinuance. An at-risk instructional program may be identified, on the basis of the criteria listed below, by the Chief Instructional Officer (*CIO*), or to the *CIO* by the area Director/appropriate administrator, a member of the discipline, the Program Review Chair, or the Academic Senate. A declining trend will be identified using the following key performance indicators alone or in combination:

- Statistically significant consistent/continual decline in class enrollment throughout the program in four consecutive semesters
- A consistently low enrollment over four consecutive semesters
- Poor retention at the end of each term for four consecutive semesters
- Statistically significant decline in, or consistently low rate of, student success

As soon as a declining trend has been identified within a specific program and reported to the CIO, the CIO shall contact the appropriate administrator(s) responsible for the program, the Academic Senate Copresidents, and the College of the Redwoods Faculty Organization. The CIO will notify the faculty and staff working in the program and, within two work weeks of notification, will meet with representatives from each area within the program—administration, faculty, and staff. These representatives will then be responsible for disseminating the information to all employees and students in the program.

Formation of Task Force

The CIO will create and convene a Task Force consisting of the following members:

- CIO or designee
- the respective Director/appropriate Administrator(s)
- a representative of Institutional Research
- an academic counselor
- two faculty members appointed by the Academic Senate:

- a) one from the program being assessed or if the program currently has no full-time faculty, an associate faculty from the program, or a subject matter expert
- b) one who is not a member of the division in question
- one faculty member not in the program appointed by CRFO
- a representative from the industry advisory committee (for Career and Technical Education programs)

Review of Data

The Task Force, working with the Office of Institutional Research, will conduct a review of the program's status, collecting and addressing as many qualitative and quantitative measures as are reasonably attainable. Data used should be based on two to five year trends and should relate to program goals as well as to the mission of the college. (See "Suggested Criteria".) The task force will be charged with interpreting those measures. After a thorough analysis of the data, the Task Force will make a recommendation to a) strengthen the program or b) discontinue the program or c) take no action. If the program is found to be sufficient as is, the Task Force may decide that no action is necessary. With few exceptions, a recommendation for discontinuance would not be made without first recommending actions to strengthen the program. In most cases, a recommendation to discontinue would only follow failed attempts at reviving/improving the program or compelling evidence to indicate that this is not the best use of the college resources

Written Report

The Task Force will issue a written report consisting of 1) a summary of the data, 2) an analysis of the data, 3) the recommendation, and 4) the factors used to make the recommendation, as well as any dissenting opinions. The report will be given to program faculty and administrators for commentary. The Task Force may revise the report if appropriate and then will send the report and commentary to the Academic Senate for discussion and a recommendation.

The written report, including comments from the program faculty, administration, and the Senate, will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for review and discussion.

If the task force recommends discontinuation of the program, a community forum will be held to receive public commentary.

Development of Action Plan to Strengthen Program

If a recommendation for strengthening the program is made, the Task Force, in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research, the Chief Business Officer or designee, and CRFO, will develop an action plan to revitalize the program. The action plan shall include all of the following components:

- a clear description of each action that will take place (See "Suggested Actions")
- a timeframe during which that action will take place;
- a method and process by which the usefulness of the action will be measured;
- an analysis of the fiscal impact of recommended program improvements, including any facilities, salaries and benefits, marketing, or retraining costs.

Development of Action Plan to Discontinue Program

If a recommendation for discontinuing the program is made, the Task Force, in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research, the Chief Business Officer or designee, and CRFO, will

develop a plan to phase out the program, respecting the needs of students, fulfilling contractual obligations to faculty and staff, and addressing the concerns identified by relevant community groups at the community forum. The plan for discontinuation should address all of the following:

- Effect on students currently enrolled in the program
- Impact to related programs and community
- Report from advisory committee (if appropriate)
- Projected use of facilities
- Alternatives for students
- Timeline for implementation of phase out
- Fiscal impact, including savings in salaries and benefits and revenue from sales of equipment and/or facilities.

Any changes to the employment status of full-time faculty will be done in accordance with the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Approval of Plan (Revitalization or Discontinuation)

The action plan will be reviewed by program faculty, the Chief Business Officer, and CRFO, and revised if appropriate. The Task Force will then submit the action plan to the Academic Senate and administration for review and comment. Budget considerations should not be the primary consideration in the decision to revitalize or discontinue a program. Rather the primary consideration should be the service the program provides to the college and the community. While approval of the revitalization plan does not obligate the college to fund all recommendations in the action plan, the college will make an effort to provide resources where clearly needed. Prior to implementation, any action plan for program revitalization or discontinuation will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for discussion and action.

Implementation of Action Plan to Strengthen Program

If a recommendation for strengthening the program is approved, the program personnel will conduct the work and activities described in the Action Plan. The Action Plan may be amended or revised at any time during this time period by mutual consent of the CIO and the program personnel. The CIO will appoint someone from the program to submit evidence of these activities, including the assessment of the activities, at regular intervals. The CIO will meet with the program personnel to discuss information and analysis going into the progress reports. Progress will be reported to the Senate.

If there has not been a statistically significant increase in key performance indicators after three semesters of the implementation of the process, the Chief Instructional Officer will reconvene the Task Force to recommend an appropriate course of action from the following:

- Give the program an extension of two semesters. At the end of the extension, the committee will reconvene and re-evaluate.
- Accept the program in its current state if it serves a community, instructional, or training need.
- Create a new plan to improve recruitment and enrollment. This plan will then be implemented over the following three semesters.
- Discontinue the program. Develop an action plan to phase out the program.

Implementation of Action Plan to Discontinue Program

If a recommendation for discontinuing the program is approved by the Board of Trustees, opportunities will be provided for students to complete the program or transfer to a related program. In addition, provisions will be made for adequate notification of affected faculty. Any changes to the employment status of full-time faculty will be done in accordance with the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Immediately after the Board of Trustees has approved the program discontinuance, formal notification will be sent to all constituents:

- Students currently enrolled in the program
- Faculty and staff in the program
- Advisory groups
- Specific accreditation/certification groups
- Relevant community groups

Final Report

The Chief Instructional Officer will issue a final report whenever an action plan has been fully implemented and the revitalized program has been “released” or the discontinued program has been fully phased out. The report will be distributed to the Academic Senate, the administration, and the Board of Trustees and will be made publicly available. In the case of discontinuation, provisions will be made for inactivating course outlines, removing the program from the college catalog, and notifying the System Office.

Suggested Timelines

Semester 1: program notified; task force convened; data collected and analyzed; report written

Semester 2: recommendation approved by Academic Senate; action plan developed; plan approved by Board of Trustees

Semester 3: action plan implemented

Semester 4-5: progress monitored; action plan adapted if necessary

Semester 6: action plan completed; final report issued

Suggested Criteria for Evaluating Programs

Measures applied to all programs

<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative (3-5 year trend)</i>
• <i>Balance of curriculum across the college</i>	• <i>Enrollment</i>
• <i>Program consistent with mission and values of the college</i>	• <i>Retention within courses and successful course completion</i>
• <i>Student satisfaction</i>	• <i>Persistence across courses within major or certificate</i>
• <i>Previous work undertaken to strengthen program</i>	• <i>Number of degrees and certificates awarded</i>
• <i>Impact on related programs</i>	• <i>Scheduling/course offering trends</i>
• <i>Accreditation issues (ACCJC/WASC and other external accrediting bodies)</i>	• <i>Availability of sufficient resources</i>

Measures applied to Vocational and Technical Education programs

<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative (3-5 year trend)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Duplication or uniqueness of program in region</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employability of graduates, job availability, and placement rate</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employer satisfaction</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Market trends</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Advisory committee recommendations</i> 	

Measures applied to transfer programs

<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative (3-5 year trend)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transfer program availability</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of transfers (UC, CSU, private)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of transfer-ready students</i>

Measures that may also be considered

<i>Qualitative</i>	<i>Quantitative</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Constraints that may affect enrollment, completion, persistence</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Industry/ market demand (non-vocational programs)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community demand for the program</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Impact on students, including underrepresented and/or at-risk students</i> 	

Suggested Actions to Be Included in Action Plans

- *Program develops plan for recruitment of targeted populations*
- *Program initiates cooperative ventures with local employers, transfer institutions, and/or other community colleges*
- *Enhanced career and/or academic counseling services*
- *Adjustment of course scheduling*
- *Articulation of programs with K-12 and/or four year and/or technical institutions*
- *Faculty development in classroom techniques, methodology, best practices*
- *Enhanced Student support services: tutoring, learning skills, childcare, financial aid*
- *Identification of possible alternate funding sources*

Reference: Education Code 78016; Title 5 Sections 51022 and 55130
New Administrative Procedure