

## University of Louisiana System

**Title: *PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE***

**Effective Date: July 1, 2004**

**Cancellation: None**

**Chapter: Faculty and Staff**

### **Policy and Procedures Memorandum**

#### **Introduction**

One of the primary goals of a university is to promote and maintain high quality academic programs. Consistent with this goal of academic excellence, each university should adopt policies and procedures to provide for regular, periodic review of all academic programs. Occasionally, for educational reasons, it may be in the university's best interest to discontinue an academic program or academic unit. Such a decision should be made after consultation with the appropriate faculty groups and in accordance with the policies outlined below.

Prior to the discontinuance of a program, institutions shall be expected, subject to Board approval, to provide appropriate professional retraining and other programs to assist faculty members who may be displaced as a result of discontinued programs.

The Board shall expect each institution to have an orderly process for the phase-out of programs.

The policies below are designed to separate the procedures used by the university to arrive at an internally-initiated decision to close a program from those used by the Board of Regents or the Board of Supervisors that result in an externally-initiated directive to discontinue a program. Policies that provide for consultation with faculty regarding termination of faculty, notification to faculty members, obligations to tenured faculty, and other rights of all faculty members are the same for either internally-initiated program discontinuance or externally-initiated program discontinuance.

I. Definition of Program Discontinuance

Program discontinuance is the formal termination of a degree program, department or division of instruction, school or college, or other program unit for educational reasons, strategic realignment, resource allocation, budget constraints, or combinations of educational strategies and financial reasons. Separate steps should apply in cases of program transfer.

A. Internally-Initiated Program Discontinuance

The recommendation for discontinuance is an internal decision and may be made by the university president, System president or the Board.

B. Externally-Initiated Program Discontinuance.

Program discontinuance is the formal termination of a degree program, as defined by the Board of Regents (or Board of Supervisors) policy, resulting from a directive to phase-out a program.

II. Process for Recommending Program Discontinuance

A. Internally Initiated Program Discontinuance

A recommendation to discontinue a program or department may be made by the Board, System President, or the university president. An internal decision to discontinue an academic program or department of instruction will be based on educational need, strategic realignment, resource allocation, budget constraints, or combinations of educational strategies and financial considerations. Both quantitative and qualitative data obtained during the formal review of the unit/program will be analyzed in relation to the university's strategic plan in making a discontinuance recommendation. There shall be faculty participation in considering the possible formal discontinuation of such a program or academic unit. A recommendation for an internally initiated program discontinuance will be reviewed and discussed with the members in the department or program, students enrolled in the unit or program, the department chair, the dean of the school or college, the vice president for academic affairs, and the university president. Final recommendations to discontinue a program will be made by the university president within a maximum period of 120 days from the time when the initial recommendation for program discontinuance was made. All plans for termination of programs will be submitted by the president within 60 days to the Board for action.

B. Externally-Initiated Program Discontinuance

Externally initiated program discontinuance is a directive from the Board of Regents (or the Board of Supervisors) to discontinue a program. The Board's decision shall direct the university to phase-out or close a program.

III. Termination of Faculty

Termination of appointments of tenured faculty or those with unexpired term appointments may occur as the result of formal discontinuance of an academic program or department of instruction in accordance with the procedures in (2) above. Once a decision to terminate a program has been made, recommendations on termination of appointments of individual faculty members in the organizational unit under review will be made by the university president in consultation with appropriate faculty and administrators. All plans for termination of individual appointments will be reviewed and approved by the System President and the Board of Supervisors prior to implementation. Unless there is a compelling academic reason to do otherwise, no appointment of a faculty member with tenure will be considered for termination until the appointments of faculty members in the unit without tenure have been considered for termination.

IV. Notification to Faculty Members and Students

Following formal approval of termination plans by the Board of Supervisors, one year's formal notice will be provided to tenured faculty whose appointments are to be terminated. The year's notice will commence at the beginning of the academic year following formal approval by the Board. A faculty member without tenure who is terminated for reasons of program discontinuance will be given notification consistent with Board policy.

Timing for phasing out programs and displacing faculty members will be based on institutional needs; including analysis of reasonable time for enrolled students to complete their degree programs and budget constraints.

Before terminating a degree program, every reasonable effort will be made to allow students to complete their degree program. Program or campus transfers will be made if mutually acceptable to the student and the receiving department. Students will be provided advising assistance with respect to their academic program options. Students will be notified of program closure and timing for phasing out programs.

V. Obligations to Tenured Faculty

Before terminating the appointment of a faculty member with tenure because of program discontinuance, every reasonable effort will be made to find another suitable position for the faculty member within the university. Assistance will also be provided by the System office for possible relocation to another campus within the System or to another institution within the state. Departmental campus transfers will be made if mutually acceptable. Faculty retraining should be provided under the sponsorship of the university where the program is discontinued if, in the judgment of the university and the faculty member, such retraining will prepare the faculty member for another suitable university position within a reasonable period of time.

VI. Other Rights of Tenured Faculty

If a program is reinstated within three years at the campus where it was discontinued, tenured faculty members who were terminated will have first right to reinstatement.

VII. Other Rights of All Faculty

Faculty members will be provided counseling regarding employment opportunities outside of the university.

A faculty member whose appointment is terminated for reasons of program discontinuance has the right to appeal denial of specified rights to a university committee.

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*Policy References:*

Campus Policies on Program Discontinuance

*Review Process:*

President's Council  
Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs  
Board Members

*Distribution:*

University Presidents