Proposal to Deactivate an Academic Program

The program deactivation process allows for the formal suspension of an academic program for a period of up to five years. The program will not be able to accept students once the deactivation is approved by the Faculty Senate. Detailed information on the deactivated program will be removed from the University Catalogue and department/program webpage(s). The program title will be listed in the graduate or undergraduate catalogue under the heading “Programs Not Currently Accepting Students.” Unless the program has been reactivated or terminated, the unit and the department housing the program will be notified by the Office of the Provost during the fourth year that action must be taken prior to the catalogue deadline in the coming academic year. At that point, the sponsoring unit has three choices: request continuation of deactivated status (see below), begin a Program Termination process, or reactivate the program. Guidelines for proposals to terminate programs and to reactivate programs are posted on the Faculty Senate Curricular Resources page (see here).

A proposal to deactivate an academic program may be initiated by a faculty committee, a department/unit, or the Provost.

Requests for Continuance of Deactivated Status: Continuance of deactivated status beyond five years can be granted on the grounds that the conditions that prompted deactivation are likely to change in the near future. Changes might include approved hires in the next three years, evidence of increased demand for the program, or new collaboration with another unit/department that will help support the program. Requests for continuance of deactivated status should be made by the department chair/program director in the form of a memo, accompanied by a support letter from the unit dean. The memo should provide sufficient rationale for remaining deactivated rather than reactivating or terminating the program and a brief history of the program, including why it was deactivated. Memos should be submitted to the Office of the Provost. Upon successful review by the Provost, proposals will be forwarded to the CAC for review and approval. Requests for continuation of deactivated status do not require approval beyond the CAC. If a request for continuation of deactivated status is not approved by the CAC, the program may appeal to the Provost’s Office. In the event that continuation of deactivated status is not approved by the Provost’s Office, a program can opt to initiate a reactivation or termination process.

No-Contest Deactivation Requests: In the case where the request to deactivate comes from the program itself (a “no-contest” deactivation) and where there are no implications for loss of faculty and/or staff, a request for deactivation can be made by the chair/program director in the form of a memo, accompanied by a support letter from the unit dean as well as department chairs/deans of other departments/units that could be affected by the deactivation. The request for deactivation memo should present the rationale for the request, a brief history of the program, the number of students currently enrolled in the program and a plan to facilitate their completion, and a record of the faculty vote on the deactivation proposal. If there are no students enrolled in the program being deactivated, the deactivation proposal should also address plans to deactivate any courses offered solely for this program.

Contested Deactivations: Parties are encouraged to work towards no-contest deactivations prior to launching a contested deactivation process. All proposals for a contested program deactivations will be prepared using the format given below, explaining the reasons, and providing supporting evidence and rationale for the proposed deactivation. A Proposal to Deactivate an Academic Program (established December 2019)
A program deactivation review will be conducted using this format as a guideline and adhering to the timeline presented at the end of this document.

This format does not address the employment situation of the faculty involved in the program should it be deactivated. That issue is addressed elsewhere in the contractual agreement covering the bargaining unit faculty.

**Operation of the Program During the Deactivation Review:** In many cases, suspending operation of the program or calling for a hiatus in admission to the program could be sufficiently damaging to the program that it would constitute a de facto deactivation, making the anticipated review by the Curricular Affairs Committee irrelevant. Consequently, *unless a hiatus in operation is explicitly acceptable to the program and the Provost*, the University will operate the program on a “business as usual” basis. Students in the program will be given the opportunity to complete the program in a reasonable time, regardless of the decision on deactivation.

**Guidelines for Proposals to Deactivate a Program (Contested Deactivations)**

The proposal must include the sections indicated below. Relevant support letters should also be provided as appropriate.

1) **An abstract summarizing the program’s position, problems, performance and prospects based on criteria adapted from the established process for academic program reviews:**

   A. Contribution to mission and objectives
   B. External demand and societal need
   C. Internal demand
   D. Quality
   E. Effectiveness
   F. Efficiency

   The proposal to deactivate must present an adequate argument that the program is not performing up to expected standards with respect to some of these criteria in order for a Review for Deactivation to be authorized. The proposal must specifically identify which criteria are deemed deficient, and clearly state why program deactivation is being requested.

2) **Evaluation Based on Criteria**

   Whenever appropriate, the initiator must present supporting evidence in the form of data provided by the University’s Office of Institutional Research and any relevant ratings, rankings, accreditation reviews or “best practices” benchmark information from external sources. Citations of sources for all external evaluative data should be identified. For each category cited in the request for deactivation, the initiator must substantiate the problems or deficiencies and indicate why these are cause for deactivation.

   A. Contribution to Mission and Plans

      Is the program misaligned with or not currently making sufficient contributions to the department, unit, and/or University level missions, strategic priorities, and academic plans? Would another alignment be appropriate?
B. External Demand/Societal Needs
Is the program deficient with respect to indicators of external demand for:
- graduates with particular types of knowledge or skills required to make social institutions work?
- persons who are informed and responsible citizens?

C. Internal Demand
Is the program deficient with respect to trends in enrollments of students whose primary area of study is:
- in the program?
- elsewhere in the University?

D. Quality
Does the program show weaknesses or downward trends with respect to:
- recruitment or retention of qualified and productive faculty?
- recruitment, retention or performance of good students?
- external reputation as judged by external scholarly and professional groups?

E. Effectiveness
What are the barriers and problems with respect to accomplishing the educational, research, and service purposes of the program, including where relevant:
- collaboration with other programs within the University?
- connections with institutions outside the University?
- capacities to assess and use student outcomes for making improvements in curriculum design and delivery?

F. Efficiency
Does the program represent a deployment of resources that is not in line with the strategic priorities of the sponsoring unit and the University? Is the program inefficient in deploying resources to accomplish its purposes and sustain viable operations based on trend analyses provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment such as:
- FTE students taught per FTE faculty;
- headcount majors per FTE faculty;
- student credit hours taught by full time versus part time faculty;
- instructional costs per student credit hour;
- sponsored research dollars per FTE faculty.

What are the opportunity costs and tradeoffs of continuing the program or deactivating the program for a period of up to five years? Impact on enrolled students? Impact on faculty, staff and administrative personnel?

3) Information gathering and deliberative steps
Indicate specifications of the major information gathering and deliberative steps concerning the program’s status that preceded the initiator’s report proposing program deactivation. These specifications should identify the data analyzed, faculty committee analysis, feedback from advisory groups, communication with other units/departments...
that could be affected by the deactivation, discussions and votes taken in faculty meetings, and other evaluative process steps.

Explain communications and other actions that will be carried out to address concerns of affected student, faculty, staff and alumni constituencies as well as other units/departments if, based on the initiator’s report, a formal program deactivation review subsequently is undertaken.

Describe major features of an orderly program phase-out plan based on the assumption that a deactivation review is conducted and that program deactivation subsequently is approved.

**Dissemination and Review of the Proposal**

If the Provost determines that a prima facie case has been made that warrants a deactivation review by the Curricular Affairs Committee, the Provost is responsible for forwarding the proposal to the Faculty Senate Office and Chair of the Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee within 14 days of receipt. The Faculty Senate Office will distribute the proposal abstract to the faculty for public comment as well as all department chairs, deans, appropriate student groups, and other relevant parties identified in the proposal. Copies of the full proposal may be requested by any faculty, student, or staff member. The Curricular Affairs Committee will review the proposal according to the guidelines presented above for proposal preparation.

**Timetable for Contested Deactivation Review**

*Note that weekend days count, but holidays, summer and days in the December – January break do not.)*

*Within 14 days of receipt by the Provost’s office:* The Provost will evaluate the proposal. If the Provost determines that a prima facie case has been made for deactivation, the proposal will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate; if not, the Provost will advise the author(s) of the proposal of its rejection, with explanation, and copy the Chair of the Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC).

*Within 7 days of receipt by the Faculty Senate office:* The Faculty Senate office will forward the proposal to the Chair of the CAC and the program faculty. The Chair of the CAC will appoint a subcommittee to conduct a review. As part of their review, the subcommittee will meet with the program faculty and unit dean. The proposal abstract will be circulated for a public comment period of 30 days as described above.

*At the first CAC meeting following the 30 day comment period:* The subcommittee will make a recommendation to CAC to approve or reject the proposal. The CAC will discuss the recommendation and vote to support or reject the proposal to deactivate.

*Within 7 days of the CAC meeting:* The Chair of the CAC will communicate the CAC’s decision with a written report to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Provost (for information only), the chair/director of the program under consideration, and the unit dean.

*Within 14 days of receipt of the CAC decision:* The program may prepare a rebuttal to the CAC position, and submit it to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

Proposal to Deactivate an Academic Program (established December 2019)
At the next Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting: The Faculty Senate Executive Committee may accept the CAC decision to approve or reject the proposal to deactivate, or send the matter back to CAC for further discussion, with specific instructions about what aspects of the report require additional consideration and a deadline for the CAC response.

If approved by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the CAC report and any rebuttal from the program will be distributed with the materials for the next Faculty Senate meeting. If approved by a majority vote of the Faculty Senate, the decision to approve or reject the proposal for deactivation will be forwarded to the President and Provost for a final decision.