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 according to the Catalog production timeline 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. Proposals for deactivation are considered no-contest if the program initiates or agrees with the deactivation. Deactivation proposals are considered contested if initiated by a party other than the program itself, and the program does not support the request by a majority vote of the department (if the program is part of a department) or program faculty (if the program is free-standing).

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; graduate programs also require a letter from the Graduate College 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 Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success. Upon successful review by the Provost, proposals will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee (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. In the event that continuation of deactivated status is not approved, a program can opt to initiate a reactivation or termination process.

No-Contest Deactivation Requests: In the case where the program initiates and/or agrees with a request for deactivation, a deactivation proposal can be put forth by the chair/program director in the form of a memo. The 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 request. 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.

Following approval according to college/school-level procedures (e.g. department/program, unit curriculum committee, and dean's office; unit faculty in some units), proposals should be submitted to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success. Graduate programs also require a support letter from the Graduate College Executive Committee and Dean. Upon successful review by the Provost's office, proposals will be sent to the CAC for review and approval. Once received, proposals will be circulated for a minimum of 30 days prior to a vote by the CAC. As noted above, deactivation of a program also requires a vote of approval by the Faculty Senate; deactivations are shared with the Board of Trustees, but do not require Board of Trustee approval. See the Timeline for Policy & Proposal Review Process available here for further details.

Contested Deactivations: A contested deactivation process should be initiated *only after other possible avenues for resolution have been explored* including, but not limited to program changes, partnerships with other programs/departments, and compromises that would allow a no-contest deactivation. Proposals for contested deactivations must be prepared using the guidelines below. Proposals should address all questions/items, and data should be provided as support wherever relevant.

Deactivation proposals must be reviewed at the college/school level prior to submission in accordance with college/school procedures (e.g. department, unit curriculum committee, and dean's office; unit faculty in some units). Graduate programs also require a review by the Graduate College Executive Committee and Dean. At each level of review, the head of the relevant voting body should submit a letter in support of the deactivation, or a letter that summarizes the reasons for not approving the deactivation including any additional information relevant to review of the termination by the CAC (e.g. impacts of termination not included in the proposal). Once college/school-level review of a proposal is complete, and review by the Graduate College for graduate programs, proposals should be submitted to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success. The review process and timeline are described in detail following the proposal requirements. Incomplete proposals will be returned with a request for the missing information; the timeline will not begin until a proposal is considered complete by both the Provost's office and the Chair of the CAC. *Proposers should carefully review the timeline below and plan accordingly*. When initiating a contested deactivation, proposers and those contesting the deactivation should be prepared to respond promptly to Provost and CAC subcommittee requests for additional information or materials in order to avoid preventable delays in the process.

The role of the CAC in contested deactivation is to evaluate the request at a curricular level only; *the outcome of the contested deactivation process is therefore a recommendation solely regarding the curricular viability and quality of the program, not the financial feasibility of maintaining the program*. Data related to program efficiency and resource use provides valuable context in that resources are necessary to support program quality, but financial concerns are not a factor in the CAC's evaluation.

Unless a hiatus in operation is explicitly acceptable to the program faculty (as reflected in a majority vote), the Dean, and the Provost, a program will operate as normal during the deactivation review process; *a deactivation will not be considered finalized until voted on by the Faculty Senate*. If a program is deactivated, students in the program at the time of deactivation will be given the opportunity to complete the program within a reasonable timeframe*.

Proposal to Deactivate an Academic Program (established Dec. 2019; revisions approved by the Senate Dec. 2020)

<u>Guidelines for Contested Deactivation Proposals</u>

I. Abstract

A one-page summary of the essential information from each of the sections below. Please submit this abstract both as an introduction to the proposal and as a separate document; proposals will not be considered complete without the abstract.

II. Rationale for Deactivation and Summary of Communications with the Program

  A. Clearly describe the reasons for requesting deactivation of the program at this time, including reasons why other options such as partnership with another unit/program are not appropriate.

  B. Summarize all communications with the program regarding the requested deactivation, including the details indicated below. Include all written communications (e.g. emails, memos) in an appendix to the deactivation request.
- individuals involved and roles/positions
- primary points of discussion
- any compromises offered by either party
- outcome(s) of the communication

  C. Describe the specific steps taken to reach an agreement between the proposal initiator and the program faculty.

III. Program History

  A. When was the program initiated?

  B. Have there been any significant changes, including name changes, since the time of initiation? If so, provide a summary of these changes.

IV. Program Quality and Internal Demand

Address all questions outlined below, providing relevant data as support.

  A. What are the current learning objectives of the program? For programs that require formal assessment (i.e. degree programs), provide evidence obtained through the assessment process to indicate how well students are meeting the stated learning objectives.

  B. Were any concerns related to program quality raised during the most recent assessment of the program through the Academic Program Review process, or for externally accredited programs, in the most recent accreditation review? Concerns may include whether program staffing was sufficient to maintain quality and/or whether the curriculum reflects expectations within the field.

  C. Are courses required for the program offered on a regular and consistent basis? For graduate programs, are sufficient courses at the 6000-level or above offered to maintain program quality?

  D. For programs that include a required, mentored component (e.g. research project; dissertation/thesis; internship; practicum), is there sufficient support and oversight of students?

  E. Provide enrollment data for the past 10 years or lifetime of program, whichever is shorter. How do the trends compare to enrollment in similar programs nation-wide?

  F. Are there any concerns related to advising of students in the program?

  G. Have students in the program raised any concerns related to the quality of their educational experiences?

V. External Demand and Societal Needs

A. Is there limited or decreasing demand regionally and/or nationally for individuals with the knowledge/skills of graduates of the program? Provide relevant evidence such as employment trends, placement of graduates, etc.

B. Is the program not providing graduates with the skills/knowledge necessary to be successful following graduation from UVM? If so, have potential changes to remedy the situation been discussed?

VI. Contribution to Missions and Long-Range Plans

A. Is the program misaligned with current university-level missions, mission as a land-grant university, strategic priorities, vision, and/or academic goals (e.g. university-wide curricular requirements)? If so, explain how; if not, explain the effects of deactivating the program on the ability to achieve the current university-level missions, strategic priorities, and academic goals.

B. Is the program misaligned with current college/school-level missions, strategic priorities, vision, and/or academic goals? If so, explain how; if not, explain the effects of deactivating the program on the ability to achieve the current university-level missions, strategic priorities, and academic goals.

C. Do UVM's peer and competitor institutions offer similar programs? Would loss of the program affect UVM's ability to attract high-quality students?

VII. Program Sustainability

A. Are there currently insufficient faculty resources to teach required courses and/or oversee other required program components (e.g. research projects; internships)? If so, have potential partnerships with other departments/units been explored?

B. Are there anticipated, voluntary losses of faculty (e.g. via retirement) that could affect the ability of program to maintain quality?

C. Include data from the Office of Institutional Research that is relevant to the financial sustainability of the program.

D. Are other programs being negatively impacted by investment resources in the program? If so, provide specific evidence.

VIII. Impact of Deactivation

A. What are the potential impacts of deactivation on any closely associated programs at UVM (e.g. a minor or certificate program in the case of a request to deactivate a major)?

B. Will course offerings be affected if the program is deactivated? If so, provide:
   - a list of the courses including enrollment trends for the past six semesters
   - evidence of communication with any units/departments/programs that include the courses listed above in their required and/or elective courses

C. Are the enrollments in other programs and/or courses outside the program being considered for deactivation likely to be affected? Include evidence of communication with any potentially affected units/departments/programs.

D. Would deactivation of the program affect research projects of any faculty outside the program (e.g. via loss of collaborations)?

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E. Are there any community partners that would be affected by deactivation (e.g. service learning projects; practicums; internships)? If so, provide evidence of communication with the community partners, including offers to maintain those partnerships in new administrative locations.

F. How would deactivation affect the responsibilities and roles of faculty involved the program?

G. Provide a detailed teachout plan for accommodating program completion for all students currently enrolled in the program should it be deactivated.

Process and Timeline for Contested Deactivations

As noted previously, completed proposals should be submitted to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success. If the Provost determines that the proposal is complete and a reasonable case has been made for deactivating the program, the Provost will forward the proposal to the Faculty Senate with a request for review by the CAC. The Provost has **two weeks (14 days)** to make a decision.

The proposal abstract will then be circulated via email to all faculty, academic deans, and department chairs with a link to a survey to submit feedback/comments; the survey will be available for **30 days**. The full proposal will be made available on the Faculty Senate webpage.

At the time of circulation, a subcommittee consisting of two CAC members who are *not* part of the home unit (college/school) of the program will be appointed to review the proposal. All feedback collected during the public comment period will be made available to the CAC subcommittee. During their review, the subcommittee may ask the proposers to respond to specific comments. Additionally, the subcommittee will meet with the authors of the proposal, the dean of the responsible unit, and program faculty, and may request additional information as part of their review. Upon completion of their review, the subcommittee will write a report summarizing any additional information gathered during the review process, make a recommendation to support or reject the deactivation proposal, and provide rationale to explain their position.

The full **CAC will discuss and vote on the subcommittee's report at the meeting following the close of the 30 day comment period, unless significant issues arise that require additional time for the CAC subcommittee to complete its review**. CAC members will be provided with the full proposal along with the subcommittee's report as part of the meeting materials. The CAC will vote to support or reject the proposal for deactivation.

Following the meeting, the Chair of the CAC will write a memo that includes the CAC decision and a brief summary of the rationale for the decision. The memo and the CAC subcommittee's report will be sent to the Faculty Senate President and the director/department chair of the program **within 5 days** of the CAC vote. A copy of the memo will be sent to the Provost for information purposes only.

After receiving the memo, the program has **30 days** to submit a written rebuttal to the Faculty Senate President; the program can also choose not to submit a rebuttal.

The CAC memo and rebuttal (if submitted) will be **considered by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) at their next meeting**. The FSEC may accept the CAC position 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 additional consideration is requested, the FSEC will consider it at their next meeting.

Once accepted by the FSEC, the deactivation will be placed on the agenda for a vote the **next Faculty Senate meeting**. Materials including the CAC memo, rebuttal submitted by the program if any, and any other information deemed relevant by the FSEC will be **sent to all Faculty Senators immediately** to allow sufficient time for consideration prior to the Faculty Senate meeting.

Results of the Faculty Senate vote will be communicated as advisory to the President and Provost **the day after the Faculty Senate meeting**.