

CSU BAKERSFIELD POLICY ON DISCONTINUANCE OF ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAMS

The following policy statement describes the procedures and requirements under which an academic degree program can be considered for discontinuance at California State University, Bakersfield. Program discontinuance is a seldom used but important component to the long-range planning of the University. It affords the University a deliberate process of program evaluation, and when done well, produces substantial consensus regarding the future direction of the department, school and/or university. Program discontinuance is not an appropriate procedure for addressing short-term financial crises or personnel problems. It is an appropriate process for evaluating the relevance and vitality of specific programs where substantial doubts exist as to the program's future viability and responsiveness. Normally, these doubts will be raised first by the faculty directly responsible for the program or will arise out of the normal program review process.

Six criteria govern decisions regarding discontinuance of an existing academic degree program. In each instance, strategies to strengthen or modify the program shall receive first and serious consideration as alternatives to discontinuance.

- (1) The overall quality of a program is an essential factor in decision making. There are many forms of supporting evidence that lead to conclusions regarding overall quality. For example, evidence of excellence in teaching, academic program reviews, accrediting agency reports, reputation within the discipline (including published surveys) and reputation across the campus, evidence of faculty and student scholarship, timeliness of the curriculum, currency of the faculty, and efforts to mentor and involve students in intellectual and creative pursuits attest to qualitative achievements.
- (2) Centrality of a program to the University is another consideration. This criterion basically addresses whether the University might fulfill its mission were this program to be eliminated.
- (3) Need is an important consideration. Both internal and external factors determine need. Internal considerations are related to the University's mission. It is the mission of California State University, Bakersfield, to be a comprehensive university which offers a variety of degree programs in the liberal arts and professions. Also, the instructional contributions of a degree program to other programs are important. External factors include the needs of our regional population, the clientele we serve, and to some extent, current student demand.
- (4) Diversity is an important criterion when considering program discontinuance. Faculty, students, and a curriculum which reflects diversity contribute to our ability to create this environment and better model a changing population.

the President. If within 14 calendar days of receipt of the letter requesting program discontinuance at least any one of those parties has objected to discontinuance, then the following procedures must be followed before a recommendation for program discontinuance can be made to the President.

- (2) an analysis of the cost and resource generation, over time, of the program;
- (3) study of enrollment trends over the past ten years, present enrollment in the program, and projected future enrollment;
- (4) consideration of alternatives that might increase the quality and/or student enrollment in the program, as needed;
- (5) consideration of alternatives for providing additional financial support for the program, as needed,
- (6) assessment of specific community needs served by the program;
- (7) assessment of the favorable and unfavorable impact that discontinuance of the program would have on other degree programs, other campus activities, and the curricular priorities and mission of the University;
- (8) study of the possible impact of program termination on faculty in that program and evaluation of possible on-campus faculty transfers which might occur, based on faculty skills, training, and desire as well as campus need; and
- (9) consideration of the impact discontinuance of the program would have on students presently enrolled.

A maximum of 45 calendar days will normally be allowed for the work of the Special Review Committee. Upon completion of its review, the Special Review Committee shall make a written report and recommendation to the Senate Executive Committee and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This report must include the opportunity for minority reports from the Special Review Committee. The Senate Executive Committee shall forward the report for review by the Academic Affairs Committee and the Budget and Planning Committee. The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall forward the report to the appropriate Dean(s) and the affected department for review.

A maximum of 30 calendar days will be allowed for review of and rebuttal to the written report by the committees, Dean(s) and affected department. A copy of this report and any written rebuttals or statements should then be forwarded to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate and the Vice President for Academic Affairs for final review. The Academic Senate normally will make its recommendation to the President regarding the program discontinuance no later than 60 days after receiving the recommendation of the Special Review Committee.

Normally, an academic program shall continue to serve its current students for at least three full quarters following the official announcement of program discontinuance by the President. During this transition period, course offerings should be designed to assist students in the program to complete the program requirements.

Notice that the program has been discontinued will be sent to all advisors, units, and agencies involved in advising or providing information regarding academic programs on this campus.

TIMELINE FOR PROGRAM DISCONTINUATION

- I. Letter received by the Vice President for Academic Affairs requesting degree program discontinuation.

14 Calendar Days* After Receipt of Letter

- IIA. If no party as listed above has objected in writing to the proposed discontinuation, a recommendation for discontinuation will be sent to the President.
- IIB. If any party as listed above has objected in writing to the proposed discontinuation, the procedures for program discontinuation as outlined in this document must be initiated.

Within 14 Calendar Days After Receipt of Written Objection

- III. Special Review Committee must be appointed with procedures outlined above.

Within 14 Calendar Days Advance Public Notice

- IV. An open forum must be held in which the University community at large can express their views.

Within 45 Calendar Days After Appointment of Special Review Committee

- V. Special Review Committee must submit its completed report and recommendation to the Senate Executive Committee and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Within 30 Calendar Days After Receipt of Special Review Committee Report

- VI. All reviews of rebuttals to, and general statements regarding the Special Review Committee report must have been submitted in writing to the Senate Executive Committee and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.