

Chapter Six: Procedures Governing Academic Program Reviews, Additions, Relocations, Expansions, and Eliminations

6.1 Overview and Objectives

6.1.1 This chapter summarizes policies and procedures governing academic program reviews and changes, including: (1) course changes, (2) addition of new programs, (3) expansion or relocation of existing programs, and (4) program reviews.

6.1.2 The University's official catalogs and website list authorized courses of study.

6.1.3 Definitions

An *academic program* is defined as any one of the following:

- a. A major or minor in undergraduate study
- b. A track (an emphasis in a degree program)
- c. A degree or credential (requiring a systematic, usually sequential, grouping of courses)
- d. A division, department, school, or college of the University

Discontinuance. The termination or closing of a program, either by a phasing-out process or all at once.

Reduction. Diminishing the scope of a program while continuing to offer some elements of it. This could include reducing the number of courses offered or the frequency of offerings within a program.

6.2 Procedures for Adding or Deleting Courses

6.2.1 Adding or deleting courses from the University Catalog or substantially altering the content of existing courses must follow the adopted procedures of each college. Experimental courses may be offered under __55 numbers, with the approval of the division, school, or college.

6.3 New Academic Programs

6.3.1 Procedures for Approval of New Academic Programs

a. Minors and New Tracks. Minors and new tracks do not require further approval beyond approval by the faculty of the affected college or school.

b. Majors in Arts & Sciences. After college faculty approval of a new major, the dean forwards the curriculum proposal and business plan to the Office of Academic Affairs for approval by the Provost and for recommendation to the President and Board of Trustees.

c. New Degrees. A new degree may be proposed by the dean, director, provost, or college faculty. After review and approval of the detailed curriculum proposal and

business plan (see Appendix) by the faculty of that college, further review and approval occurs in the following sequence:

- Curriculum and Standards Committee (curriculum proposal)
- University Faculty Senate (academic issues only) after receipt of report from Curriculum and Standards Committee
- Managers' Council (business plan; for input only)
- Deans and Directors, Provost, and President (curriculum proposal and business plan)
- President's Cabinet (business plan)
- University Council (curriculum proposal and business plan)
- University Faculty Senate (curriculum proposal and business plan)
- President transmits to Board of Trustees for final review and approval (curriculum proposal and business plan)

After review of the academic issues by the University Faculty Senate, there may be concurrent presentations to the next four groups. The "academic issues" to be considered by the University Curriculum Committee and the University Faculty Senate include primarily the academic rigor and suitability of the proposed curriculum, the relationship of the proposed academic program to other academic programs in the University, and the consistency of the proposed new program with the academic philosophy and academic mission of the University.

6.4 Substantial Expansion or Relocation of Existing Academic Programs

Substantial expansion of the size of a program or relocation of all or most of a program requires approval of the curriculum proposal and business plan by the college faculty, followed by review by the deans and directors, with final approval by the Provost. Usually, such proposals are part of an adopted strategic plan.

6.5 Academic Program Review

6.5.1 Types of Academic Program Review

a. Routine Reviews. Routine reviews are defined as the periodic assessment of programs for quality and for relevance to the needs of students and to the broader community that we serve. Routine reviews are a continuing responsibility of the faculty, the deans and directors, and the Provost. Reviews may be initiated by formal action of the Provost, the academic units themselves, or as required by external entities, such as accreditation agencies. Students may request reviews through their college curriculum committees.

All academic programs should undergo regular, systematic review as a normal component of their activities. Under normal circumstances, ensuring that reviews occur is part of the regular duties of the deans and directors. The results of routine reviews should be provided on a timely basis to the Provost.

Routine reviews may lead to no major change, to expansion, to relocation, to reduction, or to discontinuance of programs. Proposals for substantial program expansion or relocation would be governed by procedures outlined in 6.4. Proposals for program reduction or elimination would be governed by procedures outlined in 6.5.2.

b. Reviews Based on Fiscal Considerations. The Provost initiates reviews based on fiscal considerations. At any time, any component group of the University may recommend to the Provost, in writing, undertaking a review based on fiscal considerations.

The Provost, after conferring with the Chair of the University Faculty, will give:

- reasons for the program review
- specific charges, including scope of the review
- calendar deadlines of the review

Fiscal considerations may include financial opportunities and may lead to proposals for substantial program expansion or relocation, which would be governed by procedures outlined in 6.4. Fiscal considerations may also include financial constraints or financial exigency. Such reviews may lead to proposals for program reduction or termination, which would be governed by procedures outlined in 6.5.2.

In order for a review to be the result of financial constraints, there must be demonstrable serious financial issues because of chronic underenrollment of students or because of the inherent structure of a given program. The President and Provost decide on the existence of financial constraints.

If the review were the result of financial exigency, then superimposed on the procedures in 6.5.2 would be the following:

1. The Board of Trustees may declare a financial exigency following adequate on-campus discussion that shall include the following steps: The President will set forth the circumstances and will establish a schedule to complete on-campus discussions. After conferring with the Provost, the University Council, and the University Faculty Senate Chair, the President will assign the mode of participation for each affected campus governance unit.
2. After the Board of Trustees has reviewed the results of the on-campus discussion and has declared financial exigency, the University Council will consider the financial status of the University and will determine that all feasible alternatives to termination of tenured, tenure-track, extended-term-track, and extended-term faculty members have been pursued before recommending termination or reduction of one or more academic programs. The retention of viable academic programs must be the primary goal, and it must be demonstrated to the University Faculty that the faculty is not bearing an undue proportion of necessary economies.
3. See 4.5.3.b and 4.5.3.d. for faculty termination procedures.

6.5.2 Procedural Guidelines for Reviews Based on Fiscal Considerations (see 6.5.1.b) or Based on Routine Reviews (see 6.5.1.a)

a. The review process will begin within the affected college, in accord with that college's adopted governance guidelines, as approved by the University Council. If a program does not fall within one of the colleges, the review will begin with a special task force appointed by the Provost.

- b.** Supporting evidence, recommendations, and proposed actions must be carefully evaluated by the college curriculum committee (CASC in the case of Arts & Sciences) or by the special task force. In order to assess the effects of proposed actions on the total educational program, affected persons, departments, or divisions must be afforded the opportunity to submit written testimony to the curriculum committee or to the task force.
- c.** Upon completing the review within the college, if there is a recommendation to decrease personnel, the dean or director may request that the college personnel committee (CASC in the case of Arts & Sciences) begin deliberations on how it would accommodate the proposed reductions of faculty or administrative positions (see 4.5.3.d).
- d.** Recommendations from the college or task force will be conveyed to the University Council for action when the review includes a recommendation to terminate a program or to reduce a program involving more than one tenured, tenure-track, extended-term-track, or extended-term faculty position. When the reduction of one faculty position results in the termination of a program, that reduction will go to the University Council for review, as specified in 6.5.2.e.
- e.** The University Council is responsible for developing appropriate policy regarding program review. Council action is required to terminate programs or to reduce programs where more than one tenured, tenure-track, extended-term-track, or extended-term position would be eliminated. The Council does not engage in discussions of specific persons who might be affected by program review decisions. The University Personnel Committee is responsible for recommending appropriate personnel policies to the University Council involving reduction or discontinuance of programs.

Special conditions apply when the program review is the result of financial exigency (see 4.5.3.b and 6.5.1.b).

- f.** During the Council's deliberations, the colleges, the University Personnel Committee, and any other governance unit will be given the opportunity to convey their opinions in writing to the Council, which has the option of holding a hearing, if desired.
- g.** The University Council refers its action, if any, to the University Faculty if the action is deemed to be a major policy decision. Otherwise, the action is referred directly to the President for final action. For major policy decisions, the President will report the outcome of the review process, with or without recommendation, to the Board of Trustees for final action.
- h.** Immediately following action by the University Council (or the University Faculty in major policy cases) to reduce or to terminate a program, leading to a reduction of more than one tenured, tenure-track, extended-term-track, or extended-term faculty positions, the University Personnel Committee shall address the proposed changes under the provisions of Chapter 4.5. The Chair of the University Personnel Committee will work closely with the Provost and the appropriate dean or director to assure that procedures used in recommending specific personnel actions are carefully followed. After receiving recommendations from the Provost and dean or director, the University Personnel

Committee will recommend to the President the names of faculty members whose contracts should be altered, reduced to part-time, or terminated (see Chapter 4.5).

i. In the event of program elimination, currently enrolled students will be allowed to finish their degrees in a timely manner with minimum amount of disruption. Efforts should be made to assist students in transferring to similar programs.