

Memorandum of Administrative Policy Interim Program Discontinuance Policy

Area: Academic Affairs

Section: Faculty Curriculum and Instruction

Number: 07.A.02 AP

Purpose

This document defines the policy and procedures for voluntarily discontinuing all or part of an academic program. UHCL is committed to maintaining robust, high-quality academic programs that meet the needs of the region and the state. Program discontinuance decisions must be made in a reasoned manner that minimizes disruption to the university and to the majority of its programs and stakeholders. The process should reflect the university's commitment to the well-being and interests of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, recognizing that we are a community with shared responsibilities.

This policy does not apply to mandatory closures required by SACSCOC, THECB, the UH System, and/or other appropriate state agencies.

This policy does not apply to the retrenchment of a program.

Definitions

1. Academic program is defined as a set of credit-bearing courses that lead to a degree on a transcript. Academic programs are subject to program review and are monitored by regulatory and accrediting agencies such as SACSCOC, THECB, and the UH System. The THECB maintains an inventory of all academic programs at Texas public institutions and

ensures that they meet established criteria. Similarly, significant changes in academic programs, such as closures and changes in modes of delivery, must be pre-approved by SACSCOC.

2. “Part of a program” and “partial,” when referring to a discontinuance, refer to minors, concentrations, certificates, and modalities (e.g., distance education).
3. “Program closure” is defined as the date when no new students will be admitted into the program.

Process for Full or Partial Program Discontinuance

Consideration for program discontinuance will be similar to those for initiation of new programs. In addition, the final recommendation for discontinuance must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Structure of a Discontinuance Proposal
 - a. **Program Review.** The effectiveness in meeting goals and objectives, the accreditation status, and the contributions to the general education of students.
 - b. **Closure Impacts and Remediation.** The impact of closure on faculty, staff, and university enrollment, as well as mechanisms to permit enrolled students to complete their degree.
 - c. **University Strategic Plan Impact.** The impact of closure in correspondence with the university mission statement and at least two of the three Ts of the strategic plan.
 - d. **Enrollment Data.** A three-year history of student enrollment and a projection of future student enrollment.

- e. **Supply and Demand Analysis.** The current or expected regional and/or statewide demand for graduates, as well as the existence of similar programs or parts of programs within Texas.
- f. **Profit Statement.** A three-year history of the cost and return on investment for the university.

2. Initiation of a Discontinuance

- a. A request for discontinuation of all or part of a program may be initiated at any time by the following:
 - i. A majority of the tenured and tenure-track faculty in the affected department, in consultation with their dean.
 - ii. The dean of the college in which the program is housed, in consultation with department and program faculty.
 - iii. The Provost, in consultation with the dean and program and department faculty.
- b. Proposals must be submitted to the Provost.

3. Review of a Discontinuance Proposal

- a. **College Level Review.** Once a proposal is initiated, the Curriculum Committee of the affected college has two weeks to review the discontinuance proposal with the faculty of the affected department and either concur or oppose, and may include suggestions for program modification or improvement. The committee will forward its recommendation to the Dean. The Dean will have two weeks to concur or oppose

and will then notify the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (FSCC) of both positions.

- b. **Faculty Senate Review.** The FSCC will then have two weeks to review all documentation, consulting with the appropriate dean and college curriculum committee for input and clarification and will then forward its recommendation to the Provost.
- c. **Provost.** The Provost, in consultation with the President, will make the final decision regarding the discontinuance of the proposed program and will share this decision with all stakeholders.
- d. **Delays.** In case of university closures, adjustments will be made to the timelines. Additionally, unless the next level of review grants an extension, ignored proposals will be considered forwarded without comment at the deadline.

4. Execution of a Discontinuance Proposal

- a. **Notification Process.** College advisors will contact each student by email and regular mail to announce the closing of the program and to indicate when the remaining courses should be taken.
- b. **Teach-Out Plan.** Faculty in the program, working with their department chair and dean, will create a teach-out plan for each student in the discontinued program. They will also develop a communication plan for keeping students updated throughout the teach-out process.
- c. **Advising.** Students of the discontinued program will have continuous support throughout the teach-out period. Academic advisors will assist students in

- navigating their options and developing individualized plans to ensure successful completion. Students will also be informed of additional support services (e.g., tutoring, counseling).
- d. **Completion Timeline.** Students will be provided with a clear timeline outlining the steps needed to complete their program requirements. This timeline will include how and when courses will be offered (e.g., online, hybrid, in-person) and will consider the academic needs of students. The institution will explore alternative pathways such as hybrid or online courses, course substitutions, transfer to similar UHCL programs, or additional support to meet graduation requirements. Courses should be offered in consecutive semesters, when possible, until the last student completes the program.
 - e. **Closure.** Once the last student has completed the program, the Department Chair will inform the college Dean, who will then notify the Provost.
 - f. **Faculty Dismissal.** If program discontinuance requires faculty dismissal, UHS Board of Regents Policy 21.07 will guide the process. Non-reappointments will follow SAM 06.A.09. Where consistent with institutional academic needs, preference will be given to tenured faculty of higher rank and to more senior faculty within the same rank.

Revision Log

Revision Number: 1

- Approval Date: 12/1996
- Description of changes: Initial Edition

Revision Number: 2

- Approval Date: 03/27/2025
- Description of changes: (Interim) Revised to reflect clarity in procedures and focus solely on program discontinuance.

Approval

Approved by:

/Dr. Christopher Maynard/

Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost

/Dr. Richard Walker/

President

March 27, 2025

Date