



ADMINISTRATIVE **PROCEDURE**

4021

DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE

POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with Title 5, Sections 51022 and 55130 and the recommendation of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, the College of the Desert (COD) Academic Senate has created procedures for program discontinuance and other actions that result in *de facto* program discontinuance. Such actions considered to be equivalent to program discontinuance include, but are not limited to, the following:

- significantly modifying a program so that in effect one program has been discontinued and a new program created
- taking actions that result in the loss of appropriate faculty, staff, and/or resources without replacement for critical courses or services for a program
- the cancelling of a critical mass of courses and/or course offerings that renders the completion of a program within the standard time frame unlikely

The purpose of these policies and procedures is not to target programs for discontinuance but to provide criteria for the decision-making process in regards to program discontinuance and its equivalents. This process is consistent with Program Review, the Strategic Educational Master Plan, and the Desert Community College District's policy to "rely primarily" on the advice of the Academic Senate in academic matters. The creation of these policies and procedures is not meant to induce pursuit for programs to discontinue.

The policies and procedures regarding program discontinuance shall take into account negative effects on students, curriculum balance, educational and budget planning, regional economic and training issues, and collective bargaining.

A Program Discontinuance study should be initiated when:

- a program falls outside the college's missions
- a program falls outside the college's master plan
- a program falls outside a department's goals and objectives
- a program duplicates a similar program offered in the community when duplication is not fiscally justified

- a program does not meet state, Title 5, or Education Code standards
- a program no longer meets the needs of the Coachella Valley

PROCESS

I. Definitions

- A. Program: An organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective(s), degree(s), certificate(s), diploma(s), or License(s); or leading to eligibility for transfer to another institution of higher education.
- B. Discipline: An individual area of study within a program for transfer or Associates Degree or certificate programs
- C. School/Department: A collection of associated disciplines and programs.

II. Initiating a Discussion on Program Discontinuance Program

- A. Discussions can be initiated by administration or the faculty of the affected program.
- B. When a Program Discontinuance study is initiated, the Academic Senate and all faculty will be notified.
- C. A Program Discontinuance Committee will be created which includes all full-time instructors in the program, at least one representative of the adjunct in the program, the Department Chair, the School Dean, Advisory Committee members, and community representatives as appropriate.
- D. The Program Discontinuance Committee of the program being considered for discontinuance will have not less than one full semester (summer and winter intersessions are not considered “full” semesters) prior to the date on which the decision will be made to do research and provide documentation of the program's relevance to COD, the community, COD affiliates, and other academic institutions.
- E. If a program under consideration has only one faculty member (full-time or part-time) or only adjunct faculty to support it, special considerations should be given to allow the faculty member(s) to complete the research and documentation.

III. Discussion Criteria

The discussion concerning any specific program considered for discontinuance must include qualitative and quantitative components. Both qualitative and quantitative indicators shall be discussed in order to have a fair and complete review leading to an informed recommendation to continue or discontinue a program.

- A. Qualitative Indicators: Qualitative indicators are based on the mission, values, and goals of COD and on access and equity for students. These include, but are not limited to the following.
- the pedagogy of the discipline
 - the development of the “whole student”
 - the relevant educational experience for each student
 - the balance of college curriculum
 - the effect of discontinuance of the program on students
 - the potential for a disproportionate impact on diversity at COD or within the community of COD alumni
 - the quality of the program and how it is perceived by students, articulating universities, local businesses and industry, and the community
 - the ability of students to complete their degrees or certificates or to transfer, including the maintenance of the catalog rights of students
 - the replication of programs and the existence (or lack of) equivalent programs or services in the Coachella Valley and other surrounding areas
- B. Quantitative Indicators: Any and/or all of the following quantitative indicators (and others applicable to specific programs) shall be reviewed to inform the discussion on program discontinuance.
- the projected demand for the program in the future
 - the persistence of students in the program
 - term-to-term persistence (significantly below the college average) of students within the program
 - enrollment trends over a sustained period of time
 - frequency of course section offerings
 - productivity in terms of FTES (actual) per FTEF ratio (instead of WSCH/FTE since it takes enrollment activity for all attendance types into consideration)
 - number of graduates and/or transfers and rate of graduation and/or transfer from the program over the past 3-5 years (where applicable)
 - when the program is being considered for termination (for example, does the consideration for program discontinuance occur during or after a decline in importance of service to those in related programs?)
 - the placement rate of students from the program in the job market and over the past 3-5 years (where applicable, if data is available)
 - the number of students completing certificates and/or associate degrees in that field over the past 3-5 years

IV. Discussion Guidelines and Results

- A. Discussion of program discontinuance must include all parties potentially affected by the decision. These include faculty, staff, administrators, students, the employing businesses and industry, and the community. Extraordinary

efforts must be employed to ensure that the student and community voice is heard.

- B. Discussion of program discontinuance will be conducted in public, open meetings for which the dates, times, and locations will be published using all means of college communications in advance.
- C. Discussions will be conducted using the best practices for meeting facilitation (including agreed-upon ground rules) and recording and publishing outcomes of discussions.
- D. Upon completing the research and documentation process, the Program Discontinuance Committee for the program being considered will present its report and recommendation to the Academic Senate.

V. Possible Outcomes of Program Discontinuance Discussion

There are three potential outcomes of the Program Discontinuance process: a program may be recommended to continue, to continue with qualification, or to discontinue.

A. Recommendation to Continue

A program will be recommended to continue when, after full and open consideration, it is decided that is in the best interest of the college, its students, and the larger community to do so. The conclusions resulting in this recommendation will be documented in writing, forwarded to the Academic Senate and forwarded to the appropriate Vice President(s) as information. No further action is required.

B. Recommendation to Continue with Qualifications

A program may be recommended to continue with qualifications. These qualifications may include specific interventions designed to improve the viability and responsiveness of the program. A specific timeline will be provided *by College Planning Council* during which these interventions will occur, and expected outcomes will be outlined in advance. All interventions and timelines will be published in writing. After the specified qualification period is complete, the program will be reviewed again.

C. Recommendation to Discontinue

A recommendation to discontinue a program will occur when, after a full and open discussion, it is concluded that the program is no longer viable.

Any recommendation for program discontinuance will include the following.

- A detailed plan and timeline for phasing out the program with the least impact to students, faculty, staff, and the community.
- Due consideration will be given to mechanisms to allow currently enrolled students to complete their programs of study.
- Students' catalog rights will be maintained and accounted for in allowing them to finish the program.
- A plan for the implementation of all requirements of collective bargaining for faculty and staff, including application of policies for reduction in force as per Faculty Association agreement.

Any recommendation for program discontinuance will be documented and signed by all full-time faculty in the program, a representative of the adjunct in the program, a member of the advisory committee if appropriate, the Department Chair, the School Dean, the appropriate Vice President, and the Superintendent/President.

VI. Superintendent/President's Response

- A. The Superintendent/President will respond in writing to a Program Discontinuance recommendation within 30 days.
- B. The Superintendent/President's response will be delivered to the Academic Senate President.
- C. If the Superintendent/President's response differs from the recommendation, the Senate will forward the response to the Program Discontinuance Committee of the program being considered.
- D. The Program Discontinuance Committee will have thirty (30) days to modify the original recommendation and return it to the Academic Senate.
- E. If the Senate approves the modification, it will forward the modified recommendation to the Superintendent/President.

References/Bibliography:

Education Code Section 78016;
Title 5, Sections 51022 and 55130;
ACCJC Accreditation Standard 2;
Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (1998). Program Discontinuance: A Faculty Perspective;
Victor Valley College Policy and Process for Program Discontinuance

Administrator: VP Instruction

Academic Senate Approval: November 10, 2011

College Planning Council Approval: November 4, 2011

Board Information: December 16, 2011

Executive Cabinet Review: October 29, 2024

College Planning Council Review/Approval: November 8, 2024

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