RESOLVED: that the Academic Senate recommend to the President approval of the attached policy document entitled “CSU Bakersfield Policy on Academic Program Moratorium and Discontinuance.”

Rationale

The AAC thoroughly reviewed the existing policy on Academic Program Discontinuance and also created a parallel policy on Academic Program Moratorium. We believe both policies will serve well in protecting the interests of all parties who might be involved in actions to initiate either Academic Program Moratorium or Academic Program Discontinuance.
CSU BAKERSFIELD POLICY ON
ACADEMIC PROGRAM MORATORIUM AND DISCONTINUANCE
May 2012

From time to time, it may become necessary for the campus to stop offering a particular program (be it a major, a minor, a concentration, or other program at either the undergraduate or graduate levels). There are a number of reasons for such an action (not specified here), but there are two general types of approach that can be taken in deciding to no longer offer a program. The first approach would be to temporarily stop offering a particular program – called a moratorium, and the second approach would be to permanently cease to offer a program – called discontinuance.

In either approach, several philosophical values are expected to undergird such decisions. First, the decision process leading up to such a decision should include consultation in line with the highest expectations of shared governance. Faculty, both in the focal programs and across the campus, should be consulted early and throughout the decision process. Additionally, students must have a clear role in the consultation process to ensure that their views are included and that the impact on current students is considered in the decision process. Second, the decision process and the actual implementation process should be completely transparent to all key stakeholders. And third, such decisions should be consistent with general campus policies.

Following are the two general processes for an academic program moratorium or academic program discontinuance.

**Moratorium: Temporary Suspension of an Academic Program**

The following process describes the procedures and requirements under which an academic program can be considered for moratorium. Academic program moratoria are serious decisions that impact students, faculty, and staff. As a result, it is anticipated that such decisions will not be taken lightly. It is also expected that the short-term nature of this decision fits within the long term academic plan for the campus, especially for the department and/or school most directly impacted. Further, once in moratorium status, the “short term” nature of the moratorium status would suggest that if a program is in a moratorium for more than five years, the program status should be reviewed by the relevant curriculum committee and either be considered for reactivation or should move to discontinuance.

**Moratorium Process**

Placing an academic program in moratorium is a decision to temporarily suspend admitting students into the program and “teaching out” the students already in the program. There may be various reasons for taking such a step, such as the need to make a significant overhaul of the program content, a significant and ongoing budget crisis, a shortage in qualified personnel to deliver the program, etc. However, the short-term nature of the moratorium should not be equated with a reduction in the rigor of the decision process.

The process is typically started by the department or entity directly involved in delivery of the targeted program; however, higher organizational units (e.g., the relevant school, University Program Review Committee, etc.) can also initiate the process. Each of these two types of process initiation is described below, with time periods referring to working days in the academic calendar.
Moratorium Initiated by the Program

A. The initiating program (hence called the initiator) shall identify the specific program to be placed on moratorium and develop a rationale for the move. The rationale should justify the move, identify the impacted parties (e.g. students, faculty, other programs that utilize courses from the targeted program, etc.), and provide a timeline and work-plan for both phasing out the current program and identifying what would be expected to reinitiate the program.

B. The initiator shall distribute the rationale widely to the university community, paying special attention to the impacted parties identified above, and submit the rationale to the appropriate curriculum committee for evaluation. The notice shall indicate that comments on the proposal are due to the relevant curriculum committee within two weeks of the date of the distribution.

C. The curriculum committee, after allowing two weeks from the date of distribution by the initiator, shall review the proposal and comments, deliberate, and make a recommendation on the proposal. This recommendation should come within two weeks of the close of the comment period and shall be sent to both the appropriate school dean and back to the initiator. The Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate shall also be informed of the recommendation.

D. The school dean and the program shall then evaluate the recommendation and make a final determination as to whether or not to move forward. This decision shall be made within two weeks of the curriculum committee’s recommendation.

E. Once a moratorium has been approved, a significant effort must be made to communicate this decision to the University community, including (but not limited to) the Associate Vice President for Academic Programs, the Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate, the Admissions and Enrollment offices, the Registrar, ASI, and all the impacted parties noted above. The key to the notification effort is to insure that students, staff, and faculty are aware of the change in program offerings and the available options.

Moratorium Initiated Outside the Program

A. An entity outside of a program may initiate a moratorium proposal, typically a school dean or the University Program Review Committee. In this case, the same type of rationale is expected, i.e., justification, identification of impacted parties, and a timeline/work-plan covering both the phase out and the re-initiation of the targeted program.

B. The initiator shall distribute the rationale widely to the university community, paying special attention to the targeted program and the other impacted parties, and shall submit the rationale to the appropriate curriculum committee. The notice shall indicate that comments on the proposal are due to the relevant curriculum committee within three weeks of the date of distribution.

C. The curriculum committee, after allowing three weeks from the date of distribution by the initiator, shall review the proposal and comments, deliberate, and make a recommendation on the proposal. This recommendation should come within two weeks of the close of the comment period and shall be sent to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate. The recommendation shall also be sent to the appropriate school dean, the targeted
program, the initiator, the Provost’s office, and the Associate Vice President for Academic Programs.

**Permanently Discontinuing an Academic Program**

Academic program discontinuance is a permanent decision when the campus determines that it no longer wishes to offer a particular academic program. If the program is a minor or a concentration, it may be reintroduced at a later date without Chancellor’s Office approval. However, if it is a degree program, CSUB will no longer be authorized by the Chancellor’s Office to offer the degree after a teach-out period. It is always possible to propose the degree again, but reinstatements are more difficult, so discontinuance should be considered permanent.

Permanent program discontinuance is not an appropriate procedure for addressing short-term financial crises or personnel problems. Instead, it is a process for evaluating the relevance and vitality of specific programs where substantial doubts exist as to the program's future viability and responsiveness to regional needs. 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.

**Discontinuing Minors and Concentrations**

These decisions are contained on the campus, with the decision sent by way of notice to the Chancellor’s Office. However, the basic process is the same as that listed below for full program discontinuance.

**Discontinuing Bachelor and Master Degree Programs**

Six criteria govern decisions regarding permanent 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 making decisions. 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 that 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 curricula that reflect diversity contribute to our ability to create this environment and better model a changing population.

5. Degree program size is a consideration. To be effective a degree program must have a sufficient number of faculty to provide a reasonable exposure to the discipline and a sufficient number of students to insure the integrity and continuity of the curriculum.

6. Cost and resource generation are appropriate criteria. In determining cost the following factors are useful: student/faculty ratio, factors that determine resource generation, program administration costs, anticipated future outlays, and a judgment about maximum utilization of resources. When appropriate, the ability to generate outside revenue can be balanced against cost factors.

**Procedures for Initiating Program Discontinuance**

For the purpose of determining whether program discontinuance is warranted, a written request for the review of an academic program may be made by any one of the following parties:

1. Chair of the degree program with the written approval of a majority of the tenured and probationary faculty in the program or, in appropriate instances, the program committee;
2. Dean of the school in which the program is housed;
3. Dean of Undergraduate Studies, but only in regard to an undergraduate program;
4. Dean of Graduate Studies, but only in regard to a graduate program;
5. Academic Senate; or

Such a request shall be submitted in writing to the:

1. Vice President for Academic Affairs;
2. Deans involved in the administration of the program;
3. Academic Senate; and
4. tenured and probationary faculty who teach in the program.

The letter making this request must clearly indicate the specific reasons for the suggested program discontinuance. If within 14 calendar days* of receipt of this letter by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, none of the individuals or parties listed in (1) through (4) above (i.e., the Vice President for Academic Affairs, any Dean involved in the administration of the program, the Academic Senate by majority vote, or any tenured or probationary faculty member who teaches in the program) has objected to the proposed discontinuance in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, a recommendation for discontinuance will be sent to 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.
Appointment of a Special Review Committee

Within 14 calendar days of receipt of a letter objecting to a proposed program discontinuance from one of the parties listed above, the Senate Executive Committee in consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall appoint a Special Review Committee to conduct a special program review focused on issues related to potential discontinuance. The committee shall consist of:

1. six tenured faculty: one selected by the faculty who teach in the affected program, three from different units within the same school as the program in question, and one from each of two schools different from that of the program in question;

2. the Dean of the school in which the program is housed, who will serve as a nonvoting member; and

3. the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate, who will serve as a non-voting member for a program included in his or her administrative responsibilities.

4. a student representative selected by ASI and appointed by the President who will serve as a voting member.

Minimum Requirements for the Special Program Review

As a minimum, this review shall include:

1. direct, personal consultation with all current full-time faculty members who have taught courses in the program within the last two academic years;

2. an opportunity for students presently enrolled in the program to provide both written and oral statements regarding the proposed program discontinuance; and

3. an open forum, announced publicly at least 14 calendar days in advance, in which the University community at large has a chance to express its views.

The review shall address the following points:

1. an evaluation of the academic quality of the program (as described under criterion on p. 3);

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.

**CSU Program Discontinuance Procedures**

If the President decides that program discontinuance is warranted, the campus will follow these procedures required by AAP-91-14 regarding review by the Chancellor of program discontinuance proposals:

1. The campus President shall inform the Chancellor of the proposed discontinuance.
2. The Chancellor will review the proposal for system-wide effects with the advice from
whatever groups he/she deems appropriate, and may request additional information from the
 campus if needed for this review.
3. The Chancellor will ordinarily provide comments on all such proposals within 30 days and
 will inform the President of any system concerns so that these may be considered in the final
decision.
4. The President will not take any administrative action leading to the de facto or official
discontinuance of an academic program before the Chancellor has commented on the
proposa l.

In the event the President's final decision is official discontinuance of an academic program, a
cut-off date shall be announced immediately beyond which no new students, including transfer
students, will be permitted to enter the program. All students currently listed by the Registrar as
participants in this program shall receive written notification of the program discontinuance no
more than 15 days after the official announcement by the President.

Plans and alternatives shall be developed to allow currently enrolled students to complete a
degree program. Students currently enrolled in the program should be given the opportunity to
provide both written and oral statements regarding the alternatives available. These alternatives
may include:

1. completion of the program requirements by a certain date in order to receive the specified
degree from this University;
2. completion of a closely related program offered by this campus;
3. completion of a similar program, if any, offered by other institutions within the California
 State University system; and
4. use of substitutions to meet this campus's requirements for the program.

The President, in consultation with appropriate administrators and faculty committees, shall
make every effort to assist in the placement of faculty members displaced by program
discontinuance in other appropriate programs or activities in the University or on other campuses
in the California State University system.

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.

II. 14 Calendar Days* After Receipt of Letter

A. If no party as listed above has objected in writing to the proposed discontinuation, a recommendation for discontinuation will be sent to the President.

B. 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.

III. Within 14 Calendar Days After Receipt of Written Objection

Special Review Committee must be appointed with procedures outlined above.

IV. Within 14 Calendar Days Advance Public Notice

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

V. Within 45 Calendar Days After Appointment of Special Review Committee

The Special Review Committee must submit its completed report and recommendation to the Senate Executive Committee and the Vice President for Academic Programs.

VI. Within 30 Calendar Days After Receipt of Special Review Committee Report

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.

VII. Within 60 Calendar Days After Receipt of Special Review Committee Report

The Academic Senate must make its recommendation to the President regarding program discontinuance.

*“Calendar days” exclude the summer break and the breaks between quarters wherever the term is used in this document.