



# Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure

**Subject:** Academic Programs Discontinued per UW Regulation 2-13: Academic Program Appointments and Teach Out Plans

**Number:**

---

## I. PURPOSE

To outline processes for transitioning academic personnel following academic program discontinuance, and procedures and conditions for teach out plans.

## II. DEFINITIONS

**Academic Program:** Degree program, department or division of instruction, school or college, interdisciplinary program or unit, or other academic program unit. Academic Program does not include academic courses.

**Fixed-Term Stream Position:** A non-tenure track position eligible for or currently with 3- or 5- year fixed-term rolling contract or an extended-term (6-year fixed term).

**Program Discontinuation:** To permanently close a program and discontinue program activities.

**Stopped Out Student:** A previously enrolled degree-seeking student who suspended enrollment for one or more fall and/or spring terms and who subsequently seeks to re-enroll.

**Teach-Out Plan:** A written plan developed by the academic unit and approved by the Provost that provides for the equitable treatment of students when their academic program has been discontinued.

**Tenure Stream Position:** A position that is either eligible for or currently with tenure.

## III. ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS FOLLOWING PROGRAM DISCONTINUANCE

The Provost shall establish an internal process and transition plan for academic personnel whose positions are discontinued and for those whose jobs are affected by the discontinuance. This process should include a review committee comprised of deans, department heads, and faculty in the terminated unit/college and in the new unit/college. Consultation with relevant academic units will be necessary to avoid any accreditation issues or unintended consequences.

The following considerations shall be addressed in the transition plan:

- The opportunity for terminated faculty to indicate interest in and provide documentation of relevant discipline expertise for consideration in open and funded positions in existing academic programs, reorganized or consolidated academic programs, or new academic programs.
- Protocol/criteria for determining discipline specific expertise required for new positions.
- Steps consistent with sections IV.C and V.C of UW Regulation 2-13 for maintaining rank and seniority when multiple equally qualified candidates are identified.
- Recommended strategies for supporting academic units, schools and colleges that have programs discontinued
- Process for transferring faculty positions to other academic programs and determining the role of these faculty members in a teach-out.
- Process for submitting recommendations to the Provost and President for a final decision.

**A. Tenure, Promotion and Fixed-Term Implications**

Program discontinuation will not impact the tenure, promotion and fixed-term rolling contract review process. Faculty who are terminated during the academic year in which a tenure, promotion or fixed-term rolling contract decision is made will receive tenure or promotion if recommended and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Academic units that receive transferred faculty members due to program discontinuance shall incorporate and apply the tenure, promotion and fixed-term rolling contract expectations from the original academic unit as the faculty members transition to the new academic unit. Academic units should establish a reasonable timeframe for full integration of new discipline specific expectations into their unit and college guidance documents.

- B. Resignation and Retirement.** In the event that a faculty position is eliminated due to a discontinuance, the faculty member may choose to resign or to take retirement in lieu of the personnel file reflecting the termination.

**IV. THE TEACH-OUT**

**A. Academic Appointments and the Teach-Out**

In accordance with UW Regulation 2-13, when program discontinuance occurs during an academic year, the university will make reasonable efforts to transfer faculty to other open and funded positions for which they are qualified and have discipline specific expertise.

A good faith effort will be made to provide faculty with the relevant expertise to meet instructional needs the opportunity to receive an academic appointment as part of the teach out plan for accommodating students currently enrolled in the terminated program. This opportunity will ensure continuance of employment for the full hiring cycle in that discipline.

At the discretion of the university, faculty with responsibilities who have expertise associated with core courses needed for program completion may be granted a limited extension, not to exceed three academic semesters, in their current tenure stream or fixed-term stream appointment at their current salary. This extension would allow for the continuation of scholarship but it may also require a redistribution of teaching load. If there are instructional needs in the faculty member's area of expertise to carry out the teach-out program beyond three academic semesters, the faculty member may be retained in a non-tenure track position at the same rank (e.g., Associate Professor, Tenured to Associate Instructional Professor).

In the event that faculty members find new positions at other institutions, early resignations will be accepted. Academic units shall have contingency plans for meeting instructional needs should a faculty member who was part of a teach-out plan tender an early resignation.

## **B. The Teach-Out Plan**

The teach-out plan shall be transparent to students, showing how students will be supported through to completion of their degree. Assurance that there is a plan in place to meet the commitment made to students who are in the program, or who are making decisions to enter the University based on the availability of the program, or students who were at one time in the program and have stopped-out is necessary.

The plan shall address how the program will be made available to students for a sufficient time to allow students in the pipeline to complete or to identify an alternative.

Enough detail should be provided in the teach-out plan to assure those reviewing the proposal that a plan to support students is in place, although the exact details may evolve as implementation proceeds. The plan should consider the needs of currently enrolled, prospective, and stopped-out students. A key feature of the teach-out plan is that it should convey how program quality will be maintained and ensured through the teach-out period for enrolled, prospective and stopped-out students.

At minimum, the teach-out plan should include:

1. A list of the specific courses that must be taught, and the sequence in which the courses must be delivered. A justification must be provided for the inclusion of elective courses.

2. A draft schedule, indicating the number of semesters required for the teach-out.
3. The number of students currently in the pipeline and credit hours needed to be completed, and a timeline/matrix for completion.
4. A completed preliminary teach-out faculty roster form that addresses instructional needs and faculty expertise.
5. Identification of possible alternative programs at the University of Wyoming students are likely to consider or may be advised into should they not make adequate progress toward completion of degree during the teach-out period.
6. A list of institutions with similar curricula that students may opt to take courses from in order to complete their program.
7. The name of a primary contact for Admissions to consult with when advising stopped out students.
8. The name of a primary contact for student services, including advising support for enrolled students.

### **C. Progress Toward Degree and Support During the Teach-Out**

In the process of discontinuing a program, every reasonable effort will be made to allow students to complete their degrees. Program or campus transfers will be made if mutually acceptable to the student and the receiving department. Advising assistance with respect to their academic program options, as well as mental health and financial aid counseling, will be available for affected students.

The department or division chairperson, in consultation with advisors and teaching faculty, shall ensure that an academic plan is developed for students that enables them to complete the curricular program requirements within the teach-out period. The teach-out period will vary by program and must be determined by the academic unit and college with approval of the Provost.

Students should expect to take a sufficient number of courses each semester to enable them to complete all requirements within the teach-out period. As the program winds down, planning must be in place for alternative program requirements to current requirements, if needed. Students who do not make adequate progress on their academic plan for the teach-out may be advised into another major. If a course required for the degree is not offered in the teach-out period, students may make arrangements, with the department's consent, to take the course at another institution and transfer the credit, or to arrange with the department to complete the requirements in some other academically appropriate fashion. Students are required to have ongoing contact with their academic advisors and mentors during the teach-out period to ensure that their academic plans are current and consistent with the projected course offerings.

#### **1. Currently enrolled students**

Students with a declared major/minor in the program must be supported with courses, advising, and other services to complete the program. The faculty should plan to continue teaching required courses or make reasonable

exceptions and course substitutions to those requirements to facilitate student completion of the requirements. In some cases, the faculty may need to adjust program requirements to maintain quality throughout the teach-out period. Such a change in curricular requirements may require approval by the school/college curriculum committee. A change in the timing of course delivery may also be necessary.

## 2. Prospective students

In accordance with requirements from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), admission of new students to a discontinued program will cease. Students who have formally signaled an interest in the program by selecting the program on the application for admission (this includes undergraduate new freshman or transfer students or graduate students) or have otherwise been in a formal advising flow preceding declaration of the program will be informed that their program of interest is not available and what other program options are available. Sufficient advance timing must be given for undergraduate programs to assure that prospective and current students are not making their college choice decisions based on a program that may become unavailable.

## 3. Stopped-out undergraduate students

Stopped-out undergraduate students will not be re-admitted to an academic program that has been suspended or discontinued. The teach-out plan must describe how stopped-out undergraduate students will be supported to find an appropriate new academic program. Those planning to suspend or discontinue an undergraduate program should consult with the Director of the Advising, Career, and Exploratory Studies Center (ACES) to assist in planning advising considerations.

## 4. Stopped-out graduate students

Graduate students in an academic program that has been suspended/eliminated, as indicated above, must be notified if contact information for the student is available, and given one semester to reapply and reenroll in their academic program. Those reapplying will be given the opportunity to complete their degree within two academic years of readmission.

# V. **SUSPENSION OF ADMISSIONS**

The Provost may suspend admissions to academic programs that have been recommended for reorganization, consolidation, reduction of discontinuance pending completion of the process outlined in Section III of UW Regulation 2-13.

## **VI. REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION**

The University will notify the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and provide provisional plans for teaching out academic programs that are being discontinued. Notifications will also be provided to licensing boards, specialized accreditors and the U.S. Department of Education.

This Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure document will be reviewed no later than one year after its approval to assess impacts and to further refine, if needed.

**Responsible Division/Unit:** Division of Academic Affairs

**Source:** UW Regulation 2-13

**Links:** <http://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies>

**Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms:** UW Regulation 2-13

**Approved:** 6/16/2021