

Discontinuation Policy for Departments or Programs

A. Application of Policy

This Policy applies to proposed department or academic program discontinuation that would result in termination of employment for faculty members who hold primary appointments in these departments or programs and who are tenured or have contracts that extend beyond the effective date of the discontinuation.

This procedure does not apply when such discontinuation is timed to occur at the expiration of the current faculty members' contracts, or when all faculty members affected by a department or academic program discontinuation retain primary appointments within continuing departments or academic programs.

B. Types of Program Discontinuations

Discontinuation of a department or program may occur for one of two reasons:

1. Academic and/or financial factors necessary for optimizing the quality of programs or operational efficiency of a particular School or College.
2. A University-wide financial exigency in which the discontinuation is part of a comprehensive plan for dealing with the situation.

C. Discontinuation in Order to Optimize Quality of Programs or Operational Efficiency of School or College

1. The Process Year:

This Policy is designed to allow adequate consultation and a decision by the President, normally within one academic year (the "Process Year"). Although all of the steps in this Policy are required in the specified order, the scheduling of the steps may be altered with permission of the appropriate Provost, i.e. the Medical Campus Provost for the Schools on the Medical Campus and the University Provost for all Schools and Colleges. In addition, the Dean may withdraw the proposal from consideration at any time.

2. Before the Process Year Begins on September 1 (CRC) or July 1 (Medical Campus):

The Dean shall consult with the appropriate Provost as soon as a department or program closure is contemplated. The Dean shall also consult with faculty members who would be affected by the discontinuation as early as possible. The Dean shall then draft a Discontinuation Proposal and circulates it among the affected faculty members for discussion and feedback. The Discontinuation Proposal shall include:

- a. a rationale for the proposed discontinuation, including a discussion of the academic and financial impact of the proposed closure on the School or College,

Discontinuation Policy for Departments or Programs
Draft of 12/6/11

- on units of the University outside the School or College, and on the University as a whole;
- b. a record of consultation with affected faculty; and
- c. a Management Plan as detailed below covering current faculty, students, and staff as well as prospective students.

3. September 30 of Process Year:

Deadline for written feedback from affected faculty members to allow revisions before the October 10 deadline for submission to the School or College faculty.

4. October of Process Year:

Faculty members of the School or College receive the Discontinuation Proposal by October 10. The Dean should meet with the School or College faculty at least once in October to discuss the Proposal. The School or College faculty members may provide written feedback to the Dean or to the Chair of the University Council Committee on Curriculum and Degrees (UCCCD). The UCCCD chair will provide feedback to the Dean after redacting a faculty member's identifying information. All written comments submitted to the Dean become part of the material that is presented to the UCCCD for its consideration.

5. November and December of Process Year:

- a. the Dean presents the proposal and any written comments to the UCCCD for discussion and comment;
- b. the Dean presents the Proposal to the Faculty Council and the Council of Deans for discussion and comment;
- c. the UCCCD Chair presents the Proposal to the Faculty Council for discussion and comment; and
- d. faculty members whose jobs would be eliminated by the proposed discontinuation have the opportunity to address the Faculty Council or a subset of the Council.

6. Spring Term of Process Year:

The Dean presents the proposal at the first regularly scheduled University Council meeting of the Spring term. Before the end of the Spring term, the University Council will vote on whether to recommend approval of the Proposal to the President. The President will then decide whether to approve the Proposal and discontinue the academic program or department.

7. Post Continuation Employment:

If, after the above process is completed, the President decides to discontinue a department or academic program, employment for department or program faculty members with continuing appointment or tenure will be continued for at least one academic year following the President's decision.

8. Management Plan:

A discontinuation proposal must include a management plan that addresses the following:

Discontinuation Policy for Departments or Programs

Draft of 12/6/11

- a. Faculty: A plan must be developed for those faculty members whose tenure will be lost if a program is discontinued, as well as for faculty members whose contracts extend beyond the terminal year after program discontinuation. This plan should include assistance with finding another academic position within Boston University, or at another institution, or a transition to retirement. Although the Faculty Handbook cannot specify the form such assistance should take or guarantee a successful outcome, the Dean and the affected faculty members should begin this effort early in the process.
- b. Current Students: The accommodation of current students must be part of the management plan. The plan should provide appropriate time constraints for completion of the program of study, or for assisting students to transfer to another appropriate department or program within the University or elsewhere.
- c. Staff: Plans for treatment of current staff must be coordinated with Human Resources in accordance with existing University policies governing termination of staff employment in connection with position elimination.
- d. Prospective Students: Once the Proposal has been sent to the faculty of the S/C, potential applicants to the department or program must be informed that a Discontinuation Proposal has been made, and that admission to the department or program is closed pending the outcome of the review process. The time and manner of providing that information will vary and must be part of the Dean's Proposal.

D. Discontinuation Due to University-Wide Financial Exigency

If the program discontinuation is part of a University-wide financial exigency in which the discontinuation is part of a comprehensive plan for dealing with the situation, the President, Provost, and/or Dean shall notify the interested parties, including affected faculty members, the UCCCD, and the Faculty Council, as soon as possible. In addition, to the extent possible the decision shall address the considerations relating to current faculty, students, and staff, as well as prospective students as described in the Management Plan.