



Procedure Summary

This procedure is established to provide specific guidelines for identifying programs that fail to meet the institution's standards described below and adjudicate each program's continuation or termination.

Procedure

1. INSTITUTIONAL STANDARDS FOR IDENTIFYING LOW-PRODUCING PROGRAMS

1.1. Consistent with guidelines from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), "low-producing" degree programs are defined as:

1.1.1. for bachelor's degree programs, an average of less than five degrees awarded per academic year, to total fewer than 25 degrees awarded during a five-year period;

1.1.2. for master's degrees programs, an average of less than three degrees awarded per academic year, to total fewer than 15 degrees awarded during a five-year period; and

1.1.3. for doctoral and special professional degree programs, an average of less than two degrees awarded per academic year, to total fewer than 10 degrees awarded during a five-year period.

1.2. Informed by guidelines from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and characteristics of the university, the institution defines "low-producing" minors and certificates as:

1.2.1. for minors, an average of less than 2 minors completed per academic year, to total fewer than 10 minors completed during a five-year period;

1.2.2. for undergraduate certificates, an average of less than 2 certificates completed per academic year, to total fewer than 6 certificates completed during a three-year period; and

- 1.2.3. for graduate certificates, an average of less than 2 certificates completed per academic year, to total fewer than 6 certificates completed during a three-year period.

2. PROCESS FOR REVIEW AND ADJUDICATION

2.1. By October 1 of each year, the Office of the Provost will receive a report of low-producing degree programs, minors, and certificates based on data from the preceding academic year. The report will also identify and provide enrollment data for any academic programs who had fewer completers in the preceding year than the required yearly average specified in section 1 above (i.e., at risk for being low producing). The Provost will notify the Dean(s) responsible for all listed programs of the need to gather input for a recommended course of action.

2.1.1. Although programs identified in the section below as *exempt* are not typically expected to complete the review process, if those programs have an annual completion rate that puts them at risk for being low producing, Deans (in consultation with the Provost) may require the programs to undergo the formal review process early or to take remedial actions to attract or retain more students to avoid meeting the definition of low producing in the near future.

2.2. Deans are responsible for soliciting input from all full-time faculty who teach in the identified programs and developing a recommended course of action and associated justification.

2.2.1. Recommended courses of action may include:

2.2.1.1. Teach out: Termination of the program while facilitating completion for those already enrolled in the program.

2.2.1.2. Consolidation: Combining a low-producing program with a similar program.

2.2.1.3. Retain: Justification for keeping a low-producing program should provide, at a minimum:

- (a) a data-informed rationale indicating why the program would not be low-producing in the future; and/or
- (b) an appeal to a unique need associated with the institution's mission and/or strategic plan that is met by the program; and/or
- (c) a cost-benefit analysis that indicates expenses and revenue unique to the program; and/or
- (d) other considerations (e.g., national renown, productivity level common for discipline, it is in service to other academic programs, etc.).

2.2.2. For each program identified as low producing, the Dean will provide a recommended course of action and associated justification to the chair of the Curriculum Council by November 1.

2.2.3. Then Dean will communicate their recommendation to all faculty in the impacted program(s).

2.3. The Curriculum Council, a University-level committee with faculty representation from all three colleges, will review these materials to provide an independent advisory evaluation to the Provost by December 1.

2.4. The Provost will make the final determination of the appropriate course of action to address a low-producing program.

2.4.1. For bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs that have met the definition of low producing for three consecutive years, the THECB will alert System that a program is low-producing and will make a recommendation regarding closure or consolidation of the program. The System will then determine if the program will be closed, consolidated, or kept.

3. EXEMPTION FOR NEW PROGRAMS

3.1. New degree programs and minors are exempt from the low-producing review for the first five years of operation. The first review to determine whether a program is low producing is done in Year 11, as the first five years are exempt, and the LPP review requires five consecutive years of data regarding the number of program graduates.

3.2. New certificates are exempt from the low-producing review for the first three years of operation. The first review to determine whether a certificate program is low producing is done in Year 7, as the first three years are exempt, and the LPP review requires three consecutive years of data regarding the number of program completers.

4. REQUIRED REPORTS

4.1. In the spring of odd-numbered years The Office of the Provost shall submit a biennial report of the coordinating board's review and the academic institution's review to the chancellor and system board as referenced in System Policy 11.09 *Low-Producing Academic Programs*.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy [11.09 Low-Producing Academic Programs](#)

[19 Tex. Admin. Code Ch. 4, Subch. R, Review of Low-Producing Degree Programs](#)

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