

**AP 2021 PROGRAM VIABILITY AND DISCONTINUANCE**

**References:**

Education Code Section 78016;  
Title 5 Sections 51022 and 55130;  
ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A.15

Riverside Community College District is committed to support programs and classes that fulfill the goals of the Mission Statement as these are elaborated in the Educational Master Plan. Following Title 5, section 55000, "Program" is herein defined as an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, e.g., a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license or transfer to another institution of higher education. Only programs with low or declining enrollment, decreasing demand for service or clear obsolescence shall be considered for discontinuance. For a program's discontinuance, primary consideration will be given to the service the program provides to the college and the community. Budget considerations should not be the primary consideration.

- A. A Program may be considered for discontinuance only if one or more of the following criteria are fulfilled:
1. The goals and objectives of the Program are no longer appropriate to the Mission of California Community Colleges, the college's mission or Educational Master Plan, and/or congruent with the institutional Strategic Plan of the District.
  2. The Program curriculum no longer aligns with university transfer majors or, General Education requirements of the Program no longer meet industry needs and lack demand in the current job market and the Program's field is not considered an emerging industry or career path.
  3. The Program does not meet curriculum standards as defined by Title 5 section 55100.
  4. There are insufficient resources to realistically support the Program at a sufficient level of quality and the Program has experienced either consistent low enrollment (an average of 50% or more below maximum seat load capacity for courses in the Program over four consecutive semesters) or statistically significant declining Program persistence and completion rates each semester for four semesters, as evidenced by reliable, longitudinal data.

5. The Program has been determined to be out of compliance with existing state or federal laws, i.e., Title 5, section 55130(d), or licensing laws in particular occupations.
6. There is universal agreement among regular faculty in a Program that it be merged with or replaced by another related Program.

When a specific Program fulfills one or more of these criteria, the regular faculty in the Program, college administration, college Program Review Committee or college Curriculum Committee will contact the Department Chair directly supervising the Program and convene a Program Discontinuance Task Force.

B. A Program Discontinuance Task Force will consist of the following voting members as well as one non-voting member:

- At most three regular faculty members who each teach at least one course per academic year in the Program, or if they are not available, if necessary, the faculty from a closely related field, as selected by all faculty who teach at least one course per academic year in the Program.
- The Department Chair overseeing the Program.
- The Dean of Instruction supervising the Program.
- A representative of the Research and Planning (Institutional Effectiveness) Office.
- A representative of Counseling who does not teach in the Program.
- A representative of the local (college) Academic Senate who does not teach in the Program.
- A representative of the local (college) Program Review Committee who does not teach in the Program.
- A representative of the local (college) Curriculum Committee who does not teach in the Program.
- The Vice President of Academic Affairs, or designee, shall chair the Task Force as a non-voting member but may vote in the case of a tie.

Note: The Vice Chancellor Educational Services, or designee, will also serve on this Task Force as a non-voting member.

The Task Force will inform the college community that the Program is being considered for discontinuance and will convene a public comment session, to be followed later by a closed Task Force meeting, to decide on one of three directives (see below).

In the spirit of good intentions and future enrollment management and planning, the Task Force will consider several factors in making its determination. Possible areas of inquiry include:

- Needs of the community;
- Needs of the department as the particular class fits in as part of a program;
- Workforce development;
- Currency of Program Review;
- Core indicators from Chancellor's Office ;
- Local labor market information through EDD (Employment Development Department) and or employer Program Advisory Committees and surveys;
- Reputation and skills of program and/or staff;
- FTES generated by program;
- Other funding sources, such as grants or contributions from business and industry;
- Percentage of faculty who have updated skills (staff development, industry externships, conferences, courses, etc.) documented within past three years;
- Special leadership, integration or cross discipline projects in which the program is involved;
- Possibility of merging or replacing Program with a related Program.

C. The Program Discontinuance Task Force will give one of the following directives to the local (college) Curriculum Committee:

1. Directive A – Program Continuance: The Program is accepted in its current state.
2. Directive B – Revitalization Effort: The Task Force will assist Program faculty and other involved parties in developing a process/plan and associated time table to revitalize the Program. Resources will be allocated as necessary in order to improve Program enrollment, retention, completion and other measures of Program success. Some areas to be considered are: in-depth revision of the Program courses, upgrading of facilities, and offering of workshops to provide re-training, changes in methodology, approaches to teaching, etc. Other considerations will involve Student Support Services, which promotes student success and retention.

The Task Force will specify the desired levels of improved performance. If there has not been a sufficient increase in key performance indicators a full academic year within the 12 months following the implementation of the process, the Administration will reconvene the Task Force and choose one of the following:

- a. Accept the Program in its current state (Directive A);

- b. Give the Program an extension of two semesters under the current revitalization efforts and, at the end of the extension, the Task Force will reconvene and re-evaluate;
  - c. Create a new plan to improve Program performance. This plan will then be implemented over the following 12 months;
  - d. Discontinue the Program (Directive C).
3. Directive C – Program Discontinuance: The Program is discontinued in a manner that respects the needs of students and fulfills contractual obligations to faculty and staff. The discontinuance procedure will allow currently enrolled students to complete their Program(s) of study in accordance with the rights of students as stipulated in the college catalog.

Office of Primary Responsibility: Vice Chancellor, Educational Services & Strategic Planning

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