

2011 ACADEMIC PROGRAM/LOW COMPLETER REVIEW LA Board of Regents

I. PURPOSE

The Board of Regents sees academic program review as both its core mission and the best way to approach efficiency, streamline delivery, and achieve an overall re-balancing of the postsecondary system. It is not a new process: in 2009-10, 283 degree programs in the curriculum inventory were reviewed, and as a result 118 were terminated and 20 new programs were created through revision and/or consolidation. Though statewide reviews of the curriculum inventory are historically conducted every 5-10 years, the Regents find it both desirable and necessary to conduct a review of low producing academic programs again, this time including both productivity and duplication in the evaluation of existing programs to make determinations about program viability and continuation. The assessment, analysis, and outcomes that result will contribute to making higher education more efficient, sustainable, and valuable to the State of Louisiana and its citizenry.

II. IDENTIFICATION OF LOW COMPLETER PROGRAMS

A program is targeted for examination as a Low Completer if it had, during AY 2007-08, 08-09, and 09-10, fewer than the following numbers of degrees conferred:

| <u>Degree Level</u> | <u>Productivity Level</u> |
|--|---------------------------|
| Associate/Baccalaureate/Post-Bachelors | 24 (avg. 8 per year) |
| Master/Post-Master/Specialist | 15 (avg. 5 per year) |
| Professional/Doctoral/Post-Doctoral | 6 (avg. 2 per year) |

No degree program area is automatically excluded from this review, nor will requests for continuation be considered lightly. Those programs granted some type of maintenance provision (unconditional, conditional or temporary) in the most recent review were included in the current review if they did not meet viability thresholds. Based on the specified three-year average completers, 459 programs have been identified (out of a total of 1,555) for review.

Any corrections in numbers of graduates previously reported by the institution that would remove a program from Low Completer status should be reported to the Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs by Friday, February 4, 2011. There should be substantive and conclusive documentation to support such a correction in the completers previously reported by the campus or system.

III. TIMELINE

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 26 January | Regents review process, lists of Low Completer programs, and timeline |
| 28 January | Lists of Low Completer programs and process documentation sent to systems/campuses |
| 28 February | System/Campus responses due to BoR staff (see Section IV. Process) |
| 28 February – 18 April | Staff evaluates responses and follows up with systems/campuses as deemed necessary |
| 27 April | Final report and recommendations to the Regents |

Campus responses, submitted through the system office, are due to the Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs by **Monday, February 28, 2011**. Electronic submissions are preferred. Although the length of a response will naturally vary based on complexity of the program and the proposed course of action, a response for each program under review should be possible within three or fewer pages.

IV. PROCESS

A campus shall conduct a self-review of each academic program identified as Low Completer by the Board of Regents (BoR) and propose one of the following actions:

1. Termination, with a phase-out plan.
2. Consolidation, with a rationale and proposed plan.
3. Continuation, with a compelling argument and plan for increasing productivity.

Termination

A formal request, with a phase-out (teach-out and/or transfer) plan that minimizes time to completion should be submitted to the BoR through the appropriate system office if the decision is made to terminate a program. The request may include termination of multiple degree programs from a particular campus and should address any anticipated fiscal impact or opportunities for reinvestment with program elimination. (See attached template.)

Consolidation

A rationale for program consolidation should address the following issues:

- A brief description of what the consolidation would entail and a plan for implementation, including delivery model, as applicable;
- Reasons why a consolidated program would succeed as compared to the current arrangement;
- Anticipated fiscal impact or opportunities for reinvestment, with consolidation;
- All relevant issues identified above under 'Continuation.' (See attached template.)

Continuation

An argument for program continuation must include a plan for increasing productivity and address the following issues in the order noted:

1. Brief description of the program, to include enrollment by year classification, faculty supporting the program by type (T/TT, FT, PT, adjunct, other), space/facilities, and administrative support;
2. Projected enrollees and completers for the next five years with justification for such projections;
3. Contribution to economic development (and/or workforce) of the state;
4. Uniqueness or relevance to the region or area;
5. Institutional need to maintain this program to support other programs, or to maintain accreditation, or because of (justified, documented) anticipated cost/revenue loss with elimination (e.g., recent major investments, external funding support, tuition, etc);
6. Placement of graduates (positions held, places of employment, enrollment in graduate or baccalaureate study);
7. Passage rate of completers on licensure/certification exams or measures;
8. Program quality as reflected by regional or national reputation, faculty qualifications, and the documented achievements of program graduates;
9. Measures of program productivity other than numbers of graduates (grants, publications or other);
10. In the case where program duplication exists (other programs in the statewide inventory within the same CIP code and level) compelling evidence to warrant the continuation of the degree program when similar programs are available within the state. Include plans for collaboration or sharing resources with other programs, new delivery mechanisms, etc., as applicable.

Decisions on continuation will be based on consideration of documentation presented to address the issues as outlined, as well as relevance to institutional role and scope, particularly for graduate-level programs.