

Policy on Terminating an Academic Program

Category:	Academic
Senate Approval:	Initial approval Jan 13, 2015; May 17, 2022
Date for Next Review:	September 2026
Responsibility:	Provost and Vice President Academic
Contact Officer:	Manager, Office of Provost and Vice President Academic

Policy Statement and Scope

This Policy will define a process for the University to initiate the termination of an existing academic program as a result of declining enrolment, reduction or realignment of resource allocations or to meet the University's strategic goals.

The Policy will apply to all academic programs (as defined under *Definitions*) delivered in any modality or in any location. Closure should not result in students being unable to complete the Program they are registered in, within the standard time for completion for that Program.

As set out in the Trent Act, authority to determine the courses of study at the University rests with Senate. Recommendations under this Policy will be made to Senate by the Chair of the Academic Planning & Budget Committee.

Definitions

- **Termination** – for purposes of this policy, termination of an academic program will be considered equivalent to the closure or discontinuation of an academic program. Termination refers to the closure of admissions and deletion from the academic calendar. Once terminated and reported to Quality Council, a program cannot be offered again without going through the formal process for creating a new program as outlined in Trent's Institutional Quality Assurance Policy.
- **Suspension** – the suspension of a program would be considered a temporary pause in offering the program. Suspension of a program may be initiated by a Dean or the Provost and will be reported to Senate.
- **Academic Program** – an academic program is any undergraduate or graduate degree program or graduate diploma offered in full or in part, or conjointly by the University in partnership with another post-secondary institution.

Proposal

The Dean, in consultation with the relevant academic unit(s), will prepare the proposed recommendation as per the procedures set out in this Policy. The Proposal will include the following documentation:

1. **Name of Academic Program**
2. **Effective Date** – date on which the academic program will no longer be offered.

This date will normally be within twelve months following Senate approval. In the interim, unless otherwise specified, no students will be accepted into the academic program or

permitted to declare a major or joint major, as appropriate.

3. **Rationale** – provide a detailed rationale for the proposal to terminate the academic program, citing explicitly the major considerations prompting the recommendation (for example, changes in the disciplinary/interdisciplinary landscape prompting curricular reform, low student demand, insufficient faculty resources, poor quality; may include information from recent cyclical academic program review)
4. **Enrolment Data** – provide enrolment data for the most recent 5 years
5. **TUFA Members** – list all faculty currently affiliated with the academic program
6. **Closure Plan**
 - Students – include a plan to ensure that all students enrolled in the program will be able to complete the academic program as planned
 - Support – include details on the type and level of support that will be required by the department to ensure students in the academic program will be able to complete their degree

Institutional Process

A proposal to terminate an academic program may be initiated by a Chair, Director, Dean, Provost or the Cyclical Program Review Committee. Regardless of where the proposal to stop offering an academic program is initiated, the process below will be followed by the Dean(s).

1. **Provost's Planning Group** – discuss feasibility of continuing to offer the academic program, e.g., academic planning, budgetary reasons
2. **Notification to Chair/Director** – the Dean will notify the Chair/Director responsible for the academic program being terminated and inform them that consultation with the broader academic community will be taking place
3. **Formal Consultation** – Dean will present plan and invite feedback from:
 - Chair and Members affiliated with the academic program being terminated
 - Relevant Decanal Council(s) and the Graduate Program Directors' Committee, as appropriate
4. **TUFA Joint Committee** – Dean consults with Joint Committee for consistency of plan with the TUFA Collective Agreement
5. **Academic Planning & Budget Committee** – the Dean will bring the proposal to AP&B for consideration and recommendation to Senate for approval

The submission will include:

- Decanal Recommendation
 - Summary of process and consultation conducted with relevant dates
 - Proposal
6. **Senate and Faculty Board** – the recommendation from the Academic Planning & Budget Committee will be forwarded to Faculty Board for Information and to Senate for Approval

Note: Senate – Notion of Motion – according to Senate By-law V, motions to Senate to alter the status of any academic department require notice of one month, duly made at the previous Senate meeting.

Communications Plan

Subsequent to approval by Senate, the relevant Dean(s) will be responsible for overseeing a communication plan that includes notifying:

- Those affected by the decision, including Chairs/Directors, faculty members
- Those responsible for Websites, Viewbook and Academic Calendars
- Office of Registrar and Recruitment & Admissions, Trent International and Academic Advisors
- Current students of deadline for declaring their major, as appropriate
- Provincial bodies, e.g., Ontario Universities Application Centre, accreditation councils), as appropriate
- External partners and stakeholders, as appropriate

External Reporting

In the first year in which a terminated academic program is no longer being offered, notice of Senate approved decisions will be provided in annual reports by the Provost to Quality Council and the Ministry as required.

A program under suspension will not be reported to Quality Council and the Ministry.

Prior to the date by which the Academic Planning & Budget Committee is recommending that the academic program be terminated, a Dean or the Provost may recommend to AP&B that the program be offered again.