

William Paterson University Policy

University Policy

SUBJECT:	Academic Program Closure	TITLE:	Academic Program Teach-out Policy		
CATEGORY: Check One	Board of Trustees <input type="checkbox"/>	University <input type="checkbox"/>	Functional X	School/Unit <input type="checkbox"/>	
Responsible Executive:	Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs		Responsible Office:	Provost Office	
CODING:	02-20-40-	ADOPTED:	10/2020	AMENDED:	
			LAST REVIEWED: 10/2020		

I. PURPOSE

Teach-out policies address scenarios such as when a school chooses to discontinue a degree program or a track within a degree program, terminate a modality of delivering the degree program (e.g., the school wishes to stop offering an on-line program but continue the equivalent on-campus program), or decides to close an off-campus degree-delivery location. These policies are intended to provide protections for students who have begun degree programs which are being changed, and enable the “teaching out” of currently enrolled students so that they receive uninterrupted education toward their degree completion.

In addition to its being a best-practice for William Paterson University (WP) to have a formal teach-out policy, WP is often asked to report its teach-out policy as part of the process for requesting state-level authorization for delivery for WP’s education programs. In addition, it is part of the Federal Compliance regulations that in certain situations, WP must report its teach-out plans to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

It is the responsibility of the Provost to review and approve plans to close academic programs in order to ensure effective communication with stakeholders, to ensure that enrolled students are able to complete the academic program in a timely manner, and to minimize additional financial burden for students.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Degree Program: any academic program leading to a recognized degree at the bachelors, master or doctoral level that WP is authorized to award.
- B. Certificate Program: an academic program, typically 9 to 24 credits that is focused on specialized skills or content; a certificate is awarded signifying completion of the curriculum.
- C. Modality: Modality refers to the way courses are offered in a program. Typical modalities are face to face, hybrid and online. For the purpose of this policy, accrediting bodies typically require notification when the modality is changing for 50% or more of the required courses in a program that is credit-bearing or title IV eligible.
- D. Additional Location: An additional location is defined as a domestic or international facility or location that is geographically separate from the main campus and at which the institution will offer at least 50 percent of an educational program that is credit-bearing or title IV eligible

IV. POLICY

Any decision to close a Degree or Certificate program entirely, eliminate a Degree or Certificate program from an additional location or eliminate a delivery modality for a Degree or Certificate program, must also include ceasing to admit students to the program. In addition, it must choose from one of the following options:

- (1) The Department or College develops and documents a teach-out plan for currently enrolled students and terminates the program after such students complete their programs; or
- (2) The Department or College enters into a teach-out agreement with another institution or organization that will teach out the program.

Once a decision to no longer deliver an academic program, eliminate a particular modality for an academic program or no longer deliver a program at a particular location has been approved, a teach-out plan and any relevant third party agreements must be submitted for review and approval by the Provost's Office no less than 120 days prior to the start of the teach-out period. Other relevant administrative offices may be consulted as part of this approval process. The Provost's Office will also determine whether external agencies (e.g., Middle State Commission on Higher Education, the NJ Office of The Secretary of Higher Education, or other authorizing bodies) will need to be notified.

The Department or College (with assistance from the Office of Marketing and Public Relations) will develop a communications plan to inform currently enrolled students about the rationale necessitating the program closure and the process by which they can still complete their degrees. A communications plan notifying and addressing the needs of alumni of the program being closed should also be considered.

The Provost's Office will notify relevant administrative offices (e.g., Admissions, Registrar, Financial Aid, etc.) about the program closure and the teach-out plan or agreement.

The framework for a teach-out plan is described in the following section.

IV. PROCEDURE

The following must be addressed in all proposed teach-out plans:

- (1) Establishment of the date(s) by which all marketing materials and advertising for the program will be withdrawn, canceled, corrected or deleted.
- (2) Identification of the date by which recruitment and admissions for the teach-out program ceases.
- (3) Completion of an audit by the dean/chair of the teach-out program to determine what courses and other activities are needed by students currently enrolled to complete their programs.
- (4) Development of a schedule of courses to be taught during the teach-out period that ensures all remaining courses required for students to complete their programs will be offered in a reasonable sequence. In some cases, it may be necessary to modify program requirements (e.g., include self-study courses or other alternatives) to enable the students to complete their programs, but in these cases the learning objectives and credit-hour requirements must be equivalent to those of the original degree program.
- (5) Establishment of the date by which the teach-out activities will end.
- (6) A description of the faculty resources and academic support services that will be utilized throughout the teach-out period.
- (7) A statement about how the Department or College will assist students who are enrolled in a teach out program who wish to transfer to another program or institution.
- (8) Signed copies of teach-out agreements with other institutions.

- (9) Agreements with other institutions must include arrangement for the storing of student records and the disposition of final financial resources and other assets.

Additional considerations when developing a teach-out plan:

- (1) Teach-out plans submitted less than 120-days prior to the intended date of the program closure will be denied or postponed; there must be adequate time to implement the communication and teach-out plan before the program is closed.
- (2) Legal review of agreements with other institutions, if any, must be completed before a teach-out plan is submitted.
- (3) No announcement of program closure may be made until the communications plan has been developed and approved.
- (4) All teach-out plans must be consistent with any requirements and expectations of the external organizations that accredit or certify the programs to be completed under the teach-out plan.
- (5) A Department or College is not obligated to accommodate students who fail to take required courses when they are offered under the teach-out plan, or who do not receive passing grades in courses taught under a teach-out plan, beyond the formal end of the teach-out period specified in item #5 in the list of components of the teach-out plan.

By Direction of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs:

Date 10/2020


