



Academic Program Prioritization Final Report & Category 3 Implementation

*Academic Degree Programs
Discontinued or Recommended for Action Plan
July, 2013*

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Table of Contents

Chancellor’s Final Report	3
Category 3 Programs	
	Summary of Program Prioritization Process	8
	Introduction	9
	Action Plans (Template)	11
	Program Discontinuation	12
	Teach-Out Manual	12
	Academic Teach-Out Plan Templates	17
	Academic Teach-Out Monitoring Report Template	21
Templates (doc format)	http://www.wcu.edu/about-wcu/leadership/office-of-the-provost/program-prioritization/index.asp	

Final Report from Chancellor David Belcher July 18, 2013

Introduction

Background

The very first initiative articulated in Western Carolina University's strategic plan, *2020 Vision: Focusing our Future*, states that the university will "Undertake a rigorous and inclusive process to prioritize all undergraduate and graduate programs based on universally applied criteria, including quality, regional need, demand, enrollment trends, retention and graduation rates, and alignment with the University mission and the following integrated curricular focus areas: creative arts, education, environment, health, innovation and technology, and recreation and tourism." Two issues motivated this initiative:

- **Funding.** Western Carolina University cannot be all things to all people. It never could, but the economic climate of the last five years and the resulting budget reductions have made this fact, too often ignored, a blatant reality. Western Carolina University has lost \$32 million in state funding since 2008, and, based on budget proposals currently under discussion in Raleigh, we anticipate further reductions in state support in both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.
- **Focus.** Western Carolina University must focus, ensuring that it does not diffuse its efforts and resources, both fiscal and human, in so many directions that the institution jeopardizes the quality of all of its programs.

Our university has undertaken a program prioritization process this year to fulfill the commitment of Initiative 1.1.1. This endeavor has been led by a superb group of faculty, staff, and students which itself benefitted from the excellent leadership of Dr. Vicki Szabo, our late Provost Dr. Angi Brenton, and, in the latter part of the last academic year, Dr. Mark Lord who served in Provost Brenton's stead. The task force has kept the campus community informed throughout the year-long process. Program prioritization reports and information regarding the process can be found at: <http://www.wcu.edu/about-wcu/leadership/office-of-the-provost/program-prioritization/index.asp>.

Higher Education Funding Model Context

Western Carolina's program prioritization process has taken place against the backdrop of a North Carolina higher education funding model which is in transition. In recent years, enrollment growth has been the primary source of increased state funding through a biennial process of enrollment forecasting. Until recently, institutions which failed to achieve their enrollment targets were held harmless; that is, they kept the funding based on enrollment targets they did not achieve. The hold harmless approach, however, is no longer used. Institutions which do not achieve their enrollment targets will have to give up enrollment growth funding. As one can see, enrollment and achieving enrollment growth targets, while always important in the past, will be even more important for state funding purposes moving forward.

However, North Carolina, like many states around the country, is moving to embrace an outcomes-based funding model, one in which institutions will be funded in part based on their achievement of specific metrics. This funding model evolution is no surprise inasmuch as it has been prominently featured in national and state discussions of higher education funding in recent years. While UNC General Administration and the universities are still in dialogue regarding specific performance metrics and related goals, we know that Western Carolina's list of metrics will include ambitious goals for the fall-to-fall retention rate of first-time, full-time freshmen; the four-year graduation rate of first-time, full-time freshmen; the six-year graduation rate of first-time, full-time freshmen; and the four-year graduation rate of transfer students who come to Western Carolina with an associate's degree. Achievement of targets in each of these categories will influence state funding once the performance-based funding model is fully implemented.

I anticipate that the eventual overarching state funding model for UNC System institutions will include both enrollment growth and performance-based funding. Thus, enrollment numbers, retention rates, and graduation rates, key metrics of program viability in WCU's program prioritization process this year, will be fundamentally important to future state funding for Western Carolina University. That is, state funding for all of our institutional priorities will be tied to enrollment, retention rates, and graduation rates. **It is therefore imperative that each program at Western Carolina University own the responsibility for its own achievement of enrollment, retention rate, and graduation rate goals.** The program prioritization process has revealed weaknesses in these areas.

My Review

In my review of the recommendations from the Program Prioritization Task Force, I have studied the following performance indicators:

- Enrollments and enrollment trends by program;
- Program cohort sizes;
- Individual course section sizes for the last four semesters, comparing, by individual section, census date enrollment to end-of-term enrollment and comparing both of those to established section caps;
- Average class sizes of course sections in specific semesters; and
- Program retention and graduation rates and trends.

These numbers clearly indicate the degree to which we efficiently and wisely invest our fiscal resources. The funding we receive through state allocation, tuition, and fees is precious, and it is imperative that we utilize those resources efficiently with an eye toward maximum return on investment and with total commitment to the sound investment of taxpayers' support.

I have explored quality indicators. I have considered the degree to which programs and their owners (faculty, coordinators, heads) have been thoughtfully pro-active, *before* the advent of program prioritization, in recruitment and retention efforts and, where such efforts exist, the degree to which they have been successful. I have explored the differences between need in the region and actual demand for Western Carolina's programs. And I have wrestled with potential impact of program loss.

A few miscellaneous thoughts:

- A decision to discontinue a program does not imply a lack of value for the discipline. It is, rather, a statement about current program reality.
- We do not have the luxury of offering quality programs which do not enjoy student demand.
- The leaders of several of the programs under review made the case for continuing their programs because of need in our region and state. As I reflected, however, I had to ask myself why WCU should continue programs which attract very few students even if there might be a need in the region or state. If Western Carolina is clearly not playing much of a role in meeting the need, why then should WCU continue to support those programs with scarce resources?
- The leaders of several of the graduate programs under review made the case for continuing their programs because of the instructional contributions of their graduate assistants. While this issue is certainly of practical concern, I simply cannot accept that inexpensive instruction is a legitimate rationale for keeping a program.
- Several of the programs under review align with the six integrated curricular focus areas or other *2020 Vision* priorities. While discontinuing such programs may appear to be at odds with our strategic plan, I am not inclined to support low-demand programs.

Going Forward

In Part 2 of its Final Report, the Program Prioritization Task Force made a number of excellent recommendations which I, in turn, recommend to the Office of the Provost for consideration and implementation as appropriate.

Finally, let me be clear that Western Carolina University will integrate ongoing program prioritization into its regular cycle of program review, and I ask the Office of the Provost to assume the lead in orchestrating its systematic incorporation. I certainly applaud and support the Task Force's recommendation that the institution work to consolidate its various program review processes for efficiency's sake, and I trust that we will make quick progress on that front. But program prioritization will be an integral part of our work going forward in order to ensure that we are a focused institution, to ensure that we demonstrate our professed commitment to student success as manifested in excellent retention and graduation rates, to ensure that we offer academic programs of ever increasing quality, and to ensure that we invest our precious public resources wisely for maximum benefit.

Decisions

Category 1 Programs: Recommended for Potential Investment

The Program Prioritization Task Force recommended eight programs for Category 1 and potential investment. I accept the Category 1 recommendations as presented. Assuming that they continue to boast exceptional profiles, these programs will receive particular consideration for future investment as funding becomes available. Category 1 programs are listed on P. 21 of

the Task Force's Final Report:

<http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/ProgramPrioritizationReportPart1.pdf>

Category 2 Programs: No Action Recommended

The Program Prioritization Task Force recommended 96 programs for Category 2 and no additional action. I accept the Category 2 recommendations as presented. I strongly encourage leaders of programs in this category to review feedback from the Program Prioritization Task Force and address any issues or opportunities noted in order to ensure program strength and the achievement of maximum potential. Category 2 programs are listed on P. 21 of the Task Force's Final Report: <http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/ProgramPrioritizationReportPart1.pdf>

Category 3 Programs: Recommended for Action Plans

The Program Prioritization Task Force recommended five programs for Category 3 and action plan development. I accept the recommendations of the Program Prioritization Task Force and ask the Office of the Provost to work with the affected programs in articulating action plans, the fulfillment of which will determine the long-range viability of the programs in question. The five programs recommended for action plans are as follows:

- Residential Environments Minor.
- Bachelor of Arts in Stage and Screen.
- Bachelor of Science in Education/Middle Grades Education.
- Master of Arts in Education/Elementary and Middle Grades Education.
- Master of Science in Chemistry.

Voluntary Discontinuation

The following programs have been voluntarily discontinued, and I ask the Office of the Provost to proceed with discontinuation plans as guided by the policies of the University of North Carolina and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges:

- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (just one route to this degree will be discontinued; others will continue).
- Master of Arts in Education and Master of Arts in Teaching/Chemistry.
- Master of Arts in Teaching/Music.
- American Studies Minor.
- Multimedia Minor.
- Earth Sciences Minor.
- Appalachian Studies Minor.
- Broadcast Telecommunications Engineering Technology Minor.
- Digital Communications Engineering Technology Minor.
- Broadcast Sales Minor.

Category 3 Programs: Recommended for Phased Discontinuation

I accept the recommendations of the Program Prioritization Task Force to discontinue the following programs and ask the Office of the Provost to proceed with phased discontinuation

plans as guided by the policies of the University of North Carolina and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

- Women's Studies Minor.
- Bachelor of Arts in German.
- Master of Arts in Education and Master of Arts in Teaching/Health and Physical Education.
- Master of Arts in Education and Master of Arts in Teaching/Mathematics.
- Master of Science in Applied Mathematics.
- Master of Arts in Education/Music.
- Master of Music.
- Master of Arts in TESOL.
- Master of Arts in Education and Master of Arts in Teaching/TESOL.

I have not accepted the recommendations of the Program Prioritization Task Force to discontinue programs in two disciplines for reasons detailed below. I ask the Office of the Provost to work with the affected programs in articulating action plans, the fulfillment of which will determine the long-range viability of the programs.

BFA in Motion Picture and Television Production

The BFA in Motion Picture and Television Production is a unique program in which many of the performance metrics are on an upward trajectory: retention rates are good, the number of majors is healthy, the number of graduates is increasing, and the average class section size has increased significantly in the last five years. In addition to the numbers analysis, the BFA in MPTP is a program with impressive quality indicators. Graduates are accepted into top graduate programs and gainfully employed in degree-related fields. And, in late spring and thus outside the decision-making process of the Program Prioritization Task Force, the program received an external validation of quality from the Sony Corporation which chose Western Carolina University's MPTP program as the recipient of a gift of its most advanced professional video production camera. Sony made such gifts to less than a dozen film programs in the United States.

To be sure, the BFA in MPTP is an expensive program, but if program cost formed the primary criterion, many more programs would be in question.

I encourage the Provost and MPTP program leaders to review concerns expressed by the Program Prioritization Task Force in the development of an action plan to enhance the program's profile.

BA in Spanish/BSED in Spanish

The profiles of these two programs are weak at best. Performance metrics across the board are passable but unimpressive. Nonetheless, I strongly believe these programs have enormous potential, particularly in light of the burgeoning Latino population in our region and state. The long-term viability of programs in Spanish rests in the capacity of leadership at the program, department, and college levels to achieve two goals: 1) to re-envision these programs as

dynamic degrees which are responsive to the applied needs of the Western North Carolina region and 2) to generate robust enrollment, retention, and graduation profiles. The action plan should reflect these goals.

Category 3 Programs

Summary of Program Prioritization Process Inception to Implementation Plan for Program Discontinuation

Time Period	Action
September, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Force Selected and Planning Began
October, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative Institutional Discussions • Open Forum I
November-December, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria and data drafted, revised and finalized • Program review list finalized
January, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data produced and distributed to Department Heads by Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness • Department Heads and Program Coordinators completed narratives and revised data reports
January 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Forum II
February 15, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major program narratives and data submitted
February 18-March 12, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Force received and reviewed major program reports
February 25, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand-alone minors received notification of review
March 4, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information session for stand-alone minor Program Directors, Department Heads and Deans
March 11, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand-alone minor narratives and data submitted
March 14-15, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Force retreat for Phase 1 assessments of major programs
March 18, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Force meeting for Phase 1 assessments of stand-alone minors
March 21, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial assessment communication to all major programs and stand-alone minors • Process ended for Category 1 and 2 programs • Process continued for Category 3 programs
April, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 2 process began for Category 3 programs
April 3, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Forum III
April 15, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 2 narrative due to Task Force
April 18-22, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings for Category 3 programs
May 14, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final recommendations regarding Category 3 programs
May 25, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part 1 of the Final Report, including process overview and program assessments
June 5, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Forum on Final Report
June, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification to current, newly admitted and prospective students (both prospects and incomplete applications) of possible discontinuation in

	Category 3 programs
June 17-21, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program discontinuation direct appeals to Chancellor
June 20, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report, Part 2, including Task Force recommendations for future process and broader observations on WCUs strengths and challenges
July 16, 2013	Part 1 of Chancellor report released to WCU community
July 18, 2013	Part 2 of Chancellor report released to WCU community
July 19, 2013	Provost communication to WCU community
July 19, 2013	Notification to current, newly admitted and prospective students of discontinuation of programs
July, 2013	Notification to current and newly admitted students regarding the creation of a teach out plan
Fall, 2013	Notify SACS and other relevant accrediting bodies of discontinuations
Fall, 2013	Notify UNC General Administration of Discontinuations
Fall, 2013	Letter to SACS – Pending Approval - Program Discontinuations
Fall, 2013	Develop monitoring process to be implemented by colleges with regular monitoring reports to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers and names of students in teach-out plans • Confirmation of affected students receiving letters, advising, individualized academic plans • Numbers and names of students advised into other majors, with identification of new majors/minors • Progress of students in the teach out phase
November 1, 2013	Deans Offices oversee collection and filing of student acknowledgement of discontinuation letters and Teach-Out Plans. Plans to Provost's Office by November 1, 2013.
December, 2013	Beginning in December of 2013, colleges to develop and provide regular monitoring report to Provost Fellow for Curriculum. Reports provided to Provost's Office once per semester (December 15 and May 15).
Summer, 2015	GOAL: Teach Out complete for all discontinued programs and minors

Introduction

On July 19, 2013, the day following the release of Chancellor Belcher's final report discontinuing 19 minor and degree programs, Provost Lofquist sent the following message the university community:

As you are aware by now, Chancellor Belcher has communicated his decisions on program prioritization. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Academic Program Prioritization Task Force, as well as the additional committees that have provided due diligence to a very important matter in the life and vitality of our institution. We will continue to work hard to realize these changes by the due diligence with which we approach addressing the needs of all our programs whether slated for resources, continuity, action plans or elimination.

In May, departments sent messages to students (via Catamount email) to let them know the possibility of program eliminations. Today, a message from the Chancellor's Office

is being sent (again via Catamount email) to continuing and new students affected by these decisions. The Registrar's Office is moving forward to immediately make all eliminated programs inactive in our catalogs to ensure no additional students will be able to declare these majors. The Office of Public Relations and the Provost's Office are updating websites to include the final report and decisions, and the Deans are currently working with departments on follow-up communications to students. Dr. Kim Ruebel, Associate Dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions, has agreed to be the Provost Fellow for curriculum and will be working with Deans and departments to develop teach-out plans and to develop the appropriate communications for General Administration and other important constituencies.

Students most affected by these decisions have been instructed to contact their advisors prior to the end of the first week of classes so that fall semester schedules can be adjusted if needed. The plan is for all teach-out plans to be developed and finalized before registration begins for spring semester.

I recognize the anxiety and concerns in the elimination of any of our programs. In the days to come, we will work to develop processes of review and decision-making to ensure the sustainable vitality of all our programs. The review process used by the Academic Program Prioritization Task Force has certainly paved the way for this work, and the task force recommendations for future action will facilitate our ability to maintain the excellence of Western Carolina University's academic core. I look forward to working with you on this very important agenda in the life of our institution.

Action Plans

The Chancellor's final report on program prioritization included the recommendation of five programs for action plan development. The purpose of these plans is to determine long-range viability of these programs. Action plans should include program mission and vision, program objectives, student learning outcomes, alignment with WCU's 20/20 Vision and applicable state/national standards, resource investment and allocation, and performance measures (including program enrollment, retention, completion goals and actuals, and job placement). The action plan narrative should also outline program change/revision. A template is provided on the following page.

Action Plan Template for Category 3 Programs

**Action Plans should include both quantitative and qualitative data, including tables, graphs, and narrative explanations.*

Academic Degree/Minor Program:	
Date of Submission:	
College:	
Dean:	
Department Head:	
Program Coordinator:	
Level of Program:	
Total Credit Hours Required in Program/Minor:	
Number of Majors in Program/Minor:	
Number of Enrolled Students this Semester:	
Number of Completers this Semester:	

Program Mission and Vision

xxx narrative xxx

Student Learning Objectives	Student Learning Outcomes
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Student Learning Objective #	Student Learning Outcome #	State/National Standard(s)	20/20 Vision Direction/Goal/Initiative #
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Performance Measures

Program Enrollment: xxx narrative xxx

*Retention (*Completion Goals and Actual Numbers): xxx narrative xxx*

Job Placement/Post-Graduate Placement/Graduate School (etc.): xxx narrative xxx

Program Change/Revision

xxx narrative xxx [Include rationale for changes recommended: What is intended outcome of each managerial or structural change. Program change outcomes are different from learning outcomes. For example, if an internship or a capstone project/report is now included ... or an external advisory committee is being formed ... or a summer institute will be offered ... What are the intended outcomes of these changes?

Resource Investment and Allocation

xxx narrative xxx

Program Discontinuation

The Chancellor's final report on program prioritization included the decision to discontinue 19 programs. The university will submit one AA6 Program Change Form including all discontinued programs. Colleges and departments should provide information to and work in collaboration with Kim Ruebel (kkuebel@wcu.edu), Provost Fellow for curriculum. All programs and individual students must have Teach-Out Plans in place.

Teach-Out Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide instructions and tools to engage in a systematic process to teach-out the students who were in the discontinued programs. All teach-out plans (for individual students) should be complete by the first day of registration for the spring, 2014, semester [Regular registration begins Thursday, November 7, 2013.]. What follows is a compilation of guidelines, templates, and other tools designed to ensure a systematic and successful teach-out, enabling students to graduate from/complete the discontinued programs. The manual serves as a single source of information for deans, department heads, undergraduate and graduate program coordinators, program faculty, and advisors who are assisting in the teach-out process.

Each of the 19 discontinued programs will have a specific period for teach-out, depending on the length of the program and the remaining courses required by the students in the program. Each of the degree programs, and each of the minors, will no longer accept new students beginning July 18, 2013. Students must be enrolled in coursework included in the teach-out plan beginning fall, 2013, and may not stop out during any semester of the specified time frame. It is understood that plans may vary not only by program but also by individual student.

Guidelines for Discontinued Academic Degree Programs

Under the guidelines of UNC GA's regional accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges, when closing a program, "the institution must make a good faith effort to assist affected students, faculty, administrative and support staff so that they experience a minimal amount of disruption in the pursuit of their course of study or professional careers." Specifically, SACS advises that the institution should make every effort to teach out currently enrolled students and to discontinue admission of students to the program once the decision is made to terminate the program. Western Carolina University is committed to assisting students affected by the program terminations and is making every effort to formulate procedures that minimize the impact on students while maintaining the integrity of the WCU degree or minor.

In the following sections, guiding principles for undergraduate and graduate programs are set forth in an attempt to answer many questions and offer recommendations about student issues which may arise.

Frequently Asked Questions

General FAQ regarding the program prioritization process may be found online:

<http://www.wcu.edu/about-wcu/leadership/office-of-the-provost/program-prioritization/faq.asp>.

Undergraduate

Prospective students with active applications awaiting admission decisions to an affected program:

- Immediately suspend admission of new students and advise students to seek alternative majors.

Currently enrolled and admitted students:

- Programs will place high priority on enabling students to complete their degree/minor programs.
- Programs will provide each student an academic plan that enables him/her to complete the program requirements within a reasonable teach-out period. Some courses may be offered in the summer semesters.
- Students, in turn, should take a sufficient number of courses each semester to enable them to complete all requirements within the “teach out” period. Students may not stop out for any long semester during this period.
- Students who do not make adequate progress on their academic plan for teach out will be advised into another major/minor.
- Course offerings will continue for approximately two academic years beginning fall, 2013, and ending spring, 2015. The time period will vary by program/minor and will extend beyond spring, 2015, in some cases.
- If a course required for the degree is not offered at WCU, students may make arrangements, with the department’s consent, to take the course at another institution as a transient student and transfer the credit back to WCU.
- Students are required to have ongoing contact with their academic/faculty advisors during this time to ensure that their academic plan is current and consistent with the projected course offerings.

Q1. Can the requirement for at least 25% of semester hours toward a bachelor’s degree be waived for the discontinued programs?

A1. The current policy requires a minimum of 25 percent of semester hours applied toward a bachelor’s degree to be earned through regular enrollment in Western Carolina University junior-senior level courses, including a minimum of 12 hours in junior-senior courses in the major field. There is no change in the policy or procedure. In cases of extreme hardship, appeals for additional hours to be taken outside of WCU may be approved by the Provost. Student appeal requests should be made to the academic advisor. The advisor will communicate with the program coordinator, department head, and Dean in order to consider submission of a request to the Provost’s Office.

Q2. What about a student in a continuing major who is currently required to take coursework in an eliminated major or program?

A2. Coursework will, in most cases, be offered for two academic years following discontinuation of the major. Departments will be encouraged to reserve seats for the majors requiring the courses. Students in the continuing major should work closely with their advisor who will be knowledgeable about the projected course offerings of the discontinued major or program. Also, departments that are continuing should be flexible in identifying course substitutes and/or independent studies for their students when courses are required from discontinued programs.

Q3. If a student makes an unsatisfactory grade in a required course and the course will not be offered again, what provisions will be made for the student?

A3. The student should work with his/her program coordinator, department head, and/or academic dean to arrive at a reasonable substitution.

Q4. Does a part-time student need to finish his/her degree within the same teach out period as a full-time student?

A4. Yes, a part-time student must plan his/her program to finish in the same reasonable time frame as the full-time student. No student may stop out for any long semester during the teach-out period.

Q5. There may be cases, in unusual circumstances, in which a student is unable to finish his/her degree in the allowable time frame. How will these situations be handled?

A5. A student finding himself/herself in this situation should consult with the program coordinator, department head, and/or academic dean to ascertain if there is any manner in which the degree program can be completed. The University, however, is under no obligation to ensure the program can be completed after the reasonable teach-out period.

Q6. If a student applies for readmission to a program that has been discontinued. How is the readmission application handled?

A6. Readmission to discontinued programs will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account prior academic success, and the ability of the student to complete the program within the teach out period.

Graduate Programs

Prospective students with active applications awaiting admission decisions to a discontinued program and newly admitted students:

- Immediately suspend admission of all new students.
- Notify students who have already been offered admission that they must complete the program within the teach-out time period specified for the particular program, as well as in the Academic Plan for Teach-Out for each individual student. The period will end the last day that any grades are normally allowed to be turned in at the end of that semester as determined and stated in the academic calendar for that year. Students unable to comply with these time limits should seek an alternative program. The Teach-Out Plan timeline for discontinued program supersedes program completion policies in the Graduate Catalog including the 6-year completion rule.

Currently enrolled students in a discontinued program:

- Programs are encouraged to be understanding and flexible. High priority must be placed on enabling students to complete their degree programs, but without sacrificing or compromising the academic rationale for requirements, required courses, and standards of rigor of the program.
- Programs will work with students individually to outline a strategy for completion within the Teach-Out time specified, including any deviation from Graduate School dates for completion of degree requirements.
- All graduate student coursework and non-course requirements must be completed, (including any internship, required comprehensive examination, or thesis and thesis defense) by the stated Graduate School deadlines, unless expressly stated otherwise in the individual Teach-Out plan or unless an exception is requested to the Dean of the Graduate School at the beginning of the semester in which the student intends to graduate, in order for the student to participate in graduation ceremony and receive a degree.
- Programs may consider allowable WCU course substitutions for a required course only if the required course will not be offered during the Teach-Out timeline.
- If necessary, students may be approved to transfer more than the current allowable number of course hours, which varies by program. Programs must request this exception prior to a student enrolling in a course at another institution. Allowable course content for transfer courses, and exceptions to the allowable number of hours, must follow the normal procedures stated in the Graduate Catalog for acceptable graduate transfer credit.
- Students must meet the minimum credit hour requirement for the degree and all other program requirements. Non-coursework program requirements may not be waived.
- When possible, consideration should be given to allowing a student to switch from a thesis to a non-thesis option within a program if such an option already exists in the program and if doing so facilitates or expedites completion of the student's degree program.
- Composition of the thesis committee must meet university and Graduate School requirements.

Students seeking readmission into a discontinued program:

- If a student who was previously admitted into a discontinued program, but who has not been enrolled for an acceptable period of time within the Graduate School's stated Stop-Out policy, seeks readmission, such readmission to the discontinued program will be made on a case-by-case basis by the program director, Department Head, and Graduate School Dean, taking into account prior academic success, and the perceived ability of the student to complete the program within the stated Teach-Out period.

Q1. From a Graduate Student **applicant** perspective: If I have applied (but not yet been accepted) to a Graduate Program that has been recommended for discontinuation, can I still be accepted?

A1. We are sorry, but we are unable to accept new students into graduate programs that have been recommended for discontinuation.

Q2. From a Graduate Student **applicant** perspective: If I have applied (but not yet been accepted) to a Graduate Program that has been recommended for discontinuation, can I change my application to another WCU Graduate Program?

A2. Yes, the Graduate School will be happy to assist you in selecting another Graduate Program and in altering your application to reflect this change. Please contact the Graduate School at 828-227-7398 or grad@wcu.edu

Q3. From an **accepted** or **currently enrolled** Graduate Student perspective: If I have been accepted to or have already completed course work in a Graduate Program that has been recommended for discontinuation, can I change to another WCU Graduate Program?

A3. Please contact your Graduate Program Director (<http://www.wcu.edu/academics/wcu-graduate-school/graduate-degree-programs/index.asp>) for advice and to discuss this with them. Each program and your progress within that program will be unique and you will need to consider how a Program change may impact your course selection and the length of time needed to complete your degree. If you switch your program, you must apply and be accepted by the new program according to their program admission requirements. Acceptance into one program does not guarantee acceptance into another program.

SEMESTER, YEAR

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	Instructor	Date Completed	Comments (attach additional comments if necessary)

SEMESTER, YEAR

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	Instructor	Date Completed	Comments (attach additional comments if necessary)

SEMESTER, YEAR

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	Instructor	Date Completed	Comments (attach additional comments if necessary)

Other Requirements (Specify):

Date Completed: _____

I have received and reviewed my academic teach-out plan that enables me to complete my degree program/minor within the teach-out period. I understand it is my responsibility to complete the program within the teach-out period.

Signature of Student	Date
Signature of Advisor or Program Coordinator	Date
Department Head	Date
Dean, College	

SEMESTER, YEAR

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	Instructor	Date Completed	Comments (attach additional comments if necessary)

SEMESTER, YEAR

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	Instructor	Date Completed	Comments (attach additional comments if necessary)

SEMESTER, YEAR

Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	Instructor	Date Completed	Comments (attach additional comments if necessary)

Non-coursework Requirements (Specify Requirement and Due Date):

Requirement/Experience	Due Date

I have received and reviewed my academic teach-out plan that enables me to complete my degree program/minor within the teach-out period. I understand it is my responsibility to complete the program within the teach-out period.

Signature of Student	Date
Signature of Advisor or Program Coordinator	Date
Department Head	Date
Dean, College	
Dean, Graduate School	Date

Academic Program/Minor Teach-Out Monitoring Report

<i>Date of Submission:</i>	<i>*Due each December 15 & May 15 during the teach-out period.</i>
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College:		Dean:	
Academic Degree/Minor Program:		Department Head:	
Number of Majors in Program/Minor:		Program Coordinator:	
Number of Enrolled Students this Semester:		Level of Program:	
Number of Completers this Semester:		Total Credit Hours Required in Program/Minor:	

	Student ID	Student Name (Last Name, First Name)	Number of Credit Hours Earned to Date	Student Signed Teach- Out Plan (Date)	Last Semester of Student's Enrollment (Semester, Year)	Anticipated Student Completion (Date)	Last Semester of Enrollment (Semester, Year)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							

<i>Additional Teach-Out Criteria:</i>			
Department Head	Signature	Date	
Dean, College	Signature	Date	
<i>* Provost's Office Acknowledgement:</i>			