



Palo Alto University Teach-Out Policy

Palo Alto University intends for all University degree programs to remain viable for long periods of time. Should a program fail to meet expectations, however, and the program is deemed not viable through the decision process described in this document, no new students will be admitted to the degree program. Nevertheless, the University will make every reasonable effort to honor the commitment to graduate all students remaining in the program.

Any plan for termination or action to implement the termination of a University degree program must comply fully with the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) Teach-Out Policy (attached). The following guidelines govern the termination of University degree programs and teach-out plans:

1. The academic unit in which the program is housed must first conduct a program review that carefully examines potential factors limiting the program's viability, such as, but not limited to, demographic shifts, regional shifts, professional shifts, external agency requirements, enrollment trends, or financial considerations.
2. If it is determined that termination of the degree program, rather than some other action to revise the program, is the best course of action, the academic unit will submit a proposal for termination to the Dean of Academic Operations and Administration. Such a proposal should contain the appropriate evidence and rationale in support of the decision; a timeline and curriculum plan for the full teach-out; and a plan to notify stakeholders, including students, internal constituents, and external regulatory bodies (e.g., U.S. Department of Education, WSCUC). If the program is offered in partnership with another accredited institution, evidence of appropriate communications with the partnering institution, as well as with WSCUC must be included.
3. Upon approval of the proposal, the Dean will forward a recommendation to the Provost. The final decision to terminate the degree program will be made by the President.
4. Of particular concern is that students be notified in writing, as early as possible, of a date for program closure, the rationale for termination, as well as any additional costs, if any, related to the program closure.
5. Faculty participating in the degree program will be notified in writing, as early as possible, of a date for program closure, as well as the rationale for termination.
6. Students are to be provided a clear listing of course offerings needed for program completion and a timeline in which such courses will be offered. The University will make every reasonable effort to offer the courses needed and to support students through program completion in a timely manner. As individual needs might require, independent study plans may be developed to assure that the students can meet the goals of their degree plans and be able to graduate in as timely a manner as possible.

Teach-Out Plans and Agreements Policy

An institution accredited by the Commission must submit to the Commission for its prior approval a teach-out *plan* or *agreement* upon the occurrence of any of the following:

- 1) The Secretary of Education notifies WSCUC that the Secretary has initiated an emergency action against an institution in accordance with section 487(c)(1)(G) of the HEA or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV, HEA program, in accordance with section 487(c)(1)(F) HEA, and that a teach-out plan is required.
- 2) WSCUC acts to withdraw, terminate, or suspend accreditation or candidacy of the institution.
- 3) The institution notifies WSCUC that it intends to cease operations entirely or close a location that provides one hundred percent of at least one program.
- 4) A state licensing or authorizing agency notifies WSCUC that an institution's license or legal authority to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.

Teach-Out Plan

A teach-out *plan* is a written plan developed by the institution if that institution, or an institutional location that provides one hundred percent of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study. WSCUC may require an institution to enter into a teach-out agreement as part of its teach-out plan. A teach-out plan:

- a) must provide for the equitable treatment of students by ensuring that the institution has the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling, and to meet all obligations to its existing students;
- b) must specify additional charges, if any, and provide for notification to the students of any additional charges.

Teach-Out Agreement

WSCUC may require an institution to enter into a teach-out agreement as part of its teach-out plan. A teach-out *agreement* is a written agreement between two institutions when the institution or an institutional location that provides one hundred percent of at least one program ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study and enters into an agreement with another institution to teach out the program(s). When an institution enters into a teach-out agreement with another institution, the initiating institution must submit the agreement to the Commission for approval prior to its implementation. The teach-out agreement may be approved only if the agreement is between institutions that are accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency; and

- a) must be consistent with applicable standards of accreditation and Commission Policies;
- b) must provide for the equitable treatment of students by ensuring that the teach-out institution has the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that provided by the institution that is closing or discontinuing its program(s), to remain stable, carry out its mission, and to meet all obligations to its existing students;

- c) must ensure that the teach-out institution can provide students access to the program and services without requiring them to move or travel substantial distances;
- d) must provide for notification of another accrediting agency if the teach-out institution holds accreditation from that agency; and
- e) must specify additional charges, if any, levied by the teach-out institution and provide for notification to the students of any additional charges.

If an institution the Commission accredits or has granted candidacy to closes without a teach-out plan, the Commission must work with the Department of Education and the appropriate State agency, to the extent feasible, to assist students in finding reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional charges.

Revised and approved by the Commission 11/8/2013

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