



EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE

For information, contact Institutional Effectiveness: (915) 831-6740

EE-3 Program Closure

APPROVED: December 11, 2008 **REVISED:** Year of last review: 2021

AUTHORIZING BOARD POLICY: EE

Classification: Administrative

Vice President or Associate Vice President: Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education

Designated Contact: Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education

OBJECTIVE: To establish processes and timelines to ensure that program closures follow a consistent, methodical plan and that faculty*, staff, students and appropriate College departments are notified within appropriate timelines. Current students in the program being closed will be given the opportunity to complete the program.

GENERAL:

I. Program Review Committee (PRC)

Each year, the PRC will make recommendations on whether the senior instructional administrators should review a program's strengths and weaknesses and the program's capacity to improve its service to students and the community. This procedure covers those programs whose administrative review, as recommended by the PRC, has led to the administrative decision of closure.

II. Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education

For programs that the PRC recommends for senior instructional administrative review, the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education will review the program's strengths and weaknesses and the program's capacity to improve its service to students and the community and make a determination regarding the status of the program. The Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education will forward his/her recommendation to the College President within two weeks of receiving the PRC's recommendation. This procedure covers those programs for which the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education makes the recommendation that the program be closed.

III. President

The College President will make the final decision regarding the closure of College programs. The final decisions related to program closures will normally be made by the end of the same semester in which the PRC made its recommendation. This procedure covers only those programs for which the President makes the decision that the program be closed.

IV. Faculty Credentials Review Committee (FCRC)

The Faculty Credentials Review Committee will examine the credentials of tenured faculty* employed in the program to be closed. The purpose of this review will be to determine whether affected faculty members possess the necessary qualifications to teach in other disciplines. The committee will meet with the faculty members' immediate supervisor and the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education to discuss the faculty qualifications. The committee will forward written recommendations regarding each faculty member's credentials to teach in other disciplines to the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education.

V. Administrative Decision to Close a Program

In rare instances, there may be circumstances under which a decision to close a program is made without going through the PRC. Examples include, but are not limited to, programs with a long history of extremely low enrollment, programs that do not meet accrediting agency requirements or programs for which no qualified faculty are available. Should such circumstances occur, the Dean/Director that oversees the program will document such a need and make a recommendation for program closure to the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education. If the Vice

*Note: The word "faculty" denotes instructors, counselors, and librarians.

President of Instruction and Workforce Education concurs with the recommendation and the program closure involves the potential reassignment or dismissal of a full-time, tenured faculty member, he/she will hold a meeting with the Chairperson and Chairperson Elect of the PRC to determine whether the recommendation should go before the full PRC for discussion. If there is agreement that the recommendation need not go before the PRC, the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education will forward their recommendation to the College President. The President will make the final decision regarding the closure of the program.

CLOSURE PROCESS:

I. Cessation of Enrollment in the Program

Once the decision to close a program has been made by the College President, affected students, faculty* and staff will be notified in writing of the decision. This notification should occur by the end of the semester in which the PRC makes its recommendation. All new enrollments into the program will cease effective with the President's decision. The Dean that oversees the program will notify the counselor coordinators and the Office of Admissions and Registration that students can no longer declare a major in the program.

II. Notification of Students

The Dean that oversees the program will request that the Institutional Research department provide a list of students meeting all of the following criteria:

- A. Students that have declared their major in the program.
- B. Students that have taken at least one program-specific course in the program.
- C. Students that have been actively enrolled in the College within the last year.

This list will include contact information so students may be notified of the program closure and be provided with information throughout the closure process. Once this list has been obtained, the Dean will work with the Counseling department to acquire the course histories of the identified students. Using this information, the Dean and program Coordinator will develop a comprehensive list of all courses needed by students in the program. The Dean will then determine the appropriate timeline to complete the program closure. This timeline will typically be one to three years. Factors the Dean will consider include the number of students in the program, the students' current level of program completion and the timeframe during which students can reasonably be expected to complete their studies.

III. Program Completion for Students Enrolled

Once the program closure timeframe is determined, the Dean and Coordinator will develop a final schedule of course offerings in the program. The Dean will ensure that students receive written notification of the final schedule of course offerings in time to register for the next semester. Courses specific to the affected program will be closed to general registration. Only students that appear on the list provided by the Institutional Research department will be allowed to register for these courses. In order to facilitate the students' successful completion of the program, one or more contact counselors will be assigned to work with students as they complete their coursework. In order to register for program classes, students must work with the identified contact counselor.

IV. Curriculum Office

The Dean will inform the Curriculum Office of the program closure and estimated timeline. The Curriculum Office will notify the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board of the institution's plan to close the program and the effective date of the program's termination. Additionally, the Curriculum Office will ensure that the program degree(s) and certificate(s) are removed from the El Paso Community College *Catalog*.

V. Consultation with Faculty*

During the semester immediately following the decision to close a program, the Dean will prepare a packet of credentials/qualifications regarding each affected tenured faculty member to present to the FCRC. As part of this preparation, the Dean will acquire a current copy of the faculty member's credentials folder and give the faculty member an opportunity to review it for completion. The faculty member will be allowed to add any additional documentation he or she believes will help in assessing his or her qualifications to teach in another area. The Dean and Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education will present each faculty member's qualifications to the FCRC for consideration and indicate any area(s) in which they believe the faculty member is qualified to teach. The FCRC will review the provided information and make a recommendation to the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education that indicates the areas in which they believe each faculty member is qualified. Based on this

recommendation, the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education will examine the District-wide need for faculty in the areas identified by the FCRC and determine if there is sufficient need to reassign affected faculty to these areas. In the event that a faculty member is not qualified to teach in another discipline or there is insufficient need to reassign an affected faculty member to another discipline, the faculty member may be dismissed in accordance with El Paso Community College Policy DM (Local).

VI. External Accreditation Agencies

If appropriate, external accreditation agency guidelines for program closure will be followed. These may require official notification of the accrediting agency, students, and affiliates. In such instances, the Dean will be responsible for verifying that all external requirements are met. The Dean will also work with the Vice President of Instruction and Workforce Education and the President to ensure that appropriate notification of a program's closure is submitted to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

VII. Monitoring of Remaining Students' Progress

During the time the program is being closed, the Dean and Coordinator will monitor students' progress and revise the final course schedule as needed. The Dean and Coordinator will ensure that the affected students are kept informed about issues related to the program closure.