

## H. Council Trenholm State Community College

POLICY NAME:	Teach-Out Policy
EFFECTIVE:	April 8, 2015
REVISED:	
APPROVED BY POLICY COMMITTEE:	Yes 4/8/2015
APPROVED BY PRESIDENT'S CABINET:	Yes 5-6-2015

### Teach-Out Policy When Closing an Instructional Site, Degree Program, or Certificate Program

#### A. Purpose

The decision to close an instructional site, degree program, or certificate program requires substantial planning and careful consultation with all those affected. Every effort should be made to inform everyone affected as fully as possible about the conditions leading to a decision of such importance, and all available information should be shared. As the immediate interests of current students and faculty are most directly affected, their present and future prospects require sensitive and timely attention and involvement. The college teach-out policy aims to protect the interests of students and faculty and to satisfy the requirements established for the college by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) during this process.

#### B. Definitions

1. *Instructional Site.* The SACSCOC defines an instructional site as an institutional location that provides fifty percent or more of at least one program.
2. *Degree Program.* A degree program as an organized curriculum leading to a degree in an area of study recognized as an academic discipline by the higher education community, as demonstrated by assignment of a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code by the National Center for Educational Statistics or as demonstrated by the existence of similar degree programs at other colleges and universities.
3. *Certificate Program.* Broadly speaking, a certificate is a coherent course of study leading to the awarding of a credential. A certificate usually has the sense of a document certifying the status or accomplishments of the bearer or fulfillment of conditions, which authorize the bearer to act or practice in a specified way, often in business or professional settings. The college defines two types of certificates:
  - a. *A college credit certificate program* is an organized curriculum of college credit courses offered as a distinct area of study that leads to specific educational or occupational goals, and for which the college awards a certificate, diploma, or similar form of recognition upon completion. SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.4.4 refers to "certificates or other professional education outside a collegiate degree program." Thus, certificates should be viewed as professional in nature.

Further:

- 1) A college credit certificate is not intended as a degree, but as a supplement to a student's specific educational goals or professional career preparation.
  - 2) Completion of a college credit certificate generally is related to a specific field, and usually associated with a limited set of occupations.
  - 3) College credit certificates prepare students for certain types of industry licensing, and to practice in or master technical aspects of an occupation.
  - 4) College credit certificates shall be noted on a student's transcript as an official credential of the college.
  - 5) College credit certificate programs drawn from the existing approved curriculum for a degree program do not require separate approval by SACSCOC. However, to offer such a certificate at a new site does require notice or approval of the site by SACSCOC.
  - 6) A college credit certificate that is a significant departure from previously approved programs must be noticed or approved in advance by SACSCOC.
4. *Educational Program.* A degree program or college credit certificate program.
  5. *Date of program termination.* The date on which the educational program is closed permanently to admissions.
  6. *Date of program closure.* The date on which the last student in teach-out has completed the educational program.
  7. *Program Suspension.* A degree program that is temporarily not accepting new admissions and is placed on inactive status on the degree program inventory maintained by the Dean of Instruction. A program may be temporarily suspended for a period not to exceed 2 academic years to allow for academically necessary reviews and/or revisions, in order to address issues such as curriculum revision, faculty recruitment, or enrollment problems. The President may reactivate a temporarily suspended program. A program shall not be temporarily suspended if it adversely affects any faculty members or students associated with or enrolled in the program.
  8. *Notification.* A letter from an institution's chief executive officer, or his/her designated representative, to SACSCOC President summarizing a proposed change, providing the intended implementation date, and listing the complete physical address, if the change involves the termination of an off-campus site or branch campus. The policy and procedures for reporting and review of institutional substantive change are outlined in the document Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges and the College Substantive Change Policy.
  9. *SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison.* The individual at the institution who is responsible for ensuring the timely submission of annual institutional profiles and other reports as requested by the Commission in the years between accreditation. With the President and the Dean of Instruction, the Accreditation Liaison is responsible for the accuracy of all information

submitted to the Commission and for ensuring ongoing compliance with Commission standards, policies, and procedures beyond reaffirmation.

10. *Teach-Out Plan.* The written plan and subsequent process by which the College provides instructional and academic support services to students enrolled at a site that has been closed and/or in an educational program that has been discontinued. The teach-out process often extends well beyond the termination date (the date on which the site or program is closed permanently to admissions) to allow time for enrolled students to complete their programs in a reasonable amount of time. The plan must provide for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides fifty percent or more of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study. The plan may include a teach-out agreement between institutions.

11. *Teach-Out Agreement.* A written agreement between accredited institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students if one of those institutions stops offering an educational program before all students enrolled in that program complete the program.

### **C. Policy**

1) In accordance with Federal regulations, the College is required to submit a teach-out plan to SACSCOC for approval if any of the following occurs:

- a. The institution notifies the Commission that it intends to cease operations entirely or close a location that provides at least 50% of at least one educational program.
- b. The Commission terminates accreditation or the candidacy of an institution.
- c. The USDOE notifies the Commission that it has initiated an emergency action against an institution or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV, Higher Education Act program.
- d. A State Licensing or authorizing agency notifies the Commission that an institution's license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.

More specifically, if the College decides to close an educational program, approved instructional site, or the entire institution, SACSCOC requires that the College choose one of the following options:

- e. Execute a Teach-Out Plan. The teach-out option occurs when the institution "teaches out" currently enrolled students; no longer permanently admits students to programs; and terminates the educational program, the operations of an approved instructional site or the operations of an institution.
- f. Develop and implement a Teach-Out Agreement. The teach-out agreement option occurs when the institution enters into a contract with another institution or organization to teach out the educational programs or program.

- 2) Teach-out plans and teach-out agreements must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation. To be approved, a teach-out plan must include the following information:
  - a. Dates of termination and closure;
  - b. An explanation of how affected parties (students, faculty, staff) will be informed of the impending closure;
  - c. An explanation of how students will be helped to complete their programs of study with minimal disruption or additional expense;
  - d. Signed copies of teach-out agreements with other institutions, if any;
  - e. How faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment; and
  - f. If closing an institution, arrangement for the storing of student records, disposition of final financial resources and other assets.

The teach-out plan should make appropriate distinctions prospective and currently enrolled students. The teach-out period and teach-out plan will vary by instructional site, or degree program and must be determined and approved in advance at all required levels, as specified in "Section D. Responsibilities" below.

As soon as the decision to close is made, the institution should provide to SACSCOC: (1) notification of the intended closing of a program, site, or institution and (2) a teach-out plan for approval (including any teach-out agreements with other institutions).

SACSCOC may request additional information for the teach-out plan before approving the teach-out plan.

### 3) *Affected Groups*

- a. *Prospective students* with active applications awaiting admission decisions to an affected instructional site, or degree program should be immediately advised to seek alternative majors by the appropriate unit, generally the academic department or program. Prospective students should be given as much time as practicable to seek alternative majors. The academic department or program also should immediately suspend admission of new students.
- b. *Currently enrolled students* should be given a high priority in College efforts to enable them complete their degree and/or certificate programs. An academic plan should be developed for each student that enables him/her to complete the curricular program requirements within the teach-out period. Students should expect to take a sufficient number of courses each semester, including summers, to enable them to complete all requirements within the teach-out period. The teach-out period, typically, will continue for no more than two academic years following the date on which the notice of

termination is given to students. Programs, on a case-by-case basis, will determine the necessary length of a teach-out program. Students who do not make adequate progress on their academic plan for teach-out will be advised into another major. If a course required for the degree and/or certificate is not offered in the teach-out period, students may make arrangements, with the department's consent, to take the course at another institution as a transient student and transfer the credit, or to arrange with the department to complete the requirements in some other academically appropriate fashion. Students are required to have ongoing contact with their academic advisors during the teach-out period to ensure that their academic plans are current and consistent with the projected course offerings.

- c. *Students previously admitted* into a terminated educational instructional site, or degree program who are not currently enrolled shall have their requests for readmission made on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, the decision to readmit shall consider the ability of the student to complete the program within the teach-out period, the ability of the department or program to offer needed courses within the teach-out period, and the student's previous performance within the terminated educational program.
- d. *Faculty* should be involved in and informed of plans to terminate an instructional site, or degree/certificate program at the earliest possible stage of consideration. Faculty shall be informed of any potential layoff considerations at the earliest possible stage of consideration and be kept apprised of recommendations regarding plans to terminate an instructional site, degree program, or certificate program.

#### **D. Responsibilities**

- 1) *The Dean of Instruction* (and relevant Division Chair) shall inform and involve affected faculty and students at the earliest possible stage of consideration. Once the decision to pursue closure of an educational program or site has been made, the Dean shall forward a proposal to the President, which must be consistent with and allow for the reporting timelines required by the SACSCOC as reflected in College Substantive Change Policy. (See Appendix A "A Summary of Implementation Plan for Sample Program Termination.") The proposal should be developed with the involvement of faculty and students if possible and should outline the:
  - a. Nature of the program,
  - b. Reasons for termination,
  - c. Number of students currently enrolled,
  - d. Progression statistics of students in the program,
  - e. Resources used to offer the program,
  - f. Financial savings, if any, realized from the termination,
  - g. Explanation of how any students enrolled in the program will be helped to complete their program,
  - h. Assessment of whether any faculty will be adversely affected by termination, and
  - i. Explanation of how affected individuals will be informed of the planned termination.

The Dean of Instruction should be available to brief the President and the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison of the pending decision. The Dean of Instruction will develop and coordinate presentations on the proposal to the Curriculum Team and the President's Cabinet.

Once both bodies have approved requests for approval of termination of the program or site, the Dean of Instruction shall insure the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison is notified and the Liaison provides appropriate notification of SACSCOC.

The Dean of Instruction and Division Chair shall develop a teach-out plan (see Appendix B, "Teach-Out Academic Plan"), and implement the notification elements of the plan for students and faculty. Appendix C provides a general summary used to brief faculty and students as "Student and Faculty General Communication Summary." Both current and prospective students should be notified as soon as practicable (see Appendix D "Sample Current Student Notification" and Appendix E, "Sample Not Formally Admitted and Transfer Student Notification Letter"). The Dean of Instruction is responsible for on-going monitoring and reporting on implementation of the teach-out plans. A monitoring report should be used to provide periodic reports to the President and SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison on the status of the teach-out. The monitoring report shall also be used to advise students of their progress in the teach-out. See Appendix F, "Sample Program Monitoring Report."

The Dean of Instruction will insure all affected parties are notified of the pending decision. The affected parties must include the faculty, students, the Dean of Students, the Office of Admissions, the Office of Financial Aid, the Office of Institutional Research, the Department of Postsecondary Education, and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

2) *The President* shall review the initial proposal to terminate an educational program or site forwarded by the Dean of Instruction. The President will determine whether any faculty will be adversely affected by termination, and act to implement provisions for said termination. The President will work with the Dean of Instruction on any implications of the termination that affect faculty, students, or equipment.

3) *The SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison* will be informed by the Dean of Instruction of pending decisions to consider termination of an educational program or site. Once the Curriculum Team and President's Cabinet have approved a proposal for termination *at a date conditional upon SACSCOC notification and approval*, the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will work with the Dean of Instruction to insure the materials needed for notification and approval by SACSCOC are developed. The SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will notify SACSCOC promptly of the proposal to terminate and upon receipt of approval by SACSCOC. The SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison will maintain a record of the SACSCOC.

**Appendix A**

**Summary of Implementation Plan for Sample Program Termination**

<b>TIME PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	Decision made to terminate program
<b>Feb - March 20xx</b>	Division Chair and Dean of Instruction Develop Teach-Out Plan
<b>Feb – April 20xx</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Program Coordinator and/or Division Chair sends letters to all affected students eligible for teach-out of terminated programs. Students asked to bring signed letter to departmental advisor.</li> <li>2. Provide list of students contacted to Dean of Instruction and academic advisors.</li> <li>3. Continuous communication until all students contacted and individual academic maps developed.</li> </ol>
<b>March- April 20xx</b>	Develop monitoring process to be implemented by Dean of Instruction beginning date with regular monitoring reports to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers, names of students in teach-out</li> <li>• Confirmation of affected students receiving letters, advising, individualized academic plans Progress of students in the teach-out phase</li> </ul>
<b>April 20xx</b>	Program Coordinator provides individualized academic maps to affected students and distributes answers to Frequently Asked Questions (e.g., completion of "I" grades, status of part-time students, readmission possibilities, etc.)
<b>April 20xx</b>	Dean of Instruction oversees collection and filing of student acknowledgement of termination letters.  Program notifies any appropriate national disciplinary accrediting body.  SACSCOC Liaison notifies SACSCOC.  SACSCOC Provides approval of termination.

## Appendix B

### Teach-Out Academic Plan

**Program:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Termination Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Courses During Teach Out Period – Fall 20xx – Spring 20xx**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Fall 20xx</b>	<b>Spring 20xx</b>	<b>Fall 20xx</b>	<b>Spring 20xx</b>
Sample Required Course 1. XYZ101	2 Sections (Instructor x and Instructor z)	1 section (Instructor x)	1 section (Instructor x)	Not offered
Sample Required Course 2. XYZ102	2 Sections (Instructor x and Instructor z)	1 section (Instructor x)	1 section (Instructor x)	1 section (Instructor x)
Sample Required Course 3. XYZ103	2 Sections (Instructor x and Instructor z)	1 section (Instructor x)	1 section (Instructor x)	1 section (Instructor x)
Sample Required Course 4. XYZ104	2 Sections (Instructor x and Instructor z)	Not Offered	1 section (Instructor x)	1 section (Instructor x)
Sample Required Course 5. XYZ201	2 Sections (Instructor x and Instructor z)	1 section (Instructor x)	Not Offered	1 section (Instructor x)
Sample Required Course 6. XYZ202	2 Sections (Instructor x and Instructor z)	1 section (Instructor x)	1 section (Instructor x)	Not Offered
Sample Required Course 7. XYZ203	2 Sections (Instructor x and Instructor z)	1 section (Instructor x)	Not Offered	1 section (Instructor x)

## Appendix C

### Sample Program Termination Student and Faculty General Communication Summary

#### Currently Enrolled Students

At the time the decision was made to terminate the sample program, 20 students were enrolled. An additional 12 were admitted, as planned, during spring 20xx. This admission brought the total number of students enrolled in the program to 32. 17 of those students are on track to graduate at the end of spring 20xx. As a result, 15 students are directly impacted by the decision. The Monitoring Report attached has the information on those students.

Each of these students was notified of the change and has been in for advising and conversations regarding their ability to complete the program. All of the students are expected to complete the program no later than spring 20xx. Because the program will continue to offer the majority of courses traditionally required for the terminated degree/certificate program and is committed to completing these 15 students, no formal academic map was initially developed for these students. In light of the SACSCOC requirements, the department is contacting each of the students and asking them to come in to sign the letter below and to develop a formal academic map. These academic maps will be kept on file by the departmental advisor and utilized to: 1) advise the students each semester, 2) track the Teach-Out Plan, and 3) prepare the monitoring report. It is anticipated that these sessions will be completed by April 20xx.

#### Not-Formally-Admitted and Transfer Students

At the time, the decision was made to terminate the program, 110 students were designated as Not-Formally-Admitted (NFA), in the sample program. These students received the attached letter and were invited to meet with the departmental advisor to answer any questions. These students have been moved to the NFA in another sample program and are being advised on the application and admissions process of the other sample program.

Additionally, the Program has been in touch with Admissions regarding transfer students. Contact information for admitted students interested in the program to be terminated is to be sent to the department and the attached letter forwarded to them.

#### Overall Student Communication

The Department created a FAQ site to address student concerns. The site can be found at:  
<http://www.trenholmstate.edu/xxxxxxxx>

For information purposes, all students in the Department were notified of the programmatic change.

The Program has been in touch with the Dean of Instruction and Dean of Students to make sure that the Program Guide and Academic Map were updated to indicate that the program was being terminated.

## Appendix D

### Sample "Current Student Notification"

February xx, 20xx

Student  
Address  
City, AL XXXX

RE: XXXX Program

Dear Student,

Trenholm State, with the involvement of the xxxx Program administration, faculty, staff and advisory committee, has decided to discontinue the xxxx certificate/degree program. The program inactivation will be effective with the fall 20xx term year.

If you are not currently an active student in this program of study, you should contact an academic advisor in order to correct your College record. If you are pursuing this program of study, the following option is available to you.

The xxxxx Program will be closed to any new student enrollment effective fall term 20xx. You will be permitted to continue in the program; however, you must complete all of your required course work by the spring term 20xx. After this date, no further course work in this program of study will be offered. You should contact your academic advisor (xxxxxxx, 334-420-4xxx) as soon as possible to be sure that your records are correct and up to date. They will be able to advise you in more detail and make suggestions concerning future academic and career decisions.

I encourage you to consider your academic goals and explore your options with an advisor. I wish you well in your future academic pursuits at Trenholm State.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean of Instruction

cc:     , Dean of Students  
       , Division Chair

I have received and read the above letter.

Student signature

Date

## Appendix E

### Sample

#### "Not Formally Admitted and Transfer Student Notification Letter"

February xx, 20xx

Student  
Address  
City, AL XXXXX

RE: XXXX Program

Dear Student,

Thank you for your interest in Trenholm State's xxxxx Program; however, with the involvement of the xxxxx Program administration, faculty, staff and advisory committee, have decided to discontinue the xxxxx certificate/degree program. The program inactivation will be effective with the fall 20xx term year.

We wish to invite you to explore opportunities in similar programs at Trenholm State such as xxxxx. The advisor(s) for these programs are..... and may be contacted as follows:

I encourage you to consider your academic goals and explore your options with an advisor. I wish you well in your future academic pursuits at Trenholm State.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean of Instruction

cc: , Dean of Students  
, Division Chair

**Appendix F  
Sample Program Monitoring Report**

<b>Program:</b>		<b>Program Coordinator:</b>	
<b>Number of Students Still Enrolled in Program:</b>		<b>Degree Level of Program:</b>	
<b>Report Date:</b>		<b>Total Credit Hours Required for Award:</b>	
<b>Individual Completing Report:</b>			

	<b>Student #</b>	<b>Student Name</b>	<b>Number of Program SCH Earned as of xxxxx, 20xx</b>	<b>Number of Program SCH Needed to Complete</b>	<b>Program Termination Letter Sent</b>	<b>Signed Response from Student</b>	<b>Academic Map Provided to Student</b>	<b>Last Semester of Student's Enrollment</b>	<b>Date Student Completed Requirements or Other Actions Regarding Student</b>
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2									
3									
4									
5									
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8									
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11									
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