

# Samford University

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**Applicable to:** All Academic Units

**Responsibility for Administration:** Provost/Executive Vice President

**Title:** Academic Program Creation, Modification, Deactivation & Termination

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## I. Scope

This policy and procedure provides for the establishment, modification, deactivation, and termination of an academic program, degree, or major. This document is intended to be used under circumstances that suggest initiating, modifying or discontinuing academic degree programs, options, or certificate programs at Samford University. Programs award academic credit, are approved by the faculty and the administration, and may include majors, on-campus, off-campus, and distance learning programs.

New academic programs are those concluding with the conferral of a degree at any level in any field or a major not previously offered. Program modifications include the transfer of an existing, approved program to a new site different from the current, authorized locations; the change in an existing program's delivery to that of more than 25% online; the addition of new concentrations, tracks, options, specializations or cognates offered within an existing major that totals more than 18 credit hours; substantive changes in program goal, purpose or target audience that do not require a change in the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code; a change in the degree designation of a program when the change involves a significant shift in the program's purpose (e.g. BA to BFA, MS to MBA); or a reconfiguration of a number of existing degrees into a single degree (e.g. BA in French, BA in German and BA in Spanish collapsed into a BA in Modern Languages). Program deactivation is the temporary suspension of an academic program, degree, or major. Program termination involves the closure of an academic program, degree, or major.

## II. General Considerations

- All new major or minor degree programs, concentrations or tracks, regardless of the level, delivery method or location, require approval by the respective department, school curriculum committee (SCC), University Curriculum Committee (UCC), Provost/Executive Vice President, Vice President for Business Affairs, President, and the Board of Trustees.
- All new degree programs which will provide more than 25% instruction via alternative, online, or distance delivery must ensure their program is consistent with and comparable to the academic standards and quality of traditional face-to-face instructional activity.
- All significant program modifications must follow the same process and review as new academic program proposals.
- All certificate programs requiring 18 or more credit hours must follow the same format and criteria as new academic program proposals.
- No program may be publicized as an approved program in the University Catalog or in any other manner prior to approval.
- New program implementation may be deferred for up to two academic years following approval of the program. After that time, if the program is not active, a new program proposal must be resubmitted and reauthorized.
- For collaborative, dual or joint programs, a "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) that clearly delineates program responsibilities (i.e. admission, registration and enrollment processes, records etc.) and fiscal arrangements among all participants must be developed and approved concurrently with the program proposal. The MOU should be signed by the appropriate administrators, and be submitted with the final program proposal.
- Deactivation is for a period not to exceed two academic years to allow for program review, to consider enrollment problems, to deal with faculty shortages, or for other similar reasons. If the program is not

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reactivated by the end of the second academic year, the Provost should take action to terminate the program. Within this deactivation, a teach-out plan for the program must be submitted.

- A deactivated program remains an authorized program at the University, but new students are no longer permitted to enroll.
- A deactivated program will not be listed in the University Catalog.
- The Provost/Executive Vice President, in collaboration with the Academic Affairs Faculty Senate Committee, will establish and maintain procedures designed to implement these policies.

### **III. Process for Establishment or Modification of an Academic Program**

The establishment of a new academic program requires careful deliberation that includes an evaluation and justification of need and the potential for making a meaningful contribution. The academic program proposal should address the following issues which are relevant to the deliberations during the planning process:

- Fill a documented need
- Be compatible with the mission, role, and scope of Samford University
- Anticipate program demand and productivity
- State relationship of proposed program to existing programs at institution
- Outline proposed curriculum
- Delineate expected program revenues and expenditures in a multiyear proforma.
- Outline need for personnel, facilities, library holdings, marketing and other essentials
- Propose expected implementation date

#### **A. Timeline for Review of a New or Modified Academic Program**

The timeline to be followed for the review and approval of a new academic program or significant program modifications will be posted on the Provost/Executive Vice President and University Curriculum Committee websites.

#### **B. Creation or Modification of an Academic Program Process Phases**

The phases of the submission, review and implementation process are as follows:

- Phase 1 – Initial Conceptualization and School Review
  - a. The School Dean proposes the new program concept and/or significant program change to the Provost.
  - b. The School Dean and/or designee (e.g. Associate Dean, Department Chair, Faculty Member) reviews the approved program concept and/or significant program change with the Associate Provost with particular regard to the process, timeline and forms, and to determine if Board of Trustee and SACS notification and approval are warranted.
  - c. The School Dean and/or designee initiates completion of the program forms, and moves the new program and/or significant program change through their respective school's curriculum committee for review and approval.
  - d. The School Dean and/or designee completes and submits the program proposal to the Associate Provost by the deadline noted on the timeline.
- Phase 2 – University Academic and Administrative Review
  - a. The School Dean and/or designee meets with the Provost, Associate Provost, Assistant Provost and the VP of Business Affairs (or their designee) to review the completed program proposal with particular emphasis on the academic and administrative support, and financial viability anticipated.
  - b. Feedback will be solicited from affected faculty, students, and staff. The proposal may be modified by the proposal's initiator in response to feedback.

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- c. The School Dean and/or designee meets with representatives from the administrative units of admissions, bursars, financial aid, institutional effectiveness, student records, and technology services to review the completed program proposal. Emphasis is placed on the administrative processes to admit and track program students, review financial aid capabilities and billing needs.
- d. The School Dean and/or designee submits the appropriate forms to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and Associate Provost by the dates noted on the Provost and UCC websites.
- e. Once approval by the University Curriculum Committee and Associate Provost are acquired, the proposal will be sent to the Provost for the next phase.
- Phase 3 – Trustee and Accreditation Review
  - a. The Provost brings the proposed program to a Board of Trustees meeting.
  - b. The President or designee sends a letter of intent and a substantive change prospectus (if warranted) to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) for review and approval.
  - c. The School Dean and/or designee sends a letter of intent and relevant documentation to the appropriate professional accrediting agency for review and approval.
- Phase 4 – Implementation of New/Modified Program
  - a. The new or modified program must be implemented within two years of the approval date.
  - b. A program not implemented within said time period must resubmit a program proposal using the procedures in this policy.
  - c. Internal and external to campus notification of the new or modified program will be facilitated by the respective School Dean and/or designee and University Advancement.

## **IV. Deactivation or Termination of an Academic Program**

The deactivation or termination of an academic program requires careful deliberation that includes an evaluation and justification of the program's current contribution to the University. The academic program proposal should address the following issues which are relevant to the deliberations during the review process:

- Provide rationale(s) for deactivation or termination of said program
- Describe compatibility with the mission, role, and scope of Samford University
- State relationship of program to existing programs at institution
- Outline plan for students to complete their work in the program or provide an alternative way for students to complete their program (Teach-out plan)
- Delineate expected expenditures during the deactivation or termination of a program
- Outline plan for personnel (faculty & staff), facilities, library holdings, marketing and other essentials during and after program deactivation or termination
- Propose expected deactivation or termination date

### **A. Timeline for Review for Deactivation or Termination of an Academic Program**

The timeline to be followed for the review, deactivation and/or termination of an academic program will be posted on the Provost/Executive Vice President and University Curriculum Committee websites.

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## B. Deactivation or Termination of an Academic Program Process Phases

The phases of the review, deactivation or termination process are as follows:

- Phase I – Initial Conceptualization and Program Proposal Review
  - a. Proposals for deactivation or termination of a program may be initiated by the faculty, a School Dean, or the Provost/Executive Vice President. Within the proposal, a teach-out plan must be submitted that includes:
    - i. providing support to those students in the respective program; and
    - ii. identifying the plan for reassignment, retirement and/or termination of faculty and/or staff in the affected program.
  - b. The School Dean submits a letter of intent to deactivate or terminate an academic program to the Provost.
  - c. The School Dean and/or designee (e.g. associate dean, department chair, faculty member) submits the final proposal to the Associate Provost with particular regard to the process, timeline and forms, including notification of SACS and other relevant accrediting organizations.
- Phase 2 – University Academic and Administrative Review
  - a. The School Dean and/or designee meets with the Provost, Associate Provost, Assistant Provost and the VP of Business Affairs (or their designee) to review the completed program proposal with particular emphasis on the academic and administrative support anticipated.
  - b. Feedback will be solicited from affected faculty, students, and staff. The proposal may be modified by the proposal's initiator in response to feedback.
  - c. The School Dean and/or designee presents a summary of the proposal to deactivate or terminate an academic program to the Academic Affairs Faculty Senate committee for their respective review and approval.
  - d. Approval by the University Curriculum Committee with recommendations by the Academic Affairs Faculty Senate Committee will move the proposal to the Faculty Senate and General Faculty for review and approval.
  - e. The School Dean and/or designee meets with representatives from the administrative units of admissions, bursars, financial aid, human resources, institutional effectiveness, student records, and technology services to review the completed program proposal. Emphasis is placed on the administrative processes to track program students, review financial aid capabilities and billing needs.
- Phase 3 – Trustee and Regional Accreditation Review
  - a. The Provost and the president will bring the proposed program to be deactivated or terminated to the Board of Trustees.
  - b. The President or designee sends a letter of intent and a substantive change prospectus (if warranted) to the SACS for review and approval.
  - c. The School Dean and/or designee sends a letter of intent and relevant documentation to the appropriate professional accrediting agency for review and approval.
- Phase 4 – Deactivation or Termination of the Academic Program
  - a. The deactivation of an academic program is for a period not to exceed two academic years to allow for program review, to consider enrollment problems, to deal with faculty shortages or for other similar reasons.
  - b. The deactivated program is not to be published in the university catalog.
  - c. If not reinstated, a deactivated program will be terminated.
  - d. The Provost may appoint an oversight committee to monitor the implementation of the termination process, and safeguard the interests of the affected faculty, students, and staff.
  - e. Internal and external to campus notification of the deactivated or terminated program will be facilitated by the respective School Dean and/or designee, and University Advancement.