

Ch5-s6-02
Academic Program Prioritization, Revitalization and Rationalization

Responsible Authority:	Vice-President Academic
Approval Authority:	Senior Team
Date First Approved:	2020-September-03
Date Last Reviewed:	2021-September-03
Mandatory Review Date:	2024-September-03

PURPOSE

Academic program prioritization, revitalization and rationalization are intended to maintain and enhance academic programming quality while limiting adverse impacts on student access. Demographic shifts, new technologies, changes in employment trends, and global competition will lead to changing student markets and the need for changes to the academic programming. Therefore, careful attention to on-going program assessment, enhancement and revitalization is necessary. As well, the suspension or cancellation of inefficient or ineffective programs must be considered as part of the effort to maintain relevant and strong academic programming.

SCOPE

All programs offered at Confederation College are reviewed annually.

DEFINITIONS

This includes an explanation of terms and abbreviations used within the policy and procedure.

Word/Term	Definition
Prioritization	The activity or process in which an academic institution assesses and prioritizes its programs for the purpose of strategically allocating its funding and resources.
Revitalization	The Annual Program Review, Comprehensive Review, and Financial Viability Review are all processes that lead to improved programs that respond and can be nimble to demographic shifts, new technologies, changes in employment trends, global competition and the needs of our students and employers. Comprehensive Program Reviews will also occur based on a cyclical review of all programs.
Rationalization	The process to improve College academic offerings through assessment based on fact and logic leading to modification or elimination of programs or courses that do not match with the needs of employers and students in areas served by the College.
Alternate Delivery	An intake or section that is in addition or an alternative to the standard face to face delivery of the program.

POLICY

This policy describes a prioritization, revitalization and rationalization model that objectively assesses and prioritizes academic programs based on established criteria that considers the need and demand for programs, their operational efficiency and effectiveness, and alignment with college priorities, as well as the quality of the programs.

1. All programs will be assessed and revitalized annually using the Annual Program Review (APR), Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) and Program Health Checklist set out in [Appendix 1](#).
2. The APR and Program Health Checklist may be modified from time to time.
3. Programs that achieve low program rankings as a result of the assessment will be identified for Revitalization (Comprehensive Review), a Financial Viability review, or Rationalization (suspension or cancellation).
4. Programs not identified for rationalization may, nevertheless, have significant performance shortfalls with respect to one or more of the performance measures. These programs and their performance shortfalls will be identified. The Academic School will develop a plan to address the program performance shortfalls.
5. The Registrar's Office will work with the Vice President Academic to create an annual report regarding Program Mix to summarize the Annual Program Review and Program Health Checklists, presenting the recommendations to Senior Team. Based on this, the identification of programs with respect to rationalization, revitalization, financial and performance shortfalls will be confirmed by Senior Team, based on recommendations by the Vice President Academic in consultation with the Deans and Registrar.
6. The identification of programs with respect to rationalization, revitalization and performance shortfalls and the resulting development of plans and supporting budgets and their approval will follow the schedule set out in [Appendix 2](#). This schedule may be amended from time to time.
7. The program plan to address revitalization or performance shortfalls must be incorporated into the next immediate planning and budgeting cycle. See [Appendix 2](#).
8. A program assigned to revitalization will be reviewed as part of the annual Prioritization, Revitalization and Rationalization process in the following year. From that review, the program may be removed from Revitalization, reassigned to Revitalization, or rationalized (suspended or cancelled). A program reassigned to Revitalization for an additional year, must either be removed from Revitalization or rationalized following the review.
9. When a program is recommended for rationalization (suspension or cancellation), a suspension/cancellation plan must be developed by the Vice President Academic, approved by Senior Team, and implemented per the schedule in [Appendix 2](#).
10. The college will follow the Ministry of Colleges and Universities Program Suspension and Cancellation Operating Procedure – Minister's Binding Policy.

Intake Suspension (Exceptional Circumstances)

1. By January 15th of each year, the Vice President Academic, Registrar, and the Deans will review student applications to identify programs that are at risk for low enrolment and that should be considered for intake suspension.
2. In some circumstances, decisions may be made after the January 15th date where enrolment (confirmations/payments) or delivery of programming is not viable. All efforts will be made to make decisions before this date and, if this is not possible, limit the impact on students.
3. The Dean will bring forward a recommendation for program suspension along with a transition plan to the Vice President, Academic based on a review with the Vice President Academic.
4. Upon approval, The Vice President, Academic will present the decisions for Intake Suspension to Senior Team for final decision.
5. Following a Senior Team decision to suspend an intake, the Office of the Vice President, Academic will notify the appropriate Academic Dean/Assoc. Dean and the Registrar's Office.
 - a. The Dean/Assoc. Dean will
 - i. Implement the transition plan for the suspended program
 - ii. Notify faculty and arrange alternative teaching assignments in accordance with the collective agreement
 - iii. Notify the Program Advisory Committee (PAC) of the decision
 - iv. Notify the timetabling personnel regarding faculty loading/timetable changes
 - v. Inform students currently in the program of the time period for completing the program.
6. The Vice President, Academic will present the Intake Suspension(s) to the Board of Governors for their approval at the March meeting.
7. The Vice President, Academic will ensure that there is adherence to contractual protocols with respect to the effect of these decisions on academic bargaining unit members and any other relevant parties.
8. The Registrar's Office will notify all applicants and offer other program options.

Alternate Delivery Suspension

Intake suspensions of programs deemed as alternate delivery will follow the process outlined below –

1. The Dean will review all pertinent factors in consultation with faculty and Registrar's Office and bring forward to the Vice President, Academic a recommendation for the suspension of the intake for the alternate delivery of a program.

2. The Vice President, Academic will approve or deny the request.
3. Upon approval, the Office of the Vice President, Academic will notify the Registrar's Office to initiate the appropriate set of actions to suspend the intake of the program delivery in question.
4. Decisions for the suspension of *alternate deliveries* of programs can be made up to 4 weeks in advance of the intake semester.

Program Rationalization: Suspension or Cancellation (prior to application cycle)

1. When a program rationalization (suspension or cancellation) has been supported by Senior Team on the recommendation from the Vice President Academic, the follow steps will be taken:
 - a. The Vice-President Academic will provide recommendations for program suspensions/cancellations to the Board of Governors for approval.
 - b. The Vice President Academic will notify the Dean, Program Coordinator, Registrar and Marketing of the decision of the Board of Governors to suspend/cancel a program.
 - c. The Dean will notify the Chair of the appropriate Program Advisory Committee of its decision to suspend the program.
 - d. The Registrar's Office will notify the Ontario College Application Service of the program suspension.
 - e. The Dean will inform students currently in the program of the time period for completing the program.
 - f. The President's Office will notify Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) of the program suspension or cancellation.

Financial Viability Review

1. The Financial Viability review will be conducted by the identified Academic School, under the direction of the Dean.
2. The purpose of the Financial Viability review is to identify steps to be taken to improve the program Net Contribution and, ultimately, move the program to a position of long-term financial viability, demonstrated by the program having a positive Net Contribution.
3. The membership of the Financial Viability review team should include the Dean or Assoc. Dean, Program Coordinator, Regional Director (if applicable), Dean of International (if applicable), and Finance department.
4. The report shall be submitted to the Vice President Academic through the schedule set out in [Appendix 2](#) and presented by the Vice President Academic to Senior Team.
5. The Dean will be responsible for acting upon the approved recommendations from the Financial Viability review and providing an annual update until the outcomes identified are achieved.

6. A program failing to identify a plan to address the negative Net contribution within a year will be eligible for Revitalization or suspension following the next Program Prioritization, Revitalization and Rationalization review.
7. Programs which have been previously revitalized (within the last 5 years) will not be eligible to engage in the revitalization process again unless approved by the Vice President Academic and Senior Team.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Forms that are generated by the procedure should be listed and included as an appendix.

[Appendix 1](#) [Program Health Checklist](#)

[Appendix 2](#) [Annual Cycle](#)

RELATED POLICIES

Minister's Binding Policy - Program Suspension and Cancellation: Operating Procedure

Ch5-s6-01 Program Review Policy

Ch5-s6-08 New Program Development Policy

RELATED MATERIALS

Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service - College Quality Assurance Audit Process Standards and Requirements

Ontario Qualifications Framework

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board's Manual for Ontario Colleges

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Confederation College wishes to acknowledge the work of Lambton College, Fanshawe College, Cambrian College, for their contributions to the development of this policy.

Ch5-s6-02: APPENDIX 1 Program Health Checklist

Program Health Checklist

1. The performance of a program relative to each performance measure will be calculated using data for either the previous or current year and historical data.
2. The following calculations will determine the program prioritization.
 - a. For each performance measure for each program, a percentage value will be calculated that reflects program achievement of the target for the performance measure.
 - b. A weight reflecting relative importance will be assigned to each performance measure and used in the calculation of the program score.
 - c. The program score will then be calculated as the weighted mean of the performance measure percentages.
 - d. The rank ordering of the programs will inform program prioritization.
3. The following program performance measures and weights, with associated criteria, will be applied to each program.

Key Quality Indicators			
Title	Weighting	Title	Weighting
Application Demand	5%	Five Year Financial Trend	10%
Enrollment Demand	5%	Capital Requirements of Program	3%
Enrollment Trend	5%	Faculty To Student Ratio	2%
Labour Market Information	5%	Contribution Per Student	5%
Graduation Rate Year 1 of Program	9%*	Program Availability	5%
Graduation Rate Year 2 of Program		Program Delivery Model	5%
Graduation Rate Year 3 of Program		Course Outlines	2%
Program Retention Rate	3%	Course Level Learning Outcomes	5%
Learning Experience Satisfaction	2%	Indigenous Learning Outcomes	5%
Student Satisfaction	2%	Assessment Aligns with Outcomes	2%
Graduate Satisfaction (Ministry KPI)	2%	Facility	5%
Employer Engagement	5%	Learning Management System	3%
Current Financial Viability	5%	Total	100%

The Program Health Checklist may be reviewed and refined annually at the beginning of each cycle.

A Rubric detailing the weighting is part of the Annual Program Review.

* Will be distributed across program years (if more than a 1-year program)

Annual Cycle

1. May – first week – Program Health Checklist are created and reviewed by Vice-President Academic and Registrar. Programs are identified for rationalization or revitalization (initial assignment or re-assignment) and the addressing of financial viability or performance shortfalls and presented to Senior Team for decision. Discussion may take place with the Deans, Assoc. Deans, Coordinators and Faculty, where and if appropriate.
2. May – second week - The Annual Program Review and Health Checklist - with the most current data, analysis, and ratings - is provided by the Registrar's Office (Institutional Research and Quality Assurance) for each program to the Academic Schools via the Deans.
3. June – second week - Programs identified for Revitalization (Comprehensive Review) and financial viability reviews will establish review plan for the fall semester.
4. June 30 – Annual Program Reviews and Program Improvement Plans are to be signed off by the Coordinator and Dean and returned to the Registrar's Office. This process is the continuous revitalization process for programs and is used to make improvements to programs and courses through the Program Improvement Plan. Programs that have just completed their Comprehensive review may not be required to complete the Annual Program Review in that same semester.
5. September to December - The program review team(s) undertake a Comprehensive program review, or a program financial viability review.

The Program Review Subcommittee will complete a Quality Assurance review of the Annual Program Review process to report through the Vice-President Academic to Academic Council.

6. December to January - The program review (revitalization) plan and the financial viability final report(s) with recommendations are presented to the Vice-President Academic by the Assoc. Dean/Dean/Program Lead. Recommendation(s) are incorporated through the Program Review process or Finance department for Financial Viability reviews.
7. January to June - Implementation of any review approved recommendations and the financial viability approved recommendations is undertaken. Implementation is completed in time for the September intake.
8. March 15 – All program changes are submitted to the Registrar's Office through the course/program master change forms. These are changes to the structure of the program and the addition/removal/placement of courses. These updates will be added to Banner to update COMMS, website, flysheets, etc.

9. March to June end - the Program Review Final Report is presented to the Program Review Sub-Committee (a sub-committee of Academic Council).
10. October - Vice-President Academic reports to Senior Team on program Revitalizations (reviews) and financial viability reviews and provides recommendations concerning program Rationalizations for decision. Financial review will be consistent with any financial costing model and methodology as outlined by the offices of Vice-President – Finance & Administration and Vice President – Academic.