



## The Offices of Academic Affairs & Health Affairs

### Review Process for Low-Producing Programs

#### Background

Based on changes made by the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature, Regular Session, the Coordinating Board no longer has the authority to order the closure or consolidation of degree programs. Instead, the Coordinating Board may issue a recommendation for closure or consolidation of a program to the institution or its governing board. If the governing board does not accept a recommendation from the Coordinating Board, the institution must identify the program recommended for closure or consolidation on its next legislative appropriations request (LAR).

Chapter 4, Subchapter 4 of Coordinating Board rules defines low-producing programs as follows:

- For a baccalaureate program, fewer than 25 graduates in any five-year period
- For a master's program, fewer than 15 graduates in any five-year period
- For a doctoral program, fewer than 10 graduates in any five-year period

Coordinating Board rule 4.290 states that the Coordinating Board staff will recommend to The University of Texas System Board of Regents (BOR) the closure or consolidation of a program that has been on the annual list of low-producing programs for *three or more consecutive years*.

Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Coordinating Board, UT System will ask the institution to either accept the Coordinating Board recommendation or request continuation of the program. If the institution requests continuation of the program, the following information should be submitted to the respective Office of Academic or Health Affairs for staff review and BOR approval.

#### UT System Review

1. An action plan with specific strategies and benchmarks that would result in the program exceeding low-producing thresholds.
2. Quantitative data review
  - Number of degrees conferred in the most recent five-year period
  - Number of declared majors in the most recent five-year period

- Number of double majors in the most recent five-year period, if available
3. A cost-benefit analysis of each low-producing degree program that indicates expenses unique to the program and revenue generated. Also, indicate any qualitative costs and benefits related to each program.
  
  4. Other considerations  
The institution may present additional information in support of a request to retain a program. The following questions are provided as examples of other potential considerations. This list is not exhaustive.
    - Is the program the only one of its kind offered in the state?
    - Is the program nationally renowned and, if so, are there measurable indicators of excellence?
    - Are the costs to deliver the program minimal?
    - How many programs in this discipline and at the same level exist within a 100-mile radius of the institution?
    - Are the size and low productivity of the program characteristic of the discipline across the state, or is this program an outlier?
    - Of the institution's peers and aspirational peers, how many offer the program in question?
    - Is the program in service to other programs?
    - Is the program critical to the mission of the institution?
  
  5. The respective office (OHA/OAA) will review the material submitted. The information will be used to compose the agenda item for the Board of Regents meeting for programs that the institution wishes to continue. If the Board of Regents approves the continuation of a program, then the UT System will notify the Coordinating Board and include the program on the UT System's next Legislative Appropriations Request.