



DOHA INSTITUTE
FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

Academic Policies

Program Closure

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Introduction:

This policy sets out the DI's procedures for closing a program of study as a DI School cannot choose to close a program on its own authority due to the contractual liabilities between the students, applicants and the DI. Program closure has to follow specific procedures and approvals as this should be a collaborative process since the decision of closing a program involves not only the relevant academic department and involved administrators, but also the DI community as a whole.

“Program Closure” is defined here as the formal termination of a program run by the DI, with termination incorporating closure of admissions.

Policy Statement:

Conditions for Program Closure:

The conditions under which a program may close include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Low enrollment of students making the cost of program delivery relatively large.
- Loss of professional accreditation, if applicable.
- Poor quality and delivery of the program (e.g. repeated negative reports from the Periodic Program Review).
- Changes in resource allocation and/or constraints impeding the existence of the program.
- Change in the School's academic plans and objectives which led to a change in the type of programs the School is seeking to provide.
- Misalignment of the program with the strategic direction of the DI.

Proposal for Program Closure:

The proposal for closing a program follows largely the same path/process of that of approving a new degree program. The head of an already existing program and/or group of faculty should notify the Dean of their School of the plan to develop a proposal to close a program. The Dean can also initiate the process of closing a degree program. In either case, the same policy and procedures apply.

The proposal will need to contain the following information comprehensively:

- Rationale for the closure.
- Impact of the closure on the other aspects of the teaching and research provision of the School concerned and the Institute as a whole.
- Impact of the closure on the full-time faculty and staff delivering the program.
- Impact of the closure on students currently enrolled in the program and plans for accommodating them in other programs or institutions, where possible.
- Impact of the closure on other program(s) current students may transfer to in order to complete their degree.
- Impact of the closure on prospective students who have accepted offers for the program proposed for closure and plans for their academic accommodation.
- Impact of the closure on prospective student recruitment for the rest of the School concerned and the DI as a whole
- Impact of the closure on other units or departments operating in the DI, where relevant.
- Impact of the closure on the overall mission and strategic goals of the DI and its reputation.
- Impact of the closure on the DI's external stakeholders such as its important contributors and/or alumni and their relationship to the DI.
- Impact of the closure on community and public service.

The Review Process

Institutional Process:

- **Review by the School's Academic Affairs Committee:** The proposal is sent through the dean's office to the Academic Affairs Committee for their review and approval. The Committee may amend the proposal if needed. The Committee must refer to the criteria questions (see next section) to adequately assess whether a program should be closed. If the proposal is approved, the Committee will send back to the dean's office the proposal with their review and amendments, if applicable, within a month of receiving the proposal.
- **Review by the School's Dean:** In his/her review, the Dean may amend the proposal if needed before it is further considered but he/she must resort to the criteria questions (see next section) to adequately assess the proposal for a program's closure. If the Dean approves the proposal, he/she will need to draft a letter supporting the closure of the concerned program including his/her review comments. The dean's office must then

submit the proposal, the dean’s letter and review, within a month of receiving the proposal, to the Provost.

- **Review by the Provost:** The Provost will review the proposal, and the dean’s letter and review, determine that all information has been included, and, in turn, provide his/her own review comments within 15 days of him/her receiving the proposal. He/she may suggest possible changes to be made on the proposal before it is further considered.
- **Review by the DI Council:** As the highest executive body in the DI, the DI Council will review and decide on the proposal, taking the Provost’s recommendation into consideration, within 30 days of receiving the proposal.
- **Review by the Board of Trustees (BoT):** As the highest entity overseeing the DI, the Bot will ratify, if it sees fit, the DI Council’s decision in its next annual meeting.

Criteria for Assessing Program Closure:

Each of the above constituencies will examine the proposal according to a set of criteria, in the form of questions, to ensure consistency in the review process and to help reviewers make a more careful, informed, and transparent decision on whether a program should be closed or not. The set of questions, outlined below, is not an exhaustive list but is meant for guidance only.

- How many students are currently enrolled in the program that is proposed for closure? Over the last five years, how many students have been enrolled and how many have received a degree in the program? And how do these figures compare with the target numbers for the program?
- What alternative program options current and prospective students have if the program is closed?
- How will faculty members teaching in the program be affected and what is to be done with them?
- How will support staff (non-academic) involved with the program (e.g. administrative secretaries) be affected and how will they be dealt with?
- What shared services and/or resources would be reduced or removed if the program is closed?
- How will external stakeholder(s) associated with the program be affected and how will they be dealt with?
- To what degree has the program been able to meet its intended student learning outcomes?

- The research and publication quality of the faculty of the program and implications of its ceasing.
- How successful has the program been in placing its students in career positions or graduate programs post-graduation? The track record of the program in relation to the employability of its graduates or their continued study at doctoral level.
- Impact of closure on DI's reputation in the country, region, and among alumni?
- Has there been any form of external recognition or award received by the program or its faculty?
- Are there other good reasons, not mentioned in the proposal, that could explain why the program should or should not be closed?

Implementation of Program Closure and Appeal:

- All DI faculty members must be informed of a program closure by the Provost and given the rationale for the closure and supporting documentation.
- The Dean of the concerned School is responsible for informing the students and non-academic staff in the DI of the decision to close the program.
- Necessary changes have to be made to the School's and the DI's publications and websites once a program is set to be closed.
- In the event of program closure, highest priority should be provided to any full-time faculty member through reassignment of teaching responsibilities, retraining or other similar solutions. If the latter is not possible, any full-time faculty member must be given one year's notice prior to the date of the closure of the program.