



COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PLANNING AND REVIEW

15-16 CAPR 7
Thursday, February 04, 2016

TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: The Committee on Academic Planning Review (CAPR)
SUBJECT: 15-16 CAPR 7: Temporary Suspension of the Master of Art and Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies
PURPOSE: Approval by the Academic Senate

ACTION REQUESTED:

That the Academic Senate approve the temporary suspension of the Master of Arts and Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies, effective immediately.

BACKGROUND:

A three-year temporary suspension of the Master of Arts and Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies is requested, effective immediately for the reasons listed in the petition below.

Proposal for Temporary Suspension of MS and MA Interdisciplinary Studies (IS)

1. A full explanation of why the temporary program suspension is being proposed.

The following factors have led to the decision to request for temporary suspension of this program:

- (1) Semester conversion. With semester conversion, all courses in all programs will be discontinued. Therefore, it will be impossible for a student newly admitted to an Interdisciplinary Studies program in the coming quarters to design a program that can be completed on the quarter system, and will be difficult to transition to semesters.
- (2) Lack of available graduate departments and/ or faculty. The interdisciplinary studies graduate programs (MA and MS) require that each approved individual interdisciplinary studies program involve the participation of at least two CSUEB graduate programs and three faculty advisors (one serving as chair of the student's advisory committee). Since the budget cuts of 2008, it has become increasingly difficult to identify graduate programs and/or faculty who are willing and able to participate in these programs. It is especially difficult to find faculty who are willing to supervise theses or projects for IS capstone requirements. A recent inquiry to CSUEB's 30 masters program asking which programs were willing and able to sponsor IS majors resulted in only three positive responses.
- (3) Faculty turnover. Students already enrolled in an approved Interdisciplinary Masters program often encounter problems when committee members retire or leave the university, and students are unable to find replacements who are willing to take over their IS responsibilities.
- (4) Lack of access to required courses. Budget cuts have led to reduced graduate course offerings, resulting in some courses being offered infrequently. There are also programs

that give their own majors priority registration, and the IS student is unable to enroll because the class is full before he/she can register.

- (5) Lack of a graduate coordinator and support staff. The faculty member who was advising this program resigned, and no replacement has been identified. The staff member in Academic Programs and Graduate Studies who supported the program retired and that position has not been filled.

2. Reasons why faculty or the college is proposing temporary suspension instead of discontinuance.

APGS, which oversees the IS program, is proposing temporary suspension instead of discontinuance because it would like to be able to review the feasibility of the program in three years after semester conversion to see if the program is viable at that time. This program does offer students a valuable opportunity to create a program tailored to their interests, and has resulted in some very interesting and worthwhile academic endeavors, and we would hate to lose this option permanently.

3. Quarter and date when the proposed suspension will take place.

Immediately.

4. A complete list of courses that will not be taught if the program is suspended

None.

5. Student enrollment and application patterns for the program during the previous 5 years

Students may not apply directly to this program. They must have an approved plan of study before they can apply.

Official university enrollment data shows the following enrollment for the previous 5 years: Fall 2011: 8; Fall 2012: 4; Fall 2013: 5; Fall 2014: 2; Fall 2015: 3.

6. Likely effects of the temporary suspension on students currently enrolled in the program and a list of courses that would need to be taught during the suspension period or other mechanism such as substitutions and independent studies that would allow those students to graduate in a timely manner.

None. Students currently enrolled in approved programs would continue as normal. No new programs will be approved.

7. The number and type (tenured, tenure-track, and lecturer) of faculty currently teaching in the program and the way(s) in which the temporary suspension will affect them.

None.

8. The number and type of university staff employed in the program and the way(s) in which the temporary suspension will affect them.

None. The APGS staff that supported this program retired in May 2013 and the position will not be filled.

9. The means by which affected faculty, students, and staff were informed of the proposed temporary suspension and a summary of the feedback received on the proposed temporary suspension from the affected faculty, students, and staff, including copies of all written responses. Where the proposal has been developed by the college dean, the faculty and program Chair or Director must be consulted and their views on the proposed suspension recorded in the proposal in the form of a formal vote of support or rebuttal.

As mentioned above, all graduate coordinators were consulted as to their desire to continue this program and their programs' willingness to participate, and only three responded affirmatively. The resulting decision to suspend was also discussed by the Graduate Advisory Council and the CIC Graduate Programs Subcommittee and agreed with this temporary suspension request. No current students or staff will be affected.

10. A summary of what the most recent CSUEB Academic Program Review, CSUEB Memorandum of Understanding, and any accreditation review say about the program, including any parts of these reviews that have relevance to the proposed suspension.

The last CAPR review made positive comments about the program offering students the opportunity to create a program that meets their academic needs and about the cross-disciplinary nature of the program. But it also acknowledged that faculty are not credited with the workload involved.

11. Resource implications

As discussed above, there are no faculty or staff resource implications, other than that faculty will not be solicited to supervise IS majors.

12. The changes that would be necessary in order to resume offering the program and how those changes will be accomplished in the proposed period of suspension (a list of activities, personnel responsible, budgetary implications, and completion dates/timetable for implementation).

The resumption of offering the IS masters program is dependent upon the willingness of a faculty member to serve as graduate coordinator and the availability of faculty to serve on student committees, and this will depend on the successful hiring of tenure-track faculty in the next three years and the ability of programs to offer sufficient graduate coursework. APGS (Graduate Studies) will consult with graduate programs again near the end of this three year period to gauge their willingness to participate. If there is significant interest and willingness to participate then a request to resume offering of the IS degree will be made. If not, a recommendation for discontinuance will be made.

January 22, 2016

Provided by Interim Associate Vice President, Academic Programs and Graduate Studies