WASC | Senior College and University Commission

Teach-Out Plans and Agreements Guide

Purpose of this Guide

The required components of teach-out plans are listed in the Teach-Out Plans and Agreements Policy. This guide serves to accompany the policy and provides a more detailed set of guidelines and expectations for institutional activities and planning elements. It also includes sample templates for teach-out plans, teach-out agreements, individual student graduation plans, and teach-out plan updates to WSCUC at the end of the guide.

Considerations when Closing an Institution or Location

For purposes of this guide, it is assumed that closing an institution or location means discontinuing its educational activities permanently, not merely suspending them for an indefinite period in the hope that circumstances may someday permit their resumption. WSCUC encourages institutions to create a process that is consultative and engages all stakeholders in decision-making.

Closing an institution or location is a difficult decision and because of its impact on students, faculty, staff and others, should be done thoughtfully, with careful planning and communication and with respect for established shared governance procedures. Engaging stakeholders in decision-making can lead to broader community support for the closing of a location or institution and cause less disruption while the institution is winding down operations. In addition, decisions about closing a location may be more acceptable if the decision-making process adheres to an institution's established shared governance procedures, with faculty input.

Communication

Teach-outs proceed more smoothly when the institution makes a compelling case on why locations or the institution are closing and what the exact process for closure will be. Closures are difficult and painful for those directly impacted. Be open, transparent, straightforward, and clear about teach-out plans with students, faculty, and staff. Teach-out plans also include detailed sample communications to students notifying them of the closure.

Required Elements of Teach-Out Plans and Teach-Out Agreements

WSCUC requires a teach-out plan for closing an institution or discontinuing a location where one hundred percent of a program is offered. All elements of the teach-out plan must be addressed. When closing an institution, arrangements must be made with one or more receiving institutions to accept the closing institution's students as transfers.

A *sample teach-out plan template* and a *sample teach-out agreement template* can be found at the end of this guide.

Provision for Each Student

Establish a plan for every student whether currently enrolled in a closing institution or location, or inactive at the time of closure. This means that detailed plans for each individual student to complete that student's program must be provided, and these plans must be updated periodically during the time frame between notification of pending closure to the Commission and the final closure date. Every effort must be made by the institution to reach out to each student to ensure complete understanding of the closure process and timeline, the impact on that particular student's time to degree completion, any changes to completion requirements based on teach-out agreements with other institutions, distance to new institutions, additional costs and difference in programmatic accreditation (as applicable) and potential impact on eligibility for professional licensure and certification requirements.

A *sample individual graduation plan template* can be found at the end of this guide.

Interaction with WSCUC During Teach-Out

As soon as possible, send a draft teach-out plan to the WSCUC Vice President Liaison for review and approval. Plans requiring additional information or changes will be sent back for revisions prior to approval. Institutions are expected to engage in ongoing communication with WSCUC after initial notification and teach-out plan approval to provide periodic status reports including updates about the number of students successfully contacted in each closing program, updates regarding the signed teach-out agreements with other institutions (as applicable), and updates to the number of students with confirmed plans for completion of programs and graduation.

A *sample WSCUC teach-out plan template* can be found at the end of this guide.

Approved by the Commission, November 2018
Revised, February 2019
Revised, November 2020

Sample Teach-Out Plan Template

1. **Background information**
    a. *Rationale for institution's closure decision*
    Provide a brief narrative of a few paragraphs that describes the circumstances and efforts to remediate the issues that led to the final decision to close.
    b. *Descriptive statistics*
    Include the following in charts or tables that are clear and easy to read:
        i. Enrollment by degree program and certificate program with numbers of students associated with expected dates of completion
        ii. FTE of faculty (full time/part time)
        iii. FTE of staff (full time/part time)

2. **Plans for Students** (currently enrolled and inactive)
Identify specific plans for students who have not completed their degrees according to their academic needs. Include a narrative description of the options for students to complete their programs including completion of programs and certificates at the closing location or institution as well as options for completion at other institutions with which the closing institution has formed agreements. Include a description of the efforts made to ensure comparable program content, structure, scheduling, accreditation and stability at the receiving institution(s).

3. **Plans for Faculty** (part time and full time)
In every possible case, arrange for continuation of faculty members who will be needed to teach courses, advise students, and engage in activities for the completion of the institution's work up to the closing date. When faculty members are no longer needed, make every effort to assist them in finding alternative employment. While the institution can make no guarantees, good faith efforts to assist in relocation and reassignment are essential. In the event that faculty members find new positions, accept their early resignations. Include a narrative description of the options provided for faculty both during the teach-out and immediately following the teach-out including provisions for assistance finding alternative employment. Also included in this section are specific contingency plans for continuing faculty and staff, in the event they tender and the institution accepts early resignations while the institution or location is still winding down.

4. **Plans for Staff** (part time and full time)
In every possible case, arrange for continuation of those staff members who will be needed to advise students, carry out the work of the program, etc., up to the closing date. When staff members are no longer needed, make every effort to assist them in finding alternative employment. While the institution can make no guarantees, good faith efforts to assist in relocation and reassignment are essential. In the event that staff members find new positions, accept their early resignations. Include a narrative description of the options provided for staff both during the teach-out and immediately following the teach-out including provisions for assistance finding alternate employment.

5. **Academic Transcripts and Financial Aid Records** (for closing an institution)
Include a narrative description of the plan, including notification of students, the closing

institution has made for transfer of academic and financial aid records of receiving institutions with whom teach-out or transfer agreements have been made.

a. Describe provisions for identifying a receiving institution or agency to be the permanent custodian of student records including all academic, financial aid and other records including electronic archiving. Arrangements should be made with the Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education in California (BPPE) or the Hawaii Post-secondary Education Authorization Program in Hawaii (HPEAP) for filing of student records. Arrangements must also be made to designate another college or university to serve as the formal custodian of all academic transcripts for all current and former students
b. Identify the location where all academic, financial aid and other records will be stored and arrange for their transfer and archiving.
c. Identify the process for notifying students of the location of records and the process they should follow for gaining access to records. Where possible, forward a copy of a student's record to each individual student.

6. **Transfer Arrangements** (for closing an institution)
Describe the process for entering into written agreements with other institutions to receive transferring students and arrange for the prompt transmittal of their records. Where financial aid is concerned, particularly federal or state grants, describe arrangements made with the appropriate agencies to transfer the grants to the receiving institutions. Where such arrangements cannot be completed, how will students be informed? In cases where students have held institutional scholarships or grants and there are available funds, which can legally be used to support students while completing degrees at other institutions, describe how these agreements will be negotiated.

7. **Governing Board Financial and Legal Obligations** (for closing an institution)
Provide a narrative description of the rationale for the closure date and how it was determined as well as notice of the formal vote by the institution's governing body to close the institution, campus or program(s). Indicate the extent to which the institution expects to be able to satisfy its obligations to students; how assets will be disposed of, including physical plant, equipment, library, special collections, art or other funds and how the institution will accommodate the wishes of donors, grantors, executors of estates and other providers of special fund arrangements. The plan should include notice of any filing for bankruptcy protection and indicate how federal and state agencies will be notified of the closure and resolve any outstanding federal and state funding obligations.

With respect to financial resources and assets that remain after the basic needs of current students, faculty and staff are provided for, it is WSCUC's expectation that students, faculty, and staff will be treated equitably and that the governing board will make every effort to honor the institution's commitment to them. The following three principles may help to set priorities:

- Students have the right to expect basic minimal services during the final semester, not only in the academic division but also in the business office, financial aid office, registrar's office, counseling, and other essential support services. Staff should be retained long enough to provide these services. It may be appropriate to offer special incentives to keep key personnel present.
- Reasonable notice should be given to all employees, explaining the possibility of early termination of contracts and explaining that the reasons for retaining some personnel

longer than others are based on satisfying the minimal needs of students and the legal requirements for closing.

- Long-term financial obligations (loans, debentures, etc.) should be honored, if possible, even though the parties holding such claims may choose not to press them.

Include a narrative description of the decisions and arrangements made as described above by the governing body of the closing institution.

With respect to obligations to creditors, establish a clear understanding with the institution's creditors and all other agencies involved with its activities to assure that their interests will be properly considered.

Include a narrative description of the decisions and arrangements made as described above by the governing body of the closing institution.

8. **Notification/Communication Plan**
    a. *Student communication*
    Describe the institution's communication plan for promptly notifying students of the intention to close the institution or a location and keeping them apprised of the details and developments in the process to ensure minimal disruption to completing their degree programs. Include sample notifications to students in differing situations and different programs as applicable. Insofar as possible, dates of specific notifications to students will be included in the Timeline of Teach-Out Events (see below).

    b. *Staff and faculty communication*
    Describe the institution's plan for promptly communicating the institution's decision to close with staff and faculty. How will the institution work collaboratively with affected staff and faculty, and provide timely and detailed information to all involved as it becomes available to assure minimal disruption to students.

    Include sample notifications to staff and faculty in differing situations and associated different programs as applicable. Insofar as possible, dates of specific notifications to students should be included in the Timeline of Teach-Out Events (see below).

    c. *Public communication*
    Describe the institution's plan for communicating with the public including the methods and language used for (e.g., including town hall meetings, notification on the institution's web site, and other means of communication).

    d. *Coordination with other agencies and accrediting bodies*
    Describe any arrangements made with BPPE or HPEAP in California or Hawaii, or the equivalent state licensing agency in other states or other countries, to permit students to complete their degree requirements under the circumstances described above. In this part of the teach-out plan, closing institutions are expected to include copies of the communications sent to the state and other agencies within which they operate, as well as comparable communications to specialized and programmatic accreditors.

e. *Timeline of Teach-Out Events*
This section provides a detailed timeline of events associated with the teach-out showing when communications will go out to students, faculty, staff and the public, dates when students must complete individualized graduation plans, and dates when students need to agree to transfer to a receiving institution or make their own arrangements.

9. **Teach-Out or Transfer Agreements with Receiving Institutions** (for closing an institution)
Provide a brief narrative description of the arrangements and decisions associated with the teach-out agreements. Please attach sample teach-out agreements with the receiving institutions.

Sample Teach-Out Agreement Template for Closing an Institution

[These agreements are legal documents and as such will vary according to the legal counsel for both closing and receiving institutions. All such agreements include at a minimum the sections that follow.]

1. Introduction
    a. Names and locations of closing and receiving institutions

2. Purpose of Agreement

3. Terms of Agreement
    a. Transfer Credits
    b. Transfer Criteria and Tuition
        i. Exceptions to Receiving Institution's Transfer of Credit Policy
        ii. Exceptions may include waiving usual residency requirements and course equivalencies
    c. Custodian of Student Records

Sample Individual Student Graduation Plan Template

Student Name:

ID Number:

Program of Study:

Credits Remaining:

Graduation Requirements to be Completed at Closing Institution or Location		
Term	Course Code and Number	Expected Completion Date

Graduation Requirements to be Completed at Receiving Institution		
Term	Course Code and Number	Expected Completion Date

Sample WSCUC Teach-Out Plan Update Template

Student Notification Update

[In this section, provide the number of students successfully contacted in each program closing and what methods were used to make contact (email, postal mail, phone call).]

Student Intent and Agreements Signed with Receiving Institutions

[In this section, provide updates regarding student intentions to complete their degrees at the closing institution or location or signed teach-out agreements with other institutions. Also provide updates to the number of students with confirmed plans for completion of programs and graduation.]

Sample Display Chart Showing Students by Enrollment and Teach-Out Eligibility Status

TeachOut Eligibl	**Enrollment Status Notification Date**	**Total**	**Contacted**	**Eligible to Complete Closing Institution**	**Graduated**	**Considering Optio**	**Intends to Transfer Institution A**	**Intends to Transfer Institution B**	**Intends to Transfer Institution C**	**Withdrawal or Transl Processing Complete**	**Chose to Opt out of A Options**	**Unresponsive**
No	Active	100	75	50	0	25	20	3	2	0	0	25
No	Admitted	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	3
No	Withdrawn	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	2
Yes	Active	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	2
Yes	WIthdrawn	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	2
Totals		**140**	**115**	**50**	**0**	**45**	**24**	**11**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**34**

Sample Display Chart Showing Students by Program and Concentration

Program	Total	Contacted	Eligible to Complete at Closing Institution	Graduated	Considering Options	Intends to Transfer to Institution A	Intends to Transfer to Institution B	Intends to Transfer to Institution C	Withdrawing or Transfer Processing Completed	Chose to Opt out of All Options	Unresponsive
Program A	100	75	50	0	25	20	3	2	0	0	25
Program B	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	3
Program C	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	2
Program D	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	2
Program E	10	10	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	2
Totals	**140**	**115**	**50**	**0**	**45**	**24**	**11**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**34**