

BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER
Handbook Revision, Low Yield Programs

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

In his initiative to improve effectiveness and efficiency across the Nevada System of Higher Education, the Chancellor is reviewing both academic and administrative areas where changes may need to be made. The Chancellor seeks approval of a policy to ensure that all institutions regularly review academic program productivity using annual data, particularly graduation numbers. While many NSHE institutions undertake such review on their own, it is recommended that ~~all~~ report on low-yield degree programs take place at the institution level at least every ~~two~~ years to ensure that academic progr

Table 1
Low-Productivity Academic Programs: Degree Completion Criteria In Other States

State	AA	BA/BS	MA/MS	PhD	Applicability	Source
Oklahoma	5	5	3	2	5-year average (alternative benchmarks for enrollments exist)	Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Policy and Procedures Manual 3.7.7
Rhode Island	5	5	5	3	Annual total for 3 prior years	Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education, Policy A-7.0
South Carolina	-	5	3	2	5-year average (alternative benchmarks for enrollments exist)	South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Policy, Section A-12
Tennessee	10	10	5	3	5-year average	Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Academic Program Productivity Procedures
Virginia	varies	12-6	7-4	4-2	Exact number depends on specific degree program; numbers for AA/AS programs depends on number of FTEs	Virginia State Council for Higher Education (Code of Virginia §23-9.6: 1.01)

POLICY PROPOSAL – HANDBOOK
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 14, new SECTION 5
Low-Yield Academic Program Review – Effective Fall 2012

Additions appear in boldface italics; deletions are ~~stricken and bracketed~~

Section 5. Low-Yield Academic Program Review

1. Each President, in consultation with the Faculty Senate, shall develop procedures for reviewing academic program productivity ~~at least~~ every three years in accordance with the provisions of this section.
2. Academic programs that are at least 10 years ~~shall~~ be designated as low-yield if the number of degrees granted is below the following levels:
 - a. Associate programs must award at least ~~two~~ **two** degrees in the last ~~the~~ consecutive years. Certificate programs in the same field may be considered in the evaluation of the associate program productivity.
 - b. Baccalaureate programs must award at least ~~two~~ **two** degrees in the last three consecutive years.
 - c. Master's and Doctoral programs must jointly ~~and~~ award at least eight degrees in the last three consecutive years.
3. Academic programs designated ~~low-yield~~ **low-yield** shall be reviewed in consultation with the Faculty Senate within three years of the program reaching these thresholds to determine whether there are sufficient factors to support the program's continuation or merger with other programs. In accordance with the provisions of this chapter, the institution may recommend to the Board the elimination of the program, in which case every effort shall be taken to allow current students to graduate and faculty to be placed in other programs if feasible.
4. A program may be exempted from the low-yield designation ~~if~~ **if** it meets any of the following criteria:
 - a. Central to the educational or research mission of the institution or partnering institutions vested in the program;
 - b. Meets a demonstrated workforce or service need of the state or geographical region served by the institution, including and projected future needs of the state or region;
 - c. Demonstrates an increase in student demand through a pattern of increasing enrollment of majors;
 - d. Productivity in the receipt of external grants and contracts related to the program,
 - e. Supports underrepresented student or community groups, or