

# Portfolio Review Update - List of Programs Slated for Closure and Informing Impacted Faculty and Students

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Mon 4/12/2021 2:17 PM

Dear Saint Louis University community,

Over the past two years, faculty and academic leaders have conducted a collaborative and comprehensive review of the University's portfolio of academic programs. This process, called Academic Portfolio Review (APR), is nearing its conclusion, and will result in the closure of a number of academic programs with low student enrollment. I write today to share my initial decisions.

I want to say at the outset of this message that I understand the Academic Portfolio Review process has been challenging for many members of the University community. While the decision to close a program reflects significant issues with, and/or changes in, student demand, it is not a judgment on the quality of the work faculty put into creating and sustaining the program. The programs where I am initiating the closure process have served students well. The decision we make about their viability is not a reflection of the value of the faculty and students in the programs. I want to stress that for students in the programs to be closed -- current students in these programs and Fall 2021 recruits-- all will be supported in completing their degrees.

## **APR Process**

The process the Academic Portfolio Review Committee (APRC) used to arrive at their recommendations can be found [here](#). I want to provide a brief overview of the process since the APRC issued a recommended list of programs for closure in Nov/Dec 2020. Over the past few months, I have met with academic deans whose schools have impacted programs, and followed *The Faculty Manual* by sharing the list of programs over a series of meetings with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC). These sessions have helped with information gathering (from the schools/deans) and information sharing/consultation (with the FSEC).

After these meetings, I prepared letters to send to each of the impacted faculty who teach courses in these programs, and to the students currently enrolled in them. Those letters were delivered today, and the corresponding information about each program is listed on the APRC website at [this link](#). As you will see, the site lists each program by type (undergraduate and graduate; certificates, minors, and majors), the program name, the college/school in which that program resides, and the current enrollment. I provide this information in the spirit of transparency for the entire community.

I know that some of you will have questions about why certain programs were chosen for closure. Throughout the APRC process, the key faculty that lead these programs have engaged in thoughtful, careful consideration about whether to close these programs, and how best to approach it. There were other programs on the Committee's initial list of closures that I am choosing to keep open, and my rationale is provided on the APRC website.

## **Next Steps**

Now that the letters have been provided to impacted faculty, I will give those faculty the option to meet with me to discuss the rationale behind closing the program. Faculty will have the option to propose alternatives to these closures, which will either go to the Board of Trustees (if they are considered

reallocation) or directly to me (if they are considered reorganization). As a reminder, reallocation is the discontinuance of a program that may result in the termination of tenured faculty; reorganization is the structural realignment of programs or departments, and usually results in the consolidation of academic units but not in the termination of tenured faculty. Almost all program closures fall under reorganization.

The decisions I am announcing today initiate the program closure process and will allow us to utilize our resources to focus on better serving our current and future students. Of the 40 programs, the home department indicated support for the closure during the APRC process in 18 cases. In two more cases, the programs were voluntarily added to the list by the home college, as a new program was created to serve those students. The 40 programs being closed have a combined total of 260 enrolled students. The remaining approximately 200 programs have approximately 12,000 enrolled students. Closing the programs will allow us to utilize our resources to focus on better serving our current and future students.

I want to make clear that these closures are not related to the COVID-19 pandemic and as I mentioned above, that all current students in these programs, and Fall 2021 recruits, will be supported in completing their degrees.

Feel free to reach out to your dean/department chair, the FSEC, or me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Mike Lewis, Ph.D.  
Provost