

At its April 25th, 2019 meeting, the Faculty Senate approved the following changes to the UWLX faculty layoff policy. The procedures were approved by the Board of Regents on July 11th, 2019.

UWL: Procedures Relating to Financial Emergency or Program Discontinuance Requiring Faculty Layoff and Termination

The University of Wisconsin's Board of Regents passed a layoff policy (Regent Policy 20-24) in 2016 that applies to all campuses. UWL provides the following clarifications and/or extensions to the policy based on campus policies and procedures.

- (1) Definition of Program: As indicated in Regent Policy 20-24, "program" shall mean a related cluster of credit-bearing courses that constitute a coherent body of study within a discipline or set of related disciplines. When feasible, the term shall designate a department or similar administrative unit that offers majors and has been officially recognized by the UW institution. In addition, at UWL "program" can be used to designate a department or functional equivalent that offers majors or minors and can refer to 1) a discipline or similar disciplines closely related by academic interest; and/or 2) an interdisciplinary unit that consists of faculty members from diverse disciplines with a shared problem orientation.
- (2) Definition of Seniority: Seniority, for the purposes of Wis. Stat. 36.22(3)(b), is defined according to rank, and within rank, according to length of service at the University of Wisconsin- La Crosse and time at rank.
 - a) Length of service shall be computed from the effective date of the appointment at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.
 - b) The period of an approved leave of absence is included in determining length of service.
 - c) If a faculty member is reappointed after having left the university, the new appointment shall be treated as an initial appointment in the determination of seniority.
- (3) Lay off/Status/Termination/Retained Rights:
 - (a) The chancellor may lay off or terminate a tenured faculty member, or lay off or terminate a probationary faculty member prior to the end of their appointment, under extraordinary circumstances because of a financial emergency, or because of program discontinuance based on educational considerations. Such layoffs or terminations will be made in accordance with the provisions of UWS Chapter 5, Wis. Stat. 36.22, and this chapter and imply the retention of rights indicated therein. A nonrenewal under **UWL 3.07**, regardless of reasons, is not a layoff or termination under this section.
 - (b) Faculty members on voluntary or compulsory reduction of appointment under this chapter retain full membership in the faculty regardless of the percent of appointment and continue to be governed by Faculty Senate policy and procedure; in addition, the annual notice required in Wis. Stat. 36.22(11)(b)(5) shall be deemed to be given automatically by virtue of the continued part-time appointment. In the event that a faculty member on voluntary or compulsory reduction of appointment shall accept an appointment at a greater fraction of full time as specified in UWS 5.16(2)(b)1, then any subsequent claim to increased appointment shall be forfeited.
- (4) Safeguards for Students in the Event of Academic Program Discontinuance: Regent Policy 20-24 states that UW System institutions will make every effort to accommodate students

adversely affected by discontinuance of an academic program for reasons of financial emergency or because of educational considerations. Discontinuance of a program should be phased in over a reasonable time period to provide students with the opportunity to complete the program or transfer to another program. Completion of a program or transfer to another program cannot be guaranteed by the university.

UWL will also adhere to the following additional safeguards associated with students and the event of academic program discontinuance, and every effort will be made to be attentive to the students' needs:

- (a) Students should have opportunities to participate in discussions about programs proposed for termination.
- (b) A discontinued program should be phased out over a reasonable period of time, preferably in a way that allows all or most students who are currently (and continuously) enrolled in the program to complete it.
- (c) New students should not be permitted to enroll in programs that are being considered for discontinuance.
- (d) All students enrolled in the affected program shall be informed in a timely fashion that a program is being discontinued. This communication should include the timeline for discontinuance and options that students have for either completing the program or transferring to another program.

RELATED REGENT POLICIES AND APPLICABLE LAWS

Section 36, Wis. Stats.

Chapters UWS 3 and 5, Wis. Admin. Code

Regent Policy Document 20-23 --<https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents/policies/faculty-tenure/>

Regent Policy Document 20-24 <https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents/policies/procedures-relating-to-financial-emergency-or-program-discontinuance-requiring-faculty-layoff-and-termination/>