Advocacy Checklist for College and University Programs

If you have learned that your program is to be discontinued or reduced:

1. Familiarize yourself with your institution's discontinuance policies:
   
   • What are those policies?
   • Where are you in the process--at the beginning? somewhere in the middle?
   • What is the next step in that process and how should your program respond?

2. Determine whether decisions on reduction or discontinuance have been made within the guidelines:
   
   • Have all the procedures been followed?
   • Have all the parties been consulted as per procedure?
   • Are tenured faculty positions involved? if so, have all procedures been followed?
   • Is there a faculty union to be consulted, if faculty positions are to be lost?

3. Determine who the decision-makers are:
   
   • Dean, Provost, Chancellor, President?
   • Faculty Senate or other part of internal governance?
   • Board of Directors or Trustees?
   • State board of governors?

4. Determine your strategy:
   
   • What is required by existing guidelines for program discontinuance or reduction?
   • What time frame are you working with?
   • What reasons are being given for reducing or discontinuing the program?
   • What kinds of arguments will be most effective at countering those reasons?
     o financial (expense of program vs. revenue it generates)
     o philosophical (fit with mission of institution)
     o student-oriented (demand for your program and its connections such as study abroad)
     o economic (participation in local/state economy; jobs...)
     o institutional connections (plugged into General Education, international education, business/engineering/health care/arts programs...)
   • To whom should you make the arguments?

AATF French Advocacy Resource Bank
advocacy.frenchteachers.org

Advocacy Checklists
• Who can support you? (see #6 below)
• What format should arguments (yours and supporters') take?

5. Determine a communication plan:

• How will you contact those who can provide support, information, etc., for your program?
• Who are the decision-makers and influencers who will need to receive communication giving your point of view?
• Who should communicate with these different individuals and groups, and how? Examples: the French program chair contacts Dean, Provost, Board, President, or someone else? Alumni contact Dean, Provost, Board, President, or someone else?
• How can you align your campaign with your strategic priorities (will you argue for support based primarily on financial cost, and/or philosophical reasons, etc., as determined in your strategy in #4 above)?
• How should you publicize your situation beyond the campus?
  o Online petition
  o Contact news media
  o Letters to the editor
  o Social media and other electronic media

6. Line up support to send e-mails/letters to Dean, Provost, Chancellor/President, Board:

• Internal: students, colleagues/departments/colleges/schools/Faculty Senate/internal governance structure in your institution
• External: AATF, other colleges/universities (French programs and other programs), local business or cultural community, influential community members or politicians
• Alumni and Donors

7. Be sure you know all the information that is needed to influence the decision:

• Program costs vs. revenue
• Number of majors/minors/general education enrollment
• Enrollment trends
• Assessment results and actions in response to assessment
• Your relation to institutional mission
• Your links with other parts of the institution (general education, other departments/programs/colleges/majors)
• Your links with community: businesses, service organizations, arts organizations, etc.
• Student and graduate achievements
• Faculty qualifications, expertise, scholarly and other output, involvement with other university programs, involvement with community
• How to contact alumni