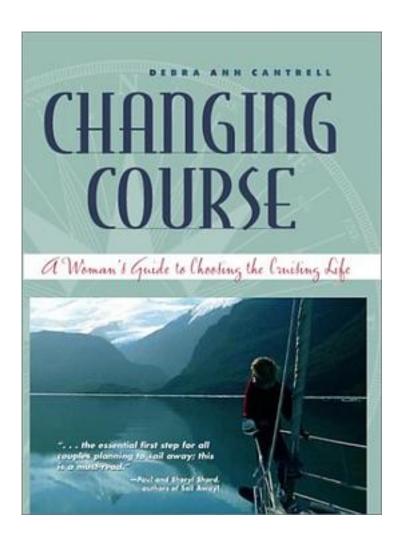
Changing Course



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Most American colleges and universities face difficult choices about how they will meet new demands in an environment of fiscal constraints. For many, growth and expansion are no longer feasible, instead they must change through substitution, or even through contraction. To make necessary changes, institutions facing these challenges may have to close select academic programs. Academic program terminations are not well documented in the literature, nor are they well understood by those charged with making and carrying out decisions. Much of what we know about how colleges and universities function as organizations and how they change is based upon assumptions of growth and not the opposite. This book explores the process of program termination. It discusses the context leading institutions to consider program reduction. It provides in-depth examination of the discontinuance process at four universities through rich case studies by focusing on the roles of leadership, shared governance, and external factors. It discusses the use (and non-use) of criteria to identify programs for closure and offers advice for institutional leaders seeking to close programs, as well as for faculty leaders seeking to keep their program from termination. Its findings also suggest that program closure may be more important to the future direction and livelihood of the institution than saving money.

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