To: Curriculum and Programs Committee (CPC)

From: Academic Program Working Group (APWG)
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Michael Babcock (Chair)

Date: January 16, 2016

Re: Level II proposal: Bachelor’s Degree in Hospitality Management

Overview

This is a proposal for the creation of an interdisciplinary Bachelor’s Degree in Hospitality Management. The program builds on our institutions strengths in food, agriculture and business. It is a 4-year degree program that incorporates existing coursework from Business, Food & Nutrition, and Agriculture. New courses are proposed to bridge Business Management skills with content in Hospitality Management. The program includes four degree options: Restaurant Management; Farm to Table; Lodging Management & Rural Tourism; Food Enterprise; and Sports & Fitness Administration.

Curriculum and Academic Quality

The degree requirements are described in detail. Existing coursework and new classes designed to support the various degree options are presented. The interdisciplinary nature of this major is evident with required coursework in business, management and accounting (e.g., BMGT 205, BMGT 335, BMKT 325, BMKT 343, BGEN 361 and ACTG 201). Students will also be required to take courses in economics (ECNS 202 or 204, ECNS 101IS) and complete an internship and capstone (HOSP 498/499). Tables in the proposal provide a curriculum plan for each option that could be accomplished in 4 academic years.

The academic quality of the proposed degree program is supported in several ways. Evaluation of the curriculum was conducted at each level of review with proposed changes that were integrated into the current proposal. The Academic Programs Committee for the Jake Jabs College of Business & Entrepreneurship has evaluated the management aspects of the curriculum and concluded that it is appropriate. The MSU Curriculum & Programs Committee endorses the coursework in terms of general education requirements and institutional fit. Individuals external to MSU and familiar with hospitality management programs have also evaluated the curriculum.
These include Dr. Wanda Costen (WA Franke College of Business, School of Hotel and Restaurant Management, Northern Arizona University) and Peter Bordi (Associate Professor of Hospitality Management, Center of Food Innovation, Penn State University). Both of these external reviewers provided letters in support of the proposed curriculum. The APWG concurs with each level of review that the curriculum supports the goals of the program.

**Resources**

The implementation of the program will require new resources. The proposal outlines the need for two additional tenure-track lines that will be phased in over a two academic year period. In addition, a new non-tenure track adjunct position is requested. The College of Health and Human Development is currently recruiting a new faculty member that would also contribute to some of the instructional needs approved. The teaching responsibilities for each of the current and anticipated hires are included in an appendix and appear justified. Provost Potvin has committed in writing to providing the new lines in support of the program.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of the program, it is important to consider the potential need to expand supporting courses beyond their current capacity. This is challenging to evaluate because much of the curriculum external to the new offerings are ones that students, irrespective of their program of study, would likely subscribe (e.g. STATS 216 Q, MATH 121, PSYX 100). Nevertheless, Provost Potvin has indicated that funding to support future extra sections of courses should be available through the new institutional funding model.

The proposal presents a detailed plan of how existing MSU infrastructure can accommodate much of the space needs of this program. The need for a Commercial Teaching Kitchen/Culinary Arts Lab and restaurant style eating space, required for one option, cannot be accommodated with existing infrastructure. However, at the most recent BOR meeting a request for the creation and renovation of new dining hall spaces at MSU was approved. This provides an opportunity for the former Harrison Dining Hall to be re-purposed for an academic use. This space contains a functional commercial kitchen with attached dining space that would serve the academic needs of the proposed program. Discussions between Faculty Senate Leadership and proponents of this proposal have established that sufficient resources to launch the program have been identified. Funds will be necessary to convert auxiliary space to academic space regardless of use. This was the case for the new WIMU Regional Veterinary Medical program. The Provost has requested and secured funds to improve the space and more may be needed in the future. Raising ‘additional’ funds externally will be a goal to support the future of this program. The APWG views this as good solution to the space requirements of this proposal.

In summary, the resources requested for this new program are appropriate and justified. The University leadership views the new degree as important, and is prepared to invest resources towards the success of this new interdisciplinary program.
Implementation

The proposed startup of the Hospitality Management degree would begin Fall 2017, assuming resources are in place (e.g., new hires, re-allocation of space). It is the intent to implement the program in two phases that will delay the start of 2 degree options until Fall 2018 (Lodging Management and Rural Tourism, and Sports and Fitness Administration). The initiation of Phase 2 will also depend on the successful enrollment of students in the first two options and recruitment of a second faculty hire. This seems strategic for a variety of reasons. First, it will allow MSU Leadership and the college to determine if the program has generated the anticipated interest that warrants an investment of Phase 2 options. Second, the gradual introduction of the programs will provide an opportunity for fundraising initiatives and internships to develop. APWG believes the implementation plan for this new program is reasonable and allows for assessment as different components are phased in.

Demand and Support

The proposal describes in detail how the demand for this program was assessed. It includes an independent analysis by the Education Advisory Board, focus groups with local industry stakeholders, review of current enrollment in other related programs, and supportive communications from industry leaders. Taken together, these data suggest that this new program will attract students and supports of the educational mission of our institution.

Some data is presented suggesting that demand for individuals with training is hotel, restaurant, and tourism management is increasing and that the new degree program will help to address this need. Although this conclusion seems reasonable given the types of data that are included in the analysis, it is not a normative component of academic program review or requirement for approval. More relevant is providing evidence that a new program can offer a high quality educational experience that can prepare our students to succeed. The APWG believes that the proposal provides converging evidence that supports the conclusion that students will have an interest in this new program.

An impressive number of letters have been generated in support of this program (~38). The EHHD Faculty show strong support for the new program, as do entities external to the College (i.e., JCCOB). It should be noted that ASMSU endorses this program by vote at a recent meeting. Support from state and local stakeholders offers an opportunity for the formation of new types of partnerships and institutional support. The value of these types of connections with external stakeholders and community is important to Montana State University.

Finally, this proposal has the potential to partner with Gallatin College and their plans to create an Associate degree in Culinary Arts. Although separate proposals, there would be the opportunity to share some resources and overlapping coursework. The curriculum is designed to
accommodate students wishing to transition from the AA program into relevant options in the Hospitality Management.

Summary

This proposal for the creation of an interdisciplinary Bachelor’s Degree in Hospitality Management provides compelling evidence of academic quality, potential for student demand, and resource commitment. APWG is supportive of this new program and believes that it represents an important opportunity for our institution.