

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Academic Affairs

NO: AAC 21-02

COMMITTEE DATE: January 26, 2021

BOARD DATE: February 2, 2021

**APPROVAL OF LETTER OF INTENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
AMHERST TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN PUBLIC POLICY AND
AUTHORIZATION FOR FAST TRACK REVIEW**

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education (BHE) has evaluated the Letter of Intent of the **University of Massachusetts Amherst** to award **the Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy** and has determined that the proposal aligns with BHE criteria. Accordingly, the BHE authorizes the Commissioner to review the program and to make a final determination on degree granting authority pursuant to the Fast-Track review protocol.

VOTED: Motion adopted by AAC 1/26/2021; adopted by BHE 2/2/2021.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(b); AAC 18-40

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approval

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
January 2021
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Letter of Intent
Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy

DEGREE TITLE ABSTRACT ON INTENT AND MISSION OF PROGRAM

The University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMA) intends that the proposed Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy (BA/PP) will teach students about the values and perspectives that shape policy problems and the ways in which policies are designed and implemented to address these problems. The major will integrate content regarding international and domestic policies, and it is planned that learning will be experiential in nature. UMA also intends that students in the proposed undergraduate Public Policy program will be prepared to seek graduate degrees.

The proposed Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy Preliminary Proposal was approved by the University of Massachusetts' Governing Authority on January 16, 2017. The LOI was circulated on November 24, 2020. No comments were received.

A. ALIGNMENT WITH MASSACHUSETTS GOALS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Address Gaps in Opportunity and Achievement in Alignment with Campus-Wide Goals

UMA reports that its' School of Public Policy (SPP) is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment for its students, faculty, staff, and surrounding communities. This emphasis is presented as crucial to admissions, recruitment, curriculum, teaching, and research. The SPP reportedly strives to develop and empower leaders who are civically engaged. Additionally, UMA holds that SPP's admissions decisions and recruiting strategies reflect institutional goals of diversity and equal opportunity for all applicants, regardless of their race, creed, sex, or sexual orientation. The School of Public Policy in particular, and the institution as a whole, is actively upholding diversity as a priority with a commitment to inclusion of historically underrepresented students. UMA provides the examples of the existing Master of Public Policy and Administration (MPPA) and Master of Public Policy (MPP) with diverse students enrolled in the program.

Course pedagogical content and delivery is planned such that students learn to value diversity and engagement. As an example of how this will be accomplished, UMA cited a 2011 Social Equity Award received from the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) The award is given annually and recognizes a program that exemplifies the highest standards of promoting and supporting social equity in research, teaching, and/or service. SPP research and teaching initiatives are carried out in a way that focuses on social justice and inequality, environmental policy, family and care policies, health

policies, and science and technology policies. It is expected that these content areas will attract diverse students to the program. UMA management courses focus on teaching students who are interested in careers outside of for-profit business and industries. UMA undergraduate social enterprise, nonprofit, and public management courses are expected to appeal to a diverse array of students who are passionate about social change. Adding the BA is aligned to MA goals for higher education because it is planned to increase campus diversity by developing new sources of traditionally underserved students from Massachusetts, the US, and internationally. UMA undergraduate admissions staff underscore that the study of public policy and the field of public service in general is known to draw students from diverse communities, such as Springfield and Holyoke, and will create a new, previously underserved pipeline of students for UMA.

Program or Department Supports to Ensure Student Retention and Completion

The UMA Associate Provost for Student Success coordinates university-wide efforts that promote student success and help students overcome barriers to on-time graduation. Over the last few years UMass Amherst reports a sharp rise in both first-year retention rates and in four- and six-year graduation rates. The proposed program is planned to assign a designated department faculty advisor to each student. Students will also be provided with academic advisement from the department's Director of Undergraduate Advising and the Undergraduate Program Director. The Internship Coordinator will provide further guidance about internships. These practices combine to form a significant strategy for increasing equity for traditionally underserved students by ensuring retention and completion. UMA plans that students will also have access to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) Pathways Center, providing academic guidance including internship and career advice. It is planned that students will also have access to the UMA Learning Resource Center (LRC), the Writing Center, and the Mathematics Help Center.

Alliances and Partnerships with PK-12, Other IHE's, Community Employers

Existing partnerships that the SPP has already established with state agencies, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector will be part of the proposed program. It is planned that MassTransfer is expected to help students transfer from community colleges and enable UMA to further prepare students to complete a baccalaureate degree and find employment in public administration and the third sector. UMA intends that SPP will establish an advisory committee of ten to twenty members including public officials, community members, current students, alumni, faculty, deans, and staff from across the university. UMA expects that students with an undergraduate degree in Public Policy are prepared for graduate study and as such, the proposed program is expected to serve as a feeder to graduate programs at UMA and other UMass campuses.

Relationship to MassHire Regional Blueprints

UMA finds that nonprofit/ third sector industries provided more than 12.3 million jobs and paid out \$638 billion in wages in 2016,¹ representing more than 10 percent of the United States workforce, approximately the same percentage as the manufacturing sector. In Massachusetts, nonprofits made up 17.7 percent of the workforce, twice as many people as the manufacturing sector employed. The nonprofit sector also pays competitive salaries. UMA also reports that, nonprofit salaries in health care, education, and social services are higher than for-profit counterparts. As well UMA found that the nonprofit sector is a reliable contributor to job growth. Between 2007 and 2016, the sector grew 16.7 percent, outpacing for-profit growth, which was 4.6 percent for the decade.² UMA expects that SPP's graduates will also find jobs in businesses that are rapidly responding to the social justice values of younger generations. Reportedly, one study found that 94 percent of millennials and 80 percent of Gen Z believe that companies should address social and environmental issues.³ Another survey found that both generations expect businesses to make a positive impact on society and the environment, to create innovative products and services, to emphasize inclusion and diversity in the workplace, and to create job opportunities.⁴ It is expected that graduates will pursue careers in entities such as the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, Teach For America, and a variety of nonprofits and foundations. UMA also expects that others may enter fields such as media affairs, public affairs, business, consulting, and teaching. A UMA review of other institutions with Public Policy undergraduate majors indicated that a majority of graduates pursue careers in government at the city, state, and federal level. These positions include policy analyst, lobbyist, political campaign staff member, research assistant, legislative staffer, and others. The Census Bureau has identified a variety of careers in the domain of public policy and administration, including but not limited to: public finance, personnel, justice, public order and safety, correctional institutions, parole offices, human resources, public health, environmental quality and conservation, housing, economic development, and budget management.⁵

Duplication

Some colleges and universities in Massachusetts have public policy programs. The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth (UMD) offers a BA and a BS in Public Administration within the Political Science Department. This program is focused on management in the public sector. UMD graduates approximately twenty students a year. Bridgewater State offers a Public Administration concentration in the Political Science Department, and Framingham State offers a minor in Public Administration. Clark University also offers a BS in Public Administration.

Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning

¹ Lester Salamon, Chelsea Newhouse, The Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society 2019 Nonprofit Employment Report

² Lester Salamon, Chelsea Newhouse, The Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society 2019 Nonprofit Employment Report

³ Cone Communications, [2017 Gen Z Survey](#) (2017)

⁴ 2018 Deloitte Millennial Survey: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/About-Deloitte/gx-2018-millennial-survey-report.pdf>.

⁵ https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/reference_files_tools/1997/sec92.htm

UMA plans that all students in the proposed LOI program will complete client-based experiential projects in the public, nonprofit, or private sectors. They will also be supported in finding and completing supervised internships. UMA plans to have a full-time staff person specifically charged with internships and careers for undergraduate students. This person will build upon the well-established network of potential employers already in place for graduate students including local, state, and federal governments, non-profit organizations, and companies in the private sector. An active alumni network is also planned to be available to undergraduate students. There will also be opportunities for students to receive financial support and mentoring during internship placements in the nation's capital and in Boston. A policy lab series is planned where students will apply skills developed in the program to real-time policy problems in substantive areas. It is planned that all students will complete a final capstone course, integrating coursework with an applied project in a policy or management area of interest. The capstone will encourage students to reflect and synthesize the major experiences, concepts, principles, and skills developed in the proposed program. Students will work on actual policy or management problem facing a community in teams; develop an understanding of its origins and elements; collaboratively design a solution; develop the plan for bringing the solution to fruition; and present the plan to representatives from the community or enterprise. The proposed program will include hybrid classes, and many courses are planned to be competency-based. In addition to the liberal arts approach to public policy, students will develop skills in leadership, statistics, economics, financial management and program evaluation.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH CAMPUS STRATEGIC PLAN AND MISSION

Priority Rationale and Support of Strategic Plan and Overall Mission of Institution

The proposed Public Policy LOI aligns with the three primary goals in *Be Revolutionary: The 2018-2023 Campus Strategic Plan*: 1) to develop a research-rich, inclusive community, 2) to encourage the advancement and application of knowledge and innovation for the betterment of society, and 3) to establish UMass Amherst as a community that exemplifies the power of diverse perspectives and mutual respect. The proposed undergraduate degree in Public Policy is designed to add to the university's curricular and research offerings, provide research and education that leads to the betterment of society, and offer a range of diverse perspectives in the public policy arena. It is planned that the SPP will contribute to each of these primary goals through careful curricular scaffolding and integration of classroom and co-curricular practices (e.g. civic and community engagement and service learning, team-based learning, case method, simulations, study abroad, internships, all built around a commitment to the public good); an emphasis on research and scholarly impact (e.g. students develop new knowledge and insights); career development and preparation (e.g. professional development seminar, a junior-year writing course to develop written and oral communication skills); and outreach and engagement through an existing network of community partners.

Overall Goals, Learning Objectives, Outcomes Evaluation (Form B Appendices)

UMA holds that the goal of the proposed BA/PP is that students learn about the range of values and perspectives that shape policy problems; how policies are shaped and implemented in response; and how policies can positively impact on the greatest common good. The curriculum and all other aspects of the major are expected to integrate learning about international and domestic policy, develop a sense of responsible citizenship, and be able to understand problems from multiple points of view. Student learning outcomes, courses, and curriculum in the proposed BA/PP will be reviewed regularly to ensure quality, relevance, and effectiveness. Program assessments will include annual reviews of program faculty, Student Response to Instruction (SRTI) evaluations for teaching quality feedback, monitoring enrollment trends in required and elective courses for the major, monitoring graduation rates, and implementing learning outcomes evaluation procedures, and annual reviews of data obtained from those evaluations.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES OF INSTITUTION

Enrollment Projections (Form C Appendices)

UMA does not anticipate that the proposed BA/PP will significantly impact any one UMA program. By offering undergraduate courses in Public Policy for several years, a recent analysis at UMA indicated that 21 percent are students from the College of Social and Behavioral Science (SBS), 28 percent were from the School of Public Health and Health Sciences, and 21 percent were from College of Natural Sciences. The other 30 percent of students came from other UMA colleges. Students in the MassTransfer program are included in the enrollment projections, with Associates to Bachelors (A2B) paths in several social science programs. Within the UMass Amherst College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, A2B programs include Political Science, Economics, and Sociology. The proposed program is planned to enable students a guaranteed transfer of credits and would eliminate the requirement for an application essay or fee. Students with a GPA above 2.5 would be guaranteed admission, and students with a GPA above 3.0 would also receive a MassTransfer tuition credit.

Resources and Financial Statement of Estimated Net Impact on Institution (Form D Appendices)

- a) *Faculty*: UMA plans that the SPP will support the new undergraduate program with existing and newly hired faculty. Existing resources include twelve jointly appointed faculty members with tenure homes in other departments and 1.5 lecturer positions. SPP also has agreements, with other departments that provide courses annually through graduate faculty. Over the next three years, SPP anticipates nine more tenure-line appointments, a plan that has been approved by SBS and the Provost. SPP planned to hire the first three of the nine new appointments, all of whom joined UMass in September 2020. A fourth person, who shares the appointment with Communication and

CICS, was planned to join the faculty in January 2021. The SPP completed the first year of a three-year hiring plan in Spring 2020 by adding three new faculty members who joined the university and began teaching in Fall 2020. The implementation of the remainder of the plan has been slightly altered relative to the timeline of hiring provided in the LOI, and the pandemic. The Provost and Chancellor have confirmed their commitment to this modified plan and a resumption of planned hiring as soon as conditions permit. Several faculty members have also transferred into the School of Public Policy from other parts of the university, as was called for in the plan. As a result, the School now has 10 tenure-line appointments and 10 joint appointments. Thus, even with the altered timeline, the School of Public Policy already has the faculty capacity to launch the undergraduate program. Although the size of the first incoming class may be slightly smaller than initially projected, we would rapidly increase intake to planned levels in concert with the resumption of the faculty hiring plan.

- b) *Staff:* SPP currently has a director and four FTE staff members. Current staff cover the recruiting, organizational, and communications needs of the school. It is planned that the SPP will hire one FTE director of undergraduate advising and one staff member to work on internships and career services for the BA and graduate programs. As the BAPP program grows, it is anticipated that additional staffing will be needed.
- c) *Library, information technologies, and facilities:* SPP will house the undergraduate program and provide access to all available resources. The UMass Library has a Law and Public Policy librarian and an Entrepreneurship and Innovation librarian who will be integral to undergraduate training in library resources. The Office of Instructional Technologies will also be available to provide a wide range of support for students.

UMA estimates the revenues generated by the proposed BA/PP are based on the current tuition and fee rates with an increase of approximately 2.5 percent per year. It is also estimated that approximately 100 students per year will enroll in the Public Policy undergraduate program, including some students transferring from other majors in the first year that the program is available. An additional planned source of program funding is marginal graduate revenues. This was calculated based on the revenue to the SPP from master's programs, less the expenses needed to fund the graduate programs. The five-year budget plan, accounts for costs in relationship to revenue and was approved by the UMA Provost and Dean in the fall 2019. UMA reports that operating expenses for SPP are divided evenly between graduate and undergraduate programs and the total administrative cost is based on operating cost estimates from a five-year expansion plan.

STAFF REVIEW AND VALIDATION

Staff thoroughly reviewed the **LOI** proposing full degree granting authority for the **Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy** submitted by the **University of Massachusetts Amherst**. Staff validate that the **LOI** includes all data required by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Staff

recommendation is for BHE authorization for the Commissioner to review the program pursuant to the Fast-Track review protocol.

Form A1: LOI Curriculum Outline

Major Required (Core) Courses (Total courses required = 7)		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
SPP 181 or SPP 101	Controversies in Public Policy (Div U) or Public Policy in Global Perspective	4
SPP 280	Public Policy	4
SPP 202	Managing for Mission in Nonprofits and Government	4
SPP 203	Economics for Public Policy	4
SPP 301	Junior Writing Seminar: Communicating Public Policy	3
SPP 410	Capstone for Public Policy Students	4
SPP 303	Practicum: Contemplating your Career	1
	Sub Total Required Credits	24

Elective Courses (5 or more total courses required for a minimum of 20 credits)

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
SPP110	Transforming Your World: Introduction to Community Engagement	4
SPP190A	Water, Oil and Blood	4
SPP 240	Leadership	4
SPP302	Evaluating Policy Evidence: Truth in Numbers	4
SPP 307	Policy and Program Evaluation	4
SPP 304	Strategies for Successful Social Change	4
SPP 398	Public Policy Internship	3
SPP 306	Policy Analysis	4
SPP 320	Public Administration	4

SPP 404	Catalyzing Change: Creating & Operating a Nonprofit	4
597GP	Internet Governance and Information Policy	4
	Sub Total Elective Credits	20
<i>Distribution of General Education Requirements</i> Attach List of General Education Offerings (Course Numbers, Titles, and Credits)		# of Gen Ed Credits
COLLEGE WRITING (CW, 0-3 credits): Completion of either EnglWrit 112 (CW) OR a satisfactory score on the Writing Placement Test, combined SAT I Critical Reading and Writing Tests, or Advanced Placement Exam (Language and Composition only). JUNIOR YEAR WRITING (No letter designation): To be taken in the public policy major (SPP 301).		0-3
BASIC MATHEMATICS and ANALYTICAL REASONING: Students must complete one course in Basic Math Skills (R1) or get a satisfactory score on the Basic Mathematics Skills Exemption Test. This requirement can also be satisfied with a higher level course that presupposes knowledge of basic math skills. BASIC MATHEMATICS (R1, 0-3 total credits) ANALYTICAL REASONING (R2, 3 credits)		0-6
BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL WORLD: 2 courses (8 total credits) Each 4-credit course requirement may also be satisfied by two 3-credit courses with the appropriate designation. BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE (BS) PHYSICAL SCIENCE (PS)		8
Social Sciences 4 courses (16 total credits) Within the Social World requirements, two courses must meet the Social and Cultural Diversity requirement. One course must focus on Diversity in the United States (DU); the other must focus on Global Diversity (DG). Students are expected to take a DU or DG course in their first year.		16

INTEGRATIVE EXPERIENCE: 3 credits (code TBA) Part of major requirements; to be taken at UMass Amherst.	0
<i>Sub Total General Education Credits</i>	24-33
<i>Curriculum Summary</i>	
Total number of courses required for the degree	30
Total credit hours required for degree	120
<i>Prerequisite or Other Additional Requirements:</i>	None

Form B: LOI Goals and Objectives

Goal	Measurable Objective	Strategy for Achievement	Timetable
Critical mass of BA Public Policy students	Have a sufficient number of students to sustain the program. Graduate 100 PA majors per year by year five of the program.	Admit students to BA in Public Policy program. Market program on campus, locally, and regionally.	Fall 2020 Advise current and prospective students about their options so as soon as the new major is available, they can choose it. Spring 2020: admit first class for Fall 2021.
Critical mass of BA Public Policy faculty	Have enough faculty to teach all BA Public Policy required courses.	Hire nine new faculty to support undergraduate curriculum. Follow SPP hiring procedures already developed.	Three new faculty hires in 2019-20, three in 2020-21, three in 2021-22
Appropriate staffing of BA Public Policy Program	Hire staff as needed to support undergraduate program needs.	Hire Undergraduate Program Director. Follow usual SPP hiring procedures.	2020-2021
Facilities	Move into space appropriate for accommodating a growing program.	Work with UMass Facilities to acquire appropriate space.	2019-2021
High quality education of BA in Public Policy students	1. Participation in program by a diverse student population. 2. Courses taught by qualified and effective faculty. 3. Students graduating at a rate equal to or above college average.	1. Campus and regional information events. 2. Communication with faculty; clearly defined learning outcomes in curriculum. 3. Monitor graduation rates; proactive advising.	Continually, from 2021. Annually, from 2021. Annually, from 2021.

Maintain curricular relevance	Elective courses for major will attract sufficient students to be offered regularly.	Periodic review of enrollment data and adjustment of course offerings.	Bi-annually, beginning in 2022.
Successful career start for students	Number of students placed in relevant jobs or admitted to graduate school post graduation.	Develop and implement career and internship advising strategy and host campus events to familiarize students with career and postgraduate academic opportunities. Maintain and expand student internship opportunities. Track student job placement through survey.	Annually, beginning in 2023.

Form C: LOI Program Enrollment

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
New Full-Time	100	100	100	100
Continuing Full-Time	0	100	200	200
New Part-Time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuing Part-Time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Totals	100	200	300	300

Form D: LOI Program Budget

One Time/Start Up Costs		Annual Enrollment				
	Cost Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	Full Time Faculty (Salary & Fringe) *Includes startup funds in Y1 and Y2	\$171,367	\$221,879	\$171,879	\$171,879	\$171,879
	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Staff	\$105,091	\$105,091	\$105,091	\$105,091	\$105,091
	General Administrative Costs	\$65,450	\$66,275	\$67,850	\$74,425	\$77,500
	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Facilities/Space/Equip.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Field & Clinical Resources	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Marketing	\$8,500	\$9,000	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500
	Supplies	\$3,500	\$4,000	\$4,500	\$5,000	\$5,500
	Assistantships	\$0	\$90,000	\$240,000	\$300,000	\$360,000
One Time/Start-Up Support		Annual Income				
	Revenue Sources	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	Grants	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

	Tuition & Fees	\$2,106,280	\$4,317,874	\$6,638,731	\$9,072,933	\$11,624,695
	Departmental	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Reallocated Funds	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Marginal Grad Program Revenues	\$350,416	\$495,199	\$597,774	\$664,849	\$728,424
	TOTALS	\$2,456,696	\$4,813,073	\$7,236,505	\$9,737,782	\$12,353,119