

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Academic Affairs

NO.: AAC 14-22

COMMITTEE DATE: January 21, 2014

BOARD DATE: January 28, 2014

APPLICATION OF FISHER COLLEGE TO AWARD THE MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the Articles of Amendment of **Fisher College** to award the **Master of Business Administration**.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 69, Section 30 et seq.

Contact: Shelley Tinkham, Assistant Commissioner for Academic, P-16 and Veterans Policy

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

January 2014

Fisher College Master of Business Administration

INTENT AND MISSION

Fisher College, a private, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accredited coeducational institution, located in Boston, MA, requests authorization to offer the Master of Business Administration (MBA). The proposed MBA program seeks to provide students with an opportunity to take part in a real world learning process that will enable them to acquire marketable skills that will help them lead professionally within any business career field.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, occupations classified as needing a Masters degree are projected to grow by 21.7% through 2020. Additionally, the Bureau projects a job gain of 3.8 million in professional and business services from 2010 to 2020. In Massachusetts, job growth in business and financial operations is projected to grow by 10.6% through 2016, with a projected total job openings of 52,370. The projected growth indicates a strong market for MBAs.

Fisher's proposed MBA will target entry and mid-level business professionals and has specifically identified the primary target market for the M.B.A. program as recent alumni of the institution. Over the past three years there have been 300 graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Management. In spring of 2012, the College polled graduating business students and 70% anticipated pursuing a Master's degree.

The proposed program was developed by the MBA Program Director and was aided by the Fisher College MBA Focus Group as well as the Curriculum Committee. The proposal was forwarded to the Faculty Forum (the faculty governance structure charged with review and approval of all Fisher College curricular matters) for a vote and was subsequently endorsed by the faculty, approved by college leadership, and authorized by the Fisher College Board of Trustees on January 31, 2013.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Fisher College was founded in 1903 and functioned as a secretarial school for young women (and men beginning in 1946) until its approval as a junior college in 1952. In 1957, Fisher Junior College was approved to grant the Associate in Science degree by the Board of Higher Education. In 1968, authority was granted to award the degree Associate in Arts. In 1970, the college was accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The college began offering programs and certificates through continuing education at sites throughout eastern Massachusetts in 1975.

In 1988, Fisher Junior College was renamed Fisher College, a private, two year college. In 1999, the Board of Higher Education approved Fisher College to offer the Bachelor of Science in Management and in 2000, the Board approved the certificates in Administrative Assistant, Computer Technology, Early Childhood Education, Paralegal Studies, Medical Assistant, Retail Merchandising and, Travel and Hospitality Management. In 2008, the Board also approved the

Bachelor of Science in Human Services and the Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Media Studies. The Board approved the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 2011, the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice in 2012 and the Bachelor of Nursing in 2013.

Fisher currently enrolls approximately eight hundred full-time, day undergraduate students and almost one thousand Division of Accelerated and Professional Studies students. They offer Associate in Science as well as Associate in Arts degrees and six bachelor's degrees.

Fisher College now seeks authority to grant a Master of Business Administration.

ACADEMIC AND RELATED MATTERS

Curriculum (Attachment A)

The Master of Business Administration has a concentration in Leadership and is geared towards entry and mid-level working professionals. It is a part-time program that can be completed in twenty-four months of continuous study. The proposed program consists of 47 credits of which up to four, core courses can be waived. Waivers will be approved based on applicable prerequisite coursework at the undergraduate or graduate level from a regionally accredited institution with a grade of B- or higher, taken within the last five years.

The proposed program's curriculum was developed in adherence with the standards outlined by the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE), for which accreditation will be pursued. The institution will utilize case studies and the application of business research and analysis skills to assist in developing students' strategic problem solving abilities.

Upon completion of the proposed Master of Business Administration, students will be able to:

1. Apply fundamental business knowledge to realistic business scenarios.
2. Apply critical thinking and problem solving methods to realistic business scenarios.
3. Demonstrate graduate level research skills.
4. Analyze data found in all business functions, using accepted quantitative and qualitative methods.
5. Apply appropriate communication strategies and methods to effectively address leadership and managerial situations.
6. Evaluate and understand the interactions between business functions.
7. Analyze and interpret the concepts of business law, business ethics, social responsibility, and risk management; and the role of external factors, including government on business operations.
8. Analyze and understand the effects of internal systems and human behavior on business operations.
9. Evaluate and recommend courses of action at the strategic and operational levels, using business cases, and present arguments in support of the recommendations.
10. Analyze and interpret the effects of globalization on all aspects of commerce.

Departmental assessment efforts are part of the College's regular cycle of program review. All academic programs are reviewed every three years utilizing a three-part instrument that includes assessment of college-wide learning outcomes, specific program learning outcomes and a general evaluation of the program's mission, enrollment, and resources.

In addition, each program is reviewed annually by an advisory board within the field of expertise. Input and suggestions are made actionable through modifications in curricula or specific elements of assignments.

Admission Requirements

Candidates must complete and submit the MBA Admissions Application and supply the following documents to support their candidacy.

- GMAT taken within the last five years. GMAT waiver will be considered for applicants with a CPA or other graduate degrees. A minimum score of 500 on the GMAT is required.
- Official college transcripts from regionally accredited, undergraduate and graduate institutions attended. A cumulative GPA of 2.7 or higher is required for undergraduate degree programs. Successful completion of a graduate degree program is sufficient.
- Resume: must be up-to-date and include educational and professional information. If any information changes after a student has applied, they may send the graduate admissions office an updated resume.
- Two letters of recommendation
- Essay
 - The topic for the MBA admissions essay is Professional Aspirations. In 750 words or less, please address the following
 - Why do you want to pursue an MBA at this point in your life?
 - What is your career goal?
 - In what way will the Fisher College MBA help you to fulfill your career goal?

Tuition and Fees

The anticipated student cost for the program, including tuition and fees, is \$26,728.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT PROJECTION

	# of Students 2014	# of Students 2015	# of Students 2016	# of Students 2017
New Full Time				
Continuing Full Time				
New Part Time	10	20	20	20
Continuing Part Time	XXX	12	15	15
Totals	16	32	35	35

RESOURCES AND BUDGET (Attachment B)

Administration and Faculty

The proposed Master of Business Administration will be housed administratively in the Division of Accelerated and Professional Studies and will be led by a program director who is a full time member of the faculty holding a doctoral degree. The college has hired an additional full-time faculty member with a doctorate in Business Administration who will begin in Spring 2014. Fisher plans to supplement the teaching load as needed with faculty from undergraduate programs as well as adjuncts if needed. There are seven full-time faculty teaching in the program. The college plans to make additional faculty hires, as needed, subject to growth of the program.

Library and Information Technology

Fisher College houses a physical collection of resources in Boston which are available to all students whether on-campus or off-site. The Library has external and collaborative network affiliations. In addition, the physical library is open 80 hours a week and well into the evening hours to provide access for students taking courses later during the day.

The Library offers students availability to several of the most commonly used online business databases, such as Business Source Premier, Hoover's, Lexis Nexis Business and ProQuest. Students may access the Library's website, online catalog, and databases from any on-campus computer. Also, all members of the Fisher College community can access additional databases available remotely through the Boston Public Library.

All buildings on the Boston campus are wired for Internet access and each classroom has video capabilities and in some cases, Smart Boards. Computer work stations are located in the library and other key areas. IT services are up to date and appear reliable. MBA students will have easy access to email, the online learning platform Blackboard, and the library portal.

Physical Resources

The main campus of Fisher College is located in the Back Bay area. They also maintain three remote campuses in Brockton, North Attleboro and New Bedford. The Back Bay facilities appear to be in good condition and many feature well-maintained period architecture, finishes and furnishings. Enrollment has grown and the College has invested in the purchase of nearby buildings to accommodate the growing student population.

Financial Resources

The primary costs associated with this program are the full time program director and other instructional faculty that will be hired as the program grows. Funds have been allocated to market the program as well as to develop a graduate designated classroom and complete any facilities changes that might be needed to enhance the learning environment for MBA students. The budget for the proposed program is provided in Attachment B.

Licensure and Accreditation

No licensure is applicable; however, the institution will seek accreditation from the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education.

EVALUATION

External Review

The proposed program was reviewed by visiting committee members Susan Newell, Professor of Management, Bentley University; Michael Mooiman, Assistant Professor, MBA Program, Franklin Pierce University, and Edward French, Academic Director of Business Programs, Franklin Pierce University.

The evaluation included the team's review of the written proposal submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (MA-DHE) by Fisher College to offer the *Master of Business Administration* degree, and the site visit was conducted from September 22-24, 2013. During the site visit additional documents were provided by the college, and information was also obtained from direct communications with the college's President, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dean, Division of Accelerated and Professional Studies, Program Director, MBA Program; and the Dean, Curriculum Development; select faculty, and students. The committee toured the main campus which included stops in the library, student center and the proposed graduate classroom space.

The Committee recommended the College:

- Develop formal protocols to implement evaluative tools that will ensure data is gathered, analyzed and reported for potential action.
- Clarify the MBA Director reporting line.
- Update the faculty manual to include the roles and responsibilities of the graduate faculty in faculty governance.
- Review and ensure clarity in the number of MBA foundation courses that can be waived.
- Require a minimum of two undergraduate classes as a requirement for the waiver of one of the graduate classes.
- Change the minimum grade accepted for demonstrating the required foundational competencies.
- Four credit courses should be adjusted to clarify that they are electives rather than "concentration" courses.
- Engage in additional planning specifically around the minimum number of students required to run a viable cohort; how students with varying numbers of waived foundation courses will be accommodated and additionally, the length of time to complete the program needs to be clarified
- Review the number of student assessment methods incorporated into the MBA courses to ensure that delivery of academic content is not compromised by excessive assessment.
- Provide a rubric that will go in the faculty manual that stipulates the expected teaching load of faculty working at the graduate level.
- Review projected enrollment, succession and retention rates and develop contingency models that consider the implications of a lower enrollment, succession, retention rates than projected.
- Establish a dedicated graduate work and study space to accentuate the difference between the graduate and undergraduate experiences.
- Revise and resubmit a projected three-year budget to coincide with the projected class schedule.

Institutional Response

The institution responded substantively to all the committee concerns and specific responses to the issues outlined above are as follows:

The College assessment committee will work with the Program Director to establish an assessment protocol and evaluation process for each aspect of assessment. The MBA Program Director will report to the Assistant Dean of the School of Management and Communication. The faculty manual has been updated to clarify the role of graduate faculty. In order to remove confusion, the courses that can be waived will be referred to as core classes. The College will now require two undergraduate classes as a waiver for one graduate class. The minimum grade accepted for demonstrating required foundational competencies has been changed from a C- to a B-. Four credit courses have been clarified as elective courses rather than concentration courses.

A more detailed schedule has been developed to support the first few cohorts of students and the institution has maintained that it will not move forward unless they have minimum of 8 students in a cohort. Depending on how many courses can be waived, a student could finish within 18 months; all others will complete the program in 24 months. A review of the course proposals has been completed and several assessments have been modified to reduce the required number of assessments as well as the mandated assessments. The faculty manual has been updated to include reference to graduate faculty and the associated teaching load. Graduate faculty are expected to teach 6 less credits per academic year than undergraduate faculty.

A modified budget with smaller cohorts and a slightly lower retention rate has been developed. The financial analysis includes the costs associated with offering 21 classes per year, which will accommodate students within each cohort who will waive up to four classes. The first floor of 111 Beacon Street has been identified as the MBA dedicated classroom and study space. One work room in the Academic Center for Enrichment will be reserved in the evenings for graduate students. The budget has been revised and is aligned with the expected course schedule. The budget has been adjusted to reduce expected enrollment and retention, in the interest of establishing a more conservative estimate.

PUBLIC HEARING

The required public hearing was held in the Board of Higher Education office on January 15, 2014. No comments were offered in opposition to the proposed program.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

After a thorough evaluation of all documentation submitted, staff is satisfied that the proposed **Master of Business Administration** meets the criteria set forth in 610 CMR 2.08(3) in the Degree-Granting Regulations for Independent Institutions of Higher Education, accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Recommendation is for approval.

ATTACHMENT A: CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Major Required (Core) Courses (Total # of courses required = 12)		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
MBA5000	Executive Level Presentation and Communication	2
MBA5020	Management, Teamwork, and Empowerment*	3
MBA5050	Leading Organizational Change	3
MBA5100	Decision Making Analysis Methods for Managers	3
MBA5150	Value Based Operations and Logistics Management Practice	3
MBA5200	Financial Reporting and Statement Analysis*	3
MBA5250	Strategic Cost and Profitability Analysis*	3
MBA5300	Global Economics and Managerial Decision Making	3
MBA5400	MIS Practices in a Networked Marketplace*	3
MBA5500	Marketing, Management, and E-commerce*	3
MBA5600	Comparative Case Studies in Business Law and Ethics	3
MBA6999	Industry Analysis, Strategy, and Planning (Capstone)	3
	SubTotal # Core Credits Required	35
<i>Elective Course Choices (Total courses required = 3) (Choose from the following list)</i>		
MBA6000	Leadership in Government and External Relations	4
MBA6300	International Business Analysis, Strategy, and Planning	4
MBA6500	Market Analysis, Strategy, and Planning	4
MBA6600	Strategic Human Resource Management and Labor Relations	4
	SubTotal # Elective Credits Required	12
<i>Curriculum Summary</i>		
Total number of courses required for the degree		15
Total credit hours required for degree		47
<u>Prerequisites and Waivers</u>		
<p>Applicants must have earned academic credit in the following “Foundation” course subject areas prior to matriculating, three credits of economics coursework, and six credits of accounting coursework. A grade of B- or higher must be earned in each category. Students who do not meet the criteria for “Foundation” courses must take appropriate “Foundation” courses in the required subject area.</p> <p>Waivers of up to four, core courses (possible courses for waiver identified with *), will be approved based on applicable prerequisite coursework at the undergraduate or graduate level from an accredited institution with a grade of B- or higher, taken within the last five years. More than one course within a discipline will be required to meet the waiver. Students with additional coursework, outside of this list, may petition the program director to determine waiver eligibility. Courses that are eligible for waiver are identified below:</p>		

Course	Waiver Requirements
Management, Teamwork, and Empowerment	Minimum 6 Credits in Management Principles of Management Organizational Behavior
Financial Reporting and Statement Analysis	Minimum of 12 credits in accounting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 credits in managerial accounting • 3 credits in financial accounting • 6 credits in intermediate accounting
Strategic Cost and Profitability Analysis	Minimum of 6 credits in accounting and 3 credits in finance
Marketing Management and Ecommerce	Minimum of 6 credits in marketing
MIS Practices in a Networked Marketplace	Minimum of 6 credits in MIS

ATTACHMENT B: BUDGET PROJECTION

Fisher College – MBA Program Budget

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
REVENUES				
Tuition Campus Based	185,472	387,757	437,068	449,437
TOTAL REVENUES	185,472	387,757	437,068	449,437
EXPENSES				
<i>Total Faculty Expenses</i>	94,990	271,325	278,341	285,568
Administrative Costs	4,000	8,000	8,750	8,750
Student Services	4,000	8,000	8,750	8,750
Academic resources	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Marketing	75,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Facilities/Contingency	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Other Expenses	105,000	58,000	59,500	59,500
GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES	199,990	329,325	337,841	345,068
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(14,518)	58,432	99,226	104,369
Margin	-7.8%	15.1%	22.7%	23.2%

ATTACHMENT C: FACULTY FORM

Summary of Faculty Who Will Teach in Proposed Program							
Name of faculty member (Name, Degree and Field, Title)	Check if Tenured NA	Courses Taught Put (C) to indicate core course. Put (OL) next to any course currently taught online.	Number of sections	Division of College of Employment	Full- or Part- time in Program	Full- or part-time in other department or program (Please specify)	Sites where individual will teach program courses
Baker, Anthony PhD Management Associate Professor, Program Director - MBA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBA5020 (C) • MBA5050 (C) • MBA6300 (C) • MBA6000 (C) • MBA6500 (C) • MBA6999 (C) <p>Leadership and Management Disciplines</p>	1	Management and Communication	Full Time	Bachelor of Science in Management (BSM) Program until MBA is launched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Campus initial launch – other sites as needed once program expands
Teopaco, John PhD Business Administration/Marketing Associate Professor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBA5020 (C) • MBA5500 (C) • MBA6300 (C) • MBA6500 (C) • MBA6999 (C) <p>Leadership and Marketing Disciplines</p>	1	Management and Communication	Full Time	Bachelor of Science in Management (BSM) Program and MBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Campus initial launch – other sites as needed once program expands
Trotta, Neil EdD – Higher Education, MBA Dean Division of Accelerated and Professional Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBA5020 (C) • MBA5050 (C) • MBA5150 (C) • MBA6600 (C) • MBA6300 (C) • MBA6500 (C) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management, Human Resources 	1	Management and Communication	Full Time	Bachelor of Science in Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Campus

		and Operations Disciplines					
Kuser, Janet MBA (EdD – ABD) Vice President for Academic Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBA5020 (C) • MBA5050 (C) • MBA5500 (C) • MBA6300 (C) • MBA6500 (C) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management and Marketing Disciplines 	1	Management and Communication	Full Time	Bachelor of Science in Management	• Main Campus
Brady, Donna MS, MS – Management and Taxation, CPA, DBA candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBA5200 (C) • MBA5250 (C) Accounting and Finance disciplines	1	Management and Communication	Full Time	Bachelor of Science in Management	• Main Campus
Meadows, Michael PhD Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBA5000 (C) • MBA5500 (C) Communication and Marketing	1	Management and Communication	Full Time	Bachelor of Arts Communication and Media Studies	• Main Campus
John Roche EdD, SPHR Human Resources		• MBA6600 ©		Management and Communication	Full Time	Bachelor of Science in Management	• Main Campus

Doctorally prepared subject matter experts will be hired for the following courses as they are offered:

Course	Education	Teaching Experience	Professional Experience
MBA5600 – Comparative Case Studies in Business Law and Ethics	JD or PhD in law	Two years baccalaureate level or higher	Five years of practical business law experience
MBA5300 – Global Economics and Managerial Decision Making	PhD in economics	Two years baccalaureate level or higher	Five years practical experience in business or research
MBA5400 – MIS Practices in a Networked Marketplace	PhD in technology related field	Two years baccalaureate level or higher	Five years practical experience in business
MBA5100 – Decision Making Analysis Methods for Managers	PhD in mathematics/statistics	Two years baccalaureate level or higher	Five years practical experience in business or research