



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

**FROM:** William P. Murphy *William P. Murphy*

**SUBJECT:** Monroe College, Bronx and Manhattan Campuses: Master Plan Amendment to Offer a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) Degree Program in the Humanities Discipline

**DATE:** January 30, 2020

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** *Sharon L. Tabor*

#### SUMMARY

#### **Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)**

Should the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment for Monroe College to offer its first bachelor's-level program in the Humanities discipline area, a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Professional Studies, at the Bronx and New Rochelle campuses?

#### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State statute and regulation.

#### **Proposed Handling**

The question will come before the Full Board at its February 2020 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken.

#### **Procedural History**

Monroe College has submitted a proposal for a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Professional Studies to be offered at the Bronx and New Rochelle campuses. A master plan amendment is required because the proposed program will be the first degree program in the Humanities discipline area at both the Bronx and New Rochelle campuses.

## **Background Information**

Monroe College seeks a master plan amendment to allow it to offer its first degree program, a Bachelor of Science, in the Humanities discipline area at the Bronx and New Rochelle campuses.

The proposed program is designed to meet the needs of adult learners by using their prior work experience, along with previous college coursework. The proposed program consists of 120 credits. Students are required to complete 45 credits of core courses, a 3-credit integrative professional studies capstone project, 30 credits of applicable concentration requirements, 15 credits of general education elective courses tailored to the student's learning goals, and 27 credits of open electives. The program will allow candidates to develop their skills and voices in a personalized and supportive environment, under the guidance of faculty members who are dedicated to cultivating an atmosphere that simultaneously engages, challenges, and supports students.

The curriculum accommodates up to a total of 90 transfer, CLEP, and Prior Learning credits awarded for life experience, demonstrated by military and workforce training, national examinations, and portfolio development. The courses focus on the skills employers require, including critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, communications, and management. This career-focused, degree-completion program will enhance the student's skills for application in a broad range of professional settings. Graduates will be prepared for employment in a variety of fields, as well as advanced academic study.

An academic review of faculty, curriculum, and other program aspects of the proposed degree program has been completed by the Department. The Department has determined that the proposed degree program meets the standards for registration as set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. In July 2019, following its standard protocol, the Department conducted a canvass of degree-granting institutions in the New York City Regents region. One institution, Fordham University objected to the proposed master plan amendment, questioning the need and demand for the program, given that other higher education institutions in the region, including Fordham, already offer programs to the adult education market; Fordham posits that the adult education market in the Bronx and Westchester counties are "saturated." Monroe College's response to Fordham's objections reference census data which indicate that, despite the availability of such programs, degree completion remains a challenge. Monroe states that its commitment to access and affordability, through competitive tuition and aid programs, creates an affordable price point for adults in the surrounding financially challenged communities.

## **Related Regents Items**

Not applicable.

### **Recommendation**

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize Monroe College to offer its first bachelors-level program in the Humanities discipline area, a Bachelor of Science in Professional Studies. The amendment will be effective until February 11, 2021, unless the Department registers the program prior to that date, in which case master plan amendment shall be without term.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

If the Board of Regents approves the master plan amendment, the Department will register the program.